

CRITIQUE OF HISTORICAL REASON

David B. Richardson

University of Toronto, Canada. E-mail: dprichardson@alltel.net

Recibido: 11 Julio 2004 / Revisado: 13 Agosto 2004 / Aceptado: 10 Septiembre 2004 / Publicado: 15 Octubre 2004

Resumen: The approach here entertained presupposes a fresh theory of world pictures (*Weltanschauungen*) of higher civilizations. For the historian's idea of historical facts presupposes a world picture, except for societies which lack a written language. That is why the historical reason discussed here is limited to the kind of history which deals with higher civilizations. The analysis of world pictures used here itself presupposes that symbols are all-important and that they lose their symbolic power if attached to a static meaning. As in Jung's theory, a symbol has the ability to be active in the mind as a transformer of consciousness, free to associate with new experiences and thinking. This theory gives special attention to Dilthey's problem: that of the rational quality of historical facts. World pictures, which give deep meanings to many historical facts, are made up of symbols and metaphors, including ideas, images, values, and emotions. These world styles are almost entirely unconscious. It is true that historians can have deliberate, conscious definitions of such worldviews as those of the Greek and Chinese civilizations. Since the actual *Weltbild* is much more complex and largely unconscious, only something more than a logical definition will suffice to understand it. This paper indicates the way in which a rational understanding of world pictures can be attained.

Palabras Clave: Dilthey's problem, higher civilizations, historical reason, *Weltanschauungen*, world pictures.

"[C.G. Jung's] ideas center around the understanding that a symbol loses its symbolic power when it is 'attached' to a static meaning. The attached, and therefore static meaning renders an amorphous symbol (like the sphere or the ouroboros) to a mere definition; no longer does it have the ability to be active in the mind as a 'transformer of consciousness,' free to associate with new experiences and thinking. 'Symbolic power' transcends and permeates through

all conscious thinking. It is important to state that Jung seemed to often see his work as not a complete psychology in itself but as his unique contribution to the field of psychology. Jung claimed late in his career that only for about a third of his patients did he use 'Jungian analysis.' For another third, Freudian analysis seemed to best suit the patient's needs and for the final third Adlerian analysis was most appropriate"
(Jung', *Wikipedia Encyclopedia*)

"Nothing is harder to surmount than a corpus of true but too special knowledge; to reforge the traditions of his forebears is the greatest originality a man can have"
(Clifford A. Truesdell, III, *Mathematical Reviews*)

"That there is, besides a necessity of cause and effect –which I may call the logic of space– another necessity, an organic necessity in life, that of Destiny –the logic of time– is a fact of the deepest inward certainty, a fact which suffuses the whole of mythological religions and artistic thoughts and constitutes the essence and kernel of all history (in contradistinction to nature) but is unapproachable through the cognition-forms which the 'Critique of Pure Reason' investigates. This fact still awaits its theoretical formulation"
(Oswald Spengler, *The decline of the west*)

INTRODUCTION

An historian, writing of one of the civilizations, chooses a way to unfold the narrative: whether simply to write an objective history in chronological order or, instead, concentrate on the political events, or economic networks, or the religions, or on the aesthetic or scientific culture. Medieval Europeans probably recognized that, going east, their civilization stopped at the city limits of Venice. What was it that was not shared by the Greek-speaking Byzantines? Here the concept of world picture becomes a point of contrast. For world pictures unified vast areas of less than global size for long periods before the present.

Within the Mideastern area so defined, historians have written accounts that cover all aspects of life and have done so in terms that people in each self-identified area would probably recognize as valid.

How best should a general historian write a civilization's history, writing not just politically, nor at the local level as if his or her history were a sum of local histories, nor merely religiously? To write globally was inaccurate before 1950; for no global civilization then existed. Even 'global' falls short of a last goal; for the word 'global' if unqualified may be global economically, or global politically, or to some extent global culturally; thus it falls short of a last goal. How will an historian in the last analysis orient his or her mind and writing? Doing it with a world picture is perhaps best; for it is from this vantage that civilizations vividly differ from each other. A world style may be the best summational mindset from which to visualize an ultimate of the historian's craft. I will give special attention to Jung's theory of the personal unconscious in order to understand world styles. For the possible usefulness of psychology to the study of history is not yet widely appreciated.

