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Polynesian Civilization and the Future Colonization of Space

In and Out of Place:
Civilizational Interaction and the Making of Australia in Oceania and Asia

Peer Reviewed Articles
Multiple Identities: Touchstones in Terrorism, Democratic Institutions, and the Rule of Law

In China’s Vanguard Civilization:
Is there Shelter for the Third World?

Contemporary Contexts of Confucianism

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Five Selected Writings Authored by Prof. Palmer Talbutt

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In Memoriam

Book Reviews

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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 former Digital Media Editor, now peer reviewer, 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.

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

Spring, 2019

The year 2019 began with pleasant news for the journal. An email was sent to us on January 30, 2019, by Ms. Ellen Amatangelo. She serves as the Scholarly Communications Coordinator and is currently our main contact at the Harold B. Lee Library of the Brigham Young University, in Provo, Utah.

First, I want to note that it is thanks to the assiduous work of our long-time member and CCR editor, Connie Lamb, that the Harold B. Lee library now houses our journal – one out of 27 – in its institutional repository, ScholarsArchive.

As those of you who attended the annual meeting of the International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations, held twice on the BYU campus over the years, may recall, the library itself is huge; as of 2016, it contained over 4.7 million books, held more than 10.6 million total materials, and served in excess of 10,000 patrons each day.

This impressive and extensive library was awarded the title of Number One College Library in 2004 by the Princeton Review, and it came in as number three on the list of top university libraries in 2007 and 2012. Moreover, the American Library Association awarded it the Library Instruction Round Table 2017 Innovation in Instruction Award.

What a contribution Prof. Lamb has made to the Comparative Civilizations Review through this wonderful association.

Second, as a result of our journal’s being housed in ScholarsArchive at Brigham Young University, we are now published online, each edition, via bepress™ of Berkeley, California. That means in turn that we are part of bepress’s arm called Digital Commons.

Bepress describes this as a “comprehensive showcase that lets institutions publish, manage, and increase recognition for everything produced on campus—and (it is) the only institutional repository and publishing platform that integrates with a full faculty research and impact suite.”

In fact, more than 1800 scholarly journals are now published via Digital Commons Publishing. A visit to: https://www.bepress.com/products/digital-commons/features/journal-publishing/
will reveal the impressive list of scholarly publications from many of higher education’s most distinguished campuses.
Furthermore, among the many benefits for our journal of being published by bepress is that the organization works with Google and Google Scholar “to make sure your work is fully indexed and turns up near the top of academic and general search results.”

So, third, what did the letter to the editors from Ms. Amatangelo report that is so dramatic?

Her letter was entitled “2018 Statistics for Comparative Civilizations Review.” It reported:

Here are the 2018 readership statistics for your journal:
- 61,148 downloads.
- 38 new works posted.

To repeat – over 61,000 full-text downloads last year!

Ms. Amatangelo kindly also informed us that ScholarsArchive readership statistics for 2018 have been compiled in the following blog post: https://sites.lib.byu.edu/scholarsarchive/2019/01/24/2018-readership-statistics/. She added that she would welcome suggestions for scholarly communication topics that people would like to know more about and will include them in her research list for upcoming blog posts.

Statistics for all twenty-seven journals in the BYU repository can be found here: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1frWAHz54azk5nya1IYerWjSc5QOeZNIs/view?usp=sharing. The PDF also contains a link for each journal.

In addition to the letter from Ms. Amatangelo, Digital Commons wrote at the same time to give us the results for the month of December. They reported that in December the Comparative Civilizations Review had 5412 full-text downloads.

The most popular papers were:
The Causes of Ethnic Conflicts (236 downloads)  
https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/ccr/vol68/iss68/8

What is the Difference Between Culture and Civilization? Two Hundred Fifty Years of Confusion (213 downloads)  
https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/ccr/vol66/iss66/4
Globalization vs. Americanization: Is the World Being Americanized by the Dominance of American Culture? (156 downloads)
https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cct/vol47/iss47/7

So, the most popular journal article for downloading over the last year, and in the last month, is entitled “The Causes of Ethnic Conflicts,” written by Prof. Mariana Tepfenhart of New Jersey and published in Number 68, the issue which appeared in Spring, 2013.

She begins her paper as follows:

Ethnic conflicts are not new phenomena. Such conflicts have existed all over the world for centuries, but in the last 20 years, after the fall of Communism, they are in the focus of public attention due to the civil war in Rwanda, the events in Eastern Europe, and the disintegration of the former Soviet Union.

The post-Cold War world showed signs of decline with respect to the power of states to maintain political stability. Since the two superpowers were no longer competing for sphere of influences in the world, Third World countries suffered primarily because they lost the support of their former patrons. What had once served as a stabilizing force was gone.

The resulting conflicts are violent, bringing suffering, death, destruction, and terrorism. They can escalate from local to regional areas. The casualties resulting from ethnic conflicts are often in hundreds of thousands as one ethnic group tries to eliminate another. The consequences can last generations.

This article discusses the most common causes that can trigger violent ethnic conflicts. The author uses as examples two countries: the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Rwanda. Although the literature on this topic is quite large and politicians and scholars come with different interpretations, generally there is not only one cause for the conflict, but a combination of factors. This paper emphasizes the role of belligerent leaders in triggering the wars.

The editors congratulate Prof. Tepfenhart on this outstanding achievement.

Close behind, in second place for December, was the article by Thorsten Botz-Bornstein, published in Spring, 2012 (Volume 66). He argues in that paper that the distinction between “culture” and “civilization” is not well embedded in the English language but has remained relatively meaningful in both other European and non-European languages.
He starts his paper by discussing the contributions of the British scholar Edward B. Tylor; Tylor abandoned the distinction between “culture” and “civilization” and for him, the term “civilization” covered both culture and civilization. He reviews the thoughts of many on this subject, including especially Charles Beard, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Norbert Elias, Samuel Huntington, Paul Ricoeur, Thomas Mann, Oswald Spengler, W.E.B. DuBois, and others.

Author Botz-Bornstein concludes that “culture as a locally lived experience is always mediated through civilization (otherwise it would be a dead culture stuffed away in a museum or a theme park). In parallel, civilization in itself is a purely abstract universal and becomes concrete only through cultural enactment.”


Her fascinating argument begins, in part, as follows:

… Instead of discussing all aspects of globalization, including its political and economic ramifications, I would like to focus attention on the area of globalization of culture. In other words, we are concerned here with how culture all over the world has been affected by the phenomenon of globalization and what sorts of transformation it has been undergoing.

By discussing globalization vs. Americanization, globalization vs. localization, homogenization vs. heterogenization, I'd like to argue that the world, instead of being homogenized into a single global culture by Americanization as some people argue, is becoming more diversified, more complex, and more multicultural.

Three important articles, all excellent reading.

Thus, for the editors, it is perhaps bordering on hubris, but it is now clear that the reach of the journal electronically may be measured by the metrics created by Digital Commons and ScholarsArchive. Another set of metrics is the number of “hits” recorded by Google. I have just typed in Comparative Civilizations Review and a total of 3,510,000 came up. Then, I went to Google Scholar and this showed 116,000 “hits”. These various figures may be challenged for a wide range of reasons as to accuracy, but the conclusion has to be evident: These support, in general but without much dispute, the decision of the Editorial Board to expand from only issuing the paper version of the journal, which was the sole medium for many years following the founding of the CCR in the winter of 1979, to the electronic form, as well.
In other news, the Board of the International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations has filled a vacancy with the election of Dr. John Berteaux to the Board. Prof. Berteaux has been active with the ISCSC for many years. He holds the PhD in Philosophy from the University of California San Diego, is widely published, and has been for many years on the faculty of the School of Humanities and Communication at California State University Monterey Bay.

Welcome to the Board, Dr. Berteaux.

Reminder of conferences of interest coming up:

- The annual conference of the International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations is scheduled to be held from July 25 to July 28, 2019, at El Retiro San Iñigo, The Jesuit Retreat Center of Los Altos, California. This year’s theme is: Comparison of Civilizations: Ancient and Modern and Theories of Civilizational Studies.

This year one goal is to encourage student participation. Interested students who wish to attend are requested to contact the Sub-committee for Young Scholar Assistance. Please write to either Dr. Michael Andregg (Conference Chair) at mmandregg@stthomas.edu, or Dr. John Grayzel, at jgrayzel@alumni.stanford.edu.

More information on this exciting venue and the upcoming meeting can be found at www.iscsc.org.
• Plans are nearing completion for a meeting to be jointly sponsored by the ISCSC, the Asian Politics and History Association and Clarewood University to be held in Ulan Bator, Mongolia, in September 2019. Other organizations are indicating their interest in participation, as well. Top officials of Mongolia and of the Mongolia Society in the United States are working to make this a very desirable session. Details are still being worked out as of press time and will soon be posted on www.iscsc.org.

• A conference entitled “From ‘Holocaust By Bullets’ To Auschwitz: Regional Dimensions Of The Final Solution” will be held from June 16 to June 19, 2019, at Uzhgorod National University, Transcarpathia, Ukraine. Keynote speakers and organizers include prominent experts on the Holocaust in this region, along the border of Poland, Slovakia, Ukraine, Hungary, Romania – much of which lies within the old Austro-Hungarian crown lands of Galicia. For more information, please go to the following URL: www.frombulletstoauschwitz.com

Finally, the journal wishes to solicit expressions of interest from members of the International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations who desire to join our Editorial Board as Copy Editors, Peer Reviewers, or in other positions. Please contact either Peter Hecht, Managing Editor, at peter.hecht@iscsc.org or myself, at joseph.drew@iscsc.org. Thank you.

Here’s wishing a happy 2019 to all readers.

Joseph Drew
Editor-in-Chief
Polynesian Civilization and the Future Colonization of Space

John Grayzel

Abstract

Polynesian civilization was configured — prior to Western colonization — in ways similar to that sometimes described as necessary for humanity's interstellar migration into space. Over thousands of years and miles, across open ocean, a core population expanded to settle on hundreds of scattered islands, while maintaining shared identity, continued awareness and repetitive contact with each other. Key to their expansion was their development of robust ocean-going vessels and their extraordinary abilities to navigate across vast expanses of open water. The first half of the 1800s saw a surge in contacts between Polynesia and western missionaries and whalers, followed by significant depopulation due to disease and, after 1850, the imposition of Western political control. The result was a dramatic disruption of many elements of Polynesian life. At the same time, the propensity of many outsiders was to characterize Polynesia as uncivilized or as an “arrested” civilization. However, in the 1970s, there began a pan-Polynesian revitalization, including, and exhilarated by, the resurrection of traditional blue ocean navigation. This paper explores this role of navigation as a major institutional repository of Polynesian civilization writ large, as well as the analytic importance of differentiating between “culture” and “civilization”, and the possibility that Polynesian civilization is beginning a “gregarious flowering” in preparation for its participation in the coming dispersal of humanity into interstellar space.

1 Gregarious flowering means that all plants of a particular species flower at the same time, regardless of differences in geographic locations or climate conditions... (e.g.) when a certain bamboo species starts to flower gregariously, they do this all over the world for a several year period until... (either) the entire forest has died (or)...only the bamboo stems die, while rhizomes become activated again to start the natural regeneration of the species.” Schröder, Stéphane. Bamboo Flowering Habits. December 18, 2011. https://www.guaduabamboo.com/identification/bamboo-flowering-habits. Accessed 01/15/2019.
Introduction

It was by responding boldly and successfully to this challenge of the estranging sea — by achieving, with their rudimentary means of navigation, the tour de force of establishing a regular maritime traffic across the open waters between island and island — that the Polynesian pioneers won their footing on the specks of dry land, which are scattered through the vast watery wilderness of the Pacific Ocean almost as rarely as the stars are scattered through the depths of Space.² Arnold Toynbee

On Raraka, we so discovered a party of natives… partially dressed, some in shirts… others with vests… Others again with trowsers of all colors… Among the inhabitants was a native missionary… This was the first island on which we observed the dawning of Christianity and civilization. Lt. Charles Wilkes, U.S. Exploring Expedition, 1838³

Generally, when Europeans or Americans think about civilization they think in terms of large cities, large-land masses, large populations, and grand monuments as the context in which one has “a civilization.” When people think of Pacific islands they often think of hula skirts, palm trees and pristine sunny beaches; places where “people can take a vacation to escape from civilization.” To a large extent, this reflects the mentality of the “large-land mass scholars” who have championed the word “civilization”. To many of them and others, oceans are bodies of water that create barriers of separation between societies, nations and civilizations. In contrast, for the people of the Pacific, themselves, the ocean and its waves and currents are the weft and the warp upon which their civilization has been woven.

Arnold Toynbee saw Polynesia as an “arrested” civilization. He believed that the high accomplishments and specializations of “arrested” civilization in adapting to the unique challenges of their environment also limited their abilities to substantially change.

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³ In 1838, six U.S. Navy vessels set out on a great voyage of exploration. Aboard were several hundred seamen and scientists under the command of Lt. Charles Wilkes. Authorized by Congress, the U.S. Exploring Expedition (also known as the "U.S. Ex. Ex.", or the Wilkes Expedition) would explore and map the Pacific, Antarctica, and the northwest coast of the United States. Wilkes, Charles. 1849. Voyage Round the World. George W. Gordon. Philadelphia.
A high technique has been developed by everyone of the arrested civilizations. The Polynesians have excelled as navigators, the Eskimos as fishermen, the Spartans as soldiers, the nomads as tamers of horses, the 'Osmalis as tamers of men. These are all cases in which civilizations have remained static while technique has improved. They are like climbers who have been brought up short and can go neither backward or forward.  

My own initial orientation to Polynesia occurred when I was responsible for closing out a series of environmental projects across the Pacific region for the US Agency for International Development (USAID). The deciding U.S. government authorities had concluded that their limited resources would be better used if concentrated among more "substantial" entities and programs, rather than scattering them across a host of (what they perceived as) “separate micro-entities.” The only dissent came from U.S. naval parties who shook their heads at their associates' inability to comprehend the full expanse of the area, known as the Polynesian Triangle, or its strategic importance. The region spans over 10 million square miles — about the size of Canada, the USA and Brazil combined, with some 1,000 scattered islands, whose total land mass only approximates the size of Massachusetts (using the equivalent of 1,000 square miles of water to one square mile of land).

This bias, which equates “big” and “territory” with “mass” and “land”, has multiple negative consequences in terms of hobbling the scholarly study and analysis of civilization; limiting our understanding of contemporary world dynamics and, in extremis, hindering adequate identification of the challenges, and possible responses, to the future expansion of human civilization across "outer space" to remote extraterrestrial masses.

This last insight, which may strike some as farfetched, was first given to me years ago by Dr. Lyn Poyer, an anthropologist and South Pacific expert, who, as a Peace Corps volunteer, lived on a Pacific island so small that, she said, as I remember, when someone hit a home run it inevitably went into the ocean. It was her experiencing the ability of a small concentrated population of people to maintain a thriving peaceful society on a sliver of relatively isolated land that gave rise to her speculation that Polynesia was possibly the living culture most adapted for sustained functioning during an extension of human civilization through space colonization.

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6 I use the expression here to mean as, in the literal Latin, "in the farthest reaches", rather than the more common translation: “at the point of death.”

7 (That is, the relatively empty regions of the universe outside the atmospheres of celestial bodies.)

Since then, I have come to believe, as this paper will seek to demonstrate, that being "arrested" is not necessarily a death warrant, or permanent state, for either people or a civilization. As regards Polynesia, in the 1970s, a variety of efforts began to emerge for the revitalization of Polynesian culture and the revival of a Pan-Polynesian identity. This paper seeks to make the case that this has been possible only because Polynesia is a living "civilization", not just a culture - and thus possesses institutions capable of purposely promoting replication of its foundational ways of thinking and acting. Of these "navigation" is pivotal, playing a much greater role than that of a "technique," as labelled by Toynbee. As such, understandably, the creation and now expanding activities of the Polynesian Voyaging Society (PVS) has played a predominant role in this phenomenon. Moreover, since traditional Polynesian navigation was very much about the capacity for discovering, voyaging to, and settling far away areas, it is suggested that Polynesian civilization may well be moving into a new role as a significant influence on humanity's eventual efforts to colonize outer space.

### Aiming for the Stars

Of course, the challenges of adapting human civilization to space will be many. They will involve prolonged voyages towards uncertain destinations; the establishment of encapsulated communities separated over immense distances; long-term inter-communal isolation; small populations crowded into very limited areas; requisite self-sufficiency and self-administration; and the need for continuous collaboration and toleration between the assorted participants. The challenges will not only be technical and logistic but social and psychological. At the same time as establishing their different settlement units, space settlements will need to maintain a common identity and a sense of shared destiny — what might be called a “unity of conscience” — possibly through periodic communications and occasional visits.

Unfortunately, many of the requisite social and psychological profiles seem to conflict with many of the characteristics of the populations and cultures of present-day “big civilizations,” such as China, the United States, Europe, India or Latin America. In contrast, many of the necessary configurations are embedded in the psyche and social orientation traditionally encouraged within many Polynesian cultures. This should not be surprising since traditional Polynesian civilization was formed by challenges and responses similar to those described as facing the coming space age, wherein, over thousands of years, a core population expanded, over thousands of miles of open ocean, to settle on hundreds of dispersed islands, while maintaining a shared identity and repetitive contact with each other.
Civilization as a Key to Expansive Human Social Evolution

Debating whether a particular society, or specific conglomeration of peoples and cultures, is, or isn't, a “civilization” might be considered little more than academic dalliance when the distinction is without significant real-world consequences. Therefore, it is important to emphasize that recognizing Polynesia as a full and dynamic “civilization” is critical to understanding the mechanisms and sustainability of the phenomenon of the Polynesian migration; and why its example can be a formative factor for humanity’s next coming extraterrestrial civilization.

For the purposes of this paper, it is critical to make a clear distinction between “culture” and “civilization”. By “culture” is meant those shared behaviors and understandings which are fashioned, expressed and integrated into the lives of a self-identifying group of people, and which they transmit from person-to-person and generation to generation. A corollary is that cultures, as defined, die with their last practitioner. They may leave behind artifacts and images and remembrances, but they no longer exist outside the dynamic lives of their members, through and in which they are created and carried.

In contrast, “civilizations” arise as societies become increasingly complex, diverse and extensive, till it is no longer possible for individuals, by themselves, to incorporate, carry and transmit the formulations of their systematized shared constructs (such as law, religion, and science). Rather the formulations become embedded in codified rules, structures and practices that reflect, retain, transmit and reproduce them, independent of their originating individuals or groups. In this sense, a civilization can outlive its original practitioners. Thus, though the Romans are long gone, Roman law remains not only knowable but still in play across Western civilization, in both church and secular legal institutions, and in geographic areas far removed from what was the territory of the Roman Empire.

Geographic Setting

The islands of the Pacific are generally divided into three main groups — Polynesia (“many islands”), Melanesia (“black islands”), and Micronesia (“small islands”). Each of these have different histories, cultures and populations, though on the fringes there has been cultural overlapping and mixings. The focus of this article is only on Polynesia, the largest division. It is made up of a large triangle of islands in the central and southeastern Pacific. These islands include American Samoa/Samoa; the Cook Islands; Easter Island; French Polynesia (including the Marquesas Islands, and the Society Islands and Tahiti); Kiribati; Midway; New Zealand; Niue; Pitcairn Island; the Hawaiian Islands; Tokelau; Tonga; Tuvalu; and the Wallis and Futuna Islands.
The Polynesian Migration

The precise dates, directions and origins of the Polynesian migration remains a matter of debate. However, broad approximations suffice for the purposes of this paper. Accordingly, we can identify the first great entrance of humanity into the Pacific area, towards what is today's Australia, and New Guinea, as occurring somewhere between 45,000 and 60,000 years ago. This first wave was by populations out of Africa, who, quite likely, took advantage of overland bridges and shallow waters then present between various land masses. By the time of the much later Polynesian migration, such connections no longer existed. Rather, the Polynesian migration depended on robust sailing vessels and sophisticated capacities in sailing technology, as well as, in many cases, pre-existing knowledge as to the location of the likely destination.

It appears that there were two major migrations, by a population originally coming out of East Asia and the area around Taiwan. One from around 1300 BC to 900 BC reached Fiji, Tonga, and Samoa. The other, from around 300 AD to 1300 AD, reached Hawai’i and Easter Island (400 AD-500 AD) and New Zealand (1200 AD-1300 AD). Together, this represented exploration of over 16 million square miles of ocean and the eventual settlement of almost all the inhabitable islands situated therein.

Figure 1: Polynesian Triangle Map
But Are They Really a Civilization?

Both “culture” and “civilization” are concepts that have wide, diverse and highly malleable definitions, which are often used as supports to a larger issue or an encompassing understanding being advocated. As already noted, as regards this analysis, there is a need to distinguish between group ...behaviors ...that are fashioned and transmitted by people themselves, over generations, (e.g. "culture") and more complex "systems of behavioral and relationship patterns" that... function across an entire society....and order and structure the behavior of individuals by means of their normative character. (e.g., “civilization”)

For our immediate purposes, a simple sufficing definition of culture, is that by Ralph Linton:

The culture of the society is the way of life of its members; the collection of ideas and habits which they learn, share and transmit from generation to generation.

---


In contrast, “civilization” refers to a higher level of complexity and diversity than “culture”. An empirical definition/description, expressed by Laina Farhat-Holzman, is:

A civilization must have a concentration of people in one or more urban areas. It must have (at a minimum) division of labor and specialization (people supported by the community to perform professional specialties), and it must have a surplus of food (wealth) to be used in support of such specializations (army, priesthood, etc.).

Andrew Bosworth provides a more functional-operational definition:

Civilization is fundamentally a cultural infrastructure of information and knowledge that serves survival and continuity. What distinguishes a civilization from a culture is that this infrastructure, having reached a critical level of complexity, becomes autonomous from constituent cities, nations, and empires. In ordinary cultures, the passing of information and knowledge may depend upon imitation or oral communication; in civilizations, this cultural memory...takes on a life of its own....supported, protected and replicated by institutions which purposely promote acceptance and replication of its recognized ways of thinking and doing.

The institutions of a civilization, and their array and their roles, is a vast subject.

Language, money, law, systems of weights and measures, table manners, and firms (and other organizations) are ... all institutions.” (Hodgson, 2006. p.2)

Such institutions craft the actions, thoughts, understandings, and social personalities of those affected by them, in ways reflective of the patterns of the civilization in question.

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13 Ibid. p 87.
Examples of other key "institutions" of civilizations that serve to keep those civilizations in some play today are Roman Law, key scriptures (such as the Old and New Testaments, the Koran, etc.), the Hindu caste system, Confucianism, Greek logic, the Western Corporation, Korean Chaebols, Japanese Zaibatsu, African performance arts for African civilization, the civil bureaucracy for China, the university system, etc.\(^\text{17}\)

Many civilizations grow through expanding outwardly, and by incorporating additional populations, often through military conquest. Over their amalgamation of new populations, they throw a public “cloak” of behaviors, ideologies, practices, values, customs, aesthetics, social roles and institutions. To those under this cover, they ascribe membership in the larger “civilization.” However, there usually remains very substantial cultural divergences that differentiate the hegemonic elites and the various sub-cultures, clients and subservient members within that civilization.

The diverse Polynesian societies situated on different islands did reflect cultural differentiations, but the single greatest determinant of the differences seems to have been the nature of the Pacific island(s) each concerned group had settled. Across Polynesia, there are large and small, flat and mountainous, coral reef and volcanic islands. Each configuration presented their original settlers with a specific reality as to the type and extent of resources available, constraints on production, and overall population carrying-size. Pre-contact estimates range from small island populations of a few hundred people to, at least, 250,000 on Hawaii’s major islands.

Within their particular circumstantial parameters, each group crafted its own adaptive responses. At the same time, groups under like circumstances reproduced much the same basic configurations. These included, when feasible, irrigated agriculture, temple mounds, concentrated and fortified settlements, stratified classes and highly differentiated and specialized social, productive, craft and religious roles. Despite significant differences, even as they adapted to their different specific circumstances, most of the Polynesian island societies also retained the general ability to set off for — and readapt to — other island circumstances, as necessary.

\(^\text{17}\) It might be mistakenly understood that "institutions", as described, are entirely independent of people. In fact, people make institutions work. The difference is between individuals and their collective institutional groups. Thus, culture relies on the priest; civilization relies on the priesthood.
But Are They Really One?

In the case of Polynesian civilization, we find a somewhat different situation. Thus, one of the many things that amazed Capt. James Cook, who made three voyages “of discovery” around the Polynesian triangle between 1768 and 1779, was the commonalities of language, crops, navigation, cosmology and religion found in the various islands visited. For example, the original settlers of Hawaii and New Zealand came from Tahiti and the larger Society Island area. Both Hawaii and New Zealand are over 2600 miles away from this area, one north of it, the other to its south-west.

On his first voyage, Cook, upon the urging of his naturalist Joseph Banks, took upon his boat a Polynesian named Tupaia, who was both a navigator and a priest from the island of Raiatea, approximately 135 miles West of Tahiti.

While for many centuries there had been voyages between the homeland and these new settlements, for unknown reasons, approximately 400 years before Cook's arrival, such occasional exchanges ceased. Yet, Tupaia was still able to draw maps and explain how to navigate to both.18

Thereafter, Tupaia accompanied Cook to New Zealand where, despite the more than four centuries of separation, he could still converse with its inhabitants, discuss historical events, and assert his high social rank as a priest.¹⁹

Unlike so many other civilizations, Polynesians did not expand through conquest but diffused from a shared cultural core area across an open uninhabited area. Rather than having to incorporate (or destroy) others encountered on their way, their challenge was to maintain, in the face of repeated distance separations and necessary local adaptations, the connectivities, continuity and coherence of their larger common body of people and their shared capacities for future diffusion and resettlement. Among the populations of specific clusters, sub-cultural differences could be keep harmonized through regular human interactions. But across the large expanse of the entire triangle of Polynesian civilizations, only durable institutions — the institutions of their civilization independent of particular individuals and sub-groups — could fulfill this need.

The Institutions of Polynesian Civilization

Traditionally, Polynesia civilization had a set of widely shared psycho-social values, beliefs and practices that were defined and exercised around a set of core concepts: i.e. *tapu* (taboos/prohibitions), *mana* (power) *noa* (blessing, freedom, the opposite of *tapu*), *mauri* (the life principle that binds all things) and which was protected by *tika* (truth, correctness, directness, justice, fairness, righteousness), *pono* (honesty, genuineness, sincerity) and *aroha* (affection, sympathy, charity, compassion, love, empathy).

That for so long, outsiders failed to see, let alone fully appreciate, the accoutrements and accomplishments of Polynesian civilizations can largely be attributed to two factors. First is the already noted ethnocentrism of massive land-based civilizations which have viewed Polynesia as composed of independent micro-cultures separated by vast expanses of ocean rather than as an ocean civilization with scattered centers and outposts. The second is the challenges of understanding, let alone accurately translating, the concepts and perspectives of an ocean, rather than land-based, people.

appearance of a map, is in fact a mosaic of sailing directions or plotting diagrams drawn on paper, similar to those made by master navigators tracing lines in the sand or arranging pebbles on a mat to instruct their pupils. p.321... (It) is not a map, nor a representation of Cartesian space, but a mosaic of subject-centered sailing directions or bearings to distant islands.” p.324.

Such dissonance has long affected many western interpretations of Polynesia. For example, for Bosworth, the most foundational institution of a "civilization" is “writing”.\textsuperscript{20} Polynesia is generally not seen as having a “writing” system.\textsuperscript{21} Yet tattooing, which westerners generally view as a decorative practice, was traditionally a highly developed symbolic accounting of an array of information, from social status and genealogy to life experiences and spiritual protections - all written, in very systematic fashion, upon the skin. It turned its bearer into what might be seen as a living human document and was considered an indispensable element of Polynesia life and society.\textsuperscript{22}

![Figure 7: Polynesian Images](image)

**Navigation: A Defining Institution of Polynesian Civilization**

For this paper, no misunderstanding is in greater need of clarification than that pertaining to the nature, roles and function of “navigation” as a key institution of Polynesian civilization. For while the actual accomplishments of Polynesians as seafarers have been widely acknowledged, till recently, the characterization has generally been that of a technologically rudimentary people. For example:


\textsuperscript{21} Missionaries often did develop new alphabets for the local dialects/language. In Hawaii this was done as early as 1820 and by the second half of the 19th century literacy among native Hawaiians was higher than on mainland USA. Kirch, Patrick. 2012. *A Shark Going In Is My Chief: The Island Civilization of Ancient Hawaii*. University Of California Press p. 21.

In 1956, New Zealand historian Andrew Sharp claimed that the Polynesians could not have intentionally set out to explore and settle their island realm because their canoes were too flimsy and unseaworthy, their wayfinding methods too imprecise, and their seamanship skills too lacking for the task of sailing east against the easterly Pacific trade winds, from Indonesia and Melanesia to the Polynesian archipelagos. Sharp believed that the islands had been settled by accident—by the crews of canoes that had been blown off course during storms or that had simply gone off course due to navigational incompetence or to cloudy weather hiding their navigational stars. He believed that the stories of long-distance, open-ocean voyaging found in the traditions of the Pacific islands were pure fantasy.

In fact, nothing could be further from reality than Sharp's claims!

Sharp, and many others, have been wrong not only in terms of underestimating the technical sophistication of Polynesian ocean navigation, but also in being oblivious to its critical role in expanding, maintaining, sustaining and periodically refreshing Polynesian civilization itself. It does this by playing not only a pivotal role as a material conveyor of people and goods but also as a social, psychological, spiritual and informational galvanizer and guide. Ironically, the very institution (e.g. writing) Bosworth feels is so vital to civilization, has also been cited by others as a significant determinant of Europe's false denigration of Polynesian, and other, civilizations.

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In the early 19th century, sophisticated Europeans had only arrived at a more complicated way of doing what the Polynesians, Micronesian, the Arabs and the Vikings had long since achieved…. The key to this paradox lies in the fact that a literate society faces the particular difficulty that it must be able to set down on paper, in this case maps, charts and almanacs, what not-literate people might easily read in the sky and carry in their heads. In the end it comes to imagine that the job can be done in no other way.24

Rather than Polynesian navigation being, as portrayed in the past by many Westerners, the expert application of rudimentary skills and technology, it is, in fact, a complex system of interdependent skills, understandings and knowledge, closely linked to those of sea craft design and construction. A common translation for Polynesian navigation is “wayfinding”; with the navigator being a “wayfinder”. For both wayfinding and traditional canoe building, there were established schools taught by recognized master practitioners. Instruction covered a wide array of topics and practices and could continue for ten to twenty years before a student became an initiated master.

Empirically, a Polynesian navigator had to memorize precise information across an array of natural phenomena: star positions, wind patterns, currents, the habits of specific fish and birds, cloud formations, and Te Lapa (“The Flashing” - a water-bound light phenomenon that appears to emanate from land and is, apparently still unknown to Western scientists).25 Of particular importance was knowing how to read and follow swells, (waves that propagate along the interface between water and air and which can travel thousands of miles).26

Figure 9: Polynesian Stick Chart

Until chaos theory we (the West) had no way to exam turbulent systems like the ocean. Science just assumed sea waves were random...Today the surface of the ocean turns out to be highly modulated... For example, a swell bending around an Island casts a turbulent shadow downward of the Island with a pattern that reveals the island's location... Swells ... shouldn't be confused with surface waves... Swells march in consistent ranks across thousands of miles... If you can read the shape of the swell, you can tell the direction and strength of the current.\textsuperscript{27}

Technically, traditional Polynesian navigation depended on a constellation of capacities adequate for someone, such as Tupaia, to guide a voyage neither he, nor anyone else, had made for several hundred years. Aligned with this was the expertise of canoe building masters in constructing sea craft capable of travelling over those thousands of miles, filled with people and provisions. Polynesians used a "star compass" to guide them to specific destinations as well as maps (made of sticks) to indicate the patterns of swells and the location of islands over the area to be sailed.

Before sailing, they would memorize the pattern which led to their intended precise destination. They could feel and taste changing differences in ocean waters. They used their own bodies as instruments. For example, in what is called testicular navigation, "the wayfarer reads the swell by sitting cross-legged and nearly naked on the bottom of his all vegetable matter canoe and feeling it in his testicles".\textsuperscript{28}

Socially, large canoe construction required organizing the efforts of hundreds of people.\textsuperscript{29} Most boats, of course, were smaller, and most navigation was over short distances. During select periods of time, island groups would make visiting voyages to each other. Such voyages might serve as opportunities for the exchange of goods and crops but were generally more social than economic. Young people sometimes went on “touring” voyages to perform for each other. Of course, not all was peaceful, and voyages for war, often over status or land, were common.

\textsuperscript{27} Witt, Harriet. 1991. The Soft, Warm, Wet Technology of Native Oceana. Whole Earth Review, Fall Point Foundation San Francisco. p 3. (Some of the swells which surfers ride in Hawaii apparently originate from around New Zealand.)

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid p. 1.

In terms of interpersonal behavior, Levy discusses the challenges and abilities of the Polynesians to maintain peaceful communities amongst tight concentrations of people on a small land-mass. He describes their ability throughout the day to navigate themselves around each other and problematic conditions, so as to avoid behavioral confrontations and emotional collisions. He sees this as engendered in childhood, citing that the usual term (in Tahitian) for actively dealing with children is fa'atere, literally “to steer.”

Levy notes that:

at an early age the child must learn to coordinate and maneuver himself in relatively unprotected environments...proper performance consists of scanning for and avoiding errors...(and) to be sensitive to the mobile, context-determined situation of his community.

