Rethinking Civilizational Analysis

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Preface

One very pleasant day in July 1998 during the meeting of the World Congress of Sociology in Montreal, Canada, we met in a Chinese restaurant in Montreal to discuss having a special issue of *International Sociology* devoted to the rethinking of civilizational analysis. Tiryakian had just reviewed Samuel Huntington's controversial *Clash of Civilizations*. Our very persons as first and second generation immigrants to the United States, our meeting place in the Chinatown of the major center of the French-Canadian civilizational enclave in North America, and our convention of professional colleagues from all over the world seemed to belie Huntington's notion of insular and mutually antagonistic civilizations and suggested what in his term could only be a single deeply and multiply 'cleft civilization'. We knew that Huntington was not the only one who had been thinking in terms of civilizations in the 1990s. In fact, a line of thought opposite to the dyspeptic reflections of the Harvard professor, on Islam as the enemy civilization, was being developed in the turbulent ambience of revolutionary Iran. In a 1991 lecture on 'Our Revolution and the Future of Islam', Sayyed Mohammad Khatami, then Iran's Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, saw a great challenge in what he considered the crisis of contemporary Western civilization. He argued that the Islamic revolution in Iran could become the source of a renewed Islamic civilization only if it fully engaged with Western civilization and absorbed its positive aspects. The fact that such divergent views of civilizations could arise simultaneously in very different parts of the world demonstrated the salience of the idea in the global age and indicated the timeliness of our idea.

Active planning for the volume in the following year coincided with the adoption by the General Assembly of the United Nations of a proposal by Khatami (now President of the Islamic Republic of Iran) to call 2001 the Year of Dialogue of Civilizations. It seemed all the more important to push for the appropriation by social sciences of the concept of civilization as a heuristic unit of comparative analysis akin to 'nation', 'state', and 'religion', while enhancing the pluralistic awareness of the global encounter of civilizations in the spirit of the United Nations' designation of that year. The first printed copies of the special double issue of *International Sociology*, 16 (3), bearing the fateful date of September 2001, reached the editorial office at the State University of New York at Stony Brook on or about September 11. In July 2002 we held a symposium on the issue's theme at the next World Congress of Sociology in Brisbane, Australia, and are now publishing it as a book with four additional essays, its relevance for our contemporary world situation made even more striking in the past two years.

It is appropriate that *International Sociology* and its publisher seek to bring to the public what we see as a pioneering work in a global field of studies. Nearly 15 years ago Martin Albrow and Elizabeth King culled from various pieces appearing in *International Sociology* a volume entitled *Globalization, Knowledge and Society* (Sage, 1990) at a time when the theme of 'globalization' was barely discussed. We trust that *Rethinking Civilizational Analysis* will provide a similar multidisciplinary stimulus.

Saïd Amir Arjomand
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Contributors

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New Science: The Breakdown of Connections and the Birth of Sociology (1989).

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Introduction

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and
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The objective of the present volume is to recapture the analytical and empirical significance on the contemporary scene of civilizations and their dynamics globally and within major regions. It seems only a short while ago that 'civilizations' were relegated to the dustbin of the history of social thought as 'globalization' and 'world system' came into prominence. But changing world demographic, economic and political reality has called for an urgent reconsideration of civilizational analysis. In the economic sphere, the rapid emergence of East Asian 'dragons' as global economic powers has led to considering their civilizational base, their deep toolkit of cultural values, as critical factors. In the demographic sphere, large-scale immigration into Western industrial societies of a population having a different religio-cultural background, whether Islam, Buddhism or other non-Western faith communities, has given rise to 'multiculturalism' as a new feature of the sometime uneasy commingling of civilizations in what had been seen as a homogeneous Western civilization. In the political sphere, the events and martial consequences of September 11 revived the shibboleth of 'civilized' versus 'barbarians', while the actions and weaponries used against 'the other' by the 'so-called civilized', to use Balandier's apt phrase, demonstrates that technological hypermodernity is no guarantee of acting civilized (Balandier, 2003).

The first two essays of this volume provide a temporal orientation on the historical use of the idea of civilization and its sociological relevance. The other essays fall into theoretical, historical-comparative and critical parts, which are interrelated and necessarily overlapping.

I

Intellectual historian Bruce Mazlish opens up the historical seedbed of civilization in his essay (Chapter 1) by noting that 'civilization' appears in the 18th century at a critical juncture point when Western reflexivity became obsessed with its secular perfectibility. The 'invention' of the term civilization is put to use in viewing 'connections' linking people together – and also in separating them, that is, in separating 'non-civilized' from 'civilized'.

