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Plural Culture, Singular Future*

RYSZARD STEMPLOWSKI

The *Jahrbuch für europäische Überseegeschichte* celebrates its tenth anniversary. In response to the kind invitation from the editor, I dare share with the readers some of my research and, without disrupting the spirit of the anniversary, some personal concerns. The research refers to history and my personal concerns are about the future. They go together. History is the past of the future and there is no future without a set of beliefs we call history. But historical narrative is a property of each and every human being and/or group. Even a big group history, be it the history of a nation-state or a region like Latin America or a "continental" history of Europe, is not a history of humanity. Neither are the otherwise interesting world history books. And although it is true that progressively more sophisticated methodologies and new sources will improve the results of research, the historical sciences will not produce a generally shared narrative or set of beliefs until the world population, including the historians, advances as a community. That implies a common future, the singular future. There will be one future or no future at all.

   I am not afraid to say what somebody may well relegate to sheer platitudes: nothing should prevent peoples and individuals from cooperating when the stakes are truly existential. And the stakes are existential. Suffice it to mention weapons of mass destruction, the extent of human impact on the environment, organized efforts at the creation or modification of complex biological systems. Our situation is not only fragile; it is dangerous. Since we have learned to live with fear, we do not give enough thought to it, while assuming that something will be done in time to avoid gloomy outcomes. Leaders or governments, of course, are expected to define an adequate strategy. Will they be able to live up to our expectations? We the his-

torians can help by sharing our knowledge and concerns, while participating in civic discourse about our common future.

On thinking of the existential challenges, I remember the "coalition of cultures" (Levi Strauss), i.e. the concept which articulates communication among them and the resulting enrichment of each and every one of them. For such a very general idea to be enhanced to a formula allowing a functional relationship among states – an enhanced coalition of culture – there is a need for an appropriate political culture. And furthermore, such a political culture has to free us of the Westphalian idea of sovereignty. Although special actions of governments are needed to help create such a political culture and thereby enhance the coalition of culture, I believe that only the integration of states, commencing with functional integration, can be the most effective answer to the existential challenges: it may secure our survival and – why not say it – bring greater justice. Admittedly, it is a goal for many generations to come, but we, here and now, should do more than just wait and see. I would like to begin with and dwell extensively on the concept of civilisation as it seems to be the most general term that is most widely used in deliberations about the plight of humanity. In this context I shall consider the issue of Eurocentricity. Later I focus on the notion of an enhanced coalition of cultures and elaborate on its implications.[1]

Civilisation revisited

We all remember the material impetus for the debate about the significance of the concept as provided by an article on "the end of history" by Fuku-

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1   In this essay I draw heavily upon other publications of mine. (1) My book: W prowadzenie do analizy polityki zagranicznej RP, vol. 1, Warszawa 2007, (2) revised part of the article: W stronę koalicji kultur, in: Polski Przegląd Dyplomatyczny 2/2/6, 2002, pp. 5-14, for the English version see: Towards a Coalition of Cultures, in: The Polish Foreign Affairs Digest 2/2/3, 2002, pp. 145-155. (3) Antyterroryzm i hegemonizm, in: Polski Przegląd Dyplomatyczny 2/4/8, 2002, pp.5-14, for the English version see: The Polish Foreign Affairs Digest 2/3/4, 2002, pp. 37-47; (4) States and Cultural Studies in Latin America, in: Ryszard STEMPLOWSKI (ed.), On the State of Latin American States. Approaching the Bicentenary, Kraków 2009, pp. 385-437; (5) Indivisible Sovereingty and the European Union, in: David J. EATON (ed.), The End of Sovereignty? A Transatlantic Perspective, Münster 2006, pp. 237-242; (6) Updating Sovereignty, a paper delivered at the Europaeum and Karlova Universita Conference in Prague, 2009 (forthcoming); (7) O pojęciu kultury politycznej, a paper for a volume of the collected contributions (2009) by the collaborators of the Institute of Regional Studies, Jagiellonian University (forthcoming 2010).

yama.[2] His writings prepared the ground for the reception of the publications by Huntington on the clash of civilisations, his views being interpreted as the thesis of the inevitability of wars among civilisations.[3] And when the terrorist attack in the USA took place (on September 11, 2001), a new shower of statements on Islamic fundamentalism, terrorism, the clash of civilisations etc. followed, with the "Axis of Evil" thrown in. No wonder "experts" appeared who considered the end of history as the annihilation of the present world order caused by a clash between "Western civilisation" and the "civilisation of Islam". The Crusaders would have understood the language. Nowadays, the Europeans and many a Muslim prefer to think in terms of "the dialogue between the West and Islam" – although not all of them. And the Muslim militants have their counterparts in "the West".[4]

Even though Eurocentric, occidentocentric and ethnocentric approaches to other cultures are relatively widespread in Europe (and in the USA), and the mass media frequently rely on clichés (I will return to this issue below), nonetheless we do not only rely on stereotypes. For instance, in Poland, good secondary schools have taught the basics of Arab cultures for decades,[5] the Polish Tartar community seems never to have been the subject of

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2   Francis FUKUYAMA, The End of History, in: The National Interest, Summer 1989; idem, End of History and the Last Man, New York 1992. Cf. Timothy BURNS, After History? Francis Fukuyama and His Critics, Lanham 1994.

3   Samuel P. HUNTINGTON, Clash of Civilisations and the Remaking of World Order, New York 1993 (I have used the Simon and Shuster, 1996 edition); his ideas were but a consequence of, and an alternative to, the somewhat different conclusions drawn by Levi Strauss. Cf. Levi STRAUSS, Race et histoire, in: Le racisme devant la science, Paris 1960.