Psychologically, especially for a long voyage, the skills to use techniques on an expert level had to be matched with accommodating personalities of both crew and passengers. Crew and passengers had to live in tightly cramped quarters and, if settlers, quickly establish functioning communities and production units upon arrival. Navigators had to maintain a honed focus over long hours.

In terms of personality, John Robison, an autism specialist and scholar of neurodiversity, has suggested that the very capacity to be a great Polynesian navigator was tied to the special sensitives of the Polynesian master navigators themselves. Piailug (a modern-day navigator) described how as a toddler his father would hold him in the ocean waters encouraging him to sense the feel of the different movements of the water.

Robinson notes that:

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31 Ibid. pp. 460-61.
33 Golson, Jack. Ed. 1962. *The wayfinder*, with no mathematical model between him and his environs, concentrates 100% of his intention on his place in the sea and the sky. With this one pointedness he processes all of his data on his course, speed, the current etc. His point of concentration is in his navel, called the piko in Hawaiian. This is considered the center of one's body and being, so that it - not the brain – is the point from which to live. Instructions for psychologically locating one's piko and for staying centered there have been passed down through the centuries in chants. Instructions for wayfinding explained that your piko is your canoe. p.1.
For navigators like Piailug ...exceptional sensitivity isn’t disabling. It is life-saving... it is apparent that he accurately senses things many others cannot see.... Where a typical person merely feels a wave rock the boat, he senses the angle of the rocking and realizes when it's different from the angle he felt a moment ago. From that he knows the canoe has wandered from its course. He has similar ability to sense changes in the patterns in the sky, and in the winds he feels against his face. American schools are filled with children who have similarly extreme sensory sensitivity. Almost to a one their sensitivity is described as highly disabling.  

Religiously, Polynesian spiritual beliefs and practices were an integral and indispensable part of Polynesian navigation. On a daily basis, it was the web of Polynesian rules of taboo (tapu) and free choice (noa) that structured so many aspects of their life and around which they had to navigate daily.

With the Maori there was no one special day, no Sunday, on which tapu must be particularly observed. One day was as another. It was a perpetual Sabbath; ... the Maori's religion was his daily life. Every Polynesian lived in “a rich, vibrant, ‘living’ Polynesian world where everyday encounters with things and people are heavily cosmologically textured... The ocean (was) a living thing... the sea and its inhabitants belonged to the powerful god Tangoroa ...the building of a canoe was an affair of religion... (with) extensive spatial and temporal structure of rites surrounding (it)...”

Under such circumstances as described, that fact that the taboo system has been shown to have had substantial benefits in the management of local sea and land resources reinforces the logic of having navigators undergo ritual initiation before being awarded “master” status.

Motivation

It seems simple to understand the motivation of Polynesians for regular inter-island voyaging. But why were they motivated to migrate over long distances to uninhabited and never seen locations?

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34 In the USA, a fixation on lining up objects and on geometric patterns, a key Polynesian navigation skill, is considered a common indicator of autism.


Commonly suggested reasons -- overpopulation, resource depletion, search for wealth, or fleeing from conflict – are largely built on European colonial experience and do not really seem to fit.

At most, the size of any migration apparently was in the hundreds, a number that would not seem to be significant in terms of alleviating a home island's overpopulation for any appreciable time. Given the large resources of time, materials and human labor necessary to execute a migration, its organizer(s) had to already possess riches, power, time and peace with which to assemble the effort. Nor did Polynesian migrants (unlike Europeans) bring back "foreign" wealth to their originating island. Migrants stayed where they found themselves, as independent entities. A good case can be made that the reasons were actually psychological and spiritual.

One of the many reasons why Polynesians set out on hazardous voyages to other Islands is the restless desire to visit strange places, to go sightseeing .... Firth ... describes just such an attitude with the Tikopia. Too frequently, perhaps, Western anthropologists attribute the actions of ... people to environmental or utilitarian motives. But to the Polynesians, “the undiscovered lands beyond the horizon” were a space frontier, as the solar system is today... and the simple desire to conquer this frontier may have dominated all other motives for voyaging and colonization.38

Polynesian identity was tied to the ancestors who had come from an original homeland. “Hawaiiki” was the legendary homeland of the Maori peoples and to which they believed they returned in death.

Now do I direct the bow of my canoe
To the opening whence arises the sun god, Tama-nui-te-ra,
Great son of the sun,
Let me not deviate from the course,
But sail direct to the land, the Homeland.39

Thus, Colin suggests that, from the Polynesian perspective, each great voyage was seen as a transformative experience.


In re-interpreting Polynesian voyaging it is worth considering that many traditional stories tell ‘neither of deliberate nor accidental cruising, but supernatural transport’ ....Clearly, the voyaging canoe was considered to be sacred in character and all the special conditions and rules of tapu surrounding its construction were to sanction the creation of a vehicle essentially of another place and time.\textsuperscript{40}

In 1893, Fredrick Jackson Turner presented his famous “frontier thesis” at the World's Columbian Exposition, marking the 400th Anniversary of Columbus' voyage. He wrote (except for the added Polynesian “equivalents”):

The peculiarity of American (Polynesian) institutions…furnish the forces dominating American (Polynesian) character….the frontier is the outer edge of the wave ....each frontier leaves its traces behind it, and when it becomes a settled area the region still partakes of the frontier characteristics…the universal disposition of Americans (Polynesians)....is the actual result of an expansive power which is inherent in them…It is like the steady growth of a complex nervous system....Thus wave after wave is rolling westward (eastward); the real Eldorado (Hawaiki) is still farther on….Complex society is precipitated by the wilderness into a kind of primitive organization based on the family.....no homogeneous public sentiment can be formed to legislate immediately into being the requisite institutions. .... And yet they are all needed immediately The most effective efforts...came through its educational and religious activity, … now, four centuries from the discovery of America (The Hawaii-New Zealand islands),.... the frontier has gone, and with its going has closed the first period of American (Polynesian) history.

Turner feared that the end of the frontier would spell the end of America's dynamic, innovative, democratic character. He underestimated America's ability to find new colonial, neo-colonial and global market frontiers. The Polynesians were not so fortunate.

The Great Pauses

As already noted, it appears that there were two major migrations, coming out of East Asia and the area around Taiwan. One was from around 1300 BC to 900 BC reaching Fiji, Tonga, and Samoa. The other occurred from around 300 AD to 1300 AD, eventually reaching Hawai‘i, Easter Island, and New Zealand.

Regarding the first pause, one of the plausible explanations is that given the variation in island environments, the process was somewhat cybernetic.

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid, p. 21.
Each new settlement met new challenges that required the development of, first, new solutions for maximizing its immediate success and, only thereafter, new discoveries leading to new solutions for its next eventual migration.

The island landscapes of the Pacific were gradually encompassed over time, during movements that required the development and deployment of skills sufficient to overcome unimagined conditions. ...as... colonists reached Fiji/Samoa/Tonga, they encountered islands smaller, more isolated and less environmentally diverse.41

Regarding the second pause, with the settlement of what is now present-day Hawaii and New Zealand, the possibilities for significant new discoveries were basically over. For a while exchange voyages continued, but for reasons not known, sometime after 1300 AD, the great voyages between the widely separated island groups ceased. Various explanations have been given for this pause in such longer distance voyages. These include a change in the currents and winds due to climatic cooling, deforestation (which made it more difficult to build the large vessels necessary), the development and expansion of the society on each of the islands (which turned their powerful leaders' attentions more and more to internal jockeying for power and control), and, after settlements were well established, a diminishing need for any exchanges of biological material, or marriage, political or social alliances.

When Arnold Toynbee called Polynesia an ‘arrested’ civilization, he considered it in its “last agonies.” He stated that the growth of a civilization consists in a “progressive and inward self-determination or self articulation” of the civilization;... In the growth phase the civilization successfully responds to a series of ever new challenges, while in the disintegration stage, it fails to give such a response to a given challenge. It tries to answer it again and again, but recurrently fails.” (IV 20)42

When Captain Cook arrived in Polynesia in the 1770s, Polynesian civilization was still intact and vibrant. Unfortunately, shortly thereafter, European-brought diseases began to ravage the various island populations. (From 1791 to 1863; approximately 80% of the Marquesas population died; on Rapa, 80%).43 By the 1880s, European and American social, political and religious contacts had captured much of Polynesian daily life and ended most "self-determination" and "self-articulation" by Polynesia's decimated population.

The Role of Hōkūle‘a

By 1975, no living Hawaiian knew the ancient techniques for long distance ocean navigation. Yet, at that very moment, new stirrings in Polynesia were beginning to emerge. What has happened since raises questions as to whether Toynbee’s pessimism was not misplaced and whether Polynesian civilization wasn’t always stronger than he thought, and more dormant than “arrested.”

In 1973, Ben Finney, an anthropologist at the University of Hawaii, along with artist Herb Kawainui Kane and sailor Tommy Holmes, established the Polynesian Voyaging Society (PVS). Their aim was to show that ancient Polynesians could have purposefully settled the Polynesian Triangle using non-instrument navigation. The PVS began work on a sixty foot Polynesian double-hulled voyaging canoe, based on drawings of Captain Cook. They called it Hōkūle‘a — the name of one of the major navigating stars of traditional Polynesian sailing.

Though there were no qualified living Hawaiian ocean navigators, Finney was able to recruit Mau Piailug, a Micronesian navigator from the tiny (1 mile by 1 1/2 mile, 600 population) Carolinian island of Satawal in Micronesia.44 With his help, efforts began to recover Hawaiian knowledge and techniques and adopt them for the proposed first voyage of the Hōkūle‘a.

In 1976, Captain Kawika Kapahulehua and navigator Mau Piailug sailed the Hōkūle‘a, from Hawaii to Tahiti, exclusively using Polynesian navigation techniques. Thirty-three days later they arrived in Tahiti, 600 years after the last Polynesian canoe had made such a journey.

Had I not had the occasion to be present, in 1992, when the voyaging canoe Hōkūle‘a stopped at the Cook Islands, I would never have understood the full emotional reaction of Polynesians to the event of a pan-Polynesia voyage as a manifestation of their pan-Polynesian identity.

What began in 1973 as a scientific experiment to build a replica of a traditional voyaging canoe for a one-time sail to Tahiti, had become an important catalyst for a generation of cultural renewal. By the end of the century, Hōkūle‘a would have sailed more than 100,000 miles; reaching every corner in the Polynesian Triangle, and the West Coast of the United States…

44 In fact, in the 20th century, traditional Pacific navigation skills appear to have been better preserved in select areas of Micronesia and Melanesia, perhaps because continuous sailing between neighboring islands remained longer as a characteristic activity of regular life than in the larger island societies of Polynesia. C.f. Gladwin, Thomas. 1970. East is a Big Bird: Navigation & Logic on Puluwat Atoll. Harvard University Press. Cambridge.
(Today, there are 25 deep-sea voyaging canoes with crews from 13 different Pacific countries and 10 master navigators ... training the next generation of wayfinders.)

But Are They Really Predisposed for Space?

As already noted, Toynbee considered Polynesia an “arrested civilization.” He characterized “arrested civilizations” as “climbers who have reached a certain height but now find themselves blocked; they can go neither forward nor backward.” But today Polynesians from all over the Polynesian Triangle are both reviving old, and creating new, possibilities for future expressions of Polynesian civilization. One avenue which Toynbee probably never imagined involves engagement with humanity's efforts to colonize outer space.

In fact, at the beginning of space travel, Hawaii provided sites for the geology training of Apollo astronauts and then served as the port for astronauts returning from the Moon. It now provides landscapes that mimic the surface of Mars, for training the first manned mission to that planet.

It has also provided Ellison Shoji Onizuka, from Kealakekua, Hawaii, who successfully flew into space with the Space Shuttle Discovery (and later sadly died in the destruction of the Space Shuttle Challenger.) The Mānoa Hawaii's Space Flight Laboratory (HSFL) at the University of Hawaii is a multi-disciplinary research and education center dedicated to meeting the challenges to space exploration.

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Meanwhile, an independent citizen group, known as “The Lawful Hawaiian Government”, which seeks to restore the authority of the old Hawaiian Kingdom, has designated a field of lava on Hawaii’s Big Island as its official UFO Landing Pad and Star Visitor Sanctuary.

![Figure 14: Star Visitor’s Landing Area](image)

However, the possible relevance of Polynesian civilization to future space activities is more than an associative relationship with present-day efforts for space exploration located in Hawaii. As already recognized by NASA, “the long-term success of the interstellar migration will depend on human motivation and the provision for human creativity, discovery, inventiveness and serendipity.”

Through the direct participation of Finney and others, the Polynesian experience has already been introduced into NASA’s thinking on the nature of interstellar migration. The present prevailing practices for space exploration favor independent specific objective voyages, conducted and directed by authorities on earth. However, the Polynesian experience demonstrates the viability of an alternative process, one implemented as a serial unfolding of explorations, occurring in a step by step fashion.

Under such a scenario, each new step would be generated after the consolidation of the efforts and learnings of the most recent past migration group. New exploration would then directly emanate from that last group, rather than exclusively from independent missions directed from the originating home base.

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For the Polynesians, such a process occurred over thousands of years, with substantial periods of pause — thereby permitting full adaptation by the most recent migration group to its new circumstances, including the local development of new technologies and capacities necessary for the next stage.

What the Polynesian migration experience very importantly demonstrated was that, even though the process was not centrally controlled or driven, a unity of conscience and a core retention of shared institutions was maintainable through the dynamic of interim reciprocal voyaging visits; mostly between settlements within relative proximity, but supplemented by occasional grand voyages back to their centers of origin. Since the challenges will be social and psychological, as well as technical and logistical, and since the requisite social and psychological profiles seem far different from that of the populations of the “big” civilizations of our time, and since the necessary configurations are reflective of Polynesian civilization, it is suggested that it is around such experience of Polynesian civilization that the future Argonauts of outer space may well be formed.

Lastly, the Polynesian experience challenges any assumptions that humanity's expansion to outer space should be entirely “scientifically” motivated and devoid of any purposely spiritual component.

In fact, “(the) idea of seeing space exploration as a religion has a long history, dating back to the Russians of the early twentieth century, many of whom self-identified as "Cosmists." James C. Fletcher, a Mormon who headed NASA (1971-1977 and 1986-1989) was openly motivated by “...the ideas expressed in the Mormon temple...(that) humans were not the only intelligent beings in the universe...(and he) was interested in the probability of finding other civilizations in space and commented on it repeatedly.”

When Fletcher combined his faith with science, as well as Frederick Jackson Turner’s frontier thesis, he sounded like Toynbee, proclaiming that:

Like Darwin, we have set sail upon an ocean: the cosmic sea of the Universe. There can be no turning back. To do so could well prove to be a guarantee of extinction. When a nation, or a race or a planet turns its back on the future, to concentrate on the present, it cannot see what lies ahead. It can neither plan nor prepare for the future, and thus discards the vital opportunity for determining its evolutionary heritage and perhaps its survival.49

Conclusion

As humanity moves into outer space, the very understandings and definition of civilization will have to undergo major rethinking. Already concepts such as "cosmic civilization" and "astrosociology" are finding their way into the thinking of NASA. But the requisite rethinking may well be not only of the next civilization to come but also of civilizations that are now, and those that have already been.

Arnold Toynbee said “the next problem of study is why and how, out of twenty-six civilizations, four (Far Western Christian, Far Eastern Christian, Scandinavian, and Syriac) miscarried and turned to be abortive; five (Polynesian, Eskimo, Nomadic, Spartan, and Ottoman) were arrested in a growth at an early stage; while the remaining civilizations grew through an élan that carried them from challenge response to further challenge and from differentiation through integration to differentiation again?” (III, 128)

Consideration of Polynesian civilization, and its ongoing transformation through revitalized navigation, raises questions not only as to its proper classification in the typology of civilizations, but, also as concerns our understanding of the life cycles of civilizations themselves. Rethinking opens up the possibility that what Toynbee thought of as an “arrested” civilization may actually be a civilization in the process of metamorphosis. One that may even be, with élan, already beginning to unfold its wings in preparation for humanity's future migration into the new frontier of outer space and the emergence of interstellar civilization.
Image References

Though there are thousands of pictures and drawings available related to Polynesia, with a few exceptions they can be reduced to a handful of original sources and perspectives. With disease decimating Polynesia's inhabitants during early contact, followed by missionary teachings and Christianity that rapidly displaced many traditional religious and cultural norms, the little visual evidence of classical Polynesian life is heavily dependent on the drawings of members of early expeditions.

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Fig 1. Polynesian Triangle Map.  
https://polyhubonline.files.wordpress.com/2014/08/126157-004-e1cbe88f.jpg

Fig 2. Polynesian Migration Map. 


Fig 5. L to R. Above & Below.  
A) Oahu statue. https://www.hawaiiecotourism.org/members/and-you-creations/  


Fig 7. L to R. Above & Below.  
A) Hawaiian Ad 1940. https://thesocietypages.org/socimages/2013/03/27/the-dancing-hawaiian-girl-at-your-service/  
B) Traditional Hawaiian Chief. 1819 Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley
C) A New Zealand warrior from A Journal of a Voyage to the South Seas in his Majesty's Ship, the Endeavor. Sydney Parkinson. Circa 1768.
D) Tonga Tattoo Women. Krutak #HawaiianTattoos


Fig 8. L to R. Above & Below.
C) Hōkūleʻa. https://alchetron.com/Hokulea

Fig 9. Polynesian Stick Chart.
http://www.ourpacificocean.com/micronesian_stick_chart/index.htm


Fig 11. Wa’a Kaulua Double Canoe: 1975 First Voyage. 1976/ben_finney.html


Fig 13. Hawaiian Space Dome.

Fig 14. Star Visitor’s Landing Area.
https://www.exopolitics.org/page/30/?search=predictions
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In and Out of Place: Civilizational Interaction and the Making of Australia in Oceania and Asia

Jeremy C. A. Smith

Abstract

The making of Euro-Australia occurred against the backdrop of two dimensions of its historical constitution. First, it occurred on the back of Britain’s entry into the Oceanian world and its intercivilizational encounters with Pacific cultures. The second dimension was the appropriation of the land of a complex and internally diverse Aboriginal civilization and suppression of its social world view. This was vital to a lasting sense of ambivalence in Australian identity and in the relations of the Commonwealth of Australia with island states in the Pacific. After Federation (1901), Australia became more independent in the context of devolution of the Commonwealth. Engagement in the Pacific War heralded a turn from allegiance to Britain to alliance with the United States. A new orientation to the Asia-Pacific was not a chosen course, but one compelled by geo-political conditions and a growing dynamism in this multi-civilizational world region. From the 1970s to the end of the twentieth century, engagement in Asia accelerated with the onset of a policy regime of multiculturalism and a process of neo-liberal modernization.

This essay argues that Euro-Australia emerged out of complex intercivilizational interactions entailing colonialism, diverse migratory and cultural flows, and the creation of a homogenizing collective memory. I contend that Australian modernity, due in part to its suppression of its indigenous civilization and accompanying denial of that suppression, has borne considerable cultural and political ambivalence about its place in the region — an ambivalence which structures its economic and political relations with neighbouring countries. In this essay, I focus on Pacific relations. I compare developments and turns in Australian foreign policy with patterns of cultural engagement since the 1970s. Towards the end, I raise the Australian regime of refugee detention in relation to climate refugees. The essay concludes with notes on the merits of civilizational analysis in understanding the Oceanian constellation and its potential futures and points for further research on Australia in a multi-civilizational context.

Introduction

This essay addresses two lacunae in civilizational analysis. First, it makes a small attempt to repair the neglect of the Pacific in civilizational analysis. Second, it turns to the making of Euro-Australia as a general feature of the interaction of civilization and, more precisely, as a middle power in relation to the Pacific civilizational world.
My specific argument is that, due to the character of its colonial conquest of Aboriginal civilization, Australian modernity has borne considerable cultural and political ambivalence about its place in the region — an ambivalence which structures its economic and political relations with neighbouring countries. I prosecute this argument in three parts.

First, I briefly sketch my concept of intercivilizational engagement as a reconstruction of Benjamin Nelson’s and Johann Árnason’s theories of intercivilizational encounters. Second, I present the case for considering the Pacific as a civilization in its own right (Árnason 2003, Nelson and Huff 1981, Árnason, Eisenstadt, and Wittrock 2005, Árnason and Hann 2018, Árnason 1997). This sets up a discussion of the legacies of intercivilizational interaction that influenced the formation of Euro-Australia.

In a third part, I argue that Australian culture exhibits an ambivalence towards the Pacific region and issues from the conditions of its formation and the ongoing political and commercial vision of the Pacific as a ‘deficient’ region in need of neoliberal reconstruction. The theoretical re-orientation is crucial to understanding the basis for the ambivalent relationship with the Pacific that Australia has. I conclude with notes on the merits of civilizational analysis in pursuing further research on the Australian relationship with a multi-civilizational Asia-Pacific.

The theoretical component on intercivilizational interaction comes in an abbreviated form. Elsewhere, I elaborate the argument for the utility of the concept of intercivilizational engagement (Smith 2017). In this essay, I condense a great deal of material from the book into a short passage. My variation of the notion of intercivilizational encounters draws on a number of sources of critical inspiration: S. N. Eisenstadt, Nelson, Árnason, and Fernand Braudel (Braudel 1994, Eisenstadt 2003, Nelson and Huff 1981, Árnason 2003, Ben Rafael, Sternberg, and Eisenstadt 2005). Cornelius Castoriadis is not a known civilizationalist, but his ontology of the imaginary institution of society resonates clearly with the objectives of civilizational analysis, as Árnason so capably argues (Castoriadis 1987). Readers of Comparative Civilizations Review will be familiar with Nelson.

In this passage, I generalize Árnason’s elucidation of intercivilizational encounters. Taking Nelson and others fully into account, Árnason argues that ‘mutually formative relations between civilizational complexes’ constitute civilizations (Árnason 2003, p.287). Árnason follows Nelson, while also revising his earlier formulations. For Árnason, the crucial question is what makes specific civilizations more open to confrontation with other sociocultural constellations? Encounters that take place in multi-civilizational zones and have an impact are especially important. Árnason also brings in economic and political factors to supplement cultural ones.
Following Nelson and Árnason, but also going beyond them, I emphasize deeper connections between different constellations. Globalisation analysis might stress connections between nations and blocs in the post-war world of the twentieth century. However, globalization analysis rarely highlights the longer histories of interregional connectivity. For this reason alone, civilizational analysis is more appealing. The transactions between civilizations are, overall, deeper than many of the major accounts than globalization analysis has suggested.

With Árnason, I contend that civilizations become meaningful at points of intersection. Historical patterns of connection and obstruction produce a remarkable diversity of linkages. Seen from this point of view, it is possible to define my main concept. Intercivilizational engagement is the regularisation of contact and encounter.

To quote from my more extensive elaboration of the concept:

(Intercivilizational engagement) has a heavier gravity in the structures of daily existence. Regularised contacts and connections over long historical periods are of a different order to encounters. Where encounters are treated analytically as episodic and time-bound forms of interaction, inter-civilizational engagement can be applied as a problematic of the connectedness of world regions, societies and cultures over a longer duration. Of course, there are differing degrees of inter-civilizational engagement just as encounters differ widely in the significance that the literature attributes to them. Be that as it may, there are precious few societies and civilisations that have been isolated from inter-cultural contact altogether or that have completely closed and fixed symbolic borders for lasting periods of time. (Smith 2017, p.81)

My methodology takes the reader into examples and case studies of intercivilizational engagement across four dimensions of collective life: migration, deep engagement in economic relations, cultural exchange, and transformative borrowing of models of polity.

I distinguish this from encounters in the following way. Theorists of encounters rightly emphasize mutually formative engagement as ground-breaking. In their eyes, intercivilizational encounters have wider and lasting ramifications. The accent falls on the intensity of periods of what I call deep intercivilizational engagement. However, the regularised contacts and connections over long historical periods are of a different order to encounters, especially across the four dimensions. I operationalize the concept in case studies of Latin America, Japan, and the Pacific.

In considering the Pacific, some comments on the civilizational background of connectivity are called for. I begin by noting that the Pacific figures all too rarely in discussions of civilization and intercivilizational encounters.
The field can amend that situation. Archaeologists, anthropologists, and historians have developed a scholarship of engagement, which magnifies the civilizational character of the Pacific world (Matsuda 2012, Scarr 1990, Shilliam 2015).

Moreover, indigenous movements, artists, and political and community leaders have given voice to the longer and distinct precolonial history of engagement. They are leaders in the recovery and reconstruction of identity and a form of cultural and historical memory that demarcates islands of the Pacific as a distinct imaginary and civilizational constellation.

Intercivilizational engagement took the form of: (a) three great waves of migration, the first beginning as far back as 40000 years BP; (b) reciprocal inter-island exchange; (c) a rich and complex cosmology comprised on multiple traditions of legend, adding up to a common fund of myths of creation, movement and settlement; and, (d) transfer of models of rule and power within groups of islands. Over millennia, these added up to a paradigm of connection. Here is an old world that was already relational when Europeans first intruded on the seas of the Pacific.

In their landmark anthropologies of the Pacific, Marcel Mauss and Bronislaw Malinowski had small but sufficient and important insights into the moral ontology, social relations, and material life of Pacific Islander civilization. Their published ethnographies of the complexity of islander cultures and their ethnographic surveys did much to illuminate key aspects of this civilization, especially for non-Oceanian audiences.

By the time Mauss and Malinowski published their findings, British and French colonialism had violently disordered this civilization, although far from completely. Since the 1960s, there has been a reconstruction of historical and cultural memory in the Pacific, which has been possible due to the upsurge in indigenous activism and the revival in the arts and the human sciences.

Viewed from the point of view of this history of a connected Pacific world, Australia is a peculiar case. The British colonized the southern continent as part of the thrust into Asia and in a counter-move to growing French interest in the South Pacific. Scientific pursuits were a stimulus to the incursion also. Within comparative civilizational analysis, there are three reasons to treat Australia as a distinct case:

1. The British expropriation of the Aboriginal civilization had no identical counterpart in the world. Unlike other colonized lands, British authorities never settled any treaty on which a legal contest of sovereignty could take place. The Australian state has not settled a treaty either.
Since none exists, Australia is quite exceptional in terms of ‘fourth world’ societies. For much of Euro-Australian history, the state has utterly suppressed Aboriginal civilization in the national memory.

A multifaceted Australian war upon Aboriginal society was first challenged in the late 1930s, and then again in the 1960s and since. A significant shift has occurred in the discipline and practice of Australian history, with revisionist currents re-writing this past and to some degree altering the national education curriculum. There are ramifications for wider historiographical practice, and Australian perspectives on historiography have been part of the debate on post-colonial identity in other settler-colonizer countries of the Commonwealth.

2. Although the British had an accumulated history of colonization from their historical experiences in North America and the early gains of their trading empire in India and Asia, the British initially understood contexts outside of the Pacific far better. The new antipodean colonies were a laboratory for experiments in creating governmental institutions alongside of a nascent Victorian-era social order. Cities arose rapidly. In some instances, colonial leaders based newly founded settlements on Victorian urban design and built up public infrastructure in accordance with a Victorian vision of orderly civilized life. Victorian cities were the creative mark of the British colonies on the mainland southern continent.

3. After Federation, Australia assumed a neo-colonial role in the region. The largest state in the region continued in that vein in a formal military alliance signed in 1952 — the ANZUS alliance with the United States and New Zealand. As a middle-power in world terms, Australian governments enjoyed disproportionate influence in the Pacific, an influence not replicated in Asia, where Australia is a member of the ASEAN security treaty with comparable and confident partners.

That is a brief summary, which calls for more elaboration. Prior to British claims on the southern land, an immensely diverse Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander imagery had flourished. That civilization had rich relationships to the north of the continent through the islands up to Timor and beyond. The conquest and internal colonisation of Aboriginal civilization fostered the fiction and the myth of an ‘empty’ state of uninhabited lands.

Of course, the southern continent had been occupied and shaped by Aboriginal people for tens of thousands of years. British colonialism and the federated Commonwealth of Australia that succeeded it were in denial of the presence and civilization of Aboriginal First Nations.
Based on coastal observations of the southern continent by Banks and Matra, who were botanists on board Captain James Cook’s reconnaissance of the east coast of the continent in 1770, the British government invoked a paradox: the Aboriginal peoples sighted on the coast were rendered invisible on the assumption that the interior was entirely uninhabited. The British considered it their right — the land being apparently uninhabited — to claim full ownership, since no prior ownership could be established or claimed (Rundell 2004, p.202, p.206).

So began the myth of *terra nullius*, a legal fiction that the land was empty of culture and civilization and that therefore there was no prior sovereign people with which to negotiate a treaty. In the nineteenth century, the judiciary reaffirmed *terra nullius* in five separate judgements and legislative acts. This underpinned the wider resonance that the image of the empty land had in Australian culture.

Yet, the Aboriginal presence remained as a troubling reminder of the colonial past and colonizing present. In the first half of the twentieth century, many Australians reassured themselves of the moral worth of the civilizing mission by deeming that the Aboriginal race was ‘dying out’ and that the Christian duty was to ease the passing of Aboriginality through Christian education in the manners, language and customs of white Australia. Combined with frontier violence against Aboriginal people in the nineteenth and even early twentieth centuries, this amounted to a ‘war’ on Aboriginal civilization.

The legal fiction of *terra nullius* came to haunt the national mindset, with the growing sense of doubt about the foundational basis of white Australia. In the post-war period, and particularly from the 1960s onwards, critical challenges to the dominant historical understanding of the foundational story shed light on the undeclared war on the peoples, signs, semiotics and Dreamtime cosmology of Australian Aboriginal civilization.

This was one critical side of the process of making white civilization in Australia. Civilization-making coincided with Australian modernity. In other words, Euro-Australia was ‘born modern’.

Being a modern society from the outset, and yet one at war with the ancient Aboriginal civilization it had supplanted, created a strange cultural condition of uncertain and ambivalent belonging (Beilharz and Smith 1997). Deep ambivalence epitomises cultural perceptions in Australia, partly because of the occlusion of the colonial conquest. Australian modernity has rested on the problem of how to combine a denied Aboriginal old world with a new world that has no antiquity, no Middle Ages and no revolutionary foundation — in other words, none of the foundations of other states with which it might be compared.
Thus, there was no political foundation like that possessed by many European and Asian societies, the United States, France, and the Soviet Union in particular. Contrasting the deep temporality of the Aboriginal Dreamtime — with its stories of Creation from land and sea in a distant undated past — is a Euro-Australian historical memory of two short centuries. No other contrast of antique and modern civilizations is as sharp as this one.

Of course, Australia did have two British myths as a backdrop to its constitution (Rundell 2004).

The first was that Australia was *terra nullius*, as discussed above. It was the official doctrine of British colonial rule and then of the government in federated Australia. More importantly, *terra nullius* penetrated deeply into Australian cultural life. When combined with the second foundational myth (that the southern continent would host a ‘new’ white society based on an imported British constitutional tradition), the basis for racism was set.

As Aboriginal social movements asserted the living presence of indigenous civilization and as the Australian population diversified, the two myths have steadily been destabilized. With the adoption of multiculturalism in the 1970s, the lasting culture of Australian racism started to erode. Although multiculturalism is a complex and multidimensional problematic beyond this essay (but see Castles, Haas, and Miller 2014, pp.166-8), one short comment is necessary. Official multiculturalism, as formulated and practiced by Federal and State Governments, is a cultural dimension of a wider process of neo-liberal modernization. It was a crucial component of neo-liberalism — a process that came earlier to Australia than many other countries in the OECD.

Notwithstanding the undertow of revision of Australian identity, Euro-Australia still struggles with its past, a struggle that reverberates in debates about the cultural, collective and historical memory. Irresolution of the historical issues inhibits efforts to tackle social problems of the present. Aboriginal communities suffer acutely from high levels of unemployment, unconscionable disparities in health and education, and confrontations with the criminal justice system.

Questions of sovereignty in Aboriginal affairs hang over all this. There is more success in multiculturalism, but as with other polities with multiculturalist regimes of management of ethnic diversity, a populist backlash based on white identity has occurred since the late 1990s. Even so, right-wing populism has not entered the mainstream in the manner it did in the United States in 2016. There is no Australian Trump.
These are the cultural, historical and political settings for engagement with the Pacific since the 1970s. Australia inherited a political economy in the region based on the extraction of resources and has sustained the asymmetrical relationship. Like other powers, Australia engaged in the infamous practice of ‘blackbirding’ in the nineteenth century by seizing Pacific Islanders and transferring them to Australia to work as coerced labourers. For affected Pacific Islands, the result was a wave of depopulation.

While there has been no repeat of such dehumanizing practices, the terms of trade between Australia and Pacific producers remain profoundly unequal. An export trade in copra, guano, phosphate, sugar and coffee were at the heart of the plantation economy run by Australian and New Zealand companies. Towards the end of the twentieth century, mining, fishing and logging reached unsustainable levels on many islands, especially Fiji, Bougainville and the Solomon Islands, wrecking terrestrial and marine environments.

To avoid a one-sided analysis at this stage, I wish to also point to the multidimensional complexity of economic transactions, the patterns of land ownership, and some ontological aspects of economic relations between Australia and the Pacific. In this respect, it is important to keep the breadth of the process of intercivilizational engagement in the picture. The extractive logic of Australian capital is inseparable from the historical inter-connexion of Pacific and Eurasian worlds.

As Marshall Sahlins eloquently argues, islanders bring their own experiences of exchange to economic relations with larger powers (Sahlins 1989). In Hawaii and throughout Polynesia, island societies negotiated the goods, networks and hierarchies of Western intruders. The intercultural character of economic engagement continued to involve exchanges in values and obligations, as well as exchange of goods and services. Those instances of reciprocal exchange may well fall under the constellation of worldwide capitalist trade patterns and their long chains of connection.