Mazlish looks further in comparative-historical fashion by discussing, on the one hand, how the 'modern' Westerners of the 18th and 19th century related to previous civilizations via 'archaeology' as a new science of mankind, and on the other, how value-laden 'civilization' and its derivative 'civilized' became when used to relate to other contemporaries, and, as illustrated by the case of Japan, how others 'outside' the West appropriated the concept.

Marcel Mauss, the nephew, first student and successor of Emile Durkheim in between the two World Wars, had, on the eve of World War I, collaborated with his uncle on a methodological note regarding 'civilization'. Their starting point was civilization as 'a sort of moral milieu in which are found a number of nations and in which every national culture is only a particular form' (Durkheim and Mauss, 1969: 453). In their brief note they pointed to the comparative analysis of civilizations as a sociological ingress to 'international life' – a sort of superior kind of social life which sociology must study.

The selection from Mauss in this volume (Chapter 2), prepared with an introduction by Diane Barthel-Bouchier, is an extension of the methodological note, which Mauss developed first in 1929 in a multidisciplinary conference on civilization. It is his most extensive treatment of the subject and an important marker of the period.[1] Mauss may be seen as sharing an important 'modern' outlook on the theme of civilizational analysis. With all the painful experiences of World War I behind him (and unaware of the still more painful one of World War II that would again make problematic European 'civilization'), Mauss saw a world civilization advancing technologically, for example, in the spread of the cinema, albeit this would not mean the homogenization of cultures. But material progress and the superiority of Western civilization in technology did not confer, he also noted, moral superiority (Mauss, 1969: 481). Unfortunately, Mauss left us only with fragments of a sociological civilizational analysis, but they are an important legacy.

II

How can sociology appropriate, or reappropriate, the concept of civilization? The first obvious step is the renovation of the sociological tradition of civilizational analysis as advocated by Edward Tiryakian in Chapter 3. He argues that civilization has been a contested term since its inception in the 18th century. It was much in use in the following century, often unreflectively as shorthand for Western triumphalism. Notwithstanding the pioneering sociological studies of Weber and Durkheim and Mauss, civilizational analysis languished in the mainstream of the social sciences after World War I. After tracing the development of the idea by two 'generations' of social scientists that followed the classical period: Sorokin, Elias, and Nelson, as an interim group, followed by the more recent conceptualizations of Huntington and Eisenstadt, Tiryakian draws on the latter two

for a reflection on civilization and modernity in light of the post-September 11 world and concludes with suggestions for a renovated conceptual approach to civilizational analysis.

In his chapter S.N. Eisenstadt offers an analytical summary of his thesis on modernity as a distinct new type of civilization, with emphasis on the primacy of its cultural and political dimensions.[2] Even though this civilization is unprecedented in its openness, reflexivity and uncertainty, it can be understood by the same mode of analysis developed in his application to the 'Axial Age Civilizations' that grew around the world religions and the rise of philosophy – that is, in terms of the crystallization of a distinct picture of the world and an 'ontological vision', combined with a specific cultural program embodied in a distinctive institutional formation. It can thus be considered the civilization of the Second Axial Age. Although this civilization originated in Western Europe, it has become a global civilization with the continual development, constitution and reconstitution of a multiplicity of cultural programs of modernity and modern institutional patterns. It is thus a civilization of multiple modernities, both in the sense of containing totalistic and pluralistic cultural and political appropriations of the program of modernity, which stand in constant mutual tension, and in the sense of culturally specific adaptations to modernity of different countries and civilizational regions. As a valuable postscript to Eisenstadt, Donald Levine provides an important background check on the metaphor of 'axial age', tracing its genealogy in German thought from Jaspers back to earlier sources, in particular Scheler and Simmel.

In Chapter 6, Wolf Schäfer extends the analysis introduced by Mazlish, first by an extensive discussion of the linkage of 'civilization' and 'culture' in anthropology and in German thought's antithesis between *Kultur* and *Zivilisation*, a contrast that was articulated by Kant with culture having the connotation of 'higher goals of moral cultivation' and civilization with 'mere good behavior'. Schäfer traces the later semantic history of culture and civilization, with a combative use of culture as superior to civilization, or civilization being morally superior to culture, put to rest by the early analysis of Robert Merton.

