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Whose World? What History?

With increased general awareness of global interconnectedness and a new millennium approaching, scholars are reevaluating how they present what used to be called world history or universal history and now might be called world systems (of various kinds), comparative civilizations, international history, the history of the world, or the history of globalization. A primary issue is, what is the appropriate unit of study—if not the nation-state, then the kind of broad spheres of influence known in the past as "the world;" whole civilizations (however defined); political/economic systems; or the entire globe (from whose point of view)? Behind each of these approaches is a tacit or explicit agenda, a set of assumptions, a criterion of relevancy, a presumed methodology, and related standards of evidence.

Contributing to the debate are three new books: *Civilizations and World Systems: Studying World-Historical Change,* edited by Stephen K. Sanderson; *Conceptualizing Global History,* edited by Bruce Mazlish and Ralph Buultjens; and a posthumous collection of Marshall Hodgson's work entitled *Rethinking World History,* edited by Edmund Burke III. It is a debate about history, but almost all the writers in Sanderson's book and some in *Conceptualizing Global History* are not historians. The implication is that world history might be taught by sociologists or interdisciplinary teams. The "ing" in each of the titles signifies a continuing search for new understanding.

Much of the debate is about definitions, including definitions of history itself. All of the old debates are still with us—e.g., whether the paradigms of physics or of biology should be taken as models. The writers in Sanderson's book and some in *Conceptualizing Global History* lean toward the nomothetic school (looking for general laws). The influence of the ancient Greeks, especially Plato, is still apparent, i.e., a concept of natural laws derived not only from the Copernican revolution but also from something akin to the Greek concept of universal Logos; the belief that forms are primary and their detailed manifestations are derivative; an assumption like that of the Greeks that "the deepest cause of things [is not their beginning but] their *telos,* their purpose and final actuality."[1]

Sixty years ago, Johan Huizinga wrote: "History is . . . an intellectual form. . . . Every civilization must hold its own history to the true one."[2] To the extent that this is true, as the West orients itself more thoroughly to the globe, it still tends

to view the world through its own lenses. (All but one of the writers in these three new books are Western). Moreover, as life-worlds (to use Heidegger's phrase) are being reconstructed, mental maps are still distorted even for those whose self-other distinctions are not geographic but Marxist (the "exploited" versus their "exploiters"). Except indirectly, the viewpoints of linguists, archaeologists, anthropologists, and philosophers, among others, are not very much included in these three books.

In former times, world history meant the history of the world "as we know it." As Wolf Schafer has written in *Conceptualizing Global History:* "the 'world' of world history was non-global most of the time."[3] "The ancient totality of history was based on civilizational arrogance and geographical ignorance."[4] The Greek word *oikumene,* Schafer says, meant the inhabited lands of the world known to the Greeks. Similar kinds of parochialism have characterized history down to the present. Even William McNeill, the dean of post-1945 American world historians, has been accused of being Eurocentric.

Another approach has been to reserve the phrase "world history" for the period after the world became linked together by economic institutions. This was what Marx had in mind when he contended that the world was not economically integrated before 1500 and therefore the phrase "world history" applies only to the post-1500 period and especially to the period after big industry had produced world history for the first time.[5] Once integrated by capitalism, presumably the world could subsequently be integrated by communism. History of the economically integrated world, as Marxists have defined it, is not the same as the global history that Mazlish postulates when he emphasizes environment because the world has always been one world in terms of environment.

Universal histories, notably those written by 19th- and early 20th-century Europeans, are analogous to what historians of geopolitics have called universal states or universal empires. These occurred when a formerly peripheral state within a states system rose to dominate the other states, creating—for a relatively short time—a single large political unit.[6] David Wilkinson, one of Sanderson's authors, distinguishes between universal states—which unified, centralized, and homogenized regional and local identities—and universal empires, which ruled over greater heterogeneity.[7] Most of his list of 23 universal empires existed before 1500 A.D. While they were "universal" within their context and might claim universality, they fell far short of global dominance.