Still, there are limits to the integration of the economic culture of reciprocity. Limitations to the takeover of the ways of islander life by developmental patterns are evident in the ongoing advice of economists at the end of the twentieth century that Pacific Islanders need to embrace the capitalist spirit more (Dirlik 1998, 1997, pp.129-33). To the extent that Pacific patterns of economic culture persist, then the “social centrality of the ancient practice of reciprocity — the core of all oceanic cultures” remains in a complex and incomplete relationship to the economic orders of capitalism, as a Tongan artist, anthropologist, and advocate notes (Hau’ofa 2008, p.36).
The economic cultural complex of Pacific civilization has limited direct influence on Australian capital and the Australian state. Australia in the 1960s retreated from trusteeships in the Cook Islands and Nauru and, a little later, Papua New Guinea. In the wake of the decolonisation of Vanuatu, Tonga, Fiji, Western Samoa and the Solomon Islands, Australian policy cast the Pacific as a zone of few economic prospects, heightened political instability and pending environmental decline.

In the political discourse on the Pacific in Australia, there is no equivalent of the American imagination of the Pacific as a multipolar ‘rim’ of states surrounding the ‘empty’ ocean that has no centre (Dirlik 1998). Australian foreign policy casts the Pacific instead as a region. In the Australian imagination, the whole zone is still ‘deficient’, but with definite places and contents, for which Australia is responsible. While the Australian polity has restructured itself around a coalescing model of neoliberal modernization, political leaders, policy advisors, some journalists, business spokespeople, and even some NGOs have projected the standards of neoliberal governance to nascent states as the only viable developmental model. As Jolly states, they have arrived at the categorical view that Pacific states “need to open their economies; effect structural change and good governance; abolish customary land tenure and inappropriate, undemocratic traditions; and connect with the dynamism of Asia” (Jolly 2007, p.527).

With that outlook, fear of the absolute marginalisation of the Pacific from globalising processes has guided Australian governments in their development, aid and foreign policies. The worst fear in this respect lies in the nightmare of “failed states.” Consequently, Australian governments calibrate diplomatic and foreign policy settings on the belief that Pacific states are flawed. Irrespective of political persuasion, all Federal Governments since the mid-1970s have acted within a paradigm of neoliberal economic development for the region.

Though responsive to claims of neo-colonialism, Australia acts paternalistically as aid donor, security expert in geo-strategic affairs, major investor and source of tourism, and neighbouring military power. Its entire vision of the Pacific centers on Australia leading Pacific states to a viable developmental path. As Jolly maintains, the relevant policy settings have Australia “both as model and saviour of the Pacific, its future and its prophet” (Jolly 2007, p.527).

As discussed above, in an early passage of this essay, Árnason’s approach to intercultural encounters emphasizes the interchange, transactions, and even encounters between different cultures, even in situations of great asymmetry. Noting this, I point out that there is another and less often acknowledged side to the regional political economy. Epeli Hau'ofa highlights it in his 1990s project of ‘New Oceania’.
During that period, he asserted economic self-reliance, mutual ownership of land, movement and connectivity as elements of a millennia-old identity, precisely those elements of Pacific civilization that Australian governments have regarded as obstructions in the modernization and globalization process.

In displacing the deficit image of the Pacific, Hau'ofa inserts a vision of a densely connected network of island societies with histories that can serve islanders’ pursuit of greater sovereign control (Hau'ofa et al. 1993). He casts this as the alternative to the historical narratives told by Western states (Hau'ofa 2008, pp.60-79). In other words, the political and cultural resources that the Tongan intellectual is alluding to are, as a whole, nothing less than “the historicity of the indigenous peoples themselves and, therefore, their contemporaneity” (Dirlik 1997, p.140).

Memory is especially important in this context, not because the past is readily accessible and recoverable in a naïve positivist sense, but because islander values are being pressed into the service of contemporary projects of sustainable development and cultural renewal (Dirlik 1997, p.141). Pacific Islanders are reconstructing memories, whether cultural and public memory or communicative and popular memory. Both are involved in the potential reconfiguration of power according to Hau'ofa.

The regional context that Hau'ofa is working in is a world of motion, with people, ideas, values and goods all on the move (Scarr 1990, Matsuda 2012).

The values, practices, and relationality of Oceania find a place in Australia via four areas of contemporary engagement: diasporic migration to Australasia and California, greater travel and communication, acquisition of property and jobs in Australia, and popularization of the visual arts, film, literature and music.

As a category of migration, Oceania had the greatest percentage of international immigrants of any world region (Castles, Haas, and Miller 2014, p.166). The lion’s share of islander movement involves islanders travelling to New Zealand and Australia, whether in travel or to re-settle. The critical impact of climate change will undoubtedly accelerate those movements. It may already be doing so.

Economically, Polynesian regional networks exercise an informal regional economy comprising a circulation of goods and monies between island homes and emigrants living in New Zealand and on the eastern seaboard of Australia. Not only is money remitted — a sure sign of dependency, when that is all that is transacted — but a vast array of objects, technology materials and symbolic foodstuffs flow back and forth in consignments. The informal trade circuit is reminiscent of ‘old’ Pacific more than new developmental strategies.
The general pattern re-creates elements of the reciprocity of economic and cultural engagement of Oceanian civilization. I want to highlight the fact that migration continues in patterns reminiscent of great traditions of travel. Migration and travel of this kind is consonant with Pacific Islander efforts to construct cultural memory.

Civilizational analysis can capture the multivalence of this regional context well. To be sure, Australia as a middle power dominates regional affairs and sets a political model for the Pacific. Yet, within the regional field of power, islander agency, meaning and reconstructed memory have impact and alter the terms of power.

On the other side, civilizational analysis can bring out the contradictions of antipodean modernity. Australia is far from reconciled to a Pacific identity with which the nation could engage culturally and on political and economic terms that are reciprocal. The cruel current day practice of shipping asylum seekers to offshore detention centers in Nauru and in PNG betray the inconsistencies in Australian foreign policy.

On one hand, Australian political discourse focuses on regional leadership and partnerships with island states. On the other hand, the acid-test issue of refugees is resolved through treatment of immediate neighbours as extra-territorial holding pens for excluded asylum seekers. More than in any other area of policy, Australian governments project ambivalence here about their entire relationship with the Pacific. In doing so, they reflect a more general ambivalence of place.

Conclusion

Terra Australis would be British, but other than Britain; Oceanian, but a huge continent, not an island; connected through its north (in a deep Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history as well as through contemporary globalization) but populated in a different and much older migration than the voyaging patterns that created Polynesia.

The short history of Euro-Australia contrasts with a long Aboriginal civilizational history and sense of place so strong that it has survived colonialism. Pacific Islander societies also have a longer history and current day projects of cultural renewal and reconstruction of memory. Both Australia and the individual states of the Pacific are part of greater civilizational constellations constituted in engagement. Consequently, they engage with each other in and through contrasts.

Can Australian modernity adapt to place through intercivilizational encounters? The question is one for further research. Two preliminary points can foreshadow future work in this area. Australia sits in flows of engagement across the four dimensions of migration, economic connectedness, adaption of political models, and cultural traffic.
However, engagement with Aboriginal and Oceanian civilizations has not involved learning encounters conducive to a strong sense of antipodean place that incorporates a sensitivity to the ecology of the southern land, or the constitutive and living traditions of the region.

Still lacking place-specific learning processes, Australian modernity looks ill-equipped to meet the decisive challenge of our times: climate change and creating a new civilizational base for sustainability (see Camilleri 1976). A full reconciliation with the peoples of the region in the present is a prerequisite to a sustainable orientation for the future. Finding a new direction is urgently necessary.

Acknowledgments


References


Multiple Identities: Touchstones in Terrorism, Democratic Institutions, and the Rule of Law

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Abstract. This paper explores the underlying, foundational politico-social theories and themes that relate closely to radicalization, terrorism, democracy and the rule of law. It examines factors (touchstones) critical to these areas (political violence, terrorism, rule of law and democracy, along with democratic institutions). Some of these touchstones include the ‘lenses’ of identities, tribalism, and contrasts between identities, including cultural, linguistic, socialization and civilizational aspects.

Keywords. Identity, multiple identities, amoral familism, ethnicity, ethnic identity, civic identity, political identity/identity politics, national identity, political tribes, religious and sectarian affiliations

Introduction

Identity is a potent force in today’s world, much as it has been in the past. One need only consider recent events in Spain and the identities that some claim — Catalan or Basque — that set individuals and groups who hold those identities as crucial against or apart from the state itself. Consider, too, countries in Eastern Europe like Bosnia, Macedonia and Kosovo. Identity, with its potentially many characteristics, is often shaped by social organizations. Examples of such identities and social organizations include age, religion, social class or caste, culture, dialect, disability, education, ethnicity, language, nationality, sex, gender identity, generation, occupation, profession, race, political party affiliation, sexual orientation, settlement, urban and rural environments, and veteran status. Yet not all members of a given group are involved in identity politics. Identity politics are frequently used by minority and civil rights organizations to form a coalition with or against members of the majority.

One person may hold several of these identities, and therefore have multiple identities. Awareness and understanding of multiple identities are crucial when objectively considering aspects of an individual, of groups, political activity, and propensity for or against violence or illicit activities such as smuggling or money-laundering, to name a few traits that may be reviewed or researched. Some are socially determined; others are determined communally or are civilizational. One may be, in a manner of speaking, “born into” specific identities related to ethnicity or religious beliefs, or those important to family and familial ties. Some personal identities are associated with cultural or linguistic characteristics. Indeed, throughout time, people have held (and sometimes juggled) multiple identities.
An example might be a person who is simultaneously female, a mother, an aunt or grandmother, a wife and later a widow, an educator, a business owner, a Native American, and a marketer. Which identities rise to the fore is based on civilization, socialization, environment, cultures, situations and circumstances, along with the need to reconcile potential and actual facets of the various identities a person holds.

Kwame Anthony Appiah wrote cogently of multiple identities, “Identities are complex and multiple and grow out of a history of changing responses to economic, political, and cultural forces, almost always in opposition to other identities.”¹

Identity politics and nationalism have become much-researched areas in recent decades; one only need think of the break-ups of the former Soviet Union and the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to recall how identity issues, especially those associated with nationalism, came to the fore. Turkey, too, has strong and very serious nationalist movements at present, as do Poland and Hungary. All three of these latter countries are seeing significant erosion of checks and balances, democratic institutions (especially the judiciary), and a measurable move to the right politically.

Identity politics in political organizing is usually closely connected to the concepts of deprivation, repression and oppression of one or more minorities in a state—or, in response to those minorities, the organization of a countervailing identity political effort by the majority to maintain their political power.²

Determining political, legal and institutional frameworks for addressing a multicultural society, and accommodating its multiple, diverse characteristics are critical for the development and prosperity of a state and its members. These frameworks and accommodative elements can lead to tolerance, a secure and inclusive civil society, economic prosperity, and stable and equitable institutions, or they can lead to violent and other levels of conflict and tensions, economic displacement and upheaval, institutional fragility and inconsistencies, and quarrels over inclusion, system access, justice and additional aspects of civil societal insecurity between ethnicities.

These frameworks (constitutional and through other means) become particularly critical in a new state, particularly one in which there are known ethnic and even civilizational clefts, such as the Republic of Macedonia (which I will examine as a case), and even more so when ethno-religious fragmentation is pervasive.

Huntington argues, in his “Clash of Civilizations” (1993), that major, ongoing conflicts will occur in various areas of the world because of clashing cultural and religious identities between groups, and that Islamic extremism would become the most threatening movement to world peace and order. Eastern Europe is one of the areas on a highly significant “cultural fault-line” or cleft between major civilizations (the uppermost level of culture). In the case of Eastern Europe, the two civilizations that come up against one another in that cleft are generally the Orthodox (Christian) and the Islamic ones. Huntington’s physical divisions of the various civilizations also indicate that Western civilization has a place in Eastern Europe.

In post-modern discussions, the importance of democracy in developing and determining structures, policies, and laws in states with multi-cultural, multi-identity citizenry cannot be overstated. Democracy has become equivalent to specifying “majority rule” and was originally linked with “tolerance” by Pericles in 430 BCE. Democracy today no longer means “direct rule” by the people, but instead, usually representative democracy, where representatives are elected by the citizens to whom they are answerable at least at the next election. Power rests in the hands of the people who may elect official representatives to rule directly or indirectly. Today, too, tolerance and establishment of various rights are sometimes viewed as preconditions to democracy but “not as constitutive of democracy itself.” That all “democracies” are not created equal nor do they include the constitutive elements of democracy is evident, too: “democratic” in a country’s name does not indicate it is indeed a true democracy or anything even resembling a democracy — take the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (North Korea), or the People’s Democratic Republic of Algeria, as examples.

There are many variations of democracy: direct and representative democracy; presidential and parliamentary democracy; authoritarian and participatory democracy; Islamic and social democracy. One often hears about liberal and illiberal democracy, too. Most democracies, however, are basically majoritarian — that is, decisions are made in line with majority rule. Those who hold leadership positions have, in most cases under majoritarian democracy, been elected by the people they are to represent, although there are also indirect ways of attaining leadership (appointments to committees, affiliation with others who hold a similar mindset on particular issues, and the like).

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5 Vaishnavi Patil, “What are the different types of democracy?” at http://sciabc.us/iPAD8.
This can lead to what Amy Chua terms “political tribes” in certain cases and is closely tied to “identity politics”.6

**Conflict and Ethnic Conflict**

Conflict emphasizes struggle and collision. Donald L. Horowitz’s definition is typical: “Conflict is a struggle in which the aim is to gain objectives and simultaneously to neutralize, injure or eliminate rivals.”7 Add this to Stefan Wolff’s ethnic conflict specifications, and the complexities are apparent: “…that in which the goals of at least one conflict party are defined in [exclusively] ethnic terms, and in which the primary fault line of confrontation is one of ethnic distinctions.” While it does not occur in every society, in some, ethnic difference or cleavages can lead to frustration and violence when “ethnic groups are forced to integrate into the national culture of the state in which they find themselves.”

Ethnic conflicts may fall into one of three categories: group-state conflicts between the minority and the institutions of the host state; inter-group conflicts, pitting the minority against the host-nation or the majority; and between different ethnic groups (sometimes, but not always, minority versus minority). There may be elements of simultaneity in the types of conflicts. These categories tend to hold true no matter if the geographic location is the Balkans, African states, North or Latin America, Western Europe or Asia.

Harff and Gurr define ethnic groups as “psychological communities” whose members hold a persistent sense of common interest and identity based on shared historical experiences and valued cultural traits. These may include language, beliefs, lifestyles, institutions, and a common homeland or established physical living space.8 The authors assert that the “ethnic groups whose status is of greatest concern…are those that are the target of discrimination and that have organized to take political action to promote or defend their interests.”9 Since they have already opened themselves to being activists, it can be a relatively short step to considering violence, especially if more peaceful forms of activism do not appear successful or do not meet group demands/expectations.

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8 Benedict Anderson discusses “imagined communities”, a closely related concept to ethnicity and ethnic groups, in his seminal work, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism Rev. Ed. New York and London: Verso Books, 1991. It follows that if communities can be imagined, they can also be re-imagined, an important concept for this paper.
One of the factors can be thought of as a “touchstone” for varieties of political activism helps explain why specific groups do become politically active: relative deprivation. This theory was developed in the 1960s to examine and analyze situations in which individuals or groups subjectively perceive themselves to be in an unfair (even unjust) status or condition compared to their “advantaged” reference groups who have similar attributes; therefore, they are deserving of similar rewards but are not receiving them.

Subjective experiences and interpretations of deprivation are more likely when the differences between two groups shrink so that comparisons can be made fairly easily. The discontent arising from relative deprivation has been used to explain radical politics (whether of the left or the right), some religions, the rise of social movements, industrial disputes, and crime. “The usual distinction made is that religious fervor or demands for political change are a collective response to relative deprivation whereas crime is an individualized response. But this is certainly not true of many crimes - for example, smuggling, poaching or terrorism — which have a collective nature and a communal base…”

Relative deprivation theory may, in other words, assist in explaining some actions of specific “discontented” groups, but not all. This is especially true when there are valid and available pathways in a democratic system by which a “deprived” group or person may register discontents and hopefully receive relief. If a specific group feels that they have no practical, meaningful way to approach a state’s institutions or its representatives, the situation will undoubtedly become more difficult to resolve.

But the signs and language of relative deprivation can be useful, especially in a democracy with free speech and rule of law, in identifying and assessing groups or persons at risk of becoming involved in criminal activities, such as terrorism, human trafficking, organized crime, money-laundering, and interethnic conflict or violence, to name a few of the risk areas. Not all persons who have a sense of relative deprivation will be activists or, more significantly, will become radicalized as part of their claimed identities. Nor does this indicate whether a person will engage in political violence or its cousin, terrorism. The point here is that when persons believe themselves to be disadvantaged for reasons of their identities, or because they may apparently lack an identity others value, such as citizenship beliefs and ties to the state, crisis points can more easily arise.

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Another theory, that of the “good vs. bad neighborhood”, also offers some explanatory and guiding power regarding conflict: if a state is in a “good” neighborhood, one that is stable, friendly, and with citizens who are like those in other nearby states, conflict is less likely internally or with other states. If one instead has “bad neighbors” (is located in a bad neighborhood, in other words), not only is inter-state conflict likely, but other types of instability will also be present (economic, employment, sectarian, and so on). Intra-state conflict is also more probable. The state which may be rather good but finds itself in a bad neighborhood because of changes in the surrounding states or regimes is also more likely to engage in “bad” behavior both internally and in its interstate relations.12

Another danger has recently arisen, the decline in democracies: fully one-third of the world’s population lives in a “back-sliding democracy”, one in which authoritarian traits are on the rise and have already had an impact. Even the U.S. is in this group.13 This decline is a worrisome trend, especially as newer states attempt to consolidate democracy, democratic institutions, the rule of law, and to battle corruption.

**Identities and the State**

Determining political, legal and institutional frameworks for addressing a multicultural civil society, and accommodating its multiple, diverse characteristics are critical for the development and prosperity of a state and its members. These frameworks, especially democracy and the rule of law, with other accommodative elements, can lead to tolerance, a secure and inclusive civil society, general economic prosperity, and stable and equitable institutions — or they can lead to violent and other damaging levels of conflict, economic displacement and upheaval, institutional fragility and inconsistencies, and quarrels over inclusion, system access, corruption, justice and additional aspects of civil societal insecurity between groups (ethnicities in particular). The constitutional framework and other practices, policies or programs become particularly critical in a new state, especially in one in which there are identified, known ethnic cleavages, and even more so when specific ethno-religious fragmentation is pervasive.

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Using Harff and Gurr’s typology of politically active ethnic groups (ethnonationalists, indigenous peoples, ethnoclasses and communal contenders), one may classify, as they do, the ethnic tensions situation in Macedonia, for example, as ethnonationalist, driven by the minority ethnicity’s aspiration to establish an independent state, or to be autonomous (in varying degrees) from the present ruling state. Some ethnicities may also wish closer ties with a national homeland outside of the one they currently live in. These traits are generally true of Albanians in Macedonia.14

Again, Amy Chua’s “political tribalism” working theory may be of use: individuals of a particular group gather together, shunning those who are not considered “like them”, to engage in political actions and activities aimed at achieving the group’s goals.15 There are those applying this theory even to current events in the United States, which should come as no surprise. Political tribalism is closely related to amoral familism as Edward Banfield explained it in the mid-1950s after a close case study of a northern Italian community.16 It has been applied more to social and economic endeavors than to wholly political ones. There are those who argue that today’s Kosovo resembles the Italian community that Banfield examined in his case study. What both amoral familism and political tribalism have most strongly in common is their foundational belief that if it is good for the family (tribe), then it is good. Full stop. No further moral, ethical, or other examination need occur.17 Some might also argue that this conclusion helps to explain mafias and some criminal organizations.

The Rule of Law

Law enforcement and intelligence agencies (and other relevant institutions and organizations), both national and international, know all of this, of course. It is when trust erodes in an institution or its practices that serious problems can arise in society and the institutions which are tasked with supporting that society.

The rule of law is based on four cornerstones:

1. **Accountability**: the government as well as private actors are accountable under the law;

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14 Ibid. 19. “Macedonia” is used throughout this paper for purposes of simplicity and because of majority formal international recognition of the Republic under its constitutional name, including the United States’ recognition.
2. **Just Laws**: laws are clear, publicized, stable, and just; are applied evenly; and protect fundamental rights, including the security of persons and property and certain core human rights;

3. **Open Government**: processes by which the laws are enacted, administered, and enforced are accessible, fair, and efficient; and

4. **Accessible and Impartial Dispute Resolution**: Justice is delivered timely by competent, ethical, and independent representatives and by neutrals who are accessible, have adequate resources, and reflect the makeup of the communities they serve.\(^{18}\)

There are other critical areas to the rule of law that arise from these four bases, and that also may be affected by multiple identities: the *World Justice Project* (WJP) utilizes these additional traits in its annual assessment and surveys. These nine additional traits are:

1. Constraints on Government Powers;
2. Absence of Corruption;
3. Open Government;
4. Fundamental Rights;
5. Order and Security;
6. Regulatory Enforcement;
7. Civil Justice;
8. Criminal Justice; and
9. Informal Justice.\(^{19}\)

WJP’s survey for 2017-2018 placed Macedonia at 0.53, or in a weaker status, on par with Bulgaria, Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Serbia. All these states ranked better than Turkey, and just slightly behind Greece regionally. Macedonia, however, is trending downward as of the most recent data, along with Bulgaria, not a positive sign for the rule of law in these states. Deeper dives into the data on Rule of Law as part of the World Justice Project’s surveys are available at http://data.worldjusticeproject.org/, with an interactive map of the world and the results. They are quite enlightening.

The Rule of Law is one of the facets of democracy and good governance that creates and permits “space” for political activities and activism. Under positive Rule of Law, that space is orderly and transparent; if Rule of Law breaks down, that space becomes more risk-filled, radicalized, and usually but not always more violent and less democratic.

\(^{18}\) [https://worldjusticeproject.org/about-us/overview/what-rule-law](https://worldjusticeproject.org/about-us/overview/what-rule-law)

\(^{19}\) [https://worldjusticeproject.org/our-work/wjp-rule-law-index](https://worldjusticeproject.org/our-work/wjp-rule-law-index)
Democracy and Democratic Institutions

It is important to remember that, when examining Eastern European states, they are nascent democracies – none even 50 years old yet, and several are not yet three decades old (this includes Macedonia). One cannot expect these states to have mature democratic institutions, much less the established and balanced Rule of Law and consistency that more mature democracies often have (although sometimes not constantly; much depends on the type of democracy and regime, as previously noted). Add to youthfulness the fact that there is a history of corruption in most of these countries that continues even today, and it is easier to understand why these newer states face issues that at least some older states have largely overcome. Lack of trust exacerbates the challenges in Eastern Europe — between countries and within each of them. Political tribalism adds to the complexities, without a doubt, especially in states with distinctive (often historical) ethnic rivalries.

Tribalism has two faces: it is inclusive for those in the defined group (that definition usually developed and created by its members); it is also exclusive to those outside of the defined group. Some have ethnonationalist traits and bases (even in the United States). Some political tribalism is zero-sum (that is, anything lost from one group is gained in total by the other). What one group or “tribe” (ethnic or ethnoreligious group, in many cases) gains, the opposing group or other(s) lose.\(^\text{20}\)

The trust issue is a major one in infant democracies (and even in older ones), particularly if any incidents occur that affect minority groups, and even more specifically, if those impact a “majority-minority” (that is, a group holding a high percentage of the minority populace. The Albanian-Macedonians are such a group in Macedonia, for example, at roughly around 25-30% of the state’s total population).\(^\text{21}\)


\(^{21}\) Jens Reuter. 1993. “Policy and Economy in Macedonia,” in *The Macedonian Question*, ed. James Pettifer (NY: St. Martin’s Press, 1999), 28-38. The percentage is an estimate, as Albanian-Macedonians have not taken part in any national censuses to date. Explanations for their boycott vary. Ethnic Albanians boycotted the 1991 census as a protest against the government’s census: forms were not printed in Albanian. The results of the 1994 Census are also formally disputed by ethnic Albanians, particularly by ethnic Albanian political party leaders. See Reuter, and P.H. Liotta and Cindy R. Jebb, *Mapping Macedonia: Idea and Identity* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004), 66 and passim. Therefore, the 2002 census was similarly indeterminate for Albanian-Macedonians. The actual population percent of ethnic Albanians and ethnic Macedonians is a commonly raised issue by partisan political leaders from both ethnicities.
There have been many such incidents in Macedonia involving Albanian-Macedonians, unfortunately; one need only review issues of the Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN, at birn.eu.com, is a “network of local non-governmental organizations promoting freedom of speech, human rights and democratic values.”) 22 They focus on recent past and current reports from the Balkans. As a further example, Bosnia-Herzegovina has no actual majority, although Bosniaks (Bosnian Muslims) are believed to comprise about 48% of the country’s population prior to the wars there. 23

In Macedonia, Albanian-Macedonians are currently working with ethnic Macedonians and the government under the terms of the Ohrid Framework Agreement 2001. It was negotiated mostly by the international community (externally, in other words). This technically did not and does not augur well for it; historically, externally developed agreements, such as this one, do not hold up over time. Consider the very fragile Dayton Accords or the Good Friday/Belfast agreements as examples of difficult, externally designed agreements that are at risk.

If one accepts that it is unlikely these demographics are likely to change in any statistically significant fashion, this means that democratic institutions must be highly transparent and consistent in the manners in which they address their citizens’ issues, and free from corruption if they wish to gain their populace’s trust, no matter which ethnicity or other tribal group or affiliation any person claims.

Some even have sectarian aspects (again, see Huntington’s Clash of Civilizations). This is certainly the case in Serbia, Republika Srpska, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Croatia, Poland, and other countries. Finding common ground and building consensus among the various political parties and other activists are often viewed as next to impossible; this makes liberal democracy and a stable, balanced and respected Rule of Law even more difficult to instill. When powerful nationalist, sectarian or populist sentiments are included in the variables that must be addressed in these endeavors, the chances of formulating and holding together a liberal democracy with a solid and transparent rule of law look somewhat bleak, to say the least. Recent rises in nationalism and populism, as mentioned, have placed several Eastern and Central European countries at significant risk.

Sectarianism is a well-determined touchstone for terrorism: this applies both to terrorism occurring within a state and those who act as “foreign fighters” (seen most recently in ISIS, the Islamic State in Syria).

22 www.birn.eu.com (Homepage note).
Because nationalist and/or sectarian sentiments do not necessarily stop at a state’s border, there are transnational and diaspora aspects included in this. There are also important issues that arise when such foreign fighters return to their home state after involvement elsewhere. How can they be reintegrated into their home country and society — and some ask if they even should be.

Banking systems associated with certain religious groups may make money laundering more direct. Hawala or hewala is a much-used, informal funding transfer system based not on the movement of cash, or wire transfers between banks, but instead on the performance, confidentiality, and honor of a huge network of Islamic money handlers (brokers). It is often used worldwide by those sending remittances back to a “home country”, or to other individuals or organizations, including, it is suspected, terrorist groups. One of the pillars of Islam, zakat, also specifies that charitable giving, in some cases, may be appropriately used to fund fighters for Islamic goals and purposes. So assets could be transferred to terrorists by the mosque. Add these factors to tightly knit ethnic groups and kin groups, and the challenge of shutting down terrorism and its resources, along with other forms of political activism, increases exponentially.

Understanding the causes, dynamics and progression of conflicts, particularly violent ones which border on actual terrorism, and the potential forms of resolution are key points in a move toward such resolution with a goal of attaining societal security. In a democracy, whether relatively new or more mature, one approach is to consider the various identities the parties hold who are involved in such tensions, and to attempt to sort through which tensions are associated with which identities. Which are most likely to have been or to become politicized? Where will support for the contending group come from? Potentially, it could arise from organized crime, mafia-type criminal “families”, money-laundering, the diaspora community, religiously affiliated organizations and entities, traditional and new smuggling operations, and so on.

Conflict is broad-ranging and far-reaching, in most cases. It need not take place on the parties’ doorsteps. Indeed, much of terrorism takes place away from the fighters’ homelands. That such action occurs makes the return and reintegration of those who have been involved in foreign conflicts even more crucial if peace, positive or negative, is to be maintained on the “home front”. If one’s identity as a terrorist, together with the associated ideologies and belief sets, is ascendant, reintegration may not be possible or desirable. In that case, the justice system and its democratic institutions must step in to handle these cases.

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Handling Conflicts: Management, Settlement, Resolution and Consolidation

Albert Einstein’s definition of peace may be useful in this respect: “Peace is not merely the absence of war but the presence of justice, of law, of order — in short, of government.”

Important to positive peace then are aspects of interethnic tolerance or harmony, and positive attitudes such as generosity, tolerance or inclusion of minorities by the majority group. Control of violence matters and is often achieved by dissociation (conflicting parties are separated, whether by their own efforts or through governmental or military efforts). In general, policies based on negative peace (the absence of war/conflict) rather than positive peace do not deal with the underlying causes of violence, only its manifestations. Negative peace efforts may actually lead to future escalation of violence rather than a lasting peace, since tensions from social conflict are merely repressed rather than fully resolved.25

Conflict management and associated regulation are attempts to “contain, limit, or direct the effects of an ongoing ethnic conflict on the wider society in which it takes place.” This can be a society/location, as indicated, far from one’s home state. Conflict settlement’s goal is to implement “an institutional framework in which the conflicting interests of different ethnic groups can be accommodated [so]…that incentives for cooperation and non-violent pursuit of conflicts…through compromise outweigh any benefits that might be expected from violent confrontation.”26

Conflict resolution demands identification of causal factors fundamental to the conflict and developing means to address them effectively. This infers, in turn, that attitudes and behavior that view violence as an acceptable means to address difference must be changed, that systems and structures may require alteration to be responsive and adaptive to ethnicities within a state, and furthermore, the recognition that conflict resolution is both a process and the process’s terminal result.

The negotiation process determines outcome (management, settlement or resolution), whether the real causes are recognized and considered by the negotiators, or whether they are deflected or avoided because discussing them is too high-risk. Consolidation of the conflict management’s terms may occur at the same time, or later.


It also depends on attitudes toward violence among the conflicting groups. Continuing to use Macedonia as an exemplar, consider that crucial to inter-ethnic violence potential, the 2001 UNDP polls indicated 60% of Albanian-Macedonian male respondents (ages 18-24) found violence an acceptable political approach.

In comparison, about 16.4% of Macedonian males in the same age group accepted violence as a political practice.\(^\text{27}\) When one considers these factors (willingness to use violence, high unemployment, pervasive mistrust of the Macedonian state (more specifically, the Macedonian national police and other security and military forces), civilizational cleavages, with limited education and economic prospects among younger Albanian men in Macedonia), it is little wonder Albanian paramilitaries and other groups advocating political violence were perceived to be a credible option (perhaps even an attractive one in some respects).\(^\text{28}\)

From 1990 through 2001, conflict management efforts in Macedonia ranged from unsuccessful integration attempts to various proposals for partition. With its symbolic shift toward emphasis on ethnic Macedonians as the “titular nation” (a “hybrid mix of the nation-state and state-nation concepts”)\(^\text{29}\), the 1991 Constitution intended to integrate Macedonian citizens at the individual, not the group, level. Albanian Macedonians found this “national minority” status unacceptable; as indicated, they demanded constituent nation status as a group. In 2001, several members of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts and the Prime Minister of Macedonia advocated partition of the state along Macedonian-Albanian ethnic lines; the proposal was abandoned due to open domestic and international disapproval of it. This issue remains an open one legally, although attempts were (and are presently being) made by various parties to resolve it. As a result, outbreaks of ethnic violence and preservation of delicate inter-ethnic relations in Macedonia were addressed through a combination of gradual concessions toward ethnic Albanians, the Ohrid Framework Agreement’s terms, application of coercive means, and corrupt exchanges between ethnic elites.\(^\text{30}\)


\(^{28}\) Hislope, Robert, “Between a bad peace and a good war: insights and lessons from the almost war in Macedonia,” Ethnic and Racial Studies 26, no. 1 (2004), 129-51.

\(^{29}\) Marko, 5.

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Corrupt exchange is, unfortunately, a signature trait of Macedonia’s ethnic conflict management, since “between consent and force stands corruption/fraud (characteristic of certain situations when it is hard to exercise the hegemonic function, and when the use of force is too risky).”\textsuperscript{31} Corrupt exchange provides “incentives to ethnic party elites to maintain coalition government despite the pressures that typically emanate from intra-ethnic party competition and the general absence of political or value consensus among coalition partners”.\textsuperscript{32}

Short-term, government partners from all ethnic groups have an interest in maintaining the coalition and staying in power since substantial material rewards are at stake.

While these are expected (and rational) outcomes of political participation in the highest levels of government, corrupt elites in multi-ethnic coalitions further act to “avoid interethnic confrontations; de-mobilizing elites thereby tone down their nationalist rhetoric and adopt a more pragmatic approach upon taking office.”\textsuperscript{33}

Macedonia’s government has not seen much in the way of interethnic conflict avoidance and the like, given frequent (and ongoing) spates of verbal and physical violence (in Parliament among elected officials, and elsewhere), at least some of which is rooted in ethnicity, and nearly all of which has weakened inter-group trust, democracy, rule of law and democratic institutionalization/institutions, while strengthening corruption.\textsuperscript{34}

In his research of corruption and its influence on inter-ethnic relations, Hislope dissects the connection between corrupt exchange among ethnic elites and the stability of the multi-ethnic coalitions governing Macedonia from 1992 until 2001.\textsuperscript{35} While corrupt exchange helped hold together multi-ethnic coalitions until 2001, its consequences were disastrous for institutions, democratic development, and for the rule of law. It is no coincidence that the first clashes in 2001 between ethnic Albanian fighters and the Macedonian national security forces occurred in villages left for years without the presence of police or border patrols, thereby allowing safe haven for a variety of smugglers and other lawbreakers who undermined societal security, civic affiliations and identities. Accusations of internal security negligence and irregularities were numerous.