What is in place, he argues, is an emerging global civilization 'with lengthening networks of technoscience' in 'the pluriverse of local cultures'. Such a technoscientific civilization claims no particular territory, and has no center but, as typified by the Internet, knows no state barriers. It is interesting to note that Alfred Weber (1998[1921]: 200–203), whose distinction between, on the one hand, the civilizational process as cumulative and universal, and on the other, cultural emanations and religion as non-cumulative and particular, sharply diverged from Max Weber, not only in underscoring the antithetical character of the distinction but also in denying altogether the dynamic properties of the world religions. By dropping the emphasis on this opposition, Schäfer's central theme of an emergent technoscientific civilization can be closely tied with the theme of 'civilization of modernity' found in the essays by Tiryakian and Eisenstadt.

We need to be more specific about how civilization can be conceptualized as a heuristic unit of comparative analysis akin to 'nation', 'state' and, 'religion'. Three features of civilization as a macro-level unit of analysis stand out. First, civilizations are not fixed in time and space. They are historical entities that change across successive generations and spread to different societies and polities. Kroeber's (1963) definition of civilization as an assemblage of cultural styles and patterns that develop and have specific growth profiles highlights the need to conceptualize the direction of change ('flow and reconstitution') distinctive for each of them. Historicizing distinctive civilizational processes is thus a major theoretical challenge.

Second, not only does it transcend units such as 'society' and 'nation-state' in terms of social space, but it has the quality of not being time-bound. This latter quality makes civilizations – or more strictly speaking, elements thereof – capable of inter-epochal transposition as well as inter-societal transmission. Both features stem from the universality or universalizability of value-ideas and generality or generalizability of symbolic systems, discourse, and institutions that comprise a civilization (Nelson, 1981: 90–92). Third, 'civilizational complexes', to use Nelson's felicitous phrase, are highly differentiated but nevertheless culturally and historically integrated.[3] Institutions and ideas that constitute these complexes can be transplanted singly or selectively.

The integrated whole is, however, also capable of assuming an identity, of being reified, hence having boundaries. This can occur vis-à-vis 'the other' – which is why every civilization has its barbarians. It should be noted, however, that the reification of a civilization is not exclusively or primarily a phenomenon of self-congratulation and arrogance of power. The holistic conception and reification of a civilization typically occurs in civilizational encounters. Those who reject the importation of institutions and ideas typically see them as incapable of detachment from the alien mother civilization as a whole – as did the traditionalists who rejected Greek philosophy in medieval Islam. But the same holistic conception of a foreign civilization as superior to one's own can be offered by the enthusiasts for its importation, as by converts to other world religions. Such a reification was certainly the basis of the advocacy of Westernization as the wholesale importation of the Western civilization by the Russian elite since Peter the Great, and by the elites of the Ottoman Empire, Iran and Japan in the 19th century. A similarly holistic image of the West as the home and sponsor of the free market and democracy has been at work in post-Soviet countries since 1989.

The holistic conception of civilization entails its 'de-differentiation' (Tiryakian, 1985) and the highlighting of its perceived fundamentals as the focal point of transformative or oppositional social action, and tends to ignore its complexity and possibilities for selective adaptation. The improbable phenomenon of Hindu fundamentalism can best be understood as a prime example of such civilizational contraction (Frykenberg, 1993), as can Islamic fundamentalism. While Nelson's idea of 'civilizational encounters' (1981) emphasizes complexity, differentiation and therefore selective

adaptation, Huntington's notion of 'clash of civilizations' (1996) presumes the holistic conception. Both the fact of complexity of civilization and the temptation to its holistic reification play a part in the dynamics of the case of inter-epochal and inter-societal encounters between the Islamic civilization and the Greek and Indian ones covered by Arjomand in Chapter 12.

In his chapter, Johann Arnason highlights the tension between the unitary and pluralistic meanings of the notion of civilization, both of which have been important for the development of the social sciences. Is there one civilization, opposed to barbarism, or are there many civilizations with contrasting features? It is the idea of civilization in the singular that lends itself most easily to the justification of imperial domination and is therefore most hotly contested. The pluralistic notion, though open to criticism on the grounds of reification, projection and 'othering', is of ambiguous instrumental value and not so evidently contestable. If Max Weber's idea of rationalization can be considered an extension of the pluralistic conception of civilization, Elias's idea of the civilizing process presumes the unitary notion of civilization. Suggesting the greater theoretical utility of the pluralistic conception, Arnason advances a provisional model for linking civilizational patterns and the civilizing processes such as rationalization. Elsewhere (Arnason, 1990: 224–25), he also points out that 'civilizational complexes are very important sources of identity that can be 'reinforced and reoriented by the global context'. Like the nation and the nation-state, they can thus be the focus of 'sub- or counter-globalization'.