4   Pronouncements on "the dialogue of civilisations" are mushrooming, but why "dialogue" in the first place? After all the term 'dialogue' implies the existence of only two sides to the argument, even if there are numerous participants, whereas dichotomy may generate a temptation for confrontation. And yet, we know that today the West is not a unity, nor does it have a single boss. The aggregation of states inhabited mainly by Muslims is no such homogenous entity either. Meanwhile the Arab participants in the conference "Islam and the Dialogue of Civilisations" organised in Riyadh a year after the 9/11 made bitter comments, to which I and other "visitors from the West" listened, about "the West" ignoring "the contribution of Islam to western civilisation" and "the arrogance of the West in pursuing an anti-Islamic and anti-Arab policy of uncritical support for Israel". Cf. Christopher CALDWELL, The Revolution in Europe: Immigration, Islam, and the West, Dobleday 2009; "the failures in this book are not limited to its flawed and biased research" – Malise RUTHEVEN, The Big Muslim Problem!, in: The New York Review of Books, LVI/ 20 (2009/2010), p. 64.

5   I remember people queueing in front of the State Publishing Institute's (PIW) bookshops in Warsaw to buy a new translation of the Qur'an (Koran, Warszawa 1986) translated from the Cairo edition (1923, 1342 AH) and prefaced by Józef BIELAWSKI. The first translation into Polish was by Tarak BUCZACKI (Warszawa 1858) working under the influence of Bolesław KAZIMIRSKI, the translator of the Qur'an into French (Paris 1840).

public controversy or group discrimination, the Sarmatian legend traces the origins of Poles back to the territory of the present Iran. And we in Central Europe – for instance in Germany and Poland – keep learning about the wanderings of peoples in the early Middle Ages, rather than the invasion of the Oriental barbarians. Furthermore, attitudes in the European Union towards the parties in the conflict in the Middle East are becoming properly nuanced.

Even though we use them, such terms as "the West", "Christianity" or "Islam" no longer, if ever, provide a sufficient conceptual framework for diagnosing the current state of international politics, since there is no single homogenous West,[6] no such Christianity, no such Islam, no actual unification of all the states for which Islam is the dominant or state religion.

If the present European recognition of the historic Arab contribution to European development may be considered unsatisfactory, what should we say about the historic Chinese contribution which is much less known and taught about?[7] And shall we consider "civilisation" as a matter of history as well as a useful concept for the future cooperation? Do civilisations exist today, then?

The pseudo-Latin term "civilisation" was coined over two hundred years ago and first came into common use in France.[8] Nowadays, we follow Pope

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6   Even in the European Union there exist still the difference which prompt the question about the number of "Europes" – see: Ryszard STEMPLOWSKI / Laurence A. WHITEHEAD (eds.), After the Attack: Several Europes and Transatlantic Relations, Abridged Transcripts, Warszawa 2002; the participants in the debate: Benoit D'Aboville, Lord Alderdice (John Alderdice), Fernando Andresen-Guimarães, Michael Brenner, Peter Burian, Nicholas Burns, Stanisław Ciosek, Ulrich Daldrup, Ginte Damusis, Daniel Dultzin, Sheldon Ekland-Olson, Leon Fuerth, Mircea Geoana, Heather Grabbe, Wolf Grabendorff, Lawrence S. Graham, János Herman, John Higley, Jean-Jacques Kasel, Andrei Kolosovsky, Sergiy Komisarenko, Hans Christian Krüger, Imants Liegis, Geoffrey Martin, Miguel Mesquita da Cunha, Gebhardt von Moltke, Porfirio Munoz Ledo, Zdzisław Najder, Jerzy Nowak, Andrzej Olechowski, Thomas Ouchterlony, Horst Pietschmann, Philippe de Schoutheete, Alisher Shaykhov, Ryszard Stemplowski, Willy Stevens, Anton Thalmann, Peter Trubowitz, Magdaléna Vášáryová, Alexandr Vondra, Allen Weinstein, Laurence Whitehead, Jerzy J. Wiatr.

7   Cf. Gavin MENZIES, 1421 – The Year China Discovered the World, Transworld Publishers 2002; I used the first Harper Perennial edition 2004; idem, 1434 – The Year a Magnificent Chinese Fleet Sailed to Italy and Ignited the Renaissance, Harper 2008.

8   The term was probably used first by Honoré de MIRABEAU, Ami des hommes, 1775. However, Dr JOHNSON refused to include the term in his Dictionary of the English Language. Cf. Lucien FÈBVRE, Civilisation. Evolution d'un mot et d'un groupe d'idées, in: Idem, Pour une histoire à part entière, Paris 1962. Fernand BRAUDEL, Grammaire des Civilisations, Paris 1987 (a textbook for the advanced secondary school students, published for the first time in 1963), pp. 33-68. Henryk SEREJSKI, Początki i dzieje słów 'kultura' i 'cywilizacja' w Polsce, in: Idem, Przeszłość a teraźniejszość, Wrocław 1965, pp. 237-249.

John Paul II and speak of the civilisation of love and the civilisation of death, people complain of the so-called civilisation diseases etc. At school we learn about various civilisations, e.g. the Sumerian, Greek or Aztec civilisations. Every once in a while books devoted to the Atlantean civilisation are published. In Argentina, in the mid-19th century, a politician who called for the organisation of mass European immigration wrote about the clash of European civilisation with local barbarism.[9] The Spanish use the term *raza* to describe representatives of the same civilisation, even though *raza* seems rather to refer to culture,[10] and yet it is not so different from the concept of race as used at the beginning of the previous century in the US and England by people who believed in the superiority of the "Anglo-Saxon race".[11] Civilisation can be optimistically defined as "a direction in the progress of humankind", as this concept at the early stage of its use was referred to by Jerzy Szacki in his entry in the twelve volume encyclopaedia, published by Polish Scientific Publishers (*PWN*).[12] Sometimes the term "modern civilization" appears as a concept related to so-called modernisation theories, sometimes it is simply a synonym for "westernization". It is often used simply as a synonym for culture. However, many varieties of the term "culture" exist. Some twenty years ago I used to listen to remarks about the superiority of *Kultur* over *Zivilization* – comments that I thought were thinly veiled allusions to the USA and France, made by my German university colleagues. I was impressed.[13]

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9   Domingo SARMIENTO, Facundo o la Civilización y la barbarie, Santiago de Chile 1845; the English translation: Life in the Argentine Republic in the Days of the Tyrants or Civilization and Barbarism, New York 1868.

