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Classical Sociology: on cosmopolitanism, critical recognition theory and Islam

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Classical Sociology: on cosmopolitanism, critical recognition theory and Islam

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Introduction: Leibniz, Enlightenment and China

The clash of civilizations thesis (Huntington, 1993) has shaped much of the academic debate about inter-cultural understanding in the humanities and social sciences. Whereas Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) and *Representations of the Intellectual* (1994) offered some optimistic prospect that intellectuals could, through recognising the inherent limitations of the Orientalist tradition, cross the borders dividing cultures, and forge pathways towards mutual respect and understanding. In the post 9/11 world, Huntington's pessimistic analysis of micro fault-line conflicts and major core-state conflicts has captured the mood of western foreign policy in the 'war on terror'. The clash of civilizations is in fact the conflict between western Christianity and the Muslim world. In recent years, Huntington (2003) has even more explicitly spoken about 'the age of Muslim Wars' and the global emergence of Muslim grievances and hostility towards America. This political framework has to a large extend determined the contours of the academic debate with the emergence of new disciplinary fields such as terrorism studies. The prospect of cultural exchange through internal criticism has been replaced by a more brutal acceptance of the incommensurability and incommunicability of cultures. The fault line is a line of incomprehension.

Criticisms of the Huntington thesis are not easy to sustain, particularly because the thesis has become a self-fulfilling prophecy. The more intellectuals talk about it, the more it determines the nature of American foreign policy. In fact, much of the criticism of Huntington has been developed at an empirical level by showing for example that conflicts within religions (such as Protestant and Catholic in Northern Ireland, or Sunni and Shi'ite Muslims in Iraq) are as important as conflicts between religions. In addition, Huntington is said to have no real explanation for the fault line, because the thesis is 'an

ethnocentric blind to avoid having to discuss the things that Muslim opponents of the US actually care about' (Mann, 2003: 169). While it is important to engage with Huntington at the level of empirical social science, his thesis creates an intellectual challenge to engage in a deeper normative and epistemological debate about the moral grounds for recognising other cultures. In this article, this normative stance is called 'cosmopolitan virtue' by which I mean the ethical imperative for recognition, respect, critical dialogue and care (Turner, 2002).

Where can we fruitfully open this debate over the clash of civilisations? Perhaps one surprising starting point might be with the German origins of the Enlightenment in the work of Gottfried Leibniz. In the twentieth century, the Enlightenment became, especially after *The Dialectic of the Enlightenment* (Adorno and Horkheimer, 1973), a target of critical attack, precisely because its vision of universal reason was said to be indifferent to cultural difference. By recognising a narrow definition of reason, it excluded a wide range of social groups such as native peoples. Reading Leibniz on China shows how misguided, or at least one-dimensional, this interpretation has been (Perkins, 2004). Leibniz, the (German) precursor of the (French) Enlightenment, is probably best known as a mathematician, and for the concept of theodicy, but there is another side to Leibniz's philosophy, which appears extraordinarily relevant to modern times. Leibniz lived in a period when European trade with the outside world, including Asia, was expanding rapidly. The commerce of commodities and the emergence of capitalism were beginning to dominate European culture. Alongside the commerce of objects, Leibniz advocated the 'commerce of light', that is a trade of mutual enlightenment. Against Spinoza's ontology that there is only one substance, Leibniz argued that the empirical world is characterised by its infinite completeness, diversity and richness. The world is teaming with entities that exist in their fullest capacity and in a state of harmony. According to Leibniz in the *Discourse on Metaphysics*, God has created the best of all possible worlds that is a world bursting with richness and diversity. Whereas classical political economy, in its analysis of scarcity, came to regard Nature as niggardly, Leibniz argued that the world was teaming with life, an excess.