\textsuperscript{32} Hislope, “When Being Bad”, 3.
\textsuperscript{33} Hislope, “When Being Bad”, 3.
\textsuperscript{34} See reports on these incidents over the years at www.birn.eu.com. Refer also to various works in Bibliography of this paper for further information.
\textsuperscript{35} See Hislope, “Calm Before the Storm? ...”, and “When Being Bad”.

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A former Minister of Interior of Macedonia, Pavle Trajanov, blames subsequent Macedonian governments from the time of the “double embargo” in 1992 (by Greece to its south and Serbia to its north) until at least the early to mid-2000s for organizing or tolerating the smuggling of cigarettes, oil and a variety of arms from or through Macedonia to Kosovo, Albania, and Serbia.\footnote{36}\footnote{Center for the Study of Democracy, CSD Reports: “Cigarette Smuggling”, \url{http://www.csd.bg/publications/book10/2.2.pdf}; “Macedonia’s Public Secret: How Corruption Drags the Country Down” (International Crisis Group Balkan Report no.133, 14 August 2002), 22-23, accessed at \url{http://www.intl-crisis-group.org/projects/balkans/macedonia/reports/A400739_14082002.pdf}; and Hislope, “When Being Bad is Good”, 34. Trajanov was Minister of Interior, 1998-99.}

Although the legal instruments of the August 2001 Ohrid Framework Agreement should prevail and be fully implemented, the long practice of tolerating corruption continues to take its toll on the institutions and peoples of Macedonia. A focused cross-ethnic battle against corruption must be waged, if Macedonia wishes to function under the rule of law and democracy, with democratic institutions, to improve its economy and meet the standards expected by its citizens and the international organizations such as North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU) that the country wishes to join.\footnote{37}\footnote{Interview with V. Georgiev, Office of Prevention of Corruption, June 14, 2006, Skopje, Macedonia.}

Developments after the 2001 armed conflict support the contention that this ethnic conflict falls short of resolution, since the fundamental causes of the conflict have not been obviated. This is not unexpected, since dealing with the underlying causes is the most difficult aspect. Such a process requires strong domestic political will, the consistent support of the international community, and a significant amount of time. The cleavages from prior to and after 2001’s conflict must be attended to before proceeding to the underlying causal factors, in order to achieve real conflict resolution (rather than simply settlement) in Macedonia.

It is both probable and likely, as was discussed by other presenters at the NATO Advanced Research Workshop in Skopje, Macedonia (April 11-14, 2018) that arms, oil and other conflict-related materiel (especially small arms) are going to terrorist groups in various global locations, and more particularly to the conflict-ridden Fertile Crescent region which includes Syria, Jordan, Israel, a part of Egypt, southern Iraq, and Saudi Arabia (it is sometimes called the Cradle of Civilization.)\footnote{38}\footnote{Mark, Joshua J. “Fertile Crescent”, 28 March 2018, in \textit{Ancient History Encyclopedia}, at \url{https://www.ancient.eu/Fertile_Crescent/}. Some may also be destined for Yemen and other Middle Eastern states and ethnic groups (such as the Kurds), and the hands of ISIS and similar terrorist groups.

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Remaining Issues for Conflict Settlement

In order to treat the unresolved underlying causes of ethnic conflict in Macedonia, action is required to resolve structural and economic problems, as well as addressing the factors of fear. Structural factors necessitating immediate attention are a broad and effective battle against corruption and organized crime, and deep, cross-cutting reforms in the judiciary and public administration. A solution must be acceptable to both sides in order to be sustainable and contribute to the stability and security of the entire region. It is best if the proposed solutions are developed by the main parties to them (the ethnic groups and their political representation). 39

The importance of deep and significant reforms in the judiciary and public administration sectors in Macedonia cannot be overstated and has been the subject of much political posturing and publicity. Ensuring an efficient and professional administration and judiciary, free from political machinations, is crucial for the rule of law, non-discrimination and fight against corruption. It is also a necessary precondition for improving the business climate and attracting foreign investment in Macedonia. Only by taking such measures can Macedonia begin addressing the two major problems for all citizens of the country regardless of their ethnicity: unemployment and poverty. 40

The aid and assistance the international community has given Macedonia to undertake reforms in these fields has been valuable over the past decade, but without strong domestic political will and dedication to reforms that are often painful, not to mention embarrassing, no significant or sustainable progress can be achieved.

Education is a crucial long-term investment in reconciliation and ethnic conflict resolution. Macedonia's educational system must reinforce the positive values of diversity, tolerance, and the cultural benefits of living in such a multi-cultural society. The education system must provide students with the possibility for elective classes in minority languages and, at the same time, should improve the quality of training in the Macedonian language for students from other ethnic communities educated in a primary language other than Macedonian.

It is important, not only for Macedonia but also for the entire Western Balkans region, that the EU keeps commitments made as part of the 2003 Thessaloniki EU Council regarding the future inclusion of the Western Balkan states as members.


40 In the IRI Macedonia Survey, March 2006, http://macedonia.usaid.gov/, 52% of the citizens responded that unemployment is the most serious problem facing Macedonia.
If the EU elects to postpone the Euro-integrative processes for an extended period or offers alternatives other than the prospect of EU membership, its conflict resolution efforts in Macedonia and elsewhere in the Western Balkans will be undermined, since its conditionality will not hold the same positive force as it has had. In such a situation, radical forces likely would question whether “incentives for cooperation and the non-violent pursuit of conflicts of interest through compromise outweigh any benefits that might be expected from violent confrontation.”

The focus on Macedonia’s Euro-Atlantic integration process and prospects supported the country’s willingness to cooperate in the conflict resolution mechanisms proposed by these international organizations and entities. In Macedonia, the struggle for political stability and security, economic progress and democratic reform continues. These issues are undoubtedly connected with successful ethnic conflict resolution and once again point to the third side of Macedonia’s conflict resolution puzzle: Macedonia cannot ignore the international community, especially EU and NATO. Only a serious commitment from EU and NATO that includes the prospect of full membership in these organizations at some realistic and specific future date will insulate Macedonia from forthcoming risks and create a solid basis for the continuation of reforms needed to fulfill the Copenhagen criteria, and to resolve, not simply settle or mask, the country’s internal ethnic conflicts.

There is significant power in the Macedonian and Albanian diasporas. The stronger the ties to an identity and a “homeland” among those diasporas, the more active their membership tends to be. This can offer opportunities and/or barriers to cracking the touchstones of terrorism and political violence.

Furthermore, international actors have tended to underestimate the depth and complexity of cleavages themselves within Macedonia. What may appear rational, unambiguous, uncontroversial and logical to those outside Macedonia may face hurdles not immediately evident to those not intimately involved in the socio-cultural, socio-political and socio-economic fabric of daily life in Macedonia. Integration is not pervasive, nor is there necessarily a commitment to it across the board. Identity as an exclusionary factor still defines much of life; that nearly all political parties are ethnically based is a cogent example of this, as are continuing claims that there are ethnic restrictions on where one may safely or comfortably live, be employed, travel without harm, where security may be enforced, and the like. Progress has been made, but more is needed, including stronger emphasis on civic identity and citizenship of a state (inclusivity) versus ethnicity or other identity (exclusivity and cleavages).

Selected Bibliography

[Note: Internet resources are fully set forth in the footnotes, so are mostly omitted here.]


In China’s Vanguard Civilization: Is there Shelter for the Third World?

Tseggai Isaac

Abstract

This paper looks at China’s civilizational and modernization heritages. Its ancient civilization is described as the first phase of China’s civilization. In the first phase, China’s Civilization was stellar, and creative, possessing well-structured bureaucratic institutions with phenomenal capacities for artistic production and the advancement of high sciences. The second phase of China’s civilization reflects its current modernization, one inspired and operationalized by Marxism and Maoism. The earlier phase of China’s Civilization was aloof, benign, self-sufficient, reticent and reluctant to attract untoward global attention. This ancient civilization, rooted in the organic soil of China itself, was holistic, robust on its own merit.

China's civilization was inspired by its ancient religions and social formations. From such fountainheads, China’s institutional framework at the village, community, district, and regional levels responded to bureaucratic authority to produce creative and organically legitimate governance for centuries.

The ancient civilization of China represented a multidimensional grandeur. At its height, it combined scientific rationalizations with productive outputs in material science. There was a seamless integration of ancient technical and scientific differentiation. These were ancient, but their scientific characteristics were rather modern. If we average and standardize variation to account for epochal setbacks and institutional aberrations, such as misguided actions by the emperors, it is not farfetched to say that the level of scientific maturity that Great Britain reached in its industrial revolution by the 16th and 17th centuries matched China’s scientific output of two thousand years before.

China’s scientific output in ancient days represented functionally relevant and exquisitely adaptive features in their effects and utility. Pre-modern China showed to the world mastery of the hard sciences. Its engineering excellence testified to China’s mastery of metallurgy, chemical sciences, physics, astronomy, medicine, and structural engineering. Its socio-cultural development were the foundations of ancient China’s highly matured political development. Political maturity of ancient China valued human freedom with hierarchical order, revealing one of the oldest and most creative civilizations in the world.
China’s coming status as a superpower is unmistakable. As China’s superpower status consolidates in the next few decades, Third World states are asking, naturally: “Is China going to introduce celebratory developmental alternatives to the neocolonial structures of the West?”

**Introduction**

The content of a nation's history is the foundation of its civilization. China’s history and civilization reveal the country as having the oldest continuous state system, one infused with a rich civilization. Historians, anthropologists, sociologists, and political scientists attempt to unfold the nearly boundless tapestry of China’s rich civilization and come to the common conclusion affirming that the State of China prevailed for millennia.

The enduring survivability of China is reflected in its cultural, traditional and religious heritage. Irrespective of the numerous dynasties of ancient China, the creative and productive emperors of the medieval years, or the struggling rulers on the eve of European colonialism, the State of China kept the lights shining on its legitimacy. China’s status of a superpower was predicted as early as the 1890s.

More than a century ago, James Whitford Bashford noted China’s status as a global power. He stated:

In the problems of the twentieth century, the United States and China bulk large — the United States because of her long line of sea coast on the Pacific, her high industrial and commercial development, her enormous wealth, her energy, and the inevitable increase of her population along the Pacific Coast. The completion of the Panama Canal will put the entire United States, including the Atlantic Coast, three thousand miles nearer China than is Europe. The Christian faith, which we very imperfectly represent, may nevertheless through us become dominant in the Pacific Basin.

China bulks large because she now has a population of 437,000,000 — three-fourths the people of the Pacific basin — whose industry, energy, economy, perseverance and fruitfulness make the Anglo-Saxon of the Orient. China sustains this immense population wholly by farming and such crude manufacturing as can be carried on by hand. China is just beginning to accept modern inventions and to introduce modern machinery; and with far the largest and toughest, most industrious and most economical laboring class on our globe, an era of vast industrial expansion is immediately before her.

Moreover, China is now beginning to construct railroads and to open the largest and finest coal and iron mines thus far known to man.
Baron Richthofen, after a laborious investigation of many years, submitted to the German government a three-volume report of the coal and iron resources of China, showing that they are the finest in the world. He found coal in fifteen of the eighteen provinces examined by him; and in the province of Shansi alone he reported enough coal to supply the human race for several thousand years. Side by side with these supplies of coal, Baron Richthofen found vast supplies of iron ore.

The German government was so amazed by Baron’s report that an expert commission was sent to China in 1897 to reexamine his data, and this commission fully verified Baron Richthofen’s estimates. It was the discovery of these marvelous resources of China which led to the greedy attempts of European powers to divide the empire — attempts which led to the Boxer uprising and which were frustrated largely by the statesmanship of Secretary Hay and the power of the United States. Surely, a population of 437,000,000 in a compact territory sustained by agriculture alone is a phenomenon unmatched by any other country on our globe.¹

The lengthy quote above is a proper context for looking at China’s climb to the status of a superpower. It shows that the essential elements of national power were available in abundance for China to marshal those elements of power and embolden itself to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

This paper begins by looking at China’s timeless civilization, its capabilities, and its potentials to defend itself from external aggression. Yet, as China prepares to assume a superpower status, its relationship to the Third World is facing criticism as being exploitative and damaging. We should look at this argument and examine if the links of ideology, national interest, and lack of skills in public policy are primary causes for any foreign aid irrespective of the status of “communist” China or the “liberal” West.

**China’s Timeless Civilization**

The Chinese civilization commands unparalleled greatness among world civilizations. Other civilizations have left little of material use that can be said to have value in the 21st century. Chinese civilization boasts of the continuity and utility of its civilizational outcomes. China had the technical and strategic capabilities to embark on colonial ventures before European nations initiated their colonial ambitions. What China lacked at the time of European colonial expansion was simply the ambition to compete with Western Imperialism.

National ambition as a motivating factor for greatness is exemplified by the fact that the great Chinese civilization that had accumulated vast technical, scientific, and legal traditions failed in the nineteenth century to capitalize on those resources to prevent China’s defeat and occupation by the European powers.2

The Chinese — whose mastery of medicine, technology, explosives, magnets, and seafaring technology was incomparable from the eleventh to the fifteenth centuries — are now measuring their current economic boom against their past ambivalence for imperial expansion. They see virtue in the pacifism and disinterest of their ancestors, in their refraining from spearheading colonial ventures before the Europeans. China’s emerging projection of power appears designed not to repeat past ambivalence, but rather to meet any Western challenge on Chinese terms at any cost.

Unless the current totalitarian political system destroys the social system and leads to national decay, the prospect of China emerging as a superpower of undisputed supremacy is ineluctable.

The Chinese were oriented to think inward in terms of their perceived cultural superiority. They felt invincible and as a result neglected the need for vigilance. Self-contentedness at the highest level resulted in forgetting the call to develop and maintain the essential elements of national power. They could not overcome their inner thoughts and cultural practices to initiate aggression as a pretext for taking the lands of other societies. The closing decades of the 19th century were painful ones for China, because it could not mount any resistance against foreign occupation. Events such as the Boxer Rebellion represent symbolic indicators of China’s indomitable spirit.

China slept for thousands of years and awoke to find itself embattled and ransacked by foreign powers.3

The ancient Chinese technical and scientific creativity flowed from cultural norms that permeated Chinese society, enabling them to solve immediate and local problems (Mott, F. W. 2003). The Chinese of the middle ages were innovative in the technical realms, but they lacked ambition and vision to channel their technical innovations for imperial conquest. They were ambivalent as to the benefits that could be extracted by marrying their scientific creativity with the contrivances of diplomacy, political ambitions, thirst for adventure and risk taking.

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2 Bailey, Thomas A. *The Foreign Policy of the American People*, Prentice-Hall, New York, NY: 1982. Bailey is full of accolades and, at the same time, he is a dispassionate critic of American greatness. His analysis is beneficial in looking at the pitfalls of uncouth diplomacy and the fortifying strengths of the military-industrial complex aptly defined by President Eisenhower. See, *President Eisenhower’s Farewell Address to the Nation*, January 17, 1961.

Europeans borrowed and innovated from Chinese science and used this for global conquest that brought them bountiful colonial possessions.

**Revolutionary China vs. Imperial China**

Careful study of Mao Zedong’s writings and wisdom reveals the difference between his sharp critical analysis and the spasmodic events that sprung up during his leadership to overshadow the implications of his ideology. The Cultural Revolution (CR) and the Great Leap Forward (GLP) were expressions of his critical thinking. They were introduced as the operationalization of his theory and the synthesis that he constructed to apply Marxism in China.

Theoretically, logically, and synthetically, the Cultural Revolution and the Great Leap Forward were powerful inspirations capable of achieving great results. What was missing was the lack of information for the effective implementation of public policy methodologies and the development of technocratic skills similar to those of the Qin and Han dynasties.

Some of early imperial China’s social and political features are rare in the histories of early peoples: all political power was highly centralized; its government was a bureaucracy of highly literate administrators who were men selected in principle for their individual qualifications of learning and ability and its imperial institutions. . . . the imperial state was a civil government, in which, nominally at least, the civil virtues were held to be superior to the military (Mote, 2003, 3-4).

Chairman Mao believed that the Party is the macrocosm of the people. In his estimation, the Party could multitask as a vanguard army, national service unit, and as a bureaucratic civil service. What was needed was the institutional order that differentiated professional skills and channeled them to work centers with clear guidelines, clearer expectations, and accurate and precise measures of achieved results. The Cultural Revolution and the Great Leap Forward lacked the systemization of the means of production and marshalling of appropriate professional skills.

Further, Mao believed that the masses give wisdom, inspiration, and guidance, to the correct path. He had confidence in the dedicated spirit of the masses and in their willingness to unite behind the Party as long as the Party did not betray their confidence and shortchange their expectations. He spoke of the dictatorship of the people as a collective application of a regimented society marching to the orders of the Party. When the Party sidetracked itself from policy formation, and engaged in aimless ideological regimentation of the masses, it began simultaneously to forget the ancestral wisdom, inspiration, and guidance that were embedded in the consciousness of the masses, and it became a party dictatorship instead of a people’s dictatorship.
According to Mao’s analysis, a people’s dictatorship is legitimate; party dictatorship is not, because it undermines the vision of the masses. When the Party shortchanges the masses, Chairman Mao believed, the Republic will be confounded, and the Party will have fallen short of the people’s expectations.

What constitutes the most remarkable and eye-opening realities of China today? It is the fact that Maoism remains the guiding light of the Chinese Communist Party. Mao’s doctrinal analysis envisioned post-1989 China and the CCP’s functional purposes. The development and placement of differentiated skill, coordination of capital and policy formations, and resources that were lacking during the Cultural Revolution and the Great Leap Forward were met by the end of the twentieth century as the fulfillment of Mao’s visions. The state and the Party were to merge in symbiotic relationship to enhance the glow of a functional state.

Today’s China was predicted during the Cultural Revolution and the Great Leap Forward. It found its bearing during the third quarter of the 20th century. In the 21st century, it is at the initial phase of its maturity. Its capacity for capital formation, its systemization of a vast work force, and its inherent abilities to maximize the efficiency of its material resources suggest the prospect of surpassing the EU, the United States, or Russia in global influence. The productive and useful expectation of the Cultural Revolution and the bench-marks of the Great Leap Forward can be realized with maximum effect in the Third World if China commits enough resources for its own investment returns while uplifting the Third World from its dismal position today.

The closing decade of the 19th century China positioned itself to overcome the intrusions of colonialism in China. The years between the First and Second World Wars witnessed the birth pains of the modern China. Events such as the Boxer Rebellion represented symbolic indicators of an indomitable spirit.

The First World War years contained painful episodes that rendered China, once a great power, possessing a majestic civilization, reduced to a defensive posture; at times it was barely capable of defending its sovereignty against colonial powers and Japanese imperialism. The devastation continued during the Second World War. The 1940s witnessed the maturity and the determination of the Communist Party under the leadership of Chairman Mao Zedong. The Chinese Communist Party at this stage showed a combative spirit and intense discipline.

The military and political organizations were on sure footing as of mid-century, able to defeat the Nationalists and consolidate China’s sovereignty in the post-post World War II decades. After the Second World War, China’s role was regional, mainly in Korea and Taiwan/Formosa. After 1976, the making of an impending superpower with inspiring history and tradition embedded in its old civilization started to become evident.
Joseph Fewsmith describes China at this stage as “historically the most self-conscious society in the world, and the legacy of its history and civilization continue to play an important role, consciously and unconsciously, in the way that China is governed.”

When Mao Zedong, the leader of the Communist revolution, sought guidance on governing his nation, he turned not to the works of Marx and Lenin, whose philosophy he espoused, but to China’s dynastic histories to better understand the way in which China’s emperors had ruled the nation. He did so even as he excoriated China’s imperial past as feudal.4

Once the China Communist Party inaugurated the People’s Republic of China, the Republic started, metaphorically, learning to walk, to steady its footing, and then to take off on its journey at its current swift pace. Fewsmith’s analysis offers important perspective as to the options available to leadership for guiding China along the path of its past civilization. The challenge was of choosing liberal democracy or communism; which best approximated Chinese tradition and civilization?

The Cold War: A Defining Era for China and the Third World

The end of the Second World War introduced new geopolitical alliances. The former European colonies of Africa and Asia were liberated, and they joined the community of nations as sovereign states. European powers had divided China into spheres of European economic interests, but the country nevertheless escaped European colonization. Furthermore, the civil war between the nationalists and the communists preoccupied Chinese patriots.

In 1949, the communists under the leadership of Mao Zedong defeated the Nationalists and established themselves as the rulers of China with the People’s Liberation Army (PLA.) The communists defeated the Nationalist hope of instituting liberal democracy in China. Ever since then, the Chinese Communist Party has become the undisputed authority, assuming the role of modernizing China and creating a formidable deterrent as well as offensive capabilities.

The Cold War years (1945-1991) were defining decades for China. In the first place, the army participated in the Korean War. Even though its military and strategic resources were far more limited than those of the Allied forces, the numerical size and the discipline within the PLA’s hierarchy enabled China to extract a settlement resulting in the division of Korea. At this time the Chinese State morphed in ways that blended Mao’s theory of the people’s dictatorship and Party rule.

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The symbiotic blend of the Chinese State and the Party reveals the seamless overlap between the powers of the state and the party, and the ideological framework that defined their unity. Imperial China captured by Maoist China gained a Chairman without royalty and state power without the imperial crown. The cultural attributes that molded the Chinese citizen, the makings of individual resiliency to endure interminable hardships while extolling imperial China as one of the highest civilizations in the world was replaced by the People’s Party’s “permanent revolution” (Britten, 1968).

The “permanent revolution” was the costly preoccupation of the Party to create dreadful purges of its bureaucratic ranks and its cadres on the pretext and fear of an incipient betrayal of the revolution and a default to bourgeoisie mentality.

Revolutionary China defined its rationale for ruling on the logical abstractions of Chairman Mao’s teachings; the force of his personality seemed to overshadow his ideological abstractions and sidetracked the Party and the State into running in circles diverted away from the healing cultural values of the Chinese people.

The best way to look at this abstract elaboration is to think of the undisputed legitimacy of the Chinese state, its living history, civilization, culture, and heritages, all so dominant that modification and political analysis and attempts to provide an alternative view and alternative institutions or ideas, such as communism or liberalism, continually appear out of place.

China’s long-established identity has proven to be beyond ideological or practical innovations, even those of Mao himself. Revolutionary China began to play a global role during the Cold War. Stalin’s Russia began as an ally of China, but the friendship dissolved fast, because of border friction and Stalin’s misperception of Mao.⁵ At first, the two regimes were ideological friends, but for Stalin it was difficult to control his contrarian ego. He refused to reciprocate the same respect and ideological comradeship that he received from Mao. Soon, the two communist giants split.

During this time, China embarked on a tumultuous ideological journey. The Party wanted to create a monolithic communal state and concentrate its energies on collectivism without giving due consideration to those technocratic resources that were needed to facilitate developmental strategies that are efficient, expedient and non-disruptive. Lack of technical and systemic planning caused food shortages. Cadres who showed ideological inspiration without any technical skills and administrative strategies were ordered to achieve the same levels of performance that would be expected of trained and experienced technicians and scientists.

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This failure to harmonize ideological visions with the development of bureaucratic and
civil service professionals resulted in the failure of the Cultural Revolution and the
Great Leap Forward to serve as a useful template for the Third World to emulate.

Such setbacks were mitigated by the sense of national freedom and state sovereignty
of China and its citizens. China had become totally free from foreign domination. It
revealed its confidence by following a philosophy of self-reliance. Perhaps most
significant, Mao’s logic on capitalism appears to have predicted the present market
system of 21st century China.

On the one hand, he condemns capitalism as a tool of mass oppression by the capitalist
classes. He makes exception to this theory by allowing small-scale capitalist activity
within the rank of the middle classes such as artisans, shop owners, individual farmers.
He believed the CCP’s task was to eliminate the residues of capitalism in private hands
and totally transfer the apparatus of capitalism to the state.

Ultimately, the problem of such an expectation is prioritization.

The period that Mao envisioned for the eradication of capitalism in one sector of society
and its replacement with people’s socialism was not set in stone. Even if rigid
mobilization and discipline are enforced on the formation and implementation of public
projects with tightly scheduled policies, the effect is a form of chaotic misery and
needless catastrophes such as were seen in the Cultural Revolution and Great Leap
Forward. Mao’s real communism is the expression of a state capable of attaining the
legitimacy to represent all of the masses and bring the entire economy under its control
by emulating the accumulative habits and practices of capitalism.

The following statement reflects Mao Zedong’s idea of capitalism, at least at the time
when it was published in 1952:

The present-day capitalist economy in China is a capitalist economy which for the
most part is under the control of the People's Government and which is linked with
the state-owned socialist economy in various forms and supervised by the workers.
It is not an ordinary but a particular kind of capitalist economy, namely, a state-
capitalist economy of a new type. It exists not chiefly to make profits for the
capitalists but to meet the needs of the people and the state.

True, a share of the profits produced by the workers goes to the capitalists, but that
is only a small part, about one quarter, of the total. The remaining three quarters
are produced for the workers (in the form of the welfare fund), for the state (in the
form of income tax) and for expanding productive capacity (a small part of which
produces profits for the capitalists).
Therefore, this state-capitalist economy of a new type takes on a socialist character to a very great extent and benefits the workers and the state.\(^6\)

The above quote is the heart of Mao’s thinking, in the opinion of this author. It is what Mao prophesied would take place in China when he penned it barely a decade after he led his army to victory in the civil war. It was realized in the precise manner that he prophesied during the years 1989 to today. China today is what Mao envisioned in his revolutionary days.

China is relatively new to the status of a superpower actor, so comparing the way China interacts with the Third World will offer a useful context for what is to come for the poor states of Africa and Asia as they raise their hopes and expectations about China.

How will China make a difference in the economic, educational, health, and overall societal welfare of the Third World? China under the leadership of Chairman Mao was friendly and sympathetic to Third World countries.

Will the Chinese state fulfill Chairman Mao’s vision for the Third World today, in the present century, as it has done with respect to the people of China?

The following statement shows Mao’s good will and the genuine solidarity that he extended to the Third World as it struggled against colonialism and the forms of economic dependency that he recognized.

Chairman Mao Zedong referred to the Chinese people as comrades of the former colonized peoples of Africa and Asia. He called for a common bond to throw off the burdens of poverty and destitution that came about due to Western exploitation and greed.

It is also instructive to catalogue the types of material, cultural, scientific, economic, and developmental experiences China can share with the Third World.

Mao Zedong's strategic thinking shed light on the fact that the two super-powers were then the main source of instability and turmoil in the world. Their acts of pursuing hegemonism, power politics — the big bullying the small, the strong bullying the weak, and the rich oppressing the poor — that gave rise to strong opposition and resentment by countries of the third world.

As a member of the third world, China firmly supported other third world countries in their struggles against hegemonism and struggles waged by countries of the second world against interference and control by the super-powers.

China was firmly opposed to the policy of expansionism pursued by the superpowers and carried out the policy of uniting with and struggling against the United States to strike at Soviet hegemonism, thus effectively restraining the expansionist forces of the Soviet Union.  

The People’s Army was conditioned to tolerate the bitter revolutionary struggles that brought the birth of the People’s Republic of China in 1949.

Mao organized a peasant army, the People’s Liberation Army, and created a strong political organization, while the Chinese Communist Party indoctrinated cadres in peasant-based guerrilla warfare, and confronted Chang Kai-shek’s nationalist army. The PLA was an effective military force. It quickly matured and was superior in size, discipline, and military strategy. It drove Chiang Kai-shek out of mainland China and established a communist government in 1949. The CCP was Mao’s creation, organized from the grassroots.

**The Makings of a Powerful China**

Revolutionary China embarked on its current journey in 1949 when the People’s Republic of China (PRC) took power and inaugurated the People’s Republic. The new communist state was on the experimental path to render Marxism as a practical guide for political, economic, and social progress. Capitalism as a contending ideology to Marxism was severely criticized by the newly mobilized communists when they published their *Communist Manifesto*. They catalogued its harmful effects on the working classes of the world. The toil of the industrial workers, the negative capitalization of labor at far lower value compared to the goods produced by the industrial laborers, and the exponential growth of capital accumulation without good citizenship of industrialists offended Marx and Engels.

In the imagination of the revolutionary Marxists, such as Lenin, Trotsky, Mao and Stalin, Marxism provided an equalitarian solution (Wolfe, B. 1948; Moore, B. 1966).

Marxism in its experimental phase began when the Bolsheviks launched the Communist state of Russia in 1917. After Lenin’s death, Joseph Stalin took over and led Russia through the difficulties of the Second World War. Stalin’s brand of leadership exploited the centralizing and dictatorial versions the communist doctrine. He was gifted in commanding attention, generating fear in the heart of his comrades and followers. He was unbending in the execution of his agenda.

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Stalin ignored the philosophical and analytical foundations of Communism as he relied on his dictatorial instincts to run the Soviet State. His personality dominated the institutional hierarchies of the Leninist Party. Mao resembled Stalin in his interpretation of Marxism. He differed from Stalin, because Mao, belatedly, modified Marxism by waking up to the ancient Chinese cultural wisdoms, *The Yenan Way*, as having ideals worth considering.\(^8\)

In 1934, Mao and the PLA made their “The Long March” from southeastern China. They settled in the Province of Yenan, an impoverished rural section in northwestern China. They established Yenan as their revolutionary base from where Mao’s thoughts and ideological philosophy evolved from hardcore Marxism, gradually distancing themselves from the Soviet Model. Mao’s version of Marxism needed theoretical modification. It is not the Russian version of communism that China needed, but one inspired by the ancient soil and soul of China. He found those inspirations in rural and traditional Yenan.

Mao's theoretical elaboration was incremental. It was an amalgam of his writings, poems, theoretical analysis, and China’s folklore linked together by a thread of revolutionary zeal. Both Mao and Stalin converged in the similarity of their party control. Stalin was much older, but they were ideological contemporaries. They differed in their ideological orthodoxy. Mao shared Stalin’s practices of mass mobilization. The severity of Stalinist collectivization and villagization and Mao’s Cultural Revolution and Great Leap Forward have identical outcomes on their respective societies. The outcomes were traumatic and destructive.

The Yenan way reoriented Mao’s views into reconsidering the great merits of the Chinese heritage. He embarked on integrative theory by taking into consideration Chinese ancient history and the lives of great Chinese emperors. In practice and reality, he was self-assured, confident of the soundness of his own theory. Additionally, the outcome of his policy decisions attracted attention to his forceful personality.

The Great Leap Forward and Cultural Revolution were the climax of his way of thinking, one that had evolved since the 1930s when he moved his base to Yenan. His temperament and his personal idiosyncrasies compromised the soundness and the objectivity of his theoretical thinking. His major decisions, such as the Cultural Revolution and Great Leap Forward, bordered on irrationality.

The destruction and devastations they wrought and the pain they inflicted on the longsuffering Chinese people did not make theoretical or common sense.

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In discipline, combat preparation, and mobilization, Mao was an innovative trailblazer, while always admiring and celebrating such ancient Chinese philosophies and ideological inheritances as Confucianism. To elevate his revolutionary message, he propagandized Maoism as a variant of Marxism rooted in the peasantry.

In Asia, the legacy of colonial policies with regard to border lines is being felt today by China’s neighbors. The limits of China’s borders that had been drawn during the colonial era and readjusted by Japan and the Great Powers after the Second World War are now subject to China’s apparent intentions to redraw the limits of its claims to the satisfaction of its newly regained self-assertion and grandeur.

China’s neighbors, namely Vietnam, Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, and Cambodia are protesting China’s unilateral decision to redraw their borders and contest their territorial waters. Similar problems persist in the Middle East, Africa, and South America and in Eastern Europe (Isaac, T. 2015:15).

Maoism as a special version of communism modified to fit Mao’s conceptions was not crystalized to approximate the ideals of Marxism, Leninism, or Maoism. The CCP charted its own version of ideological, political, industrial and economic policies as the basis for launching the robust modernization journey that China embarked on in 1989.

From 1946 to 1949, China experienced a civil war between the nationalist Chinese under liberal Chiang Kai-shek and Mao’s Chinese People’s Liberation Army (PLA). Chiang Kai-shek had started his own career as a communist. As he studied the communists and understood their methods, he changed course to become a dedicated liberal securing financial and military aid from the West, particularly the United States. One of the first steps that he took after he changed his ideology was to fight to eliminate the communists within his organization.

In 1927, Chang Kai-shek succeeded in defeating the communists. He severely crippled and disrupted their organizational efforts, but a few fled to the rural areas under Mao’s leadership. Chiang Kai-shek thus served as the preeminent leader of Mainland China until 1949. In the civil war that culminated in 1949, Chiang Kai-shek and his National Army were driven out of mainland China to create the Republic of China on Taiwan. The People’s Liberation Army under the leadership of Mao Zedong declared the People’s Republic of China (PRC) in 1949.

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The Making of a Mercantilist and Powerful China

Following the death of Chairman Mao in 1976, the chaos and restlessness of the revolutionary zeal was sorted out when a new group of leaders rose from the ranks of the CCP and redirected China away from Maoism and toward state capitalism. China’s state capitalism allowed small measures of private enterprise in commerce, IT enterprises, real estate, and agriculture. Under the leadership of President Jiang Zemin, in the early 1990s, a robust free market economy and entrepreneurial incentives were encouraged. The upper echelon of the CCP controlled political power and, at the same time, relaxed economic restrictions.