It would be interesting to know how many of the 23 produced "universal histories" and how such histories might compare to Europe's later universal histories (even though post-Roman Europe never became a universal empire). The usual charge against the European universal histories is that they were implicitly or explicitly imperialistic, presuming to encompass the history of mankind in one often teleological metaphysical sweep. They bore some resem-

blance to the Judeo-Christian-Islamic messianic tradition but also borrowed concepts from the Greeks.[8]

Hypothetically, a universal history could be written that was not so metaphysical or imperialistic. Manfred Kossok, in *Conceptualizing Global History*, defines universal history as "the total temporal, spatial, and structural process of human development." In the narrower sense, it means "the compression of human history into a worldwide system of reciprocal communication (of both a dominant and a nondominant nature), penetrations, influences, and dependencies."[9] He says there could be a place for universal history shorn of its Eurocentrism. Its conceptualizations, Kossock says, would need to borrow perspectives from more than one civilizational tradition.

This kind of amalgam has yet to be forged, and will be difficult to achieve. Buultjens comments that the tradition of writing history was not well established in India and Africa until recent times. The Europeans, of course, are not the only people who have thought of themselves as the center of the world.

Historian Fernand Braudel first postulated a world system in 1949.[10] Later, most scholars focusing on systems have been social scientists, not historians, and often Marxist. Looking at the world in terms of system appears to be a very Western perspective, not only borrowing the metaphors of physics where Greek ideas still lurk but also influenced by issues and paradigms rising out of the mechanisms and social structures of the industrial age. Histories of world systems emphasize geopolitics or economics or both in interrelationship. Social stratification is a factor, too. It is the interrelationships that are the most intriguing. None of these writers claims that geopolitical systems and economic systems completely coincided.

Christopher Chase-Dunn and Thomas D. Hall, in Sanderson's book, define a world system as a large intersocietal and intercultural network, rarely coextensive with the world as a whole until the late 20th century. There have been, they say, kin-based, state-based, and market-based world systems. Sanderson's book, in general, does not dwell on the debates among anthropologists about the sequences (or not) of tribes, chiefdoms, and states. Authors disagree about whether there has been only one or many economic world-systems. Chase-Dunn and Hall say there have been a number of world-systems, becoming fewer as they have become larger. State-based world-systems "prior to the modern one oscillated between core-wide empires and interstate systems," or they broke up into mini-states.[11]

There has been much debate about how long world systems have existed. One set of writers claims that systems have been around for a very long time. Sociobiologists describe "political" and "economic" arrangements in the worlds of insects, birds, and mammals. We know that trade was practiced by the ancestors of man before modern man evolved. Barry K. Gills argues in Sanderson's

book that world-systems go back nearly 5000 years.[12] Chase-Dunn and Hall say that world-economies lacking political or military unification existed throughout history (they use the word "world" in its old pre-global sense). Frank and Gills argue that capital accumulation has oscillated between private families and the state within a single sporadically growing world system. According to Frank, accumulation before 1500 was based on demand tribute in the form of added product (payment as work, goods, or money); later, accumulation was based on producing added value.[13]

Immanuel Wallerstein, another of Sanderson's writers, has written in a Marxist vein that political hegemony was rare and brief in world history. When it was achieved, efficient capital accumulators did the achieving. Having economic advantage led to political power, but economic power could be independent of political power. Usually, there was a sequential development from commercial to industrial to financial hegemony. When all three coincided, then a core area had brief economic hegemony over the semiperiphery and periphery. The capitalist world-economy, which he says began to emerge around 1450 A.D., was characterized by commodification, proletarianization, mechanization, contractualization, and polarization.

Pre-1500 economic networks, he has written, were world-empires rather than world-economies. His use of a hyphen implies a unit less than global in scope. World-empires joined their edges to the center by the collection of tribute but left edge production systems relatively intact; the capitalist world-economy incorporated edge production systems into its division of labor based on the chain from raw materials to finished product. In world-empires, unequal exchange was based on force; in the capitalist system, it was based on supply and demand with force latent.[14] Wilkinson, in an earlier critique of Wallerstein, wrote that military hegemons began as economically backward fringe states and that it is best to think of political-military and economic systems as two separate entities. All of the writers seem to ignore Polanyi's typology, which emphasized that there were many different modes of trade, many of them sponsored by political rulers.[15]

Gills writes, in Sanderson's book: The definition of world system rests on the basis of exchange of surplus. It "implies a division of labor and brings in its train *systematic,* political, social, ideological, cultural, and even religious rhythms." "World system structure does not involve a single core and a single periphery, but rather an interlinked set of center-periphery complexes . . . joined together in an overall ensemble . . . world systemic multicentrality is hierarchically structured."[16]

Some of these authors use the words "network" and "system" interchangeably, which leads to confusion. A network is a set of linked discrete nodes. Presumably some nodes could drop off, or the nature of the links could change,

and it would still be a network. The idea of system is based on the imagery of a living organism or a complex machine. Presumably, in a system the whole and its parts depend on one another and the whole has both a transcendent and an embracing quality. Culture-boundedness lies at the root of many categories used for analysis, especially the concept of system.