What bearing has this monadology on the issue of cultural relations with China? Recognition of the diversity of cultures and civilizations leads us to recognise the inherent value of difference and diversity. While Leibniz like Spinoza advocated a tolerance of diverse views, he went well beyond the philosophers of his day to establish a moral imperative to cherish and learn from this phenomenological and cultural diversity. He applied this ethic to himself, committing much of his scholarly life to the study of Chinese civilization. Differences between entities or monads require exchange, but it also establishes a commonality of culture. Leibniz was not, in modern terms, a cultural relativist – if all cultures, however diverse, are equal (in value), why bother to learn from anyone of them? All knowledge of the outside world is relativistic, because it is necessarily from a particular position. However, Leibniz argued that, because we are embodied, there are enough innate ideas to make an exchange of enlightenment possible. We share a common ontology; therefore, the possibility of understanding is always present. Leibniz once wrote to Peter the Great, who was at the time engaged in a struggle with Islam to protect Moscovy from being engulfed by Crimean Tartars, to say that he was not an 'impassioned patriots' but a person who works for good of the whole of mankind. In short, Leibniz cultivated a cosmopolitan ethic. From the doctrine of blind monads, Leibniz developed a hermeneutics of generosity that regarded inter-cultural recognition and understanding as, not merely as a useful ethnographic field method, but as an ethical imperative. Leibniz embraced cosmopolitan virtue in his attempt to establish the conditions for cultural exchange with China and offers us a guideline for understanding our own times, especially a commerce of light with Islam. Leibniz constitutes a rational and ethical antidote to Huntington.

The problem of rationality and difference is perhaps best understood within the historical framework of western colonialism. Economic and military domination of the New World produced a sense of otherness or alterity that was the spark behind the emergence of anthropology. Both Christianity and humanism were influenced by the discovery of the Americas in 1492 and by new routes to China and Japan. The exploration of aboriginal cultures and religions presented a significant challenge to the notion of the unity of humankind that was one underpinning of Natural Law. Violent encounters with native

societies in North and South America produced cultural stereotypes of 'primitive man' through representations of their cannibalistic tendencies. In the eighteenth-century exploration of the Pacific islands, human sacrifice, cannibalism and warfare become constitutive themes of the anthropology of difference (Sahlins, 1985). Awareness of the diversity of cultures through colonial exploration created the social and political conditions that produced modern anthropology. While anthropology has been defined conventionally as the study of the unity of Man and the diversity of cultures, nineteenth-century anthropology came to reject the view that human beings have a common ontology in favour of cultural relativism and the plasticity of human nature. Ethnographic fieldwork of British anthropologists in Africa and Australia provided potent ammunition for philosophical arguments that human cultures are incommensurable. The Leibnizian moment of understanding and the possibility for cosmopolitan virtue were eclipsed.

While anthropological research, especially physical anthropology, had the (often unintended) consequence of promoting the idea of the incommensurability of human cultures, nineteenth-century sociology as a product of the Enlightenment embraced the idea of a unified science of society. Claude Saint-Simon and August Comte shared a common positivism and evolutionary view of society in which the new industrialism would bring about the final destruction of Christian religion, but Comte saw sociology as a new science – a new 'religion of humanity'. Positivist sociology, like the historical materialism of Karl Marx, promulgated the idea of socialism to transcend both the class divisions of capitalism and the Darwinian struggle of the races. Sociology as the child of the Enlightenment promoted the idea of humanity as a religion, whose 'theology' was positivism that would replace Catholicism – the dying religion of nineteenth-century Europe. The possibility for Leibnizian understanding remained open.

Classical sociology and nationalism

As sociology evolved as a positivist science of society, the failures of socialism created a set of conditions in which sociology became increasing a nationalist discipline, whose

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findings on the working class, urban environment and criminal behaviour were increasingly useful in the formation of state policies. Sociology constituted a series of national interpretations of the emergence of western capitalism and its consequences (Connell, 1997). Although it is controversial, it can be argued that Karl Marx's Asiatic mode of production involved an Orientalist view of history which, following Hegel's philosophy, treated the West as a dynamic and the East as a static social system (Turner, 1978). Both the utilitarians (such as John Stuart Mill) and Marx in writing about British India argued that India would only experience progress when private property had been created along with an efficient railway system and a democratic press. Marx also notoriously held negative, if not prejudicial, attitudes towards small nations, where the progressive march of capitalism had been blocked by historical circumstance. If Marx held reactionary views about the possibility of progress in the developing world, the political impulse of Marxism was initially progressive and internationalist. Although the Internationals themselves were primarily organisations to promote the welfare and political ambitions of the western working class, they articulated a strong sense of international workers's solidarity. The collapse of the Second International (1889-1914) demonstrated the huge difficulties of overcoming entrenched nationalism in periods of international conflict, and prepared the way for Stalinism and the rejection of Trotsky's international vision of socialist struggle.

