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**Studies into the Nature and Origin
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**TOPICS: HISTORICISM
AND MULTICULTURALISM**

Edited by Mihaela GLIGOR

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EDITORIAL

Historicism and Multiculturalism. The Problem.

Mihaela GLIGOR
The Romanian Academy, Cluj-Napoca

Historicism, n

1. A theory that events are determined or influenced by conditions and inherent processes beyond the control of humans.
2. A theory that stresses the significant influence of history as a criterion of value.
3. *Art & Architecture.* The deliberate use or revival of historical styles in contemporary works.
4. *Philosophy.* The view that historical periods should be studied without imposing anachronistic categories of evaluation¹.

The central claim of historicism is that all traditions, theories, interpretations, and most - if not all - concepts, are nothing more than cultural artifacts of a particular time and place. Since they are one and all human creations, none of them can claim to be true in the sense of corresponding to reality.

¹ The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition. Copyright © 2002, 2000 by Houghton Mifflin Company. Published by Houghton Mifflin Company.

Historicism is the theory which claims that history in the narrower sense, the sense of culture-formation, is the sole interpretive standpoint from which history in its all-encompassing sense is to be understood.

Usually, historicism refers to philosophical theories. Elements of historicism appear in the writings of the philosopher G. W. F. Hegel, influential in 19th-century Europe, as well as in those of Karl Marx, whom he influenced. The term is also associated with the empirical social sciences and the work of Franz Boas. The Austrian-English philosopher Karl Popper attacked historicism along with the determinism and holism which he argued were at its root. Post-structuralism uses the term *new historicism*, which has some connections to both anthropology and Hegel's philosophy.

It is quite difficult to give a concise meaning to the term *historicism* (derived from German word *Historismus*). As Professor Georg G. Iggers observes,

Meinecke, Heussi, and Antoni in their studies of historicism assumed that the term originated in the late nineteenth century and became well known only in the twentieth century in connection with the "crisis of historicism", the deep uncertainty regarding the value of Western historical traditions and the possibility of objective historical knowledge. In fact the term is considerably older and was well established in Germany by the middle of the nineteenth century².

Although, according to Professor Iggers,

Historicism as an intellectual movement arose in the eighteenth century in a concrete institutional and intellectual setting. A prerequisite of historicism as described above is a sense of history, an awareness that the past is fundamentally different from the present³.

Usually, when we talk about historicism from a philosophical point of view, we have to mention Hegel's name and his important contribution in

² For further details, see Georg G. Iggers, *Historicism in Dictionary of the History of Ideas*, vol. 2, p. 457. On line version, at <http://etext.virginia.edu/cgi-local/DHI/dhi.cgi?id=dv2-52>.

³ Idem, vol. 2, p. 459.

this interesting domain. The historicist position by Hegel suggests that any human society and all human activities such as philosophy, art, or science, are defined by their history, so that their essence can be sought only through understanding that. The history of any such human endeavor, moreover, not only builds upon but also reacts against what has gone before. Hegel's famous aphorism, "Philosophy is the history of philosophy," describes it very well.

Hegel sees the relationship between individuals and societies as organic, not atomic: even their social discourse is mediated by language, and language is rooted in etymology and unique character. It thus preserves the culture of the past in thousands of half-forgotten frozen metaphors. To understand why a person is the way he is you must put that person in a certain society: and to understand that certain society, you must understand its past, its values, i. e. its history, and, also, the forces that shaped it.

Hegelian historicism is related to his ideas on the means by which human society's progress, specifically the dialectic and his conception of logic as reflecting the inner essential nature of reality.

As Professor Iggers puts it,

The core of Hegel's philosophy was that all existence as well as logic itself was immersed in historical change but that history itself was a rational process. For Hegel, [...] the state was an expression of spirituality; but for Hegel the spirituality of the state rested on its rational structure and the course of history itself was the test of its rationality.⁴

Although the Hegelian form of historicism is now out of fashion, scholars in a variety of fields are presently endorsing new forms of the theory.

Earlier in this century, Wilhelm Dilthey praised this theory as "the last step to the liberation of man." We don't insist on Dilthey's understanding of historicism, we just mention that the liberation of which Dilthey speaks in his works⁵ is the same as that which had been sought by

⁴ Idem, vol. 2, p. 461.

⁵ See especially Wilhelm Dilthey, *Selected Works*, Vol. III: *The Formation of the Historical*

Kant: liberation from the advances of the natural sciences that seemed to threaten humans with being but little cogs in the great cosmic machinery. Dilthey's historicism is therefore best understood as (yet) another version of Kant's transcendental idealism.

While post-structural historicism is relativist in its orientation, that is, it sees each culture as its own frame of reference, a large number of thinkers have embraced the need for historical context, not because culture is self-referential, but because there is no more compressed means of conveying all of the relevant information except through history. This view is often seen as being rooted in the work of Benedetto Croce.

Benedetto Croce's "absolute historicism" represented a third attempt to overcome historical relativity through history. Croce stressed that all "history is contemporary history" reflecting the interests and perspectives of the present. In the final analysis "history is principally an act of thought"⁶.

* * *

Multicultural, adj.

1. Of, relating to, or including several cultures.
2. Of or relating to a social or educational theory that encourages interest in many cultures within a society rather than in only a mainstream culture⁷.

Multiculturalism is a term derived from "multicultural", and as generally understood, it refers to ideology and policy in western nation-states, which previously had a *de facto* national identity. Many nation-states in Africa, Asia, and the Americas are culturally diverse, and are "multicultural" in a descriptive sense. We usually understand multiculturalism as a practice of giving equal attention or representation to the cultural needs and

World in the Human Sciences, Edited, with an Introduction by Rudolf A. Makkreel and Frithjof Rodi, Princeton University Press, 2002.

⁶ Benedetto Croce, *History - Its Theory and Practice*, New York, 1921, p. 19.

⁷ The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition. Copyright © 2002, 2000 by Houghton Mifflin Company. Published by Houghton Mifflin Company.

contributions of all the groups in a society: special emphasis may be given to minority groups underrepresented in the past, as through bilingual education.

According to many scholars, India is the most culturally, linguistically and genetically diverse geographical entity after the African continent. India's democratic republic is premised on a national belief in pluralism. State boundaries in India are mostly drawn on linguistic lines. In addition, India is also one of the most religiously diverse countries in the world. In India, religion is an integral part of the entire Indian tradition. For most of the Indians, religion permeates every aspect of life, from commonplace daily chores to education and politics. Secular India is home to Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism and other innumerable religious traditions.

Indonesia holds the second place as regarding multiculturalism. Indonesia's national motto, "Bhinneka tunggal ika" ("Unity in Diversity"), articulates the diversity that shapes the country.

Whether we refer to India or Indonesia as examples of multiculturalism, or we choose other countries, like Russia, Canada or United States, the term of "multiculturalism" defines internal relationships among communities relatively circumscribed, and also among people of specify provenience engaged in external, professional, cultural, linguistic, or any other relations. There are important interactions: proximity, information exchanges, amalgamations, even endorsement - by symbiosis - of some new identities.

As a philosophy, multiculturalism began as part of the pragmatism movement at the end of the nineteenth century in Europe and the United States, then as political and cultural pluralism at the turn of the twentieth. Philosophers, psychologists, historians and early sociologists such as Charles Sanders Peirce, William James, John Dewey, W.E.B. Du Bois and Alain Locke developed concepts of cultural pluralism, from which emerged what we understand today as multiculturalism.

In his well-known work, *A Pluralistic Universe* (1909), William James espoused the idea of a "plural society". He saw pluralism as "crucial to the formation of philosophical and social humanism to help build a better,

more egalitarian society”⁸. James argues in *A Pluralistic Universe* that “the world is not a *uni-verse* but a *multi-verse*”.

Multiculturalism was adopted as official policy, in several Western nations from the 1970s onward, for reasons that varied from country to country. The great cities of the Western world are increasingly composed of a mosaic of cultures. Government multicultural policies may include: recognition of multiple citizenship (the multiple citizenship itself usually results from the nationality laws of another country); government support for newspapers, television, and radio in minority languages; support for minority festivals, holidays, and celebrations; acceptance of traditional and religious dress in schools, the military, and society in general; support for music and arts from minority cultures.

* * *

The present issue of the *International Journal on Humanistic Ideology* on the Topics: *Historicism and Multiculturalism* unites articles signed by reputed professors and researchers from Romania, India, United States and United Kingdom. Their materials cover a large area, from the

⁸ See William James, *A Pluralistic Universe*, University of Nebraska Press, 1996, with an *Introduction* by Henry S. Levinson. Regarding to our present Topics, *Historicism and Multiculturalism*, we mention two lectures from those included in James’s book. The first lecture presented by James is entitled “The Types of Philosophical Thinking”. Here, James suggests that his age is once again growing philosophical, mentioning the growth of absolute idealism in the spirit of Kant and Hegel in the British universities. James contrasts such monism to his pluralism. James proceeds to define rationalism and empiricism, as well as spiritualism and materialism, and theism and pantheism. He notes the present tendency towards pantheism, making a distinction between the two types of spiritualism: dualism (or theism) and “post-Kantian” monism or “absolute idealism” (or pantheism). To make the distinction between absolute idealism and his pluralism, both of which identify the human substance with the divine substance, James notes that according to pluralism all of reality need not be encapsulated in an “all-form” or totality, but rather it may form an “each-form”. Also, the third lecture presented by James, “Hegel and His Method”, presents us Hegel’s influence and examines his dialectic, as well as apparent paradoxes that derive from it. Hegel’s account, according to James, involves a form of “vicious intellectualism”. James further distinguishes between the Absolute and God, maintaining that they are in fact two different notions.

problem of anti-historicism and the history of religions as it appears in Mircea Eliade's interpretation of *Terror of History*; to a much-documented analysis of history of compromise; to a description of what multiculturalism means in modern India or what modernity and modernization means from an intercultural perspective. Also, we have in the *Journal's* pages a good analysis of self actualisation and a perception of the *Other* in an inter-religious dialog.

* * *

The *International Journal on Humanistic Ideology* is a biannual scholarly journal devoted to the study of Humanities, the nature and origin of humanistic ideas. The *International Journal on Humanistic Ideology* encourages interdisciplinary approaches engaging the following domains: philosophy, philosophy of religions, political philosophy, political science, history, history of religions, history of ideas, history of science, anthropology, sociology, educational science and communications theory. One of its primary aims is the integration of the results of the several disciplines of the Humanities such that its articles will have a synthetic character in order to acquaint the reader with the progress being made in the general area of Humanistic Studies.

I would like to thank to all the Professors from the Scientific Board of the *International Journal on Humanistic Ideology* for their support and confidence.

THE TOPICS:
HISTORICISM AND MULTICULTURALISM

**Mircea Eliade and the *Terror of History*.
Anti-Historicism and the History of Religions**

**Mac Linscott RICKETTS
Professor Emeritus, Louisburg College**

Abstract: This paper is a detailed examination of Mircea Eliade's book, *Cosmos and History, The Myth of the Eternal Return*, presented together with the *Journal* notes he wrote while he was composing the volume. Using both published and unpublished parts of the *Journal*, I am able to show how the volume evolved and disclose some of the difficulties Eliade had to overcome in writing it.

Keywords: Historicism, traditional societies, archetypes, the myth of the eternal return, archaic man, modern man, Emmanuel Kant.

In the new *Preface* that Mircea Eliade wrote for the "Torchbook" Edition of *The Myth of the Eternal Return* (1959)¹ which bore the name

¹ First published in French as *Le mythe de l'éternel retour: archetypes et répétition* (Paris: Librairie Gallimard, 1949). English translation, *The Myth of the Eternal Return*, trans. by

Cosmos and History, the author stated that although he would no doubt write the book differently now from the way he had done it a decade earlier (1949), “I still consider it the most significant of my books; and when I am asked in what order they should be read, I always recommend beginning with *Cosmos and History*” (p. ix). Why?, the prospective reader may ask. Perhaps because it deals with Eliade’s most fundamental concept: the radical distinction between “archaic” man and “modern” man - that is between the member of a “traditional” society whose life is based on imitation and repetition of “archetypes” (paradigmatic myths and rituals) which give his existence “metahistorical” meaning, and the post-Hegelian man of contemporary societies who lives in a world in which history has no transcendental meaning. As he makes plain in the *Foreword* to the original edition (1949, slightly modified in 1952), Eliade’s object in writing the book is to call the attention of “the philosopher and the cultivated man in general” to a view of History in traditional societies that is very different from their own.

Had we not feared to appear overambitious, we should have given this book a subtitle, *Introduction to a Philosophy of History*. For such, after all, is the purport of the present essay; but with the distinction that, instead of proceeding to a speculative analysis of the historical phenomenon, it examines the fundamental concepts of archaic societies - societies which, although they are conscious of a certain form of “history,” make every effort to disregard it. [...]

The meaning and function of what we have called “archetypes and repetition” disclosed themselves to us only after we had perceived these societies’ will to refuse concrete time, their hostility toward every attempt at autonomous “history,” that is, at history not regulated by archetypes (p. xi).

In the *Torchbook* Preface, Eliade elaborates on these remarks:

Willard Trask, Bollingen Foundation, Inc., 1954; *Cosmos and History, The Myth of the Eternal Return*, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1959.

The chief difference between the man of archaic and traditional societies and the man of modern societies [...] lies in the fact that the former feels himself indissolubly connected with the Cosmos and cosmic rhythms, whereas the latter insists that he is connected only with History (p. vii).

In other words, Eliade defines “modern man” as a believer in “historicism.”

Chapters One and Two of *Cosmos and History* deal principally with illustrations of myths and rituals typical of “archaic” and traditional peoples. The point is stressed that everything is done in conformity with “archetypes,” that is, with “sacred models” revealed *in illo tempore*, the “timeless-time” of the beginnings. Like the mystic, like the religious man in general, the primitive man lives in a continual present, Eliade says (p. 86). The archaic man inhabits a *meaningful* world, which repeats itself like the cycles of Nature. Eliade does not see this as evidence of a desire to return to animality, but as a “thirst for the ‘ontic,’ a will to be, to *be* after the fashion of the archetypal beings whose gestures he constantly repeats” (pp. 90-91).

Chapter Three, entitled “Misfortune and History,” addresses the question of how humans have tolerated history, with all its adversities. For archaic and traditional peoples, catastrophes in nature and history (floods, droughts, plagues, invasions, slavery, etc.) were all held to have some meaning, and the aid of priests, sorcerers, etc. was sought to discover their causes and alleviate them. “Suffering is perturbing,” Eliade asserts, “only insofar as its cause remains undiscovered” (p. 98).

The *Old Testament Hebrews*, whose prophets “were the first to discover the meaning of history,” prophesied Israel’s defeats at the hands of foreign armies, interpreting them as the result of their apostasy from their true God, Yahweh² (pp. 102-108). By accepting the explanation given by their prophets, the nation did not lose faith in Yahweh. Later, there developed the concept of a coming Savior, at the end of time. “Messianic beliefs in a final regeneration of the world also indicate an anti-historic attitude,” Eliade affirms.

² Cf. “Catastrofă și Mesianism,” in Mircea Eliade, *Profetism românesc*, vol. 1, edited by Dan Zamfirescu. Bucharest: Roza Vânturilor, 1990 (reprinted from *Destin*, 3, April 1952).

[...] In the Messianic conception, history must be tolerated only because it is known that, one day or another, it will cease. [...] But the will to put a final and definitive end to history is still an anti-historic attitude, exactly as are the other attitudes (pp. 111-112).

Turning to India, Eliade states that “Indian speculations on cyclical time reveal a sufficiently marked ‘refusal of history’” (p. 117). For both Buddhists and Hindus, salvation means to escape from the cosmic cycle - that is, from time. By declaring that the world is now in the final and most degenerate era, the *Kālī Yuga*, suffering can be accepted. Moreover, it offers consolation to the man who lives “under the terror of history,” Eliade says, since the sufferings help him to understand the precariousness of his human situation, as well as to resign himself to his fate (p. 118). Notice that here is the first reference in the book to “the terror of history,” which will be the theme of the final chapter.

The balance of the chapter examines Hellenistic, Roman, and Oriental views, especially Iranian, Babylonian, Judeo-Christian, and other doctrines concerning cosmic cycles and the end of the world. But, as Eliade points out,

[...] even within the framework of the three great religions - Iranian, Judaic, and Christian - [...] there still survive certain traces of the ancient doctrine of the periodic regeneration of history. In other words, history can be abolished, and consequently renewed, before the final *eschaton* is realized (p. 130).

Moreover, no matter how “tragic, pathetic, unjust or chaotic” the historical moment may be, the individual is always free to withdraw from it and seek consolation in philosophy or mysticism.

This sketchy summary of the first three chapters of *Cosmos and History* passes over many important and interesting observations made by the author, because I am eager to arrive at the theme of my article, which is the subject of the fourth chapter: “The Terror of History.” But in order to understand that chapter properly and to appreciate its place in the economy of the finished volume, we need to examine the origin and evolution of the book.

The inception and writing of *Cosmos and History*

On New Year's Day, 1944, in Portugal, Eliade reflected in his *Journal* on what he had accomplished (in writing) during the past year: 243 pages of the novel *Apocalips* (never finished), a book on the Romanian Legend of Manole, the Master Mason³, and *circa* 40 oversized pages of the work that would become *Traité de l'histoire de religions*⁴. But he laments the fact that he had lost, in 1943, "At least 500 hours [...] in 'historical' depressions and fears derived from the military catastrophes in which the fate of Romania is always involved, directly or indirectly."⁵ But the first indication that he is thinking of writing a book on the subject of the last chapter of *Cosmos and History* is a journal entry for 29 January 1944:

I'd like to write someday [about] this dreadful thing: *the terror of history*, the terror of man in confrontation with man. It is not true that man is afraid of Nature, of the gods: this fear is minimal compared to the horror which he has endured, for millennia, in the midst of history. Our epoch is *par excellence* a terrorized epoch. The future masterpieces of world literature will be created setting off from this terrifying experience.

On the tenth of March, thinking about the course of the war, he records having "the sentiment of immanent, inevitable historical catastrophe." Much of the time that winter and spring he was sunk in a mood of deep depression.

The Russian crossing of the Dniester River and the Anglo-American bombardment of Bucharest prompted him to write on 6 April:

³ Mircea Eliade, *Comentarii la Legenda Meșterului Manole (Commentaries on the Legend of Master Manole)*, in *Meșterul Manole. Studii de etnologie și mitologie*. Edited and notes by Magda Ursache and Petru Ursache, *Introduction* by Petru Ursache. Iași: Junimea, 1992.

⁴ He was calling it then *Prolegomene la istoria religiilor* (in Romanian). It had been begun in 1940 in England.

⁵ Eliade is thinking of the defeats suffered by the Axis armies (which included several Romanian divisions) at Stalingrad, Kharkov, the crossing of the Dniester by the Soviets, etc.

A final disgust for history. A craving for suicide. [...] I go about the city [Lisbon] and say to all the Portuguese I meet, “You know: if Romania falls, all of Southeastern Europe will fall. The Russians will be in the Adriatic and the Mediterranean. And when they take Germany, they will be on the shores of the Tagus⁶. No one will stop them.”

And yet - I can't believe that it will be *like that*. Then, nothing would make sense in history. Who will justify our deaths and tragedies of hundreds of years?

I'm thinking of writing a book, *The Terror of History*, on this theme: that until a little while ago, every personal tragedy and any ethnic catastrophe had its justification in a cosmology or some soteriology (cosmic rhythms, reabsorption in water, *ekpyrosis*, or purification by fire, cycles of history, “our sins,” etc.) Now, history simply terrorizes - because the tragedies provoked by it no longer find justification or excuse.

On June 21, he says he has become indifferent to the great events happening in France (the Allied invasion), and that his only concerns for the past week have been “theoretical.” For the first time, he refers to his planned book by name: “I'm thinking of new chapters for *Cosmos and History*. Can't write anything for *Prolegomene*.”

Still, he did not begin writing the book until the following year. In the meantime, Romania had surrendered to the Soviets (23 August 1944), Eliade had lost his beloved wife Nina to a lingering, agonizing case of cancer (20 November), and he had been dismissed from his post at the Romanian Legation. In the throes of deep grief, about six weeks after Nina's death, he wrote in his journal:

My thoughts run from one book to another: now I want to take up *Cosmos and History*⁷, now to return to *Prolegomene*,⁸ now I'd like to write a book challenging the modern world, an invitation to absolute freedom which I decipher in certain myths and discover living still in certain man, even in our time (yogis, mystics [...]; the freedom man *could obtain* if...).

⁶ A river that flows through Lisbon.

⁷ This was the original title of the book, as is shown here. See “Preface to Torchbook Edition,” p. vii.

⁸ He had continued working on that volume up to the eve of Nina's death.

That which tempts me especially is a settling of accounts with Hegel and with historicism. I feel that I possess some intuitions that could develop into a great vision of the whole. But I can't concentrate. I can't decide to begin to work.⁹

At this time Eliade was doing a great deal of reading - from the Bible, Leon Șhestov, Kierkegaard, and certain philosophers (such as Dilthey and Heidegger), but he simply could not write anything except journal notes. Ideas for *Cosmos and History* were in his mind, however, and he was eager to start writing it. "My mission in the culture of the twentieth century is to rediscover and make alive the pre-Socratic world," he declares on 4 January. Finally, on 13 February, he is able to announce: "I have begun *Cosmos and History*. I chose today because it is Tuesday, and it is the 13th!"¹⁰ Journal entries appear frequently now: on 14, 16, 19 February, 15 March, and 11 April. On the night after he had started writing, he suffered insomnia until 4:00 a.m. In the daytime, he made a donation of soup at the church for 20 persons, "for Nina's soul." Despite a mood of great sadness, he managed "by hook or crook" to draft three pages.

Oppressed by the enormous number of things I know and would like to say, without losing the reader in a labyrinth in which I today walk with a superb certainty. I'd like to summarize, and yet I can't ignore a lot of little-known facts, which are, in my opinion, incompetently interpreted.

On 16 February he was able to write all day on *Cosmos and History*. He states modestly,

I can't say that I've created anything, my work of today being mostly a summary of results published six or seven years ago (*Cosmologie și alchimie babiloniană, Comentarii la Legenda Meșterului Manole*). But it is necessary to start from things known by the reader in order to arrive at other, new ones. Moreover, I have the impression that my so-called

⁹ *Journal*, 3 January 1945.

¹⁰ Not May 1945, as he remembered when writing the "Preface to the Torchbook Edition" (p. vii).

scientific publications have not been read very much, or, in any case, they have not been read by those who could understand them. *Cosmos and History* is addressed in the first place to philosophers.

But in the published volume, he broadened the field of readers to include any “cultivated person,” as we have seen.

The next journal notation about the book is for 19 February: “Have written thirty pages, in the format of *Prolegomene*” (that is, large-sized sheets). In the entry dated 15 March, Eliade meditates on his own experience of the “myth of the eternal return,” and the necessity of man’s reconciling himself to living in the “Cosmic rhythms.”

I’d like to formulate in some way - in a play, a novella, an essay - the sad reconciliation that I feel sometimes in those late night hours: the cosmic alternation, the day which follows the night, without fail, *whatever happens*; the spring which follows winter. The eternal return. This myth must be revived, if life still has any meaning, if it still deserves to be lived. *Cosmos and History* poses the anthropological problem only, of the despair of modern man, devoid of any living myth which could justify, recompense, or give meaning to the sufferings, deceptions, and injustices endured on account of history. But not only this problem of “the terror of history” demands to be resolved, but also the other, equally urgent, of the reconciliation of man *in time*, of his salvation through the simple fact that he participates in a temporal, rhythmic Cosmos, rich in alternations.

Soon after writing this, on 21 March, he interrupted work on the book, as he mentions in a notation of 11 April. He returned to *Prolegomene*, but he also penned a little article while he was staying at his last residence in Portugal, a humble cottage on the beach at Cascaes, that seems related to his volume on *Cosmos and History*. Entitled “Historicism and Interiorization”¹¹ it contains Eliade’s clearest statement on what he means by “historicism,” and how he judges it.

¹¹ “Istorism și interiorizare,” published in *Indreptar*, I, Sept.-Oct. 1951, pp. 10-11; *Înșir’te Mărgăritare*, I, Sept.-Oct. 1951; republished in Mircea Eliade, *Împotriva deznădejdii*, Humanitas, 1992, pp. 89-91.

That which was later called “historicism,” the desire to know *exactly* and in the smallest details all that has happened in the past. [...] is a creation of the nineteenth century. [...] Not just “historical” events properly speaking are important, but all that has happened in time: the development of human institutions, language, the evolution of the human species, as well as all other species, etc. [...] A thing is validated as an object of knowledge when its origin and evolution are deciphered. Hence the obsession with beginnings, with origins; hence the search for global explanations of language, religions, myths, institutions, etc. A religion is understood, for example, not by knowing its inner structure, but by learning its origin, the obscurities of its germs.

Eliade, of course, rejects this method, which he says “impoverishes and sometimes even annihilates” the object. For Eliade, the essential thing to know about myths or rituals is their *own mode of being* in the world. “Only after their authentic meaning has been revealed can one pass on to their *history*.”

But the point of the article is that the historicistic attempt to seek the “origins” of things discloses “a vast attempt at interiorization, a gesture of the spirit to withdraw into itself.” Prior to historicism, the road to knowledge of the self was meditation, Eliade states. Now, paradoxically, historicism, although apparently extrinsic to the spirit, is a “degraded introversion [...] through which the spirit tries to find itself again,” by penetrating to the depths of things! This is true, Eliade contends, not only in historical studies, but also in the natural sciences, physics, chemistry, etc.

Despite his work on *Prolegomene* and the writing of occasional articles such as the one just described, the summer months were relatively unproductive ones for Eliade as he waited for a passport and visa for himself and Nina’s daughter, Giza, that would allow them to emigrate to Paris. The prized documents came in late August, train tickets were secured, and on the 13th of September they bade farewell to Portugal forever.

Eliade in Paris

It was early Sunday morning, September 17, when a “new life” began for Eliade and Giza, in Paris. The first months were spent in trying to adjust to using the French language, trying to make a living, and blending into the intellectual life of the French capital.¹²

Eliade had a few good friends living there already, and soon he had met many more persons who would become important in his life. He was engaged by a publisher to write a condensed version of his 1936 thesis¹³, and invited by Professor Georges Dumézil to lecture at the Sorbonne in the winter of 1946. Selecting material from *Prolegomene*, translated - with help - into French, he addressed small audiences for twelve sessions on the subject of *The Morphology of the Sacred*.

Denounced by Romanian Communists for his former “Iron Guard” connections, he lost the opportunity for a three-year contract at *Hautes Études*. However, the open-minded publisher of the leading French history of religions journal invited him to write a major study on shamanism (a subject on which Eliade had done much research).¹⁴ There would follow many other articles in French reviews. On 29 July 1946, he returned to work on *Prolegomene*, revising the text in the French translation. This volume, finished in 1948, would be published early in 1949 as *Traité d'histoire des religions*. But Eliade had not forgotten about *Cosmos and History*.

On the 29th of November, 1946, while he still had much work to do on *Prolegomene*, he wrote in the *Journal*: “I think I’ll finish *Cosmos and History*, with an effort, in six or seven weeks. [...] I’ll work during January-March in order to finish it,” he says optimistically.

On 20 December we find that he has been doing a great deal of reading on the subject of the annual ceremonies observed around the world to mark the coming of the New Year:

¹² See Mac L. Ricketts, “Eliade’s First 500 Days in Exile,” *Inter Literas et Terras, II, Cross-Cultural Studies, Mircea Eliade*, Editura Universității Suceava, 2007, pp. 158-181.

¹³ Written in 1946-47, it was published as *Techniques du Yoga*, Gallimard, in 1948.

¹⁴ “Le problème du chamanisme,” *Revue de l’histoire des religions*, 1946, pp. 5-52.

For many years, I've liked rereading, on the approach of Christmas, about the legends, rituals, and customs of the Twelve Days of Christmas, etc. (between Christmas and St. John the Baptist's Day): animal masks, Carnival-like ceremonies, legends of headless horses, which appear on the night of the New Year, etc. [...]

Everywhere, the twelve days that precede and succeed the New Year constitute a decisive moment in the life of the community. Then the souls of the dead visit the living, then the initiations of adolescents take place, etc. [...]

But why does the coming of the dead occur *only* and *everywhere* on New Year's Eve? Because the New Year represents not only the critical moment of the year (the "chaos" that is installed immediately after the conclusion of a temporal cycle), but also a cosmogonic moment. The New Year repeats creation [...]

The souls of the dead draw near to the living because they hope for a *repetition* (however ephemeral) of existence [...], or they hope implicitly in an *abolition* of Time, therefore in a transcendence of their condition as shades. I will develop all these things in the little book on which I've been working for several weeks, *Archétypes et répétition* (in Romanian, I first called it *Cosmos și Istorie*).

Indeed, the myth and rites of the New Year were to constitute a major part of the published book. Incidentally, this is the first mention of the new name (*Archétypes et répétition*), and Eliade gives no explanation here or elsewhere for the change of name.

On 2 January 1947 he records in the *Journal*¹⁵ that he has read all day and taken notes for the second chapter of *Archétypes et répétition*, the one that deals especially with New Year ceremonies and myths. Ten days later he is working on the ending of the first chapter. Regarding the book, he asserts:

It is certainly my most important theoretical work, more important even than *Prolegomene*, because it connects, completes, and gives meaning to *all* my scientific and theoretical works of the past ten years. [...] Being

¹⁵ This notation is found in the unpublished *Journal Manuscript* (*Journal MS*).

obliged to make a short book, I won't let myself be tempted by erudition [...]. Certain philosophical problems which I have pondered for years are raised and resolved (?) for the first time. It is, in any case, a very good introduction to the philosophy of history. It could even have that as its title¹⁶.

He did not mention the book again until 17 February (a Sunday), when he complains,

Although I've reflected continually on certain problems and have succeeded in seeing them very clearly (e.g., that of the New Year in archaic religions), the book progresses slowly. This week I wrote six pages, after having done nothing for many weeks but read and reread, in order to complete the information and make the plan for this damned Chapter II.

Near the end of February, he estimates that he will be able to finish *Archétypes et répétition* and maybe *Prolegemene* too within a few more months, "if my current interest for such studies lasts."¹⁷

On March 1, he records that he worked very late the night before on Chapter II of *Archétypes et répétition*, and now he can foresee the end of it.¹⁸ The next day he is happy to report that he has finished writing and is almost done transcribing Chapter II.¹⁹

After taking a "break" from *Archétypes*, he returned to it on 23 March:

I resume work today on *Archétypes et repetition*, interrupted two weeks ago. I begin Chapter III, (the last one I hope!), the hardest, the most "elusive," which I still don't know how to direct so that I don't come out at the problem of the philosophy of history - a problem I'm determined at all costs to reserve for a later volume.²⁰

¹⁶ *Journal MS*, 12 January 1947.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, 27 February 1947.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, 1 March 1947.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, 2 March 1947.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, 23 March 1947.