10 El Dia de Raza, the Day of the Race, October 9, is the anniversary of the so called discovery of America by Columbus (the Chinese voyages and possible contributions have recently been discussed of by MENZIES, 1492) and the celebrations associated with it serve the purpose of emphasising the cultural unity of Spain and Hispanic America (the term "Latin America", which later came into use, initially in France, has a different meaning and refers to a much larger area; some researchers deny its pertinence as an analytical unit); the concept of Hispanidad was mirroring the status of the North African dependencies of Spain, rather than the (Spanish) American ones.

11 Seth King HUMPHREY, Mankind, Racial Values and the Racial Prospect, New York 1917, and Lord MILNER (who was Minister for the Colonies at that time, 1919) introduced himself as "a British race patriot"; Theodore H. VON LAUE, The World Revolution of Westernisation, New York 1987, p. 224. The concept of race was used to stress dissimilarity.

12 Wielka Encyklopedia Powszechna. A comparison of the entry for "civilisation" as defined in different encyclopaedias might provoke much thinking.

13 A German term, Kulturkreis, a cultural circle, also exists as a definition of a group of related cultures in neighbouring territories; a concept similar to the one of "Kulturraum" (German) or "cultural space", used to describe the region "der, trotz sprachlicher, ethnischer und kultureller Verschiedenheiten, gemeinsame materielle und ideelle Kulturtech-

The concept of civilisation was used by Spengler, who was the first to put forward the thesis of the fall of the West,[14] yet it was Arnold Toynbee who was the first author to construct a synthesis of history based on this concept.[15] According to him, civilisation is "an endeavour to create a state of society in which the whole of Mankind will be able to live in harmony, as members of a single all-inclusive family. This is, I believe, the goal at which all civilisations so far known have been aiming unconsciously, if not consciously."[16] He added that "the relation of 'civilisations' and 'a specific civilisation' to 'civilisation' can be likened to the relation of a single representative of a certain class of phenomena (or a larger group of such representatives) to the class they represent. Each civilisation pertains to a specific society and it is practically impossible to study a selected civilisation and its society in separation from each other. A specific civilisation can be defined as 'a cognisable object of study', as a domain common to particular areas of activity of a certain number of various people, or as a representation of specific types of society."[17] This combination of subjective and objective factors was meant to ensure a full understanding of civilisation. However, the author found no major followers among scholars. This might have been because of the difficulty of applying this definition, or because his analysis had a religious dimension, especially in the last stage of his work.[18]

Probably the most prominent historian of the 20th century, Fernand Braudel, also used the concept of civilisation,[19] yet he developed the notion

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niken, religiöse Prägungen, Mythen usw. hervorbrachte, die in komplexer Gemengelage jahrhundertelang fortwirken." – Horst PIETSCHMANN, Mexiko: Von der vorspanischen Zeit bis zum Beginn der Unabhängigkeitsepoche, in: Walther L. BERNECKER / Horst PIETSCHMANN / Hans Werner TOBLER, Eine kleine Geschichte Mexikos, Frankfurt/Main 2007, p. 9f.

14 Oswald SPENGLER wrote about the structure of civilisation ("complex"), Der Untergang des Abendlandes, München 1918, passim.

15 Arnold TOYNBEE, Study of History (published in 1934–1961), a work in 12 volumes devoted to the philosophy of history, based on an analysis of the cyclic development and fall of 26 civilisations (later the author accounted for 34 civilisations) during the period from approx. 3,500 B.C. to 1972. At the same time, Toynbee was writing annual analyses of the previous year's events inclusive of the political history of World War II (co-authored by Jane CAPLAN) for Chatham House Cf. War and Civilisation, OUP 1950). Cf. Footnote 47.

16 Arnold TOYNBEE / Jane CAPLAN, A Study of History. The One-Volume Edition (OUP, 1988), p. 44.

17 Ibid., p. 45.

18 Tyonbee arrived at the conclusion that history was created by God. He rejected the Darwinian theory of the evolution of species. Modern historiography has drawn on his work not so much for the considerations about civilisation as for the analysis of specific cultures from the remote past.

19 See footnote 8.

as a combination of two concepts – *civilisation matérielle*. The phrase *civilisation matérielle* in the title of his book was translated into Polish as *kultura materialna* (material culture),[20] into English as simply civilisation,[21] and into German as social history.[22] Kochanowicz, the editor for the aforementioned translation into Polish, construed the concept of the *civilisation matérielle* as "methods of obtaining energy and goods and the means of consumption".[23] In the Polish tradition, the term "civilization" encompasses the concepts of technology and modernisation, whereas the most common understanding of the concept of culture refers to symbolic culture.[24] Braudel, on the other hand, claimed that "culture means civilisation which has not yet reached maturity – its optimum – which has not ensured its sustainability. Before this takes place – and the wait may be lengthy – the neighbouring civilisations exploit it in every way possible, which might not be just, but is only natural."[25] He must have meant the concept of culture in the broadest sense.

Wallerstein believed that a concept of civilisation could be defined with reference to the cultural forms of existence of consecutive imperial worlds in a territory, e.g. to refer to the long continuation of the state in Chinese territory.[26] Toynbee used the notion of civilisation in writing a synthesis of history. And Braudel was writing a historical synthesis, too. A historical

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20 Fernand BRAUDEL, Civilisation matérielle et capitalisme, XVe–XVIIIe siècle. Les structures quotidiennes: le possible et l'impossible, Paris 1967. Translated into Polish as Kultura materialna, gospodarka i kapitalizm XV–XVIII wiek. T. I. Struktury codzienności. Możliwe i niemożliwe, trans. Maria OCHAB / Piotr GRAFF, Warszawa 1992; T. II. Gra wymiany, trans. Ewa Dorota ŻÓŁKIEWSKA, Warszawa 1992; T. III. Czas świata, trans. Jan STREZELECKI / Jerzy STREZELECKI, Warszawa 1992. Preface and academic consultation for T. 1–3 – Jacek KOCHANOWICZ. Said Braudel about the concept of civilisation matérielle: "The ambiguity of this concept is obvious. I hope, though, that if my way of perceiving the past wins approval, (...) one day we will be able to find a more adequate label to describe this infra-economy, the second, informal sphere of business activity, the sphere which is a domain of self-sufficiency and exchange of goods and services within a limited radius." (For Braudel, the first sphere was the market, and the third one capitalism.) – ibid., T. I, p. 20.