A theory of globalisation needs to take socialist internationalism seriously rather than assuming that globalisation sprang from a socio-economic vacuum in the 1970s. Communist internationalism was thus an important stage in the globalisation of radical politics. The doctrine of 'socialism in one country' was formulated by Stalin in 1924 as a reply to Trotsky's theory of the 'permanent revolution'. The political leaders of the October uprising were convinced that the Russian revolution would spread through Europe and that the Russian Revolution itself could not succeed in the long run in isolation. As the prospects of a global revolutionary conflict receded, the communists resolved to guide the socialist transformation of Russian society in international isolation. Lenin retained the orthodox Marxist view that by the laws of history the revolution would eventually embrace the western world, if not the entire globe. Stalin's attack on

Trotskyism was an attempt to counteract the negative psychological impact of the failure of world communism on the morale of party workers. Throughout his *History of the Russian Revolution*, Trotsky had maintained the view that any proletarian revolution in Russia was dependent on the support of the Western proletariat, and that 'socialism in one country' was a dangerous political error (Trotsky, 1967, 3: 352).

Max Weber's sociology has often been regarded as a bourgeois alternative to Marx's political economy. Interestingly their views of the stationary quality of Asian societies and their religions were not incompatible. The political inspiration for Weber's sociology was nationalistic not international. Indeed in the Freiburg Inaugural lecture Weber employed a Darwinistic view of international relations in which he observed that future generations would hold them responsible for not creating sufficient 'elbow room' in east Germany to support a strong German state. The young Weber took it for granted that sociology would operate in the service of the German state to advance Germany's historical role as a world power, Weber and his followers (including Carl Schmitt) were motivated by what they saw to be the weakness of Germany in the context of British and American military and economic power. They welcomed the outbreak of World War One because it would resolve the spiritual malaise of Europe; it would clarify the ambiguous relationship between culture and civilization. Weber's sociology of religion clearly illustrates the implicit assumption that (western) Christianity is the only authentic, moral religion.

In *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone*, Kant (1960) distinguished between religion as cult (*des blossen Cultus*) in which humans seek favours from God through prayer and offerings to bring healing and wealth, and religion as moral action (*die Religion des guten Lebenswandels*) that commands human beings to change their behaviour in order to lead a moral life. Kant further elaborated this point by an examination of 'reflecting faith' that compels humans to strive for salvation through faith rather than through either the possession of religious knowledge or ritual acts. The implication of Kant's distinction was that (Protestant) Christianity was the only true 'reflecting faith', and in a sense therefore the model of all authentic religious intentions.

Kant's distinction was fundamentally about those religious injunctions that call people to (moral) action and hence demand that humans assert their autonomy and responsibility.

These Kantian principles were eventually translated into the sociology of Max Weber. In the *Sociology of Religion* (1966), Weber distinguished between the religion of the masses and the religion of the virtuosi. While masses seek comforts from religion, especially healing, the virtuosi fulfil the ethical demands of religion in search of spiritual salvation or enlightenment. The religion of the masses requires saints and holy men to satisfy their needs, and hence charisma is corrupted by the demand for miracles and spectacles. More importantly, Weber distinguished between those religions that reject the world by challenging its traditions (inner-worldly asceticism) and religions that seek to escape from the world through mystical flight (other-worldly mysticism). The former religions, primarily the Calvinistic radical sects, have had revolutionary consequences for human society in the formation of rational capitalism. The implication of this tradition is paradoxical. First, Christianity, or at least Puritanism, is the only true religion as a reflecting faith and secondly Christianity gives rise to a process of secularisation that spells out its own self-overcoming (*Aufhebung*). In *The Religion of India* (1958) and *The Religion of China* (1951) Weber showed that 'Asian religions' merely legitimised the status quo such as the caste system in India or the clan system in China. These religions did not issue a normative challenge to the empirical order. Weber's sociology of religion clearly illustrates the argument that his view of other cultures presupposed the primacy, authenticity and superiority of Christianity (Lehmann and Ouedraogo, 2004).