The Party woke up to realize that the Chinese genius for national renewal and prosperity rested on the engine of private entrepreneurship, not as a result of ideological sentiment but as an aspect of national character. As private capital was encouraged, parts of the macroeconomics of China, including fiscal, monetary, foreign trade, commerce, industrial, and policy matters were firmly under the grip and watchful eyes of the CCP. The ideological party of the Mao years embraced the state as an instrumental tool for mercantilism.

As a result, within the last 50 years, China has managed to stand tall as an economic giant. Today, China’s economic tentacles span the globe. It uses its vast economic surplus to stipulate its own dictates to achieve compound interest on the marginal foreign aid it extends to the Third World. Will this dynamic accumulation differ from the capitalist mode of economic interaction against which Chairman Mao used to rail?

The CCP certainly became adept at creating pragmatic and practical policy tools. At the lower level of economic activities, the CCP allowed small businesses and single input merchandising interests, such as consumable and perishable items, for its vast consumer market. As Townsend stated:

Despite their sensitivity [to centralization] problems, Chinese elites apparently remain committed to their pattern of diffused administrative responsibilities. It has served as a check on bureaucratic expansionism, prepared the country for resistance to foreign attack, and compiled a creditable record of economic growth.

Most significantly, perhaps, it has created an administrative system that is sensitive to the growth potential of localities and encourages them to maximize the use of their own resources. This aspect of decentralization, in combination with mass line methods of work, supports political mobilization and community involvement among the population.¹⁰

This practice encouraged large-scale capital accumulation, the spinoff of which was the increase of government revenue. Never mind that regulatory policies were lax or that the greed associated with feverish capitalism resulted in the reciprocal exchanges of benefits between grasping entrepreneurs and corrupt party cadres. In the larger scheme of Chairman Mao’s analysis of the “contradictions” associated with the revolutionary landscape, the economic sector manifests profit-seeking elements who will use their bureaucratic positions to align with entrepreneurs to impede the revolutionary struggle.

He was specific about the endemic tendencies of profit-seeking pointing out: “To maintain public order and safeguard the interests of the people, it is necessary to exercise dictatorship as well over thieves, swindlers, murderers, arsonists, criminal gangs and other scoundrels who seriously disrupt public order”.11

For midlevel production, distribution and labor relations, a version of a neo-corporatist system blending state and corporate interests as instrumental policy for national mobilization became the chosen path for harmonious means of economic production, distribution, and extraction. Government revenue skyrocketed as Chinese goods flooded global markets. Governance mattered in the larger scope of the CCP’s national agenda.

Once the benefits of a guided free market started accumulating, the CCP encouraged intense capital accumulation. Its capacity for capital formation, for mobilizing the workforce, identifying work centers, segmenting the workforce via work centers, and identifying policy targets from the actual planning strategies was combined with the force of its ability to inspire society for most productive activities. State autarchy was unleashed and Chinese entrepreneurs, scientists, engineers all contributed to the rise of a triumphant, increasingly wealthy state.

Mao was always optimistic about China’s potentials. His use of the concept of “empiricism” to affirm his conviction of China’s stratospheric rise was looked at askance by those who subjected his work to strict analysis.12 He based his hopeful optimism of China’s rise to prominence on purely Marxist logic. His “thoughts”, strategies, and polemics were Marxist, but it is also apparent that he channeled Confucianism, the values of which he was jealously proud.

After 1989, a new outlook and new ideas were elevated as ideological guides to be embraced by an enlightened state and Party for the achievement of national prosperity.

China has rediscovered Mao’s philosophical thoughts and reconciled them with those ancient Chinese cultural goals that he tried but could not accomplish due to his larger-than-life image of himself in comparative terms. He was egotistic, self-assured, brilliant in thoughts, thoughtless in actions, and unwilling to look back and take corrective measures to correct or admit his failures. The succeeding leadership bettered him in being rational, astute, wise, duty-bound, cautious, but prodding and taking risks in global affairs.

The blend of ideology and culture are elevating the citizen as an engine of creative ideas, boundless efforts, and a committed vanguard for a modernized and industrialized China. Today, China is rising, and its bright future can shed rays of hope to Third World Countries. The extent to which the Third World is going to fare better by emulating the China model compared to the developmental model that was offered by the liberal ideology is a legitimate topic of study.

**China and the Third World Today**

China has reignited its ancient culture of phenomenal creativity in growing areas of science, the economy, Internet Technology, and globalization.\(^{13}\) It has climbed up the ladder of the take-off stage and reached the economic heights, thus inching closer to the developed stage. As it does so, its approach to development is a zero-sum game. China is now viewed as lacking a sense of restraint in its exploitative relations to the Third World.

China has evolved into a country that is accumulative and exploitative — in the process, it has become far worse than the liberal capitalists whom Chairman Mao described as “blood suckers.”

One former government official whose country was taken advantage of by the Chinese International Development Bank lamented:

> Venezuela has tried to finance itself with the help of the China Development Bank, which does not impose the kind of conditionality that IMF bashers dislike. Instead, the CDB lends on secret terms, for uses that are undisclosed and corrupt, and with built-in privileges for Chinese companies in areas like telecommunications (Huawei), appliances (Haier), cars (Chery), and oil drilling (ICTV).

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The Chinese have not required that Venezuela do anything to increase the likelihood it regains creditworthiness. They merely demand more oil as collateral. Whatever the IMF’s faults, the CDB is a disgrace.\textsuperscript{14}

China has earned the right to be regarded as a fully developed country. Its level of modernization, both in the economic and the political arenas, is as robust as those states who categorized China as a developing state less than 50 years ago.

China’s lightening economic development is spectacular, and the scale of differentiation is vast in all categories of the sciences. China’s civil engineering feats are creating islands out of the deep-sea oceans. China’s strategic and defense developments are manned by the most sophisticated scientific skills under the command of phalanxes of young scientists whose creativity, vision, dedication, and Confucian discipline are awe-inspiring.\textsuperscript{15} Simultaneously, China is accelerating its scientific speed with determined confidence to catch up with the West, and with the United States, in particular.\textsuperscript{16}

With the outbreak of the Cold War shortly after 1945, China was at a crossroads. Was the Peoples Liberation Army to clench the revolutionary banner and launch China on a radical revolutionary path or were the Nationalists going to prevail?

Until Chairman Mao Zedong’s death in 1976, China was a vanguard leader of the Third World. As such, it provided to the Third World countries an ideological vision of egalitarian Marxism. However, the stridency of Maoism, the asymmetry of its ideological vision, and the tactical errors committed in the selection of public policy tools essential for the smooth implementation of the Great Leap forward, all attracted negative attention.

The drama overshadowed the substantive contents and ideological intent of the Great Leap Forward. For this reason, the “brotherhood” and the common vision that China saw as the basis for cementing a strong bond with the Third World were not consummated. The mechanical aspect of the Cultural Revolution also dissipated popular energy as different social forces within the CCP battled each other while the masses meekly fulfilled the Party’s objectives in terms of production goals.


The organizational crisis within the Party was used by capitalists and imperialists to paint a negative picture of Maoism. Third World countries were warned to distance themselves from Maoism. President Kennedy’s warning “Those who ride on the back of the tiger will end up inside” was frequently cited and was meant to sway the geopolitical preferences of the Third World.

Still many Third World revolutionaries remained loyal comrades of China and admired the CCP’s ability to rule effectively. Third World revolutionaries such as Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, and Mohammed Mossadegh of Iran were all dedicated centralists whose ideological vision was similar to that of Maoism.

The ideological objectives and goals where China and Third World revolutionaries agreed included, in this author’s view:

1. Equalitarian Marxism envisioned a strong centralizing developmental state.
2. The centralizing developmental state is ultimately dedicated to faithfully striving for the realization of human rights, civil liberties, due process of law and justice.
3. In order to achieve these ultimate objectives, the party must be disciplined and trained in the art of selfless revolutionary thought. The rank and file members must be valiant, relentless, loyal and conversant in Marxist analysis.
4. The state was to be governed by the rules and edicts of a centralized and dominant party.
5. The party would rely on using authoritarian methods to realize totalitarian governance without deviating from its mission to build a prosperous, peaceful, and secure society.
6. Totalitarianism is a unitary system where social harmony is enforced, individualism is subordinated to the collective objectives and goals, and individual choices are curtailed for maximizing harmonious political and social order.

Countries differed in their methodology of application and in the challenges they faced to fully implement their policy goals. Nearly all of the above-cited revolutionary leaders were confronted by foreign and domestic resistance. Those who overcome foreign resistance were exceptions, such as Nyerere. Only China stands today fulfilling the Maoist version of Marxism.

The warm embrace of the Third World by Mao is still enunciated by the leadership of China. There is obvious goodwill from China and the huge investment that China is making in the Third World is worthy of praise. As stated above, an ideological stand without the technical support of an effective public administration and public policy can fail and thus make heavy investment in the Third World meaningless.
Patterns of China’s foreign aid programs seem designed to give mixed results of promise and disappointing failure. The areas where China’s foreign investment and foreign aid is making progress are seen in those countries that have established a committed civil service sector. Thus, in countries such as Ethiopia where, in relative terms, cultural habits repudiate corruption, China’s investment was fruitful. Those that are failing are mostly in Africa where the civil service sector is fraught with corruption and inefficiencies.

China’s interaction with the Third World is dynamic; it is evolving and changing. An example of this is China is rethinking of its investments with corrupt and ineffective governments. What positive returns will China’s investment bring can only be measured over an extended period of time. The pitfalls that impaired the effectiveness of the Cultural Revolution and Great Leap Forward can also be challenges to developmental cooperation. Skilled manpower, high ethical standards, transparency, and, most of all, proven benefits that lift the lives of neglected societies must animate China’s role in the Third World in order to make a difference. These are what China wishes for its citizens and should be what China’s investment abroad may show to the world in general and to the Third World in particular.

Conclusion

China stands self-assured, proud of its civilization and history. Its manpower and the Chinese spirit and culture that animated its genius constitute an enviable resource that many countries admire. Beyond that, as modern China expands its global influence to distant lands, its mining and resource extraction ventures can easily turn to misadventures if China neglects its obligation to profile ethical and honest exchange with Third World interlocutors.

If China is aiming to help the Third World in ways that are better than those options that were provided by the West, its motivation should be based on reciprocal benefits, not on ways that compound the Third World’s economic impoverishment. Among these options are:

1. China should reciprocate the generosity, trust, and high expectations that Third World’s citizens have placed on China’s partnership as better alternatives in the broad areas of the economy, diplomatic, and civilization.

2. Direct investment by capitalists, and what Chairman Mao called “their running dogs,” was criticized by Chairman Mao, and by scholars from the dependency theory field of study as form of neo-colonialism. China’s direct investment must provide socio-economic benefits to its Third World partners enough to elevate their poverty-stricken lives and to heal their wounded pride.
3. China’s interaction and economic exchanges with the Third World are criticized as being mechanical, one-sided and brutally exploitative. Critics argue that China is interested only in what China can get by way of hoarding extracted goods and industrial input and leaving Third World in worse situations. China must work hard to dispel this criticism by aiming to better the lives of those societies with whom China interacts in care, consciousness, and altruism similar to its aims for its own citizens at home.

China has earned the right to be regarded as a fully developed country. Its level of modernization, both in economic and political areas, is as robust as those states which relegated China to developing status just recently. China’s lightening economic development is spectacular, and the scale of differentiation is vast in all categories of the sciences. China’s civil engineering feats are creating islands out of the deep-sea oceans.

China’s strategic and defense developments are manned by the most sophisticated scientific skills, under the command of phalanxes of young scientists whose creativity, vision, dedication, and Confucian discipline are awe-inspiring. Scholars observe than China is accelerating its scientific speed with determined confidence to catch up with the West and the United States.

Some look at China’s march forward as technical achievement and accumulation of wealth. They measure China’s achievements by what is quantifiable. Such quantifiable results cannot be disputed. However, there are normative elements in the study of nations that are as effective as quantitative results. These include national character, history, institutional accountability, and the harmonization of such amorphous characteristics as ideological beliefs and the strict parameters of public policy goals and objectives. The country that succeeds in the harmonization and in the precision of these vectors will rule.

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Bibliography


Contemporary Contexts of Confucianism

Yuanhui Shi

Abstract

This paper discusses the possibility that Confucianism will be put into political practice in present-day China. Although New Confucians in mainland China often call for the revival of Confucianism for the cure of many current social problems, there are some unconquerable obstacles, among which political construction is the most crucial. What is more noteworthy is that Confucianism itself has some doctrinal defects provoking those practical obstacles. Therefore, this paper argues that Confucianism, advocating a moral government of benevolence, is a doctrine of idealized political order, but it lacks the practical elements needed for realistic political operation.

Since 2014 some New Confucians in mainland China have been preaching that Confucianism should to be inserted into political practice, and that China be Confucianized, demanding “to return to Kang Youwei”.¹ Now, somewhat differentiated from their previously allied Taiwanese counterparts, from whom they once obtained academic resources and inspirations, New Confucians support the idea of having Confucianism adopted as the official ideology guiding the political life of the entire state. Here lies the difference between the two groups: can Confucianism serve as a political construction for the present China, or merely provide some spiritual and moral guidelines for people in their common lives? A judgment by one New Confucian in mainland China addressed this point. He described the New Taiwan Confucians as “very abominable, shallow, cowardly and therefore futureless”,² evidently because he expected his cousins in Taiwan to have done more than merely emphasizing the spiritual and moral significance of Confucianism.

The Revival of Confucianism in Mainland China

To understand how the political demands of New Confucians in mainland China are pushing China to align with Confucianism instead of Marxist or Western political ideas we will examine past events.

The First Opium War (1838–1842) awakened China out of a long-cherished illusion of being a self-contained power of political, economical, military and cultural superiority. From then on, many efforts were made to compensate for feelings of inferiority to Western powers. The Self-Strengthening Movement, the Hundred Days’ Reform and May Fourth Movements are examples of these efforts. The Self-Strengthening Movement (1861-1895) was mainly focused on setting up factories for the purpose of economic and military benefits. The Hundred Days’ Reform (11 June to 22 September 1898, late Qing Dynasty) focused further on politically modernizing China (1861-1895). The May Fourth Movement (1917-1921) challenged traditional Chinese Confucianism in its cultural and ideological validity.

Progressive demands for reformation were motivated by the deep anxiety inflicted by foreign challenges to China's sovereignty during the period of colonization. The Self-Strengthening Movement and the Hundred Days Reform could be seen as two preparatory stages for the May Fourth Movement. Failures of some of these reform campaigns, along with disappointment with the Xinhai Revolution, ultimately drew more attention to ideological Confucianism and enabled the coming cultural self-analysis and doubt.

Differing from the two previous reformative efforts, the May Fourth Movement was overwhelmingly successful in awakening cultural reformation in China. Subsequently traditional Confucianism was marginalized in spite of strong support from some conservative voices. This led to an acceleration of the course of modernization. Although after 1949 mainland China and Taiwan chose two different political systems, the modernizing course continued in both regions.

It is noteworthy that in Taiwan, mainland Confucianism was not completely rejected. It was still preached by New Confucians, such as Mou Zongsan and Xu Fuguan. Meanwhile in mainland China, many intellectuals were fiercely criticized for their anti-revolutionary academic ideas, including New Confucians such as Xiong Shili, Liang Shuming and Feng Youlan, and even Marxist academics Hou Wailu and Jian Bozan. This nationwide mass denunciation reached its height when the Cultural Revolution declared Confucianism one of its main targets. The traditional belief of thousands of years was made into an historical outcast.

As economic growth became the focus of national policies in mainland China in 1977, the course of modernization, mainly industrialization and commercialism, gradually picked up speed and led to a period of economic prosperity in the 2010s. But beneath the glittering surface of prosperity lay many disappointments and disillusionments that were widely felt. Among the worst were environmental pollution, school disorder, spiritual degradation and political corruption of all types.
Many New Confucians in mainland China, with inspirations from Taiwanese Confucianism, concluded that the renunciation of Confucianism was the cause of all these social ills, and that to resolve them, China ought to rehabilitate the traditional beliefs for the national ideological stage.

One point we have to admit is that Confucianism mainly speaks to the human mind and aims at uplifting it morally, and so in this sense, those New Confucians are sensible in their call for the revival of Confucianism.

**Some Obstacles**

But there are some obstacles to the political resurrection of Confucianism in mainland China.

First, the crucial pillars for the medieval ideology of Confucianism are lacking. According to thousands of years of history in China, phratrial management, Imperial Examinations and monarchical tyranny combined to put Confucianism into political practice, which respectively organized people inside their clans by means of Confucian ethics, implemented Confucian notions in political life through those officials selected by their mastery of Confucian classics, and ensured that Confucianism would be adopted as the national ideology and preached nationally. But with all of these structural foundations disrupted long ago, how could it be possible for Confucianism to restore its ancient tenets?

Another point is that the above-mentioned social problems in mainland China also came as a result of global industrialization and commercialism, a world-wide epidemic. In medieval times Confucianism in China can be recognized as a tool that was used to foster and shape a healthy human mind among intellectuals and underprivileged people in spite of the prevailing political corruption. But how could Confucianism alone act as an effective buffer for such an overwhelming influence without any assistance from outside, when it was still unknown if this traditional belief system was officially adopted and enforced by the Chinese political system?

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4 This practice (宗族主义) stressed that hierarchical management must be established and respectfully carried on within every kin phratry (usually made up of smaller families with the same male ancestor and thus the same surname) in order to maintain a peaceful and orderly sustenance for all the phratrial members, advantaged or disadvantaged. The phratrial management was originally advocated and implemented by the initial rulers of the Zhou dynasty and later reinforced by Confucius and Mencius in Confucianism, lasting until the end of the Qing dynasty. See Fu, Lecheng, *A History of China*. Guiyang: Guizhou Education Press, 2010, pages 37-38; Li, Zehou, *Historical Ontology & Five Essays from 1999*. Beijing: SDX Joint Publishing Company, 2008, p. 181; and Liang, Shuming, *The Substance of Chinese Culture*. Shanghai: Shanghai People’s Publishing House, 2011, p. 77.
Besides, “ren” (benevolence), the core ideas of Confucianism focus attention on human morals and ethics. Political balance, economic exploitation, and military mobilization are also areas of focus, but to a lesser extent.

As a founding doctrine for Chinese culture, Confucianism, established by Dong Zhongshu as predominant in political affairs, ascended to its historical level of ideology under the reign of the emperor Wu of Han (141-87 BCE). But in fact, the emperor preferred military generals, cold-hearted administrators, efficient labor foremen, and profit-thirsty financiers more than the Confucians for the simple reason that the former were much more useful to his policies of foreign wars and hierarchical control of the empire.

An example of this is that Sang Hongyang, one of emperor Wu of Han’s most successful economic managers, completely defeated some highly-skilled Confucians in a debate about his exploitive wealth-collecting practices. The Confucians knew little about revenue generation and were only able to repeat the moral ideas of Confucius.

Wang Mang, who was a strong believer in Confucianism when he was enthroned as part of the Han dynasty, planned to carry on a political reformation in line with Confucianism, but he was overthrown and killed by rebels. Here we have to acknowledge that Wang’s reformation failed partly for the reason that Confucianism was not designed to effectively manage practical political, economic and military tasks.

In this sense, the emperor Xuan of Han, known for his political success, once warned his prince that Confucianism and Legalism combined to make an effective government for their Han Dynasty, but that Confucians were too impractical. The warning was heeded by several emperors who followed Xuan, and this resulted in better control of their empires. This is the reason why so many emperors in ancient China used Legalism skills to keep control of their empires while, for the purpose of cultural gloss, pretended to believe in Confucianism.

Why Is Confucianism Not Good in a Political Context?

Confucianism is actually a doctrine of moral ideas and ethic concerns. Although many ancient Confucians declared that moral growth and political practice were both their life ambitions, they were largely lacking in political skills.

To be a successful politician or statesman, in a larger sense, demands mastery of knowledge and skills of various areas.

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With this a leader may achieve a healthy power balance, a prosperous economy, a lively and productive culture, and the security of military strength. But the focus of Confucianism is on developing minds morally and ethically. The ideas of economic construction, scientific research, technological uplift, balance of political power, and military strength were occasionally recognized to be the result of moral and ethical cultivation, but usually totally neglected in Confucian thought.

Private commercialism and industry were usually ranked low and sometimes even suppressed in ancient China. According to Confucianism, the people who engaged in business were mostly profit-thirsty and morally dishonest. Also, much more dangerously, it was thought that these profiteers would greatly widen the wealth gap between the rich and the poor, causing an increased risk of famine by attracting more peasants to turn from farming to business, and greatly disrupt the national moral standards by means of their expensive and immoral life.

Another reason, probably more intrinsically urgent to emperors, was that private businesses would grow powerful enough to be a threat to the stability of their empires. In this sense, many emperors, especially those inclined to an absolute hierarchical control of the empire, such as emperor Wu of Han, acted forcefully to establish and strengthen state-owned businesses, and to greatly reduce the power and size of the private economy.

Amazing achievements in science and technology were once made in ancient China. The famous Houmuwu Ding (a massive bronze vessel) was cast during the Shang Dynasty, utilizing the most sophisticated chemical, physical and metallurgical knowledge and skills in the world at the time.\(^7\) During the reign of the emperor Wu of Han, weapons of the highest quality gave one Han soldier such an advantage that he could be as effective as five Huns on the same battlefield.\(^8\) But such knowledge and skills were believed to be low and insignificant by Confucians who believed that science and technology were simply more particular, and thus less important, than the development of moral principles throughout society. This was what would make the empire more thoroughly healthy and everlasting than any other idea or practice, according to the Confucians.

The historical fact related to a powerful Western cannon can be used to confirm this point. During the Ming Dynasty, Xu Guangqi recommended use of the cannon, which was finally put to the test on the Manchu battlefield, greatly assisting in the victory over the troops of Nurhaci. But the Ming government still refused to widely use this more effective weapon, probably as a result of bribery of Ming officials by some businessmen to help the profiteers maintain their monopoly of all foreign trade.

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8 Ibid., p.80.
Cannons would lead to profits for the Macau Spaniards who were ready to sell cannons to the Ming leaders.

Some Ming officials, for the purpose of downplaying Xu Guangqi, even intentionally withheld necessary supplies for the troops of Sun Yuanhua, a disciple of Xu. This led the two officers under Sun to yield to the Manchu army, resulting in Sun's beheading by the emperor. What is ironic is that the cannon was widely accepted and used by the Manchu, vastly increasing their military strength, facilitating the victory over the Ming empire, literally helping to establish Qing sovereignty.9

Johann Adam Schall von Bell, a Jesuit priest and close friend and counselor to the emperor Shunzhi of Qing, did much to increase scientific knowledge and technology in China. Although he was jailed for a time as a result of political subterfuge, he was an expert in astronomy and even an accomplished engineer who designed a powerful cannon.10

In the history of China, balance of political power always alternated between establishing and collapsing, with the dynasties coming one after the one, without any establishment of a solid political environment. Without an effective balance of power, emperors often grew to be self-centered, indulgent, and tyrannical, with their favorite eunuchs, relatives or officials getting more and more powerful and thus spreading corruption.

On the other hand, some officials or generals used their influence to be independent from central government, or even to attempt to seize power from an emperor who was perceived to be weak. Out of the fear that their thrones might be endangered or taken over, many emperors were most concerned with their own stability and tight control of military power. At times of war throughout history, many emperors, in order to ensure their control over soldiers, used their eunuchs to counterbalance their generals. Few emperors would hand their troops over to the complete command of their officials or generals with solid belief in that leadership. In this way military strength was greatly diminished in ancient China.

**Defects in Confucianism**

Confucianism could not achieve a balance of political power because it sought to provide a clear and actionable conception of personal duties and rights to shape trustworthy human relations that was combined with the practical aspect of duties fulfilled and rights secured.

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10 Ibid., p. 163-192.
This was not enough to maintain a stable balance of political power. Confucians were mainly concentrated on preaching the merit of “ren” (benevolence) and thus only wished to arouse the moral sense of others and achieve a mutually reliable human relationship by means of constantly uplifting one’s own moral condition to be a moral model for his neighborhood.

*The Book of Lord Shang* points out that the benevolent (those who have achieved the merit of “ren”) can be benevolent to others, but can’t make others benevolent without fail; that is, being benevolent or even shouldering one’s duties without asking for his rights can’t necessarily arouse the moral sense of others so as to accomplish a moral world.\(^1\) Since there was no reasonable and consistent understanding of duties and rights, much less a multilateral one, a permanently trustworthy human relationship couldn’t be established or solidly maintained while mutual disbelief would appear and grow. What’s more, the highlighting of moral merit and the neglect of personal rights combined to bring up many hypocritical saints and to provoke doubt and even repulsion against Confucianism among some practical-minded people, thus making a mutually-trusting human relationship more difficult or even more impossible.

According to Li Zehou, “ren”, is a kind of human psychology of benevolence radiating from the affection between parent and child.\(^2\) He argued that the merit, having originated from the emotional state of awe, piety and gravity in shamans during their praying rituals, was finally conceptualized as “ren” by Confucius.\(^3\) This idea is no doubt reasonable in that it highlights the significance of family relations, the state of self-examining and self-disciplining, as well as the mindset of moral beneficence.

Therefore, we can arrive at the judgment that although Confucianism is also focused on human benevolence, it is different from the Christian fraternity, for the conception of “ren” has its starting-point established on the affection between parent and child. Mencius stated, “We should extend our affections for our parents and children to those of others”.\(^4\) Here the implication is that although one should love and care about other people, the love for his own family members ought to be greater than that for others.

Just due to this fact, Fei Xiaotong pointed out that the traditional social structure in China was basically the type of “water rippling from a self-center,” in which affectionate concern decreased when further from the center. This is different from the Western idea of each person standing on ground of the same level.\(^5\)

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\(^{13}\) Ibid., p. 180.


He further stated that Confucianism advocated an egoism instead of the Western-style of individualism, although this egoism was not that of absolute selfishness, but, rather, of a self-centered human benevolence.\textsuperscript{16}

That is to say, although Confucianism preached that one should carry on his responsibilities for himself, his family, his country and his world, it still emphasized that all these responsibilities must have oneself serving as a radiating central point. This makes Confucian egoism, a doctrine of human benevolence diminishing from the self-center, different from Western individualism, which especially has stressed equality. This also explains why true human equality didn’t appear in ancient China.

Although Confucianism was mainly based on egoism, it was still focused on family relations, especially the parent-child relationship. Family was, for the Chinese people, a spiritual harbor and the most important source of reliable friends. Very few people would leave their families behind and act completely egoistically.

The Chinese people regard their families as their life center and extend the ethical principles of family relations to social life, thus lacking the sense of individualism and public spirit characteristic of Western life, as Liang Shuming argued.\textsuperscript{17} In this sense, Confucianism couldn’t cultivate truly modern citizens, individuals with substantial mentalities for modern political life.

The stress of moral ethics in Confucianism made principles of morality predominant as ideological guidelines for social life, suppressing some carnal human needs and desires, and then seeking social progress for higher civilizations of prosperity and freedom.

In Confucianism, personal conscience rather than outside instruction was highly depended on for moral uplift, and Confucius once argued that self-disciplining and following moral principles would lead one to achieve “ren”, and one should rely on himself instead of others for the achievement of that merit.\textsuperscript{18} This means that one had to conduct self-examination and self-discipline to pursue moral progress step by step, and to shoulder his responsibilities for himself, his family, his country, and his world stage by stage. Yet in this lay the contradictory notion that one could either be only concerned with himself and his family, or extend his concern to his country, as well as his world.

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., p. 27.
\textsuperscript{17} Liang, Shuming, \textit{The Substance of Chinese Culture}. Shanghai: Shanghai People's Publishing House, 2011, p. 77.
\textsuperscript{18} Zhu, Xi, \textit{Annotations of the Four Books}. Xi’an: Sanqin Publishing House, 1998, p. 149, 199.
The difference was completely determined by his own judgment whether he was successful or not, just as Mencius once said that one should make a contribution to his world when he was successful, and if not he might (as well) be responsible for himself.\(^{19}\) In this sense, one had to depend on his own conscience to lift up his moral level and shoulder his responsibilities.

Thus, different people were allowed to form specific moral expectations for themselves, and similarly to decide to be responsible either for themselves or for their country and their world.

Naturally, people were completely allowed to be self-centered or universally-spirited, or anywhere between the two opposites. At the same time, each person was fairly self-confident that he had achieved the merit of “ren” or at least come very close.

Taking this point into consideration, we may understand why it was so hard for the Chinese people to come to a completely reasonable agreement, society-wide, without any irritation or even hatred, for each of them believed that he himself was morally right and thus justifiable at the core, therefore unwilling to yield or change his own idea.

During the Song Dynasty, Wang Anshi and Sima Guang, both Confucian saints and patriots, couldn’t arrive at an agreement about how to make their country economically prosperous and militarily strong, and they rejected each other’s political ideas totally whether it was reasonable and helpful or not.

When Wang Anshi was in office, he couldn’t accept Sima Guang’s challenge or criticism of his reformative policies and Sima Guang had to live in Luoyang, far away from the national political center of Bianliang (Kaifeng at present). In return, when Wang was removed and Sima Guang restored to his office, he had all the policies made by Wang abolished, even if some of them proved to be effective in economics and in military construction.

Of course, we can’t deny that, due to the fact that both of them were moral saints, they respected each other in terms of private relationship, mutually trying not to offend or attack the other. However, in the history of China, Confucians could seldom tolerate different political ideas and even were moderately eager to offend and attack their political rivals. This explains why the Chinese people couldn’t accept genuine equality or democracy at the bottom of their hearts. It also explains why, in Confucianism, there was no really effective means for the Chinese people to arrive at an optimal judgment or policy.

\(^{19}\) Ibid., p.516.
In Chinese culture the so-called term “mianzi,” face, is actually one’s moral self-image established according to his own conscience. Since conscience is personal and self-motivating, “mianzi” has to be shaped by means of moral self-examination, self-discipline and self-improvement. Therefore, when under moral criticism, the Chinese people, believing that their personal conscience has been doubted and challenged, usually respond furiously and fiercely. This means that people should be given adequate respect for themselves to find and redress their moral failures, and at the same time leads to the fact that the Chinese people are not accustomed to rational discussion or debate.

Confucianism, advocating a moral government of benevolence, is a doctrine of an idealized political order, but it is lacking in practical means of bringing such an ideal into reality, as is discussed above in this section.

**The Significance of Confucianism in Present-day China**

Since entering the stage of national ideology under Emperor Wu of Han, Confucianism set the guidelines for the Chinese people in all aspects of their life for more than 2000 years — up to 1949.

Ancient Chinese literature, essays, poems, dramas and novels all carried various Confucian messages and thus shaped traditional Chinese culture, which in turn forged the typical Chinese consciousness that one should be industrious, morally self-uplifting, and responsible for himself, his family, his country and his world. That is to say, Confucianism always preached a moral, active and responsible life outlook, and helped the nation survive many frustrations and hardships by providing for the Chinese people a psychological anchor and a spiritual beacon.

In fact, Confucianism still preaches that life attitude to the Chinese people and forges the Chinese consciousness through the reading of classic Chinese essays, poems, dramas and novels. In this sense, Confucianism is still effective in today’s China, serving as a spiritual beacon and a psychological anchor for the Chinese people.\(^{20}\)

But in terms of politics, Confucianism has not been helpful, and will not be helpful at least as a main framework. Mou Zongsan stated that the moral government principles of Confucianism were consistent with the content of democracy, and he was quite reasonable in that Confucianism was calling continuously for a truly benevolent political policy in that politics must be responsible for the life of the people, for the future of the country and the world, thus inclined to serve the true welfare of the people, the country and the world. This idea is essentially in agreement with Western democratic principles. However, we still have to admit that those Confucian principles were spiritually-based ideals of politics, lacking practical means of realistic operation, which have been and still are nearly impossible to put into real practice.

Of course, Confucianism might be helpful in forming a more comprehensive understanding of justice and goodness and redressing some faults of democratic procedures, for Confucianism is more focused on the effects of justice than on stopping at a just procedure.

**Conclusion**

Why are New Confucians in mainland China are calling for Confucianism to be ideologized and put into political practice?

This is actually a continuation of the idea of the New Taiwan Confucians, and it is, of course, a natural response from Confucianism to the Western challenge as well as to social problems provoked by commercialism and industrialization, such as environmental pollution, educational disorder, spiritual degradation and political corruption. Many New Confucians in mainland China believe that Confucianism can be an effective answer to these threats, for the doctrine has shaped the hardworking and moral-spirited Chinese consciousness and helped the Chinese people get through many challenges.

But as we have discussed above, there are some obstacles, Confucianism could not overcome if put into political practice, for Confucianism has lost its crucial pillars that existed in ancient China, and what is more noteworthy, has some inherent defects in political construction.

Of course, Confucianism will benefit the Chinese people a great deal by providing them with a more active and hopeful life outlook, as well as serving as a psychological foundation. But in terms of the world of politics, of political construction, Confucianism will not be as effective as the New Confucians of mainland China are expecting.

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References


Five Selected Writings Authored by Prof. Palmer Talbutt

Palmer Talbutt

Editor’s Comment

Prof. Palmer Talbutt (1927-2017) was a professor in the Department of Philosophy and Religion at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University from 1959 to his retirement as Professor Emeritus in 1991. He earned his B.A. in English from Harvard University, his Master's in Philosophy from Columbia University, a B.D. from Garrett Theological Seminary in Evanston, Illinois, and a Ph.D. from Duke University.