It was nearly the end of April he when he took up the work on Chapter III again, hoping to finish it a few days. “After that will follow a brief final chapter, with some philosophical considerations - pointing toward the future book I’m planning on the philosophy of history.”²¹ Finally, on 12 May, “with a great effort,” he finished the first draft of the third chapter, but he cautions himself:

I must resist the temptation to transform this essay into a monograph. Its purpose is to raise problems, not resolve them. But someday I want to settle accounts with “historicism”, especially the historicism of Croce.

The unpublished *Journal* of 1947 is replete with pathetic references to Eliade’s financial difficulties. He was continually forced to borrow money from friends or to take anything he had of value to the pawn shop. One reason he was in a hurry to finish *Archétypes et répétition* was because he would be paid for it, and he desperately needed the money to pay his rent. Nevertheless, his progress was slow, because he held himself to a high standard of research.

On 13 May, for example, he was reading Hegel’s *Lessons from the Philosophy of History*. As he does so, he says,

I find “inaccuracies” and misconceptions at every step, but how admirable is this attempt to encompass everything, to take account into account and valorize all things! [...] Reading Hegel, not only are you invited to see a *meaning* in world history, but above all, you see that it’s possible to speak about a universal history which is not just a juxtapositioning of separate chapters. [...] I oppose with all my might Hegel’s “historical” vision, and in *Archétypes et répétition* I show why. But that doesn’t keep me from admiring his œuvre.²²

Eliade always “transcribed” the first draft of anything he wrote. When he was transcribing Chapter III, he was surprised to discover the

²¹ *Ibidem*, 30 April 1947.

²² *Journal*, 13 May 1947 (published).

“poverty of the vocabulary and the simplicity of the syntax.” He seems to have been writing still in Romanian, because he says the text will be translated immediately into French, but nevertheless he is appalled.²³

He put the finishing touches to Chapter III on 25 May, and returned to *Prolegomene*. “For the time being,” he wrote, “I’m giving up the idea of a short, final chapter which I had hoped to present along with the rest of the manuscript.”²⁴ This decision is surprising, inasmuch as the subject of Chapter IV, “The Terror of History,” was the original inspiration for the volume! But he had not in fact abandoned the plan of writing the fourth chapter. On 13 June he reminds himself that he must do it. By 1 July Giza (replacing Nina in her secretarial function) has typed the first three chapters, but Eliade says he has neither the strength nor the desire to read and correct them. Two weeks later (13 July) he reminds himself: “I still have to write the last chapter of *Archétypes et répétition*, and two chapters for *Prolegomene* [...]”²⁵ As he proceeded with *Prolegomene* (Ch. XI: “Sacred Time and the Myth of the Eternal Return”- what he called in the *Journal* “magico-religious time”), he drew heavily on material already written for *Archétypes et répétition*²⁶.

The journal entry for 27 August, only a part of which has been published, merits being quoted more extensively:

That which keeps me from *living*, properly speaking, from taking part in “history,” from giving free rein to my instincts and effusions - is the consciousness that I *have to do something*, that I *must* finish my “*œuvre*.” The sentiment is not only paralyzing, but also sterilizing. The ideal demanded of me is to cease as a living being, and to limit myself exclusively to the function of producing the “*œuvre*.” [...] For me, at times, it becomes unbearable. [...] For example, I’m burning with the desire to say several things relative to modern history, to have a conversation with men of the dialectical moment, and to show them the horrors in Romania,

²³ *Journal* MS, 15 May 1947. On the man who “corrected” *Archétypes*, see 17 August 1947, *Journal* MS.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, 25 May 1947.

²⁵ *Journal*, 13 July 1947 (published).

²⁶ *Journal* MS, 20 and 25 August 1947.

to tell them not to risk their lives in a civil war, no matter what the horrors may be, just because they feel they *must* protest against the terror of contemporary history. But I don't permit myself to do any of these things.

I don't let myself read the newspapers, since the news from the homeland is so tragic that I can't do anything all day after reading about it. My misfortune is that I cannot work without *believing* in my work. And it is enough for me to hear how thousands of National-Peasantists are being tortured in the "democratic" prisons of my country for me to cease believing in writing, in my own work. I realize then that I must do something else, anything else. Although a second of reflection brings me back to reality. What else can the *lone man* do in this apocalyptic history?²⁷

Here we see Eliade confronting and struggling with "the terror of history" as it existed then in Communist Romania. In the next few years several Romanian-language "exile periodicals" appeared at Paris, Munich, Madrid, and elsewhere, and in these Eliade was able to publish articles addressed to his fellow countrymen.²⁸

In the final months of 1947 and the early months of 1948, he worked on the last two chapters of *Prolegomene*, finishing the book in April, 1948.²⁹ He also showed what he had written on *Archétypes et répétition* to friends and potential publishers, who all were "enthusiastic." Fighting "a sudden passion for literature," he forced himself to return to *Archétypes*.³⁰

By July, he had decided to rename the book again. As he explains:

For many years, my true problem has been, and remains, the problem of Time. That's why *Archétypes et répétition* will be named, as is also appropriate, *Le Mythe de l'éternel retour* [...].³¹

But it was October before he finally began writing on the book again:

²⁷ *Journal MS*, 27 August 1947. Compare with the modified and truncated published text.

²⁸ See Mircea Eliade, *Împotriva deznădejzii*, edited by Mircea Handoca, Bucharest, Humanitas, 1992.

²⁹ *Journal MS*, 11 April 1948.

³⁰ *Ibid*, 13 June 1948. All his life, Mircea Eliade alternated between writing fiction and scholarly works.

³¹ *Ibid*, 8 July 1948.

I return to *Le Mythe*.... I see much more clearly the point of the last chapter, but I hesitate to open here, in a few pages, the problem of *History*. And, nevertheless, I ought to do it. Why should I keep postponing the statement of these ideas for another book, which I don't know when I'll write, or even *if* I'll ever get around to writing?³²

In his journal entry for 2 November, as he is finishing the book, he complains of the cold temperature in his room. He leafs through the *Journal* for 1945, when he was beginning the work.

It's strange how my panic of that time, my belief in the immanence of war, anticipated the international tension that followed. But for the last several weeks, I've been calmer. No longer do I believe - fortunately - that war will break out in a month or two.

At 11:00 p.m., he records that *Le Mythe* is completed, except for the Preface. Summarizing its "history," he states:

Begun in March [actually, February] 1945 at Cascaes, quickly dropped and then taken up again in the winter of 1946-47, finished provisionally in May of 1947, [it] is now definitively concluded. I consider it my most important book, despite its imperfections and the allusions (which will not satisfy anyone) of the last chapter.³³

The publishing house "Gallimard" was waiting for *Le Mythe*, and it was in the press by January 1949. Eliade saw it in a bookstore window 27 May, and did "book service" for it a few day later.³⁴ In April, the Italian historian of religions, Raffaele Pettazzoni, came to Paris, and Eliade met at last this man he had long admired.

³² *Ibid*, 28 October 1948. In the published *Journal*, he revised the last two sentences: "And nevertheless, I will have to do it. Around me, everyone is asking *how much more time* do we have, when 'will there come...?'"

³³ *Ibid*, 3 November 1948; revised and shortened in published *Journal*.

³⁴ *Ibid*, 3 February; 27, 31 May 1949.

We discussed *Traité* for two hours; ‘historicist’ that he is, he rejects my theses about archetypes. But he apologizes all the while, repeating continually that I have renewed religious studies, etc.³⁵

After *Le Mythe de l'éternel retour* had been published, Eliade received appreciative comments from B. Croce, H. de Lubac, Karl Meuli, Eugenio d'Ors, and others.³⁶ D'Ors, whom Eliade had known in Portugal, was “enthusiastic,” Eliade says, “because I’ve brought out the Platonic structure of archaic and traditional (‘popular’) ontologies.” But Eliade is disappointed since he thinks d'Ors has not understood his point about the ritual abolition of time, which necessitates repetition.³⁷ He has the same criticism for other reviews he has read:

All excellent, but I have the impression that my most important thesis - the necessity for “repetition,” that is, for the re-creation of the world - is not clearly understood. The function of repetition is existential; it is the will to *continue life*, hoping to repeat it *ad infinitum*.³⁸

By now, the end of October 1949, Eliade was already involved in writing what would become his last and greatest full-length novel, *Noaptea de Sânziene*, published in English as *The Forbidden Forest*.³⁹ This novel can only be understood as the literary expression of Eliade’s ideas about time, as set forth in *Le Mythe de l'éternel retour*, which should be read before, or in conjunction with the novel.

Back to *Cosmos and History*, Chapter IV

Chapter IV, “The Terror of History,” is subdivided into four sections. In the first section, “The Survival of the Myth of the Eternal

³⁵ *Ibid*, 3 April 1949; revised in published *Journal*.

³⁶ *Journal*, 16 June 1949.

³⁷ *Ibid*, 3 October 1949.

³⁸ *Journal MS*, 29 October 1949

³⁹ Mircea Eliade, *The Forbidden Forest*, Notre Dame (Indiana) and London: Notre Dame University Press, 1978, translated from the Romanian by Mary Park Stevenson and Mac Linscott Ricketts.

Return,” Eliade begins apologetically by admitting the problem raised in this chapter exceeds the limits he had intended for the book. To compare the man of traditional societies, who “accorded the historical event no value in itself, with “modern, historical man” would require analyzing all varieties of modern historicisms,⁴⁰ and to do so would “carry us too far from the principal theme of this study.” Therefore, he proposes to examine only “the solutions offered by the historicistic view to enable modern man to tolerate the increasingly powerful pressure of contemporary history” (p. 141).

But before doing so, he reviews what he has said in the first three chapters of the book, reminding the reader of the ways people of traditional civilizations have defended themselves against history,

[...] either by periodically abolishing it through repetition of the cosmology [...], or by giving historical events a metahistorical meaning [...].

The Christianity of the popular [agricultural] European strata never succeeded in abolishing either the theory of the archetype [...] or the cyclical and astral theories (according to which history was justified, and the sufferings provoked by it assumed an eschatological meaning) (p. 142).

Among ecclesiastical leaders and theologians, two general conceptions of time contended down through the centuries: the *linear*, from the Fall to the Redemption, and *cyclical*, including theories of astral fatality. Eliade sees the cyclical view as having a revival recently, in various forms, with Nietzsche, Spengler, Toynbee and others (p. 246). He finds this quite meaningful:

The formulation, in modern terms, of an archaic myth betrays at least the desire to find a meaning and a transhistorical meaning justification for historical events. Thus we find ourselves in the pre-Hegelian position, the validity of the “historicistic” solutions, from Hegel to Marx, being implicitly called into question (p. 147).

⁴⁰ See *Cosmos and History*, footnote 19, p. 150, for a list of some “historicisms.”

In the second section of this chapter, “The Difficulties of Historicism,” Eliade points out what he considers the faults of Hegel’s viewpoint, and its inadequacy for dealing with the problem of “the terror of history.” “From Hegel on, every effort is directed toward saving and conferring value on the historical event as such,” Eliade says. Teaching a strict philosophy of historical necessity, Hegel was obliged to see in every event the will of the “Universal Spirit.” Eliade observes that there was, in this view, a parallel with the Hebrew prophets, who also proclaimed that every historical event was a manifestation of the will of God. “But with Marx, history cast off all transcendental significance; it was no longer anything more than the epiphany of the class struggle.” Yet, Eliade admits, Marxism preserves a meaning to history: events are leading to a final elimination of the terror of history in an “age of gold” (pp. 148-149).

For Eliade, “The terror of history becomes more and more intolerable from the viewpoints afforded by the various historicistic philosophies.” He does not propose to discuss the philosophies in this book, he says, but he wants to know one thing:

How can the “terror of history” be tolerated from the viewpoint of historicism? [...] We should wish to know, for example, how it would be possible to tolerate, and to justify, the sufferings and annihilation of so many peoples who suffer and are annihilated for the simple reason that their geographical situation sets them in the pathway of history [...].

He names specifically southeastern Europe as an example.

How can man tolerate the catastrophes and horrors of history - from collective deportations and massacres to atomic bombings - if beyond them he can glimpse no sign, no transhistorical meaning? (p. 151).

But Eliade is optimistic:

There is reason to foresee that, as the terror of history grows worse, as existence becomes more precarious because of history, the positions of historicism will increasingly lose prestige. [...] It is not inadmissible to think of an epoch not too far distant, when humanity, to ensure its survival, will find itself reduced to desisting from any further “making” of history

[...] and will confine itself to repeating prescribed archetypal gestures [...] (pp. 153-154).

There he leaves the matter, saying that he plans to pursue “these speculations” elsewhere.

The third section, “Freedom and History,” compares modern man’s “freedom to make history” with traditional man’s adherence to archetypal norms and gestures, which seems, to the former, to be a reversion to “nature,” born of a fear of doing anything new or unusual. However, “modern man,” as Eliade puts it,

can be creative only insofar as he is historical; in other words, all creation is forbidden him except that which has its source in his own freedom; and, consequently, everything is denied him except the freedom to make history by making himself.

But, Eliade contends,

it is becoming increasingly doubtful that modern man can make history. History is being made by smaller and smaller elite, even being reduced in many cases to a single dictator, so that the average man who would be free must flee, take refuge in a subhuman existence, or commit suicide. In contrast, the man of archaic civilizations enjoys the freedom to be creative - by being able to annul his own history and begin a new, pure existence each year (pp. 154-159).

In the last section of Chapter IV, entitled “Despair or Faith,” Eliade presents what he sees as the alternatives available to modern man, in the face of the terror of history. If historicism is not the answer, then what is? “Basically, the horizon of archetypes and repetition cannot be transcended with impunity unless we accept a philosophy that does not exclude God,” he declares.

And indeed, this proved to be true when the horizon of archetypes and repetition *was* transcended, for the first time, by Judæo-Christianity, which introduced a new category into religious experience: the category of *faith*.

Here Eliade cites Abraham who trusted Yahweh (concerning the sacrifice of his only son), whose faith can be defined as “for God, all things are possible,” and the *Gospel of Mark*, 11: 22-24, which implies that everything is possible, through faith, for man as well.

Faith, in this context, as in many others, means absolute emancipation from any kind of natural “law,” and hence [...] the freedom to intervene even in the ontological constitution of the universe. It is, consequently, a pre-eminently creative freedom. In other words, it constitutes a new formula for man’s collaboration with the creation - the first but also the only such formula accorded him since the traditional horizon of archetypes and repetition was transcended. Only such a freedom [...] is able to defend modern man from the terror of history - a freedom, that is, which has its source and has its guarantee in God (pp. 160-161).⁴¹

Eliade continues,

We may say, furthermore, that Christianity is the “religion” of modern man and historical man, of the man who simultaneously discovered personal freedom and continuous time. [...] It is only by presupposing the existence of God that he conquers, on the one hand, freedom (which grants him autonomy in a universe governed by laws [...]) and, on the other hand, the certainty that historical tragedies have a transhistorical meaning, even if that meaning is not always visible for humanity in its present condition. Any other situation of modern man leads, in the end, to despair.

And finally,

Christianity incontestably proves to be the religion of “fallen man,” and this to the extent that modern man is irremediably identified with history and progress, and to which history and progress are falls, both implying a final abandonment of the paradise of archetypes and repetition.

These quotations from the last section of the book seem to present Eliade as a man of faith and a true believer, who had found in Christianity the answer to his own problem of the “terror of history” (the fall of Romania

⁴¹ Compare *Journal*, 1 January 1945.

and its occupation by the Soviet Union, as well as his personal trials). Still, we must withhold a final judgment, because he is careful always to speak in the third person. However that may be, when it has been studied closely, *Cosmos and History* endures, as Eliade believed it would, as his most important theoretical volume.

Two Histories of Compromise

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Abstract: Since almost everybody agrees with the definition of politics as “the art of compromise” the general disregard of this concept is intriguing, to say the least. By tracing down the overlooked conceptual history of compromise, the essay signals for the first time the ignored difference between the usages of compromise on either side of the English Channel starting as early as the sixteenth century. It offers as possible explanation for such discrepancy a different apprehension of political representation between England and continental Europe, especially France – a difference with long-lasting consequences. I check this hypothesis by comparing and contrasting the theories of social contract in England and France respectively, pointing out how the forgotten work of Gilbert Burnet, a contemporary of John Locke, proves that in seventeenth century England the social contract came to be assimilated with a generalized compromise.

Keywords: compromise, representation, early modern Europe, Gilbert Burnet.

For the social philosopher, for the social scientist, words are not “mere”; they are the tools of his trade and a vital part of his subject matter. Since human beings are not merely political animals but also language-using animals, their behavior is shaped by their ideas. What they do and how they do it depends upon how they see themselves and their world, and this in turn depends upon the concepts through which they see. (Hanna Pitkin)

The iceberg's tip has a bad reputation. It is deceitful – one is told – since it fails to signal the huge mass of ice underneath the surface of the ocean. Only one-seventh to one-tenth of its total is above water. Yet in condemning the tip we tend to forget the most important thing: it might not warn us about the true size or shape of the iceberg, but it does something else – it signals its very existence. It reveals, so to speak, its own concealing.

When it comes to political philosophy the ignored history of compromise might very well play the role of an iceberg's tip: in itself it might not seem much – just another tortuous history among many others that, in the past few decades, have stirred the interest of many political philosophers and historians of ideas. Yet such a perception is as deceitful and revealing as the tip of an iceberg. As the tip of the iceberg, the conceptual history of compromise signals much more – concealed differences in the underlying assumptions we make about representation and individuals' relationships with the political sphere.

To begin with, “compromise” is not just another word in the vocabulary of political science. In the Anglo-American world, for most politicians and political scientists alike, the definition of politics as “the art of compromise” is barely disputed. Some even argue that “every political system can be classified [...] on the basis of its prevalent attitude toward compromise”¹ or claim that “democracy and compromise are somehow, perhaps intimately, related to one another”.²

Yet despite this widely accepted centrality for politics the concept draws much less attention from the part of political philosophers than other related ones, such as representation, toleration, election, and the like.³ In more than a century, barely a dozen of books and articles have more or less seriously dealt with this concept, making the *theme* of compromise one of

¹ Rintala, Marvin, “The Two Faces of Compromise”, *The Western Political Quarterly*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (1969) p. 326.

² Kuflik, Arthur, “Morality and Compromise”, *Compromise in Ethics, Law, and Politics*, ed. J. Roland Pennock and John W. Chapman, NY: New York University Press (1979: 41).

³ Ball, Terence, James Farr and Russel L. Hanson, eds., *Political Innovation and Conceptual Change*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1989: ix).

the most neglected by political theorists.⁴ And whenever compromise is not altogether ignored, its virtues and its centrality for real-life politics are heavily disputed.

If Quentin Skinner is right in saying that linguistic disagreements are also disagreements about our social world, one can hardly find a concept with a more contested meaning, and therefore one more able to shed light on otherwise less obvious disagreements.⁵

There are many debates about what qualifies as compromise and about the role compromise *can* or *should* play in politics. Such *conceptual* disagreements mirror the ones in the utilization of the *term*. The overlooked history of compromise reveals a dazzling discrepancy between the usages of the word in England, as compared with continental Europe, notably France, starting with the sixteenth century all the way to the late eighteenth century. Even today, after a long process of homogenization, the differences are still discernable, both across the English Channel and across the Atlantic, but at the beginning of the modern period, such discrepancies were striking indeed.

⁴ **Books:** Morley, John (1906 [1886]) *On Compromise*, London: Macmillan and Co.; Smith, T. V. (1956) *The Ethics of Compromise and The Art of Containment*, Boston: Starr King Press; MacIver, R.M., ed. (1957) *Integrity and Compromise: Problems of Public and Private Conscience*, NY: Published by The Institute for Religious and Social Studies, Distributed by Harper & Brothers; Pennock, J. Rolland and John W. Chapman, eds. (1979) *Compromise in , Ethics, Law, and Politics*, NY: New York University Press; Seltser, Barry Jay (1984) *The Principles and Practice of Political Compromise: A Case Study of the United State Senate*, Studies in American Religion, Volume 12, NY and Toronto: The Edwin Mellen Press; Benjamin, Martin (1990) *Splitting the Difference: Compromise and Integrity in Ethics and Politics*, Kansas: University Press of Kansas; Dobel, Patrick J. (1990) *Compromise and Political Action*, Savage, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers; Bellamy, Richard (1999), *Liberalism and Pluralism: Towards a politics of compromise*, London and New York: Routledge. **Articles:** Smith, T.V. (1942) "Compromise: Its Context and Limits" in *Ethics – An International Journal of Social, Political, and Legal Philosophy*, Vol. LIII, No. 1; Hallowell, John H. (1944); "Compromise as Political Ideal" in *Ethics*, Vol. 54, No. 3; Martin, Oliver (1948) "Beyond Compromise" in *Ethics*, Vol. 58, No. 2; Livingston, John (1956) "Liberalism, Conservatism, and the Role of Reason", *The Western Political Quarterly*, Vol. 9, No. 3, pp. 641-657; Rintala, Marvin (1969) "The Two Faces of Compromise" in *The Western Political Quarterly*, Vol. 22, No. 2; Devine, Francis Edward, "Hobbes: The Theoretical Basis of Political Compromise", *Polity*, Vol. 5, No. 1, (1972) pp. 57-76; Ankersmit, Frank R, "Representational Democracy: An Aesthetic Approach to Conflict and Compromise" in *Common Knowledge*, 8:1, 2002, pp. 24-46.

⁵ Skinner, Quentin, "Language and political change", in Ball, Terence, James Farr and Russel L. Hanson, eds., *Political Innovation and Conceptual Change*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1989).

Literally, dozens of British writers, from Shakespeare to Burke, used “compromise” in a positive or at least a neutral context – and they did it with an astonishing consistency. For them, “to compromise” meant mainly to bargain, to give and take for the sake of reaching an agreement otherwise impossible. At that time, even Jesus was described as a compromiser and many authors overtly talked already about “the virtues of compromise.” Furthermore, by the beginning of the seventeenth century, the classical sense of arbitration by an impartial third party started to fade away, being replaced with a new sense, of mutual agreement just between two parties.

The same consistency in the usage of compromise, this time turned upside-down, is to be found in the writings of French authors. By the end of the sixteenth century, Montaigne and Charron were already concerned about “compromising” their consciences – a concern shared during the seventeenth century and later on by writers as distant in time and style as Corneille, Descartes, Moliere, or even Tocqueville. Author after author worries about compromising “his honor”, “his virtue”, “himself”, etc. For the Frenchmen, “compromise” was – and remained – a dangerous word, hence the later distinction between *compromis* and *compromission*.

Such a salient discrepancy between commendable and condemnable compromise is in need of an explanation. How does it happen that the neutral Latin term “*compromissum*”, initially confined within the limits of a particular meaning, came to signify so many different things – a social contract, a mutual adjustment of otherwise irreconcilable positions, a method of election, but also “to endanger” “to jeopardize” or “to put to hazard its own reputation”?⁶ This essay undertakes for the first time to explain these differences by tracing the conceptual history of compromise – a long overdue enterprise if one wants to place in proper contexts the terms of the debate.

In the process, something close to a paradox becomes evident. By becoming the first providers of political authority, the Englishmen were in fact, at the same time, kept apart from the political sphere that came to be run exclusively by “professionals”. The story is turned upside down in

⁶ See *The Barnhart Dictionary of Etymology* (1988) Robert K. Barnhart, editor, Sol Steinnetz, managing editor.

France where absolutism and private individualism provided for the individual a “protective shell”. When, during the eighteenth century he finally emerged as a political persona he was no longer satisfied with a mere delegation of rights – hence the ever reoccurring insistence of French political thinkers on direct democracy and unmediated political action, but also a different apprehension of the idea of representation.

As I will try to show, once representation came to be accepted as *incounturnable*, it maintained in France the classic “top-down” directionality, unlike its British “bottom-up” counterpart. As a result, the tensions between representing “*la Nation*” or “*la Raison*” (but almost never *individual wills*) marked the period centered on the French revolution with intensity unknown across the Channel. These unresolved tensions are still with us, although in different forms.

The first part of the essay traces back the origins of compromise and analyzes the negative connotations it already had acquired in France by the end of the sixteenth century, taking into account the social, political, and intellectual context of the time. The second part will present the English version of the story revealing the ways in which compromise came to be understood (and used) in a radically differently way because of different historical developments. Finally, the third part will further check this hypothesis, by comparing and contrasting the French and English theories of the social contract, with an accent on the forgotten work of Gilbert Burnet – the one who, instead of the much popular social contract”, uses the term “compromise.”

The Beginnings

As a Latin word, “*compromissum*” meant initially a reciprocal promise to abide by the decision of an impartial arbitrator whenever a common solution between two individuals could not have been reached otherwise, i.e., through informed dialogue and rational persuasion. It was a method of last resort to solve a particular and private disagreement. As such, it was not used in political contexts, but mainly in judicial ones, albeit its

main role was to remove “the dispute from the ordinary jurisdiction of the courts”.⁷

A few centuries later, the French dictionaries will assume that the avoidance of official justice implies a guilty conscience. The first edition of the *Dictionnaire de L'Academie Francaise* (1694) notes, for example, “*on ne met en compromis que les affaires douteuses*” (“one puts to compromise none but the dubious affairs”). The same Roman meaning, of settling differences, this time translated in Greek, is found in two other Byzantine documents from the sixth century AD.⁸ The sense of a coming to terms passed in Middle French as “*compromis*” around fifteenth century. The first known mention of “*compromis*” that I was able to track down dates from 1402 and it was used by Christine de Pisan (ca. 1364 - ca. 1431): “*Et dessus vous en sont en compromis/Les parties d'un debat playdoye*”.⁹

According to this meaning, the arbitrator’s authority was already present at the time of the *compromissum*, and was *not* the result of being chosen or designated. Both parties agreed upon the “*compromissores*” precisely because both acknowledged his authority in judging the matter at hand and no further.

By definition, then, the practice of compromise rested on three main assumptions: 1) the *recognized* authority of the arbitrator to *equally represent* the interests of both parties; 2) the willingness to *accept the risks* involved in a third party’s judgment; 3) the basic *equality of the parties* involved in the dispute, as a pre-condition for trusting that the promises made will be kept regardless the outcome. To compromise, indicate the first French dictionaries, signified “*s'égalier a quelqu'un*”, made oneself equal to somebody else. Richelet (1680) and Furetiere (1690) – insist that one cannot compromise with an inferior: a lord should not compromise with a bourgeois; a master should not compromise with his servants, etc.

⁷ Stein, Peter “Review of *Ricerche in Tema di 'Compromissum'* by Mario Talamanca”, *The Journal of Roman Studies*, Vol. 51, Parts 1 and 2 (1961: 247).

⁸ See H. Haarurer, S.M.E. Van Lith *Corpus Papyrorum Raineri, Band VI, III*, (Vienna: Verlag Bruder Hollinek, 1978).

⁹ “And above you are in compromise / The parties of a debate about self-excuses”. Christine, de Pisan (ca. 1364 – ca. 1431), *Le Livre du chemin de lonc estude* (Ed. Andrea Tarnowski, Librairie Generale Francaise, Le Livre de Poche Lettres gothiques, 2000) – quoted in “The Project for American and French Research on the Treasury of the French Language (ARTFL)” - <http://humanities.uchicago.edu/orgs/ARTFL/>

These specifications are important because they help understand how the negative connotations of compromise could have possibly arise in connection with a strong emphasis on the individual. Only a self-centered individual, self-conscious about his own distinctiveness and distrustful of everybody else's authority, could have possibly been cautious about compromising, i.e., submitting to the judgment of another, his "conscience," "honor," or "reputation" – the first recorded occurrences of the negative meaning of the word.

As Nannerl O. Keohane among other scholars persuasively demonstrates, by the end of the sixteenth century France, the sharp distinction between the private and public spheres was naturally doubled by a strong individualism – an individualism based upon the "natural" inequality of men, but an individualism nonetheless.¹⁰ This trend increased even further in the seventeenth century, when it "proved for a time and admirable and efficient ideology for the subjects of an absolutist state".¹¹ The explanation runs deeper than the generally accepted siding of the nascent modern individual with the nascent modern state against old forms of corporatism such as parishes, guilds, and the like.¹² As Vittor Ivo Comparato put it bluntly, "Absolutism becomes something more than a background issue: it is the very condition for private freedom".¹³

Paradoxically at first sight, it was precisely the corporatist perspective inherited from the medieval times coupled with the monarcho-centric and hierarchical vision of the public sphere that allowed the survival – or rather the safe hibernation – of the individual in the absolutist seventeenth century. From different perspectives, to be sure, authors such as

¹⁰ Keohane, Nannerl O. (1980) *Philosophy and the State in France: The Renaissance to the Enlightenment*, Princeton, Princeton University Press.

¹¹ Keohane, *ibid.*, p. 83.

¹² See, for example, Walter Ullmann, *The Individual and Society in the Middle Ages*, (Baltimore, Maryland: The John Hopkins Press, 1966), most of the authors from *The Individual in Political Theory and Practice*, ed. Janet Coleman, (European Science Foundation: Clarendon Press, 1996), or those in *L'Individu au Moyen Age*, sous la direction de Brigitte Miriam Bedos-Razak et Dominique Iogna-Prat (Aubier: Éditions Flammarion, 2005).

¹³ Comparato, Vittor Ivo, "A Case of Modern Individualism: Politics and the Uneasiness of Intellectuals in the Baroque Age" in *The Individual in Political Theory and Practice*, ed. Janet Coleman (European Science Foundation: Clarendon Press, 1996: 163).

Seysell, Bodin, Montaigne, Charron, or Pascal agreed that the individual fully manifested himself only in the confines of the private sphere. Only here, in what Montaigne called the “back room” of the mind, was he able to preserve space for his freedom of conscience.

The wise man should withdraw his soul within, out of the crowd, and keep it in freedom and power to judge things freely.¹⁴

Here, there was no other authority besides his conscience (and, eventually, God). Here, he was what he really was. Here, his true self could be explored and, most important, could be *protected*. The centrifugal temptations of public sphere ought therefore to be resisted for the sake of the self.

It was a paradoxical command that was given us of old by that god of Delphi: Look into yourself, know yourself, keep to yourself; bring back your mind and your will, which are spending themselves elsewhere, into themselves; you are running out, you are scattering yourself; concentrate yourself, resist yourself; *you are being betrayed, dispersed, and stolen away from yourself*.¹⁵

When it came to the individual’s true self, no “arbitration” or judgment by somebody else could be a more appropriate judge, for only conscience can read even the most secret intentions of the heart.

So wonderful is the power of conscience [that] it makes us betray, accuse, and fight against ourselves, and for want of other witnesses, to give evidence against ourselves.¹⁶

Since conscience was the best judge of the self, it goes without saying that it should not be disgraced through any kind of compromise. As

¹⁴ Montaigne, III, I (603), quoted in Keohane, *Philosophy and the State in France*, p. 110.

¹⁵ Montaigne, III, 9 (766). See also I, 3 (8) and III, 12 (799). Quoted in Keohane, *Philosophy and the State in France*, p. 100.