The present volume testifies to the thrust of Nelson's civilizational analysis, to his valorization of different paths to modernity taken by different civilizations and their coming together at important juncture points. In Chapter 9, Donald Nielsen, one of Nelson's students at the New School, provides the reader with an extensive discussion of Nelson's conceptual framework that framed the emergent sociology of civilization*s* (note the plural), while in Chapter 10, Randall Collins provides vindication for a focus on intercivilizational encounters in laying out an ecology of civilizational prestige. His empirical materials on intercivilizational attraction in the case of Muslim Spain point to several religious components interactive with one another. He finds similar patterns in Asia, for example in the case of Indian Buddhists who went north to China and were well received as 'propagators of highly respected wisdom'.

Inter-civilizational contacts and patterns of interaction are thus reasonably well covered in this volume. By contrast, the equally important issue that does not receive sufficient attention in this volume is *intra*-civilizational historical/developmental patterns and their dynamics. Max Weber put forward the idea of rationalization as the most important developmental process in human history, but only explicated it systematically in the last year of his life.[4] Norbert Elias's 'civilizing process' consists of the broad socio-cultural implications of the process of state-formation in terms of the concentration of the legitimate use of violence according to Weber's famous definition of the modern state. Elias derived this from an analysis of that

developmental pattern in Western civilization. It can, however, be generalized thematically and cross-culturally. In Chapter 7 of this volume, Arpad Szakolczai amplifies Elias's civilizing process of restraining and eventually eliminating violence from human relations by boldly relating it to Weber's perspective on charisma and prophecy. Eiko Ikegami (1995) has successfully traced the parallel Japanese intra-civilizational process of 'the taming of the Samurai' through the progressive sublimation of violence in their culture of honor as a result of the distinct developmental pattern of the Japanese polity.

Replacing a unitary notion sense of civilization by a pluralistic conception more adequate for theoretical analysis, '*the* civilizing process' (editors' emphasis) of Elias must give way to 'civilizational processes', which can capture the distinctive direction of change in major elements within each civilization. This is a matter of considerable importance in civilizational analysis, especially in the global contexts where intra-civilizational processes intermingle with inter-civilizational ones and the development of the civilization of modernity. The 'social anthropology of civilizations' as developed by Robert Redfield and Milton Singer provides a model for a correlative definition of these two types of civilizational processes.

Each civilization has a Great Tradition at the center and many local Little Traditions in the periphery. 'The social organization of tradition' (Redfield, 1989[1956]: 40–59) links the two through priests, literati and intellectuals as 'cultural brokers'. The Great Tradition, as seen by Redfield and Singer:

> becomes the core culture of an indigenous civilization and a source, consciously examined, for defining its moral, legal esthetic and other cultural norms. A Great Tradition describes a way of life and as such is a vehicle and a standard for those who share it to identify with one another as members of a common civilization. (Singer, 1972: 7)

The dynamic aspect of the model consists in the mutual approximation of the two traditions. Furthermore, a distinction is made between this 'orthogenetic' process and the 'heterogenetic' process of borrowing from other cultures/civilizations. In rethinking civilizational analysis, we can call the first an 'intra-civilizational' and the latter an 'inter-civilizational' process. This perspective also complements Eisenstadt's forward linkage of civilization and modernity by linking the latter backward to tradition. Tradition is not static but changing: 'the learned literati [are] an institutionalized agency for changing tradition, so long as they regard the change as primarily preservative of the tradition's essentials' (Singer, 1972: 42). This reconceptualization of tradition paves the way for Eisenstadt's multiple modernities.

To make sure this model is not forgotten as an abstraction, let us consider two important contemporary instances of the intra-civilizational process: Sanskritization and Islamicization. In his classic study of Sanskritization, M.N. Srinivas (1956) aptly contrasted it to Westernization rather than modernization. He defined Sanskritization as a process of cultural mobility among the lower caste, which resulted in the enhancement of the central Hindu values as expressed in the Sanskrit texts – notably vegetarianism,

teetotalism and subjugation of women, and the greater integration of Hindu society around them. Srivinas was struck by the paradox that while many members of the Indian elite from the Brahmin caste were the cultural brokers of Westernization, the lower castes were eagerly imitating the Brahmin's way of life and were thus the primary agents of Sanskritization. Sanskritization and Westernization were the two concurrent processes of social change in contemporary India which sometimes reinforced each other but often moved in opposite direction.