The emergence of 'classical sociology' has been seen by many commentators as the evolution of various national expressions of social inquiry. These national contexts explain why sociology in for example Britain, France and Germany has had such different preoccupations. These national manifestations have occasionally shared common theories and methods, but they have nevertheless expressed national (ist) ideologies and addressed national problems. This situation has led sociologists such as

Anthony Giddens in *The Consequences of Modernity* (1990) to argue that classical sociology treated 'society' implicitly as 'the nation-state', and hence sociologists were in fact producing studies of French society, Germany society and so forth, while writing books with generic titles such as *Economy and Society* or *Suicide*. Despite the generic terms, their real subject matter was bounded by national borders. Classical sociology was not cosmopolitan, because it was the study of the 'national society' under the umbrella of 'society'. Perhaps furthermore one might argue that classical sociology was the product of national struggles, because it was historically hemmed in by the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 and the termination of hostilities in 1918. The rise and fall of the Durkheim School was very obviously shaped by French nationalist issues including the defeat of France in the war with Prussia, the Dreyfus Affair, and the catastrophe of the trench warfare of 1914-1918. During the early decades of the twentieth century, we could argue plausibly that European sociology was produced by military conflicts, especially those between France and Germany. It continued to be shaped by the experience of revolution, especially in Russia and Hungary, and was partly sustained by cold-war antagonisms between the Soviet system, its satellites and Western Europe.

This view that sociology is a product of both colonialism and nationalism is not entirely satisfactory. These problems in the nationalist background of sociology have been recently addressed by Fukuyama Kurasawa (2004) in terms of the development of 'the ethnological imagination'. He appeals to the possibility of an ethnological imagination to disrupt and challenge existing western social theory, which has proved incapable of grasping the reality of non-western societies, often freezing them into misleading dichotomies such as tradition and modernity, or particularism and universalism. While social theory was able to produce a critical understanding of western modernity, it was singularly unsuccessful in understanding non-western societies. The challenge of the contemporary situation is the growing cultural pluralism of societies as a consequence of globalisation.

Kurasawa's criticisms are valuable, but there is a curious problem with the idea that sociology was part of an imperial project. Kurasawa claims that, because western social

theory was fashioned in a context of imperial power, western thought often denigrated such colonised societies. This argument probably applies best to the United Kingdom. However, sociology as a university discipline has had relatively little success by comparison with social anthropology, which has been typically housed in the ancient universities. The relevance of social anthropology to colonial administration hardly needs any comment. However, Germany, in many respects the home of modern sociology, had almost no significant colonial holdings, apart for a few outposts in Africa. There was no German equivalent of the Dutch seaborne empire or Britain's Commonwealth. France had major colonial dependencies, but French social theory depended on British anthropological fieldwork (Richman, 2002). French sociology was essentially a reflection on the French Revolution and the collapse of the old regime. An argument can be made to the effect that France's first sociologist was not Saint-Simon but Alexis de Tocqueville, a man whose report on Algeria in 1847 enthusiastically supported the civilising mission of France (Tocqueville, 1988). The first significant piece of French ethnography was undertaken by Michel Leiris in an expedition from Dakar to Djibouti between 1931 and 1933, publishing a number of classics such as *Miroir de l'Afrique* (1934a) and *L'Afrique fantome* (1934b).Finally, it is difficult to talk meaningfully about western and non-western social theory in the modern world. Unsurprisingly many of the leading Islamic thinkers of the twentieth century either lived and worked in the West, or had been trained in western universities. These include, thinking only of Iran, the work of Malkum Khan, Ali Shariati and Abdolkarim Soroush (Vahdat, 2002). Islamic thought has already, since al-Afghani's famous encounter with Ernst Renan, been deeply engaged with western thought. It is difficult therefore to see how one could easily classify Islamic social theory as western or non-western.