¹⁶ Montaigne, *Essays*, Book I, Chapter V, *On Conscience*.

both Montaigne and Charron make clear, even to defend yourself from false accusations could mean to debase yourself as to accept the very possibility of judgment by others and therefore the possibility of letting others decide over your most valuable possession – yourself.

J'aide ordinairement aux présomptions injurieuses que la fortune sème contre moi, par une façon que j'ai des toujours, de fuir a me justifier, excuser et interpréter, estimant que c'est mettre *ma conscience en compromise*, de plaider pour elle.¹⁷

For both authors the model to be followed remained Socrates who, falsely accused, refused to properly “defend” himself before the polis.

Aux faulses accusations et mauvais soupçons qui courent et se font hors justice, il se trouve double finesse. L'une, qui est aux interessez, accusez et soupçonnez, c'est de se justifier et excuser trop facilement, soigneusement, et quasi ambitieusement [...]. C' est trahir son innocence, *mettre sa conscience et son droict en compromis et en arbitrage*, que de plaider ainsi [...]. Socrates en justice mesme ne le voulust faire ny par soy ny par autruy, refusant d'employer le beau plaider du grand Lysias, et ayma mieux mourir.¹⁸

To compromise your conscience, to leave it to the arbitrage of others was unacceptable for 1) the public sphere had no business interfering with

¹⁷ *The Complete Works of Montaigne: Essays, Travel Journal, Letters*, translated by Donald M. Frame (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press), 1957; “I ordinarily assist the unfair presumptions against me that fortune sows about by a way I have always had of avoiding justifying, excusing, and interpreting myself, thinking that *it is compromising my conscience* to plead for it”, *Essais de Michel de Montaigne*, Presentation, établissement du texte, aparat critique et notes par Andre Tournon, Livre III, Imprimerie Nationale, p. 395.

¹⁸ “Faced with false accusations and evil suspicions that are spread and made outside justice, one finds two subtleties. One, which belongs to the interested ones, accused and suspected, is to justify and excuse themselves too easily, with too much care, and almost with ambition. [...] It is to betray one’s innocence, putting one’s conscience and right to compromise and arbitration, if one plead like this: [...] Even in justice, Socrates did not want to do it by himself or by somebody else, refusing to use the beautiful pleading of grand Lysias and rather preferred to die”. Charron, Pierre (1541-1603), *De la sagesse; Trois livres*, p. 26.

the private one, and therefore 2) no authority from outside is ever conceivable when it comes to your conscience. Under these circumstances, none of the three preconditions for the acceptance of compromise – authority to represent, willingness to risk the judgment, and the equality of the parties – were met.

The French dictionaries of the seventeenth century are already aware of these negative connotations. Pierre Richelet (1680) in his *Dictionnaire de la langue françoise ancienne et moderne* mentions the new sense, “*mettre en compromis son credit, son honneur, & ce qu’on a de cher & de considerable*” (“compromising one’s credit, honor & what one has dearest & most considerable”), while warning that “*il ne faut pas qu’un honnête home se compromette avec des coquins*” (“an honest man should not compromise himself with rascals”). Antoine Furetiere, in his *Dictionnaire universelle* from 1690, is even more explicit about the reason why “*on dit aussi qu’il ne faut pas mettre son honneur au compromis, c’est a dire au hasard*” (it is also said that one should not place one’s honor in compromise, that is, in danger): “*On ne doit point mettre en compromise avec les inferieures, pour dire avoir des paroles ou des querelles avec eux*” (“One should not put oneself in compromise with the inferiors, for saying having words or quarrels with them”). “*Compromettre signifie aussi s’égalier a quelqu’un, contester avec quelque personne indigne*” (*Compromettre* also signifies to make yourself the equal, engaging in a controversy with an unworthy person). The first edition of *Dictionnaire de l’Academie Francaise* (1697) mentions as well “*On dit figur. Mettre quelqu’un en compromis, pour dire, Le compromettre. Et l’on dit aussi fig. dans le mesme sens, Mettre la dignité, l’authorité de quelqu’un en compromise*” (It is said figuratively. *Placing someone in compromise*, for saying, compromising him. It is also said figuratively, with the same meaning, *Placing the authority of someone in compromise*”).

This carefully protected separation between *forum internum* and *forum externum*

can be traced back to conciliar literature, [for] the need to distinguish spiritual from temporal jurisdiction led to the establishment of a

clear-cut boundary between individual conscience and that which is subject to the law.¹⁹

When it came to the individual's true self, the best judge remained one's conscience, for it could read even the most secret intentions of the heart.

So wonderful is the power of conscience [that] it makes us betray, accuse, and fight against ourselves, and for want of other witnesses, to give evidence against ourselves.²⁰

Since conscience was the best judge of the self, it goes without saying that it should not be disgraced through any kind of compromise.

The inner world is free and regulated by reason. By contrast, the external world is dominated by the conventions which allow political communities to survive and to last: religion, customs, and law. But the cultivated man is capable of creating a world of authenticity within himself.²¹

But if conscience – and therefore individuality – could be protected from the outside world by simply refusing its judgment in the private sphere, what happened with the individual when such strategy was no longer possible, for he could not (and should not) remain forever confined in it?

As Bodin pointed out, as soon as the individual “goes forth out of his own house where he commands, to negotiate and traffic with other heads of families about that which concern concerns them all in general,” he becomes a “*companion, equally and fellow-like with others*”.²² Once he enters the sphere of *la chose publique*, he loses his individuality, becoming a *member*

¹⁹ Comparato, Vittor Ivo, “A Case of Modern Individualism” (1996: 104).

²⁰ Montaigne, *Essays*, Book I, Chapter V, *On Conscience*.

²¹ Comparato, “A Case of Modern Individualism” (1996: 161).

²² Bodin, Jean (Paris, 1577) *Les Six Livres de la republique*, I, 6, 46-47, quoted and translated by Keohane, *Philosophy and the State in France*, p. 69, emphasis added.

of a pre-existing community, defined mainly by his role in this larger structure – the corporate body. In such a community, the member enjoys *equality* – the precondition of compromise – but he endangers his *individuality*. The only thing that ensures his distinctiveness in this commonly-defined public realm is his honor, i.e., his reputation among his peers.

To clarify this point, Arendt's description of life in the ancient polis offers a nice parallel and deserves a lengthy quotation:

[The] modern equality, based on the conformism inherent in society [...] is in every respect different from equality in antiquity, and notable in the Greek city-states. To belong to the few "equals" (*homoioi*) meant to be permitted to live among peers; but the public realm itself, the *polis*, was permeated by a fiercely agonal spirit, where everybody had constantly to distinguish himself from all others, to show through unique deeds or achievements that he was the best of all (*aïen aristeuein*). The public realm, in other words, was reserved for individuality; it was the only place where men could show who they really and inexchangeably were.²³

As Keohane observes, by the seventeenth century, the ethic of *la gloire* – the ethic of Corneille, Balzac, and Descartes – provided a different strategy – “an alternative to the retiring and skeptical sage who was the *libertin's* ideal”.²⁴ In the public sphere, honor and reputation became the equivalent of conscience in the private realm, and therefore *defining* attributes of individuality to be protected “*a tout prix*”. To compromise (or even to be suspected of willingness to compromise) one's honor or one's reputation was to abandon one's individuality in the public sphere. There is no surprise then if in 1637 Corneille is concerned “*qu'on put a jamais me reprocher d'avoir compromise ma reputation*” (“that one could ever admonish me for compromising my reputation”) – only here the place of the arbitrator is filled by his censors: “*de tous ceux qui ont été attaquées comme moi, aucun que je sache n'a eu assez de faiblesse pour convenir d'arbitres*

²³ Arendt, Hannah, *The Human Condition*, (second edition) Chicago & London: Chicago University Press (1998: 41).

²⁴ Keohane, *Philosophy and the State in France*, p. 186.

avec ses censeurs” (“of all those attacked as I was, nobody that I know of was so weak as to agree on arbiters with his censors”).²⁵

In such a medium hostile to compromise, it remained, however, a “lingering” compromise still acceptable in the public sphere – compromise as *a method of election*. This second meaning – rather forgotten today – was, however, widely in use during the Middle Ages and early modern times. It is often missed nowadays how important and widespread elections were during the Middle Ages.²⁶ For example, all church offices from the papacy down were elective and were meant to discover not the people’s choice, but God’s will. As such, the election of the pope – and for the matter of any other bishop – was guided by the unanimity rule – “the only rule that could assure the participants that their decision was right, hence the maxim “*vox populi, vox Dei*”.”²⁷

Not surprising, unanimity was often hard to reach, and as a result the process frequently produced conflicts and schisms. In 1215, in order to prevent such conflicts, the Fourth Lateran Council instituted three ways to achieve unanimous agreement in the event of dissensions among electorate: “acclamation,” “scrutiny,” and ... “*compromissum*”. Elections “by acclamation” were quite rare, although closer to the idea of “quasi-inspiration”. Scrutiny or “suitability” (*idoneitas*) was meant to discover, through vote, the best candidate for the job. Finally,

compromissum signified the delegation of final choice to a small commission whenever long sessions and repeated failures showed unanimous agreement to be unlikely.²⁸

²⁵ Pierre Corneille, *Theatre choisi de Corneille*, Paris: Editions Garnier Freres, “Avertissement”, Le Cid (1961: 8). Interestingly, Racine, the younger contender of Corneille, who replaced the heroic tragedy with the tragedy “gallante”, never uses the word “compromise” in his oeuvre.

²⁶ The following paragraphs are based mainly on Josep M. Colomer and Iain McLean, “Electing Popes: Approval Balloting and Qualified Majority Rule” in *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. 29, No. 1, (1998), pp. 1-22 and Alexander Murray’s review of *Wahlen and Wahlen in Mittelalter* by Reinhart Schneider; Harald Zimmermann in *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 107, No. 425 (Oct. 1992), pp. 956-58.

²⁷ Colomer & McLean, “Electing Popes”, p. 3. The council of Antioch forbade the practice of bishops choosing their successors in 341.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

Schneider and Zimmerman demonstrate how widely the medieval use of *compromissum* was not only in the election high-ranking prelates but also of small parish clergy.

One or more *compromissores* would be chosen for each recognized interest: by the *populus* or *universitas parochianorum*, rich and poor, women as well as men; others by local powers, say a monastery and/or a secular magnate. [...] Only when such local compromise – in our sense – failed, would choice pass up the hierarchy.²⁹

“For each recognized interest” an intermediate representative, a *compromissore*, was therefore designated (yet not elected, the *compromissores* being the ones asked to do the properly speaking “election”). Some parallels between this new acquired meaning of “compromise” and the original one can certainly be traced. As in the case of *compromissum* as *arbitratio*, *compromissum* as *electio* was a method of last resort, to be used only whenever people could not agree – yet here the disagreement was not between two parties nor between *two individuals*, but between *multiple factions*. Obviously, these factions were not *geographically* defined, but instead they coalesced within the same geographical unit of representation (say, a parish) around various “interests” – a distinction that in time will prove important. And once again, as in the case of arbitration, compromise as method of election depended heavily on the *pre-existing* authority of the *compromissores*.

People from each faction ought to have agreed beforehand which one of them is trustworthy to best represent the faction’s interests. One was not trustworthy because one had been designated to be a *compromissore*. One was designated to be one of the *compromissore* for the corporate body because one was trustworthy.³⁰ The importance of these corporate bodies (*universitas*) can hardly be downplayed. If it was a representative at all, the *compromissore* was a representative of this body and its “recognized interests,” not of individuals. The acceptable compromise in the sphere was,

²⁹ Murray, *Wahlen and Wahlen*, p. 957.

³⁰ The distinction between representation and authority is largely discussed in Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation*, pp. 38-59.

therefore, of no concern for the individual per se, but only for the individual as *member* of a pre-existing association. Once again, the individual was safe – this time protected by the “shell” of the corporate body – even in the midst of a compromise.

The theorists of the state made little effort to emphasize in any way the potential political role of the individual. In Seyssel’s account, for example, the political role for “ordinary individuals” (*peuple menu* and *peuple gras*) was to simply fulfill their economical and social duties according with their ranks, i.e., to do their duties in the sphere of civil society. By any means, then, these individuals could not constitute the source of political authority. The only way they could participate in the political life of the kingdom was as *members* of estates “well-ordered and held together” in their own patterns and consonances.³¹ One was “political” by simply being a *member* of a corporate body that in turn was part of a hierarchical structure “political” in itself, from top to bottom. With the exception of the very top “layer” of the pyramid, being political did not require any active participation, let alone delegation of authority from bottom-up. As an individual, one receives authority – one does not provide it.

Even for Bodin – one of the theorists most inclined, despite his monarchocentrism, to praise the educative virtues of public involvement for the sake of a common good – participation in politics was, for the individual, just a preparatory phase for the life of private contemplation:

Every man in his degree and according to his quality, having enjoyed appropriate preferment’s, and so having learned true wisdom by managing of worldly affairs, should retire from these vain and worldly businesses, to occupy themselves in the contemplation of things natural and divine.³²

It appears that constitutionalists, absolutists, and individualists could all agree at least on one point: the individual – as *individual* not necessarily as *member* – should keep (and be kept) away from arcane politics.

³¹ Keohane, *Philosophy and the State in France*, p. 37.

³² Bodin, I, I, 4-8, cf. III, quoted in Keohane, *Philosophy and the State in France*, p. 80.

It is relevant that the Estates General – supposedly the political bodies par excellence – played only a minor part in France – and Seyssel doesn't even bother to mention them by name. Their revival between 1560 and 1588 couldn't change this matter of fact. As Keohane argues, “the notion that the Estates-General was a bold and vigorous popular institution suppressed by the absolutist kings does not withstand examination”.³³ They lacked efficiency and had no share in the authority of the sovereign. Several authors of the time, such as Commines, Seyssel, and Pasquier, insist that the authority of the king is not diminished nor shared by the king's consultation with his advisers, the *parlements* or the estates. He was and remained for a long time the (only) head of the political body and the only source of authority.

All authority flows from the king, all institutions are organized around the throne. The patterns of activity in the *corps mystique* do not flow upwards; the only connections are *from the top downward*, in a pyramidal fashion.³⁴

Under such circumstances, the individual *as* individual had no choice but to distance himself from politics altogether or to accept the position of a representative of the king by occupying a public office; or do both at the same time – as did Montaigne. While filling several important administrative positions, Montaigne was also carefully pointing out that to accept a public office was to run almost unacceptable risks,

because in every government there are necessary offices which are not only abject but also vicious. Vices find their place in it and are employed for sewing our society together, as are poisons for the preservations of our health.

However, since such offices are necessary for the smooth running of the government, he sarcastically conceded to “let this part be played by the

³³ Keohane, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 41, emphasis added.

more vigorous and less fearful citizens,” who are ready to “sacrifice their honor and their conscience” for their country’s good – who are, in other words, willing to compromise themselves.³⁵

The English Twist

If the French were so worried about compromising their conscience, their honor, or both, why didn’t their English counterparts display the same concerns? As mentioned before, during the sixteenth and seventeenth century, there is no shred of evidence about an English author using compromise but in a positive or neutral sense.

From Shakespeare to Swift, and from John Bridge to Arthur Hall, they all used the word in its judicial sense as agreement, truce, etc, even in its reflexive form.³⁶ (*When Laban and himselfe were compremyz’d That all the eanelings which were streakt and pied Should fall as Iacob hier – Merch. of V., 1, iii*).³⁷

If the first French dictionaries carefully warned “*qu’il ne faut pas mettre son honneur au compromis, c’est a dire au hazard*,” their English counterparts – Philips Edward (1658), Thomas Blount (1670) – make no reference to this sense. The most recent updated Middle English Dictionary presents four forms of the word: *compromis* (n.); *compromisen* (v.); *compromission* (n.); and *compromitten* (v.). All of them have the sense of “mutual agreement”, “promise or arbitration”– yet no negative connotation is ever mentioned. (“Being compromised” meant in effect “being in agreement.”)

One has to keep in mind, however, that such a praise of compromise did not preclude the awareness to the negative connotations of the term. The intellectual exchanges between England and the continent during the

³⁵ Montaigne, III, 12 (800), quoted in Keohane, op. cit., p. 113

³⁶ This is an important observation since in present day English the passive or the reflexive form normally indicates blame or criticism. See Kelly (1979), op. cit., p. 91 for a more detailed discussion.

³⁷ For Shakespeare’s usage of “compromise,” see also *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, I, I; John, V, I, Richard II, II, I;

seventeenth century were impressive. It is of little surprise then whenever translations occurred from French, one can find the “continental” sense of a “dangerous compromise” intact. For example, a translation from French made in 1615 mentions that “*it was not thought conuenient, that the Patriarch should with his person put the reputation of the Holie See to compromise*”.³⁸

Yet such awareness is not reflected in the English dictionaries of the time. It is a striking difference in the understanding what compromise stands for in the first French and English dictionaries respectively. Unlike French dictionaries of 1680 and 1690, their English counterparts – Philips Edward (1658), Thomas Blount (1670) – make no reference to this sense. One has to wait till the eighteenth century, when the sixth edition of *The New World of Words: or, universal English dictionary* (1706) mentions that, in a figurative sense, compromise may signify “to put to hazard of being censured, *as It behaved not to compromise his Honour and Reputation*”.

That this was not a common English usage is proved by the fact that a few years later (1719) the second edition of *Glossographia Anglicana Nova* makes no reference to this figurative sense (“Compromise – in Law, is a Promise of two or more Parties at Difference, to refer the Deciding their Controversies to the Arbitrement of one or more Arbitrators.) *The Imperial Lexicon of the English Language* (A. Fullerton & Co., 1850) mentions again as a possible meaning “to put to hazard”. Yet in 1877, *A Dictionary of the English Language* (Samuel Johnson) has once more no reference to this negative connotation.

The observation is even more intriguing, considering that by and large historians agree that in sixteenth and seventeenth century England the individual – from the yeoman up to the lord – enjoyed a greater freedom, a more secure private property and more political leverage than his French counterpart. So why wasn’t such a “lucky” individual concerned with the dangers of compromising himself? The explanation, I suspect, is to be found

³⁸ Avity, Pierre d’, sieur de Montmartin, 1573-1635. *The estates, empires, & principallities of the world Represented by ye description of countries, maners of inhabitants, riches of prouinces, forces, gouernment, religion; and the princes that haue gouerned in euery estate. With the begin[n]ing of all militarie and religious orders. Translated out of French by Edw: Grimstone, sargeant at armes.* 1615.

precisely in this particular fortunate English historical context which in turn helped shaping a different understanding of the relationship between individuals and the political sphere – an understanding that remained since then little challenged in the Anglo-American world.

Thanks to a brand new understanding of representation, the English individual was the first one in Europe to enjoy a saying in the political process (mediated through his representatives, to be sure, but still a saying) and a theoretical equality with his fellow citizens. The process reflected the one in France as in a mirror – everything was reversed. The reality of the French absolutism, on the one hand, and the French theorists, on the other one, kept the individual as far as possible from the political arena. In parallel, as we have seen, the focus on the individual increased proportionally with his “official” political demise.

In England, on the contrary, the story was turned upside down. From early on, for both partisans of the divine rights of kings and proto-liberal supporters of the Parliament, the political unit of measure, so to say, became the individual. Yet by the same token, this rise of individual’s political status was matched by his confinement to a very specific role – the choice of the representative.

As Hanna Pitkin observes, the French were the first ones to adopt as possible meaning of representation, “to take or fill the place of another (person), substitute for” – a development that in England occurs only in the sixteenth century, probably because until then, compared with Latin and French, English was less used in legal and political works.³⁹ However, as Pitkin’s own examples confirm, whenever “representation” is used in early French as meaning “representation of a person,” it is either “for the way in which a magistrate or attorney stands and acts *for the community*” or, for a single person but with *a higher status* – “a bailiff can be spoken of representing the person of his lord”.⁴⁰

As in medieval times, French representation remained therefore essentially a top-down one, in which the authority of the represented was

³⁹ Pitkin, Hanna Fenichel, *The Concept of Representation*, LA: University of California Press (1967: 243).

⁴⁰ Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation*, pp. 242-3.

always higher than that of the representative. Even the seventeenth century French dictionary makes clear this interpretation:

Représenter – tenir la place de quelqu’un, avoir en main son autorité. Le pape représente Dieu sur la terre. Les Ambassadeurs représente le Prince. Le Magistrates représente le Roy. On dit aussi dans la cérémonie du Sacre, un tel Seigneur représentais le Duc de Normandie, le Comte de Champagne. On dit aussi dans les successions qu’un petit-fils représente son père décédé pour venire partager avec ses oncles a la succession d’un ayeul⁴¹.

Something different happened in England, where

from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century there was a gradual development of unified action by the knights and burgesses in Parliament. [...] Their joint action was often in opposition to the king, and they found strength to oppose him by acting as a corporate group.⁴²

However, it would be a mistake to oversimplify this picture. During all these centuries, the divine right of kings had been hardly contested. On the contrary, as Edmund S. Morgan demonstrates, the Parliament followed a much shrewder strategy, which by elevating the king to unprecedented heights, in effect isolated him from the rest of his subjects and especially from the Parliament.⁴³

That the role of the Parliament was one of “representation” was beyond doubt, as shown by multiple documents of the time. The only question remaining was representation of whom or what: people, communities or individuals? In the answer to this question – an answer refined and clarified during the seventeenth century – lies a crucial

⁴¹ “Representing – keeping somebody else’s place, having his authority in your hands. The Pope represents God on earth. The Ambassadors represent the Prince. The Magistrates represent the King. It is also said in the ceremony of the Sacre that a certain Lord represented the Duke of Normandy, the Comte de Champagne. It is also said during the successions, that a grandson represents his dead father.”

⁴² Pitkin, *On Representation*, op. cit., p. 245.

⁴³ See Morgan, Edmund S. *Inventing the People: The Rise of Popular Sovereignty in England and America*, NY, London, W.W. Norton & Company, (1988), Chapter 1.

difference between France and England. For slowly but surely, these representatives in the British parliament came to be seen and to see themselves no longer as the representatives of a higher authority, being it God, king, or “the people” as a whole. By the end of the sixteenth century they were already assumed as representatives of each and every single individual.

The process was by no means a linear one. For several hundred years the idea of a political representation of individuals went hand in hand with the classical medieval one – the one who understood representation as representation either of a higher authority or of a whole community.

When, by the thirteenth century, the king started summoning knights from counties and boroughs, he made clear that these “representatives” were supposed to have *plena potestas* – the full power of attorney to bind their constituents to whatever taxes or laws they agreed to. The consent given in Parliament was binding *as if each and every single constituent was present there in person*. “As if”, observes Edward S. Morgan, signals that from the beginning representation “was itself a fiction”, as was the divine right of kings before it. “If the representative consented, his constituents had to make believe that they had done so”.⁴⁴

The way in which an individual was accepted to represent other individuals “is not altogether clear”. “It is possible”, speculates Morgan, “that originally a representative could consent only in the name of individuals who specifically empowered him”.⁴⁵ As an indirect proof he offers the example of the first representative assemblies gathered in England’s colony of Maryland in 1630s. In the 1638 assembly

the records show that some free men attended in person while others delegated representation, each of whom was entitled to his own vote and also to all the votes of those who selected him as their representative.⁴⁶

Yet by the 1640s the assembly came to be seen as a strictly representative body in which each representative was selected by a majority

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

of votes from his community, and was supposed to represent everybody from that community.

Be it as it may, it is clear that the idea of each and every single individual being represented was not easy to distinguish from the idea of a whole community being represented. A writ from 1290, for example, specified that the knights summoned at the Court should be empowered

to consent for themselves and for the whole community of the county (*pro se e tota communitate cimitatus illa*).⁴⁷

To explain this entanglement, one can reasonably assume that at that time the distinction between representing “individuals” and representing “communities” was not seen as important and revolutionary as we can – perhaps! – see it today.

In one of the earliest known applications of the word “represent” to Parliament, *De Republica Anglorum*, Sir Thomas Smith stated as a truism in 1565:

[E]verie Englishman is entended to be there present, either in person or by procuracy and attornies [...]. And the consent of the Parliament is taken to be *every man's* consent.⁴⁸

Such an emphasis on every individual's representation is nowhere to be found in France during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

During the seventeenth century, the Royalists themselves contributed to the dismissal of the idea of “the whole people's” being represented,

for the people, to speak truly and properly, is a thing or body in continual alteration and change, it never continues one minute the same, *being composed of a multitude of parts*, whereof divers continually decay and perish, and others renew and succeeded their places.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ *Calendar of the Close Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office ... Edward I* (London, 1900-1908), 135-36 (June 14, 1290), quoted in Morgan, *Inventing the People*, p. 41.

⁴⁸ Quoted in Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation*, p. 246.

⁴⁹ Dudley Digges, *A Review of the Observations upon some of his Majeties late Answers and Expresses* (Oxford, 1643), 4, quoted in Morgan, *Inventing the People*, p. 61.

“The people,” most of them argued – was but a fiction, an ever-changing collection of individuals. And if we are to take seriously the idea that individuals delegated whatever powers they possessed to the Parliament, it followed that they could also revoke them. In 1648, a group of “gentlemen and Freeholders” from a dozen counties, eight cities and fifty-two boroughs did precisely that. They

addressed their representatives by name, repudiated their actions, and declared that they did “revoke and resume all that trust, power and authority we formerly delegated and committed to them”.⁵⁰

That by that time the idea of “people” was no longer understood as an organic whole but instead as a collection of individuals is proved by a variety of sources. For example, the supporters of religious freedom arguing against the parliamentary regulation of religion made clear that “the people of a nation” are nothing but free individuals. Since a man did not entrust the Parliament with the power of regulating religion, the Parliament has no right to do so.

The people of a Nation – wrote Walvyn in 1645 – in chusing of a Parliament cannot confer more than that power which was justly in themselves; the plain rule being this: That which a man may not voluntarily binde himselfe to doe without sinne: That he cannot entrust or refer unto the ordering of any other.⁵¹

What before was a representation of the entire *populus*, or at least of a significant part of it – baronagium, shires, communes, etc – *as a whole*, becomes now a representation (abstract, to be sure) of *every* single subject.⁵² And from *representing* individuals to *deriving authority* from them, is but a

⁵⁰ *A Remonstrance and Declaration of Several Counties, Cities and Burroughs* (London, 1648), 8; quoted in Morgan, op. cit., p. 63.

⁵¹ *A Helpe to the right understanding of a Discourse concerning Independency* (London, 1644 [5]), 4 – quoted in Morgan, *Inventing the People*, p. 70.

⁵² See, for example, Voegelin, op. cit., pp. 38-39.

short step.⁵³ By the mid of the seventeenth century it was clear for all parties that the political battles to follow will be centered around the individual as the provider par excellence of political authority. *He* was the one giving away his power, rights or authority and thus empowering the political officials, being these kings or members of the Parliament.

For the first time, the source of authority was to be found in the individual and the transfer of authority was understood as functioning “bottom-up”. Furthermore, as far as their political status was concerned, all individuals – according to the definition of the time, i.e., freemen with a certain social status – were, theoretically, equal. Even the harshest partisans of the absolutist monarchy acknowledged this equality, from the sovereign down.

In England individuals were equal, because they were equally providers of all political authority. That the abstract sovereignty of all individuals was rather a useful fiction is hardly disputable. Yet, as Edmund S. Morgan observes, in the political world such fictions have nevertheless very real consequences:

In the strange commingling of political make-believe and reality the governing few no less than the governing many find themselves limited – we may even say reformed – by the fictions on which their authority depends. Not only authority but liberty too may depend on fictions. Indeed liberty may depend, however deviously, in the very fictions that support authority. That, at least, has been the case in the Anglo-American world.⁵⁴

In his fascinating work, Morgan puts the accent on the ways this fiction forced its promoters to fulfill the expectations and, as a consequence, to fight for even more rights for the common people. Yet what he forgets is that for a fiction to be efficient it has to function both ways. Not only the representatives were forced to take more seriously than expected their

⁵³ Morgan makes a similar observation in *Inventing the People*, p. 48. And yet, by overlooking the essential difference between representing “the people” and representing “each and every single individual” he formulates it differently: “But it was only a short step from representing *the whole people* to deriving authority from *them*”. The coupling of “the whole” with “them” instead of “it” is a proof of this enduring confusion.

⁵⁴ Morgan, *Inventing the People*, p. 14.

duties, the represented ones did the same. What is of importance for us is not if each Englishman *indeed* delegated his authority to the government. What is of importance for us is that he *believed* he did so.

This self-confidence of the individual in his political power and his basic political equality with *all* his fellow countrymen made the great difference. As Keohane notes, it is this new understanding that separates British and French political thinking.

The notion that it is a grave disadvantage for government to be subject to the partial wills of those who are governed, that such subjection is not a source of liberty but of chaos and destruction, distinguishes French theory from the beginning of the sixteenth century, and sets it apart from Anglo-Saxon modes of thought.⁵⁵

We can now finally see where the stark discrepancy in the utilization of compromise comes from and how it is intimately related with the political role to be played by the individual. By the seventeenth century, the paradox of finding an impartial arbitrator between individuals otherwise equals in all respects became a veritable obsession for both the supporters of the king and for the partisans of the Parliament. They all agree that individuals should consent to surrender their natural rights to a third party, being it a monarch or a legislative assembly. The sovereign was to be the overall *compromissore*.

The three preconditions for the acceptance of compromise were finally met on a large scale, unconceivable across the English Channel:

1) The authority of the arbitrator, i.e., the sovereign, was acknowledged by all parties – only this time it did not pre-exist the compromise but instead was the result of being designated as such and thus empowered with the authority of all individuals;

2) The willingness to submit oneself to the judgment of the sovereign was the very keystone of this consensual transfer of authority;

3) Finally, all the parties involved in this new compromise were, by nature, equal.

⁵⁵ Keohane, *Philosophy and the State in France*, p. 34.

Social Contract as Compromise

If the above interpretation is correct, one can expect to find some confirmation in what were the most elaborated political theories of the time, i.e., the various theories of the social contract. And once one knows what to look for – the extent to which the social contract coincides with this new understanding of compromise and the political role reserved in this contract for the individual – the body of evidence is rather impressive. The advantage of this inquiry is obvious: unlike the concept of compromise, in the case of the social contract we have a much more articulated and more self-conscious spectrum of theories.

No wonder then if, unlike compromise, the concept of a social contract attracted widespread attention from political scientists and historians alike. From J.W. Gough (1936), to Peter McCormick (1976), to Michael Davis (2003) scholars have debated the origins of the idea of a social contract, its theory and practice, the distinction between the “proper” social contract (made between people) and the contract of government (between people and the governors), and so forth. The literature addressing these matters is indeed impressive.

Yet sometimes one can lose sight of the forest for the trees. Some scholars have compared different theories of the social contract against some sort of ideal type, ranking them in accordance with their respective degrees of similarity with this ideal model. Others have preferred an evolutionary perspective, one in which this idea has its own *telos*, evolving step by step, either from antiquity or from the *monarchomachi* of the sixteenth century, in order to reach its full development sometimes between the end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth. None of them has seriously considered the possibility of different “evolutionary lines” with different “end-products”.

