Vytautas Kavolis. *Moralizing Cultures.*

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more perspectival variations, given the "Leninist extinction" (Jowitt's term) and the motivational collapse of the cold war.

As far as civilizational crossings are concerned, "modern political culture" has traveled with its inevitable changes (to which the comparativist should attend) from the "First World" to the "Second," and latterly to the "Third." (Consider the messy conditions of Haiti, whose revolutionary origins were largely French inspired.)

Given a certain amount of background review, if needed, Lucas's brief anthology should repay careful examination. In my own case, review was certainly required. I was impressed especially by Darnton's, Jones', Bergeron's and Blanning's papers. (Historical particularities are desirable to qualify plentiful generalizations from sociologists, political scientists, and philosophers, to say nothing of ideological.

Palmer Talbutt


The International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations (ISCSC) has been an active learned society since the early 1970s. At annual meetings and through the semi-annual journal, Comparative Civilizations Review, many thoughtful persons have shared their scholarship on a truly remarkable range of topics. Among them is Vytautas Kavolis, Distinguished Professor to Comparative Civilizations and Sociology an Dickinson College, who has been President of the Society and Editor of the journal.

In Moralizing Cultures, Kavolis has revised into a coherent argument a series of papers he has presented over many years on the themes and topics of moral culture. The result is an extraordinary achievement in "civilization analysis," a mode of theorizing and a manner of inquiry which has been cultivated, nourished, and now harvested within the intellectual environment of the ISCSC. The book is indeed an abundant yield of careful analytical distinctions, broad vision, and plentiful information, resulting from a comparative analysis of moralizing behaviors and institutions across many historical civilizations and world religions.

According to Kavolis, a moral culture contains a moral vision as well as organized components which can be referred to as moralizing institutions. While both can change, they usually do so at different rates. Kavolis insists that one should compare moral cultures "at the same level of complexity." he distin-
guishes among primordial (tribal and folk), and traditional (archaic and classical), and modern moral cultures. The primordial are usually found within traditional moral cultures, as Kavolis shows in comparing and contrasting Confucianism and then differences between medieval Catholic and Protestant Christianity.

In Part III, Kavolis discusses "symbolic designs," the centerpiece of his analysis. By symbolic designs he refers to "an arrangement of meanings, perceptions, and emotional nuances objectifies in a cultural document, such as a myth, a work of art or a philosophical system" (63). In a richly textured analysis, too complex to summarize briefly, he compares the myths of Prometheus and Satan, as civilizational rebels, then compares romanticism and daoism, and in a third chapter discusses four logics of evil (the liberal, the therapeutic, the naturalist and the technocratic) as secular moralities. He concludes: "the civilization in which most of us live is not a secular, but rather a symbolically stratified culture in which three types - primordial, sacred and secular- of moral designs...coexist" (119).

A final chapter has the title: "The Humanization of Morality and the Return of the Sacred." But it is a different sacred or at least it is not the same sacred as existed previously in earlier civilizations. By humanization of moral cultures, Kavolis does not mean the "elimination of the influence of religion." It is rather a shift from abstract principles requiring adherence, whatever the consequences, to a "practical concern with reducing suffering and enhancing nondestructive human potentialities."

In the same line of argument, after secularization, a resacralization is expected, but it cannot be a return "to where we have been"; indeed the "resacralizations take place on higher levels of secularization." Here Kavolis, unlike most students of Durkheim, takes the central matrix of "The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life" on the production of the sacred and brilliantly extends the argument to its dialectical relationship with the secular.

Even further, Kavolis acknowledges that a secular culture may increase suffering and have the effect of reducing the realization of human potential. To the extent that those effects are recognized and demonstrated, then the secular moral culture must admit the "limits of secularity" and indeed include that recognition in its overall design.

Kavolis concludes that "no one religion, science of secular ideology can any longer pretend to be able to provide adequate solutions for problems facing contemporary civilizations" and then discusses the culture both practical guidance and "symbolic authority." The latter provides "an emotionally affecting vision of that which is lacking in the situation" in which they find themselves, yet symbolic authority is inadequate without an appreciation of the "actual situation" in which the people find themselves.

The civilizational analysis of moral cultures provides a grounding in civilizational experience. It recognizes what has been present and effective in the
mora; cultures of different civilizations. Thus in concluding that "the central cultural battles of the future" will be between "mythology and practical humanism," Kavolis has brought together the accumulated knowledge of diverse civilizations in identifying contemporary trajectories, whatever the specific forms and symbolic designs they may assume, either today or tomorrow, within contemporary civilizations and within their moral cultures.

Carroll J. Bourg


Wasserstein's book reads like a doctoral dissertation intended for scholarly specialists. For the more general reader even in the scholarly community, a chapter placing the caliphate in broader historical context would have been helpful. Since the book is about religion as the basis for political rule, a theoretical chapter comparing the role of religion in the legitimization of different kinds of rulers might have been useful. The chapter also could have compared different religions as sources of cohesion in different kinds of polities. It could even have compared 'Abbasid and Umayyad regimes in terms of how their versions of Islam served legitimization and cohesion since Wasserstein's book deals with a period in Muslim Spain's history, it could have been more thorough in relating the period to the broader whole of Spanish Muslim history and to uses of religion North African governance. As it is, what we have here is a monographic, diligently researched, but very narrowly conceived.

In the early stages of Islam, the Muslim community was a combined religious and temporal entity of which the caliph was supreme head. As Muslim conquests proceeded rapidly, there were factional struggles, doctrinal quarrels, and rivalry for the caliphate. As a result, the nature of caliphate changed, when the Prophet died, the Shi'iite faction insisted that his cousin and son-in-law was the sole rightful heir to the leadership role. They said the ruler's function was not acquired, but innate. He was not only ruler but also teacher, with superior (inherited) powers of mind and heart. The Sunni majority had a secular view of the role of ruler. Losing out, Shi'ites fell back into opposition to the state.

When Sunni Umayyads (the leading family of Mecca) came to power in 644, they claimed to be hereditary monarchs. Shi'ites said they were usurpers. As conquests enlarged the empire, there was also the issue of relationships between Arab conquerors and non-Arab subjects. The Umayyads were a military occupying force of Arab tribal kings. By mid 8th century A.D., there was rival-