The contradictory direction of the two processes puzzled Srinivas who wondered if the former would, in the long run, turn out to be the prelude to the latter. Singer (1972: 389) solved the puzzle, but without taking the full credit for doing so, by pushing his argument to its logical end. The conceptual solution is that Sanskritization is an intra-civilizational and Westernization is an inter-civilizational process. The intermingling of the two can in principle be analytically mapped out and their respective relative weight would then be an empirical rather than a conceptual question.

Two parallel processes of Islamicization and Westernization have similarly been concurrent in the Islamic civilization. As the ideas of development and modernization were ushered in by the United Nations in place of Westernization, as the civilization of modernity has struck firm roots during the half century since the publication of Srinivas's article, we may here speak of Islamicization as our intra-civilizational process, and modernization as our inter-civilizational process. Arjomand (2003) has identified a historical pattern of geographical expansion and intensive societal penetration of Islam as a world religion that accounts for the expansion of Islam as the fast growing contemporary world religion, and for the Islamic reformist and fundamentalist movements which seek to make their respective societies more Islamic. This Islamic intra-civilization process is accelerated by many key processes of modernization such as urbanization, spread of literacy, expansion of higher education, growth of the media of mass and electronic communication and national political integration. The two processes intermingle in the global context. The increasing global integration of the Muslim world has induced many Muslims to emphasize their unique identity within the frame of reference of their own culture, which can be said to be at once universal and local or sub-global.

There can be no doubt that global integration has made many Muslims seek to appropriate universalist institutions by what might be called Islamic cloning. We thus hear more and more about 'Islamic science', 'Islamic Human Rights', 'Islamic international system', and a variety of organizations modeled after the United Nations and its offshoots. Most notable is the Organization of the Islamic Conference, which was founded in 1969 and has 57 countries as its members. The cloning is unmistakable. Despite its intent, the assimilative character of defensive counter-globalization or counter-universalism is quite pronounced. It has already resulted in the assimilation of universal organizational forms, and, albeit restrictively, of universal ideas such as human rights and rights of women (Arjomand,

2004b). It is difficult to escape the conclusion that, despite its intent, defensive counter-universalism is inevitably a step toward the modernization of the Islamic tradition. It is thus a part of the global civilization of multiple modernities.

III

Part III focuses on the historical developments within, and comparisons among, the Chinese, Islamic, Indian, and Western civilizations. In Chapter 11, Cho-Yun Hsu considers differential outcomes in inter-civilizational encounters within a single setting, namely China. He considers the factors that made for the receptivity and institutionalization of Buddhism, on the one hand, and on the other, despite efforts by Jesuit missionaries, the abortive attempt at introducing Christianity. He proposes several factors that produced different outcomes, including the level of participation of intellectuals and the level of popular support in the general populace.

A third 'empirical' essay that relates to Nelson is Said Arjomand's (Chapter 12) comparative study of medieval Islam and its civilizational interaction (or encounter) with Perso-Indian and Greek political ideas. Why, asks Arjomand, was there a differential reception of Greek philosophy, as exemplified by acceptance and diffusion of Aristotle's *Ethics*, but not his equally available *Politics*? This puzzle opens up a broad vista for the sociology of civilizational analysis for it suggests that not all parts or values of a given civilization are readily assimilated unto another, even if the encounter is not violent or involuntary. Aristotle's *Politics*, in this instance, must have been less compatible with the political premises of medieval Islam than Perso-Indian statecraft.

T.N. Madan's condensed essay (Chapter 13) is a testimony to the penetrating analysis of the central Indian 'value-idea' of 'hierarchy' by the late Louis Dumont, which has its grounding in Durkheim and Mauss. As Madan makes clear, India's caste system must be taken seriously as an authentic civilizational scheme and not as a product of 'social degeneracy'. The caste system is a complement to its opposite ideology, Western individualism. Madan is careful to note that, on the one hand, there is significant regional variation within India, and on the other, that western capitalist societies, though their 'value-idea' is that of equality and individualism, are characterized by 'class divisions and socio-economic inequalities'. It is tempting, one might infer, to view 'homo hierarchicus' and 'homo equalis' as Weberian ideal types, heuristic in the comparative study of civilizations.

In Chapter 14, John Hall gives us an ultimate look at Weber's core concern: what accounts for the rise of the West? Hall's 'Eurocentric confession' gives weight to the breakthroughs of the West, not in the moral/ideational sphere usually associated with Weber, but with structural factors, socioeconomic processes and even luck (in access to material resources). Hall grants the economic dynamism of the West, but leaves with

a paradox: 'the West caused a jump in social evolution most of all because of its relative failure as a civilization'.