I argue that the idea of a social contract as it first emerged in France (Francois Hotman), later on to be developed by the Huguenots Theodore Beza (*Right of Magistrates*) and Phillippe du Plessis-Mornay(?) (*Vindiciae*

contra tyrannos) is significantly different from the idea of the social contract as it developed in England and thus these thinkers cannot be considered as precursors of Hobbes or Locke, to mention just the most famous names from the seventeenth century directly related with the theory of the social contract. As in the case of evolutionary biology, the Neanderthal man proved to be so different from *Homo sapiens* that, despite their exterior similarities, they were not even genetically compatible, so as to be able to conceive a child.

The French Huguenots, although being among the pioneers of the social contract theory, never conceived such a contract as one among individuals giving up or entrusting their (political) rights to a third party, being this a man or a group of men. The first versions of the French social contract emphasized the role of pre-existing political bodies, notable “the people”. As Julian H. Franklin stresses, the right to resistance was based on the assumption that the people created kings.

Since a people, in the thinking of the sixteenth century, *was not an aggregate of individuals, but an organized and stratified community*, it seemed obvious enough that a people was prior to its king.⁵⁶

For Hotman, Beza or Mornay alike, the compact or contract was between the people as a whole and its king. If such a contract could be interpreted in any way as a compromise, it is in the classical understanding of compromise as method of election. If in medieval times, each corporate body designated its own *compromissores* as its representative, by the end of sixteenth century France, the people as a larger corporate body, designated the king as its impartial arbitrator. Therefore,

unlike his Scottish and English counterparts, [Beza] admits no right of private individuals to initiate resistance to a tyrant-king [...] The People, Beza holds, is like a corporate association whose liabilities to other parties or assets due from others are discharged or received collectively.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Franklin, Julian H., *Constitutionalism and Resistance in the Sixteenth Century – Three Treaties by Hotman, Beza & Mornay*, Pegasus, NY (1969: p. 33) – emphasis added.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

If the monarchomachs agreed that resistance to a heretical king can be initiated by subordinate magistrates it was because “though appointed by the king, their authority came directly from God”. In England, as Morgan notices, the same argument was presented with a crucial change in emphasis: “duty toward God gave way to the rights of men”. “Government officials, however appointed, gained their authority from the people and so were accountable to the people for their actions in office” – people as a collection of individuals, there is.⁵⁸ For the English theorists of the seventeenth century the role of individual as foundation for any type of social contract can hardly be overlooked.

That this contract was perceived even by the Englishman of the time as not just a covenant or an agreement but also as a compromise becomes clear when comparing two quotes from the seventeenth century, concerning the same subject and separated but by a few decades – one from Hobbes, the other one from Burnet:

(Hobbes): A commonwealth is said to be instituted, when a multitude of men do agree, and covenant, *every one with everyone*, that to whatsoever man, or assembly of men, shall be given by the major part, the right to present the person of them all, that is to say, to be their representative; *every one ... shall authorize* all the actions and judgments, of that man, or assembly of men, in the same manner, as if they were his own.⁵⁹

(Burnet): The true and Original Notion of *Civil Society* and *Government*, is, that it is a *Compromise* made by such a Body of Men, by which they resign up the Right of demanding Reparations, either in the way of Justice against one another, or in the way of War, against their Neighbours; *to such a single Person, or to such a Body of Men* as they think fit to trust with this.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Morgan, *Inventing the People*, p. 56.

⁵⁹ Hobbes, Thomas [1839-1845] *English Works*, Sir William Molesworth (ed.), London: Longmans, Browns, Green and Longmans, III, pp. 159-60 – emphasis added.

⁶⁰ Burnet, Gilbert “AN ENQUIRY Into the Measures of SUBMISSION TO THE SUPREAM AUTHORITY: And of the Grounds upon which it may be lawful or necessary for Subjects to defend their Religion, Lives, and Liberties” in *A collection of papers relating to the present juncture of affairs in England* (1688) - emphasis added.

And yet the explanation may go even further. If political societies are created by individuals *handing out* their rights and authority to their representatives, it follows that the political role of the individual is drastically restricted to the right of (eventually) changing his representatives if there was a breach in trust – but nothing more. As Morgan observes,

the sovereignty of the people was an instrument by which representatives *raised themselves to the maximum distance* above the particular set of people who chose them.⁶¹

Richard Tuck is even blunter when he emphasizes:

the extent to which individuals were invested with rights that they might surrender them absolutely to the sovereign.⁶²

The political sphere becomes autonomous, disconnected from the individual. Paradoxically at first sight, the very elevation of the political role of the individual was at the same time the cause of his political demise.

With the fictional people suddenly supreme, actual people, as embodied in local communities, found their traditional rights and liberties in jeopardy from a representative body that recognized only a fictional superior.⁶³

The representatives become the only *professional compromisers* since by definition they fulfilled a double function: equal parties involved in a compromise and, as a majority, the highest possible arbitrator of any political dispute. The individual “could no longer engage directly in the equality of ruling and being ruled, but had to depute his government and defense to *specialized and professional representatives*”.⁶⁴ Finally, politics became “the art of compromise”.

⁶¹ Morgan, *Inventing the People*, p. 50 – emphasis added.

⁶² Tuck, Richard (1980) *Natural Rights Theories: Their Origins and Development*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, mentioned in J.G.A. Pocock, *Virtue, Commerce and History: Essays on Political Thought and History*, Cambridge University Press (1985: 45).

⁶³ Morgan, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

⁶⁴ Pocock, *Virtue, Commerce and History*, p. 49.

Multiculturalism.

The Story from an Indian Point of View

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Abstract: This paper foregrounds the historically specific Indian experience in engaging with “unity and diversity”. It further argues that “multiculturalism” was theorized in India but not within the accepted protocols and language of the modern, western academia. It primarily refers to two sets of debates, namely: the public discourse of India; and a more academic discourse in Indian sociology. Within the public discourse the gender question is privileged as it dramatically brings to the fore the contestations between competing discourses on rights of women versus rights of culture.

Keywords: unity and diversity, colonialism, international academic division of labor, gender, composite culture, secularism, democracy, recognition, redistribution

I. Introduction

For middle-class Indians of my generation, born less than a decade after independence in 1947 the slogan of “unity and diversity” was true. It marked one’s identity as Indian. Diversity was our hallmark. We spoke different languages, worshipped different gods in different ways, lived near the sea and high above on the mountains and deep in the deserts; we grew

diverse crops, ate varied food and dressed differently. This was the standard educational fare that we post-independent children of India received, both inside and outside our classrooms. Diversity was something that defined us and something that we were proud of. In some sense, as middle-class children, this perhaps is what united us. But contentious issues such as unity and diversity are not so easily resolved. And as we now look back to the past, we see deliberate, sometimes disorderly efforts to work out what this unity was all about. Diversity was self-evident, unity perhaps less so. The state project, the nationalist discourse, honed over the two hundred years of struggle against British colonialism was, of course, a key source and obvious agent of this unity. The Indian Constitution crafted in the Constituent Assembly out of long and intense deliberations on diversity and inequality, sought to provide detailed legal provisions to ensure both recognition of cultural diversity and a just society. It is clearly evident that the politics of recognition and the politics of redistribution were seen as complementary and conjoined.¹ I cite a few provisions from the Indian Constitution to indicate how fundamental “multiculturalism” has been to the very idea of a modern India.

Article 15. Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth.

The State shall not discriminate any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, and place of birth or any of them.

No citizen shall, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them, be subject to any disability, liability, restriction or condition with regard to access to shops, public restaurants, hotels and places of public entertainment or the use of wells, tanks, bathing ghats, roads and places of public resort maintained wholly or partly out of State funds or dedicated to the use of general public.

Nothing in this article shall prevent the State from making any special provision for women and children.

¹ Nancy Fraser and Iris Marion Young’s debate on this subject at the end of the 20th century is instructive in this regard. See Fraser (1998) and Young (1998).

Cultural and Educational Rights

29. Protection of interests of minorities – (1) Any section of the citizens residing in the territory of India or any part thereof having a distinct language, script or culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same.

In many fundamental senses, the Constitution was both a product and producer of this “unity and diversity” that constituted the people of India. In other words, it was from within the 19th century social reform movement (with its diverse strands) and the historical nationalist struggle against colonialism that a body of modern Indian thought, within and outside the nationalist framework, arose. Central to this body of diverse strands² were different visions of India and different modes of negotiating with cultural diversity and economic inequality in the language of contemporary multiculturalism.

The nature of this “unity” and the nature of India’s “diversity” were very much part of modern India’s political discourse. Not all however would concur with this primarily political base for the rhetoric of unity and diversity. Many would argue that there were deeper sources for this “unity”. Significantly this was a central theme in Indian sociology and one which this paper will briefly touch upon. But like most such stories in our part of the world, these debates did not resonate around the world in the manner that debates on multiculturalism did when the West decided that the melting pot model did not quite work and the salad bowl did. Diversity was to be celebrated, being considered no less important than democracy. And here in distant India whose struggle with “unity and diversity” was constitutive of its modern identity, multiculturalism entered formally into academia.³

Soon afterward, another development took place. The Indian Diaspora became increasingly visible in a multicultural western academia. And today, as I write a few days after Barack Obama was declared

² I have dealt with the three central ideological strands, liberalism, socialism, cultural revivalism, in the context of the gender question in Chaudhuri: 1995, 2000.

³ *Seminar*, an important journal which takes up relevant themes for discussion debated multiculturalism (*Seminar*, 484).

President-elect in the USA, we have seen an increasingly visible Indian Diaspora in American politics.⁴ India's own historical engagement with diversity and unity however took place in a context uninformed either by academic multiculturalism or multicultural politics in an ethnically diverse contemporary western society. Its effort was towards an inclusive democracy that modernity aspired for. It was far removed from postmodern intellectual currents that did shape trends within contemporary multiculturalism.

Multiculturalism (and postmodernism) however did enter the contemporary Indian academia. But this is another story. We now wrote and taught from the many textbooks that western multiculturalism produced. We also believed that while the makers of the Indian Constitution were remarkably far-sighted, they had not really "theorized" their justification for what can be termed as "multiculturalism" in hindsight. Indeed an oft-repeated lament in Indian social science is that we have failed to theorize. We therefore persist with the given international academic division of labor, content to be the "field" and the "data" even if it is to buttress the claims of multiculturalism.

Readers will already have discerned the gist of what this paper seeks to do. I will only outline now in a schematic fashion the tasks and the argument of the paper. It hopes to:

(i) Bring to the foreground some of the debates in India which would help further any debate on "multiculturalism", even if the actors in the debate are innocent of the term. A central task of this paper is therefore simply to make visible the Indian experience. Not surprisingly, this task runs throughout the paper.

(ii) The other related task moves beyond the "making visible" to argue that diversity and its negotiation within a nation state were theorized, but not within the accepted protocols and language of the modern, Western

⁴ An interesting development has been the appointment of an Asian Indian American, Sonal Shah, to President-elect Obama's transition team. The woman concerned is purportedly close to the Hindu Nationalist Group in the USA and her family in India too have close political alliance with a party, not known for its sympathy to multicultural ideas at home. This draws attention to the dangers of multiculturalism as simply a mechanical "politics of recognition." Even as I write, the issue is drawing different responses in the Indian media.

academia. This is an argument that I have made earlier in the context of feminism⁵ and one that I shall elaborate a little later (Part II).

(iii) This is not the only context in which I return to the story of feminism. I do this repeatedly in the course of this paper for many reasons, inasmuch as my familiarity with the area is not inconsequential. The most important reason, however, is that issues of diversity and unity has been intertwined in the history of the women's movement in India. That was so in the 19th century, through the 20th century and into the 21st century. Questions of cultural identity linked with questions such as *purdah* or veiling, *sati* (widow self-sacrifice on husband's funeral pyre), child marriage, widow remarriage, and women's education were central issues of contestation in colonial India.⁶ Conflicts between gender rights and cultural rights not only surfaced time and again, but were overtly debated. Questions pertaining to the right of the state versus the right of the community to intervene in customs of Indian people were raised in the colonial period and continue to be deeply contested issues in contemporary India (Part III).

My argument that multiculturalism has been debated in India rests partly on my rethinking of what constitutes "theorising". I argue that *the history of doing has also to be read as a history of theorising*. To be sure, the making of the Constitution is not just a historical act but an immensely rich and significant intellectual exercise. This apart, I also rest my case on actual, overt academic debates on this theme in Indian sociology which I seek to present, albeit in a synoptic manner (Part IV). Not surprisingly, we will discern here clear evidence of the ideological trends of the National Movement, bringing to the fore again the close and often unintended proximity of public and academic discourse. This is evident in the manner that multiculturalism acquired salience in both the public and academic discourse of the West, particularly the United States of America, a point on which I briefly touch in the concluding comments of this paper (Part V).

⁵ See Introduction at *Feminism in India*, Chaudhuri: 2003.

⁶ See Chaudhuri: 1993, *The Indian Women's Movement: Reform and Revival*, where I seek to show how social reform and democratic efforts to secure gender rights accompanied sharpening of community identities, ironically often with assertion of discriminatory practices against women. See Chaudhuri: 1997.

II. Questioning protocols of theorizing

The lament that Indian social science has not been able to theorize in the manner for instance that feminism and multiculturalism have been theorized in the West is an oft-expressed lament. I would like to draw from my own experience in attempting to compose a conceptual history of feminism in India, for I contend that the story is not so different when it comes to multiculturalism. As I groped for theory in Indian feminist writings, two or three issues cropped up.

First, there appeared to be an apparent gap between a very rich body of writings on women's accomplishments and a dearth of obvious theoretical writings on feminism. *Second*, there was the recurrent theme of evasion and ambiguity towards the term "feminism" itself. Both features demanded closer scrutiny. The paucity of theoretical writings of feminism could be explained either by the extant international academic division of labor which presumed that theorization was a Western concern. Or it could be interpreted as an active lack of interest, impatience with "theory", a pressing need to be "getting on" with active interventions. But as I sought to put the volume together I felt increasingly uneasy with both explanations. And I found myself questioning both the perceived gap between the rich body of literature on the women's movement and the scarcity of theorization as well as the academic/activist dichotomy. That India has had a rich history of women's movements has been well documented by scholars. While the intention was clearly towards the making of a conceptual history, it was almost impossible to separate the history of action from the history of ideas. In other words *the conceptual debates themselves embodied the history of doing and vice versa*. This implied that the first possible route of rethinking of what constitutes conceptual history itself had to be reworked. My own attempt to resolve this was to emphasize the specific history of the women's question in India (Chaudhuri: 2002). This centrality of history and colonial history in particular led to a second and related route of rethinking – a kind of *ex post facto* realization of why I insisted on teaching history and also

why so much feminist scholarship in India itself has been historical. Indeed, *historical works have laid a rich foundation for theorizing about feminism in the Indian context*. In an India where history textbooks have been at the centre of the vexed question of unity and diversity – or should I say multiculturalism – the centrality of our self-conscious imaginings of the past is critical.

I return to the third possible route of understanding, the claim that feminism (and here multiculturalism) was theorized in India. *I distinguish here a more specialized academic theorizing in contrast to a great deal of actual political theorizing in India*. Indeed, until the 1990s we really did not have a body of well-trained feminist scholars engaged in academic conversations within the international academia. I attempt below to illustratively indicate how multiculturalism was being debated just as feminism was in the making of Indian history. As already mentioned, I root my discussion in the history of the manner that the women's question emerged in India, for that is the vantage point from which I seek to understand society.

III. Women as cultural emblems of the nation/of a community

I have argued elsewhere that three dominant ideological strands were woven in the discourse on the women's question in India. The three were liberalism, socialism and cultural revivalism. I use the term “woven” with care, for the three distinct strands tended at various points to enter each other's discourse. Notions of an essential Indian culture and Indian womanhood would unexpectedly creep into an apparently liberal or even socialist discourse. Not surprisingly therefore women were visualized as citizens, as workers and as cultural emblems, a point that I elaborated with reference to the first plan document of India in the 1940s (Chaudhuri: 1997). Significantly, as we shall see later, these appear to be largely the ideological currents that run through the Indian sociological debates on “unity and diversity”.

Notwithstanding the liberal “nation state’s” pledge for women’s political and economic participation in the nation, women continue to be seen primarily as biological reproducers of members of nations and as cultural reproducers of national/ethnic bodies. If “the nation is home and home is mother” women cannot but be signifiers of ethnic/national differences. They participate centrally in the ideological reproduction of the collectivity and as transmitters of its culture. It is in a discourse on “national culture” that women therefore are most often and most “naturally” referred to. Most “naturally” for the middle class who dominated the “national” debate, women’s economic participation was cognitively invisible and political participation was alien. Women’s role in the “home” was natural. And we know the etiology of common sense is central to hegemony.

Thus, while the economic and political spheres are “alien” spaces women have to enter, the “home” is the “natural” realm where women are already reside. Western feminists have claimed that in the Western world women have been seen as nature and men as culture. In India we know women are represented as cultural emblems. But what I want to argue further is that this “culture” is at once “nature” in the sense, that like the “family”, the “home” and “women”, “culture” here evokes a past beyond history. It is primordial and thus inspires a passion of which “development” and “political participation” can only be envious.

Culture and nation are thus seen as natural. On the other hand culture in the modern nation state can really be understood as a “garden” culture, not wild and therefore not natural. While wild culture like wild nature can grow unattended and still look beautiful, artificial gardens can be left unattended only to be destroyed. Likewise modern “national culture(s)” are thought-out entities which are administered under the specialized services of the state. Debates on cultural policies within Indian nationalism and nation building were important. Debates within Indian sociology, at which we look in the next section has to be also seen in this light. Defining what constitutes “national culture” however was a contentious project from the very start. Trends seeking a hegemonic, homogenous Hindu upper-caste-notion of culture, trends aspiring for a secular, progressive culture that privileged the downtrodden, trends that articulated a well-elaborated idea of a “composite

culture” with the far-sighted slogan of “unity and diversity,” often had to fight through the trajectory of Indian nationalism and the activities of the Indian state. For women, it implied once too often a conflict between women’s rights as equal citizens and a community’s rights to cultural practices which hinged upon gender discriminatory practices such as *sati*, *pardah*, child marriage, denial of inheritance rights and polygamy.

Even in the national and women’s movement in the colonial period fissures had clearly cropped up between the promise of political and economic equality of women and equality for cultural practices that more often than not were discriminatory to women. Amrit Kaur and Hansa Mehta had objected to the guarantee of religious propaganda and practice. They felt that the terms “propaganda” and “practice” might invalidate future legislation prohibiting child marriage, polygamy, unequal inheritance laws and untouchability as these customs could be construed part of religious practice. Kaur suggested that freedom of religion be limited to divine worship (Chaudhuri: 1993, p. 185).

I have been arguing that culture is perceived as “natural” but is a very artificial construct in the modern state. Groups which have power seek to shape the content of “national culture” in a culturally diverse society like India, in a clime where women came to represent “culture”, community leaders actively defined what constituted the authentic cultural practices of a community. It has been argued that the women’s question itself became a site for defining what tradition is. Women’s political activism sought to cast doubt on this as we saw in Amrit Kaur’s efforts. But opposition was strong, as is evident from the fact that her views did not have the final word. Today we thus have a Constitution with Article 15 which deals with the Right to equality. But the constitution also contains articles dealing with other categories of rights, like the Right to freedom of religion, as embodied in Articles 25-28. And the question may be asked:

Can a State which proclaims opposition to discrimination based on sex [...] permit religious personal laws, which affect the life of women in a basic manner? (Desai: 1994).

Recent debates in the west, particularly in France, over veiling will find Indian history instructive.

Almost sixty years later the fears of India's early feminists have come true. Worse still, today the state's secular credentials are so weak that there is almost universal consensus that the Uniform Code Bill is best kept away. The demand for a uniform civil code has been appropriated by the Hindu right-wing party, Bharatiya Janata. It is important to recall today therefore the stiffest opposition to the Hindu Code Bill came from the then-Hindu Mahasabha. One of its leading members, Chatterjee, argued that the Act would encourage the conversion of Hindus to Islam and Amrit Kaur lamented that "*religion* in danger is a very potent caveat which scares even the seemingly intelligent [...]" (Chaudhuri: 1993, p. 190).

Questions of culture, community identity and scriptural sanctions have been very much part of the manner in which the women's question emerged in India. One of the first issues where this comes up is the *sati* dispute. While the Brahma Samaj marshalled enormous *shastric* (scriptural) evidence to show that *sati* is not mandatory, the Dharma Sabha pleaded with the British to disallow those who know nothing of their customs and religion from speaking (Chaudhuri: 1993, pp. 17-21). The Age of Consent Bill that raged through India in the end of the nineteenth century asserted the natural and nationalist right of a community to decide when and how to reform, rejecting the right of an alien and unresponsive state to legislate on the private matters of Indians (ibid., pp. 68-74).

While the establishment of an independent state alters, in a way, the terms of discourse, the problem persists of how closely the different communities identify themselves with the state. The majority community "naturally" identifies with the "nation state" while degrees of discomfort persist with the other communities. It is a fact that India attained independence with the partitioning of the country, and unprecedented killings on "communal" bases have marked the discourse of state and communities till date. So far as women are concerned the questions that persist are: Who decides who speaks legitimately for a "community"? Who decides what constitutes the "culture" of a community?

The Shah Bano case dramatically brought these questions to the fore. On 23 April 1985 the Supreme Court of India passed a judgment granting maintenance to a divorced Muslim woman Shahbano (A.I.R. 1985). The court awarded Shahbano maintenance of Rs. 17920 per month from her former husband and dismissed the husband's appeal against the award of maintenance. The judgment of the Supreme Court sparked a nation-wide controversy. The principal argument put forward by conservative Muslim opinion was that the Muslim Personal Law was based on the Shariat, which is divine and immutable. Though sections from the Muslim community defended the judgment, the state was more willing to listen to the voice of conservative spokespersons of the community. Shahbano herself was pressured to such an extent that in an open letter she denounced the Supreme Court judgment:

[...] which is apparently in my favor; but since this judgment which is contrary to the *Quran* and the *hadith* and is an open interference in Muslim personal law, I, Shahbano, being a Muslim, reject it and dissociate myself from every judgment which is contrary to the Islamic *shariat*. I am aware of the agony and distress which this judgment has subjected the Muslims of India today (Inquilab: 1985).

The state passed the Muslim Women's Bill and the Hindu communal forces saw this move as an appeasement of the minorities by the state. Significantly, the fact that it was the Muslim women who were at the losing end – passed them by. The question that arose is this: who exactly was the Bill seeking to protect? Community leaders, divorced husbands or women? (Pathak and Rajan: 1986).

It is important to emphasize that the tendency for the conservative leadership of a community to affirm gender-discriminatory practices as authentic culture is not confined to the minor community. Soon after the Indian state passed the retrogressive Muslim Women's Bill on 4th. September 1987 an eighteen year old Hindu widow, Roop Kanwar, was burnt alive on her husband's pyre in the full gaze of about 3000 spectators, "accompanied by the full panoply of Rajput valor" (Bhasin and Menon:

1988, p. 12). *Sati* was projected as the highest ideal of female spirituality and renunciation, the highest achievement of *naridharma* and *pativrata* and imbued with the aura of sacrifice associated with Rajput history (Sangari: 1998, p. 26). The sentiments expressed in the *sati* case were widely perceived in consonance with the “natural cultural” and “national” sentiments of the people. The state perceived no threat while the Shah Bano case was widely projected as an instance of a community’s disloyalty to the state and nation. Quite clearly, women to be cultural emblems of the nation have to conform to a particular culture. In a culturally diverse country this issue is not an easy task. The question of how this cultural diversity can be contained within a broader idea of the unity of the Indian nation state, as we see in the next section, is one that engaged Indian sociology from the very beginning.

IV. Debating India: Unity and Diversity in Indian Sociology

India’s cultural unity is a recurrent theme in Indian sociology. That the colonial backdrop was the single most significant context within which Indian sociology grew and grappled is a fact both widely acknowledged and emphasized. Scholars have repeatedly drawn attention to the British colonial attempt to present India as a divided, bickering conglomeration of tribes and castes, not the mettle that modern, democratic nations are made of. To that extent, the anti-colonial thrust of many early Indian sociologists led to a critique of what was seen as a deliberate British ploy to prevent a united nationalist opposition led to British colonialism. This was, in a sense more simply done than reaching a consensus about the nature of India’s culture or the definition of unity and diversity. Not surprisingly the contentious issue of reconciling recognition of diversity with an idea of a united nation state did not cease to be serious problem with the end of colonial rule. Diversity in India refers to a range of differences based on tribe, region, language, religion, caste and class. Most importantly none of these are static, unchanging givens. Colonialism itself impacted them differently. Sixty years of development after independence in turn led to both an unequal and

differential forms of development. We thus had regions which came under direct colonial rule very early and some which continued to be what were called “native states,” governed by native rulers with whom the British had struck a deal. We thus have today Indians who are fifth and sixth generation Western urban, educated middle class men. And we have regions still unaffected by the more tangible benefits of modernity even though they are exposed to “modern diseases”. Multiculturalism here is as much a matter of recognition of distinct identities as of right to equality. In Indian “native states,” sociologists have studied the peculiar tension of an Indian colonial middle class who imagined their historical role on the lines of the English bourgeoisie but who themselves were petty landholders under a colonial regime or clerks in the colonial administration. We also have their grappling with multiculturalism of an earlier colonized era, obviously far removed from their descendents’ experience as “Diaspora Indians” in a multicultural America. I touch upon this in the last section of the paper. I return now to a very quick thematic treatment of “unity and diversity” in Indian sociology.

Sociology in India sought to address this issue, not surprisingly in diverse ways. I have already mentioned the liberal, socialist, cultural revivalist orientations within the Indian national movement, so evident in the gender question. Not surprisingly, similar approaches are visible within the debates on culture in Indian sociology. I will seek to group the responses of Indian sociology to the difficult task of balancing “unity with diversity” under three broad headings.

1. *Integration and the cultural unity of “Indian civilization”.*
2. *A search for synthesis and a composite culture*
3. *An emphasis not just on recognition of cultural diversity but also on redistribution. Unity and diversity is articulated in a language of “national norms” understood as democracy, secularism and socialism*

1. *Integration and the cultural unity of “Indian civilization”.*

Readers will find it interesting to notice that scholars were seeking possible ways out of the dilemma even as they lived through serious

political challenges. It is not out of order here to draw the reader's attention to my argument that the political events and political positions can be usefully read as modes of theorizing. D.P. Mukerji's observations on Radhakumud Mookerji's book, *The Fundamental Unity of India*, are instructive. Writing before July 1942, D.P. recalls:

About thirty years ago, Prof. Radhakumud Mookerji wrote a book called *The Fundamental Unity of India* [...]. The importance of his thesis consisted in crystallizing what many Indians had begun to feel in reaction against the subtle insinuations and the overt statements by interested people about India being a congeries of many languages, habits and cultures. Prof. Mookerji emphasized the cultural unity of Hindu India, referred to *the notion of a single, undivided Bharat-Varsha in one of the great odes of all times, and pointed out that pilgrimages to the extreme corners of this continent brought its diverse peoples into physical and mental contact in an age when communications were difficult. The use of Sanskrit on all ceremonial occasions – and their number as legion and [their] hold all- pervading – made for cultural homogeneity* (Mukerji: 1942, p. 31, emphasis mine).

Significantly these ideas persist both in the dominant commonsense of the middle class as well finds expression in overt assertions of Hindu India. Radhakumud Mookerji however felt compelled to rethink his proposition. He spent much time learning from the solution of the problem of minorities on the model offered by the League of Nations. The model solution in turn led to the war and the Professor recommended cultural autonomy for the minorities in language and religion. I would like to draw the reader's attention to Mookerji's interest in learning "the solution of the problems of minorities on the model offered by the League of Nations". I do this to once again iterate how the Western/global context has always impinged upon debates in India. The obverse did not usually happen. Thus the West carried out its conversation with itself until the non-western immigrants pushed the multi-cultural debate centre stage. Since 9/11 significant shifts have taken place in multicultural debates, once again highlighting the significance of history in the making of theories. The

colonial experience, in contrast, forced a “global” “multicultural” perspective on us Indians. Living in an erstwhile colonized country performe implies that one has to contend with cultural diversity and hierarchy.

As Mookherji’s revised position suggests, Indian sociology realized very early the possible dangers of defining the cultural unity in exclusivist terms. Yet this trend persisted. T.N. Madan, reviewing an essay of M.N. Srinivas, writes:

Srinivas’s essay on *the cohesive role of Sanskritization* (“a profound and many-sided process,” p. 68) makes the interesting point that India’s ingenious method of dealing with cultural differences consists in laying a veneer of Sanskritic (Brahman) culture on everything, Hindu or non-Hindu; and this is said to happen through the process of lower castes imitating Brahmanic customs, which was originally called Sanskritization, as also through the deliberate propagation of the life style of high, clean caste Hindu (Madan: 1968, p. 244, emphasis mine).

As I write in 2008, the very process of Sankritization has come under sever interrogation from Dalit sociology which has critiqued its Brahmanical assumption of what constitutes “upward mobility” and its denigration of qualities that marked Dalit lives, respect for labor being a key point. The issue of unity and diversity in India is thus not just an issue of diverse cultures understood primarily in terms of ethno-cultures but one of hierarchy and caste. Perhaps the issue of race in Western multiculturalism will bear comparison.

While the Hindu-Muslim tension has in a way dominated the discourse on national integration, the issue of the relationship between the dominant Hindu tradition and tribal societies has also been a constant theme in the writings of social anthropology in India. The idea of an Indian civilization has been a steady yet ambiguous present. Steady because it is a constant reference point, ambiguous because scholars are not in agreement with how it ought to be defined. With reference to tribes, scholars have referred to the ongoing process of interaction, including the absorption of tribal peoples into the Hindu fold that has been going on for centuries. G.S. Ghurye understands that

India's integrative mechanisms noted two outstanding features which unified India were Brahmi script and Sanskrit language... In this respect it provided an unbroken unity for India till the decline of Hindu polity (Venogopal: 1998, p. 18-19).

Others have a different view. Surajit Sinha argues that "our understanding of the cultures of particular ethnic groups would remain perpetually incomplete unless the role of the integrative organization of the state or the zamindari was taken into consideration" along with the modes of cultural communication that would include "organizing specialists" (Sinha: 1964, pp. 166-168). We find therefore considerable divergence on how sociologists in India have understood "civilizational" and "cultural" unity, even as the search for integration and connectedness has remained strong.

2. *The search for synthesis and a composite culture*

D. P. Mukerji argues that as a social and historical process, Indian culture represents certain common traditions that have given rise to a number of general attitudes.

The major influences in their shaping have been Buddhism, Islam, and Western commerce and culture. *It was through the assimilation and conflict of such varying forces that Indian culture became what it is today, neither Hindu nor Islamic, neither a replica of the western modes of living and thought nor a purely Asiatic product* (Mukerji: 1942, p. 1 emphasis mine).