During the last quarter of the twentieth century, however, American psychohistorians have relied heavily on Freudian psychology. Lloyd de Mause of New York City is in 2003 the world leader of the psychohistorians, and his own extensive books show well the Freudian bias of the movement. De Mause investigates from a Freudian point of view the pathologies both of powerful individuals in history and of collectivities. In effect, to the eyes of psychohistorians, in both mankind's history and the histories of particular nations the famous should have been psychiatric patients. In fact, de Mause's 2003 Internet website features a globe of the world attached to a body lying on a psychiatrist's couch. Psychohistory today seems to be concerned with a particular group of general psychopathologies. These pathologies are the Freudian origins of leadership failures as well as child abuse and, generally speaking, Freudian analyses of cruelty, war, and crimes, widespread today as they were in the past. De Mause seems to be the giant in the movement; he may have made some interesting historical discoveries.

Freud's discoveries and his models of human functions, such as Ego, Superego, Libido, and

compensation wonderfully advanced medical psychopathology. He created a new kind of medical practice. Nevertheless, his underlying suppositions were, in Jung's view, too limited to be a complete foundation of psychiatric treatment. His writings never became the sole basis on which psychiatrists could build their theory; for he presupposed an excessively libidinous human life style. In other words, his philosophy is materialistic, hedonistic, and Epicurean. Inadequate to fulfill, though it addresses, spiritual and ethical values, it cannot account for various selfless and metaphysical goals, the unfulfillment of which results in psychopathologies. During the twentieth century, general historians did not envisage any other psychological approaches to history except hermeneutics, which is the study of history from the point of view of *Erlebnis* ("lived history"). Neither approach had much success in historians' circles. Like most of the learned, historians paid little attention to psychology. In the light of Jung's discoveries, perhaps historians will seek to know the role of the unconscious in worldviews.

1. THE MEANING OF 'HISTORICALITY'

I use 'historicality,' 'historicism,' and 'historicity' synonymously to refer to giving high value to historical facts. The terms also indicate that an historian's interpretative skills are authentic. For example, I shall particularly discuss world pictures of China, of the new Western world, and of the Middle East. If one has any of those three world pictures one will value historical pieties. In biblical times, historians and prophets wrote of history as unrolling under Providence's watchful eye. In China, historians saw history as taking place within cosmic nature's organic economy. In today's Western world picture historians search for history as the experiences and contexts of the individuals concerned. It is the essence of modern science to think of every process as having a history, whether the process is human, purely material, or some combination thereof. When appraising the history of a collective event, or its value, we naturally include in our appraisal the place where it occurred and the role it played in a process¹.

I shall eliminate purely physical processes from consideration and refer to human history only². We identify, define, and remember an event historically, and in doing so exclude any "subject which remains outside the flux, never changes, and maintains contact with the flux

only by a miracle"³. "Historical reality," to the mind of historians with Fernand Braudel's line of thinking would consist of "regular repetition of data selected and constructed because of their comparable nature"⁴. I will amend this valuationally, admitting of at least a provisional transcendence in the direction of Max Weber's notion of "ideal type." Ideal type is an "enriched authorial-generated organizing concept," as, for example, the German middle class. That is to say, it is a "Kantian imposition of mind on the unassimilable complication of the external world"⁵. Moreover, Weber is persuasive in holding "also a utopian meaning of the term; for ideal types give an understanding of how particular individuals, groups, or social formations would behave in an ideal world of rationality and consistency..."⁶. An example would be the stereotypical Hindu Civilization or the medieval city-state (behaving rationally).

Historicism, it is generally agreed, implies the respect of modern historians for the individual relativities of the diverse histories unfolding in this or in that neighborhood, prefecture, state, or country. One's history presents a world in process, in contrast to the unchanging structures in society or fixed laws. Some truths and values transcend the relativities of an epoch. And general truths and values make the epoch's relativities possible⁷. If an historian adduces an absolute, "truth," for example, of divine awareness of the world, it will contain relative truths. For example, in the ancient Near Eastern tradition, a strong love of law that was a legalism encompassed the idea of a changeless law. Even in modern Europe, it was possible, as in the case of Bishop Bossuet (1627- 1704), to presuppose that imperfect laws were valid enough to be taken as part of the natural law. While his personal judgments did not swerve from Christianity's Mideastern world idea or from his patriotism, his Christian religion led him to declare that the natural law enthroned by decrees the absolutist French monarchical form of state.

History, in the perspective that I see, involves past and present growing into the future, an all-inclusive world picture of a social and psychological process of development. This world picture's unity includes its beginnings, its later historical processes, and its future social achievements. Historicism for the most part has been an unwritten philosophy of life by which an individual sees his social unit as a streaming history. An historian, in this scenario, may

envisage just one great history of which all smaller histories are parts on a smaller scale. One great biblical history exists. Jewish writers of the Torah (Pentateuch) in their redactions of Old Testament writings united the older and presumably smaller histories.