Some of these writers apply the term "network" to trade but apply the word "system" to groups of states. Two other relevant words are "corporative" and "community." Hodgson points out how pervasive the corporative idea was in medieval Europe; the early European state was the "king's body." Premodern merchant networks were sometimes itinerant *communities* but they were not *corporative.* Presumably, economic networks changed into systems when multinational corporations replaced merchant diasporas.

By failing to focus on cultures as a primary variable, systems historians leave out a vital ingredient. Today, we say that a corporate body has a culture, whether it is political or economic. Religion, of course, is an important aspect of culture. Wallerstein, Frank, and Wilkinson do not think of religion as a separate system, as the Roman Catholic Church with its Jesuit and other orders seems to have been in the 16th century. Nor do they honor religion's primary role in the shaping of political culture from the very beginning.

The debate in Sanderson's book is whether to interpret history in terms of systems or civilizations. Definitions of civilization vary widely. The roots of Western biases in definition go back in time; indeed, they are prehistoric. Western scholars since the 18th century have often cited the existence of cities as one of the prime indicators of civilization, yet today we are told that hunter-gatherers were reluctant to become sedentary and—in the Middle East—disdained sedentary pig-herders (a possible explanation of proscriptions against pork-eating).[17] Today, Arabian Bedouins and the heirs of American Indian chieftains sometimes express an anti-urban bias. When people did settle down in the ancient Middle East, cities gradually attained their symbolic cultural role. Since histories were written by sedentary people, non-sedentary (and certainly violent) invaders were depicted as uncivilized barbarians—including the Indo-Europeans despite their enormous influence on the world's languages; the Vikings despite their considerable maritime achievements; and the Mongols of the 13th century and later, despite their skills with horses, the cities that came under the rule of Qubulai Khan, and Tamerlane's Samarkand.[18] [Archaeologists appear to have a bias in favor of the societies that left non-biodegradable artifacts.]

Some definitions of civilization have been blatantly Eurocentric. [Western scholarship still reflects the influence of the long arm of the Roman Empire, and the long-range effects of Constantine's embrace of Christianity.] Eighteenth-century Europeans sometimes thought the word applied exclusively to themselves. In 1926 James Henry Breasted wrote, in *The Conquest of Civilization,* that

northwest Europe had the highest level of civilized achievement in the world, partially because of racial superiority.[19] By this time, of course, Western Europeans had long been invaders, but the difference was that *they* were writing the histories.

Some scholars think of civilization in a more objective way in terms of the interrelatedness of a number of factors. Fernand Braudel, for example, wrote that civilizations are to be defined "in terms of geography, cultural (i.e., linguistic and religious) zones, urban cultures, and the societies and economics that sustain them and the ways of thought or mentalities that grow in the context created by [these] variables."[20]

Many scholars define civilization in terms of coherence; the question is, from whence does the coherence come? Many say it comes from high culture. Anthropologist Alfred Louis Kroeber, who did most of his field work among North American Indians, defined civilization as style or superstyle, a definition to which Braudel objected. Kroeber wrote in *Configurations of Culture Growth* that civilization has an image which influences and modifies its disparate elements. Its patterns, he said, give the parts relationship to one another and to the civilization as a whole. His student, Gordon Hewes, wrote in 1975 that Kroeber "treats civilizations almost exclusively in terms of their æsthetic and intellectual components, largely detached from surrounding or underlying social, economic, political, or even religious phenomena."[21]

Definitions of civilizational coherence are often elitist. Arnold Toynbee defined civilization as a state of society in which a creative minority of the population is liberated from economic activities. Max Weber's view was that "[c]oherence is a property not of civilization as a whole but only of the organization of life of its culture-defining strata."[22]

Vytautas Kavolis, a former president of the International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations, once wrote: "A civilization (or at least a classical civilization) is best defined as the largest functioning sociocultural organization, encompassing several states and languages, held together by a literate tradition maintained by full-time students of theoretical writings central to it."[23] William McNeill says in Sanderson's book: "A shared literary canon, and expectations framed by that canon, are probably central to what we mean by a civilization." Cohesion, he says, comes from "continual circulation of news and nuances of meaning."[24]

These kinds of definitions have spurred anti-establishment scholars to eschew the term. Wallerstein thought it had little practical value and said at one time that civilizations were only ideological constructs serving rhetorical purposes and acting as legitimization projects for specific groups.[25] When some present-day historians characterize many past histories of nation-states in the

same way, it is not to make a case for greater objectivity but to legitimize their own use of history for power-seeking purposes.