21 Fernand BRAUDEL, Civilization and Capitalism, 15th–18th Century, vol. I: The Structure of Everyday Life, 1992.

22 Ders., Sozialgeschichte des 15.–18. Jahrhunderts – Der Alltag, 1985.

23 Jacek KOCHANOWICZ, T. I, p. 10.

24 "The culture of a given community is a complex of all the forms of social consciousness that are functional in its social practice" – Jerzy KMITA, O kulturze symbolicznej, Warszawa 1982, p. 72. It reminds me of the classic formula of John LOCKE: "Consciousness is the perception of what passes in a Man's own mind." Cf. the use of the term by Czesław MIŁOSZ, Rodzinna Europa, Kraków 1994, p. 127.

25 BRAUDEL, Grammaire, p. 90.

26 Immanuel WALLERSTEIN, The Capitalist World-Economy, 1979, p. 158.

synthesis was also what Wallerstein was aiming for. When Jerzy Jedlicki
later asked: "What civilisation do the Poles need?" he was also writing about
history,[27] and the newly established Chair of European Civilisation at Col-
lege d'Europe in Natolin near Warsaw was filled in 2001 by Bronisław
Geremek, a historian.[28] The concept of civilisation likely will continue to be
useful in historical research; however, to quote Jedlicki, this concept "has
never had a strictly specified meaning, in common with other great ab-
stracts of political philosophy which become useful on account of the very
fact that their semantic content can be plastically modelled. The concept of
civilisation has become indispensable because in a single semantic conden-
sation it contained an enormous sum of patterns which were Western
European by origin, but pertaining to all mankind by purpose. And more
than just a sum – a system."[29]

My doubts as to the usefulness of this concept for the diagnosis of cur-
rent international politics derive from the fact that if an all-embracing
"world civilization" (the above mentioned "system") is being formed (or
perhaps already exists today), then, logically, what we are dealing with is
not a civilisation that fits any of the definitions we are used to. After all, any
civilisation can only exist, i.e. be recognisable, against the background of
other civilisations, and this entails synchronicity of contemporary civilisa-
tions. If we change the meaning of the concept so radically, further use of
the same term would be unjustified. In sum, the hypothetical "victory" of a
single civilisation as a global system would result in the questioning of the
historical – indeed the historiosophical – concept of civilisation,[30] in "the
end of civilization".

In view of the above, still more doubts arise today when you follow the
developments in world politics in relation to the concept of a "civilized"
state. These states apparently meet "civilised standards". What standards?
Do they comply with 18th century requirements, i.e. they are ruled by a
Christian monarchy? Do they comply with contemporary requirements, i.e.
a nation organised in the form of a state (nation-state) and at the same time
"modern", capitalist and democratic?[31] Given such a use of the concept of

27 Jerzy JEDLICKI, Jakiej cywilizacji Polacy potrzebują? Studia z dziejów idei i wyobraźni
   XIX wieku, Warszawa 1988.
28 Cf. Maciej KOŹMIŃSKI (ed.), Cywilizacja europejska, Warszawa 2005.
29 Ibid., p. 27.
30 The opinion that Wallerstein's definition would survive, provided an additional assump-
   tion is made that the "territory" as used in his definition is to be interpreted as the whole
   globe, remains open for discussion.
31 Gerrit W. GONG, The Standard of "Civilisation" in International Society, 1984; Iver B.
   NEUMANN / Jennifer M. WELSH, The Other in European Self-definition: An Addendum to

civilisation, many sovereign and recognised states fail to be classified as civilised. Is not the term "rogue states" tantamount thereby to "uncivilised states"? Is such a notion of civilisation supposed to be the "western" ground for "the dialogue between civilizations"?

Eurocentricity

In my view the Eurocentric approach manifests itself when someone, e.g. a researcher (one typically educated at a European university), applies analytical categories that stem, inevitably, from the history of the most advanced or modern European societies, in a methodologically indiscriminate way to other societies. Not only has the term "the great geographical discovery" been appropriated (the great discoveries are invariably made by the Europeans, even if they arrive after the Chinese or Arabs, and use copies of the older "non-European" maps). Even the very categories of progress, advancement and modernisation are usually value-laden and aggrandize Europe by leaving unmentioned the non-European sources of the scientific progress in Europe, mostly Chinese and Arabian. The Eurocentric attitude may be defined as an occidentocentric one to include some attitudes that are shown in the US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand etc., and to an extent the predispositions of some elite members in other non-European countries.

My rejection of the Eurocentric approach is not an unconditional one, however, as only European culture proved to be cumulative over such a long period, including the Neolithic or agricultural revolution and the industrial one, evoking emulation of the European path world-wide, and stimulating the present globalization.

Whereas modern Eurocentrism feeds on so-called great geographical discoveries, and became embedded during the Enlightenment, modern anti-Eurocentric beliefs appear in Europe (mostly Western Europe and the USA, also in Canada and some other countries) in the 1960s–1980s as forms of the political culture of support for the then Third World countries against imperialism, real and imagined. Ideologically motivated as this support mostly was, it was also important for some researchers. But the very ideological slant of many debates made the whole idea of countering the Eurocentric position rather divisive. Among Polish historians of Latin

America[32] anti-Eurocentric beliefs were also related to the objections some of us harboured against the officialdom of state-socialism. In other words, in many cases the anti-Eurocentric beliefs, justified philosophically as they were, did not arise exclusively from research requirements. Such beliefs in Europe and some other countries were manifestations of some sort of anti-establishment inclination during the Cold War and the growing significance of the Third World. It has found its reflection in the choice of research topics and in the contents of the publications.[33]