An historical account, alternately, may picture a multiplicity of histories of relatively independent peoples. This was the case among nineteenth century German historians. Then all histories become part of one's heritage, because the tendency was to weave the smaller strands of history into a main context, and the context's roots were the historic events⁸. Even the most particular pictures of past and present that early societies gained from careful genealogies contained the historical sense. Today, however, the world at large probably thinks and values globally. Generally speaking, therefore, the meaning of "historical sense" will be the more consistent in the degree to which this "sense" aims at a global unity of human history. Would Johann Herder (1732-1790) have agreed to this idea? For all his pious love of particular independent histories of peoples, the prescient Herder, in the eighteenth century, still saw a growing unity of humanity in the light of his *Volke* ideal. He proposed a global history, including an ideal of humanity, a highest goal of all mankind⁹.

The mere existence of such concepts as *Volke* and 'humanity' leads to the concept of 'world picture. For *Volke* and 'humanity' make sense or can be translated with real appreciation of nuances only in the context used by the thinkers of the time. Much, however, can be said for the hard-to-define character of "world picture." (One thinks of Oswald Spengler's Prime Symbol and Wilhelm Dilthey's *Weltanschauung*.) Within its scope are a civilization's political and military deeds, along with sciences and philosophies. Events and works have tangibility; they affect or cause history's changes much more clearly than do the arts. Yet, for all their clarity, at least to those who read about them, they do not openly reveal the society's world perspective. Today's great general systems could not exist without their information systems, especially the world pictures. A civilization has other important but less clear processes, such processes as creating fine art or painting or music or dance choreography or poesy or drama, etcetera. At least the importance is not decreased if the creative artist is baffled by his own work. We will see that weighing a world outlook's

impact on a painting is not made more difficult simply because its meaning evades the artist who made it.

Such less tangible operations as the creation of fine art may allow us an understanding of deeper thinking processes. We consider, for example, the biases imbibed, in the old saying, with the mother's milk. These are so universally held by members of a civilization that they are mostly not even aware that the biases are merely ideas. For example, we members of Western Civilization are raised to see space as an "ocean" kind of plenum, with currents and pressures. Not all civilizations have seen space that way. So I now suggest adding another phrase to objective and scientific, and thereby, clear and distinct understanding. It will presuppose the (subjective) aesthetic and thus clear but nevertheless 'indistinct' understanding. Leibniz wrote, in 1712, near the end of his life,

"Taste as distinguished from understanding consists of confused perceptions for which one cannot give an adequate reason. Tastes are formed by nature and by habits. To have good taste, one must practice enjoying the good things which reason and experience have already authorized"¹⁰.

The important thing is that Leibniz allowed for a proper kind of perception, which lies outside the distinct concepts of scientific knowing. He recognized clarity without distinctness in apprehending aesthetic facts. He wrote that one has "clear and confused knowledge"¹¹.

The sculptor Phidias's Greek world perspective (fifth century BCE), say, was "clear and confused" perhaps even Phidias would admit this in regard to his Parthenon statue of Athena with distended nostrils. Since I know that in the Greek outlook aesthetic facts mattered, I have no trouble in believing that, however clear and distinct the ancient Greek style may have been to an ancient Greek, I as a Westerner can apprehend, even these works of art, at best, by clear and confused knowledge. Perhaps we can transform much of their confused knowledge of world pictures into clear understanding.

"World picture," in nearly all meanings of the term, corresponds to a society, not an individual. Both the individuals and the collectivity have a world picture, but the world picture in all its hugeness, complexity, and mutability, properly speaking, exists only in individuals. As we shall

see it exists almost entirely in the personal unconscious of each educated member of the society. A public quality inheres in it, and well it may, since, for example, the Chinese world feeling publicly pervades designs of Chinese homes. That is to say, the fact of their similarity of design is a public fact. This much, at least, we can say about the shared or public trait in a society's world picture.

Let us consider an example of a public trait. Like all languages, the Arabic and Hebraic languages contain evidence of the world style of their culture. The Arabic and Hebraic languages "clearly and indistinctly" convey much meaning (and part of the Middle Eastern world style) in their grammatical and rhetorical construction. On the centrality of God within the Near Eastern mind one may go somewhat afield for evidence. For example, a great deal can be said about ancient Arabic and Hebraic societies by making a simple observation of an ancient typical scene:

"The Arab conceives his society not as an organic whole, compounded of interrelated and interacting parts, but as an association of separate groups, religion, nations, classes held together only by the ground beneath and the government above. His town is an agglomeration of quarters, guilds, clans, houses, only rarely with any corporate civic identity of its own"¹².