The question of how parts relate to the whole keeps arising. McNeill writes in his self-critique that in 1963 he followed V. Gordon Childe and others in defining civilization as "a society in which occupational specialization allowed the emergence of high skills—administrative, military, artisanal, literary, and artistic." He now admits that that definition is not adequate for later eras. The question is, he says, "How do all the different skills and habits and outlooks of sharers in a civilization fit together into a more or less coherent whole?"[26] Louis Dumont has also said that the distinctiveness of a civilization arises from its dominant ideology, controlled by a conception of the relationship of the individual to a social whole.[27]

Edmund Burke III, editor of Marshall Hodgson's *Rethinking World History,* is critical of Hodgson's emphasis on high culture: "Because it focuses upon culture, the civilizationalist approach favored by Hodgson has only a tenuous grasp on the crucially important long-range demographic, economic, and social transformations which accompanied (perhaps even preceded) the onset of the modern age."[28]

This is not a fair charge against Hodgson, whose comparisons between medieval European and Middle Eastern law are much more extensive and seem more insightful than the relatively brief references to law in *Conceptualizing Global History.* Louis Menand III writes in the latter book: ". . . the notion of individualistic human rights does not exist in Islamic political theory."[29] Hodgson paints quite a different picture.

"The Islamic *sharia* law was largely an expression of individuals not only for their personal life but for the whole ordering of society."[30] "Apparently, it was largely merchants that drew up the *sharia* law in the first place . . . and the scholars of the law, the *ulama,* were often of mercantile families or even merchants themselves." The consequences were that merchants had "a certain veto power in the society as a whole."[31] ". . . the authority of the *sharia* law was such that . . . no alternative institutions, which might have neutralized its effect, could achieve legitimization and hence long-run durability."[32] No "parochial corporate entity was allowed a permanent status."[33] Everything became the responsibility of the community as a whole and therefore of the individuals who made it up. The law was highly egalitarian and left many relations up to private contracts between responsible individuals. Little was left to ascribed status. It was not required that offices be filled from fixed hereditary lines. Consequently, before the 16th century, there was a high degree of social mobility and also of geographic mobility.[34] The *sharia* law "gave the Iranic-Semitic populations at last a common vehicle for their traditions."[35]

Hodgson contrasts this Islamic pattern with Occidental "hierarchical corporativism," with its status by ascription.[36] He describes Islamic law as serving "communal moralism," Western law as serving "corporative formalism."[37]

In any case, there are still questions about *how* civilizational patterns, high culture, essence, or dominant ideology shape the relationship of the civilization's parts to one another. Neither Sanderson nor Mazlish has recognized the substantial anthropological literature about culture and personality.[38] Apparently unversed in many aspects of philosophy or aesthetics and probably eschewing Jungian psychology, systems historians do not incorporate theories of style or symbol into their mode of interpretation. Yet, the literature on symbols is vast and relevant.[39]

Anthropologist Florence Kluckhohn, not quoted or cited in these recent books, has written that culture includes both values and symbols. Values refer to existential assumptions underlying personal behavior and institutional patterns, and to principles which direct choice. Cultural values spring from the basic facts of human nature, which she says are perennial. Cultures vary in their ordering of value priorities (as Hodgson illustrates, comparing Europe and the Middle East). Any system contains both a dominant value profile and subculture profiles.[40] This mode of analysis has yet to be used in detail by historians, civilizationalists, or systems scholars.