Some scholars have suggested that "for a time, Nehru's *The Discovery of India* and *Letters from Prison* constituted a tacit statement of Congress's cultural" (Rudolph and Rudolph: 1984, pp. 17-18). D.P. Mukerji writing five years before Independence and before Partition about the composite nature of Indian culture, observes that

Jawaharlal Nehru's *Discovery of India*... contains probably the most balanced account of the syntheses and further that this is a "balanced interpretation" by "a cultured mind possessed of a sense of history". (Mukerji: 1942, p. 217, note 6).

Elsewhere, D.P. Mukerji writes that India's foreign policy of non-alignment is itself understood as an expression of India's cultural genius.

Yogendra Singh writing in the early sixties develops a model arguing that culture is "a dynamic process of synthesis and change" and rationalizes his elaborate theoretical construct by emphasizing that:

A crucial problem in the study of social change in contemporary India hinges at *the possibility and desirability of cultural synthesis*. The majority of thinkers, sociologists and social scientists have accepted the constantly synthesizing and dialectical process of cultural change in India. They quote evidence from Indian philosophy, art, science, social structure, rituals and customs to substantiate the hypothesis (Singh: 1964, p. 52, emphasis mine).

We note in Singh an emphasis on diffusion, imitation, assimilation on the one hand and on the values of equality and questions of power structure on the other. The latter issues acquire salience however in an Indian sociology that was influenced by Marxist ideas. As an illustration, I focus on a specific volume which carries the proceedings of a seminar "Towards a Cultural Policy" held significantly in honor of Lenin in 1972

3. Cultural policy and the national norms of democracy, secularism and socialism

Here the debate shifts gears and highlights questions of inequality and access. The search for national unity is not one of civilization essence or composite culture, for as P.C. Joshi argues, nationalism in Asian countries like India,

Is itself an ideological force, nurturing new socioeconomic ideas (like secularism and socialism). By seeking to identify the various classes and communities with national economic goals and programmes, all classes and communities are mobilized to bearing the burdens of modern economic development (Joshi: 1975, pp. 47-48).

Questions asked are:

How can we redefine Indian-ness without glorification of segmental achievements in the past? What are the elements that weakened the fibre of Indian society in the past and need the attention of a cultural policy? *How should the cultural processes be refashioned in order to broaden the sweep and to extend their reach to the economically and socially disadvantaged groups?* (Saberwal: 1975, p. 4, emphasis mine).

The kind of cultural policy visualized therefore sought to deal with horizontal discontinuities, arising from differences in language and tradition but also with vertical discontinuities arising from inequities of income and status. Education, arts science and technology are taken up as prime agents through which society's basic values, symbols, and myths are created, expressed and transmitted. Habib Tanvir, noted playwright contends:

Our purpose is to revitalize tradition in a manner that would keep the process of modernization close to our nationally accepted values and objectives. *Our intention is neither revivalistic nor xenophobic. We submit that a deliberate policy will give us the flexibility to welcome and imbibe cultural strains from diverse sources* (Tanvir, *ibid.*, p.148, emphasis mine).

Readers would discern here reasons for my contention that multiculturalism was being theorized sometimes within the academia and sometimes outside. Others in the same seminar wondered whether there is something called Indian culture at all!

Our obsession with the cultural unity of our country is understandable. It is like a person with a deranged liver always conscious of it. (sic) Or it may be likened to a *tantric* yogi's obsession with his Kundalini which exists nowhere except in his mind. In the same way there is probably no such thing as the cultural unity of India. One wonders if it ever existed. What exists is a cultural diversity interwoven haphazardly strong as to be described as a cord, spun and twisted through the centuries, is the thread of Brahmin influence so paramount as to give the illusion of unity to the whole of Indian culture. But there are many other threads running independently of it and they all make the groundwork on which is embroidered the complex pattern of our cultural diversity (Kripalani, 170).

Year 1989 heralded the breakdown of the “existing” socialist world. While ethnic violence spread and intensified in these parts, Marxist theory saw a general retreat. With the opening of the Indian market and a resurgent Hindu major party at the helm of affairs, the dominant public discourse of secularism, socialism and scientific spirit is clearly being reworked. Indian sociology’s concerns as evidenced in the pages of the *Sociological Bulletin* with India’s cultural unity remains, but the broader framework for resolving this appears to have undergone some change. What strikes one the most, perhaps, is the language of “nationalism” and “ethnicity” that appears to take over from the older frameworks of cultural synthesis, civilizational unity and composite culture. Writings of T.K. Oommen in the last decade or more has focused on questions of nations and ethnicities, distinctions between states and nations and the need for conceptual clarity. The search for “cultural unity” he would critique as part of the endemically national-biased practice of sociologists. The point that he wishes to make is that:

The popular assumption that “nation-states” are natural human collectivities is unsustainable. ...if the global-society is an abstract notion and a conceptual dope, the state-society is an artificial entity and often an empirical monster. If so, where does one look for and pitch oneself in one’s effort to identify an authentic unit of sociological analysis? *I suggest that civilization-society provides a viable anchorage and is an authentic unit for sociological analysis which would save sociology from both false universalism and false nationalism* (Oommen: 1990, p. 6, emphasis mine).

Cultural policy however continues to be on the agenda of Indian sociology as is evident by the fact that this was the theme of the XXIth All India Sociological Conference held in 1994. Victor D’Souza, in a talk at the conference, argued that

What is necessary is not the homogenization of Indian culture or the restriction of cultural expression, but the dismantling of conditions responsible for the transformation of cultural pluralism into structural pluralism (D’Souza: 1995, p. 162).

While the concern with unity and diversity persisted in Indian sociology the modes of doing so changed from both the composite and civilizational paradigm as well as the political economic approach. Developments in India post-1991, significantly, also have marked a retreat from a discourse that privileged cultural diversity, of which we were so proud (and which we fear today), and an increasing celebration of what can be seen as consumer multiculturalism⁷ that has accompanied India's growth as a global economic player.

V. Conclusion

I began this paper with the intent to make India's story of "unity and diversity" not just more visible but have also argued that the history of doing can be read fruitfully as a history of theorizing. I have further sought to argue that our colonial past perforce plunged us into an unequal and exploitative relationship with the West. This relationship was no less cultural than it was political or economic. Thus, recognition of "our distinct culture" was important. But even more so was recognition of a "historical experience of discrimination and denigration" that became part of our cultural experience. Further, as the paper has sought to show, "our culture" was neither homogenous nor equal internally. Nothing perhaps demonstrates the various tensions than the gender question caught between colonialism, various home-grown patriarchies and many diverse efforts to redress the gender issue. To say that this has been a challenging task is perhaps to belittle the complexity of the issue. Significantly, in a post cold-war era globalized world, too often we hear Western intervention justified on grounds of liberating oppressed non-western women. Debates on gender during Indian colonialism are instructive.

If debates marked Indian public discourse on "unity and diversity", Indian sociology too sought its answers in an effort to work out a feasible model. But as mentioned earlier, non-western debates do not circulate

⁷ I have dealt extensively with this in an earlier piece. See Chaudhuri: 2003.

globally in the manner of Western academic debates. The academic clout of even a multicultural United States of America coupled with our historical sense of cultural/academic inadequacy is such that we readily “learn” (as we say) their theory and try to fit our data to it. In this exercise we too often forget the contexts, past and present, theirs and ours. There is not enough space here to detail this, but only room for a few cursory remarks to highlight the differential contexts.

A great deal of contemporary literature emphasizes that central to this global age is the construction of identity formations which intersect natural frontiers, and which are composed of people who have been dispersed from their homelands forever. People who belong to such cultures of hybridity have had to renounce their dream of recovering any kind of “lost” cultural purity. They are irrevocably translated. The word translation Salman Rushdie notes “comes etymologically from the Latin ‘bearing across’”. Migrant writers like him, who belong to two worlds at once, “having born across the world...are translated men” (Rushdie: 1991). They must learn to inhabit at least two identities, to speak two cultural languages, to translate and negotiate between them. This we are told is one of the distinctly novel types of identity produced in the era of late modernity (Hall et al: 1992, p. 310). I am a little confused as I read Nehru:

I have become a queer mixture of the East and West, out of place everywhere, at home nowhere. Perhaps my thoughts and approach to life are more akin to what is called Western than Eastern, but ideas cling to me as she does to all her children, in innumerable ways....I cannot get rid of that past inheritance or my recent acquisitions.... *I am a stranger and an alien in the West. I cannot be of it. But in my own country also, sometimes, I have an exile's feeling* (Nehru: 1947, p. 596, emphasis mine).

Or as I read about Rammohun, often spoken of as the first modern Indian, who lived more than a century before Nehru penned these feelings. Rammohun Roy maintained two houses in Calcutta, one for entertaining his European friends and the other for his family to live in. It is said that in the first house everything was European except Rammohun, and in the second

everything was India except Rammohun (Panikar: 1995, p. 1). A modernity mediated through colonialism ensured a multicultural modernity, even if and India herself was not a living testimony of diversity within herself.

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Whither Multiculturalism? A View from India

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Abstract: The practice of “multiculturalism” is a significant expression of a movement related to the politics of identity in many societies. It has been viewed differently by scholars and by the lay person at various points in time. At this crucial juncture of terrorist strikes in India, it is time to re-evaluate this phenomenon. Is multiculturalism a threat to the stability of a society or does it have a positive role to play in the integration of societies, is the question with which this article attempts to contend.

Keywords: Multiculturalism, Nativism, Integrationist pluralism, Cosmopolitan liberalism

When I was asked to pen an article on the phenomenon of multiculturalism, I began by writing a purely theoretical treatise on the subject. November 26, 2008 (India’s 9/11) changed all that. The terror strikes and the ensuing carnage in Mumbai and by proxy in all India made me look at the notion of multiculturalism afresh in the context of the current scenario. Multiculturalism is a term often used to portray societies with a large number of different cultures. It refers to a nation that provides non-discriminatory opportunities and status to diverse cultural and religious groups, with no single culture controlling any other.

The underlying implication is that cultures are different and plural, and this is a reality that is recognized and accepted by all members of the society. Most of all, it entails a respect for the “other” whatever be his/her political, religious, economic or social milieu. In addition, multiculturalism is a rejection of forced cultural assimilation of any group into another.

Many societies have formulated official guidelines of multiculturalism that advocate the acknowledgment, observance and preservation of different cultures or cultural identities within that society to sustain social solidarity. Thus, multiculturalism can connote a policy, a moral value, or an actual social reality that emphasizes not only the distinctive nature of different cultures in the world but also ensures that small groups within a larger society are able to preserve their unique cultural identities.

India is one of the most culturally diverse societies in the world with its democratic state founded upon a conviction in pluralism. However, although it continues to have an impressive mix of groups and cultures, India seems to have become today less multicultural and less tolerant than it was in its past. There seems to be less and less acceptance of the “other” culture(s). The mainstream group is larger and more dominant than ever before. In fact, it appears that the notions of multiculturalism and pluralism are now being used mostly by politicians, primarily as a means to garner votes from the minority groups.

The erosion of the ideal of multiculturalism in India has been visible for quite some time, what with the sporadic incidences of inter-group clashes (ironically, more often than not initiated by the majority group), in different parts of the country.

In the past couple of decades, however, these conflicts have become more frequent and more violent. As a result, the voices of sanity have become fainter while the radicals have become more strident and dominant. And nowhere is this better exhibited than in the aftermath of the terrorists’ strikes in different parts of Mumbai.

On the one hand, the media have displayed the gratitude of the common citizen towards the security forces, and on the other, the ire of the man on the street against the ineptitude of the government has become quite

apparent. Amidst this entire hullabaloo, one might miss the statements made by a number of persons from different walks of life demonizing a certain community, holding it responsible for the bloodshed.

Although a neighboring country was being blamed for perpetrating these acts, there was also talk about the “enemy within”. There were, of course, others who emphasized the fact that “terrorists have no religion” but the very utterance of such sentiments is proof enough that we are facing another bout of Islamophobia.

Multiculturalism as Inclusion vs. Separation

It is, thus, obvious that multiculturalism implies varied meanings and ignites contrasting sentiments in the minds of the people, the most common dispute being between the inclusionist and the separatist interpretation of the term. The inclusionist approach to multiculturalism involves an assimilationist view of inter-cultural relations. Conversely, the separatist approach underlines the “separate multiculturalism” (also known as minority nationalism) stressing the efforts of each group to preserve its culture. A three-fold typology of multiculturalism is given by Martin E. Spencer (1994) which divides culture into “nativism”, “minority nationalism” and “cosmopolitan liberalism”.

The first connotes a situation where the identity of the local culture gets elevated to the status of a majority culture that excludes persons from minority groups and consigns them to a lower political, economic, and social standing. The second, i.e., minority nationalism, envisions a society in which opportunities and benefits would be distributed on an ethnic basis. And the third, namely cosmopolitan liberalism implies a society in which there could either be a majority culture, or a society in which a wide-ranging pluralism exists.

Both situations entail each group’s acceptance of the democratic political values of the state involving the consensus of the governed on the rule of law, human rights, and various kinds of freedoms. Quite clearly, this liberal notion diminishes the importance of a cultural identity and instead

promotes the idea of tolerance and is in some ways similar to the “integrationist pluralism” proposed by Glazer (1983).

While Indians offer the rhetoric of giving all cultures and groups their own space, since the terrorist strike one can sense the overwhelming support for the inclusionist-nativist view of multiculturalism where in order to prove their patriotism, the “others” are expected to give up, or at least subordinate their culture to the meta-culture of the majority.

The Case For and Against Multiculturalism

Although the concept of multiculturalism was supposed to be used in a positive sense, now, with escalating violence and terrorist incidences in all parts of the world, many intellectuals and political analysts have begun to believe that multiculturalism has failed. For many, it has become a scapegoat for anything that goes wrong, be it ethnic strife, corruption, increasing crime rate or general escalation of violence.

Since November 26 it is even being said that it can be blamed for the terrorist activities in India as the appeasement-oriented multiculturalist policies of the government had promoted divisiveness rather than assimilation or integration.

The argument being offered is that multiculturalism supplies a hotbed for domestic terrorists as it allows the propagation of views that run contrary to liberal democracy, especially the extremist religious views that result in terrorism.

For others the notion of multiculturalism still holds immense appeal since it is not perceived as a risk to the stability and integration of our society. Rather, it is visualized as helping us to develop, nurture and reinforce a society that has always taken pride in the diversity of its people. They, thus, seek to promote multiculturalism since they believe it provides us a better understanding of the otherness of our fellow humans, and helps us be more sensitive and responsive to their needs.

Conclusion

Whichever way one looks at it, multiculturalism is a challenge, a struggle to attain equality of citizenship for all groups. Martin (1998) advocates shunning of the “consumerist multiculturalism” in which the various groups in a society are only interested in fighting to procure certain interests for their group or their *piece of the pie*, as he puts it.

Instead, what is required is a “transformational multiculturalism” in which despite differences of class, race, ethnicity, most persons share a common concern for surmounting subjugation and repression with the help of social, cultural, and political activism.

In this sense, multiculturalism is not just a matter of state policy or action, but a responsibility of the various institutions of civil society. As Petro Georgiou puts it, it is terrorism that is dangerous, not tolerance.

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Modernity and Modernization from an Intercultural Perspective

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Abstract: This study sees the European process of modernization through the values that gave it a structure, and taking into account the continuous force which they radiate. Two case studies were carried out in Japan and Romania, but they are examples of failed attempts at modernization – they represent the arguments of this paper. If the first country succeeded in its second attempt at modernization, this fact is due to the essential role of education. This is what is recommended also for the present modernizing attempt of Romania.

Keywords: Being modern, modernizing, liberal democracy, values, the values of modernizing, liberty, equality, fraternity, legality, education, intercultural education, acculturation, enculturation, educational aim.

1. In the beginning, there were values

In an epoch which can be placed between Cromwell’s revolution and the promulgation of *The Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen*, modernization started on a path which even today hasn’t found its end. What are the characteristics that make our era special in comparison to the preceding times? First of all, the extension of the frame of values proposed to humankind. For more than a millennium and a half, Westerners were

guided by the values representative of Classic Humanism, enriched with Christian values. Classic Humanism was more or less centered on the Greek values adopted by the Romans, or, to be more specific: Truth, Goodness and Beauty.¹ Starting from the first century, another value joined the first three: the Christian sense of sacredness.² It was not accomplished without difficulties, and it was a matter of several centuries before “[...] liberal Rome”, which had inflated its Pantheon by accepting all the deities of the conquered nations, acquiesced to the idea that one cannot fight against those who believe in Jesus Christ and identify themselves with His words. It was a historical irony that the city where Christians had to seek refuge from persecutions became the capital of Christendom. Before the beginning of the modern age, this frame of values continued to expand geographically – through conquering wars, crusades, colonialism, missionary activity and forced conversions, using the sword or the Holy Bible and the cross, but most of the time all three, both on sea and land. Anyway, for more than a millennium and a half, the most intense and stable *process of globalization* took place on different continents from the pre-modernist epoch onward.

Toward the middle of the seventeenth century, this *pre-modern frame of values* began to become insufficient, showing its limits. The causes are varied and interdependent, having a relation of co-evolution rather than mechanic determinism. However, we can inventory them in a random order: the geographical expansion of the pre-modern Western model, the “appearance” of modern science, the first industrial revolution, the intellectual changes of mentality, the emergence of institutionalized education as a “mass phenomenon”. We should not forget that modernity was announced and accompanied by profound philosophical revolutions, including political philosophy – from Machiavelli and Descartes to liberal English philosophers and economists and French encyclopaedists, a huge

¹ These values were regarded by the Greeks as being connected, merging, cf. the composed term *kalokagathia*. To suggest the same thing, the Romans created the quotation *mens sana in corpore sano*.

² The Greek and Roman foundations of Western civilization are described by Paul Valéry in his public lecture, *The Crisis of the Spirit* which took place in London at the end of The First World War. See Paul Valéry, *The Crisis of the Spirit and Other Essays*, Iași: Polirom Publishing House, 1996, pp. 260-272.

anxiety of intellect made spirits anxious, a genuine crisis alerted all consciences, creating an inevitable revolution in the field of values.³ And this revolution in the order of values, mentalities and institutions became effective due to *three great modern political revolutions*: the English, the American and the French. The main role of these revolutions was to synthesize the *new frame of values*. What is interesting is the fact that the change was not accomplished by the dissolution of old values, but by supplementing them. To be sure, modernity marks a rupture, but one with multiple possibilities to continue old values. Classical values have not been abandoned, but along with these, new values have emerged, not only preserved by modernity, but also proposed by it.

We are speaking here about *legality*, instituted due to the relatively non-violent Anglo-Saxon revolutions, and to the three values which were part of the French revolution slogan, namely *liberté, égalité* and *fraternité* (liberty, equality, and fraternity or brotherhood). Of course, the Anglo-Saxon revolutions also refer to the values promulgated by the French Revolution. Do not forget that the original purpose of Cromwell was to reduce the powers of the absolute monarchy, although the first English colonists did not reach the new World promoting the freedom of conscience, equality of treatment under the law, and Christian brotherhood. However, in their case, the legalist note is dominant; it may be considered a paradox in the case of other revolutions, where it is not less obvious.⁴ On the other hand, maybe the *Terror* from 1794, which followed *The Declaration...* from 1789, beyond the context and the protagonists' temper, can be seen on account of the *legality* which was not explicitly named a fundamental value in the body of famous statements.⁵ Actually, it is a very strange thing if we think of the fact that the *Declaration* had the value of a constitution – an organic law. Now, the importance of *legality* is multidimensional. From a philosophical point of view, it moves the issue of *justice* from an almost exclusively divine plan to that of the relationships among people and the

³ About the crisis which “prepared” or at least announced modernity, see Paul Hazard, *The Crisis of the European Conscience: 1680 – 1715*, Univers Publishing House, 1974.

⁴ See *The Declaration of Independence and The Constitution of The United States*, Penguin Books, New York, 1995.

⁵ See Jean Morange, *La Déclaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen*, PUF, Paris, 1993.

institutions created by them, which can be legally regulated, first of all by the supreme law, the Constitution, and then, on the subsidiary path, the whole system of laws.⁶ From the famous *Decalogue* communicated by God to Moses and taken up by Christians until the dawn of modernity, *the normative dimensions of culture* – namely religion, morality and law – were ordinarily confused with the field of “sin – guilt – transgressing the law”, and with that one which is subsequent to the penalties applied to these. On the other hand, *legality* is a fundamental value, without which the target values of modernity have no legal basis, nor consistency.⁷ There is no freedom, equality or brotherhood without constitutional grounds, without legal guarantees. Finally, *the Christian sense of sacredness* has become relative, not only by the secularization of the status, but also through the expansion of ecumenism, by accepting that sacredness has different ways of expression. As an Arab proverb says: “God is a mountain and there are many roads and paths that can be climbed.” In the course of almost two hundred years, forced Christianization gradually diminished until it became extinct. *Freedom* means freedom of conscience and faith. That does not exclude the fact that different religions, old or new, “universal” or “local” are in search of new adherents, that evangelism continues to operate. Except for some fundamentalist elements, especially the Islamic one, this phenomenon takes place mostly under peaceful auspices.

2. The Expansion of the European Cultural Model

Certainly, in the last two hundred years, this *European cultural model* in whose centre we can identify “the hard kernel” of the value frame consisting of eight core values, has not ceased to expand, undeniably proving universal virtues. Moreover, the eight values radiate into all dimensions of culture, and, if the distinction still remains relevant, of civilization, giving them their specific flavor. We admit that a cultural

⁶ See, for example, Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws* (1748), any edition.

⁷ For details, see Liviu Antonesei, “What is Post-capitalism?”, in *Xenopoliana*, year II, 1994, 1-4, pp. 160-167

product or a civilized manifestation is Western, and consequently “European,”⁸ if we succeed in finding the characteristic values in them. Everywhere we will record the actual manifestations of these values; we will be concerned with *the European culture*, regardless of the geographical location. And where values are invoked, even demagogically, we can only speak of *European* trends, Westernization, we have to do with transitions, and thus with the phenomena of *acculturation, enculturation, counter-culturation and interculturality*. This cultural model of values can be defined as *democratic capitalism*. The reasons why this model expanded are varied, but some of them can be identified with certainty:

a). the economic performances of capitalism, based on private property and open market, but also on the power of scientific knowledge;⁹

b). the political performances of democracy, based on political pluralism, consequently on the freedom of expression and association, but also on the whole system of rights and liberties “of the human being and citizen”;¹⁰

c). the anthropological performances of the system of liberal democracy, based not only on the open market and the aforementioned

⁸ I have used quotation marks to stress that the term no longer has anything geographical in it. As I will contend, Japan is part of the Western space of values, for it has joined the Western system of values, not without seizures. On the other hand, the USA, which was a European colony in the beginning, then some kind of *province* of Europe, has succeeded in the last decades to overcome many criteria, including cultural ones. Australia also belongs to the Western area; it has had remarkable success in its attempts to integrate into the West, and to keep itself separate from the group of “Asian tigers”. At the same time, Romania has been missing out on the process of re-modernization, of re-Europeanization, for almost twenty years, although it is, geographically, within the “promontory” called Europe. Exactly in the same period, South Africa successfully removed the remainders of *apartheid*, upgrading itself to the European level.

⁹ Property and free markets are economic expressions of the value of *freedom*, while scientific knowledge is related both to the classic *truth* and to the modern *freedom of conscience*.

¹⁰ Liberal democracy is the unsurpassed expression of *normative freedom*, related to the following dimensions of culture: religion, morality and, above all, the right. By The United Nations’ adoption of *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and then of *The Declaration of the Rights of the Child*, all “rights and freedoms” representing the legal embodiment of modern values have become universal, including geo-cultural spaces that have not acceded to it substantially. This allows “The United Nations” to interfere everywhere in the world, to defend them – by any means, including military. Do not forget that in Ethiopia, Iraq, in the former Yugoslavia, military intervention has occurred as a result of the UN’s resolutions.

rights and freedoms, but also on the virtues of public education, at the first only progressively generalized, becoming later “permanent”.¹¹

Consequently, everywhere we meet the happy combination of *individualistic liberalism* and *traditional religious morality* (Christianity, Buddhism, Shinto, Islam, etc), located within the framework of modernity, and thus of *democratic capitalism*. Yet, this system would not have extended so much to its current size and would not be on the way to generalization were it not something specific to the human being. Being different from all other beings although, like them, natural in all ways, man is a “*cultural being*,” a human being. And a human being is one who can be *educated*, thus permeable to cultural contacts, dialogues, influences and idiosyncrasies.¹² In fact, what we call today *globalization* is nothing but the economic dimension of the total – it is the globalization of many markets characteristic of contemporary developed capitalism – of a process started two hundred years ago by launching a new *framework value*, of a new *cultural model* – liberal democracy – and an *anthropological* one – the citizen, and thus the free responsible human being, open to knowledge and “inter-knowledge,” able to take risks and initiatives in all socio-cultural areas. But *globalization* has not only economic dimensions¹³, but also political – through the creation of The United Nations in 1945, but also of European institutions which continue to expand – cultural and educational – the most eloquent signs are structures like the *UNESCOs* and *UNICEFs*; religious – by ecumenical trends, both between the Christian confessions and between these and other “universal” religions; sports – the Olympic Games movement and the other world competitions, including the

¹¹ This is an eloquent test that these values have not been invented by modernity, but they were uncovered in the human “substance” itself and endowed with the aforementioned normative virtues. From God or from nature, *freedom* and other values exist in human beings, and the education’s aim is to “update”, to give substance.

¹² Liviu Antonesei, *Paideia. The Cultural Basis of Education*, Polirom Publishing House, 1996, pp.13-45.

¹³ On economic globalization, see Daniel Dăianu, “Globalization and the International Financial Phenomenon,” in *Where Are the Postcommunist Countries Heading? Economic Currents at the Dawn of the Century*, Polirom Publishing House, 2000, pp.73-98. An unexpectedly virulent criticism of globalization is in George Soros, *The Crisis of Global Capitalism. Open Society in Danger*, Polirom/Arc Publishing House, 1999.

phenomenon of the free movement of athletes; but especially informative, communication. In this last regard, the prospects opened by satellite communication, the intervention of computers, the appearance of the Internet and the birth of Cyberspace cannot be fully foreseen. Many activities have already moved to the home, including a part of education. Censorship now seems impossible¹⁴, and communication between areas at a huge geographical distance has become virtually instantaneous “in real time”, not only in terms of sound, performance already made by telephone and radio communication, but also writing, images, moving images and spatial projections. Lastly, at a superficial level, but of crucial importance as a sort of outpost of modernization, it is the globalization of “trends of consumption”, from food and clothing up to products “for numberless”. The adoption of the “German clothing” was preceded by the adoption of European values by well-to-do young Romanians. Similarly, the adoption by young people in former communist countries of the blue-jeans, long hair fashion and rock music was a phenomenon of counter-culture, the official riposte to the culture, which designated them as followers of a “culture of freedom.” Otherwise, even in the West, at least at first, until it became a profitable business, these trends have been a phenomenon of counter-culture, of reaction to the ossification of the establishment.

Therefore, it is clear that the process of modernization, of modernity-expansion is the most important *phenomenon of interculturality*, of *acculturation* and *enculturation* with application to the major cultural communities – and not of individuals or small groups – which history has known so far. No doubt that the success of the modernization was thus stronger, faster and more stable the more evolved the communities were,

¹⁴ I have correctly written “seems” because the article “The Internet and the Law,” on 13 January 2001 in the British newspaper *The Economist*, makes a review of the initiatives of “regulation” of a field whose indisputable attraction is precisely “the mixture of self- and non-regulation”. Some rules seem fair – they limit the access of children to *sites* harmful to education. Moreover, in the United States, the “internauts” can avail themselves of the famous Amendment No. 1 and may act in the courts for the violation of the freedom of expression. In contrast, in Great Britain, “The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act” allows the police to check e-mails and other types of on line communication, which causes serious problems on the right of secrecy (or privacy) of correspondence and telephone conversations.

therefore the more educated, including in the intercultural dimension.¹⁵ Of course, the expansion of modernity is not a straight-line and uniform phenomenon. Different countries, even European ones, have reached modernity at various intervals; there was hesitation in the processes of modernization, even output in *extra-modernity*, such as communism, fascism or different versions of civil or military authoritarianism.¹⁶ The phenomena of re-tribalisation, of instituting dictatorships or military regimes which appeared in many of the former colonies of Western powers after decolonization clearly show that forced modernization has little chance of success that it can not go beyond the surface, that it is superficial, at the level of “forms without a basis”. Modernization is successful only when its values are not only incorporated in institutions and laws, but also assumed and interiorized by most citizens, that is, when the “forms” can stimulate the “basis”, compelling it to give them content. Not only will superficial modernization not live, but it can cause serious psychological and social traumas, such as xenophobia, conspiring mentality¹⁷ and especially, a fatal clash between *the Western and Westernizing elite* and *the Westernizing ones* and *the population mass*. These elites are often superficially Europeanized, having the mentality of “scholars who have been awarded a prize”, wanting more to please the European “teachers” than to persuade their own citizens regarding the matter of superiority and suitability of the European cultural system of values, which causes the consternation of the former and the deep

¹⁵ I would like to remind the reader that the European Union could not have been imagined without the historic “reconciliation” between France and Germany, politically inaugurated by President De Gaulle and Chancellor Adenauer, but supported for decades by the educational programmes of mutual un-demonization of the former enemies. It was a very instructive example of *intercultural education*, which we Romanians could follow together with our Hungarian neighbors. At the institutional and legislative level, we have welcomed the Treaty between these two countries, the Europeanization of laws regarding the minorities, the “Open Sky” agreement or creating a joint Romanian-Hungarian battalion, but it would be necessary for education to have the same evolution.

¹⁶ These types of experiences are sometimes extra-modern or pre-modern, particularly because they distort some of the values which define modernity. Let us think more about what is left from legality, freedom, equality and brotherhood in political regimes, such as fascism or communism.

¹⁷ George Voicu, *The Bad Gods. The Culture of Conspiracy in Romania*, Polirom Publishing House, 2000.

opacity of the latter.¹⁸ These processes not only show the precariousness of the educational systems from such geographical and cultural spaces, but also the failure of the educational functions which, by definition, belong to true elites. Beyond the cultural capital that the elites amass, far from their abilities at passing examinations, the same elites supply *cultural and behavior models*, which are “real,” “alive”. Paradoxically, instead of becoming the agents of a consolidated modernization, these elites become blocking factors, even “wreckers”, more or less involuntarily and innocently. In fact, in order for school to support the process of modernization, for elites to work as cultural models, it is necessary that *the modernity values* are assumed not as a set of random values, not as a number of values among other things, but in their quality of *cultural universals*¹⁹ which possess normative virtues.