A long-time, active member of the International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations, he proposed in 1987 that the ISCSC organize sessions on the thought and writings of the organization’s first president, Pitirim A. Sorokin, upon the occasion of Sorokin’s centennial in 1989. Subsequently, he co-edited with Joseph B. Ford and Michel P. Richard the resulting volume, *Sorokin and Civilization: A Centennial Assessment*. The preface was written by Prof. Roger Wescott and leading scholars in the field contributed chapters. A committee was authorized by the Council of the ISCSC, upon the suggestion of then president, Dr. Michael Palencia-Roth, and the final product was guided to publication by Transaction Publishers in 1996. A new, 2018 edition of the book is now available from Routledge.

Prof. Talbutt studied under Sorokin at Harvard, began writing on Sorokin’s contributions while in graduate school, and was an expert analyst on his life and thought. He was widely published on philosophical topics, with many books, articles, and scholarly papers published during his highly active career as an American intellectual.

He was also a great friend and a kindly, charitable and thoughtful support to all members of the ISCSC.

The following is drawn from materials he wrote and was gathered for this printing by CCR Editor-in-Chief, Joseph Drew.
I The Relevance of the ISCSC for Scholarship

The best-selling point for the relevancy of the International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations, and for an academic shift of attention, is Sorokin’s prophecy of cross-cultural flowering in the Pacific area.

Such a trend clearly follows increased trade, travel, study abroad, translations of basic works, recent heavy investments attending “globalization,” and so on. Mostly this has been going on, faster and faster, for over two centuries, but very much so in the past fifty years.

On the other hand, whatever its economic progress, “Old Europe” and for that matter the “Old (and very dangerous) Middle East” are less likely to undergo any comparable creative change. Earlier civilizational interplays had, of course, given rise to “Athens and Jerusalem,” then to “Mecca and Alexandria,” to “Granada and Paris.”

But Christianity and its many branches, Islam with its own, and Judaism, have all defensively constructed their own institutional barriers to assimilation and change. Grudging sociocultural updatings and recapitulations are as much as can be expected in those regions.

Despite a residue of Marxisms, not to speak of local nationalisms, the Pacific realm is much more subject to cross-cultural interactions. Anglophone North Americans have fallen heir to post-Raj, post-Opium War British legacies. And the Asian partners are now remarkably outpacing their Western counterparts. (Didn’t Napoleon once say, “Let China sleep”?)

Interactive examples on the scholarly side are the “Philosophy: East and West” movement centered at the University of Hawaii, and the Center for the Comparative Study of Civilizations, Reitaku University, Japan. The latter group publishes a journal partly in English, partly in Japanese.

The Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy co-sponsored a conference in Hawaii in 1984. Its most distinguished papers were published by Princeton in 1988, Interpreting across Boundaries. The editors were Eliot Deutsch and Gerald James Larson. A very sizable representation to the conference was from Japan, as indeed was the case in 1999 at the Third International Whitehead Conference at Claremont, California.

The ISCSC has had meetings in California, in Fairbanks, Alaska, and in Reitaku, Japan. (Clearly that listing is a very partial sampling for Pacific Rim scholarship.)
Incidentally, the former effective leader of the state of Singapore, of the “Seven Tigers,” Lee Kuan Yew, recently predicted: “By 2050 the world’s economic center of gravity will move from the Atlantic to the Pacific and Indian oceans.” (Forbes, July 2005). Given his previous track record, that utterance should not be discounted. And such a trend would drive the ongoing cultural exchanges faster still.

The members of the International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations include numerous scholars whose origins, backgrounds, goals and sometimes locations, are at for furthering cross-civilizational developments predicted by Pitirim Sorokin. Our President is now Professor Andrew Targowski, who would welcome scholars with cross-cultural interests.

II. Civilizationists and Think-Tankers

Civilizational study in its breadth across cultural boundaries and its long-term orientation differs from “think-tank” worldly practicality. Perhaps Samuel Huntington with his Foreign Affairs article and William McNeill, with his Rise of the West’s comforting antidote to Spengler, count as bridging exceptions. Even so, let’s itemize some contrasts for the sake of strategic self-knowledge, if not simply to nurture our complacency.

Think-tank clients want advice, hopefully congenial with their strongly-held views and those of the populace. (The latter, according to Sir Humphrey Appleby of Yes, Prime Minister, only want to know “who are the goodies and who are the baddies.”) Policy issues of some urgency focus the attention of the tankers. Emotion-laden opinions then must be either carefully stepped around or catered to. (An opposition to “multipolarity” and discreet favor toward so-called “Atlanticism” can be more dignified than “freedom fries” zeal or taking French dressing off the menu.)

James Madison had warned us against “emotion-based opinions,” though he, like Thomas Jefferson and Nathanial Hawthorne, engaged in considerable wishful thinking about slavery’s fading away. Insofar as he was one of the voices for Publius, he was an early tanker. Roughly speaking, emotional opinions can be sorted in three piles. “Wishful thinking,” which bets on continuing some doubtful policy: e.g., “There’s light at the end of the tunnel.” “There will soon be democracy all over the Middle East, and in all the seceded Soviets.” “Iraqi oil will pay for the occupation.”

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1 For Hawthorne’s wishful thinking “there is still another view (which) looks upon slavery as one of those evils which divine Providence does not leave to be remedied by human contrivances, but which in its own good time, by some means impossible to be anticipated, but of the simplest and easiest operation, when all its uses shall have been fulfilled, it causes to vanish like a dream.” (Wallner, Peter A., Franklin Pierce: New Hampshire’s Favorite Son. Concord, NH: Plaidswede, 2004, p. 214.)
By contrast, there is “fearful thinking,” as backing for drastic changes in policy. Consider Senator Vandenberg’s “Mr. President, you must scare hell out of the American people.” Red scares. The domino theory. Monolithic Communism.

Lastly, there is “grandiose thinking.” The Christian Century indicated what Protestants optimistically thought of the 19th; “The American Century” showed what Henry Luce thought of the 20th. “The world’s only superpower.” The Imperial Presidency. The “imperial” theological and political thinking of Henry VIII. Such thinking leads to vicious reactions when it is thwarted; consider former stooges who go off the reservation or otherwise disappoint their impatient masters. Presidents Diem and Trujillo, Russia’s stooge Imre Nagy, our Noriega, and one former stooge just recently plucked from a spider hole.

Think-tankers and advisors likewise should tiptoe carefully, e.g., consider Confucius, Robert Barnes, Thomas More, and Thomas Cromwell. Civilizationists are less well-known and well-paid, but generally safer. They sail hopefully on high seas, well away from turbulent waters, rocks and shoals. (CIA evaluations which are defective or more wisely ignored by pigheaded clients could also be illumined by the preceding remarks. As Roger Miller once wrote in a lyric: “I don’t like to think things I don’t like to think; I like to think just what I please.”)

Let us return to a strategic question for the ISCSC, “Quo vadimus?” Where we shall be going can best be charted by a vector from the past, tracing where we have been going. Apart from my bibliographical handout, which includes some cognate items from members of the Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy, as well as a few scholarly works critical of our greatest lions, here are some presentations what I found especially stimulating.

Such remarkable samples of ISCSC work include the following: Maria Gimbutas discussed evidence for widespread matriarchal religion in southeastern Europe. Knud Lundback discussed the Jesuit mission to China and Leibniz’s response to Chinese thought. John Hord, David Wilkinson, David Richardson, Matt Melko, Gordon Hewes, Leighton Scott, Bill Edwards and others contributed to a series of lively sessions on civilizational boundaries in space and time. Wilkinson, along with Arthur Iberall, elaborated on his “Central Civilization” theme. Melko and Bill Eckhardt presented wide-ranging data on wars through history. Professors Choi and Robel dealt with Asian matters in depth, as have our distinguished colleagues from Hong Kong. James Billington once gave a fine plenary address on Romantic nihilism in nineteenth century Russia, closely following Vytautas Kavolis’ Presidential paper on Romanticism and Taoism. Corrinne Gilb had presented detailed comparisons for major urban centers. Midori Rynn, along with others, has thrown subtle light upon Japanese culture and history.
As well as the Presidential Addresses by Kavolis, published in the Review and elsewhere, Roger Wescott, Shuntaro Ito, Michael Palencia-Roth, Wayne Bledsoe, and Matt Melko gave such major speeches themselves. As a Distinguished Visiting Scholar, Boris Erasov discussed civilizations falling into criminality in their decline, focusing upon breakdowns in Russia.

Braudel has come up for careful examination, as have the “world-systems” theories of Wallerstein and his followers; Sanderson edited a series of such papers. Pitirim Sorokin’s Centennial in 1989 occasioned several careful assessments of his work, published later by Transactions. Our 1991 meeting in Santo Domingo had a rich program concerning the three major interacting cultures in the area — indigenous, Hispanic and African, arranged by Professors Elpidio Laguna-Diaz and Michael Palencia-Roth. Gordon Hewes had given a presentation on the overland Silk Road. Some years later Professor Eiji Hattori illumined the overseas Silk Road, both in papers and in his fine book, translated by Wallace Grey.

There is a considerable difference, it seems to me, between the wide range of such works couched in depth, and typical “think-tank” products. Admittedly, all are scholarly, but the latter are rightly bound to the present time and its urgencies.

The policy-oriented “tanker-types” are often afflicted by pressures of the moment, whether economic, political, or international. Consequently, they tend to view with alarm, or desperately seek to reassure. Consider Daniel Bell’s “End of Ideology” and Fukuyama’s “End of History”; the former, while implausible, is a well-meaning effort to calm jangled nerves, and the second is a paean in favor of globalization. Far better than either is John Lukacs’ more soberly thoughtful “End of an Age.”

Whether the civilizationist essays a balanced comparison, as Nelson and Kavolis would have liked, or whether he digs deep within one civilization to clarify some element crucial for a high-level comparison, most think-tankers would prefer shorter, more expedient routes to answers for their clients. However, some tankers do take a road less traveled.²

² In all fairness, many think-tankers advise on uncontroversial administrative matters, helpfully refining and improving practical procedures. Others bravely speak truth to power, even when they go unheard. Another point: the lion’s share of governmental folly is to be laid at the door of authorities (and the fickle populace), not at those of advisors, however timid. (I cannot resist adding a reference to P.G. Wodehouse, one of whose characters had a specific position in Hollywood; as a variant of a “yes-man,” his role was that of a “nodder.”)
III

Select and Relevant Bibliography for the International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations

Journals

Comparative Civilizations Review. The International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations Numbers 1-46. 1979-and following. (Founding Editor: Vytautas Kavolis. Present Editor: Joseph Drew.)

Journal for the Comparative Study of Civilizations. Center for the Comparative Study of Civilizations, Reitaku University: Reitaku, Japan. Numbers 1, 1996-and following. (Editor: Keisuke Kawakubo.)

Books


Muller, H. J. *The Uses of the Past.* New York: Garland Publications, 1940. (Another critique of Toynbee’s views, especially upon Anatolia and its environs.)


IV. A Scholastic Quadrant

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain of Power and Its Uses</th>
<th>Strobe Talbott</th>
<th>Niall Ferguson</th>
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<td></td>
<td>The Great Experiment</td>
<td>The War of the World</td>
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<tr>
<td>Domain of Sociocultural Meanings</td>
<td>Pitirim A. Sorokin</td>
<td>Charles Taylor</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social and Cultural Dynamics</td>
<td>A Secular Age</td>
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Each point of reference may be expanded in terms of “whence” and “whither.”

Each may be read as in polylactic with the others, especially on the parallel planes, where there are contrasts in terms of scope and of optimism and pessimism (or of “idealism” and “realism.”)

Remarks on the Quadrant

The four monumental works give room for polylogue. That is not to say that their assumptions and conceptual frames are congruent. Far from it. Indeed, polylogue among members of the same choir is without profit.

Monumentality here does not mean a frozen status, but rather richness and complexity. Each work carries a lively vector, given their antecedents, whether precedents or influences or both. (The origins of diplomacy and international law for Talbott; Tolstoy, Spengler, Danilevsky, and the Platonic legacy for Sorokin; the history of conflicts and warfare for Ferguson; and the best of the Giffords lecturers plus social scientists on secularity for Taylor.)

Talbott and Ferguson deal with the uses and misuses of power. Ferguson, like Timothy Snyder, author of Bloodlands, confronts the qualified optimism of Talbott’s history of the United Nations with grimly pessimistic data about human nature gone mad. (Ferguson does suggest a three-fold diagnosis of occasions for disaster: economic volatility, declining imperial power, and multiple small ethnicities and national minorities.)

Sorokin and Taylor deal more with sociocultural transitions than with exercises of power. Yet they differ; Sorokin’s scope is far wider, temporally and geographically, while Taylor’s is localized, phenomenological, and detailed. Sorokin’s sensate supersystem cannot be equated with Taylor’s secularity, but Sorokin’s “active sensate” stage is at least compatible with Taylor’s “exclusive humanism.”
The convulsive transitions of Sorokin’s supersystems in part capture challenges to Talbott’s statesmen and the civil and international struggles of Ferguson’s account. Secularity (Taylor’s theme) is at minimum a necessary condition for establishing a United Nations. Were bin Laden, or even the Pope, a truly major player, we would promptly slide into a “clash of civilizations” precluding any such founding negotiations.

Relating Taylor to Ferguson could be done in terms of partisan religiosities, often as scapegoating heretics or infidels, by slogans like “Gott mit uns” or “Deus vult.” Even pseudo-religions (e.g., Communism, according to Bertrand Russell) generate a destructive zeal. So, wars such as Ferguson recounts could be heated up by similar fierce language.

Lastly, Sorokin’s and Taylor’s works gain illumination from two other writers. Karl Jaspers’ *The Origin and Goal of History* may be superimposed on Sorokin, and Jacques Barzun’s *From Dawn to Decadence* upon Taylor. *Die Achsenzeit* evokes the sublimation of myth, as does the transition from ideational to idealist culture for Sorokin. Furthermore, Jaspers’ stages of history seem to leave another Axial Age an open possibility; Sorokin predicts another “integralist” phase centering within the Pacific rim. Taylor also mentions the Axial transition, as does Robert Bellah. “Decadence” is compatible with the dreariest aspects of secularity, as is Sorokin’s “overripe sensate” phase. (Polylogue can always use a little extra help.)

The interest of the first three books lies in the future: The problematic nature of the UN, or NATO; knight-errantry; the emerging hazards of conflict; the shifts from “sensate” to “ideational” phenomena. That of the fourth, Taylor’s tome, belongs to the past: The unfolding of the best Gifford Lectures, and Giffabili (works worthy of Gifford status), as they culminate in *A Secular Age*. Taylor is also nostalgic for pre-axial, or Dionysian, conditions.

V. Sorokin and Philosophical Polylectic: A Trilogy

Sorokin and Philosophy

Given Sorokin’s defiant attitude toward modernity and recent philosophy’s “closed-shop”, not to say “inside-baseball” preoccupations, (philosophy confined to what certified scholars say to other certified, or soon-to-be-certified, experts), this enterprise appears unpromising. As does my recent trilogy upon the same topic, relating Sorokin’s metaculture to the broadest sort of metaphilosophy.

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3 As a sample of such professional parochialism, in 1987 while touring Great Britain, I went out from Edinburgh’s King James Hotel to two nearby, amply-stocked bookstores. Having asked about their philosophy books, I was turned away. One clerk said I should go out to the environs of the University. This was in the homeland of David Hume and the locale for the Gifford Lectures. It would be better to
Going back to the origins of my quixotic pursuits, there were two crucial semesters. In the spring of my junior year, I enrolled in Morton White’s “American Philosophy.” The major text was an anthology, edited by Muelder and Sears, richly compiling Gold Age thought. To this White added his own excellent *Social Thought in America*. Among its virtues it offered an acute critique of Dewey’s ethical naturalism, not unlike G.E. Moore’s argument against John Stuart Mill. That point must be kept in mind.

Immediately afterward, in the fall of my senior year I enrolled in Sorokin’s course for which he used his recently completed, very comprehensive, *Society, Culture, and Personality*. My appreciation had been primed by two earlier semester courses with the Russian historian Michael Karpovich, and by readings of Spengler, Toynbee, and Berdyaev, also of classical Russian works.

Simultaneously, I was introduced to J. H. Randall Jr.’s *Making of the Modern Mind*, the main text in my final philosophy elective. The interaction between all those influences was stimulating. For all their different emphases — Randall had once written a highly critical review of the third volume of *Social and Cultural Dynamics*), both scholars saw philosophical change as embedded within cultural change. Each saw these processes as stimulated from without, in Sorokin’s case by convulsive crises, in Randall’s by scientific and social or political innovations. (My second book referred to these as “rough” and “progressive” dialectics respectively.) Both took creative cultural change as ongoing, both were anti-authoritarian. Neither saw philosophy as developing solely between professionals.

Sorokin Neo-Platonized Comte’s three stages, and he turned his unidirectionality into a loose (non-cyclical) oscillation. Sociocultural supersystems were famously labeled “ideaetional, idealistic, and sensate).” Shifts among these were illustrated in his magisterial and controversial four-volume *Social and Cultural Dynamics*. (In 1957 Sorokin compressed these into a one-volume book, but the full value must be sought in the longer version, especially the fourth volume.)

Alluding back to Morton White (and G.E. Moore), I found that his critique of Dewey illumined Sorokin’s distinction between the idealistic and the sensate. The distinction between ideational and idealistic was typically drawn in many of the Gifford Lectures, as well as in Jaspers’ *Revelation and Philosophical Faith*.

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take philosophy as the very core of liberal education, indeed, to follow Karl Jaspers’ maxim: “Philosophy is for everyone.”
After graduation and an interval of study I proceeded to Columbia, there taking three semesters with Randall and doing further research on Sorokin. The provocative contrast between Sorokin and his scholarly rival Talcott Parsons should be tempered by Sorokin’s own “Similarities and Dissimilarities” essay, recast both in Fads and Foibles and in Sociological Theories of Today. I argue in my Centennial paper on Sorokin and in its expansion in Rough Dialectics that there are deep affinities between Sorokin on the one hand and Protestant and post-Protestant liberals on the other.

Kant, Hegel, and American Golden Age thinkers can be classed as Protestant liberals, with William James at the cusp of that movement. John Dewey departed from Congregationalism and Hegelianism to a post-Protestant liberal stance, just as J. H. Randall Jr sublimated his father’s religious liberalism.

Now admittedly Catholic scholars, of whom a number have been rightly active in affirming Sorokin’s continuing importance, find echoes of Thomas Aquinas in Sorokin’s triadic scheme (Revelation, Reason, and observation in parallel to the ideational, idealistic, and sensate). And Sorokin’s researches in altruism did attend to the lives of saints, Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic. That said and concurred with, I would point to Sorokin’s attachment to Tolstoy, whose generalized mysticism bears a remarkable likeness to American Transcendentalism.

But more central still to the alliance I seek to forge is Sorokin on the “internalizing of norms,” also his student Vytautas Kavolis on Moralizing Cultures. In short, the emulative transfer of approbated ways of life and roles – this being the common ground shared by all. The chart drawn for my Centennial paper affirms such affinities between Sorokin, Parsons, and Max Weber.

Myth can no longer be drawn upon for filling temporary gaps in natural science; however, it does have its role in grounding and legitimizing, in “button-holing” the subject as proximate center of meaning, or recipient/incipient of values — all in commending, facilitating, the transfer and correction of approbated patterns of life.

Myth can be sublimated and re-sublimated, even in some measure attenuated. But that does not amount to demythologizing, as Jaspers correctly argued against Bultmann. That sublimation vector is expressed in the ideational idealistic relation, also detectably through Jaspers’ Axial Age, in F. M. Cornford’s From Religion to Philosophy, and in many books based on Gifford Lectures. Although the world may be disenchanted, ideal culture may not be purged of all mythic traces. Sorokin’s rehabilitation of the ideational and the idealistic threw down that gauntlet.
Distinguished scholars have argued for Sorokin’s continuing importance for sociology. Recently Russians have joined Americans in that affirmation. The trilogy I present takes a detour, a “road less traveled,” emphasizing his contributions toward philosophy. Such a path goes through hostile terrain.

But nonetheless, sociocultural dynamics is inclusive of philosophical change, among other factors. His transforming use of Comte’s three stages, whereby “oscillations” or “rhythms” preserve the relevance of “ideational” and “idealistic” symbols, finds reinforcement in the works of Cassirer and Jaspers. His attention to crises is appropriate, given enforced changes in religious and political thought, not to mention modes of self-consciousness.

The hostility of the terrain follows from what William James referred to as the “PhD Octopus,” W.H. Werkmeister called the “diremption in philosophy”, and what Cornel West noted as the “technocratic” trend in universities. Two examples: Rüdiger Bubner omits Jaspers from his Modern German Philosophy on the ground that he “wrote for the educated middle class.” Secondly, some time ago a member of our department introduced a freshman level logic course, requiring an advanced text in philosophy of language. Responding to widespread complaints, we asked her what she had in mind. Her answer was that students needed preparation for graduate study.

These three volumes on philosophies (mainly Western, incidentally Eastern) inscribed within Sorokin’s sociocultural dynamics demand a Prologue. Philosophers wildly content, and Westerners have trouble understanding Sorokin. In turn, the trilogy points to a “basic trend of our time,” the emerging cross-Pacific “integralist” renewal.

My books Reanimation in Philosophy (1986); Rough Dialectics: Sorokin’s Philosophy of Value (1998); and Circumstantial and Philosophical Dynamics (2007) can be regarded as a trilogy, interrelating overviews of philosophy within a context provided by Sorokin’s sociocultural theory.

The first was written pre-Gorbachev and thus retains some ideological content; the second follows the Soviet Union’s collapse and the increase of ideational and “pseudo-ideational” preoccupations; the third, written after the fanaticism of 9/11 and fundamentalisms elsewhere, attends to intrusive religion in “the public square.” Such convulsive moves away from the “overripe sensate” toward nascent, sometimes unpleasant, religious turmoil does fit in with Sorokin’s account of transitional crises.

Volume One proffers substantive sets of typologies, that is, multipolar snapshots to be loosely interwoven as a matrix for philosophy, revealing its outline, fault lines and contrasts, also a reaching back past Jaspers’ Axial Age toward sources in myth and animism. The history of Western thought is sketched within Sorokin’s sociocultural typological dynamic.
The term “polylogue” suggested by Vytautas Kavolis and introduced in Volume Three is quite apt for such typological interweaving, also displayed in the eight concluding charts.

So, Volume One roughs out an accounting for philosophy, how we get a grip upon it, with special attention to the transfer of ways of life and thought.

Facilitating such transfer, sublimations and attenuations of myth set up a contrast with positivisms and naturalisms. Sorokin’s oscillations account for philosophical change, convulsive as it is, can be contrasted with J. H. Randall Jr.’s historical matrix stressing scientific and social innovations as change agents. That is spelled out in Volume Two.

Volume Two shifts the major focus to Sorokin himself, his life and intellectual career. It includes a translation by Lawrence Nicholls of his defense of Tolstoy as a philosopher together with Nicholls’ comments on Tolstoy’s influence. Two charts are drawn, the first a follow-up to the “Chain of Being,” where three moments of sublimated myth appear, all these attending the transfer of orientative strategies, guidance grounded in the first, approbatability or telic structuring in the second, and accessibility in centers of recipience/incipience for meaning in the third. Such moments are projected, as it were, either away from or into nature.

While the first volume takes a loose grip on philosophy by way of polylogue among typologies, the final book proposes a classificatory macrosystem drawing upon multiple inventories. In that way, the boundaries and neighboring disciplines, as well as internal differentiations, are suggested as central to the Noosphere. Modes of recent philosophy that are in contention with mythic remnants are scanned, as are philosophies of history and of culture that are compatible with Sorokin and with sublimated mythic elements.

The ultimate point of the trilogy is to defend possibilities for cross-cultural exchanges on a grand scale, as Polylectic Writ Large, among the Great Traditions. This would be a mutual accommodation among high level sublimated myths. Geographically, such exchanges and integralist enrichments, according to Sorokin, would take place across the Pacific Rim. Given that important analogies span traditions and cultures, here are a few instances:

Philo Judaeus claimed, “Plato must have read the Books of Moses.” These was a (loose) analogue between biblical monotheism and Plato’s “One or Good.” Tertullian doubted this: “What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?”

Radhakrishnan saw affinities between Neo-Hegelianism and non-dualist Vedanta. Also, he detected Indian influences behind Neo-Platonism, a more plausible notion than Philo’s.
Process Thought and Theology share features with Buddhism. Charles Hartshorne received a warm reception in Kyoto and other Eastern centers of learning. I myself observed a large Oriental attendance at the Third International Conference on Whitehead, held in Claremont California.

Sorokin’s use of the term “supra-conscious” is significant, as is his enthusiasm for Whitehead’s “intuition.” Those terms point to the remarkable origins of upper levels of the Chain of Being, notably the founding symbol and the ways of life and thought, authorized and integrated thereby.

Recapitulation

**Volume One: Reanimation in Philosophy**, University of America Press, 1986

This is mainly philosophy, plus a neo-Sorokinian scanning of Western thought, also reaffirmed in Volume Two. It is compressed, taking account of multiple typologies in time, Golden Age through thirty years of post-war analysis. The overall compression suggests that expository treatments in the endnotes, and the chartings, plus explanations, in the Appendix merit more attention.

As to origins, there’s a reaching back past sublimations in the Axial Age toward myth and animism. Animism as nature-worship leads to the ambiguous monism of Stoicism (and that of Taoism), later to the double-aspect monism of Spinoza. Spirit-worship runs through Orphism to Plato (and elsewhere naturally enough to Confucius).

Sublimated myths appear in culturative symbolics, the legitimizing and transfer of ways of life and thought. The upper levels of the Great Chain of Being provide three operative moments of culturative symbolics, the founding, grounding, or authorizing moment as highest, then the normative moment well grounded in the former, and thirdly, the invocative moment for the incipient/recipient self, eliciting susceptibilities or propensities toward ways of life. (The second and third phases are like the two adhesive sides of Velcro.)

Shakespeare’s witches in their threefold invocation of Macbeth: “Thane of Fife, Thane of Candor, and King thereafter,” awaken an unlucky propensity in their victim. But surprising and very surprising invocations for the philosopher attune him to extraordinary affinities, as in non-naturalisms, phenomenologies, and philosophies of life. No such destructive malice entraps that innocent thinker. The unsurprising “Thane of Fife” rubric captures the naturalist (everyone knows he is part of nature, looking into nature for his dinner and a place to sleep), and it enlists the philosophical analyst as well (everyone knows he’s a user of language). They proceed as unsurprised as was the actual Thane of Fife. But *res cogitans* and Transcendental Subjectivity, for example, are surprising, and rejected by analyst and naturalist alike.
The lowest level of the Chain of Being, the World, functions as the domain for cognitive symbolics. Again, the naturalist rallies around that scientific flag. “Bring me no surprises” is his, and the analyst’s, motto. Sorokin’s ideational and idealistic cultures, on the other hand, are chockful of surprises.

Between the mythically sublimated “well-founded strategist” and the sturdy no-nonsense naturalist lies the “placement strategist.” He locates himself in Culture and in Nature, without any support from Transcendence.

It is a comfort-zone, while “Blessed Assurance” attaches to an ideational complex, the placement strategist finds, at a minimum, “Cognitive Assurance.” Consider C. D. Broad’s *Mind and its Place in Nature*, C. I. Lewis’ *Mind and the World Order*, and A. O. Lovejoy’s epistemological dualism, as in his *The Revolt against Dualism*. Richard Rorty files his complaint against such comfort-seekers in his *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*. But dualisms go way back, and have been mounted in many guises, not all of them so mythical.

As regards the eight diagrams in the Appendix (plus the two in *Rough Dialectics*), one might repeat Hans Reichenbach’s objection against “picture-thinking.” But I would respond that multiplying pictures is a salutary loosening up, a “hair-of-the-dog” remedy against being stuck with just one dogmatic image.

**Volume Two: Rough Dialectics: Sorokin’s Philosophy of Value.** Rodopi, the Netherlands, 1998.

Sorokin’s article on Leo Tolstoy enriches the book, as he defends his status as a religious philosopher. The translator was the sociologist Lawrence Nichols, who also adds an essay examining Tolstoy’s considerable influence upon Sorokin. The term “Rough Dialectics” refers to the way sociocultural crises and convulsions dramatically alter philosophy. By contrast, the historian John Herman Randall, Jr. looks at major changes in thought as stemming from scientific or social and political innovations. This by contrast can be called “progressive dialectics.”

Sorokin’s life and career, including controversies with rival scholars, receive appropriate attention. Such marked differences show contrasts between urban and regional values. Here a “radial contrariety” comes into play, where the radius reaches out from the city to the hinterland and to outlands. Sorokin had identified with the Social Revolutionaries, a peasant party, certainly not with the Marxists. He took a dim view of “over-urbanization” and of the “overripe senate” culture, hence of Modernity in general. The turning away from “Eurocentrism” advocated by Spengler and Toynbee was emphatically shared by him as well.
The ambivalent American response to Sorokin can be read in terms of the “radial contrariety,” expressed locally in our nation, through politics, art, journalism, popular entertainments, and religious self-identifications. But at the same time Sorokin’s positions can reasonably be recognized as complementary to the best of urban values.

Eastern thought, Indian and Chinese, receives favorable recognition from Sorokin, while Western philosophers of history and culture, such as Dilthey, Cassirer, and Jaspers, can be drawn into alliance with Sorokin, since his social science expresses the *Geisteswissenschaften* perspective so strongly. His *Society, Culture and Personality* as well as *Social and Cultural Dynamics*, notably confirm this affinity.

Indeed, negative criticisms of Sorokin as a speculative philosopher of history do so backhandedly as well. His long, and broad, view taken on sociocultural changes and crises, entails a macrosociological, not a microsociological, venture, embracing a plethora of religious and philosophical transformations.

**Volume Three: *Circumstantial and Philosophical Dynamics*, 2007.**

Lest this final volume become an orphan of the storm, its familial ties to the first two books must be acknowledged. Parts I, two sections of Part II, and Part III look back to, and wind up, strategic metaphilosophic proposals offered earlier, as varied typologies within an ongoing polylectic.

A verbal novelty, “polylogue,” put forth by Vytautus Kavolis alludes to many groups and individuals in full interaction, the results being polylectic. Polylogue is the manifest process, polylactic the result or product. Retrospectively, both terms throw light upon the exposition in Volumes One and Two. (Why isn’t “dialogue” enough? In its way it may be a good thing, but it can lead to pigheaded deadlocks. Polylogue does cover effective mediations; “blessed are the peacemakers,” in short. Second and even third opinions can be helpful.)

The chief aspect of the macrosystem’s double-duty concerns its role as detailed backdrop for the earlier typologies, for the “sublimated myths” on high negotiated through Polylectic Writ Large, for the encasement of seminal positions with their collateral sub-branchings (polylactic writ small), and for its hospitality toward a non-Western enclave, the elements of which are loosely analogous to those from the West. Sorokin’s ideational and idealistic cultures, not *passé* as they are for Comte, Dewey, and Reichenbach, are always latent, and sometimes strikingly recurrent. Cassirer on myth as primordial, though sometimes politically destructive, and Jaspers on the modes of the Comprehensive and the principles of philosophic faith, give us a strong defense against naturalist or analytic dogmatics.
The Book’s final part sums up the implicit morals to be drawn from the macrosystem, imagined as activated and judiciously supplied with sociocultural defenses. The “choreography” must be taken with a grain of salt: what we have there can be taken as a metaphilosophical monster, tuxedoed-up like Peter Boyle in the film, “Young Frankenstein,” and attempting a soft-shoe. The inventories, not the codings, are what provide the coverages alluded to above.

However awkward the codings, they do suggest a prototype for holding the classifying together. Down the road somewhere, there may appear an enthusiast to improve the coding arrangements.

Additional Thoughts on Sorokin

Looking down the road, what can we see ahead for Sorokin Scholarship? First, here are four basic empirical insights, all shaped by his Social and Cultural Dynamics and its later developments.

1. There has been an “epochal shift” of civilizational interactions to the Pacific basin, Eurocentrism being bankrupt.

2. Sorokin’s descriptions of our “overripe” sensate culture in crisis were sounds and have received additional confirmation since 1941

3. The oscillation from the senate extreme toward rising ideational symptoms has become obvious with ethnic and religious revivals and conflicts.

4. Sorokin argued that there should be no necessary conflict between the United States and Russia; he also held a “convergence theory” regarding the two societies. Recent circumstances have given marked plausibility to that theory.

Here follow six insights, more theoretical than empirical, where Sorokin gives the context for undermining positivism and presents his accounting for drastic cultural change.

5. Social realities and cultural patterns are not only co-involved, but they are jointly vulnerable to historic crises. Sorokin treats the Geisteswissenschaften concretely as under tribulation.

6. Neither positivism, naturalism, nor Marxism can explain major sociocultural shifts. Sorokin’s critiques of sociological methods make it clear that the humane studies are not natural sciences.
7. Sorokin deploys principles of “immanental change” and of “limits” to explain sociocultural oscillations. One clue to this may be that supersystems are marked by deep axiological imbalances. This renders problematic any “boundaries” of sociocultural systems and makes moot any external vs. internal causal dispute.

8. “Integralism” must be taken dynamically, as bespeaking a transforming unifying force:
   As in culture, “putting it all together,” markedly in coherent philosophical and religious systems.
   As in society, “bringing us all together,” in altruistic ethics.
   As in personality, in strivings toward integrity.
   As in macrosociology, in synthesizing worldly and otherworldly values.