There has been much debate among comparative civilizationists about the relationships—temporal and otherwise—of empires to civilizations. They have some tendency to reify civilizations as if civilizations had the kind of determinable spatial-temporal boundaries empirically discernible for polities. Carroll Quigley wrote that when a universal empire—a single political unit dominated by a formerly peripheral state—in turn dominated a whole civilization, that civilization and society entered a golden age of peace and prosperity with little innovation or economic expansion before being destroyed by outsiders. Matthew Melko, one of the authors in Sanderson's book, wrote in 1985: "Civilizations frequently *end* empires, but not always," especially if they are pluralistic such as Europe and Southeast Asia (italics mine).[41]

Melko thinks civilizations encompass a multitude of integrated systems. Wilkinson's view is almost the opposite. He has written that the later "civilizations" listed by Quigley were clearly parts of larger transactional networks because of long-term entrainment in a states system and process. He has—in effect—tried to escape the cultural issues and circumvent lingering Greek influences by redefining civilization in terms of level and connectedness, not level and uniformity. Civilization, he says, is military-political connectedness, which can include links by conflict (borrowing from George Simmel's insights). Civilizations are world-systems whose relevant criteria are cities and closed transactional networks, not writing or cultural coherence. Around 1500 B.C., he says,

Egyptian and Mesopotamian civilizations fused (a fusion is a relatively symmetric egalitarian coupling). After that, the Central Civilization resulting from that fusion gradually engulfed all other civilizations in the world (engulfment is asymmetric unequal coupling—the asymmetry in this case apparently deriving from the fact that other parts of the world were originally peripheral to Egypt and Mesopotamia). Along the way there were occasional bondings and non-bonding elastic collisions between civilizations which he calls convergence. Convergence might be by war, trade, empire, migration, cultural flows or diplomacy. There were, as Toynbee said, abortive or satellite civilizations. There was a plurality of civilizations until the late 19th or early 20th century. No civilization fell because falling would require that all of its cities be destroyed or depopulated. Since this never happened, it is best to talk of turnover of civilizations, not collapse and rebirth. Now, according to Wilkinson, there is only one civilization.

Originally, trading areas, which he calls *oikumenes,* were larger than civilizations, which were the areas in which states could rule, fight, or ally. *Oikumenes* were economically linked urban networks. Since one civilization has now engulfed all the others and there is now a worldwide *oikumene,* Wilkinson's contention is that civilization and world-system are now the same.[42] (He seems to fuse the concepts of network and system.)

Kavolis wrote in 1988: "Globalization theory analyzes the processes by which the world is becoming a 'single place,' a frame that has to be taken into account in acting and in interpreting."[43] *Conceptualizing Global History,* edited by Mazlish and Buultjens, grew out of an international conference at Bellagio, Italy, in the summer of 1991 (Sanderson's *Civilizations and World Systems* grew out of an unrelated conference in Berkeley, California, in the summer of 1989).[44] Editor Mazlish says global history is contemporary (or futurist) history, not universal history or world history (and not systems history or the history of civilizations). It is policy-oriented.

Much of the book that he and Ralph Buultjens have edited reads like another effort to undermine or circumvent established elites and power relationships. Neva R. Goodwin writes: "In place of the details of the old standard histories, which portray local incidents and individual actors, global history will depend upon generalizations about the effects of (or on) human beings in groups or as a species. Unlike histories that gain their coherence from a geographic, gender, or ethnic definition, global history will depend upon themes."[45] The scholarly approach should be interdisciplinary.

Mazlish writes about "the challenge of creating institutions other than the nation-state as the subject matter of history; the possibility of global opinion as an ethical force; the issue of identity."[46] If the nation-state is no longer the prime actor, then maybe the prime actors are movements, nongovernmental organizations, and multinational corporations. (One is immediately reminded of the

proposal before the United Nations to create a second branch of its legislature consisting of representatives from nongovernmental associations.) Wolf Schafer writes: "The works of the new global history tend to be thematically focused on recurring processes like war and colonization or on cross-cultural patterns like the spread of disease, technology, and trading networks."[47] This book deliberately downplays religion.

Government in Mazlish's book is implicitly not the "command of the sovereign." Focus is on the U.N. Declarations of Human Rights. Menand notes that the emphasis since 1945 on democracy and human rights stems from English-speaking and Western European nations. He traces the idea of the rule of law to the Magna Carta. The three-fifths of the world which has yet to adopt human rights, he concludes, needs a rule of law and pluralist democracy.[48] This version of explicitly presented and agenda-driven history is as Eurocentric in its values, assumptions, and interpretations of history as any universal history ever was.

Implicit and explicit agendas abound in Mazlish's book. He has American academic politics in mind when he visualizes a global history association (different from the already-existing World History Association), a new journal, revised curricula, and a series of books (already underway at Westview Press).