IV

John Rundell applies a new perspective on the clash of civilizations to the Australian context in Chapter 15. The British made use of a conception of 'civilization' that made the civilization of indigenous life invisible and legitimated the sovereignty of the colonial state. Rundell draws both on contemporary archaeological/anthropological research and on Durkheim and Mauss for a contrasting interpretation of indigenous civilization as a dynamic process. The civilizing process is a creative one for the social membership, one of continuous tensions between the sacred and the profane. Following Durkheim, civilizations as sets of symbolic representations, which are 'culturally instituted understandings of social creation', are not contained in discrete territorial units, but extend in time and beyond frontiers. Aboriginal 'inscriptive practices' in story-telling, song and art cut across the sacred and the profane, the present and the past. They were ignored, rendered invisible or ploughed under British colonial-settler civilization. Rundell then looks at civilizational encounters and the changing Aboriginal modernities. For the settlers, the modernities went from the initial interpretive view of 'empty lands', to viewing the Aborigines as an absolute outsider (the 'bestiarium' who needed conversion), to the development of 'civilized' welfare paternalism. But inside the Australian indigenous civilization, their Aboriginality has been a living form creatively responding to the challenges of the civilization of colonial domination.

Huntington's basic thesis of the replacement of the clash of ideologies during the Cold War by the clash of civilizations around their geo-cultural 'fault lines' had an immediate and enormous political impact. However it also generated a critical literature that became a sizeable academic industry. Although the terrorist attacks of September 11 were taken by the American press and public, and by many in Europe, as proof of the validity of Huntington's thesis, the flood of scholarly criticisms continued unabated and some international gatherings, notably the Joint Forum of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) and of the European Union (EU) in Istanbul in February 2002, sought to distance themselves from Huntington's views. It therefore does seem appropriate to examine September 11 more closely from a civilizational-analytic point of view.

Huntington's thesis had already enjoyed enormous popularity with Islamic fundamentalists in the 1990s. A few days after the September 11 attacks in New York and Washington, a Turkish daily sympathetic to Islamic fundamentalists quoted a professor as saying 'We have not as yet witnessed a full clash of civilizations in the concrete, though the events of September 11

constitute the beginnings of such a concretization' (*Zaman*, 18 September 2001). What is more important, bin Laden and Al Qaeda militants tacitly endorse the thesis of Huntington. The instructions found in the luggage of the September 11 highjackers refer to 'the admirers of Western civilization' who are besotted in their love of it as 'the followers of Satan'. Referring to their astounding success, bin Laden declared: 'these events have divided the world into two camps, the camp of the believers and the camp of the infidels' (*New York Times*, 8 October 2001).

Huntington himself, however, was at first much more cautious. In an interview with the *New York Times* (20 October 2001), he implicitly acknowledged many criticisms of his thesis. He maintained that Islam's borders are bloody because there are so many of them and with every other civilization, that it is not Islam but demography (large number of males in the 16–30 age bracket) that accounts for militancy and terrorism, that there are as many intra- as inter-civilizational conflicts. He claimed to have made the point with reference to Islam and suggested that it is bin Laden who wants a clash of civilizations (not himself). Above all, he denied the presumption that civilizations are unified blocks, which had been taken as a basic premise for their inevitable clash, highlighting the lack of cohesion as the main problem with contemporary Islam.[5]

Newsweek started the year 2002 with an article on 'The Age of Muslim Wars' which, according to its author, Samuel Huntington, 'began as the cold war was winding down in the 1980s'. Here, Huntington recognizes the rise of Islamic fundamentalism as a response to modernization and globalization. Furthermore, he acknowledged the causal relevance of the Israeli government's 'provoking the second *intifada* with its settlements and ongoing military presence in the West Bank and Gaza,' and concludes that 'the resentment and hostility of Muslims toward the West could be reduced by changes in US policies toward Israel.' In fact, much of his analysis seems unobjectionable, except for the use of the terms 'Muslim wars', and 'Muslim violence' to refer to the incidence of violence 'involving Muslims' without necessarily having a religious cause. (Where religious causation can be established, as with 'Muslim terrorism', the term is not objectionable, even though we consider 'Islamic terrorism' more accurate.) But the problem with the argument remains the unbridged gap between Islamic terrorism and Islam. This gap makes the clash of Western and Islamic civilizations meaningless. Yet, another metaphor of Huntington's can throw some light on the subject: the idea of 'cleft countries' such as the United States that replicate the hypothesized 'fault lines' within them (Huntington, 1996: 209). It would be more accurate to speak of one cleft, global civilization of modernity, in which both dialogue and clash among different elements of civilizational complexes is inevitable. From the perspective of this new global civilization and its discontents, the September 11 tragedy shows the alarming new possibilities for revolutionary violence by clandestine groups as an expression of such discontents.