While Weber might be criticised for a nationalist vision of sociology, Durkheim's conception of the social as *sui generis* can provide one platform for a cosmopolitan sociology. Durkheim had a clear conception of the possibility of sociology as a cosmopolitan science of moral facts. In *Professional Ethics and Civic Morals,* he distinguished between 'patriotism' and 'world patriotism'. Durkheim (1992:72) recognised patriotism as a set of sentiments and beliefs that correspond to the dominance

of the state but he looked forward to the possibility of world patriotism as a system that would correspond to humanity as a whole. World patriotism is a higher form of morality not confined to the nation state. He argued '[a]s we advance in evolution, we see the ideal men pursue breaking free of the local or ethnic conditions obtaining in a certain region of the world or a certain human group, and rising above all that is particular and so approaching the universal'. Durkheim admitted that the organization of humanity as a single society was difficult to envisage (at least in the short term), but individual states should try to raise citizenship to the highest moral and social level, and thereby reduce the distance between national and cosmopolitan moralities. In the language of contemporary sociology, Durkheim was attempting to reconcile human rights and citizenship, but it also permitted him to suggest some reconciliation between cosmopolitanism (universalism) and patriotism (particularism). Durkheim (1992: 75) asserted that '[t]rue patriotism, it seems, is only exhibited in forms of collective action directed towards the world without' such as the defence of one's country, but patriotism could also be directed within (to civil improvement, moral development and education). This type of moral patriotism would not necessarily involve conflict with our neighbours and could combine with cosmopolitanism. The attempt to reconcile moral patriotism and universal cosmopolitanism has remained an important part of the agenda of political philosophy and has emerged significantly in the context of globalisation, democracy and cosmopolitanism in the question: do democracies need territory?

What is Critical Recognition Theory?

Care and respect for other people cannot take place without a prior recognition of them as human beings. This feature of contemporary philosophy is referred to as 'recognition ethics theory' and an appraisal of Hegel's master-slave relationship has been an important aspect of the development of recognition ethics (Williams, 1997). The claim that an ethical relation requires recognition is derived from Hegel's analysis of the master and slave relationship. A master cannot freely receive recognition from a slave, because the slave is not in a position to give it voluntarily. The master cannot recognise the slave,

because the slave appears as merely a thing. By contrast, love was the ideal context of recognition in which two mutually attracted but free individuals offer each other perfect recognition. Hegel's recognition theory is not necessarily individualistic, since the same arguments apply to recognition between communities. Hegel's argument is sociological in the important sense that he accepted the fact that power and inequality are inevitable constraints on ethical recognition. The point is to change the material conditions between people in order to create circumstances in which freely given mutual recognition is possible.

Recognising the rights of minorities must be the first step towards establishing a framework of rights. This notion is modelled on Habermas's communicative theory of democracy and normative order (Habermas, 1997). An ideal speech situation must be in place for dialogical recognition to take place. An ideal context for recognition requires a set of procedural rules - communication is not distorted severely by ideology; speakers have roughly equal opportunities to participate, and there are no damaging time constraints on debate. Cultural rights require an open-ended opportunity of dialogue between host and minority, but also between anthropologists and 'their subjects'. There are two additional criteria. Mutual recognition has to be able to incorporate mutual criticism. Secondly, dialogue has to have an opt out clause – members of minority groups should not be compelled to accept the local customs of their own traditions and must be able to opt out (for example refuse forced marriage or infibulation) just as members of host societies can opt out by migration (Kukathas, 1992a and 1992b). This model of critical recognition pays attention to the fact that identities in modern societies are necessarily contested. The theory thereby avoids both essentialism and relativism.

Mutual and free recognition is required if people are to be recognisable as moral agents. Rights in any case presuppose free, autonomous and self-conscious agents capable of rational choice, but life is unequal. The master-slave dialectic suggests that neither slave nor master can achieve mutual, inter-subjective recognition, and hence without some degree of social equality there can be no ethical community, and hence a system of rights

and obligations cannot function. Redistribution must in fact be a condition of recognition. Social inequality or scarcity of resources undercuts the roots of solidarity or community without which conscious, rational agency is difficult. A variety of modern writers such as Charles Taylor (1992) have appealed to recognition ethics as the base line for the enjoyment of rights in multicultural societies. Without recognition of minority rights, no liberal democratic society can function, but recognition requires some material and legal changes to equalise the relationships between social groups. It is also fundamental to the problem of strategies to achieve the social recognition and inclusion of aboriginal peoples into modern societies. Although much human rights research has concentrated on the aboriginal peoples of North America and Australia, this problem of the difficulty of recognising aboriginal cultures has also been an issue in Japan, where, given the emphasis on national homogeneity, the Ainu have found it difficult to secure indigenous rights.