In this age when the economy of overseas Chinese is close in size to that of Japan, the agenda of Wang Gungwa, Vice Chancellor of the University of Hong Kong and one of Mazlish's authors, might be seen as an effort to gain more legitimization not only for "the notion of sojourning in relatively open trading societies" but also for immigration which allows immigrants to continue to be part of close-knit ethnic diasporas or allows political refugees to continue to promote their political values together with like-minded people around the world.[49] He mentions only briefly the pre-World War II German concept that Germans in Chile, Argentina, southern Brazil, North America, Czechoslovakia, Austria, and Russia were still Germans. He does not discuss pre-1939 German international cartels.

The problem with explicitly agenda-driven history or history focused on selective themes is that it fails to consider adequately the all-important factor of context. Without an adequate understanding of context, not only are histories incomplete, but they also fail to provide a sufficient background for public policy-making, one of the agendas of the Mazlish book. Just as we need to understand how the food chain works in order to formulate reasonable environmental policies, so we also need better understanding of how any facet of history is imbedded in a multifaceted context. The historian's emphasis on archival research does not by itself serve this purpose. There is a sociological and cultural bias driving any person's or institution's selection of what evidence to place into archives. What the historian harvests from archives also depends on what questions he (she) is asking and his (her) a priori assumptions of rele-

vance. Many subjects require an interdisciplinary approach not yet fully adopted by historians.

The subject of cities in history covered in *Civilizations and World Systems* provides an excellent example. Both Wilkinson and Chase-Dunn use urban demography as a prime indicator. Using geographers' models, Chase-Dunn and Hall found that "[b]oth political and economic power distributions are reflected in changes in city-size distributions."[50] Andrew Bosworth writes: "The number of cities, their rates of growth, and their hierarchical distribution can each be used as economic barometers."[51] Wilkinson has written: "One useful indicator of the statist/capitalist balance is the balance between cities of the same size that are state capitals (i.e., power-maintained) and those that are commercial centers (i.e., trade-maintained)."[52] He seems to disregard the fact that much commerce has tended to flow through capitals and/or to be power-maintained. Ignoring the fact that rulers in such disparate places as pre-1500 Europe and Mughal India tended to be peripatetic, Chase-Dunn and Hall say, "Large empires should generally have large cities."[53]

Many of the writers in the Mazlish and Sanderson books try to be "scientific" about cities, relying on the population data in Tertius Chandler's *Four Thousand Years of Urban Growth: An Historical Census.*[54] Yet, estimates of population before the modern era vary considerably depending on their premises, including how much hinterland is included.

All of the writers underplay the role of cities as cultural centers. One does cite Norell et al., who have contended that there has been no significant relation between creativity and the size of a civilization's largest city, the growth of the civilization, and the degree of centralization.[55] All of them downplay the role of religion, but religion cannot be left out of the history of cities. In ancient Sumer and Egypt, individual cities had their own gods and the ability of the city to expand its range of control depended to a considerable extent on the appeal of its gods and how well they lent themselves to syncretism. Rome built its empire in part by coopting the gods of other cities. A network of Roman Catholic bishops sustained otherwise nearly-abandoned city sites during the late days of the Roman Empire. Down to the present, churches in Europe, mosques in the Middle East, and temples in Hindu India have played a substantial role in cities. Over millennia religion gave cohesion to the trading groups that traversed wide areas and threaded through cities. The sale of tithes-in-kind for the church helped fuel the great medieval and Renaissance European financial/trading centers about which Braudel has written.

Because they tend to reify cities, these authors in Sanderson's book (except Bosworth) also tend to ignore the fact that individual cities were often crossroads for more than one system—economic, political, religious. Each of the systems included its own set of cities that overlapped but was not identical to

that of the others. The central city may have been different in each case. The unanswered question is, what were the relationships between civilization, economics, and power, as they were manifested in or worked through cities?

Preoccupied as they are with macro reconnaissance, these writers do not get down to the fine grain, which I contend is best understood in terms of values (including concepts of space and time), symbols, and rhythms (including the rhythms of the embracing culture, the rhythms of human biology and natural environment, and the rhythms of institutional life and human ecology). One question is how rhythms differ for different kinds of people and how social and cultural rhythms connect to the facts of human psychology and physiology. A person's mental maps, no doubt, affect his/her rhythms. The geographic scope of a system affects its rhythms. Large cities have a different beat from that of small towns. Symbolic forms both reflect and help to determine the beat.[56]

While some scholars are writing about a new age of city-states, Mazlish's conclusion is that: "Global life is substituting for metropolitan life." What then happens to cities? And to rhythms?