From the critical literature on the clash of civilizations, we have chosen

an analytical rather than political critique by Gregory Melleuish. In Chapter 17, he argues against Huntington's assumption that civilizations are rigidly unified political and cultural entities – hard, impenetrable, resistant to change and clashing. Melleuish contends that civilizations are, on the contrary, entities capable of developing in a variety of directions. They interact through the goods, ideas and people who move from one to another, in cooperative activities as well as in warfare: 'Civilizations are not closed systems like billiard balls but porous and open to outside influences.' Dan Chirot's essay, Chapter 16, combines critical and constructive purposes, providing a balance in relating the 'clash of civilizations' to 'uneven modernization'. He is as critical of multiculturalists who reject Westernization altogether, as of 'Huntingtonians', who reject that 'the rest' can evolve with the West in a 'single modern type of social structure with a broadly common modern culture'. Thus, Chirot converges with Eisenstadt in a broad modernization perspective that opts for an emergent civilization of modernity.

In the final chapter, Hamid Dabashi critically examines the noted cultural historian Jacques Barzun, who views civilization as having reached its pinnacle in the West and is now at the stage of decadence. Dabashi sees this as a conservative stance, a defensive strategy, shared by various intellectuals in the face of changing global material conditions with 'the moral correspondence to it as yet to come.' Dabashi explores the evolving context of the idea of Western Civilization as it replaced Christendom in providing legitimacy to ruling regimes. He proposes that 'civilizational thinking' during the Enlightenment phase of modernity provided 'a universal frame of collective identity' to the triumphant bourgeoisie, which established national cultures. From whence the twin inventions of 'national cultures' and 'civilizational constructs' were deployed in hegemonic domination of the vast colonial empires. Yet, Dabashi does not end the story there: first he notes that the colonially constructed sites, such as 'Islamic', 'African', and other such, turned the tables on the cultural intruders by becoming sites of colonial resistance, and not the passive, inert entities constructed by 'Orientalists'. Second, he points to growing demographic cracks in the West and to the demise of national economies in the face of the new configuration of global capital and labor, generating its own culture 'which is at once post-national and as a result post-civilizational.'[6]

Taken together, the pieces have provided an historical overview of the concept of civilization, which we offer in the post 9/11 world situation as a more critical unit of sociological analysis than the nation-state or the world-system. The volume as a whole should be seen by readers as a collaborative endeavor to stimulate a new research agenda for sociology in the 21st century, one that will increasingly be structured by inter- and intra-civilizational encounters, both amicable and conflictual. Ultimately, this is a work in progress, like our world situation.

Notes

1. Victor Karady has put together a variety of other pieces of Mauss dealing with civilization (Mauss, 1969: Chapters 5 and 6).

2. For a full exposition, see Eisenstadt (2003). For Eisenstadt's place in the third generation of the sociological tradition of civilizational analysis, see Chapter 3.

3. Recall that Sorokin, an early sociological pioneer in this field, viewed a 'civilization' as 'a unified meaningful-causal system' (Sorokin, 1947: 639).

4. Alfred Weber was wrong in considering religio-cultural movements as non-cumulative. Max Weber, on the other hand, correctly considered them cumulative and developmental, but in his general statements tended to misconceive their character as a rationalization process of the instrumental and formal kind. In fact, the type of rationality at work here is architectonic rather than instrumental.

Many sociologists, notably Habermas and Schluchter, have treated rationalization as a universal rather than a culturally/civilizationally specific process. Arjomand (2004a) has argued against the widely accepted presumption that the major long-term developmental processes consist in universal instrumental and formal rationalization. He proposes a contrasting notion of *value*-rationalization as a developmental process on the basis of the assumption of pluralism and diversity of normative orders as building blocks for the institution and modification of society by collective judgment through constitutive struggles.

5. In truth, bin Laden's terrorism has as many roots in the modern political tradition of revolutionary terrorism, begun with the Jacobins during the French revolution and developed by Russian revolutionary groups in the 19th and early 20th centuries, as it does in the Islamic tradition. Like the fascist movements in the inter-War Europe, radical political Islam represents 'the Jacobin dimension of modernity' (Eisenstadt, 1999) in the contemporary Muslim world. It is thus a phenomenon of the global interpenetration of civilizations which has created a distinctive civilization of modernity.