Neither of the two, Arabic or Hebraic gracefully supports causal explanations; for neither Arab nor Jewish society was interested in causal connection, apart from reliance on God. Historical accounts are like strings of beads, each tiny unity connected to the other by 'and' rather than by 'since.' Usually, the particles are used to link together the ideas. In both languages there is a clear rejection of rationalism. It is small wonder that both ethnic groups especially liked poetry. God was the metaphysic of ancient Arabs and Jews, a philosophy, not of Being, but of Becoming.

So we understand something of the Near Eastern style, confusedly to be sure; that is, we understand the following "clearly but indistinctly:" To these folks, for whom Yahweh or Allah is Life, all things depend, at all times, whether instants or centuries, on God. They do not depend on each other. In this dependency is no Western mechanical connection of entities, nor Greek series of causes, and no Chinese harmony of things. God is the great presence in

the Arabic and Hebraic societies and in their shared Near Eastern Weltanschauung. We see it in their histories, such as the Hebrew Old Testament. And, interestingly enough, in keeping written records on baked tablets Sumer-Akkadians almost wrote the same kind of history in the third millennium BCE. Living in Iraq, they were, of course, Near Easterners. Historians of the third millennium BCE, having no thought of preparing a connected narrative and writing votive inscriptions on statues, steles, cones, cylinders, vases, and tablets, sometimes had a sense of historical detail.

In our own experience of reading a country's history (other than our own country) we understood "clearly but confusedly" the historical account that we were reading. In these later days, aware or unaware of so doing, we associate general historical accounts quite closely with world outlooks; and it is comprehensible that historians should understand, at best, clearly and confusedly. To take as an example, we may consider one famous general analyst of historical processes, namely the historical pessimist Oswald Spengler (1880-1936). He could have improved his historical comparisons of civilizations and their primary or secondary symbols, as, for example, ancient Greece's approach to space contrasted with the Renaissance approach. For Spengler had a photographic remembrance of both civilizations' greatest public buildings: Athens' Parthenon and Paris' Notre Dame. Moreover, he understood scientifically and philosophically the two spaces. But he wrote his account of the spaces too succinctly probably in order not to tire himself or his readers with theory. Thereby he deprived himself of distinct understanding and in the process rendered distinct insight impossible for others.

He might have understood the two spaces distinctly and exactly, that is, rationally, if he could have known or made analyses, in Jungian terms, of a mostly unconscious world picture (his "Prime Symbol"). For one can, with help from history and archeology, learn the meanings of subliminal images, ideas, symbols, and emotional archetypes. Thus, a comparativist historian can find many replicates or instances in which old Buddhist or Hindu temple towers in India are solid stone within, yet contain a tiny room at bottom with a sacred *lingam* (penis) and a *yoni* (womb). Both the living rock of the temple tower and the *lingam-yoni* at the bottom symbolize immense active energy at the heart of

reality; and this symbol can be replicated many times.

2. THE ROLE OF THE UNCONSCIOUS

"[According to scientists at New York University] babies appear to deduce [...] formal rules well before they can understand what words mean or how to say them at an age [seven months] when the infant brain with twice as many neurons and twice as energetic as an adult brain is almost exploding with vitality. [...] Our results show that babies' minds are built to look for such rules [of language structure and grammar] even without being told"¹³.

Subliminally unconscious reasoning or valuing or feeling does exist, and C.G. Jung (1875-1961) showed how to unveil these events for systematic examination. I will propose, then, not that civilizationists or historians should seek to know unconsciously, but that they can interpret intuitively inspired buildings, artworks, and ideologies to learn in clear reason's light a civilizational worldview. Justinian's intent to create a single digest of the law codes, for example, casts light on the Near Eastern worldview. As to the medieval West, Notre Dame's Parisian medieval architect probably unconsciously thought of or perceived mechanical force, but we prove or postulate that the concept was there by means of the visible symbols of mechanical force

Advances in modern architecture can similarly throw light on the new Global world picture. Architect Frank Lloyd Wright's desire to emphasize the horizontal line stems from a Modern and as we will see, a Chinese archetypal intuition. Again as we will see, the abstract expressionists of mid-twentieth century America were inspired both directly and in earlier Western-Japanese contacts by Japan's archetypal intuition of emptiness. Emptiness is a Buddhist concept found in Japan in house design, Zen painting, and Zen meditation. Thus, to reflect on archetypes and symbols in the Modern or Global world style is to be aware that the age beginning in the nineteenth century is one of change, invention, and expansion, not an age of empire or decline. And not only China and Japan, but also India powerfully impacted on Western Civilization around 1800, as we will see. In contrast, whereas ancient Rome was divided by two powerful life styles, that of Greece and that of the Middle East, Western Civilization today has assimilated into a fairly unified new world

picture the worldviews (e.g., China's) that strongly affected it in 1800.