9. Sorokin’s multifaceted work gives the opportunity of forming three sorts of alliances. The first sort, the alliance with “social philosophers in an age of crisis,” was affirmed by Sorokin himself on several occasions since 1950. A second enriching sort may be posited on the basis of affinities, one with certain West European philosophers of culture and history. Such thinkers as Wilhelm Dilthey, Karl Jaspers, Ernest Cassirer, Benedetto Croce, and Jose Ortega y Gasset help shore up the defensive flanks against naturalisms and determinisms. Crucially, many of these men also support the anti-authoritarianism in Sorokin’s political and social thought. Thirdly, there are American empiricist and rationalist liberals – likewise anti-authoritarian in affirming the ongoing creative dialectic in culture – whose roots in one degree or another lie in liberal Protestantism.

   One remark is essential. Intellectual alliances, like political ones, never imply across-the-board agreements, but rather urgent, high priority common ground in great causes.

10. Lastly, Sorokin’s conceptual repertoire makes possible the explanation of the world’s Great Traditions as diverse articulations of the sociocultural dimension, illumining their clashing overlaps, providing tools for much-needed conflict resolution.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCALE</th>
<th>CORRELATIONS</th>
<th>IN SOCIAL SCIENCES</th>
<th>IN THE ARTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Massive</td>
<td>With vast systematic interactions. A high-level scanning of overall “traffic patterns”, with too much distance for the human. Roles are seen as causal linkages within larger systems.</td>
<td>“Social physics”, the study of impersonal systems, e.g., geopolitics, realpolitik, or market analysis.</td>
<td>Where the self is swamped as an atom. Kafka; Chaplin’s Modern Times; Lang’s Metropolis; much modern architecture; non-representational painting such as Pollack’s; “Pop Art” such as Warhol’s; Theater of the Absurd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-scale or Personal</td>
<td>With patterns that can be commended as apt or worthwhile. Exemplifications that may also be seen as exemplary, “Worldviews” included. The role grasped in its integrity is conveyed through emulation.</td>
<td>Studies involving sociocultural “meanings”, susceptible to Verstehen or the “logico-meaningful method”. Shared ground between Weber, Sorokin, and Parsons. This level joins the humanities and sciences.</td>
<td>Poesis: e.g., philosophical poetry; most novels and drama; representative art displaying character and humanly meaningful contexts, e.g., Rembrandt, George Catlin, Norman Rockwell.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minute</td>
<td>With fragmentary, privatized moments and moods. Its microscopic closeness allows too little distance for the human.</td>
<td>Associationism, psychological hedonism, Freudianism, Behaviorism. (e.g., dealings with ideas, wants and impulses, stimuli and responses.)</td>
<td>Where the self is pulverized. Impressionism; Expressionism; Surrealism; short lyrics of momentary mood; “stream of consciousness” writing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cosmopolis tends to deflect attention from midscale norms toward vast public systems and toward private motivations.
Mythological Models in Civilization Analysis

Vytautas Kavolis

This paper was presented at the Conference on Civilizational Patterns and Intercivilizational Encounters, held by the International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations, August 30-31, 1973, at the University of Chicago.

I need to begin by defining several key terms.

- **By a symbolic design** I refer to an objectified, or documented, arrangement of meanings, perceptions, and emotional nuances which constitutes an identifiable configuration that, at any given time, provides a relatively self-contained and understandable unit of empirical investigation.
- **By the symbolic designs of a civilization** I refer to configurations of meanings, perceptions, and emotional nuances which are so distinctive and so widely influential that, at any given time, they identify the major differences in what might be called the “qualities of mind” between the largest comprehensible units of sociocultural investigation at each level of societal evolution — these largest comprehensible units constituting “civilizations.”
- **By civilizational analysis**, finally, I refer to the study of any symbolic designs, when they are seen as components of one or another of the largest comprehensible units of sociocultural investigation and compared across the boundaries of such units.

Civilizational analysis may be conducted either in the traditional “humanistic” or the “sociological” manner. When conducted sociologically, it must meet the further requirement that linkages between symbolic designs and modes of social organization be investigated.

In my view, it is at least as advantageous, in the comparative study of the symbolic designs of civilizations, to begin with the significant detail as to attempt to comprehend the total structure within which this detail is located. As one proceeds in analyzing the significant detail, one’s analytical framework necessarily expands into the aspects of the total structure relevant to it.

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But focusing on the significant details permits us to be more sensitive to changes over time in the symbolic designs and the underlying structures of consciousness and sensibility, a topic which civilizationists, in contrast to the intellectual historians, have tended rather to neglect (unless their own background has been in *Geistesgeschichte*).²

By the term “significant detail” I am not referring to a descriptive element such as a particular deity in the scheme of Georges Dumézil, but to a thematic component treated, in some way, in a mythological system (or in its equivalents) and either embodied in an anthropomorphic or animate figure or expressed more abstractly.³ Anthropomorphic constructs embodying a thematic component frequently provide the added bonus of a sociopsychological theory suggesting how this thematic component is perceived to have been motivated and how this kind of motivation is thought to have developed over time.

An anthropomorphic mythological construct may provide: (1) a universal model for conceptualizing a particular type of behavior, (2) a psychological theory revealing how, and of what materials, a particular civilization constructs psychological theories, and (3) a specification of the sociological framework within which either (a) the particular type of behavior tends to arise or (b) the particular psychological theory is generated.

These general considerations may be substantiated by comparing the myths of Prometheus and of Satan, both of which treat the general theme of rebellion by an individual against the supreme authority in the established order and against the rules by which this order operates.⁴ But Prometheus rebels, in stealing fire against the prohibition of Zeus, motivated by sympathy for the sufferings of others than himself — people deprived of fire; and he gives them practical assistance without imposing on them either his own values or his leadership. He permits them to incorporate his technical gifts into the structure of their own life, as they themselves see fit.

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² In my usage of these terms, a “structure of consciousness” or a “structure of sensibility” refers to a state of mind or perceptual orientation widely shared by people in a particular sociohistorical setting but inferable only through the specific symbolic designs produced and employed for communication in such settings. Over-simplifying it somewhat, a symbolic design is immediately visible in a particular work of culture; the structure of consciousness – which might also be called the “depth structure of symbolic designs” – is a much more general construct which the analyst employs for explaining the characteristics shared by a variety of specific symbolic designs.


Surely, what might be called the “humane attachment — practical assistance mechanism” is a universal possibility, experienced and observed by people in all civilizations. But what is remarkable is that the Greeks — or some significant Greeks — have associated the humane attachment — practical assistance mechanism with what they themselves thought of as the crime of rebellion against established authority or, perhaps more precisely, against the existing normative order.

Rebellion is therefore a “noble crime”; and, in the long run, the substantive personal virtue of the individual overcomes the formal criminality of his act.

This is one model for conceptualizing the behavior of the rebel. The other is the Satanic model. As described in the literature of the Judeo-Christian tradition since the second century BCE, but especially in the Medieval Christian writings, Satan rebels out of resentment.

The causes of his resentment are variously interpreted by the theologians: he is the first of the angels who thinks he has been replaced in God’s affection by a younger sibling — Christ; he objects to having been created by someone else and wants to be his own maker. But he rebels not out of sympathy for others, but from resentment of what he perceives as deprivation of his interest. And he is wholly unconcerned with any practical needs. His concern, apparently, is to create a total alternative to the divine order, an “adversary culture,” and, within it, to assume God’s place.

But the results of his activities are wholly destructive. While Prometheus, who started by providing a useful service, ends up creating a new conception of justice which even Zeus, in the Aeschylean trilogy, eventually comes to accept, Satan proves unable to create any values and can mock the old only by inverting them. The would-be total innovator is enchained to the inverse of all of the old.

Satanic behavior can be conceptualized psychologically as governed by the resentment-destruction mechanism. Surely this mechanism, too, is a universal possibility, experienced and observed by people in all civilizations. But note that in the Judeo-Christian, and particularly the medieval Christian, tradition, it is the resentment-destruction mechanism that is firmly attached to the theme of rebellion against the established and the normative order represented by it. Within this tradition, there is no nobility in the crime of rebellion against the normative order. Personal virtue therefore cannot overcome the crime; it can be dealt with only the forces of “law and order.”

The connection between rebellion and the resentment-destruction mechanism is much more central to the Christian tradition than the linkage between rebellion and the sympathy-assistance mechanism in the Greek civilization. Prometheus was far less important in Greek mythology than Satan in the medieval Christian.
But, centrality aside, the linkage of the cultural theme of rebellion with the psychological mechanism of humane attachment resulting in practical assistance to others is, among the historic civilizations, a distinctively Greek theme.

The old Plato would not have treasured it, but in no other premodern civilization has this linkage of themes been given a mythological elaboration anywhere approaching that given to it by Hesiod and Aeschylus. And we are concerned not only with what is central to a civilization, but also with what is unique in it.

We have, so far, two interpretative models of rebellion, both potentially applicable to the behavior of actual rebels in any civilization. The first model suggests that rebellion motivated by humane sympathy for the suffering of others and expressed through particular acts of practical assistance, results in an enduringly valuable change in the structure of the moral universe. The other model contents that rebellion motivated by personal resentment and expressed in global attempts to create an alternative style of life and impose it on others, is destructive in its consequences.

We also have the historical fact that one of these potentially universal theories of rebellion has been created by important representatives of the Greek civilization, and the other has possessed immense influence in the medieval Christian civilization (and in some of its secular derivatives).

Is the selection of the theoretical model by which to interpret rebellion a consequence of the different behavior of rebels in the two civilizations or is it an expression of differences in the cognitive structure of the two civilizations at the time when these models acquired their hold over the imagination?

Before addressing myself to this question, however, I wish to compare the psychogenetic theories contained, or implied, in the Promethean and the Satanic legends, to account for the origins of the rebel. What is most distinctive of Satan at his earliest appearance in the Old Testament is that he is a function of God specializing in ferreting out potential transgressors and bringing them to God’s attention to be punished. He is, on the one hand, an absolute servant, created by his master, who has no existence of his own, no civil rights, and no social ties except the bond of obedience against which he eventually rebels; and, on the other hand, he is the enforcer of morality. When the absolute servant rebels, he can only imagine himself replacing the despot at the peak of the power structure, without disturbing the structure itself; and he will be even more merciless than his former master. And he who begins as the enforcer of morality, ends as the great corrupter.
Prometheus, on the other hand, is an independent from the very beginning of his conscious existence. He has his own independent position, not delegated to him by a higher authority; he has his own relatives, wife, and children; and above all, he has his own knowledge — the ability to predict the future — which is in fact superior to the knowledge possessed by the ruler of the gods.5

It would have been inconceivable for Satan to have known more than God does. That is, the Satanic rebel acts out of ignorance, on the basis of an inferior, self-deceptive theory. Or so the Judeo-Christian tradition, in which knowledge tends to be thematically linked with power, interprets the intellectual condition of the rebel. In Greece, it was possible for highest power to be perceived as devoid of knowledge (as well as of virtue).

Prometheus, then, begins as the equivalent of a knowledgeable, high-status adolescent used to making his own decisions. The first significant decision he makes is, in fact, one to support Zeus in his battle against the Titans, who are members of Prometheus’s own family. This decision — in some ways the equivalent of Crane Brinton’s “desertion of the intellectuals” in the revolutionary process — proves to be a mistake, since Zeus in power becomes a ruthless tyrant.6

Moreover, rebellion, for Prometheus – if not necessarily in conscious intention, then in its objective effects – functions as an expiation for the unintended wrongs he had earlier helped to arise by having aligned himself with an emergent tyranny. While the expiation is not specifically mentioned in the Greek texts, the logic of Promethean behavior permits this interpretation, as Satanic behavior does not: Satan could feel no guilt for what he had done in serving his master, since, having been created entirely as a tool of that master, he had no choice in his initial actions. It is he who perceives himself as the blameless tool of a greater power, rather than he who has reason to know he has been foolish in his own judgments, that develops into the resentful destroyer.

5 The relationship of Prometheus to feminine figures is worth noting. By some accounts, it was Athena (whom Prometheus, by splitting the skull of Zeus, helped to be born; thus, a woman “of the younger generation”) who taught him many of the practical skills he then transmitted to men. And it was his mother, Themis, who provided him with his ultimate resource – knowledge of the future. Prometheus not only does not misuse women to gratify his whims (as Greek gods habitually do), but he makes good use of the creative strengths women possess and willingly share with him. He is unafraid to be dependent on women at the same time that he helps them. In contrast, there are no significant women in Satan’s early history, and in his later career he manipulates women to achieve his goal of seducing men to do the evil. In this respect, he is somewhat comparable to Zeus who sends Pandora, the first human woman, to punish men for receiving the Promethean gift of fire. But in the Greek scheme, it was the highest god – not an evil spirit – who both misused women to indulge himself and manipulated them to exercise his control over men.

One further element in the background of Prometheus is his part as a trickster god who delights in substituting bones and fat for meat in the sacrifice to Zeus and thus deceiving the supreme authority without any motive apparent in this action other than the pure fun of it. Satan, on the other hand, does not appear capable of pure fun, unrelated to the single-mindedness of his service to God (in his earlier career) or to that of his rebellion against God (in his later identity).

Thus, the final psychogenetic summary of the evolution of Satanic and Promethean types of rebellion: abstract justice, combined with resentment, corrupts the absolute servant; playful trickery, to which sympathetic kindness is added, permits a moral evolution in an independent mind.

We now have not only two models of rebellious behavior, but also two psychological theories of how these respective types of behavior have come about. And the civilization-comparative question may be repeated on another level: why did the Greek and the Judeo-Christian civilizations develop different “psychological” theories of the origin of rebellion against authority?

Two possible approaches to this question may be suggested.

1. The first focuses on differences in the depth structure of moral thinking of the two civilizations.

The classical Judeo-Christian tendency, reinforced by Iranian influences, and surviving in a variety of secular ideologies of Western-European derivation, has been to adopt a “mobilizing,” or “reifying,” attitude toward moral issues.

The goal implicit in this attitude is to enhance the “good” and to exorcise the “evil” in one’s experience and personality by rigidly separating them, as object of total worship and absolute condemnation, in the mythological constructs used to comprehend experiences and subjective states of the personality.

The Greeks, in contrast, have tended to adopt a “developmental,” or “dialectical,” attitude toward moral issues, with the implicit goal of integrating the potential “evil” (e.g., the authority of the legal order) in such a way that the “evil” is gradually transformed into the “good,” or functions as an indispensable challenge to it, while the “good” must be exposed to a searching criticism of its claims, in the absence of which it stands in danger of revealing itself as (or degenerating into) another form of “evil.”

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This attitude is evident not only in the Promethean myth, and in the conception of Zeus, in whom, as Paul Ricoeur puts it, “the problematics of the ‘wicked god,’ the undivided unity of the divine and the satanic, reaches its highest pitch,” but also in the treatment of Dionysus, in whom Christ-like and Satan-like elements are intertwined.8, 9

- In contrast to India, where dualistic categories (the purity-pollution distinction) are used to separate hierarchically arranged eternal entities;

- In contrast to historic China, where polarities (in the Yin-Yang paradigm) are designed to encourage peaceful cooperation with a minimal change of identity;

- In contrast to the medieval European tradition, in which polar opposites either battle energetically until the final solution, the outcome of which is predetermined (the God-Satan model) or are mutually interdependent in a static hierarchical relationship, which it is impermissible to challenge (as in the notion of the “marriage” of the soul with the body, in which the “masculine” soul is entitled to the obedience of the “feminine” body);10

- In contrast to all of these conceptions of the proper relationship between polar opposites, the Greeks have conceived of a dialectic in which the opposites evolve, changing their own characters and the structure of their setting, in the course of a battle in which the cards are not stacked in advance in favor of one participant, as they are in the God-Satan paradigm. The “Promethean” dialectic has subsequently re-emerged in the Romantic imagination, whereupon it was Christianized by the Marxists.11

Hierarchy challenged and torn apart by a dualism is one of the relatively constant themes distinctive of Western civilization. But the content of the dualistic or dialectical “battle” changes over time. Three modalities of the Western dialectic seem particularly important:

The “medieval”: The God-Satan struggle between good and evil;

b) The “modern”: Irrational tradition in conflict with utilitarian calculability; and

c) The “post-modern”: A Rousseauist tension between collectively binding social contracts and individual moral-aesthetic sensibilities.\(^{12}\)

Each of these three modalities seems to be less necessarily committed to the imagery of “total war” for conceiving of the relationship between the opposites defining it.

2 The second approach to explaining the differences between the Greek and the Judeo-Christian models of rebellious behavior, and between their theories of the origin of such behavior, can be made on the social-structural level. Satan has originated within the general framework of a militaristic Mesopotamian “oriental despotism,” where the obligation of everyone, including the highest officials, has been to serve the ruler in the manner of disciplined soldiers, and in which, since the supreme authority was always right, rebellion necessarily appeared as the upheaval of primeval chaos against the righteousness of civilization.\(^{13}\)

The Mesopotamian type of “oriental despotism” may be contrasted to the bureaucratic “oriental despotism” of historic China, where officials, and to some degree other classes, adhered to generalized moral standards of their own, by which they could define their own dignity and even judge their supreme authority, the emperor — thus retaining, at least in theory, a certain margin of group (though not individual) independence relative to him. In the Chinese framework, in which supreme power could legitimately be perceived as deficient in knowledge and in virtue, rebellion could not easily be interpreted in terms of a Satanic model and tended to be legitimated by the rebels themselves, until the nineteenth century, in the not particularly dualistic terms of the nature mysticism of popular Taoism and the reassertion of traditional peasant values.\(^{14}\)

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\(^{12}\) Particular components of the “post-modern” psychocultural dialectic can be referred back to the distant past: the Promethean myth, Roman law, the Tristanic legend, the Lutheran conscience. What is “post-modern” is the dominance of this tension among the formulators of cultural imagery of the present age.

\(^{13}\) Karl A. Wittfogel, Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957). Wittfogel does not recognize the importance of the “symbolic” distinction made here.

The myth of Prometheus has been put together in a society which cultivated “individualistic heroism” in social action and in fact provided opportunities for a privileged elite, to seek this goal. When Prometheus first appears, the breaking down of clan controls was taking place in the absence of a dominant state organization. With the Chinese scholar-official, or a John Stuart Mill, Prometheus shares an aristocratic sense of obligation for the “lower orders.”

But he pursues the call of this obligation in his own “individually heroic” way, without waiting for legitimation by any traditional standard or generalized system of faith.

A society which permits individualistic action for at least some of its members is probably necessary for such trust in one’s own private moral sensitivities, not sanctioned by any agency or tradition external to the individual to be imagined. And when Prometheus attains his full development, in the tragedies of Aeschylus, there is at least a segmental democracy operating in Athens.

Another structural characteristic of the Greek society relevant to the Promethean theme is the lack of effective control by an organized priesthood over the interpretation of moral issues, whereas in the Mesopotamian framework such priesthoods tended to be organized, like the state, along the lines of a militaristic “oriental despotism.” (And even the Hebrew prophets spoke in the name of obedience to the supreme authority, daring to question only the power of the middle-level authorities, much as Russian peasant rebels did in relation to the Czar and his subordinates until the end of the nineteenth century.)

The militantly organized Church was presumably more important than the feudal state in regenerating the Satanic theory in Europe from the twelfth century on, and then briefly, on both the Catholic and the Protestant sides, during the height of the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation. In modern revolutionary regimes, we find a similar correlation between Satanic theories and control by the equivalent of an organized priesthood over the interpretation of moral issues.

The Satanic theory of rebellious behavior appears to require both a social structure built for the maximization of obedience and elimination of independence, and an intellectual tradition of rigorous (non-cooperative) dualism. A civilization, like the traditional Chinese, which eliminates individual independence in politically relevant action, but which does not favor rigorous dualism in thought, does not generate Satanic interpretations of rebellious behavior.
And in the post-medieval bourgeois societies of Western Europe, including those of the most rigorous Calvinistic shaping — which tended, however, to seek maximization of individual independence in social action — the hold of Satan did not last. Given an obedience-maximizing structure and a dualistic tradition, social strains and particularly threats to this structure and tradition increase the likelihood, and the virulence, of Satanic theories.\textsuperscript{15}

It is conceivable that conditions under which Satanic theories arise also favor Satanic behavior, as twentieth-century totalitarianisms suggest. But a mythological model should probably be seen not as a reflection of observed, that is already existing behavior, but as an expression of the categories of imagination shaped by the conjunction of a social structure and a cognitive model. In imagination, however, designs for alternative modes of behavior are tried out (and sometimes, of course, found wanting).

Thus, the analysis of the interpretations of rebellious behavior underlines the impossibility of understanding the distinctive symbolic designs of civilizations either without reference to their social structures or as direct reflections of their social structures. Nor, in all likelihood, should differences in symbolic designs be read as registering corresponding differences in visible behavior, or the absence of a particular symbolic design be interpreted as indicating the absence of the behavior which other peoples conceptualize in such designs.

What symbolic designs express exists, outside of them, only in the imagination; and not everything which exists outside of the imagination is transformed into its basic categories.

I shall conclude by re-emphasizing two methodological points.

(1) An effective approach to the comparative study of the symbolic designs of civilizations is to focus on a particular theme, found in several civilizations, and embodied in a cultural product that lends itself to both psychological and sociological analysis.

(2) A productive method of analysis, within this approach, is to look for the linkages of key notions — socially strategic concepts which are treated, in particular civilizations, as necessarily associated with each other, or as mutually exclusive, or as having an indeterminate and variable relationship between themselves.

Linkages between an ideological notion such as rebellion, and a psychological mechanism presumed to be underlying the behavior oriented to this notion are also worth noting.

Presumed interdependencies between the notions of power, knowledge, virtue, and law have been brought out as particularly important in the present case. But, for an adequate analysis of the symbolic designs of civilizations through linkages between key notions, an inventory of perhaps twenty to fifty such notions, for each civilization at distinguishable stages of its development, might be needed.

Summary Table: Two Modes of Rebellion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL OF ANALYSIS</th>
<th>THE SATANIC MODEL</th>
<th>THE PROMETHEAN MODEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Described Behavior</td>
<td>Total rebellion against normative structure</td>
<td>Partial rebellion against a particular aspect of the normative structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inferred Motivation</td>
<td>Resentment – destructive mechanism</td>
<td>Humane sympathy – practical assistance mechanism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Role Antecedent to Rebellion</td>
<td>Absolute servant, enforcer of morality</td>
<td>Independent agent, knowledgeable trickster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociocultural Environment</td>
<td>Obedience-maximizing social structure, radically dualistic cognitive tradition</td>
<td>Obedience-minimizing social structure, “dialectical” conception of relationship between opposites in cognitive tradition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In Memoriam

Walter Benesch, 1932-2017

My friend, Walter Benesch, died in August 2017, at home with his family around him. His wife, Renate, told me that he lived his life just as he liked and died in tranquility, leaving behind many of us who admired and loved him.

Walter was that rare academic who bridged disciplines: comparative history, Slavic literature, comparative philosophy, and comparative Western and Chinese philosophy. He was a wonderful husband, devoted father to two boys (who were brought up without television in their home), and a man who could think great thoughts while tending his garden, raising chickens and turkeys, thereby feeding his family through the very cold Fairbanks, Alaska, winters. He also continued to teach philosophy gratis after his retirement because the demand was so great. There had been no great demand for philosophy in Alaska before Walter’s splendid professorship. Philosophy majors have learned to think outside the box, which makes them valuable employees in almost any enterprise.

The year that I first met him at an ISCSC conference, I gave the final paper and he and his 17-year-old son Oleg (currently a professor in England) asked “Do you take your show on the road?” (he liked my presentation) and I said: “Absolutely.” As soon as I returned home, there was an invitation from Walter to visit the University of Alaska in Fairbanks for a week as a “visiting scholar.” I accepted, and then he gave me the date: mid-February!” He scraped together an honorarium from four departments and I prepared four lectures appropriate to those disciplines. The honorarium was used to buy winter clothes that I would need in temperatures of 18 degrees below zero! I am a Californian.

Walter and I have been friends ever since, and I am very fond of his son Oleg (who joined our association as a scholar of Japanese Culture) and a great admirer of his wife Renate, whom he met and married while getting his doctorate in Austria. Walter was a superb scholar and a surprisingly good author of books for children that were both fun and informative. He was a phenomenon as a universal man in a time of increasing narrow specialization.

He was interviewed by his Fairbanks newspaper, the Peninsula Clarion, in 2002, with such a charming description of this unusual man that we offer it here.

Walter, we will all miss you.

Laina Farhat-Holzman
Retired UAF Philosophy Professor Tunes Into Chickens

Posted: Friday, September 13, 2002
By GEORGE BRYSON
Anchorage Daily News

FAIRBANKS (AP) -- Sometimes when retired University of Alaska Fairbanks philosophy professor Walter Benesch attends a conference and addresses some of the greatest thinkers in the world, his German-born wife, Renate, can't help but have her doubts.

Her husband can talk Eastern and Western philosophy with the best of them, she says — just as he did a year ago at a meeting of the International Association of Chinese Philosophers at the University of Beijing.

"But as he's standing up there and delivering some paper, I think: If they only knew where this started ... as he was mucking out the chicken yard."

Sitting now in his comfortable Fairbanks home surrounded by more than an acre of sunny gardens, bordered by a poultry pen, Benesch laughs hearing his wife divulge his secret.

It's true, he says. You can learn a lot from chickens.

"The chickens' view of life is really philosophical: You see out of both sides of your head at the same time, and you're not worried about tomorrow. It's very Buddhist. Chickens are very, very Buddhist."

Benesch's wide-ranging commentaries — reflecting on current events in the context of history, literature, science and philosophy — are heard across about half the state each Monday (with the exception of the Anchorage area) on "Alaska Edition," the prize-winning public radio program produced by Fairbanks station KUAC. (Anchorage residents can listen to audio files of the show archived on the Web at www.kuac.org/alaskaedition.html.)

Benesch, 68, began to question his own assumptions way back in college. Raised in the desert country of southern Colorado in the 1930s and '40s, he thought he was going to be a pastor when he enrolled in the University of Denver but changed his mind after a couple of years as a history major.

"If you get a lot of history, you have trouble with theology," he says. "All you have to do is encounter the wars of Reformation, where God wants Catholics to kill Protestants and Protestants to kill Catholics."
That, and discovering Alaska.

His parents had driven the family up the new Alaska Highway in the summer of 1950, and he'd relished the cooler climate. He'd returned to work on a stream survey in Sitka during his summers off from college and brought with him a pile of books. That's when he began developing an interest in Dostoevsky and other Russian authors.

"The library at the University of Denver would let me take as many boxes of books as I wanted," he says, "so I would pack them with Russian literature."

It was an interest that would take his life in a new direction just a few years later.

After earning a master's degree at the University of Montana, serving a two-year tour of duty in the Army at Fort Richardson, then taking a job in Anchorage teaching ninth-grade English, he won a local Rotary fellowship to attend college in Austria for a year, studying Russian and Slavic cultures.

But the hard part lay ahead: attending doctorate-level classes taught entirely in German at Leopold-Franzens University in Innsbruck. The only way to make the leap in language, he decided, was to begin speaking German full time.

"The moment I got off the plane, I stopped all English," Benesch says. "It took about six weeks to two months, and then suddenly that was it. Of course, it was a lot of work after that, but I was now thinking in the language. I wasn't translating anymore. I didn't have to make the leap."

He'd also met Renate, a young German translator who'd earlier attended school in America as part of her own student exchange — and was far more adept at English than Benesch was at German. They dated as he continued his studies in Innsbruck, then they married in 1963 after he earned his doctorate in Slavic studies.

There was only one condition, Renate says.

"He said you'll have to live in Alaska. He was very clear on that. And when I made up my mind, I knew there wouldn't be any wiggle room."

In 1963, Benesch landed a job at UAF teaching courses in English, history and philosophy. A few years later, he began teaching full time in the university's fledgling philosophy department.

They acquired a little cabin on five acres in an undeveloped part of Fairbanks north of the university and never moved away. They raised two boys — Ilya, now 33, and Oleg, 24 — in a bilingual household. Though mostly they spoke German.
“Since Renate and I met in Austria, we've always spoken German,” Benesch says, “so we decided when we came back we would just stick with that, and we still do. This is a German house. And when the kids came along, we kept it. So, the kids are bilingual.”

To help them remain that way, Walt and Renate decided to raise them without television.

“It's been a real interesting experiment,” Benesch says, “but it's worked beautifully.”

Renate credits her husband with “living his philosophy.”

Which seems inspired partly by the post-Aristotelian school of skeptics who valued intellectual inquiry and partly by modern advances in science and theories of relativity, which have found that two seemingly contradictory answers can be right after all.

“The particle explanation of light is right — in certain circumstances,” Benesch says, “and the wave explanation of light is correct. They're both right. And so, you get rid of the idea of contradiction.”

But a certain Buddhist “appreciation for the present” was also evident — outdoors, in the family poultry pens, as Benesch returned to his chores.

The turkeys and chickens were calling.

Reviewed by Ernest B. Hook

This disappointing work provides a superficial, disorganized, repetitive, incomplete, frustrating, and even a somewhat perverse review of effects of earthquakes on human history. With regard to perversity, the author claims, “we might even argue that earthquakes, for all their horrors, can enhance economic growth in the long term” and be “blessings in disguise.”

He cites Gandhi, Kant, and John Stuart Mill in apparent support. Gandhi invoked the great earthquake in India and Tibet in 1934 as a warning to Hindus about their views on untouchability. He saw, unsympathetically, a moral utility in great natural catastrophes and, apparently, associated deaths of the innocents as much as the guilty, as warnings to the credulous. Kant only went so far as to suggest we should consider whether earthquakes “might bring us good things.” Mill went further to predict, unequivocally, Robinson implies, long term economic benefits from disasters, including presumably earthquakes, because they encouraged manufacturers to introduce more efficient processes!

Even widely followed philosophies have made similar arguments about the unexpected advantages of disease, famine, wars, and death. In Christian eschatology the horrors unleashed upon humanity by the advent of the Four Horseman of the Apocalypse will precede the Last Judgment, the presumed end of human civilization and reintroduction of an existence in paradise.

Some commentators have cited the utter devastation after World War Two in the Federal Republic of Germany and in the Empire of Japan as an explanation for the major economic expansion in these countries after the war; they argue that the utter destruction removed social-political barriers to growth and enabled the extraordinary economic emergence of these countries after their destruction. But this ignores the benign policies of the occupying victors, who allowed, indeed facilitated such growth and then withdrew, as well as the cultural heritage in both Germany and Japan that included a strong “work ethic.”

Robinson concludes that “earthquake-prone cities, including many capitals, generally recover from seismic catastrophes and frequently prosper. I emphasize his qualifications, because he does not cite any exceptions. He does refer to Antigua, the beautiful former capital of Guatemala ruined and rebuilt four times in less than 300 years after 1586.”
He doesn’t tell us that its seismicity led to the country’s capital being removed to Guatemala City, leaving Antigua to slumber in lessened prosperity as a consequence.

With regard to societies and civilizations, Robinson is less certain about lingering effects. He cites two opposed views: that of Will Durant, who stated, “Civilization exists by geological consent, subject to change without notice” and that of Jared Diamond, who in his “Collapse: How societies choose to fail or succeed”, totally ignores earthquakes and volcanoes. (Diamond might claim in this volume he addressed human choices. In other books he does emphasize geography.)

Robinson reasonably claims that human agency and geographical factors are both important. Humans can do things to diminish the hazards of earthquakes. Thus in 2010 the magnitude 7.1 earthquake near Christchurch New Zealand caused no fatalities; whereas the one of magnitude 7.0 near Port-au-Prince Haiti caused 85,000 to 316,000. Reinforced construction in New Zealand accounts for the difference.

But the important point from our viewpoint is to what extent, and how, societies and civilizations can survive earthquakes. Haiti did survive, albeit with difficulty and with international assistance, despite the devastation.

Robinson suggests the apparently simultaneous collapse of Bronze Age societies in Crete and elsewhere in the Eastern Mediterranean around 1200 BCE in many different sites may have been due to, or at least triggered by, an earthquake of as yet unknown epicenter. He does not mention anywhere a frequently-cited alternative explanation: one of the most powerful volcanic explosions of all time, on the island of Thera (now Santorini), is often postulated as the cause of the collapse of the Minoan Civilization. Granted an earthquake of unknown epicenter could have triggered the explosion. But plausibly, the consequences of the catastrophe (and associated tsunami if it was an earthquake) so weakened the Minoans that they could not resist the destruction of subsequent raiders or invaders of whom we know little.

Robinson can do no more than speculate about civilizations, but he discusses in some detail the effects of natural disasters on cities and nations. He reviews in detail earthquakes in London 1750, Lisbon 1755, Caracas 1812, Naples 1857, San Francisco 1906, Tokyo and Yokohama, 1923, Tangshan (China) 1976, Gujarat (India) 2001, the Indian Ocean Tsunami 2004, and Fukushima (Japan) 2011. The historical details in these chapters are of interest and the best part of the volume.

Unfortunately, in his introductory chapter he makes implausible claims about some events discussed in detail in later chapters where no evidence in support of the earlier claims appear. For instance, by a series of sequential extrapolations, Robinson suggests the Japanese earthquake of 1923 led to World War II and that the San Francisco earthquake of 1906 triggered the formation of the U.S. Federal Reserve in 1913.
Moreover, he states that after 1906, the subsequent economic growth in San Francisco resulted from the earthquake, the city “went on to flourish”, and even “gave birth” to Silicon Valley to the south of it in the 1950s! This is simply a fallacy. Silicon Valley resulted from its location close to Stanford University, not San Francisco. Robinson states that the Tangshan earthquake in China in 1976, about one month before Mao’s death, led Deng Xiaoping to transform his country into an economic power, because of the failure of the central government to address the aftermath of the earthquake, another fallacy.