There must be open channels of communication between dominant host society (master) and subordinate minority groups (slave) in order for mutual recognition to emerge. Recognising the rights of minorities must be the first step towards establishing a framework of rights. This critical notion can modelled on a communicative theory of democracy and normative order (Habermas, 1997). An ideal speech situation must be in place for any dialogic recognition to take place. An ideal context for recognition requires a set of procedural rules - communication is not systematically or severely distorted by ideology; speakers have roughly equal opportunities to participate; there is no arbitrary closure of the communication; and there is no systematic domination over the speakers. Cultural rights require an open-ended opportunity of dialogue between host and minority, but also between anthropologists and 'their subjects'. These ideas have been extensively rehearsed in the literature on human rights, but in this argument my intention is to develop what I want to call 'a *critical* recognition theory'. It is not enough in recognition ethics simply to recognise the other. There must be mutual opportunities for reflection, dialogue and criticism. Mutual recognition has to be able to incorporate mutual criticism.

Critical recognition theory can be seen as an application, therefore, of Habermas's theory of communicative rationality. Recognition involves recognition of the other, but it does not necessarily require an acceptance of their values *in toto*. We could imagine an ecumenical dialogue between Christian and Muslim communities that is based on mutual recognition, trust and respect. However, such recognition does not imply mutual acceptance of each other's theologies. Indeed it might involve a highly critical dialogue, in which for example Muslims might argue that Christian trinitarianism is incompatible with any monotheistic theology, and Christians claim that Muslim theology does not have a viable sense of personal autonomy. Habermas's communicative notion of rationality implies that these theological debates might have no solution – at least in the short term. Recognition does not necessarily involve reconciliation of views; it means much more, namely that we respect the other's arguments and where possible accept their intellectual force. It does not mean we have to agree with the other.

There is however one further aspect of this example. It is also the case that some Christians - for example Unitarians - would also agree with some Muslims that the Trinitarian doctrine is ultimately incompatible with strict monotheism. And interestingly enough, some Muslims, for example those known collectively as the Mu'tazila, would agree with some Christians that man's free will is difficult to formulate in a creed that is committed to strict monotheism. This example is meant to suggest that critical recognition theory recognises internal debates and internal contradictions in the other's culture, and can remain sceptical about their own arguments and creeds. Critical recognition theory allows for: (1) mutual criticism; (2) scepticism about one's own arguments, and scepticism towards the other's position; (3) failure to reach agreements, and hence ongoing debate; and (4) ultimately a judgement. As a consequence of this intercultural dialogue, it should be possible for both sides in principle to exercise some critical judgment towards the other. In terms of our example, it may be that Muslim scholars, having listened openly to many arguments, make the judgement that Christian orthodox theology is ultimately incoherent. The role of judgement distinguishes critical recognition theory from anthropological descriptive relativism and from epistemological disinterest, because these anthropological positions rule out any judgement. They merely

recognise at best that Christians and Muslims live in different cultures and therefore by different assumptions.

Recognising Islam

Given the international crisis around the war on terrorism, the study of Islam has acquired a new urgency in academic life. Social scientific views of Islam have, like public opinion, been much divided over how to interpret Islam. Against a background of Orientalism, sociologists of Islam have generally speaking been anxious to criticise the Huntington thesis and to recognise Islam as an important cultural presence in Europe. Anthropologists and sociologists have generally rushed to the defence of Islam, often to the defence of fundamentalism, because they wish to avoid any accusation of racism or Islamophobia. The work of Akbar Ahmed might be taken as a characteristic illustration of a generalised defence of Islam, a sort of anthropological apologia. By contrast, Gilles Kepel (2004) and Oliver Roy (1996), two leading French students of Islam, have been very critical of radical Islam. Understanding Islam might therefore be a litmus test of theories of cosmopolitanism and recognition ethics.