3. Japan – the Example of a Successful Modernization

An excellent example of a successful modernization is offered by Japan, a case of rapid and spectacular modernization. But very few of the authors which analyze the Japanese phenomenon recall that the post-war success is based on a gigantic failure before the Second World War.²⁰ Because Japan’s first modernization started before 1900 and failed in the 30’s of the twentieth century, succumbing to military authoritarianism. Why did things evolve in such a way? – Particularly because of a superficial, somewhat selective adhesion to *the values of modernity*. Modern legality often collided with the impossibility of conciliation with the customary law of the first feudal sovereigns and *samurai*-s. Freedom was taken especially

¹⁸ Dorin Tudoran, “The Impersonal Romania or About Political Jockeys” *Adevărul literar și artistic (The Literary and Artistic Truth)*, X, no. 554, 6 February 2001, pp. 1 and 8-9. Tudoran knows very well what he is talking about, being left for almost twenty years in the United States but living more than ten of them here in Romania and The Republic of Moldavia, therefore he knows how Western modernity works, but also the caricature character which it acquired in broad areas of “the other Europe”.

¹⁹ Constantin Cucuș, op.cit, p.217.

²⁰ Jean-Jacques Servan Schreiber, *The Japanese Defiance*, The Political Publishing House, 1975.

in its economic dimension, but also preserving a huge range of state interventionism. About democracy, in the Western sense of that time, it would be extremely difficult to speak. Modern social brotherhood is manifested rather as clanship etc. Japan's defeat in the Second World War allowed this country to start all over again in a different way. This time, the adherence to the values of Western modernity was authentic and complete.

In less than two decades, Japan became a modern country, with a functioning market economy, with a high level of technological research, always up-to-date, and with stable democracy. Moreover, it is the first country that has done what is called permanent education, including it inside economic companies long before it became a matter of academic concern. At the same time, Japan did a huge favor to a frightened Europe and refreshed its memory; Europe was traumatized by the German interwar origins of the education for values.

The activity of the Institute of Moralogy, founded in 1928 by Chik Hiroike, had such an explosive activity after war that resulted in *UNESCO's* re-orientation towards spiritual values.²¹ As George Văideanu reminds us,

Through its originality and its theories, but especially through the social activities carried out in the recent decades, the Institute offers a significant example regarding the role of spiritual values (moral, artistic, cultural) in development. The impact of the programmes of the Institute of Moralogy on school life is becoming stronger and stronger.²²

This is one of the reasons why Japan, one of the most developed countries of contemporary world, with a peak technology and an imaginable expansion continues to preserve many of its traditions which form its cultural specificity – from the kimono and the tea ceremony to martial arts and the No theatre. So, we may conclude that nobody “steals” or “buys”

²¹ Joseph A. Lawerys, “Science, Morals and Morality”, *Five Lectures*, The Institute of Moralogy, Japan, f.a.

²² George Văideanu, “Education pour et par les valeurs ou l'éducation axiologique: vue globale”, *The Scientific Annals of the “Al. I. Cuza” University*, Iași, New Series, Psychology-Pedagogy, Volume II, 1993, p. 11.

your soul unless you are willing to sell it or to give it for free.²³ It is the living proof that *cultural universals* such as the *values of modernity* can manifest themselves in most varied ways, as long as their essence is not counterfeited, as long as their deep spirit is not altered. A culture can be modern and, in the same time, it can preserve its style, if it has one and if it is strong enough.

Post-War Japan became modern also because it succeeded in healing some of the ethnocentric fears it had before war. It was not at all an easy process, certainly, if we refer only to the fact that the great Japanese writer Yukio Mishima organised an entire opposition movement and committed a ritual suicide – *seppuku* – in order to protest against his country's modernization. Unlike Mishima, our Romanian nationalists do not commit suicide, but they take advantage of the people's naivety to fraudulently become rich and to represent the nation at Strasbourg! The tragic death of Mishima namely symbolizes the end of Japan's militarist and imperial epoch and the birth of a new one, which is enormously indebted to the power of an education centered on the fundamental values of modernity – an education which is, at the same time, predictable and deeply-rooted in tradition, being specific and open to interculturality, well-grounded in the institutional base system and multidirectionally open to permanent education.

Here is an example of the success of modernity from which we Romanians have much to learn, if we have our eyes and ears wide open, a mind free of prejudices and phantom compensation, either heroic or victimizing. It's interesting how our historic mythology varies without interruption, often in the same speech, between two representative poles: on one hand, our mission is to be a "shield of Christianity", "a rampart against the heathens", and on the other hand, we are "a small country placed in the way of all bad things", "a small rich country", "an island of Latinity in a sea of Slavs" etc, against whom all enemies, either from inside or from outside, conspire to steal our riches. It is a speech which is both self-praising and self-justifying.²⁴

²³ It is specification for our nationalists, either older or younger, who see the necessary modernization as a loss/sale of one's soul.

²⁴ Lucian Boia, *History and Myth in the Romanian Conscience*, Bucharest, Humanitas Publishing House, 1997.

4. What must we do?

We Romanians missed our first attempt at modernization, but, unlike the Japanese, we even handle the present attempt with difficulties! It's time for us to ask the same question as Lenin asked while reading Herzen. What must we do? Nothing else, if we pass over the dimensions of the economic and political reform, but "European Education," which is the title of a beautiful novel by Romain Gary, a French writer born somewhere in our vicinity in Eastern Europe, who was chased by the Nazis during the war, but who escaped to the West before installation of communism. An emblematic personality, a persecuted man who may, therefore, better understand the meaning of the formula from his novel's title.

During this study, we tried to adopt a technical perspective in connection with *Europeanization* and *globalization*, in order to be neutral from an axiological point of view. At the same time, due to the fact that these are inevitable processes, despite their positive or negative character, it is necessary for us to be aware and prepared to face them. Or, it is first and foremost the role of education, especially the intercultural one. From this perspective, we can talk about two phenomena of interculturality: the major interculturality, linked to the process of modernization, i.e., the retrieving of value, legislative and institutional modernity, and minor interculturality or the second, related to the relations with the majority culture and minorities with those in "close proximity". Note that in a second meaning, the second form of interculturality is a consequence of the first, because the spirit of the European approach led in time to the acceptance of cultural differences, to the discrimination of others. Do not forget, for instance, that the slogan of the *Council of Europe* is "All equal, all different". Education has a great many operations which must be carried to a conclusion in both respects. Without pretensions of completeness, we mention a few directions in which education can facilitate the process of modernization, thus integrating the country in the European structures and, on the other hand, reducing the shocks that the inevitable process of globalization may produce to the community:

a) At the level of the educational ideal: the need to shift from formal adoption of the ideal of modernity by the law of education, the ideal that is the citizen,²⁵ to the actual implementation of this ideal regarding the major goals and purpose of education. The eight core values and especially the modern ones, still neglected, should guide this process. These values must become as essential for the educational process as the air we breathe.²⁶

b) At the level of objectives: the entire set of educational objectives should be deduced, not only the instructional ones, from the double tetrahedron of the values of modernity. It should be worked like “Mendeleev’s table”, entirely covering all “boxes”, leaving “free” only those that modernity has not yet discovered. It would be more appropriate to use the metaphor of the tree; because it catches the progressive detailing what takes place at the level of objectives of the end to the operational/operative ones.

c) At the level of content: complex operations of filling in the gaps are needed, of changing the perspective, of reorganization. Among other things, from the perspective of intercultural education, I would propose:

c.1. Re-thinking the place and the share of *social and anthropological disciplines*, which are themselves “inventions” of modernity, in all cycles of education, so that a high school graduate knows, on one hand, the issues related to the values of modernity, the rights and freedoms of citizens, the functioning of European and world-wide institutions, the state functions and performance of political and electoral systems, and on the other hand, to have minimal guidance in disciplines such as sociology, civics (politics), anthropology or political economy. In principle, one of these should be a subject to baccalaureate. In the future, we can think of several forms of “national baccalaureate”, just like in France, where one topic is centered on anthropological and social disciplines.

²⁵ The education law, art.31.

²⁶ Liviu Antonesei, op. cit. pp. 49-55.

c. 2. Studying foreign languages in close connection with the culture and civilization they are related to, because, beyond its instrumental function, language is always a sign of defining a culture. In addition to studying international languages, the study of languages in “close proximity” should be encouraged, as well as those belonging to minorities because, beyond its usefulness in unavoidable economic and political relations, language can contribute to the removal of “the enemy’s image” and to the de-stigmatization of minorities.

c. 3. The comparative study of history, including cultural history. in order to facilitate better understanding of the relationship between universal and particular, to seize the benefits of ethnic decentralization and change of perspective through projecting oneself into the other’s shoes. The classes of comparative history, comparative literature, and comparative studies in general should be encouraged to the detriment of addressing different ethnocentric or parish cultural spaces.

d) At the level of educators: the need to recycle all teachers in the spirit of European values of modernity, by improving operations which do not have anything in common with similar processes, simply formal and ideological before 1990. At the same time, the process of preparation/processing the educators in Western universities should be continuously encouraged and even stimulated – university scholarships, internships for master’s and doctorate degrees, joint research projects etc and “partnership” links between our universities and the foreign ones, not only Western, but also those in “close proximity”. Beyond the importance of professional training, such contacts have an exceptional cultural effect – there is nothing more favorable than the assimilation of culture by direct contact.²⁷ And the elite university, due to their role of trainers of trainers, but also of the cultural function of irradiation which University has, can have a fundamental role in the dissemination of the values of modernity.²⁸

²⁷ In order to analyze in comparison different reforms in the post-communist Eastern Europe, see Cezar Birzea, *Les politiques éducatives dans les pays en transition*, Les Editions du Conseil de l’Europe, Strasbourg, 1994.

²⁸ For the functions of the University, see Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Idea of University. A Reexamination*, Yale University Press, New Haven/ London, 1992; Liviu Antonesei, op. cit., pp. 97-99.

These measures are minimal in terms of education, intended to achieve European values of modernity faster and with greater facility, and to bear without destructive trauma “the shock of globalization”. These are the tasks of an education which can never be otherwise than an interchange. It is difficult to believe that we Romanians will integrate ourselves into a Europe with a stigmatizing mentality for “the gypsies”, condemning “foreigners” and their cultural values, and notions such as “private, sacred and inviolable property”, “market capital” or “secondary market operations” have not yet found a place. For almost twenty years, we have not done much in this direction, and sometimes we have done many wrong-headed things, the results of which can be seen not only in the internal state in the country, but also in its failures and delays of the processes of integration and/or globalization. Unfortunately, time has no patience and we will have to do a great many things, not step-by-step, but in unison. And our success depends more than ever on the success of the reform of education.

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Self Actualisation: For Individualistic Cultures Only?

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Abstract: Maslow's concept of *Self Actualisation* refers to the greatest "need" in his motivational theory; the need to realize and fulfill one's potential. Research has continually highlighted the differences between cultures using the individualistic-collectivistic dimension, but these differences have not been extended to the characteristics that define self actualisation.

The current study aims to test the cultural validity of Self Actualisation by using the Personal Orientation Inventory (POI) questionnaire as a comprehensive measure of the self actualising characteristics originally highlighted by Maslow. The POI questionnaire was tested on 100 British participants as representing individuals from an individualistic culture, and 100 Indian participants as representing individuals from a collectivistic culture. The POI measured responses on 12 scales, each representing key characteristics of the Self Actualising individual. In support of the hypothesis, the results showed British participants scored significantly higher than the Indian participants on 10 out of the 12 scales. Thus, contrary to the belief that the basic concept of Self Actualisation applies to any human being in any culture, the current findings suggest that the characteristics of Self Actualisation, as defined by Maslow and the POI, cannot be effectively applied to collectivistic cultures in the same way they can in individualistic cultures. Implications include important impact on the workplace, as this concept of Self Actualisation has been integrated into management techniques used by human resources

teams, motivating employees and encouraging them to develop self actualising values.

Keywords: Self-Actualisation, cultural differences, Abraham Malow.

Introduction

Self Actualisation is the term given to the modern psychological concept first coined by Kurt Goldstein (1934) and then developed by Maslow (1943, 1954, 1968) in his work on motivational theories. Sitting at the top of Maslow's "hierarchy of needs" (1943), self actualisation can be described as persons realizing their potential, "fulfilling themselves" and "doing the best they are capable of doing" (Maslow, 1954, p.150). According to Maslow, this stage in the hierarchy can only be achieved when needs lower down in the hierarchy are satisfied.

Maslow's hierarchy begins, at the bottom, with physiological needs and progresses to safety needs; love needs; self esteem needs and finally the need for self actualisation. The implication of the fulfillment of these lower needs suggests that the self actualising person no longer has the "need" for these motivational drives. Such an individual would subsequently possess particular characteristics which were observed and studied by Maslow (1968). Such characteristics include more accurate judgment and perception than non-self actualising individuals, more self acceptance, absence of unnecessary defence and anxiety, spontaneity, and in particular synergy or the resolution of dichotomies such as right-wrong. With regard to the self actualised individual and his/her relation with others, Maslow (1943, 1954) describes key facets to be detachment from societal influences, autonomy and independence; an individual who is not bound by the expectations and opinions of others, but rather acts upon his/her own will. The self actualised also approaches life with an attitude of "newness or appreciation of old experiences as if they were new" (Wilson, 1969).

Thus, we have a description of the “self actualising individual”, but the path to achieving this stage in Maslow’s hierarchy is not fully explained. Wilson (1997) notes that Maslow does not specify what kind of society, culture or environment is ideal to harvest self actualisation in people. Although no social theory on self actualisation has emerged, many theorists suggest that modern culture plays a significant role in facilitating self actualisation by providing a source of various challenges, such as encouraging autonomy by creating a cultural competence of self-sufficiency (Hewitt, 1989; Giddens, 1991; Marks, 1979; Wilson, 1997). Such observations on the influence of “modern culture” on self actualisation have mainly focused on the culture and society of the United States and the United Kingdom. This research, coupled with Maslow’s original observations also done only in the United States, posits a crucial question: is the concept of self actualisation a culturally valid concept? With little research into differences in self actualisation across cultures, one could potentially propose an ethnocentric criticism of the concept; is it possible that self actualisation is only applicable to the “modern culture” observed in Western, “individualistic” cultures? In other words, if self actualisation was conceived by Western theorists and rooted in a Western, individualistic culture, can it be applied to non-Western, collectivistic cultures? To understand this criticism and attempt to answer this question, we will look at the characteristics of the self actualising individual in greater detail and the differences between individualistic and collectivistic cultures in that context.

The characteristics of the self actualising individual can be best understood by referring to the Personal Orientation Inventory (POI) questionnaire (Shostrom 1962, 1964, 1974). The POI gives a quantitative measure of the otherwise ambiguously measured concept of self actualisation by incorporating scores and ratios of various relevant characteristics based on the original description of characteristics by Maslow (1943, 1954). It is a valid, reliable and comprehensive tool used to measure self actualisation (Knapp, 1990). The questionnaire contains 150 items about various values and behaviors. Each item consists of two statements between which the participant must choose, and these choices are then used to obtain scores for individuals on 12 different scales, each measuring a characteristic of the self actualising individual.

The two most important characteristics in the POI are the *Time Ratio* and *Support Ratio*. The time ratio is a ratio score which refers to an individual's tendency to be either time competent (living in the present, and for the here-and-now) or time incompetent (living in the past and/or in the future); the self actualising individual is deemed to be time competent (*TC*). The *support ratio* is also a ratio score referring to an individual's tendency to be either other orientated (over sensitive to feelings and approval of others) or inner orientated (aware of ones own feelings and approval). In this ratio, the self actualising individual is characterized as being inner orientated (*I*).

The POI also includes 10 complementary subscales measuring different characteristics of the self actualised individual (Shostrom, 1974, p. 5):

- *Self Actualising Values (SAV)* - measuring affirmation of primary values characterized by self actualising individuals;
- *Existentiality (Ex)* - measures ability to react to each situation without rigid adherence to principles;
- *Feeling Reactivity (FR)* - measures sensitivity of responsiveness to one's needs and feelings;
- *Spontaneity (S)* - measures freedom to act and be oneself;
- *Self Regard (SR)* - measures affirmation of self worth and strengths;
- *Self Acceptance (SA)* - measures acceptance of oneself in spite of weaknesses;
- *Nature of Man (Na)* - measures extent of constructive view of the nature of man;
- *Synergy (Sy)* - measures ability to resolve dichotomies;
- *Acceptance of Aggression (A)* - measures ability to accept one's aggression as natural;
- *Capacity for Intimate Contact (C)* - measures ability to develop intimate relations with others, unencumbered by expectation and obligation.

These scales measuring values that characterize the self actualising individual must be understood in the context of the individualistic-collectivistic distinction.

Hofstede (1980) explains that although human beings are collective creatures with gregarious natures, “human societies show gregariousness to different degrees” (p. 209); highlighting the dimensions of individualism and collectivism in culture and society (Triandis, 1971, 1995). Individualism can be described as focusing on the self and individual, personal goals. Individualistic societies see the individual as the first or basic and most important unit, and these societies, more often than not, are developed, Western societies. Collectivism, on the other hand, is more concerned with social groups and collective goals. In such collectivistic societies social groups are seen as the basic and most important unit and these societies are often developing, non-Western societies (Triandis, 1971, 1995; Erez & Earley, 1993; Hofstede, 1980, 2003; Hsu, 1971).

For example, Gudykunst, Yang & Nishida (1987) asked individuals to score how true various statements were for themselves and found that American participants scored highest for statements on self-consciousness and lowest for statements on other-directedness, while Japanese participants showed the opposite trend. Similarly, Bochner (1994) tested for cultural differences in self concepts by completing sentences beginning with “I am”. These sentences were categorized as “idiocentric” or “group” where the former are sentences that do not imply other people and the latter sentences that imply group or category membership. Results showed that participants from an individualistic culture used idiocentric sentences the most and group sentences the least, while the opposite was found true of participants from a collectivistic culture.

This distinction is crucial in understanding the validity of a concept such as self actualisation, as the culture or environment one grows up in, be it individualistic or collectivistic, can influence ones thoughts and behavior, and subsequently ones “need” for self actualisation and other motivations. For example, Markus & Kitayama (1991) conducted a meta-analysis of cross cultural research and concluded that cognition, emotion and motivation vary in relation to whether an individual’s culture has provided them with an independent or interdependent “self construal”. The distinction between independent and interdependent can be likened to that of individualism and collectivism and many agree that one’s cognition and

motivation are affected by the social system in which they are raised (Bandura, 1995, 2002; Fromm, 1955; Nisbett, 2003; Nisbett, Peng, Choi & Norenzayan, 2001). Furthermore, with differences in the view of the self between cultures, as an independent individual in individualistic cultures or as an interdependent member of social groups in collectivistic cultures, it is also plausible to question whether Maslow's (1943) concept of fulfilling one's potential is expressed differently in these cultures. If so, this would render the self actualisation concept as described by Maslow, with its specific characteristics, as meaningless in a cultural setting outside of Western individualism.

This brings us back to the ethnocentric criticism of self actualisation. Given that societies such as those of the United States and Great Britain have high individualistic qualities (Hofstede, 1980, 1983) and self actualisation is believed to be induced by such environments (Hewitt, 1989; Wilson, 1997), it may be inferred that living in highly individualistic societies makes one more prone to developing Maslow's self actualising characteristics and the "need" for such self actualisation. Thus, perhaps in societies which have more collectivistic values, individuals are more likely to exhibit needs and characteristics different from those specified by Maslow.

This is not to say that certain cultures are more susceptible to becoming self-actualised than others. The essence of self actualisation, becoming all that one can be while fulfilling our greatest potential, is a universal theme. It is a theme which moves well beyond any human separation: beyond culture, gender, race and religion, it is rooted within us as a powerful motivation. The separation begins as we try to classify the *characteristics* of this self-fulfillment; how we specifically define Self Actualisation. This paper proposes that the characteristics Maslow described (1943, 1954) and the POI quantifies (Shostrom, 1962) are based upon an individualistic cultural perspective and therefore discriminate against any individual from a collectivist culture.

This criticism can be put into a clearer and more meaningful context by applying the individualism-collectivism distinction to the scales used in the POI. Firstly, with regards to the Time Competent scale, one is defined as

time competent when one lives primarily for the present (present-orientated) and sees the past, present and future in meaningful continuity. This continuity refers to the past as used for reflective thought and the future as aspirations to present goals, but not that the past, present or future are determinants of one another (Shostrom, 1974, p. 13). Anthropologist Dundes (1969) acknowledges a difference in how Western countries regard this continuity; being more concerned with “what the present will become” (p. 67), unlike non-Western countries who are concerned with “what has caused the present” (p. 67). This “past orientation” of the non-Western, collectivistic cultures suggests that individuals from such a culture are less likely to be time competent than individuals from Western, individualistic cultures (Dundes, 1969; Triandis, 1971). This can be supported by the premise that individuals from collectivistic cultures live by values that are based on societal expectations (Hofstede, 1980), and these expectations are, more often than not, rooted in the past through tradition and/or provide obligations for the future. Such values include, for example, maintaining and living in extended families, which studies have shown to be more important to young individuals from collectivistic cultures (Hastings & Hastings, 1981). In relation to time competence, Dundes (1969) compares the individualist, who moves on from the past to live in the present, with the collectivist, who does not and “continues to live with [his] past” (p. 67).

With regards to the Inner Orientated scale, one is defined as inner orientated if one’s behavior is directed by inner motivations rather than external forces. Referring back to the distinction between collectivistic and individualistic cultures, there is a key difference in the importance of others and society in directing behavior. Collectivistic cultures are more “other orientated” with strong emphasis on approval, acceptance and adherence to social groups (Erez & Earley, 1993; Gelfand et al, 2000; Gudykunst et al, 1987; Markus & Kitayama, 1991, Riesman et al, 1953; Triandis, 1995). This suggests that individuals from a collectivistic culture are less likely to be inner orientated than individuals from individualistic cultures. In support of this, Tanaka (1978) tested individualistic and collectivistic differences in agreeable responses to various behavioral statements. For example, in response to the statement “To do something good for society”, participants

from Indonesia, Pakistan and India scored the highest and those from Australia and New Zealand the lowest. However, in response to the statement “To achieve personal happiness”, the pattern of results was reversed. Similarly, Riesman *et al.* (1953) describe that the other-directed person “hardly thinks of himself as an individual” (p. 33) further suggesting that collectivists who define themselves in such an “other-directed” way are less likely to be inner orientated than individualists.

The first two subscales of the POI: self actualising values and existentiality can be described as “valuing” scales. The former measures the extent to which an individual holds and lives by characteristics and values of a self actualising person (e.g., autonomy and independence, self sufficiency and self efficacy), and the latter measures the degree of flexibility in applying these values to the individual’s life. If individualistic and collectivistic cultures are distinctly different in how they view the self in relation to society (Hofstede, 1980, 2003; Triandis, 1971, 1995; Markus & Kitayama, 1991), it is plausible that the perspectives of these cultures will also differ on self concepts such as self actualisation. Autonomy and independence for example will be more supported and encouraged in individualistic cultures in comparison with collectivistic ones. From the premise that the self actualising characteristics and values, rooted in a Western, individualistic perspective, are not applicable to non-Western, collectivistic cultures, it can be suggested that individuals from collectivistic cultures are likely to score lower on these “valuing” scales than individuals from individualistic cultures.

Similar assertions can likewise be made about other scales of the POI, such as the “feeling” subscales and the “self perception” subscales: the scales of *feeling reactivity* and *spontaneity*. The former measures one’s sensitivity to her/his own needs and feelings, while the latter measures one’s ability to express such feelings freely in behavior. Riesman *et al.* (1953) describe the “inner-directed” person as one who uses a “psychological gyroscope” to direct behavior, based on one’s own needs and feelings. This gyroscope, although developed from a young age, is continually adapted with new schemas and provides an inner lens into oneself, enabling individuals to assess how they feel. As explained above, individuals from

individualistic cultures are more inner-directed or orientated because of the emphasis of the individual (Ma & Schoeneman, 1997), and are therefore more likely to use a gyroscope or inner lens to reflect on their own feelings than are individuals from a collectivistic culture who are more other-directed or orientated. Also, an individual who is “inner directed” might carry less demands from his/her social environment, thereby allowing spontaneous behavior to be expressed more freely in comparison with an individual who needs to consider the cultural implications of her/his choices. This suggests that individuals from an individualistic culture are more likely to score higher on the “feeling” scales than individuals from a collectivistic culture.

Finally, the scales of *Self regard* and *Self acceptance* can be described as scales of “self perception”. The former measures an individual’s perception of self worth in relation to his/her strengths and the latter is an individual’s acceptance of him/herself in spite of weaknesses or deficiencies. Markus & Kitayama (1991) describe the concepts of an independent and interdependent self construal as representing individualistic and collectivistic cultures, respectively. Research suggests individuals with an independent self construal are “self enhancing”, and able to maintain a positive view of the self, while individuals with an interdependent self construal are “self critical” and cannot “fit in” with others’ needs and expectations (Kitayama et al, 1997; Kitayama & Duffy, 2004). This suggests two implications for scores on the self perception scales between individualistic and collectivistic individuals; firstly that individualists will score higher on the self regard scale because of “self enhancing” of one’s worth and strengths, and secondly that collectivists will score lower on the self acceptance scale because of “self criticism” of one’s weaknesses rather than acceptance of oneself.

A test of these proposed differences between individualistic and collectivistic cultures in responses to the POI self actualising scales is essential, as the importance of the cultural validity of such concepts clearly lies, not simply within the domain of psychology, but extends to organizational, teaching, social, and business environments (Choy & Moneta, 2002; Delaney & Delaney, 1971; Coble, 1972; Coble & Hounshell,

1972). Since the concept “self actualisation” is used as a theoretical basis for employers to motivate employees in human resource management (e.g., The Royal Bank of Scotland Group, 2007), it is crucial to understand any cultural differences that are apparent in employees’ needs and/or motivations. This is especially so in the recent changes in labor markets through globalization with increasingly multi-cultural and multi-ethnic workforces (Boone, Meng & van der Velden, 2004). With individualists and collectivists working side by side in the same company, it is important to distinguish whether the former is more driven by the Western self actualisation needs and characteristics than the latter. If this is the case, it has profound repercussions for personnel management methods and motivational techniques as well as the validity of literature on self actualisation.

To date there have been no direct comparisons between collectivistic and individualistic societies using the POI. A number of studies have been conducted to evaluate the resistance of the POI to intentional attempts to fake a high self actualisation score in countries around the world, such as the Netherlands (Steilberg, 1976) and Nicaragua (Knapp, Kardenas & Michael, 1978); but these countries are not collectivistic (Hofstede, 2004; Ekern, 1998). Furthermore, these studies (both rather old now) were not concerned with a comparison of data from collectivistic and individualistic cultures.

Thus, in order to answer such questions and pave the way for research on cultural differences in self actualisation, the current investigation will compare responses of individuals from a predominantly individualistic, Western culture (United Kingdom) and individuals from a predominantly collectivistic, non-Western culture (India). The cultures of these countries have been used to represent individualism and collectivism, respectively, based on the scores of each on Hofstede’s Individualism Index (IDV); United Kingdom score 89/100 and India 48/100 (Hofstede, 2004).

Based on the premises explored above, the proposed hypotheses for the predicted differences in responses of individualistic and collectivistic individuals to the POI scales are as follows:

Experimental Hypotheses

H1: Individuals from an individualistic culture will score higher on the Time Competence (Tc) scale than individuals from a collectivistic culture.

H2: Individuals from an individualistic culture will score higher on the Inner Orientated (I) scale than individuals from a collectivistic culture.

H3: Individual from an individualistic culture will score higher on the “valuing” scales; Self Actualising Values (SAV) and Existentiality (Ex), than individuals from a collectivistic culture.

H4: Individuals from an individualistic culture will score higher on the “feeling” scales: Feeling Reactivity (FR) and Spontaneity (S), than individuals from a collectivistic culture.

H5: Individuals from an individualistic culture will score higher on the “self perception” scales; Self Regard (SR) and Self Acceptance (SA), than individuals from a collectivistic culture.

Method and Participants

An opportunity sample of 200 participants (male $n = 96$; female $n = 104$) was recruited for this investigation. Of this sample, 100 participants were of British nationality; born and living in the U.K. and 100 participants were of Indian nationality; born and living in India. Further inclusion criteria for this study required that participants had never lived outside their country of birth for longer than 12 months. The age range across all participants for both sample groups was 18-25 (Indian sample: mean = 21.2, SD = 2.327; British sample: mean = 20.86, SD = 2.40).

The participants recruited from India were selected on the basis of having good proficiency of the English language in order to understand the questionnaire and instructions. This was measured by participants having achieved a minimum of level 6 on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) which is the level English required by most Universities for new students (IELTS, 2006).

Design

The investigation used an independent group’s design, whereby individualistic (British) and collectivistic (Indian) cultures were compared on their responses to the POI questionnaire.

Materials

Personal Orientation Inventory (POI);

The key material used in the investigation was the Personal Orientation Inventory (POI) questionnaire (Shostrom, 1962, 1964, 1974). The questionnaire consists of 150 items; each taking the form of two contrasting statements addressing the same issue, from which the subject must pick the one that applies to him or her best. These items are then providing the score for the twelve POI scales. The current investigation slightly adapted the answer-sheet by including demographic questions regarding the participant's nationality, place of birth and longest absence from their country of origin, in order to maintain cultural validity within each sample.

The POI questionnaire was chosen as the measure of self actualisation because of its popularity as a valid and comprehensive tool for assessing levels of self actualisation (Knapp, 1990). In particular, the POI has high resistance to faking a positive impression of self actualisation (Braun & LaFaro, 1969), it is validated on test-retest reliability (Klavetter & Morgan, 1967), shown to be relatively stable over time (Knapp, 1990), and uninfluenced by social desirability (Shostrom, 1974; Warehime & Foulds, 1973).

Procedure

British participants were recruited in university and college campuses (in and around Greater London). Participants were then selected on the basis of meeting the nationality criteria. Indian participants were recruited from a variety of colleges and universities. The universities and colleges from which participants were selected were located in the State of Punjab, North India. All institutions were mixed (male and female students) and offered a variety of disciplines (students ranged from arts to sciences).

All participants completed the Personal Orientation Inventory (POI) questionnaire and additional screening / demographic questions. Any participants not meeting the residency inclusion criteria were excluded from the study. All participants received a copy of the same questionnaire and answer sheet as well as an identical set of instructions and consent form.

Prior to participation participants were informed that the purpose of the investigation was to find out about young people’s beliefs and values and were told that they could withdraw from the study at any time. After completion of the study all participants were fully debriefed.

Results

Mean scores for the 12 POI scales were collated for both groups (British and Indian) and the differences between these means can be seen in figure 1. The graph shows that the British participant scores are consistently higher than the Indian participant scores. This trend follows across all 12 scales, with the greatest differences on scales I (inner orientated), Ex (existentiality) and SA (self acceptance).