6. Dabashi's analysis converges with that of Leslie Sklair (1995) who proposes that the culture-ideology of the global system is provided by consumerism.

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I. THE INTELLECTUAL BACKGROUND

1

Civilization in a Historical and Global Perspective

Bruce Mazlish

The term 'civilization' was invented and conceptualized only in the second half of the 18th century, in France. In *L'Ami des hommes: Traité de la population* (1756), Mirabeau the elder (father of the famous orator of the French Revolution) used the modern term 'civilization' to designate a society in which civil law had replaced military law; that is, a juridical notion already present in the previous century. He also used it to describe a group of people who were polished, refined and mannered, as well as virtuous in their social existence.

Let me hazard an initial short list of characteristics; in fact we can grasp the concept of civilization and thus the challenge it represents only in terms of historical development. Police is one. It is essential to the notion of civilization, as noted by Mirabeau in his stress on civil law. It entails the subjugation of force and violence to public legality. This development is a precondition of expanding trade and commerce, which requires a stable government and the protection of property rights. Cities, too, are essential for sustained commerce. In these cities, the cultivation of manners – civility – is facilitated. Norbert Elias (1978) has shown us one example of how the civilizing process occurred in early modern Europe, moving from the courts to the cities, and from the nobility to the bourgeoisie. In the civilizing process, women play an increasingly important role, and one measure of civilization is alleged by some thinkers, such as James Mill, to be the position and treatment of women in the society. And lastly there is, in the original formulation by Mirabeau, an assertion that religion was 'the principal source' of civilization, because of its softening of manners (Starobinski, 1993: 3).

Clearly, much has still been left out. The fact is that civilization is a deed, a movement, a process. It is necessarily always changing (sometimes regressing). Human consciousness, as I am arguing, became fully aware of

its past in this regard only in the 18th century, mainly in Western Europe, and especially in France; thus the *concept* of civilization was formulated for the first time. Quickly after its introduction in 1756, the term's usage spread, though unevenly. And almost as quickly the problem arose of civilization being viewed as a universal, substantive form of secular perfectibility, based on the growth of reason (and thus on the European model, obviously thereby embodying a normative judgment), as the goal of all societies, *or* of its being recognized as a plural – civilizations – as a condition achieved by many different societies in different ways.

The word 'civilization' comes forth at roughly the same time as most of the other terms in social science make their appearance (in fact, the term 'social science' itself was first used around 1789). The idea arises in an efflorescence of modern, western reflection on the bonds that hold peoples together – or apart. For as the pace of change increases, just before the French and Industrial Revolutions, accompanied by an increasing consciousness, reflection on the different forms and stages of 'connections' linking humans together – or fraying and breaking – becomes obsessive (Mazlish, 1989).

In short, the emergence of the concept 'civilization' is overdetermined. For example, civilization is preceded by the concept of 'society', which itself emerges in the late 17th century. At that time, western man and woman realize that their society is not unique, but is only one among many, and will itself change shape over time (by the 19th century, Carlyle will coin the term 'industrial society' as the successor to 'feudal society'). Moreover, the new awareness carries with it the realization that society is created by humans, not gods, and that it can be consciously changed by human reason (although others see it as changed by unconscious, organic forces). By the 18th century, the notions of civil society, the public sphere, and public opinion join that of society and take center stage. Earlier notions of civility melt into the notion of sociability and this is attached to the idea of democracy. Work in biology, with Buffon and culminating in Lamarck, provides an 'evolutionary' context (though pre-Darwinian) to the notion of secular perfectibility. Progress, whether by reform or revolution, is a keyword of the period. And lastly, I would argue, the concept should be seen as part of the battle of the ancients and the moderns, with even the Greeks now seen as 'savage', lacking in both the material and moral aspects of 'civilization'.

Now, we must note that the modern concept 'culture' arises a short while later in reaction to 'civilization'. Specifically, civilization comes to mean for many people the cold, calculating, mechanical, and universalizing way of thinking embodied, supposedly, in the Enlightenment and in revolutionary France. Culture, on the other hand, as enunciated by the German philosopher Herder, in the 1780s, is seen as rooted in the blood, land, and unique history of a particular people: the *Volk*. Between *Volk* and humankind a gulf is opened up, made specific with the invasion of the German states by the French revolutionary armies. On this account, civilization is merely material, while culture is mainly mental and moral, and as much about the