Jack Goody's *Islam in Europe* can be taken as an example of a western commentary that seeks to avoid any critical judgement on Islam or Muslim society. He rejects the simple division between eastern and western cultures that has been characteristic of Orientalism, and he achieves this aim by demonstrating, through historical rather than anthropological research, that Islam has been an inescapable aspect of European history. He describes three routes by which Islam entered Europe. The southern encounter started in the eighth century when Islamic, primarily Arab, armies conquered North Africa and entered the Iberian Peninsula, which they came to be known as al-Andalus. The second encounter in the east was brought about by the Seljuqs and Mongols who migrated continuously from Asia between 1055 and 1405. The Ottoman Turks were a conglomerate tribe that was formed in Anatolia, and spread through Greece and the Balkans. The northern encounter

involved Tartars entering the Ukraine, but this Islamisation was part of a larger historical movement of people from the steppes of Central Asia, the most famous being the invasion of the Mongols and the Golden Horde under the Great Khan who reached Kiev in 1223.

There are at least three important lessons from *Islam in Europe.* First, Goody demonstrates that, while these encounters were violent military struggles, there was considerable cultural exchange between Muslim and Christians from the eighth century onwards, and that Christian civilization received significant technological and scientific contributions from Islam. Secondly, Muslim migrants to contemporary Europe cannot be considered to be introducing an alien, external culture. Thirdly, the expansion of Islam into Europe was not wholly militaristic; it was also brought about by Sufi traders, intellectuals and artists. Islamic Spain in terms of its architecture, literature, music and the sciences perhaps best illustrates the richness of this encounter between Islam and Christianity.

However, Goody's strategy is not a *critical* theory. For example, Goody's attempt to justify the destruction of the Buddhist figures at Bamiyan by the Taliban as the work of a legitimate government, applying Islamic law against infidel images, is the least convincing aspect of his analysis. The destruction of ancient Buddhist figures was an aggressive act against an international heritage. Recognising cultural difference does not mean accepting cultural difference. On the contrary, we need to develop a critical recognition theory within which there is space for mutual and self critical understanding. What I want to call 'critical recognition ethics' lies at the heart of cosmopolitan virtue in which caring for the differences of the other does not rule out critical judgement. Toleration of the cultural policies of warlords –whether Muslim, Christian or Buddhist - is not part of Leibnizian hermeneutic generosity.

To explore this distinction between simple and critical recognition, it is worth examining Habermas's own attempt to understand and tolerate Islam, and Bassam Tibi's critique of

this tolerance of political religion. In recent years, Habermas has begun an engagement with Islam (Tibi, 2002: 266). There is first the engagement with the debate over the return of the sacred and the nature of post-secular society; the second was Habermas's visit to Iran in which he rejected the notion that Iran is a totalitarian state; and the third was Habermas's Leibniz lecture in Berlin in which he argued that tolerance must extend to accepting Islamic proselytisation in Europe. Tibi's critique of Habermas is based on one major premise which is that tolerance does not mean 'anything goes, and it can only be practiced by accepting the rules related to it, first of which is the honouring of individual human rights and the reciprocity of tolerance' (Tibi, 2002: 267). This commentary on Habermas amounts to want I want to call critical recognition theory. Recognising the right of Muslims to proselytise must be mutual, namely that Muslims could convert to Christianity without fear or reprisal, or at least that Christians should free to practise their religion in Iraq or Turkey (Tibi, 1998). These conditions are very difficult to secure and protect, but they are for that reason worth the effort. To say with Habermas, that if necessary we must tolerate intolerance is ultimately not compatible with his own theory of communicative rationality. The irony is that the Ottoman Empire had a reputation for protecting peoples of the book (Christians and Jews) as minorities, and hence to uphold freedom of expression in contemporary Turkey would be to appeal to their own, not our, tradition of tolerance.