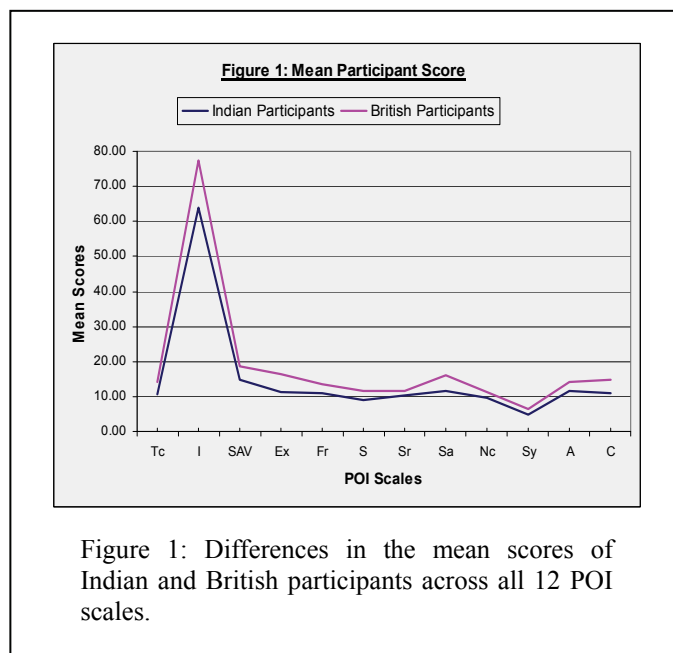


Figure 1: Differences in the mean scores of Indian and British participants across all 12 POI scales.

The statistical analyses of these mean differences are displayed in Table 1. These show that the difference in mean scores between the British and Indian groups were statistically significant for 10 of the 12 POI scales, with the British (Individualistic) group scoring consistently higher than the Indian (Collectivistic) group.

Table 1: Independent Samples t-test results comparing mean scores of Indian and British participants on all 12 POI scales.

Scale	Mean Participant Scores (SD)		<i>t</i> – value (df)	Sig. (<i>p</i> - value)
	Indian	British		
Time Competent	10.52 (2.48)	14.03 (1.86)	11.30 (198)	< 0.001
Inner Orientated	63.89 (7.09)	77.38 (4.63)	15.92 (198)	< 0.001
Self Actualising Values	14.81 (1.71)	15.35 (1.74)	2.20 (198)	0.028
Existentiality	11.39 (2.83)	16.54 (3.74)	10.95 (198)	< 0.001
Feeling Reactivity	10.91 (2.23)	11.83 (2.55)	2.71 (198)	0.007
Spontaneity	9.00 (1.85)	9.88 (2.04)	3.19 (198)	0.002
Self Regard	10.35 (1.70)	11.02 (1.97)	2.56 (198)	0.011
Self Acceptance	11.53 (2.41)	16.02 (2.06)	14.13 (198)	< 0.001
Nature of Man	9.65 (1.64)	10.41 (1.93)	2.99 (198)	0.003
Synergy	4.84 (1.13)	5.28 (1.11)	2.76 (198)	0.006
Acceptance of Aggression	11.64 (2.30)	11.89 (2.10)	0.80 (198)	0.424
Capacity for Intimate Contact	10.80 (2.80)	11.34 (2.55)	1.42 (198)	0.156

These results support all the experimental hypotheses. In line with hypotheses 1 and 2 British participants scored significantly higher than Indian participants on the Time Competent and Inner Oriented scales. With the Inner oriented scale producing the greatest difference overall ($t = -15.92$). Furthermore, in support of the remaining hypotheses the British participants scored significantly higher than the Indian participants on the “Valuing” scales (Self Actualising Value and Existentiality), “Feeling” scales (Feeling Reactivity and Spontaneity) and “Self Perception” scales (Self Regard and Self Acceptance).

In addition to the hypotheses that have been supported by the results, statistically significant differences between Indian and British responses were also found on other 2 subscales; Nature of man and Synergy.

Discussion

The results supported all the experimental hypotheses and post-hoc comparisons also suggested that a further two POI subscales (Nature of man and Synergy) are also affected by cultural differences. The results indicated

that the responses or scores of the British, individualist participants were significantly higher than those of the Indian, collectivist participants for 10 out of the 12 POI scales measured. The higher the score on these scales, the closer to the self actualising ideal an individual is deemed to be (Shostrom, 1964, 1974). Thus the implication is that individuals from an individualistic culture are more likely to be closer to the self actualising ideal, *as measured by these scales*, than individuals from a collectivistic culture.

Time Competence and Inner Orientated Scales

In support of the first two hypotheses, it was found that British, individualist participants were more “time competent” and “inner orientated” than their Indian, collectivist counterparts. As discussed previously, there are many possible reasons for these differences. Regarding time competence (Tc), participants from a collectivistic culture, in this instance India, are more likely to live by values and expectations rooted in the past, which guide their present and future behavior; “Welding all together are the universal bonds of tenacious, age-long customs” (Eno, 1925, p. 240). For example, Hastings & Hastings (1981) conducted a 5-nation survey on public opinion where mothers were asked to rate their agreeableness to a given answer to this question: “In your old age, what sort of relationship would you like to have with your children”, and the answer was: “To live together and have my daily needs looked after”. Only 2% of mothers from Great Britain and France agreed with this answer, in comparison with 21% of mothers from Japan, 34% from South Korea and 74% of mothers from Thailand. Values such as living in extended families reflect the “past orientation” of non-Western, collectivistic cultures (Dundes, 1969), whereby such cultures hold a viewpoint that sees the present and future as a consequence of the past. This past orientation leads to a lack of continuity between the past, present and future in a meaningful way, whereby the most important time is the present, and not the past (Shostrom, 1974). Thus it can be inferred that if individuals from non-Western collectivistic culture are more past orientated than present orientated, they are subsequently less time competent, scoring lower on the Tc scale, than individuals from a Western, individualistic culture.

Another explanation for the difference in Indian and British participants on the Tc scale can be derived from the concept of “Karma” (Brunton, 1999) embedded in South Asian religions (Hinduism, Sikhism, Jainism and Buddhism). The concept of karma refers to the actions or deeds one enacts which are the basis for a cycle of cause and effect throughout one’s life (or lifetimes in religions that incorporate reincarnation) (Karnik & Suri, 1995). This cycle reflects the intermittent relationship between one’s past actions (as a cause) with present and future actions (as an effect). Thus one is continuously concerned with the consequences of one’s actions in order to build on “good karma” or good actions which have good consequences. The possible implication for this in terms of time competence is that “what he/she is today is the result of past actions and what he/she will do now will influence what he/she becomes in the future.” (Karnik & Suri, 1995, p. 367). Hence one is living in the past, rather than the present, and living for the future, rather than for the here and now. The Indian participants in the investigation were recruited from the state of Punjab where the dominant religions are Hinduism and Sikhism, both religions advocating karma in their beliefs (Michaels, 2004). Thus it is plausible that an upbringing based on a culture that has the religious influence of karma beliefs (Indian, collectivistic) may cause an individual to be less time competent.

Regarding the inner orientated (I) scale, participants from an individualistic culture are more likely to be inner orientated because of the greater sense of self and individuality, and thus being more aware of one’s own needs and internal motivations, as opposed to the needs of others and external factors, when compared to collectivistic cultures. As discussed earlier, the inner-directed individual uses a “psychological gyroscope” to individually direct their behavior, whereas the other-directed individual uses “radar” to assess the needs and expectations of others to direct their behavior (McLaughlin, 2001). With collectivistic cultures defined as societies where “people from birth onwards are connected into strong, cohesive in-groups, which throughout people’s lifetimes continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty” (Hofstede, 1980 p.225), the notions of protection, loyalty and strong group membership imply that in

such cultures the needs of the “group” are paramount, and are prioritized above the needs of the individual. Thus it is more important for collectivists to have a “radar” that assesses the needs of others and external factors in order to direct their behavior in accordance with the group to maintain loyalty and membership. Whereas for the individualist whose ties with others are loose and “everyone is expected to look after him/herself” (Hofstede, 1980 p.225), it is more important to have a “gyroscope” to reflect on one’s own needs and internal motivations to direct behavior that promotes autonomy and self sufficiency. The finding that this difference was the greatest mean score difference between the two groups of participants across the scales reflects the essential defining difference between individualistic and collectivistic cultures with the former being inner-directed and the latter other-directed.

The POI Subscales

In support of the final three hypotheses, it was found that British and Indian participants’ responses differed significantly on 6 of the 6 predicted subscales of the POI in relation to “Valuing”, “Feeling” and “self Perception”.

The *Valuing Scales* consist of the “Self Actualising Values” (SAV) and “Existentiality” (Ex) subscales. These measure the extent to which the individual holds and lives by principles and values characteristic of the self actualising individual such as, autonomy and independence, self-sufficiency and self-efficacy, spontaneity and “newness” of experiences (Maslow, 1954, 1968), and his/her flexibility in applying these values to his/her life. The significant difference on these scales suggests that individuals from an individualistic culture hold and live by values that are in line with Maslow’s self actualising characteristics, more than individuals from a collectivistic culture. Some of the differences in these characteristics can be seen in the descriptions of the “modern” and “traditional” man by Triandis (1971). The “modern man” is described as being relatively independent of others (including parental authority), less concerned with time, open to new experiences and having greater control over self, future and nature – all characteristics reflecting individualism. The “traditional man,” on the other

hand, is dependent on others, especially on parental authority; suspicious of new experiences, has less control over self and feels influenced by nature rather than influencing it – all characteristics reflecting collectivism. Relating the “modern” and “traditional” man values to individualists and collectivists can explain why individualists are more likely to hold the values and characteristics of a self actualising person as defined by Maslow (1954).

The *Feeling Scales* refer to the subscales of “Feeling reactivity” (Fr) and “Spontaneity” (S). These scales measure the individual’s sensitivity to one’s own feelings and the expression of these feelings freely. The significant difference on these scales suggests that individuals from an individualistic culture are more sensitive to their own personal feelings and able to express these behaviorally, than are individuals from a collectivistic culture. This can be explained by referring back to the concept of the “psychological gyroscope” (McLaughlin, 2001). Individualists are more inner-directed, they use a psychological gyroscope to monitor and reflect on their own “inner” needs, feelings and motivations. Collectivists, however, as more other-directed, do not use this psychological gyroscope and subsequently are less likely to be sensitive to their inner needs and feelings; thereby scoring lower on feeling reactivity. Gudykunst *et al* (1987) found that individuals from a collectivistic culture were more likely to agree with the following statement than those from an individualistic culture: “Even if I’m not enjoying myself I often pretend I am”. This reflects the collectivists’ lack of free/spontaneous behavioral expression of their true feelings because of the concern of others and not wanting to “stand out” (Heine et al, 1999). In addition to this, Güss (2002) has identified ways in which individualistic and collectivistic cultures influence one’s decision-making. Persons from an individualistic culture are more willing to take risks, be more spontaneous in their decisions, for example using expansive-decisive business strategies, whereas individuals from collectivistic cultures are more risk avoiding, for example by using defensive-incremental business strategies (Güss, Strohschneider & Halcour, 2000). This finding that individualists are more likely to take risks than collectivists relates to the subscale of spontaneity measured in the current study, which showed that individualists scored higher for spontaneity than collectivists.

The *Self Perception Scales* of “Self regard” (Sr) and “Self acceptance” (Sa) measure an individual’s ability to like themselves because of their strengths and to accept themselves in spite of their weaknesses. The significant difference on these scales suggests that individuals from an individualistic culture are more able to regard themselves highly based on their strengths and in spite of any weaknesses than are individuals from a collectivistic culture. To explain this, the distinction between an independent and interdependent self-construal has to be debated (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Kitayama *et al.* (1997) suggested that having an independent or interdependent self-construal provides an individual with a cultural competence of either self-enhancement or self-criticism to live in an individualistic or collectivistic society, respectively. American and Japanese participants were asked to rate the extent to which their self-esteem would increase/decrease in success and failure situations. American participants showed a greater increase in self-esteem in success than decrease in failure situations; exhibiting self-enhancing. Conversely, Japanese participants showed a greater decrease in self-esteem in failure than increase in success situations; exhibiting self-criticism. Kitayama & Duffy (2004) suggest that individuals with an independent self-construal in individualistic cultures exhibit self-enhancing to “maintain a positive view of the personal self because it facilitates the ever-important cultural mandates of self-expression, choice and autonomy” (p. 60). Individuals with an interdependent self-construal in collectivistic cultures exhibit self-criticism because it “promotes the ever-important goal of fitting in” (p.60). Thus, individualists promote and self-enhance their view of themselves in light of their strengths, scoring highly on self regard, while collectivists are self-critical and so are less accepting of their weaknesses; scoring low on self acceptance.

In addition to supporting all the experimental hypotheses, the results also found the “Awareness” scales, comprising “Nature of man” and “Synergy”, to be significantly different between individuals from an individualistic compared to collectivistic culture.

These scales measure the good-bad dichotomy in man and one’s ability to resolve such dichotomies to live life in synergy. The significant

difference found suggests that individualists are more able to resolve dichotomies such as good-bad, right-wrong, selfish-unselfish, and so on, than are collectivists. This may be because for the collectivist, who is obliged to meet the needs and expectations of the social groups of which he/she is an integral part, it is important to have clear boundaries of what kinds of characteristics and behaviors are valued in these groups in order to maintain a “social norm”. Without these boundaries, or dichotomies, there would be a breakdown in the consensus of what is seen as good-bad, right-wrong. For example, if a member of a collective group did not see right-wrong as opposites, making the boundary of when behavior is right or wrong blurred, he/she runs the risk of going against the norms and expectations of the group. This can be likened to the tight-loose culture dimensions outlined by Triandis (1989). By definition, “tight” cultures have clear-cut group norms and expectations of members, and members who break or go against these norms are usually required to give up membership of the social group(s), since defiance is not accepted. Conversely, “loose” cultures have less clear norms and instead there are situations where breaking norms is accepted, or even expected. Non-Western, collectivistic cultures are, by Triandis’ definition, more likely to be “tight” cultures and therefore, for individuals from such a culture, having clear distinctions between dichotomies such as right-wrong are in line with the cultures norms and expectations, thus serving to promote social harmony; this would naturally lead to lower scores on the subscales of the POI.

Implications and future studies

The implications of the results are profound. Firstly, the concept of self actualisation, as defined by Maslow and the POI questionnaire, does not appear to be a cross-culturally valid concept, in that the characteristics measured are not applicable to collectivistic cultures in the same way that they are to individualistic cultures. As this study is one of the first investigations to test the application of the self actualisation concept in a collectivistic cultural setting, these results create a platform for further research into validating Maslow’s motivational concept in different cultures.

Further research is needed to establish whether the fulfillment of the individual in a non-Western, collectivistic culture is idealized in a different way. Living to our fullest potential is a universal theme, and the route towards unlocking this potential and fulfilling it might be dependent on our cultural values.

An example for an environment where different characteristics of motivation and self actualisation are being expressed might be the workplace. If self-actualisation as it is currently defined and characterised is not applicable to non-Western, collectivistic cultures, the practical implication is that its current use as a motivational technique in the workplace may only benefit individuals from a Western, individualistic culture. Thus prestigious companies such as Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS, 2007) that actively use Maslow's (1943) motivational theory and concept of self actualisation in their human resources management may be promoting individualistic values and as a result failing to effectively "reach out" and meet the motivational needs of their more collectivist employees. Furthermore, if the employees' level of motivation is being measured by the characteristics we examined throughout this paper, the employee from a collectivistic culture might show significantly lower levels of motivation which can be easily explained by flawed measurement. When explaining the differences between individualists and collectivists in the working environment Tiessen (1997, p. 367) says:

Individualists show proclivities for new venture formation and making major innovations. They tend to leverage their resources through contract-based relations [...]. In contrast, collectivists generate variety through group-based, incremental improvements and changes. Collectivists leverage their own resources by harnessing "clan like" affiliations. This description corresponds to the motivational differences described throughout this paper; it highlights the crucial importance of cultural research to be implemented in human resource management techniques in order to bridge the divide between individualistic and collectivistic cultures, allowing individualists and collectivists to work efficiently and effectively, side by side, in the same organizational environment.

Conclusion

Overall, these differences in the participants' responses can be attributed to the lack of applicability of the measurements and questions of the POI to a collectivistic culture. Since the results indicate that the participants from a collectivistic culture produced scores that were significantly lower than those participants from an individualistic culture, according to the POI, the direct implication is that collectivists are less "self actualized" than individualists. However, this paper suggests that this is not the case. The concept of self actualisation in a collectivistic culture may consist of entirely different characteristics to the ones measured by the POI. As debated in the introduction, the concept of self actualisation as fulfilling one's fullest potential might be applicable to any human being in any possible culture, but the characteristics and the actual fulfillment of this highest level of motivation might differ between cultures. We tend, as participants in the individualistic perspective, to automatically link the highest level of motivation (self actualisation) with fulfilling our private, intimate and motivational needs. Can we consider a different picture, one where people derive the fulfillment of their highest motivational satisfaction *not* from applying their private, inner perspective, but by fulfilling the needs of their environment, mainly their family and culture? The explanations given here for the differences in each of the 10 measurements of self actualisation indicate that the characteristics of each scale is far from being the "ideal" for individuals from a collectivistic culture. Therefore, with reference to the original ethnocentric criticism of self actualisation, the present results support this criticism and suggest that the concept of self actualisation and the characteristics that make up the well-adjusted individual are applicable mainly to Western, individualistic cultures.

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Ex Oriente Lux?
Georgius of Hungaria and his
Treaty on the Beliefs and Customs of the Turks.
Notes on an Apocalyptic Perception of the *Other*

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Abstract: Inter-religious dialogue remains an issue of major importance today. This fact is proved by the many conferences and meetings in which diverse religious and political leaders take part. The central idea of the present article is to show the importance of Georgius of Hungaria's *Tractatus de moribus, conditionibus et nequicia Turcorum*, an *opus* first published in 1481. The author gives a vivid example of the fact that we must recognize *the other* in our life. *The other* is our fellow human being, irrespective of color, faith, doctrine, and gender. Although there is an apologetic spirit in this treatise, as well as in the works of Saint John of Damascus and Saint Gregory Palamas, with regard to the Muslim faith, their basic idea is that we have to find a certain communion and feeling with people of other creeds or religious views. The experience of communion is the outstanding feature for the human being. The end-point or the *eschaton* is the one toward which all of us are called. The light of this end and the light of communion seem to come from the East, still a cradle of civilization, and the visions offered by these three authors mentioned above could provide us with a premise for the ideology of alterity.

Keywords: Inter-religious dialogue, other, Muslim, Christians, apologetic spirit, experience of communion.

If we think about the special importance played by the *other* in one's life, then we will realize to what extent the mystery of otherness is authentically and truly fulfilled in Christianity. Still, the Christian religion is not the only one in which we could discover sparks of the illuminative work of *otherness*. One of the first monographs written by Europeans on the beliefs, customs, institutions and culture of the Turks is Georgius of Hungaria's work entitled *Tractatus de moribus, conditionibus et nequicia Turcorum*, published in 1481. We must insist on this writing, still rarely remarked or not at all, because it constitutes one of the major contributions towards a good knowledge of the Ottoman universe of thought, and therefore probably the first *Tractatus* written by a scholar born in the Romanian region, at such an early date, even before Dimitrie Cantemir.

Georgius' work has been viewed as the most valuable account of the life and institutions of the Ottoman Turks in the fifteenth century¹. This paper records the experiences of an inhabitant from the Sebeş (Mühlbach) region, who was captured by the Turks in 1438 and taken as a slave until 1458, when he regained his freedom, went back to Italy, having become finally a monk within the notorious order of the Dominicans. Georgius' book was printed in several Latin editions between 1480-1550, passing through slight title modifications, and German (1530-1531). During that period, it was the most important and detailed source for the knowledge Ottoman life and culture by the Europeans².

Originally, the book was divided in the following sections: 1) *Prohemium*; 2) *Prologus*; 3) *23 capita* or numbered chapters with titles; 4)

¹ See Reinhard Klockow, "Die Erstausgabe des 'Tractatus de moribus, condicionibus et nequitia Turcorum' des Georg von Ungarn: Prolegomena zu einer kritischen Ausgabe", in *Südost-Forschungen. Internationale Zeitschrift für Geschichte, Kultur und Landeskunde Südosteuropas*, begründet von Fritz Valjavec, im Auftrag des Südost-Institutes München geleitet und herausgegeben von Mathias Bernath, Band XLVI, 1987, R. Oldenbourg Verlag, München, p. 57. We feel truly indebted to Dr. Klockow, who has been so kind to help us with the manuscript containing the translation of Georgius' book and some of his studies and articles. We have also to thank to Dr. Heidi Stein for the original German edition of the *Tractatus* and also to Adam S. Francisco. Therefore we express all our warm and deepest thanks to him.

² J. A. B. Palmer, "Fr. Georgius de Hungaria, O.P., and the 'Tractatus de moribus, condicionibus et nequicia Turcorum'", in *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library*, University of Manchester, 34 (1952/52), p. 44.

Ratio Testimonialis; 5) *Duo Sermones in vulgari Turchorum*; 6) *Interpretatio Sermonum Predictorum in Latino*; 7) *Opinio Abbatis Joachim de Secta Machometi*³. We are interested, however, for our study, in the details with regard to the Ottomans' religious convictions, which Georgius mentions, offering extremely interesting information. He suggests that, during his captivity, he reached a thorough knowledge of the Muslim beliefs, rituals and even theology.

The first edition of this treatise which appeared in Rome (1480), already offered a certain perspective on the feelings that the Europeans had just begun to share toward to Turkish threat, and the following Latin editions till 1530 had the same goal. The Latin editions from Germany (1530-1531) and those in German had a different purpose or at least a supplementary one, which is shown clearly in the preface written by Martin Luther for one of these late versions in Latin. Passing quite quickly over the positive and useful information regarding the moral principles and manners of the Muslims, Luther uses Georgius' writing in order to sketch out a series of unfavorable comparisons with his Catholic opponents, with the priesthood and monastic orders, holding at the same time to the superiority of his own interpretation of the Christian religion. Sebastian Frank, in the versions of Georgius' work owed to him, goes even further than Luther's arguments in order to prove the equal value of all the religious institutions. Thus Georgius' *Tractatus* becomes an instrument of apocalyptic propaganda of the Protestant movement against the forces of darkness embodied by non-Christians, especially the Ottoman Turks⁴. This is the real reason which makes us stress the importance of what Georgius has left to posterity.

At several times, Georgius really seems to have been on the point of converting himself to Islam, experiencing different forms of mystical visions which had confirmed to him the authenticity of this faith (religion), so much had it come to fascinate him⁵. Nevertheless, finally, he turns back

³ *Ibidem*, p. 52.

⁴ Sarah Henrich, James L. Boyce, "Martin Luther – Translations of Two Prefaces on Islam: Preface to the *Libellus de ritu et moribus Turcorum* (1530), and Preface to Bibliander's Edition of the *Qur'ān* (1543)", in *Word & World*, Vol. XVI, No. 2, Spring 1996, p. 252; J. A. B. Palmer, art. cit., p. 56.

⁵ This feeling results also from the way he speaks about Mahomed II. See R. Klockow,

to Christianity and later, when he was writing his *opus*, makes every attempt to state his strong attachment to the Christian faith. Yet the analyses made of his text prove his special admiration for the Ottoman culture, and his critical spirit toward Islam comes to be rather, as A. Classen remarks⁶, his form of self-defense against the fear of having transgressed the traditional European rules. Plenty of data indicate the fact that this text was very much read during that period among the Europeans, first because they became more and more worried about the rapid advance of the Ottoman forces, producing in this way an apocalyptic fear⁷. Readers emphasized however certain passages of the *Tractatus* which confirmed their prejudices that they had created about the Turks. For instance, Luther will become more familiar with the text in 1529 and will edit it once again, after having complained of the general lack of information regarding the Turks in a pamphlet in 1528 (*Vom Kriege wider die Türken*). Apparently he accepted the condemnation of the Turks and the Muslim religion as a main feature in the structure of Georgius' argument. Still even for Luther the presentation made by Georgius gained more credibility, unlike other texts about the Turks, because the author hadn't been a mere eye-witness, but proved the ability, natural for every true scholar, of observing also the positive aspects of this people's life and thought, instead of depicting the Turkish world, foreign to the cultural and spiritual space where he had been formed, in purely negative terms. The fact of the Turkish menace acquires an eschatological color in Georgius' story, being, indeed, in the eyes of people of that time, one of the terrifying signs of the End. Luther's central idea is that the Turks represented a danger as great as the Catholic Church for a Christian's salvation⁸.

“Georg von Ungarn und die verführerische Vorbildlichkeit der Türken”, in *Europa und der Orient. 800-900*, Lesebuch herausgegeben von Gereon Sievernich und Hendrik Budde, Berliner Festspiele, Berlin, 1989, p. 45.

⁶ Albrecht Classen, “The World of the Turks Described by an Eye-Witness: Georgius de Hungaria's Dialectical Discourse on the Foreign World of the Ottoman Empire”, in *Journal of Early Modern History*, Vol. 7, No. 3-4, November, 2003, p. 257.

⁷ R. Klockow counts seven manuscripts from 1481/82 until the XVI th century, 12 printings from 1481 until 1550 and 11 translations in German from 1482/83 until 1531).

⁸ Adam S. Francisco, *Marin Luther and Islam: A Study in Sixteenth Century Polemics and Apologetics*, PhD Thesis, University of Oxford, Oxford, 2006, p. 33.

Luther's new edition came at a proper time, when the Sultan Suleyman was just beginning a new siege on Vienna. Since the fall of Constantinople, in 1453, there was a general *turcophobia* in the whole Europe, the public opinion feeling itself threatened not only politically but also religiously. In the same time, the rise of the Ottoman Empire stirred a considerable curiosity, if not a visible admiration. Luther saw all these as being part of an almost apocalyptic scenario, as another impulse toward the fulfillment of an inner reformation of the Church. In fact, from the second half of the sixteenth century on, the interest for the Turkish, Persian or Indian culture and spirituality increased on the part of Western travelers in the Near and Middle East. It was thus, in fact, that modern Oriental research was founded.

For a long period, Georgius doubted very seriously the truth of Christianity, deciding to get used to Islam almost to the point of becoming a dervish himself, especially because he had already become a much respected person among the citizens, a kind of counselor. This might be so because of the trouble through which he had passed at the beginning, until he found a very kind master. But his religious crisis didn't last too long and for the last fifteen years of his servitude he kept his Christian faith, though in secret, until he regained his freedom⁹.

Georgius' treatise is characterized by an open hostility toward the Turks, despite many exceptions. Secondly, the treatise expresses deep Christian convictions that are put in contrast with the Muslim system of faith and doctrines, considered *false*.¹⁰ Thirdly, due to his long experience as a slave for the Turks and to his high intellectual level, Georgius makes a serious attempt to offer detailed information about the Turkish culture, knowing that his audience will be impressed by his accounts as a real eye witness. He approaches his subject in a very rational manner, sketching out the Turks' origin in the first chapters, their expansion and the etymology of their name, and then presenting the religion of this people. At this point, Georgius emphasizes his hostility toward Islam, describing the Turks in the most sarcastic manner. The third chapter is entitled *How terrible is the*

⁹ A. Classen, art. cit., p. 264.

¹⁰ Cf. D. Cantemir, op. cit.

Turkish sect and why we have to be afraid of them, in direct connection with the general opinion according to which the ascension of the Otoman power signified *the beginning of the Apocalypse*, of the eschaton. Besides, Georgius had remarked a decline on the part of the people to cultivate the good, plus their greed, their lack of obedience, the overloaded architecture and the so called claims of high science. But the Turkish menace was about to constitute the acme of all bad prophetic signs which obsessed the late medieval society, as also today, and the author was baffled to discover that nobody seemed interested in this crucial challenge which Christendom was passing through. He feared not only the social and moral decline that could affect the material welfare of the European society, but mostly the more dangerous menace which hovered over Christians. The Turks deprived people of material freedom, but they destroyed especially their spiritual power and weakened the stability of faith in their hearts. Practically, he was afraid of the seductive force exercised by Islam, a fact that could make the Christians living among the Turks become more open to the new faith:

There is no man with enough power to resist to this evil force. It is so huge and cruel, that it kills man bodily and spiritually, throwing him into hell, while his soul remains in the body¹¹.

Georgius gradually comes to hold a dualist vision, defining the relationship between Christians and Turks as an eternal spiritual conflict, especially because the Islamic religious ideas might penetrate man's innermost of heart, infecting his soul. He advises Christians to stay as far away as possible from the Turks' world, because the common man, the profane one, might not resist to this strong spiritual temptation. He is also concerned even with identifying the bad influence of Islam, but the more he

¹¹ Georgius de Hungaria, *Tractatus de moribus, conditionibus et nequicia Turcorum. Traktat über die Sitten, die Lebensverhältnisse und die Arglist der Türken*, Schriften zur Landeskunde Siebenbürgens, vol. 15, tr. Reinhard Klockow, Köln/Weimar/Wien, Böhlau, 1994, p. 176; apud A. Classen, art. cit., p. 266. A Hungarian edition of the *Tractatus* was published under the title *Kimondhatatlan nyomorúság két emlékirat a 15-16. századi oszmán fogságról*, tr. Fügedi Erik, Európa Könyvkiadó, Budapest, 1976, 267p.; and a French edition: Georges de Hongrie, *Des Turcs: Traité sur les moeurs, les coutumes et la perfidie des Turcs*, tr. du latin par Joël Schnapp, Anarchasis, Toulouse, 2003, 219p.

strives to demonize the Turks and their faith, the more he reveals the way in which he previously had exceeded the sensible border between Christianity and Islam. The confrontation between Turks and Christians is a final one, corresponding, chronologically speaking, with the end of days¹².

One of the most fascinating aspects of Georgius' book is the refined strategy by which the author draws attention to many varied examples to convince us about the Turks' bad nature, but viewed more deeply, it reveals, despite its marked apologetic spirit, that it expresses more sympathy than criticism. In his view, the Turks kept slaves alive in order to catch their souls, through the conversion to Islam¹³. On the other hand, he hints at the illuminated sultan, probably Mahomed II¹⁴, as has been observed by Prof. R. Klockow¹⁵. At first sight, almost every aspect of the Ottoman life and culture seems to be superior to the European life style. Although the Turks have been victorious in many wars, they haven't fallen prey to arrogance and *hybris*, like Christians, as Georgius informs us. He emphasizes a deep feeling of uncertainty about his own culture, because not only the poorest of the Turks, but also the richest prefer simple tents and hunting or shepherding during their spare time. The Turks prove that they are fully aware of the fact that they aren't permanent citizens of this world, but instead they are only travelers and have to be subjected to God. The Christians should follow this way as well, for the sake of Christ and faith: "propter Christum et fidem eius facere deberent ex uoto"¹⁶.

Nevertheless, Georgius is very clear in a crucial point: the Turks neither force anyone to convert to Islam nor do they try to teach people of other religious convictions about their faith. Even he was not forced, though he lived among them for twenty years. Nevertheless, the author never recognizes Islam as a respectable religion, very cautiously formulating

¹² R. Klockow, "Theologie contra Erfahrung: Die Argumentationsstruktur des 'Tractatus de moribus, condicionibus et nequitia Turcorum' des Georg von Ungarn", in *Zeitschrift für Balkanologie*, herausgegeben von Norbert Reiter, Stavro Skendi & Klaus – Detlef Grothusen, Jahrgang 25/1, Otto Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden, 1989, pp. 68-69.