The most recent and vocal objection to the Eurocentric position has been put forward by a group of authors, mostly sociologists and political scientists, advancing new analytical concepts. In 1992 Anibal Quijano published an article on the *colonialidad* or coloniality,[34] which became a flagship product and a battle cry of the group in question. In 1998 during the World Congress of Sociology in Montreal a symposium was held on *"las alternativas al eurocentrismo y colonialismo en el pensamiento social latinoamericano contemporáneo"*, and Langer continued the endeavour by editing, five years later, a volume on La colonialidad del saber,[35] and Mignolo wrote on the ideal of Latin America advancing the thesis that "the coloniality is constitutive of modernity".[36] Three years later the authors of essays in the volume edited by Moraña, Dussel and Jáuregui offered an outright challenge to almost everything that had been published on Latin America by qualifying it as Eurocentric or colonial(ist), using the term coloniality as "pivotal to the understanding and critique of early and late stages of colonialism in Latin America, as well as its long-lasting social and cultural effects."[37] And

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32 A group of PhD candidates and young post-docs at the Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences, led in the seventies and eighties of the last century by Professor Tadeusz Łepkowski (1927–1989), a prominent figure in the Polish historiography.

33 Admittedly, there was also in my own case an ideological motivation behind my choice of topic of the "habilitation" work I wrote while at the University of Cologne, 1981–1982 (State-Socialism and the Actually Existing Capitalism. La República Socialista de Chile and the Great Depression); cf. Ryszard STEMPLOWSKI, Socjalizm państwowy w realnym kapitalizmie. Chile w 1932 roku, Warszawa 1996.

34 The word constructed in Spanish like modernidad, racionalidad etc., and in English like modernity, rationality, etc.

35 This line of criticism has found its prolongation – see Walter D. MIGNOLO / Arturo ESCOBAR (eds.), Globalization and the Decolonial Option, Routlege 2009.

36 Walter D. MIGNOLO, The Idea of Latin America, Malden (MA) – Oxford – Carlton 2005, p. xiii.

37 Mabel MORAÑA / Enrique DUSSEL / Carlos A. JÁUREGUI (eds.), Coloniality at Large. Latin American Debate and the Postcolonial Debate, Durham – London 2008, p. 17. But only few of the European publications on Latin America are included in the very extensive bibliography in that interesting book, references to such works are scarce, and publications on Latin America in other languages than English (mostly American), Spanish and

"Quijano defines coloniality as a global hegemonic model of power in place since the Conquest that articulates race and labor, thus combining the epistemological *disponitifs* for colonial dominance and the structures of social relations and exploitation which emerged with the Conquest and continued in the following states of Latin America's history".[38] Theirs is the most elaborate criticism of the prevailing writings on Latin America. The writings have prevailed in two ways – firstly, in quantity, and secondly, as the analytical approach to colonial and – perhaps more significantly – postcolonial times. The writings result from – one is tempted to use the poetics of the group – the Eurocentrality of the dominant West. Quijano and the other authors may be seen as striving "to dislodge European state-making and capitalism from their privileged positions as universalizing themes in world history".[39] In my view, they are struggling to make the independence of Latin American countries mature, at last, in the cultural sense of the term. If so, the old concepts like imperialism or domination and dependency may still come in handy. These terms each have more than one meaning.[40] Following what Elżbieta Skłodowska makes of William Shakespeare, we may see that "... there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in postcolonial theory".[41] Which leads me back to my principal reservations about the conventional usage of the term civilisation, and to the considerations about culture.

Portuguese, are hardly noticed, if at all, which makes many works on Latin America and Europe published in the continental Europe look irrelevant, notably those in German and French, let alone in the languages seemingly too exotic for anyone to know like Swedish or Polish. Paradoxically so, it amounts to the reinforcement of the criticised position. Some of the authors dealing with comparisons between Latin America and the USA make the imbalances even more pronounced – see Francis FUKUYAMA (ed.), Falling Behind. Explaining the Development Gap Between Latin America and the United States, Oxford 2008; Cf. Hans Werner TOBLER / Peter WALDMANN (eds.), Lateinamerika und die USA im „langen" 19. Jahrhundert. Unterschiede und Gemeinsamkeiten, Köln – Weimar – Wien 2009.

38 MORAÑA / DUSSEL / JÁUREGUI (eds.), Coloniality at Large, p. 19.

39 Roy BIN WONG, China Transformed. Historical Change and the Limits of Western Experience, Ithaca (NY) 1997, p. 1.

40 Just two examples of the approaches that differ from the customary conceptualizations: Matthew BROWN (ed.), Informal Empire in Latin America. Culture, Commerce, and Capital, Malden (MA) – Oxford – Carlton 2008. Ryszard STEMPLOWSKI, Zależność i wyzwanie. Argentyna wobec rywalizacji mocarstw anglosaskich i Trzeciej Rzeszy, Warszawa 1975.

41 Elżbieta SKŁODOWSKA, Unforgotten Gods: Postcoloniality and Representations of Haiti in Antonio Benítez Rojo's 'Heaven and Eareth', in: MORAÑA / DUSSEL / JÁUREGUI (eds.), Coloniality at Large, p. 175. Cf. Sanjay SETH, Historical Sociology and Postcolonial Theory: Two Strategies for Challenging Eurocentrism, in: International Political Sociology c/3/2009, pp. 334-338.

The traditionalist usage of the term civilisation ensues also from the fact that the new reality consists in the formation of a global social structure which is gradually losing its positive correlation with the former frontiers between civilisations, which – to make matters worse – have not yet been adequately determined, and here Quijano, Moraña, Dussel, and Jáuregui are right. Thus, it is not about a complete rejection of the concept of civilisation, but rather about the use of this term primarily with respect to our thinking about the cultures existing in the past, the memory of which is mainly passed on by way of formal teaching. Accordingly, I would prefer to use the term "civilization" with reference to a culture of a specific type, a culture of a society that existed in an integral territory for a prolonged period of time under conditions of continuity in its political system and type of economy, and participated in the diffusion of patterns among civilisations in a non-continuous way limited as to the scope, thus achieving a high level of homogeneity, autonomy and self-sufficiency.