Conclusion: Cosmopolitan virtue and patriotism

Ironic cosmopolitanism (Turner, 2002) refers to the notion that to tolerate the beliefs of the other I have to be capable of creating a certain distance from my own culture. I need not only empathy but the capacity to treat my own beliefs from an external position. Ironic cosmopolitanism is intended to steer a course between two contrasted positions as illustrated in the work of Maurizio Viroli and Martha Nussbaum. In *For Love of Country,* Viroli (1995) writes that identities require a common culture, a landscape and shared rituals to be effective and enduring. The weakness of socialist internationalism was that it had difficulty creating a sense of solidarity without place. The geography of emotional

attachments therefore appears to be important in creating civic virtues and commitments. Political attachments need memories and collective memories require a location where these common rituals can be enacted. A placeless cosmopolitanism would also be empty and ultimately lifeless. A love of one's country, as a love for the republic, does not, in Viroli's argument, rule out respect for other cultures and places. Nussbaum by contrast has rejected the distinction between patriotism and nationalism, and condemns those on the Left who have argued that nationalism can be combined with universalism She asserts , in the interests of 'international quality of life issues' (such as hunger, poverty and ecological crises), that we must commit ourselves to a higher level of values (Nussbaum, 2000). Her plea for cosmopolitanism is to create a more international foundation for these political concerns. A dramatic shift of allegiance from national citizens to 'citizens of the world' is required. We need to establish an educational strategy to promote understanding other cultures and accepting a moral obligation to the rest of the world (Cohen, 1996).

Cosmopolitanism does not mean that one does not have a country or a homeland, but one has to have a certain reflexive distance from that homeland. Socratic irony is necessary for cosmopolitan virtue, by which one can achieve some distance from the polity. Cosmopolitan virtue requires irony, because the understanding of other cultures is assisted by an intellectual distance from one's own national or local culture. If Nussbaum's plea for global civic education can work, then understanding other cultures presupposes that we could treat our own culture disinterestedly as an object of inquiry. As such cosmopolitan virtue also requires self-reflexivity with respect to both our own cultural context and other cultural values. Such an orientation of irony and reflexivity produces a humanistic scepticism towards the grand narratives of modern ideologies. Cosmopolitan irony would as a result share much in common with the pragmatism of Richard Rorty in that tolerance of others must start from a position of some uncertainty as to the ultimate authority of one's own culture (Rorty, 1982). Cosmopolitanism assumes that there is doubt about the validity of any 'final vocabulary', but cosmopolitan doubt about cultural authority is not equivalent to cultural relativism, especially what I have termed complacent relativism. Because cosmopolitanism engenders ironic self-reflection,

it does not need a strong or hot version of otherness, because its own identity is not profoundly shaped in conflict with others.

Cosmopolitan virtue is not designed to make us feel psychologically comfortable with cultural difference and diversity. Cosmopolitanism has a relationship to the traditional themes of homelessness in the theology of the Abrahamic faiths. Adam and Eve were driven from their Garden as a consequence of their transgression, and forced to sweat and labour in an alien place. It was also central to Jewish themes of exile and exclusion, and is generally shared by the world religions as an image of the vulnerability of human beings. If the body has been a metaphor of the human home, then homelessness expresses the fundamental spiritual alienation of human beings. The adventures of Odysseus provide an equally potent image of the tensions between the security of a dwelling place and the moral challenge of the journey. Odysseus's confrontation with diversity and his voyage home have been taken as a collective metaphor of human alienation.

Cosmopolitan virtue is a defensible moral position in a globally fragmented culture, and complacent relativism is not the only possible outcome of the recognition of global diversity. In addition, a focus on human vulnerability provides a moral baseline for standards of conduct and intellectual inquiry that can as it were make relativism relative. Cosmopolitanism can both express a set of virtues (care for other cultures, ironic distance from one's own traditions, concern for the integrity of cultures in a hybrid world, openness to cross-cultural criticism and so forth), and embrace a love of country as a republican commonwealth that ought to be shared by all. If there is now widespread acceptance of the relevance of human rights legislation, then in principle perhaps we can accept a set of obligations that logically underpin those rights. The notion of 'cosmopolitan virtue' is a general description of such cultural and moral obligations. A critical theory of recognition would require a normative sociology of group relations, which in turn would require a new Enlightenment – a reworking of Leibniz's passion for China in the context of contemporary globalisation

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