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 192; apud *ibidem*, p. 268.

¹⁴ He was very polite, generous and supported the Orthodox Christian Church, showing at the same time curiosity about the Christian doctrines and rituals.

¹⁵ See note 5, *supra*.

¹⁶ Georgius de Hungaria, op. cit., pp. 232-236; apud A. Classen, art. cit., p. 272.

counterarguments by sketching out some amazing parallels with Christianity, e.g. his monotheistic view and the role of Muhammad as unique and true prophet. He uses Old Testament passages which condemn pagans in general (*reprobos*), although these don't refer to the Islamic religion at all. Then, he doesn't try to prove in any way the false character of the Muslim way of life and faith, offering as the only explanation for the Muslim imams' and ascetics' (dervishes) impressive life the *power of the devil*. At the same time, he admires their performances, showing that these people enjoy the experience of visions and spiritual, even mystic, ecstasies, and that many Muslims accept the Christian doctrine according to which Jesus was miraculously conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary, for which they have a special regard. Again, the explanation of these uncomfortable "confusions" resides rather in the devil's power (*diabolice potentie*), Georgius' stereotypical answer for many of the surprising resemblances identifiable between Islam and Christianity¹⁷. His discussion about the raptured dervishes and their frantic dances proves itself to be more problematic. On the other hand, as we said earlier, he shows his fascination for these religious visionaries, as he confesses that he had been the eye witness of a mystical revelation during a dance, hearing spiritual voices which came from a dervish, another one had fallen into a profound trance, seemingly dead. Georgius compares them with angels, especially because they had a special status, like teachers and spirituals of the community, but he will blame them later on because one of them had cursed a family, who hadn't welcomed him in their house, considering them *devil-possessed*.

As A. Classen remarks, the main problem of the treatise is the idea of recognizing alterity (otherness) as a constructive epistemological alternative for the cultural and religious identity of the person. Georgius shows this very thing in his special concern for Islam¹⁸. After his returning from slavery, a moment corresponding almost with a spiritual enlightenment, Georges turns radically against Islam, qualifying every experience lived in the Ottoman space as unfair, negative, as a deceptive work of the devil, that is pure illusion. Suddenly, the wonderful Turkish

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 178; apud A. Classen, art. cit., p. 275.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 278.

world becomes a construct of the Antichrist. Consequently, once this universe is integrated in an eschatological framework, its foundation really has to break down, and will, because there could be no truth found in it¹⁹. Although Georgius tries to show himself vehement against the Islamic religion, his account denotes, in past, his concern for this phenomenon. Probably inspired by the apocalyptic visions of Joachim de Fiore (1130-1202)²⁰, from which some sections appear in the final part of the *Tractatus*, Georgius becomes an ambitious defender of his Christian position. His contribution is very important, because he was a remarkable eye witness, in a period of late Middle Age terribly shaken by dilemmas and apocalyptic psychosis, of the growing European interest and fascination for this foreign world represented by the Ottomans.

Besides Georgius' work, we must mention also the contributions of Saint John of Damascus and Gregory Palamas, who offer a series of precious facts about the Islamic religion and its way of life. Saint John of Damascus considered that Islam is rather an idolatrous and superstitious heresy than a religion, even the *forerunner of the Antichrist*. Almost the same connotation can be met in Georgius' remarks within the *Tractatus*. In the same year when Saint John was writing *The Fountain of Knowledge* (743), Peter, the bishop of Maiuma, was condemned to death because he had publicly blamed Islam and nicknamed Muhammad *false prophet* and *forerunner of the Antichrist*²¹. This expression was used also for the emperor Leon III, for Constantine V and very probably for other important

¹⁹ Georgius de Hungaria, op. cit., p. 306; apud A. Classen, art. cit., p. 277.

²⁰ R. Klockow, art. cit., p. 69; cf. Bernard McGinn, "Reading Revelation: Joachim of Fiore and the Varieties of Apocalypse Exegesis in the Sixteenth Century", in *Storia e figure dell'Apocalisse fra '500 e '600*, Atti del 4 Congresso internazionale di studi gioachimiti San Giovanni in Fiore – 14-17 settembre 1994, a cura di Roberto Rusconi, Viella, 1996, pp. 11-29; Idem, *Visions of the End: Apocalyptic Traditions in the Middle Ages*, 2nd Edition, Columbia University Press, New York, 1998, pp. 126-141; Idem, "Apocalypticism and Church Reform: 1100-1500", in *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism*, vol. 2: *Apocalypticism in Western History and Culture*, ed. by Bernard McGinn, Continuum, New York, 1999, pp. 79-81. About the apocalyptic conceptions of Joachim de Fiore, see also Idem, "Wrestling with the Millennium: Early Modern Catholic Exegesis of Apocalypse 20", in *Imagining the End*, pp. 149-150.

²¹ Daniel J. Sahas, *John of Damascus on Islam: The "Heresy of the Ishmaelites"*, E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1972, p. 67.

political and religious leaders. It constituted a serious accusation oriented toward those about whom it was believed that they distracted people from the true faith (*orthodoxia*), by deceiving the faithful. Thus, in a special chapter on the Antichrist, Saint John considers not only the Devil as an antichrist but every man who doesn't believe in Jesus Christ:

It is antichrist he who doesn't confess that the Son of God has come in flesh, that He is perfect God and that He has made himself perfect man, being at the same time God. But in a proper and special sense, antichrist is named the one who comes to the end of days²².

Then, the name *forerunner of the Antichrist* used to be a kind of formula for the condemnation of those who falsified the Church's doctrines of faith, especially those referring to the divinity of Jesus Christ, as it appears and is used against the docetist Islam.

In 1354, another remarkable representative of the Eastern theology and mystique, Saint Gregory Palamas, during a diplomatic trip from Thessalonika to Constantinople, was captured by the Turks somewhere near Kallipolis²³. In the period of captivity, he is taken through different cities of the North-Western part of Asia Minor or Anatolia. This slavery lasted a little more than a year, from March 1354 till July 1355, and Saint Gregory remembers three meetings during which he discussed religious issues: one with Ishmael, the great emir Orkhan's nephew; a debate with a group of Jews recently converted to Islam; and a dialogue with an imam from Nicaea. These are described in a pastoral letter addressed by Saint Gregory to the Christians from Thessalonika²⁴. Skipping the numerous strictly historical details, we may keep three central ideas which seem to wander through Saint Gregory's text, ideas that have a similar color with Georgius' considerations. First is the conviction according to which Anatolia's Turkish conquest and his captivity were part of the divine plan of salvation. For

²² Sfântul Ioan Damaschin, *Dogmatica*, tr. D. Fecioru, 3rd edition, Scripta, Bucharest, 1993, p. 200.

²³ Daniel J. Sahas, "Gregory Palamas (1296-1360) on Islam", in *The Muslim World*, vol. LXXIII, No. 1, January, 1983, p. 1.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 3.

most of the people in the regions conquered by the Turks, everything meant an end, but those who were able to pass these difficult tests took part in a new world. At the same time, the meeting of Christianity and Islam represented a conflict between two religious cultures and ways of life that excluded each other. Then, finally, for Saint Gregory, this religion had to be viewed, as all the other religious phenomena, in the light of Jesus Christ, the God-Man²⁵. All the pains that Christians passed through were due to moral decay and ignorance. The dialogue with the Muslim imam had as central subject a comparison between Jesus and Muhammad. For Saint Gregory, Jesus is Christ, inseparable from the Father, who will come back to judge people. For his Muslim interlocutor, He is only a servant of God and a prophet, accepted by Islam as one of the prophets of the written revelation that we find in the Gospels.

These contributions that we have briefly mentioned can help us make a summary sketch of the relationships between Christians and Muslims, for which we might find a conceptually eschatological foundation. Man's preparation for the eternity can be made only through dialogue, without losing or relativization of faith. But this is a very old lesson which the contemporary man still has to learn from his ancestors.

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²⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 12.

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REVIEWS

Rudolph C. Heredia, *Changing Gods: Rethinking Conversion in India*, Penguin Books, 2007, ISBN: 0143101900.

**Review¹ by Santosh Kr. SINGH
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When faith is institutionalized, it becomes religion. While religion is rigid, the beauty of faith has been its fluidity. The reason why religion is being seen globally today as the most potent weapon of mutual destruction is because of the loss of the element of faith as its central component. The politics of identity further accentuates and hardens the religious boundaries. The prospect of any dialogic engagement between different religious landscapes is strongly frowned upon by the community supremacists. In such a time of mutual contempt and denial, the ever-present current of faith and its perpetual proclivity of transcendence beyond the demarcated religious territories generate extreme situations of controversies and contestations. The issue of religious conversion is one such volatile situation.

The book under review, by Rudolph C. Heredia, a Jesuit sociologist by his own declaration, is a courageous academic intervention as he tries to forge a middle ground of sanity and common sense amidst fiercely contested domains of pro- and anti-conversion ideological positions. Heredia argues that the issue of conversion, especially involving Christianity, evokes such sharp reactions because of its associations with colonialism. Taking on the orthodox element within proselytizing religions and their construction of conversion as an event of victory over the 'other' rather than a process of perpetual quest for higher level of spiritual

¹ First published in *The Tribune*, Chandigarh, India, on September 30, 2007, under the title *Shades of conversion*.

awareness, the author questions the legitimacy of conversion which is facilitated and mediated through external inducements or network of power or force. Conversion becomes subversive, he argues, when religion works as political ideology rather than spiritual faith.

This, however, in no way undermines the possibility of conversion as an emancipatory, affirmative and enlightened journey of self. Conversion as an option of exercising one's right as individual or collectivity in search of higher truth can be liberating. A Dalit's urge to embrace Buddhism, for instance, as a moment of departure or escape from centuries-old shackles of abhorrent caste practices needs to be understood with empathy and in the context of its historicity. This journey may be fraught with failures and frustration but to negate the possibility of transition itself is violation of basic human rights. Those who are opposed to conversion are characteristically those for whom what is sacrosanct is the religious territory and its boundaries and not the people.

Speaking of the extremist element within Hinduism today, Heredia questions its idea of Hinduism as a monolithic entity and contends that even within non-proselytizing religions there have been transitions and shifts and syncretism. Citing the notion of Gandhi's *Atmaparivartan*, the author argues that even though it is different from *Dharmaparivartan*, it indicates the possibility of eternal urge for change being omnipresent.

Reacting sharply to the attempt of appropriating Gandhi's rejection of the concept of conversion by the fundamentalist element within Hinduism, Heredia considers it a gross injustice to the legacy of *sarva dharma sambhav* of Gandhi. Gandhi understood conversion primarily as an element of colonialism and hence his apprehensions. Moreover, he had tremendous faith in his reformatory ideals and therefore always advocated the autonomy of all religions. His supreme understanding and the practice of the idea of peaceful coexistence through resolution of inner contradictions have no meeting point with the highly vitriolic and exclusivist brand of Hinduism.

In a chapter, "Personal Journeys," the author passionately explores the nuances of conversion through a brief biographical description of spiritual journeys of Ambedkar, Gandhi, Pandita Ramabai and sister Nivedita. Through these life sketches, the author highlights various shades of conversion and most importantly debunks the notion of definitiveness in transition from one to other religious landscapes. The chapter captures the trauma, ambiguities and dilemma involved in the process of conversion.

In a multicultural and pluri-religious society and the world that we live in, the keys to religious harmony and stability are increased inter-faith dialogues and religious disarmament. The author here highlights the significance of Gandhi's non-violence and belief in goodness of others as beacon of hope. A culture of healthy debate and dialogue across religious boundaries will have to replace the culture of hegemony and silence. Only then would it be possible to convert conversion from a tool of subversion to a diversity-enriching, liberating process.

The merit of this book is that it is replete with academic rigor, powerful arguments and a sensitive but fearless treatment of a subject not many academicians would dare to engage with such alacrity.

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Sheila Greene Davaney, *Historicism: The Once and Future Challenge to Theology*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006. ISBN 0-8006-3219-2.

**Review by Mac Linscott RICKETTS
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This volume of some 200 pages is one in a series, "Guides to Theological Inquiry," edited by Kathryn Tanner of the University of Chicago Divinity School and Paul Lakeland of Fairfield University. The series is intended to introduce students and scholars of various disciplines, theologians, and clergy to academic movements that are most relevant to contemporary theology. Historicism, although often in opposition to theology, is, has been, and will continue to be a "challenge" to theology, as Davaney's title suggests. In the Foreword, the editor, Professor Tanner, even states that "No intellectually responsible Christian can avoid the challenges of historicism,"

The book is divided into four major chapters: 1. "Modernity and the Emergence of Historicism," 2. "Nineteenth-Century German Historicism," 3. "Historicism in America," and 4. "Toward a Contemporary Historicism." Chapter

1, the shortest, traces historicism to the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation, which cast off the authority of the Church, replacing it with the Bible. There followed then, in Europe, nearly a hundred years of religious wars. “Enlightenment modernity” arose subsequently out of Galileo’s scientific and mathematical discoveries and Descartes’ new philosophy, based on reason alone. Deism replaced Christian theology among the framers of the American Constitution. This rational form of religion had been in the process of evolving since the sixteenth century, and became widespread in Western Europe and America. There were scholars as early as the seventeenth century who were insisting that the Judeo-Christian scriptures be treated like any other historical documents. This “historical-critical” study of the Bible would reach an acme in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Toward the end of this chapter, the author discusses Kant, Hamann, and Herder, eighteenth-century German Enlightenment thinkers, who were forerunners of the German historicists of the next century.

In the second chapter, Davaney accords major and detailed attention to the flowering of historicism in nineteenth-century Germany. Among the many individuals to whom she gives special attention, the first are W. von Humbolt, L. von Ranke, “the founding figures of the German tradition of historiography”. Romanticism was central to the century. The Romantics, although opposed to the “Historical School,” nevertheless were historicists, and “placed great emphasis on particularities and individuals.” The big names in German Romanticism were Schleiermacher, Schlegel, and Novalis. Georg Friedrich Wilhelm Hegel was perhaps the most influential philosopher of history of the century. His fundamental idea was that of Absolute Spirit (*Geist*) or Reason as the driving force in all reality, including history. Hence, he believed that “every epoch and every civilization is to some degree the manifestation of cosmic Spirit,” whether individuals are conscious of it or not (p. 40). He further believed that history was a benign, progressive movement, albeit predetermined.

Ludwig Feuerbach was Hegel’s great posthumous critic. Davaney asserts that he founded a new philosophy of religion that “turned Hegel’s position on its head.” Whereas Hegel had made history, including religion, the manifestation of Spirit, Feuerbach claimed the opposite: that human beings, as a species, project their image of themselves in nature upon something they called God. Karl Marx, a contemporary of Feuerbach, began like him as an heir of Hegel, but also came to develop a philosophy of his own. Davaney explains that Marx’s theory understands human beings as historical agents who construct themselves through their labor. For Marx. “Productive activity or labor is thus humanity’s primary form of

relationship with itself and with the rest of the world” (p. 46). But labor increasingly becomes a form of alienation, between the worker and the product of his labor, and between social classes, etc., reaching a peak in capitalism. Religion too is an expression of alienation and must be abolished.

Three other major figures in nineteenth-century German historicism discussed in this chapter are David Friedrich Strauss, Wilhelm Dilthey, and Ernst Troeltsch. Strauss was influential in advancing the science of Biblical criticism, rejecting supernatural events in the New Testament as neither to be taken literally nor rationalized as exaggerated natural events. But he accepted the Hegelian dictum that the divine had entered history, and that religious truth, in mythical form, still remains significant.

Dilthey argued for a “philosophy of life,” declaring that life means no more than itself. But humans do not experience life chaotically; they continually create a meaningful world. And they create *worldviews*, of which he recognized three kinds (naturalism or materialism, idealism of freedom, and objective idealism). Each is historical, and hence all are partial attempts at making sense of life.

Troeltsch, whose work carried over into the twentieth century, had studied under Albrecht Ritschl who argued for a this-worldly, ethical Christianity that would bring the Kingdom of God on earth. He also was influenced as a student by the History of Religions School, where the comparative study of religions was dominant. Here, religion was viewed as the history of the Spirit manifesting itself in history. Davaney associates Schleiermacher, Rudolf Otto, and (later) Mircea Eliade with this school, although, in this reviewer’s opinion, Eliade’s roots are sunk primarily elsewhere. Troeltsch insisted that Christianity as well as all religions must be evaluated as products of the history and the cultures in which they were formed. Furthermore, Christianity must be seen as one religion among many, with nothing unique about it.

Chapter 3 brings the study of historicism to America. Davaney characterizes historicism in the United States as being linked to pragmatism, modern science, a new naturalism, democracy, and a more global perspective, as compared with its European champions. William James (1842-1910), the first American historicist she discusses, is more often known for his pragmatism, a term and method originated by C.S. Peirce. But he was equally a historicist: “For James, ideas, concepts, and beliefs [...] are thoroughly human and, as such, finite, contingent, and fallible, just like the world of which they are a part” (70-71). This, many historicists and pragmatists readily accept. But he developed a metaphysical view of reality that has remained controversial: “radical empiricism.” Rejecting

both theism and materialism that undermine free will, he conceived of the universe as composed of a multiplicity of individual realities, *always in relation with one another*. These entities, in their relationships, hold reality together, and hence there is no need for a God or other unifying agency. Nevertheless, he is known for several books he wrote about religious experience, in which he tried to historicize his conception of God. For this too he was criticized by the more conventional historicists, and he remains an ambiguous figure.

Davaney states that John Dewey (1859-1952) is “among America’s most significant intellectual figures,” whose work created an American version of historicism that had far-reaching implications. A man of many parts, he was “the quintessential public intellectual whose thought and social activism were intimately interconnected” (81). He reconstructed philosophy, Davaney states, rejecting previous philosophies, all of which had in common the designation of something as “really real,” ultimate, fixed, immutable, transcendent, and therefore outside time. Those who claim to have found such an ultimate truth or reality assume the right to wield authority over others, thus making their philosophy or religion a matter of power. In contrast, Dewey proposed that philosophy was an inquiry born of the need of humans to deal with their natural and cultural environments — something, in a word, *historical*. As Davaney asserts succinctly, “Gone are the illusions of final or ultimate truth and in their place are concerns for the enhancement of finite existence [...]” (85). Dewey, as would be expected, accepted pragmatism, the use of scientific method broadly conceived, aligned with historicism. Moreover, he was “perhaps the greatest champion of democratic ideals in the twentieth century” (87). As for “religion,” Dewey argued for a radical reinterpretation of it, as “the unification of the self through allegiance to inclusive ideal ends [...]” (Dewey, [Davaney, 90]). But is such a historicized and naturalized religion possible, practically speaking, the author wonders.

A large section of Davaney’s Chapter 3 is devoted to the “Early Chicago School of Theology,” which flourished in the first half of the twentieth century at the University of Chicago Divinity School. Its faculty were primarily individuals who held to “higher” biblical criticism, attempting to separate historical fact from myth and legend, while being assailed by traditionalistic scholars and church leaders who clung to a literalistic view of Scripture, known as “Fundamentalists.” Much of their work centered on the “quest for the historical Jesus.” The author names six men as prominent in this school, and selects three of them for detailed examination: Shailer Matthews (1863-1941), Gerald Birney Smith (1868-1929), and Shirley Jackson Case (1872-1947). Matthews stated that religions are

sociological entities, part of the interconnected movement of history. Smith asserted the thoroughly historical character of all human thought and activity, including theology, which for him was a form of cultural and social analysis. Case is known especially for his attempt to reconstruct a biography of Jesus, while acknowledging that neither the Gospels nor any other ancient sources can be viewed as authoritative. At best, he said, they reveal the historical conditions out of which the early church emerged. But Jesus, like anyone else, was a product of his times and his own experience, and there is little that can be known about him from the written materials available. Also treated in this chapter are Mordecai Kaplan (1881-1983), founder of the liberal Reconstructionist Judaism, which shared many of basic views of the liberal Protestantism of the time; and W.E.B. Du Bois (1868-1963), a founding member of the NAACP (National Association for Colored People) and long-time editor of its periodical, *Crisis*. All of these men had much in common, as questioners of traditional philosophy and religion, and proponents of worldviews based on non-supernaturalism, pragmatism and historicism.

“Toward a Contemporary Historicism,” Davaney’s final chapter, treats her subject as it evolved in the middle up to the end of the twentieth century. She first reminds the reader that there were many types of historicisms in the latter nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that heavily influenced theology and religion. But in both Europe and America, historicism declined as the twentieth century progressed, she states. Only in the last several decades has it begun to re-emerge. But in mid-century, she considers the work of the theologian H. Richard Niebuhr (1894-1962) very important, as a “bridge connecting American theology with what was taking place in Continental theology, especially in the form of neo-orthodoxy and the theology of Karl Barth” (122). Niebuhr argued for the historical and social character of human existence: “the human self is dependent upon its history” (123). As for “God,” Niebuhr had a more specific concept than did the members of the Chicago School, for instance. His “radical monotheism” was trust in “the One Beyond the Many,” or that which is left when lesser faiths (in multiple, fragmented loyalties, or in a single finite loyalty, such as family, society, nation) are transcended.

Turning to the end of the century, the author mentions briefly Latin American, Black, and feminist theologians who rejected the traditional theologies that seemed to them to have been allied with oppressive historical conditions. “Postmodernism” is mentioned in passing, with the notation that various meanings have been given the term. For the first time, Davaney offers critiques of a few of the persons whose views she sketches (Mark C. Taylor, David Tracy, George Lindbeck), while also expressing appreciation for their work.

In the last major section, she presents her own version of historicist theology, “pragmatic historicism.” She associates her views with the similar views of seven other persons (including Gordon Kaufman, Sallie McFague, and Cornel West), but that the total system as presented here is hers alone. Those wishing to read a full statement of her theology may consult her book, *Pragmatic Historicism: A Theology for the Twentieth-first Century* (Albany: State University of New York, 2000).

In the book under review here, she stresses that her historicism takes into account not only “human-made” history, but also a “historicized natural world,” a point overlooked by earlier historicists. Like nearly all historicists, Davaney acknowledges the debt of every individual to a specific past, but she, like other contemporary historicists, recognizes that this past is not singular or unified. “Every tradition is in reality many traditions, conglomerations of distinctive and even heterogeneous elements [...]” (149). Furthermore, these pluralist traditions have boundaries or characteristics that distinguish them from other “historical trajectories,” but these boundaries are “porous and ever-changing.” Davaney contrasts this view with certain current theological orientations, such as “postliberalism,” that contend that religious traditions have “stable and invariant cores and distinguishing borders marking them off from other historical traditions” (p. 149). To the question, how are can historical traditions lacking essences and having shifting borders be distinguished, she refers with approval to the methodology of Jonathan Z. Smith, University of Chicago historian of religions, who formulated a “polythetic” approach to classification of groups. For him, a concrete group is characterized not by a few essential features possessed by all of its members, but by a great many features that are possessed by a “large number” of individuals in the group, though no one feature is possessed by every member. As Davaney expresses it in terms of pragmatic historicism, “[G]roups exhibit a plurality of distinguishing factors, all of which will be exhibited by differing members of a group at some time. However, none will be present everywhere nor will all be present in any given individual, subgroup, or temporal moment” (p. 152).

Added to these things is another factor, “multitraditionedness,” the recognition that humans are influenced by traditions other than their own national, religious, cultural, and linguistic traditions. Unlike many earlier historicists, current historicists and others are insisting we must recognize a “plurality of ways of belonging” in the fragmented world in which we live. As to the epistemological implications of pragmatic historicism, it blurs more than any previous historicism

the distinction between the physical and human sciences. Further, it maintains that human have no unmediated access to the world or any way to determine “timeless and absolute truth” (156).

Contemporary theology, the author states, viewed from the perspective of pragmatic historicism, has failed to attain a fully historicist position, despite the wide abandonment of old notions of religion as something *sui generis* and different in kind from anything else. Some theologians, she contends, have continued to embody “untenable assumptions” about religions and have even “surreptitiously” reintroduced nonhistorical elements into their views. She applauds the work of anthropologist Clifford Geertz, post-liberal theologian G. Lindbeck, and pragmatist G. Kaufmann, who define religions as “overarching or encompassing frameworks in which humans interpret existence, name reality, and delineate humanity’s place within the wider cosmos” (159-60). Most recently, Prof. Davaney reports that there has been a movement away from an elitist preoccupation with texts and beliefs, toward the study of what ordinary religious people do in practicing their religion. Also, no longer do theologians speak in the singular of “Buddhism,” “Christianity,” or “Hinduism,” but in the plural of each, recognizing that they are not unified wholes. Indeed, the category of “religion” remains a contested “mechanism” of limited practical value. Theology, for pragmatic-historian Davaney, “might best be characterized as a form of cultural analysis and criticism that is distinguished from other cultural discourses by virtue of its concern with those human formations we are designating as religions or similar cultural configurations that give meaning and direction to human existence” (p. 161). Thus, it has nothing to do with “timeless truth” or some nonhistorical realm.

Summarizing, in conclusion, Davaney declares:

Pragmatic historicism acknowledges human historicity and its implications for all of our human efforts to understand life and to endow existence with meaning and value. It extends the recognition of fallibility, contingency, and partiality to our most cherished beliefs and practices. It affirms that we live mediated lives, always encountering reality through the particularities of bodies, cultures, languages, geographies, and histories. To embrace such finitude and historicity does not lead to despair [...]. It leads instead to the possibility of a risk-taking, life-embracing, existence, grounded in who we have been and open to the possibility of new and more vital ways of being (p. 169).

This book, one of a relatively few that attempt to introduce the whole subject of historicism, tracing its history and major thinkers from the sixteenth

century, is not an “easy read,” despite its declared intended users. The final chapter, especially, will be difficult for persons not familiar with the evolution of historicism in the United States. The frequency of multisyllabic words and coined technical terms will be a stumbling block for foreign readers – and not for them alone! It is obvious that the book is designed for upper-level classroom use, primarily in American theological schools, I would judge. The serious philosophy or divinity student, especially if he has some grounding in philosophy, who is willing to read and reread Professor Davaney’s book, will gain much from it.

The subjects of the first three chapters seem adequately covered. But Europe drops out of sight in the fourth chapter, and Latin America, Asia, and Africa are virtually invisible. To develop chapters on these geographical areas would increase the readers’ difficulty, but it would also enrich his or her wisdom.

The book contains an excellent index, a useful bibliography can be gleaned from the endnotes, and a very helpful Glossary is thoughtfully included.

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***Patterns of Middle-Class Consumption in India and China*, Edited by Christopher Jaffrelot and Peter Van der Veer, Sage, New Delhi, 2008, ISBN: 9780761936237.**

**Review¹ by Santosh Kr. SINGH
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India and China have emerged as the two most powerful economies of the world. It is being argued that the era of globalization has benefited these societies the most. The robust economic growth of an unprecedented scale bears testimony to this. However, the segment which has been dominating the limelight recently is the ever-mysterious middle class in both the countries. Changes in these societies, as witnessed from the late 20th century onwards, have been characterized by the burgeoning middle class and its bewildering behavior patterns.

¹ First published in *The Tribune*, Chandigarh, India, on June 15, 2008, under the title *Force behind globalization*.

The concept of “middle class” has always been a notoriously elusive and ambiguous category. There have been attempts to pigeonhole the concept in some kind of definition with universal acceptability, but to no avail. As a matter of fact, the phenomenon of middle class can best be described by its *ethos*, by conditions which are symptomatic of the formation, crystallization and existence of a category somewhere between the top echelon and the base of a society.

However, there are a number of common elements across the cultures which are characteristically middle class. It is unambiguously linked to modern, industrial and post-industrial conditions. The rise of skilled professional categories and then lately the boom in the service sector has rearranged the social order of traditional societies from pyramid to olive to onion-shaped structures. The middle class everywhere invariably shows the insatiable and unabashed urge to exhibit; to flaunt and indulge in what Thorstein Veblen called “conspicuous consumption”. It makes its presence felt through consumption of food, clothes, newer consumer items and, most importantly, experiences which are adventurous and hedonistic in taste and orientation.

The conspicuous consumption of “global commodities” by the middle class in contemporary societies everywhere, in a way, has worked as the engine of globalization. Both China and India are no exceptions to these trends. The volume under review here is a serious attempt to unravel some of the mysteries around this class while highlighting the role of specific social and cultural contexts in its formation and then in designing its configuration.

In India, the emergence of the middle class as an objective reality is attributed to the arrival and spread of British colonialism. Initially, mainly the petty bourgeoisie and the upper castes with primary Westernization became its almost exclusive constituents. But gradually, as the freedom struggle gathered momentum, the middle class came to occupy the central place in anti-colonial protest movements. The significant presence of lawyers, for example, among the top leadership of the Indian National Congress underlines this fact.

In post-independence India, however, the kind of economy and polity that the Indian state followed had deep imprints of Gandhi’s anti-materialism. A city was looked upon essentially as a landscape of sin, amorality and avarice. The 1980s however saw a change in some of these premises. By the 1990s, the dismantling of *licence raj* structures was in full swing. This heralded a new era, which became a breeding ground for the middle class *mentalites*. The boom in the service and the IT sectors severely undermined the earlier upper caste tag of the professional and the occupational profile of the young Indians forming the main bulk of the middle class.

China also followed almost a similar trajectory. Mao's period and the Cultural Revolution in the 1950s were marked by anti-city, anti-materialist and anti-imperialist ideological overtones. It was only in the post-Deng Xiaoping period of the late 70s that the opening up of the economy began. Shanghai, which once was described as a city of dreadful delights and everything un-Chinese, became a new reference model of modernity and growth. Both Mumbai and Shanghai emerged as powerhouses of the globalized era levered by the unprecedented magnitude of energy supplied by the new middle class sans any frills or fiction.

The chapters of this book, for instance, on the changing sexual behavior of young Chinese women professionals and the impact exerted by American television dramas like *Sex and the City*, in Jacqueline Elfick and Patricia Uberoi's analysis of the middle class' fetish for ostentatious marriages as reflected through some of the bridal magazines and their ways of catering to this new clientele, capture the dynamics of the market, modernity and the changing value system of the middle class in both these societies. Besides, the entire gamut of aspects of consumer culture has been explored - tourism, leisure activities and the entertainment industries (art, karaoke and soap operas) - as well as consumption of experience through these.

The Indian middle class, however, seems to retain some of its anti-colonial characteristics from the past. Hence, when it comes to its response to the forces of Americanization, unlike its counterparts in China, it is more balanced and rooted in tradition. As Carol Upadhyia convincingly argues in her chapter, the IT professionals she interviewed combined a deep sense of globalization with a strong attachment to their Indian roots.

In short, the middle class in both China and India seems to have finally arrived. At the moment, it's time for sheer pragmatism and mammon worship without much care for the old baggage of collective morality. A vast majority of people, however, in both the societies continue to undergo pauperization at the periphery. Moreover, internal differentiation and discontentment exist within the middle class itself. This is perhaps a major concern: how long will the majority continue to silently endure this conspicuous consumption on the part of the middle class? Hence the ideal of an equitable distribution of the gains of economic growth is the key to any future projections in these societies.

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