An enhanced coalition of cultures

The term "culture", somewhat less extensive than "civilisation", yet a more operational one, has been used to refer to a specific set of features characteristic of people who inhabit an integral territory. We can even further narrow it by linking it to the social role of individuals and the characteristics of a group of individuals who inhabit non-integral territories and are subject to global formative influences: they perform the same social roles and communicate with one another in a way which has not been known before. Hence, the concept of the cultural may be defined as the ability to construct individual or collective identity. It corresponds to the concept of the political; the ability to organize a community (and in consequence, the state). Against this framework of the cultural and the political we can place the concept of political culture (more on this below).

The global structure that is coming into existence today is emerging as a result of a decline in cultural diffusion as we have known it for ages (a process which has been always complex and slow), consequent upon the gradual disappearance of barriers to social communication, and is characterised by a prodigious increase in trans-cultural flows of information, and consequently, by ever more prominent and rapidly occurring changes within the societies which communicate with one another. The common impression of an accelerated flow of time is the very function of the increased frequency of social change in virtually all areas of life.

According to Levi Strauss, the contribution of particular cultures to development does not primarily consist in the fact that they contribute their, and exclusively their, discoveries, inventions or ideas, to the development of all humankind. If a given culture were to be founded exclusively on its own resources, it would rather be able to generate a short-term series of significant achievements, while through interacting with other cultures it can participate in a long-term process of accumulation of achievements. Thus the long-term contribution finally depends on the dissimilarity of a given culture rather than on its singular accomplishments. For this reason, there is no point in claiming that one culture is now superior, and another one inferior, since the cumulative functioning of all of them is only manifested in their specific coalition.[42] Naturally, the greater the number of cultures, the greater the diversity of the complete assemblage of cultures, even though this function may not be linear.

We are allowed to think, following Strauss, that the coalition of cultures is a process in which cultures relate to each other and exert influence on each other. The concept invites thinking about intentional actions like government policy-making to enhance the coalition of cultures.

Let us take a look at some fields where the enhancement of the coalition of cultures seems to be particularly urgent.

This enhancement is a twofold activity along parallel lines: (1) Some actions of government are already in progress to contribute to the enhancement; and these actions may become even more effective if awareness grows of their significance in terms of a coalition of cultures, thus improving policy-making. (2) Special actions should be instituted to help build the necessary political culture, and here governments may contribute most significantly.

Let us consider one problem with reference to the above line number 1: How to find a form of government co-operation that would ensure a comprehensive security with a simultaneous recognition of cultural diversity within this global social structure? Obviously, cultural diversity will also undergo alterations, as the content and composition of the characteristic features of each culture are subject to change. Let me repeat that the existence of diversity itself is of paramount importance, since development has hitherto been a function of the number of cultures and their diversity. It is one thing to intervene to prevent a military or terrorist threat, if it is at the same time (1) real, (2) direct and (3) serious; it is quite another to impose the political culture of the NATO-EU democracies ("help create a stable nation" etc) through a military build-up and occupation by the NATO-EU

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42 STRAUSS, Race et histoire, p. 273.

countries, even when they are helped by civilian aid agencies (they are also foreign in every sense of the term) and try to be as friendly as they can. If the targeted society happens to be of a very different culture – such an action will not succeed. Those societies may develop their democracy only in a long-term and peaceful cooperation with our democracies, within some form of an enhanced coalition of cultures. However, all the participants will have to learn from each other. Therefore, to the question "How long are the foreign forces going to stay in Iraq or Afghanistan?" the answer has always been that it depends on how "ambitious" is the project of the intervening governments.

The trans-national terrorism of today has its fundamental origin in the world-wide phenomenon of uneven development, including diversity of cultures, yet the catalysts of the processes involved also include both the conflict in the Middle East and the diversity of political culture within the societies of the Muslim states. It is easy to imagine that in the Arab countries additional anxiety must have emerged in relation to the further intra-political results of such a state of affairs. The protracted conflict in the Middle East has had a major impact on the political culture of the Arab states, where it has contributed to the development of a public political discourse, political polarisation and the extension of democracy construed at least as an increased freedom of public speech on prospects for social development in the Arab states. Nonetheless, the desired extended participation of Arab policy-makers in international discourse has not yet reached beyond the stage of determining the fundamental categories of this discourse as far as certain subjects are concerned. Advancing such general topics as "Islam and the dialogue of civilizations" is symptomatic of this situation.[43]

Let us now consider one problem with reference to the second parallel line mentioned above: How to define political culture, and how to help develop a democratic political culture?

We know that without leaders nothing can be done, but without a democratic political culture nothing will last. The political culture of a society in a given state and time can be defined as the set of widespread and relatively stable and respected beliefs (a) related to the identity of the society as a political nation that is the constitutionally defined sovereign, (b) expressed in public discourse, and (c) referring to the state as the institutional

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43 It speaks volumes about the political culture that very few of the people in Afganistan or the other Muslim societies call (unofficially) for the State to be an order above all other social orders, inclusive of the religious one, and for democracy to be a standard for all residents of the state, irrespective of their citizenship and sex. (The Arabs are only 18% of Muslims.)

correlate of that identity, and especially to the constitutional system of policy-making.44

The desired political culture must consist in the acceptance (including its implementation) of the rule of law which is based upon democratic values, otherwise the coalition of cultures will remain a postulate, as conflict will prevail over cooperation. The ideal conditions for such a coalition would also consist in a balanced state of affairs. Conflict as such will inevitably remain as a built-in element of humankind existence. However, it need not take the form of war, political terrorism etc. Is this a naive thought? Well, sometime ago the idea of eliminating cannibalism would have been considered naive. Until recently I believed that we had eliminated torture, at least in democratic countries. Today we are succeeding in eliminating, country by country, the remaining form of killing people with the sanction of the state: the death penalty. The truth is that it requires thinking in terms of the *long durée*. Look at the foreign armed interventions as an example. Such an intervention is some kind of intercultural communication. Hence, it is part of the coalition of cultures. If we enhance the coalition of cultures, it will reinforce cooperation and decrease the level of conflict.