I will not elaborate further on the specific problems with the book except by providing more suggestions for what I hope will be an improved 2nd edition:

A single chapter, with a glossary, of the technical details and definitions, e.g. “faults”, “plates” “zones”, briefly explaining the science of earthquakes, the different types of faults, the various causes of earthquakes, how the various measures of earthquakes compare, and the advantages of each. Elaborate on the details of such matters as P waves and S waves, subduction zones, etc. Where they appear these details are scattered about, and not well defined so are simply jargon.

Regarding the list of earthquakes: add to the date and location such basic information the numbers known or estimated killed, and magnitudes of each even if only estimated, noting which scale is used. (Strangely, although the author informs us in the text he is not using the well-known Richter scale, I cannot find a single remark about what scale he does use when giving the magnitude of an earthquake, or how, for instance, the magnitude for a particular earthquake he provides differs from that of the Richter or other scales.) Instead of a two-page simple sketch map of seismic zones in the world, provide expanded and labeled maps of known seismic faults. Iceland for instance is in grey implying it is all an active zone. It may be, but no one looking at this map would realize a fault goes right through the country. So discuss Iceland, among other areas where one can see the effects of two major tectonic plates drifting apart above sea level.
Since 1967 I have spent many summers on a kibbutz, a collective farm, in Israel. When I was there five years ago, one of the kibbutzniks, an agricultural scientist with a PhD from Oregon State University, recommended I read the writings of Prof. Yuval Noah Harari of Hebrew University. I didn’t. What a mistake. Today, Harari’s book entitled “Sapiens,” as translated from the original Hebrew into English, has been residing on or near the top of the New York Times best-seller list for many weeks.

*Sapiens* provides a wide-ranging and thought-provoking introduction for students of comparative civilization; it describes the rise and journey of mankind, ending with speculation about the future of the species. The work is divided into four parts — the Cognitive Revolution, the Agricultural Revolution, the Unification of Humankind and the Scientific Revolution.

The first chapter presents a brief review of the evolution of mankind. Our genus, *Homo*, began about 2.5 million years ago, with sequential pulses out of Africa, our birthplace, beginning about two million years ago. The nomenclature and classification schemes for evolution seem to change with each generation of scholars. Today we can say that from the hominid family came various subfamilies. Our subfamily is called the Hominines, within which are two tribes, the panins and the hominins; species anywhere on the main human clade, or line, are generally called hominins.

There is one subtribe of the hominins that includes early predecessors of ours no longer surviving, such as the Australopithecine and Kenyanthropus; we fall in the other subtribe, called Hominina or hominans. We, as *Homo sapiens*, are the sole remaining version of our subtribe, having outlasted other forms of *Homo* such as *H. habilis*, *H. erectus*, and *H. neanderthalensis*. (See Bernard Wood’s *Human Evolution: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005.) Harari observes that although we live today, and others in the *Homo* line do not, *Homo erectus*, “upright man,” survived for two million years, far longer than we have to date.

Physically, anatomically modern man evolved about 150,000 years ago. We have large brains, more than double the size of early men, but, writes Harari, “a jumbo brain is a jumbo drain on the body.” There are other unique features to our bodies, including that we are born too early, before all our vital systems are developed. Thus, mankind needs to take care of our young. “It takes a tribe to raise a human” and evolution has favored those capable of forming strong social ties. Obtaining fire enabled the rise of humanity, too; we can cook food that we cannot digest in natural forms – wheat, rice and potatoes, for example. By cooking, we also destroyed dangerous germs and parasites in the food.
Harari discusses the methods by which *Homo sapiens* spread across the globe (leaving Africa roughly 70,000 years ago), outlasted other humans already present, and used language to rise to supremacy among all other creatures. It was the Cognitive Revolution, about 70,000 to 30,000 years ago, that led to our present ways of thinking and communicating. Why communicate? He thinks that a major reason was the human need to gossip. And a major result of our ability to imagine via words led to the ability to change behavior rapidly, to evolve culturally. The Cognitive Revolution led to our ability to plan, to form larger groups, and to bring about both cooperation amongst strangers and innovative social behavioral patterns. Thus arose the hunting and gathering bands.

Was it a bad life? Hunters and gatherers enjoyed a more comfortable and rewarding lifestyle than most peasants and workers who have followed them over the years. Interestingly, Harari cites new evidence that the size of the average human brain has decreased since the age of foraging. Moreover, hunters and gatherers were not dependent on one single source of food, so they could make up for losses. These individuals were taller and healthier than the peasants that followed them, suffered less from infectious diseases, and they worked fewer hours than modern people. Further, those who could avoid dying in the first few years of life might anticipate living into their sixties, seventies, and eighties.

Among the major achievements of early man that he cites was the colonization of Australia 45,000 years ago, but this led to the extinction of many native animals. He gives other examples of the elimination of fauna whenever humans arrive, including in the Americas. The conclusion: “the historical record makes *Homo sapiens* look like an ecological serial killer.” We are, says Harari, “the deadliest species in the annals of biology.”

In the section on the Agricultural Revolution the argument is made that it occurred in various places around the world, not simply in the Fertile Crescent, where it happened roughly 10,000 years ago. It was “one of the most controversial events in history.” Moreover, it was “history’s biggest fraud” because the average farmer had a worse life than the average hunter gatherer, “a trap.” And, says the author, with the Agricultural Revolution mankind didn’t domesticate wheat; it domesticated us; he means that we were the ones forced into houses, who got a worse diet, achieved little economic security, and experienced an inability to move when things went bad, while wheat expanded worldwide. Ten thousand years ago, wheat was “just a wild grass, one of many, confined to a small range in the Middle East. Suddenly, within just a few short millennia it was growing all over the world.” It had become one of the most successful plants in the history of the earth, he writes, thanks to our efforts.
With the Agricultural Revolution, writes Harari, the population grew; this meant that farmers had to work harder to feed the increased population. “Population growth burned humanity’s boats.” Further, today’s luxuries become tomorrow’s necessities, so new obligations are created.

However, Harari says, the Agricultural Revolution was a turning point, where many say that “Sapiens cast off its intimate symbiosis with nature and sprinted towards greed and alienation.” Harari reports that the population exploded, rising from about 5 million before the Agricultural Revolution to more than 250 million by the first century CE.

Settling down as farmers meant that mankind now would plan, think for the future, something hunters and gatherers generally didn’t do. New “imagined” social order arises, with social stratification, urbanization, government, and civilizations as products of the Agricultural Revolution. In addition to objective facts, subjective views emerge — including myths which assume the status of objective facts for most people. Myths arise as necessary to sustain society — myths including beliefs in inequality (Hammurabi) or equality (the U.S. Declaration of Independence) and often resting on “true believers.”

Harari lauds the invention by ancient Sumerians of writing. This has enabled modern progress and exists itself as what Emile Durkheim would call a social fact; it cannot be reduced to the individual level but is social *sui generis*. Writing enables numbers and arguments and facts to be passed on generation to generation.

In this section, Harari has essentially written a comparative study of civilizations. He tells of how different writing systems developed, how great texts began in oral form, and how bureaucracy arose. He points to the widespread belief in the “fiction” of social stratification and discrimination of all sorts, how the social concepts of man and woman arose (as distinguished from the biological existence of males and females) and what their implications have been, and what large questions about the organization of society remain open.

The third part of the book Harari calls the Unification of Humankind. He begins by arguing that history is moving in a direction: mega-cultures have led to the unity of humanity. He labels early civilizations as “worlds” separated from the others. Then, he argues, commerce, empires and universal religion spread everywhere. Result: We now have a single global culture, probably, he writes, the inevitable result of the dynamics of human history.

First: Commerce triumphs. Money, he writes, is the most universal and most efficient system of mutual trust ever devised. We might hate our enemy, but we take his money.
Second: Empires, while frequently despised, have in fact unified countries and help bring about a common culture; in the future, we will be seeing the erosion of nationalism and the emergence of a global empire. Global standards of financial behavior, environmental policy and justice are emerging, and individual countries simply can’t stop climate change single-handedly.

Third: Religion is the third great unifier of mankind. Harari discusses the rise of polytheism, monotheism, dualism, natural law religions (such as Buddhism, Jainism, Taoism, and Stoicism), and modern manifestations of humanism, capitalism, socialism and other forms of religion.

Why has history developed as it has? Harari rejects deterministic arguments based on economics, biology, geography or ecology. We can figure out “how” history happens but not “why” certain forks in the road were taken; I would have alluded to Max Weber here. Harari writes: “Unlike physics or economics, history is not a means for making accurate predictions.” Further, there is no proof that history is working for the benefit of humanity, he says.

In Part IV Harari covers the Scientific Revolution, noting the vast changes this revolution has brought to the life of mankind, including a growth in numbers from 500 million to 7 billion of us. The author examines the rise of science, the great breakthroughs, and the fact that science is typically in the service of some goal. He argues that history’s “chief engine” for the past 500 years has probably been the “feedback loop” between science, empire, and capital.

Thus, a British ship bound for the Southern Pacific to study the transit of Venus across the face of the sun did that study but also led to geographic discoveries which brought on British conquest of much of Oceania and Australia and the concomitant deaths of most of the original residents the British encountered.

Europe beat out Asia and Africa in this expansion, the author argues, because it accepted the tenets of science and could harness technology to significant ends; further, rapacious capitalism drove the tremendous success of Europe (much as Marx argued in The Communist Manifesto).

In an interesting section, the author ponders why the great Chinese admiral Zheng He with his huge armada (far more powerful than Columbus’s) and his gigantic voyages, undertaken in the early fifteenth century, did not make a lasting impact such as the Europeans did only a few decades later. Why did China not take control of Indonesia, India, Arabia, and East Africa? The answer: the Chinese under Zheng He and the later Europeans both were explorers; only the Europeans sought to conquer and rule, as well. The Chinese were interested in local matters, goings-on at home only, not in expansion to new found lands they could have ruled.
Not all of what European expansionism achieved was harmful.

- Harari tells the story of how the British, once ensconced in India, were able to uncover Mohenjo-Daro, and thus find out about that early Indian civilization of which Indians themselves were unaware.
- He describes how the British were able to decipher the long unused writing system of cuneiform, thus bringing to modern men the 3,000-years-long ancient life of the Middle Eastern Sumerian, Babylonian and Assyrian cultures.
- He talks about how William Jones, the great founder of the Calcutta-based Asiatic Society, was able to study Sanskrit in depth and then come up with the concept of the existence of the Indo-European language family.

Finally, money. Harari describes the idea behind capitalism — it’s based on faith in the future and coupled with the argument that those who make profits will reinvest their profits in the business, growing it. Capitalism, he says, rests on the existence of capital (money, goods and resources invested in production) not wealth, wasted on unproductive activities. The principal tenet of capitalism is that economic growth is the supreme good; justice, freedom and happiness all depend on economic growth. Example: within 80 years the relatively small swampland called Holland, owned by Spain, gained its independence and grew to be the richest country in Europe; how? Credit and capitalism.

Capital has driven European expansionism over the past few centuries and capitalism has been closely related to empire-building, as European countries stepped in militarily to advance the interests of their investors. The Opium War was a perfect example, as was the British takeover of Egypt and the English fight against the Ottomans on behalf of Greek independence — all intended to protect their countrymen’s financial interests. Especially egregious was the murder — driven by greed for profits in the rubber industry — of up to ten million people in the Congo by Belgians between 1885 and 1908.

Harari sums up: “Some religions, such as Christianity and Nazism, have killed millions out of burning hatred. Capitalism has killed millions out of cold indifference coupled with greed.” He writes that consumerism is a result of capitalism; so, too, is the vicious, insensitive mistreatment of animals whose products (such as milk and meat) we utilize. Environmental destruction also is a result of rapacious capitalism.

With the Industrial Revolution has come standardized time, urbanization, the disappearance of the peasantry, democratization, and the collapse of the family and one’s local community (now replaced by the state and the market). From our status as members of a family and a community, we have become alienated individuals. This parallels the arguments of Henry Sumner Maine and Ferdinand Toennies, among others.
In one fascinating discussion, Harari points out that war has greatly diminished in recent decades. Most people cannot imagine real war interrupting their lives these days, as opposed to the situation for much of history. Countries with borders generally see those borders respected by neighboring countries; Iraq’s attempt to gobble up Kuwait in 1990 was a rare exception. Empires have fallen peacefully in the period following World War II — particularly the Soviet Union. Most of the final stages of the British and French empires were generally peaceful.

Thus, peace has become the rule, rather than the exception, according to the author. The atomic bomb makes any major war a suicide pact. Moreover, the profits of war have declined, since a country’s wealth these days is in the minds and abilities of the scientists, engineers, and artists — not in minerals found underground or animals in the fields, easy to loot. Trade increases the profits of peace, and most of today’s international elite are interested in peace rather than war.

He writes that: “As far as we can tell, from a purely scientific viewpoint, human life has absolutely no meaning. Humans are the outcome of blind evolutionary processes that operate without goal or purpose.” Thus, any meaning that people ascribe to their lives is just a delusion. He also writes that studying the rise and fall of empires, or the discovery and spread of technologies, says nothing about how all this influences the happiness and suffering of individuals. Are we *Homo sapiens* happier today than in the past? This is the biggest gap in our studying of history, one that we should start to address, he says.

We are probably coming to the end of our species as we now exist. It looks like the pace of technological development will soon lead to the replacement of *Homo sapiens* by completely or partially different beings, ones who possess not only different physiques but also very different cognitive and emotional worlds. Harari talks of great medical advances and the change from what we are now to cyborgs, with some parts of us replaceable as they wear out, enhanced human abilities, and the elimination of certain diseases as fatal to us.

But, will a brain reproduced inside a computer be a person? If it is your brain copied, is it you in that machine? What about consciousness?

Perhaps soon, all extant concepts that give meaning to the world will be challenged as irrelevant. Anything happening beyond that point of evolution will be meaningless to us, according to Harari. But, he writes, the future is unknown, and we cannot predict whether these forecasted changes will occur as anticipated today. So, we need to consider that the next stage of history may well include not only technological and organizational transformations but also fundamental alterations in human consciousness.
Overall, this is a wide-ranging review of the rise, triumphs, failures, and likely end of our genus. The book excites the imagination and it certainly highlights the importance and wide expanse of the social sciences, and, not coincidentally, the comparative study of civilizations, for all readers.

Reviewed by Pedro Geiger

*The Art of Civilization, a Bourgeois History* is an excellent, erudite book. After the *Introduction*, its first chapter, *Birth of the Aesthetic*, deals with the concept of “civilization” and with the role of cities in the production of “civilization” — the product of the citizens, of the bourgeoisie. Even when the Church or the Aristocracy was running European societies, the making of the goods of the civilization was in the hands of the bourgeoisie. The author undertakes a deep analysis of classical Greek production. *Birth of the Aesthetic* divides historical times between the oldest periods, when art was produced without the existence of the concept of “art,” and the periods which followed the formation of such a concept. Thus, the role of the classical Greeks in creating the idea of beauty is presented.

Didier Maleuvre prefers to use the word “civilization” as meaning “pertaining to the city.” Comparing it with the more static term “culture,” which includes rural and folk environments, the author sees civilization as expressing an instance where one looks differently, more dynamically, *inward* and *outward*, to the *past* and the *future*. As to the place of art production in the process of civilization, he declares that “art indeed is useful to civilization, and to one civilization in particular”; the many forms and uses of art in western societies “served a demystifying function advancing a rationalized (some say “disenchanted,” others, “bourgeois”) frame of mind which, in the specific sense detailed below, we shall call “civilized.”

“The purpose is to show how the civilizing mind (i.e., the view from the city, the town-dweller’s lorgnette) shapes, and is shaped by, artistic expression. More polemically, the aim is to see how art since ancient Greece mostly (though not exclusively, and certainly not uncritically) advances a mentality we should now call by its name, to wit, *bourgeois.*”

“Art looks at things not just for what they are, but for what they are not and what they could be. The city does strange things to the mind. The eighteenth-century *philosophes* said that it civilizes it; more neutrally, we could say that it citifies it; and poetically, we will say that it aestheticizes it.”

The eight following chapters of the book describe a sequence of civilizations during different historical periods, as being directed “toward the rationalizations of mentalities.” These chapters are named *The Time of Images, Into the Time of Art, The Time of Makers, The Time of Work, The Time of Knowledge, The Time of Taste, The Time of Ideologies* and *The Time of Production*. The book concludes with the chapter *Triumph of the Aesthetic.*
Chapter 2, *The Time of Images*, is dedicated to the period of feudalism in Europe, when one saw a decline of the cities, and when Christianity became the source of artistic production. At its inception in Europe, “Christianity spread down the roads and routes of the city-building Pax Romana. As an economic and cultural vector, the city … was a spent force, surviving mostly in the spiritualized medium of theology, such as Augustine’s *City of God* (fourth century).”

Until the ninth century, the Church was the force driving the civilization, and it promoted the production of images, such as the images of Christ. The diffusion of images expressed the insertion into Christianity of Neo-Platonism, with its principle of the importance of Form.

Chapter 3, *Into the Time of Art*, deals with the Middle Age in Europe, with its Renaissance and with its post-Renaissance. The chapter divides the styles into a Romanesque Middle Age and a Gothic Middle Age. This is a time when cities begin to revive. “Cave-like architecture was out; now was the age of the cliff–and forest–like building. The Romanesque emphasized tight-knit community, the Gothic romanticized transcendent yearnings. … The new cathedral wasn’t just a big space for big crowds; it was a divining rod for the imagination. It made religion intensely spectacular, bid the gaze to soar. … The edifice itself proclaimed the city mindset — competitive, experimental, and assertive. Assertive because the city, by its very existence, confirms the power of men-made environment over nature, and the cathedral symbolized newfound confidence in man’s power to create a world made and designed by us for our use and enjoyment.”

“The Middle Ages knew the arts of rhetoric, of drawing, of sculpting. These arts generally looked back on precedent or social authority: they were methods. *Ars* became art when creative authority drew inward; when the scholar-teacher betook himself to double and to rebuild. The scholastics rediscovered the art of thinking, thinking not merely as the transmission of knowledge but as production. The shift from transmission to production parallels the transition from agrarian work to city-life artisanship.” The chapter ends with comments about the arts of poetry and singing.

*The Time of Makers*, the fourth chapter, covers the lives and work of major figures in the arts, philosophy and politics, from the 14th to the 16th centuries, when mercantilism flourished, and the port cities were developing and creating the Hanseatic League. At this time the Renaissance started new cycles of Art and began the production of science, and man’s consciousness of his individuality appeared. Among the figures whose lives and works are analyzed in this chapter are Boccaccio, Dante, Donatello, Durer, Francis Bacon, Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Machiavelli, Montaigne, Petrarch, Raphael, Shakespeare, and Thomas More.
The Time of Work, the fifth chapter, covers the Reformation, the appearance of the Protestants, and their influence in art. It was a time when paintings started to be sold to the bourgeoisie, and representation shifted from religious figures to common people, and to still life (natures mortes). The rise of the Dutch Golden Age (1590-1680), with painters as Rembrandt, Vermeer, and Brueghel, is analyzed as valuing “accuracy over grandiosity.”

The sixth chapter, The Time of Knowledge, points to the religious wars in Europe as a result of the Reformation, but, on the positive side, to a knowledge revolution, “a revolution inside the concept of knowledge itself.” Knowledge is not a loyalty to dogma, but a search for veracity. “New knowledge observes, tests hypotheses, and never declares itself above error.” Doubt is embodied in the classic Hamlet exclamation “to be or not to be.”

The end of the religious wars in Europe came with the emergence of the Nation-State as the transcendent power during the 17th century, the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 being its legal instrument, along with the abolition of the Hanseatic League. Emphasizing the concept of motion, the chapter points to the changes in thought influenced by Copernicus’ findings about the Earth’s rotation. The chapter deals with Bacon, Caravaggio, Cervantes, Descartes, Galileo, Lope de Vega, Montaigne, Pascal and Shakespeare, among others. It also comments on the Baroque.

Chapter seven, The Time of Taste, starts with the “Quarrel between Ancients and Moderns” at the end of the 18th century, and with the appearance of concepts such as “modernity” and “academic.” It was a time when “the bourgeoisie became the major economic player, so its empiricism, its taste for clarity and due process, for material security and peaceful compromise took center stage.” The chapter covers the Enlightenment and notes that it was only in 1750 that the German philosopher Alexander Baumgarten coined the term “aesthetics,” derived from ancient Greek. Among those the chapter considers are Diderot, Kant, Hobbes, Hume, Locke, Jean Jacques Rousseau, the Marquis de Sade, Smith, and Voltaire.

The Time of Ideologies is the eighth chapter. It deals with revolutions that express the decline of the aristocracy and the emergence of mass movements, including the American (1776) and the French (1789) revolutions. It shows the relations between these revolutions and movements in arts, philosophy and sciences, citing and analyzing Balzac, Beethoven, Bell, Burke, Marie Curie, David, Goethe, Hegel, Hertz, von Humboldt, Keats, Mozart, Pasteur, Schelling, Schiller, and Wagner. It mentions the Crystal Palace Exhibition of 1851 and subsequent world expositions.

The Time of Production is the title of chapter nine. It addresses the advance of realism, a movement parallel to the growth of industrial capitalism and the formation of the proletariat class, a class opposed to the bourgeoisie.
The bourgeoisie itself generated a significant division between its high, middle and low bourgeois layers, according to differing levels of income. The two last layers and the proletariat formed the people, and an idea of art produced for the people appeared. In a list that runs from Courbet and Goya to the Impressionists and to the Cubists, one finds, among others, the names of Cézanne, Daumier with his caricatures, Degas, Gauguin, Manet, Modigliani, Monet, Picasso, Renoir, Seurat and Van Gogh.

This is also a time of the birth of the political socialist movements, with Proudhon, Marx and Engels. The author explains why, in his view, art cannot be politicized in the way imagined by the left and the right. “The goal of politics is to maintain or change a concrete social situation. Politics operates in the immanent and the feasible. Art is reflection, … a work of art is a mirror, and a mirror image exists on a different plane of reality. It takes a holiday from the here and now. This holiday creates spectators — which is not what political activists should be.” The chapter also deals with philosophers such as Bergson and Nietzsche, and it gives attention to the introduction of Art Education as a way to bring the masses to Art.

The tenth and final chapter, Triumph of the Aesthetic, deals with the twentieth century, one characterized by works on art in impressively high numbers. “The problem with the twentieth century isn’t that art was used to beautify politics … the core problem was that politics and morality were enclosed by an aesthetic view of life.” The author sees the conflicts between artists and communist regimes as linked to the bourgeois nature of Art, to the liberty of the city, and to the communist opposition to the bourgeois while praising the nation state. The book finishes with consideration of present conditions and the possibilities of the future. “What is space? What is time? What is energy? How does history move? What is gender? What is consciousness, society, religion, art? Who or what are we?”

New lines in arts, as of the German Bauhaus, the Russian Concretes, Dada, Futurism, Minimalism, Pop Art, and Surrealism are discussed in this chapter, as are more current developments in philosophy and science. The names of individuals and their works include, among others, Aragon, Apollinaire, Duchamp, Freud, Gorky, Le Corbusier, Keynes, Kierkegaard, Paul Klee, Malevich, Thomas Mann, Stravinsky and Warhol.

A very rich bibliography, containing material from Greek philosophers to contemporary scholars, completes the contents of the book. As a small criticism, one can wonder at the omission of Heidegger in the bibliography and the absence of a discussion regarding cinema and Video Art, although there is a brief mention of Buster Keaton. Regardless, the ideas presented in this book represent a very strong contribution to our debates about the definition of what is civilization.
University of California Press, 2016

Reviewed by Norman C. Rothman

In this work the noted Islamic scholar, Chase F. Robinson, traces the development of Islamic Civilization through the biography of notable figures — some known such as the Prophet Muhammad, and the fearsome world conqueror, Timur, who ruled over a large chunk of western Eurasia, and some less known, such as the poet Rumi, the traveler Ibn Fadlan, and the cartographer al-Idris.

The book has four major sections based on chronology and themes. It covers the first millennium (actually from the seventh century to the sixteenth century CE).

The first section — entitled “Empire” — traces the foundation and spread of Islam from 600 to 850 CE from the Arabian Peninsula to North Africa — and by extension, the Iberian Peninsula, the Middle East, much of central Asia and parts of the Indian subcontinent. In this period, there was a fairly unified administration or empire ruled first from Damascus, under the Umayyad dynasty, and then from Baghdad, under the Abbasid dynasty. The individuals covered are the Prophet; his cousin Ali, who was the fourth caliph and whose descendants began the Shia movement; Abd-al-Malik, whose reign as caliph gave the Umayyads a new lease on power; Ibn al-Muqaffa, a scholar of Persian extraction who translated Persian learning into Arabic; Rabi’a, a woman whose teachings became a foundation of the Sufi tradition; and al-Ma’mun, who was the last consequential member of the Abbasid dynasty.

Part II deals with the period of 850 to 1050 CE. This period witnessed the loss of political unity. At the same time, however, the disparate peoples under Islamic rule — Persians, Egyptians, Berbers, Turks — gradually adopted Islam even to the point of schism. A number of them became Arabized, as Egyptians and Berbers especially subsumed previous identities since the Qur’an was written in Arabic. This section is called the “Islamic commonwealth,” as various people forged a new identity based on missionary work often carried out by Sufis and extended commerce both land and sea to Sub-Saharan Africa and East and Southeast Asia. Islam arrived in these last two areas due to missionary work and trade. The figures covered in this part include a courtesan, a martyr, a rationalist philosopher, a physician, a world traveler, a scribe and a calligrapher; a man who conquered what is now Afghanistan, Pakistan, and north India; and a man who was both a high-ranking government official and a noted writer on applied mathematics and astronomy.
Part III, “Provisional Synthesis,” covers 1050 to 1250 CE, often termed the “Golden Age of Islam.” The classical heritage of the Greeks was combined with ancient learning from India and neighboring regions to produce advanced works in mathematics, science, philosophy, and applied subjects, such as medicine. Indian numerals became the Arabic numbers which replaced the cumbersome Roman numerals previously used in the Middle East and Europe. Decimals and the concept of zero inherited from the Mesopotamians were introduced and this concept of zero, borrowed from India, spread globally.

The individuals covered in this section are the writer of 400 works on many subjects; a female scholar of the Hadith (sayings of the Prophet); a writer who systematized Sunni thought; a merchant millionaire; and the famous Muslim opponent of the Crusaders, Saladin. Most significantly, Ibn Rushd, known as Averroes in Europe, was considered the foremost philosopher of his age. He was a judge as well as a physician, and through his work he became the foremost interpreter of Aristotelian thought and rationalism. His work was translated and read by scholars in Europe as late as the 18th century.

Part IV, “Disruption and Integration,” deals with the end of the Golden Age, as the Islamic world gradually succumbed to external attacks by Timur, a Turkified Mongol who conquered much of Central Asia, Iraq, Iran, northern India, the upper Middle East and neighboring areas; Mehmed II, who converted the Greek Byzantine Empire into the Turkish Ottoman Empire; and Shah Ismail, who established Shia rule in Persia. However, this period, which dates from 1250 to 1525 CE, saw the writings of the Sufi poet Rumi, Rashid al-din (a global historian), Ibn Taymiyya who wrote copiously on law and philosophy, and Ibn Khaldun, a famous historian and social theorist whose works were widely read in Europe.

Professor Robinson has written a work that is both scholarly and entertaining. It is readily accessible to both layman and scholar. He trends to a middle ground in his biographical sections. These are neither hagiography nor critical assessments. He gives both positive and negative coverage. His sources are both timely and copious. His ancillary material is outstanding; he gives a complete index, impressive illustrations, a large bibliography as well as detailed notes, and a glossary. The only deficiency is that the book stops at the 16th century. Let us hope that a future volume will complete the picture!
CALL FOR PAPERS/ABSTRACTS
INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE COMPARATIVE STUDY OF CIVILIZATIONS
2019 Annual ISCSC Conference
Please join us for the 49th Annual Conference
of the International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations
to be held June 25-28, 2019
El Retiro San Iñigo, THE JESUIT RETREAT CENTER OF LOS ALTOS
(near both San Jose Intl. and San Francisco Intl. Airports)
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DEADLINE for Abstracts is April 1, 2019

Conference Theme:
Comparison of Civilizations:
Ancient and Modern and Theories of Civilizational Studies

This year’s conference promises several exciting and new approaches. When ISCSC was founded in 1961 it crafted itself as big-picture, multi-disciplinary society. In the following years, increased specialized focus of academic research affected this orientation and the dynamics of actual ISCSC activities. Recently, there has been a surge of academic interest in transdisciplinary and meta systems approaches. This presents a unique opportunity for the society to do several things: revive its founding orientation; encourage new thoughts and approaches; and encourage diverse classical approaches within different disciplines. The 2019 49th conference is structured to begin this process. All current and future members are urged to take an active part in this process.

To broaden participation and the sharing of ideas, we will strive to maximize plenary session during the conference. Plenary sessions will be organized to reflect the variety of sub-themes. We are also planning to include a special session for “Young Scholar Papers”.
Examples of illustrative thematic topics could include:

- Comparative Models of Economic Development
- Comparative Legal Histories
- Comparing Literatures in China and the West
- Asian-American International Relations
- Asian Culture, Values and the West
- Africa, Polynesia, Latin America, the West and Globalization
- Comparative Environmental Protection and Survival of Civilization
- Histories of Science and Institutional Development
- What Constitutes “Wisdom” or “Justice” Among Disparate Civilizations?
- How to Encourage Constructive Engagements and Encounters Between Civilizations
- Comparative Religion and How it Relates to Civilizations
- Comparative Economic and Political Systems
- The Importance of Cultural, Linguistic and Artistic Studies

As always, other topics with civilizational relevance are welcomed. Send Abstracts of up to 300 words describing your proposed paper by May 15, 2019, simultaneously to both ISCSC Vice President Michael Andregg at mmandregg@stthomas.edu and to ISCSC Executive Director, Peter Hecht at peter.hecht@iscsc.org. Abstracts are requested to be in English, using MS WORD, Times New Roman, 12-point font. Accepted abstracts will be included in program materials and Conference Proceedings. Those submitting abstracts will be notified within two weeks of submittal regarding acceptance for presentation at the conference.

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

Whether submitting an Abstract for presentation or not, you are warmly invited and encouraged to register and attend the 2019 Conference at the Jesuit Retreat Center of Los Altos. A firm DEADLINE for CONFERENCE REGISTRATION is June 25th, 2019.

Please note: The unique venue of the conference presents an opportunity for young scholars and students in the vicinity - who may otherwise be unable to afford fulltime attendance - to participate as day commuters. Interested local students are encouraged to contact our special sub-committee for Young Scholar Assistance by contacting either Dr. Michael Andregg (Conference Chair) at mmandregg@stthomas.edu or Dr. John Grayzel, at jagrayzel@alumni.stanford.edu for further information.

Sincerely,

Lynn Rhodes, President, ISCSC
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.
In October 1961, in Salzburg, Austria, an extraordinary group of scholars gathered to create the International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations. Among the 26 founding members from Austria, Germany, France, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Spain, Italy, England, Russia, the United States, China and Japan were such luminaries as Pitirim Sorokin and Arnold Toynbee.

For six days, the participants debated such topics as the definition of “civilization,” problems in the analysis of complex cultures, civilizational encounters in the past, the Orient versus the Occident, problems of universal history, theories of historiography, and the role of the “human sciences” in “globalization.” The meeting was funded by the Austrian government, in cooperation with UNESCO, and received considerable press coverage. Sorokin was elected the Society’s first president.

After several meetings in Europe, the advancing age of its founding members and the declining health of then president, Othmar F. Anderle, were important factors in the decision to transfer the Society to the United States.

Between 1968 and 1970 Roger Williams Wescott of Drew University facilitated that transition. In 1971, the first annual meeting of the ISCSC (US) was held in Philadelphia. Important participants in that meeting and in the Society’s activities during the next years included Benjamin Nelson (the Society’s first American president), Roger Wescott, Vytautas Kavolis, Matthew Melko, David Wilkinson, Rushton Coulborn and C.P. Wolf. In 1974, the Salzburg branch was formally dissolved, and from that year to the present there has been only one International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations (ISCSC).

The presidents of the ISCSC are, in order: In Europe, Pitirim Sorokin and Othmar Anderle; in the United States, Benjamin Nelson, Vytautas Kavolis, Matthew Melko, Michael Palencia-Roth, Roger Wescott, Shuntaro Ito (from Japan), Wayne Bledsoe, Lee Daniel Snyder, Andrew Targowski, David Rosner, Toby Huff, and current president Lynn Rhodes. To date, the Society has held 47 meetings, most of them in the United States but also in Salzburg, Austria; Santo Domingo, The Dominican Republic; Dublin, Ireland; Chiba, Japan; Frenchman’s Cove, Jamaica; St. Petersburg, Russia; Paris, France; New Brunswick, Canada; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; and Suzhou, China.

More than 30 countries are represented in the Society’s membership. Its intellectual dynamism and vibrancy over the years have been maintained and enhanced through its annual meetings, its publications, and the participation of such scholars as Talcott Parsons, Hayden White, Immanuel Wallerstein, Gordon Hewes, André Gunder Frank, Marshall Sahlins, Lynn White Jr., and Jeremy Sabloff.

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.

Prof. Michael Palencia-Roth
Membership Information

If you are not a member of the ISCSC please consider joining for a $70 USD yearly membership fee, plus $8 USD for non-mainland USA postage. Members receive a one-year subscription to this journal, are invited to attend the annual conference, receive the ISCSC newsletter, and may participate in ongoing dialogues. Membership is open to all interested in civilizations. Visit www.iscsc.org for further information.

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