Another cluster of issues centers around the words "modern," "modernization," "modernity," and "postmodern." For Hodgson, modernization was a radical break from agrarian conditions which occurred first in Europe, but could plausibly have taken place in Sung China or the world of Islam. Andre Gunder Frank triggered a major debate when—using modernization in the post-1945 sense of "development" of third world countries by the industrial West, especially the United States—he wrote about the deliberate "development of under-development," an aspect of neocolonialism.[57]

Hodgson's definition of modernity includes culture and social patterns. He thought the hallmark of the modern age was technicalism, "a condition of calculative . . . technical specialization in which the several specialists are interdependent on a large enough scale to determine patterns of expectation in the key sectors of society." He saw modernity as a global process, although the West was the epicenter.[58]

Technology was the key. " . . . the Renaissance did not inaugurate modernity . . . it brought Europe up to the cultural level of the other major civilizations of the *Oikumene.* It did so in some measure by assimilating the advances of the other Asian civilizations"—e.g., gunpowder firearms, compass, stern-post rudder, decimal notation, and the university. Consequently, technical specialization increased the accumulation of inventions, which led to "qualitative change in the level and kind of human social organization."[59]

Cited in these books, Modelski and Thompson have argued that a succession of active zones of innovation are what drives world system evolution.[60] Peter Hall noted in *The World Cities* that cities' connectedness to the world system of economic change increases with technological progress.[61]

Other writers place more emphasis on Western cultural definitions of modernity. Mazlish writes: "The modern was positivistic, technocratic, rationalistic, believed in linear progress, absolute truths, rational planning, nationalism, and the standardization of knowledge and production."[62] The capitalist form of modernization, he says, postulated a rational man pursuing his own self-interest. The opponents of this idea extol altruism.[63] While the West has moved into postmodernism, many people in the world still want modernity.

The term "modernism" had a different meaning when it was coopted by artists, writers, and architects in late 19th-century and early 20th-century Germany, Austria, and Italy, as well as in Western Europe and the United States. Mazlish has something else in mind when he identifies two phases of "modernism," one around 1948, another from 1910 to 1915, and mentions its "shadowy and shifting nature."[64]

In many of its forms, such as dadaism, cultural modernism was intended as a repudiation of the past. The same can be said of postmodernism.

Toynbee used the term "postmodern" in his *Study of History* to describe the age from the 1870s which he said was slipping into irrationality. Kavolis has said, "The only constant in the various accounts of 'postmodernism' is self-conscious rejection of 'modernism' with its tendencies toward dialectic thought, hierarchy of values, universal forms, master narratives encapsulating the meaning of history, and efforts after a not yet forgotten coherence." Postmodernism is a mode of interpretation which stresses its collage-like decentered, fragmentary, simultaneously multiperspectival, "transparent" nature.[65]

Mazlish defines postmodernism as the abandonment of the Enlightenment project, perhaps best illustrated by French intellectuals Foucault, Derrida, and Lacan. Foucault wrote that Nietzsche's "death of god" also entailed the "death of man"—i.e., of humanism. Instead of man, there were structures, systems.[66] Mazlish comments: ". . . it is the Western historian who structures history in terms of modernism and postmodernism and imposes it on the history of the world."[67]

Deconstruction has been a hallmark of the postmodern age. Burke refers to "post-Foucault" discourse.

Beyond postmodernity are the social and cultural revolutions of the Information Age not discussed by these writers. Post-postmodernism began with new ideas about mathematics and logic which appeared in the first half of the 20th century. Recently, cognitive anthropology and cyborg anthropology have begun to replace structural anthropology. The science of complexity and fractal geometry express the new "wired world" based on computers and the Internet. Business organizations—especially those in new high-technology fields—emphasize individual autonomy more than hierarchy. Webs and networks are replacing structures; fluidity and flexibility are replacing standardization and fixity.[68]

One question yet to be addressed is whether continuity can or should be sustained under these new circumstances, and, if so, what should be the forms and content of history when the Internet obliterates here/there distinctions and collapses time. People still yearn for meaning, hope, stability, and community, but how are these to be found amidst disruptive changes? When the language of the Internet is English, can it be said that the issue of Eurocentrism has gone away? Clearly, much more remains to be said about approaches to world history.