Obviously, political and religious leaders, scientists and artists can be expected to communicate with one another, and this is already contributing to democratic political culture. Governments should, however, take special action to help build such a culture. The actions may take the form of government projects – as I have argued elsewhere – that would be feasible without excessively difficult political decisions and/or very substantial financial outlay. We can here draw on the experience of the Polish-German Textbook Commission, and the French-German one.45 UNESCO could also

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44 STEMPLOWSKI, States and Political Cultures, p. 386f. My definition draws upon works of Jerzy KMITA, Kultura i poznanie, Warszawa 1985, p. 25, and Józef SIEMIENSKI, Polska kultura polityczna wieku XVI, in: Polska kultura polityczna, Kraków 1932, pp. 119-167. For an extensive reference to the literature on the political culture, including the classical works written and/or edited by Gabriel ALMOND / Sidney VERBA, The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations, Princeton 1963; idem (eds.), The Civic Culture Revisited, Boston 1980; see the above mentioned essay of mine on the states and political cultures in Latin America.

45 The first bi-lingual German-Polish book on history, some sort of a supplementary handbook, co-authored by the German and Polish historians, and intended for the secondary school, was published in 2008, covering the years 1933–1949, including 145 entries explaining the basic terms referring to the German-Polish aspects of the Second World War. More such books are in progress. The are to serve as a basis for a regular handbook. Cf. Ursula J. BECHER / Włodzimierz BORODZIEJ / Robert MAIER (eds.), Deutschland und Polen im zwanzigsten Jahrhundert. Analysen – Quellen – didaktische Hinweise, Hannover 2001. The version in Polish: Polska i Niemcy w XX wieku. Wskazówki i materiały do nauczania historii, Poznań 2001; Włodzimierz BORODZIEJ, Die Deutsch-Polnische

intensify its efforts to improve the state of school textbooks. There is much for parliaments to do, increasing financial support for public centres for research in inter-cultural relations. At the same time, a basic long term research should be launched: The European Parliament could commission reports to find out (A) to what extent EU inhabitants are informed about the cultures of EU member countries, and about other cultures, and (B) to find out what are the perceptions of contemporary European (including the EU) cultures held in societies outside the European Union; it should launch a debate and take a position on these issues — perhaps propose an Inter-Parliamentary Union debate on the subject of democratic political culture as a premise for the enhanced coalition of cultures, and appeal to the national parliaments to launch educational reviews to find out to what extent the national educational systems contribute to the enhancement of the coalition of cultures and whether educational institutions should enlarge their remit.[46]

The integration of states

In the meantime the Europeans will continue with the integration of their states. It is not true that "civilization is the only possible supranational association".[47] All the criticisms and complaints notwithstanding, the European Union continues to develop. Any European diplomat or politician who has interacted with Latin America or African or Asian politicians and diplomats will tell you that as a rule the foreigners envy us the European Union.[48]

Schulbuchkommission 1972–1999, in: Internationale Verständigung. 25 Jahre Georg-Eckert-Institut für Internationale Schulbuchforschung, Hannover 2000, pp. 157-165. In the beginnings of 2008 a two-volume handbook for the secondary school was published – "Histoire/Geschichte" – covering the years since the Congress of Vienna (1815). It was the first such school handbook in Europe. Since it has presented history of Europe as largely that of Germany and France one may expect the new improved editions will be forthcoming.

46 One may also argue that there is an acute deficit of the ability to cooperate among the inhabitants of any single member state of the European Union, albeit the extent of the deficit varies from country to country.

47 Feliks KONECZNY, O wielości cywilizacyj, Wydawnictwo Gebethner i Wolff, Kraków 1935, p. 366. He wrote that civilisation was the only possible supranational association of nation-states, there were many civilizations (he specified them) but there was no all-human civilisation. See the English version, On the Plurality of Civilisations, London 1962. Cf. Footnote 15.

48 Some Europeans may support implementation of the EU rules but not the very joining therein: A prominent Swiss diplomat was encouraging me in London (1999) to oppose

As we know, the willing integration of states guarantees peace and development for the states involved. However, for the integration to succeed it requires the similarity or compatibility of the political cultures in the states involved, and they have to be democratic. That is why such an integration is not imminent on a large scale in any region outside Europe.

Nonetheless, some endeavours do take place. The most advanced case outside European Union is not NAFTA but UNASUR, created 2008 by twelve states of South America. It is potentially much more than *Mercosur*. The question arises if they can model their union on the European Union without having such long lasting and terrible war experiences as the Europeans? Should they manage to make up for it they are going to encounter what even for the Europeans is a large obstacle: the issue of sovereignty.

In South America democracies are fragile. The democratic political culture is a property of the minority in each country.[49] Latin American party systems are very weak in comparison to party systems in the EU countries, despite the fact that the big traditional parties in Europe are in crisis. Hence Latin American presidential systems are exposed to the temptation of parliamentary impeachments. Add to this inefficient public administration, massive tax-evasion, and corruption. The corruption has penetrated the social fabric of the population to such an extent that we may consider it as a parallel system of wealth redistribution. In most cases the process of nation-state building has not yet been completed, not only because the sharp inequalities, but also, in some cases, because the divisions along ethnic lines are so deeply entrenched that it is hard to foresee whether shared citizenship will suffice to unite the population as a political nation. The states are truly elitist, the elites of power are oligarchic. In such a situation, sovereignty as legitimacy is dear to Latin American rulers.

Even in EU countries, however, the Westphalian ideal of sovereignty is very much alive. For the proverbial man in the street, also for politicians, journalists and the like, sovereignty is a synonym for the freedom to act single-handedly and/or without any limitations. The notion of sovereignty

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the Polish applications to Nato and the EU, frightening me with "the Brussels bureaucracy" and "macdonaldization". In response I asked him whether he was prepared to accept Poland as a member of the Confoederatio Helvetica or would he prefer us to remain the isolated object of the Great Powers' rivalry.