A comparativist historian of architecture needs to know the paramount role of energy, a dynamic expansive force, in India's world feeling. Hindu architecture since ancient times has been pervaded by an energy or concept of energy, a concept totally different from medieval, Renaissance and Baroque architectural forms. India's architecture had its own identifying symbols present throughout the development sequence. In sum these four foci, mechanical force in the West, emptiness in Buddhist Japan, fields in China, and energy in Hindu India, have produced totally different architectures not readily translatable into each other's terms even when they interact, but the comparativist historian will need to verify this. Such an historian, moreover, must find the abundant replicates of the energy symbol in architecture. Besides, since China's impact on the West was as great as India's, one needs to know the Chinese aspect of Einsteinian space that enters into modern buildings.

Einsteinian space, which I take up elsewhere, is probably influenced by both Chinese and Indian factors. China's preoccupations with fields in both the earth and heavens were somehow conveyed to the west. And China's multi-perspectival view of space, as well as her notion of a space pervaded by relations, also affected Einsteinian space. I discuss elsewhere the existence of fields and dynamic multi-dimensional space symbols in the new architecture. Perhaps the most obvious influence is that of Japan's abstract spaces in houses, both in the exteriors and interiors. Further, both China's intense sociality or social self-consciousness and that of Japan have influenced architects, notably Le Corbusier. We will want to verify this by examining philosophy, religion, music, painting, and the other arts.

Back in the seventeenth century, Leibniz was close to realizing that the human unconscious could perform some of the acts done by consciousness. If, as a provenance of full consciousness, he had discerned this ability, he might have then realized that the pattern he consciously, "clearly, and confusedly" perceived, this same pattern his personal unconscious perceived unclearly but distinctly. A hundred years later, F. Schelling coined the phrase, "the unconscious," and a few years later, S. T. Coleridge brought the phrase into the

English language. Two hundred years later C.G. Jung clarified the idea of the unconscious. He might have seen in According to Jung, the personal unconscious is a storehouse of forgotten or suppressed experiences. In an article he wrote in 1918, "The Role of the Unconscious," for the monthly review *Schweizerland*, he presented probably his clearest differentiation between the personal and the collective unconscious. One's inherited brain structure supplies the contents of the collective unconscious. But the personal unconscious contains material that has been repressed or forgotten; yet, some unconscious ideas, understandings, and feelings, though unclear, are distinct. The unconscious night in which all cows are black is unclear but distinct—or so the enormous power of our unconscious psyche to deal distinctly with myriad unclear contents can lead us to believe. And this is the subliminal realm where a world picture and its parts are distinct.

We consider again 'mechanics,' that centerpiece of modern physical science. It existed even in the middle ages, not only in such obvious fields as architecture but also in such carefully structured but not obviously physical constructions as music. Medieval musicians, and for that matter, medieval architects might not have understood the profoundly mathematical mechanics that came to exist only several hundred years in their future. But we can decrypt a small portion of their musical and architectural symbols, namely canon or counterpoint in music, such that we can relate it to flying buttresses or to curtain walls in Gothic architecture. Thus I have decrypted some Western symbols in this manner, but the music composer and the medieval architect perhaps could not understand a rational mechanics, symbolized in their art, destined to exist several hundred years in the future. Their clear understanding of their musicology and architectonics was, like Leibniz' model, also clear and indistinct. But some of the confusion has been removed. I have "decoded" a small portion of the musical and architectural symbols, namely, the highly valued mechanics. In that way we may understand a little better the medieval Western world style that music and architecture have shared. Thus, in canon music, voices sing against each other, as if mechanically so braced; and similarly Gothic Cathedrals are a mechanical play in stone.