49 "Elections are the hallmark of democracy" – Peter H. SMITH, Democracy in Latin America. Political Change in Comparative Perspective, Oxford 2005, p. 183. However, the percentage of the electoral participation (quite high in Latin America where constitutions provide obligation of voting but there is no sanction for those who do not vote) is not the most important criterion of democracy. In Germany it is lower than in Italy or Greece, but are we to believe that the Italian or Greek democracy is more vigorous than the German one?

functions in the prevailing political culture as freedom of action (policy-making), indispensable at the level of the *raison d'état*.

However, this single-handedness, as the kind of action that is tradition-ally associated with the sovereignty of a state, be it an autocratic or democ-ratic one, may or may not be a manifestation of sovereignty. The action of a group of states of any kind to achieve a common goal may or may not result from or in a loss of sovereignty of anyone. Once we disentangle the single-handedness, and/or group functioning, from the notion of sovereignty we may arrive at a proper understanding of the sovereignty of a democratic state participating in the processes of the European integration of states. If the *raison d'état* of a democratic state provides policy goals which to be at-tained require integration with another democratic state (or states), the sovereign decision to choose such goals and integrate with such state or states to attain the goals constitute the legitimate basis of the derivative de-cisions or policies at the executive level. In the implementation of the sov-ereign decision in question, such derivative decisions and/or policies are enacted and/or acted upon by the states concerned and the bodies/entities they set up together and equip with the adequate competences. The salient decisions at the level of *raison d'état* are taken by a sovereign state alone (no sharing of sovereignty is admissible here). Hence the idea of sharing sovereignty, so popular in EU-speak and conventional wisdom is superflu-ous, in fact it is misleading, I believe,[50] and given the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty, it should disappear. It may, at the most, facilitate the inte-gration of government positions vis à vis their critics for a period before the integration principles are spread in public discourse and get assimilated by the political culture.[51]

I am afraid that what is difficult about sovereignty for the Europeans is absolutely unacceptable for power elites outside democratic countries. In South America, the somewhat misleading concept of sharing sovereignty could help them to move forward, for it might be presented as a Bolivarian idea of the common fate etc. The growing intensity of communications be-

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50 STEMPLOWSKI, Updating Sovereignty.
51 The Opposition to the integration of states argues that an EU member state loses its sov-ereignty. The prevailing counterargument is that it is not losing it, because sovereignty is only shared (we lose a bit but they lose a bit as well and so we exchange the responsibili-ties, we remain equal etc.). I argue, to put it simply, that the bone of contention does not exist, as sovereignty as a property of an EU member state is unalienable (and therefore indivisible, not even in part) as long as the state exists, and the selection and attaining of common tasks (e.g. those of the member states of the EU) is done by the states precisely in implementation of their unrestricted sovereignty.

tween the South American (Mercosur, UNASUR) and European (EU) institutions bodes well in this respect.

All explicit manifestations of trans-cultural communication favouring cooperation are invaluable. However what we need most in the present era of globalisation is a global movement for the enhanced coalition of cultures. One of the key reasons is to enable the largest possible number of people in the largest possible number of countries to learn more about other cultures. This would increase the chances for mutual inspiration.

When discussing the integration of states one should not forget David Mitrany, because he warned against regional integration, specifically its political aspects. He feared this would increase the number of competing powers and thereby make the preservation of peace more difficult. He argued for world functional integration except for political integration, which he considered to be a very distant prospect, if possible at all.[52] It seems to me, however, that he had not given thought to something we have come to call democratic peace. The concept of the democratic peace pertains to relations among the democratic states but we are allowed to assume that the group will grow, and that democratic countries will prevail over the others to the extent of finally containing international armed conflicts and terrorist actions.

And what about social movements and other non-state entities? A movement for the enhanced coalition of cultures might attract anti-globalists, who do not accept the present state of the world.

It is also striking how convergent the ideal of an enhanced coalition of cultures is with religious ecumenism, the plea for good-neighbourly relations, Human Rights, processes of regional integration of countries with different cultures etc.

Closing remarks

Reflecting on what we have learnt from research in world history, one is tempted to observe that the ideal of an enhanced coalition of cultures invokes the fundamental characteristic of social existence: trust. What is meant here is a state of mind, of individuals and whole societies, and hence also both the philosophical orientation of a society and the social attitude of an individual. And yet, just as co-operation cannot easily be permanently

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52 David MITRANY, A Working Peace System. An Argument for the Functional Development of International Organization, London 1943. Cf. Ryszard STEMPLOWSKI, Projekty rządowe i koncepcje teoretyczne integracji państw europejskich w XX–XXI wieku. Skrypt i teksty źródłowe do wykładu w Akademii Dyplomatycznej, Warszawa 2007, p. 49.

developed within a single institution in unfriendly surroundings, an enhanced coalition of cultures is difficult to organize within a plurality of cultures. But this by no means implies a shortage of tasks to be performed cooperatively.

Co-operation is the essence and basic value of an enhanced coalition of cultures at every level, and the very essence of our modern identity in the making, individual and collective. Identity stems from culture, and we know that cultures have many names, as diverse as societies, nations and states; however, if we consider the existential risks and tasks that we face, our common future must also be conceptualized politically and in the singular, for Europe and the *Übersee*.

Zusammenfassung

Der Autor untersucht anhand der Schlüsselkonzepte „Zivilisation", „Kultur" und „politische Integration" die Möglichkeit der Entwicklung einer Theorie der integrierten Kultur(en). Diese – so suggeriert der Beitrag in idealistischer (oder gar naiver?) Form – sollte es zumindest theoretisch ermöglichen, überstaatliche Einrichtungen zu schaffen, um mit dieser Form der Integration die grundlegenden Bedrohungen menschlichen Überlebens auf diesem Planeten zu reduzieren.

Summary

The author examines the helpfulness of notions such as civilization, culture, and the integration of states to the problem of how to conceptualise the idea of an enhanced coalition of cultures that, he suggests idealistically (or naively?), may help us to integrate states, step by step, and reduce threats to human survival.