I have been analyzing thus far societies in terms of their world pictures, and I realize that this outlook theory is a fairly new aspect of historiography. We are not yet ready to determine the extent to which this is a new science or, for that matter, a science at all. Understanding the same symbol, whether it is encased in music or in architecture! how scientific is that, no matter how clear it is? My idea so pursued may perhaps be conditionally accepted; but we moderns think in terms of physical science. So, for any final acceptance the matter must be expressed in terms of scientific rationality.

I noted above that unconscious activities are involved. I may, for instance, want to decrypt subliminal activities of Phidias' mind (via his sculpture), though he lived two thousand four hundred years ago, in order to discern part of the Greek worldview. I must then also decode the mostly subliminal Greek world style, itself. I say "subliminal," because more, perhaps, than ninety-nine percent of the impression upon any human being of the Greek world feeling, or of the ancient Hindu's outlook, was or is subliminal, in other words, mostly unconscious. As for our own Global outlook (though possibly "Western" is a better term), likewise more than ninety nine percent of our knowledge of it is subliminal or unconscious.

A civilizational world picture has a consummate micro-complexity. This is on the order of, say, of oak tree in all its minute parts, or the City of Tokyo in all its relations. What subliminal ideas the citizens of Nippon have about Tokyo City do not readily rise to the surface. For, to know a city like Tokyo takes a lifetime of experience, and most of that knowledge will be subconscious. A district, say, like Shinjuku, a particular university, or a particular park, will bring up one of two vivid memories but also a collection of associations none of which will quite touch the surface of the rememberer's mind until some further incident brings them through to the conscious. This kind of stew in an individual's mind of long forgotten ideas, sensations, emotions, and the like perhaps lies behind every interpretation we make of life, and occurs in any civilization, in every era and circumstance. Thus, a civilization's world picture exists in the vast cerebral repository of intuitions and interpretations of each educated member of the society.

In order to understand the nature of world pictures, Jung's theory of psychological types of people is very useful. To begin with, the human mind retains memories in terms of four types of mentality: intuitively, rationally, emotionally and in images and sensations. More exactly, these memories are retained "in the unconscious" in one of the following psychological modes or types: intuitive, emotional, sensing, or rational¹⁴. Jung's model includes the 'activity' of the personal unconscious, similar to that of consciousness.

At its best each function, consciousness or the unconscious, can even judge logically and arrive at conclusions. Each can perceive similarities and differences and thus form sentences. Each can feel, intuit, sense, and understand. What I write here is easy enough to understand. At the same time, we know that Jung's model of the personal unconscious surely falls short of explaining all that goes on in the human brain. Nevertheless, it approximates perhaps closer than Einstein's relativity theory approximates to the nature of celestial space. Einstein probably did not understand relativity theory any better than Jung understood his psychology. Einstein had to take lessons from Dr. Christoffel in order to use Christoffel's matrix mathematics. The same is true about the invention of calculus and the infinitesimals. Leibniz' calculus is probably the greatest invention in the history of mathematics, but he incorrectly thought that infinitesimals have no extension. (His model was probably a theory of point-instants that is traceable to the founder of Buddhism; see p. below) So, too, we can expect that psychologists and biologists will correct some mistakes in Jung's theory of the personal unconscious. Mathematicians improved calculus and corrected Leibniz' error.

For the present, in Jung's model of the personal unconscious and its contents, we may consider the Western world picture, referred to, say, in an artistic symbol, for instance, a Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775- 1851) landscape painting. A person attempting to decrypt Turner's nineteenth century worldview might note particular sensations, intuitions and emotions. Turner seems to invest rosy clouds and atmosphere with a cosmic quality. He seems obviously to love out-of-doors nature, similarly, as did the Chinese artists. Alone, this China-oriented interpretation would be nearly worthless for unearthing a world picture. But this decryption of a painting may get some

weight if a multitude of other artifacts and their symbolic import are similarly decrypted. Would, therefore, a hundred decryptions of historic artifacts as symbolizing an organic inter-play of earth and cosmos suffice? the objects varying... paintings, sculptures, architecture, poetry, movies. And the interpretations done by several learned decryptors? In this example I suggest the tremendous influence of Chinese nature-love and of the organic and cosmic quality of the Chinese world picture.

To pursue this inquiry one needs to consult specialists on the Chinese influences on the West; for in reading the historical accounts of the influence one learns to decode fragments of entire world pictures. One can push ahead in this line of study by learning about the leading philosophies, sciences, and religions of the culture. And we may note that this is not a quick or facile preparation. For we realize how fragmentary must be any one person's appreciating an entire world picture, let alone several. But we must make a start.

3. THE ROLE OF WORLD PICTURES IN WRITING HISTORY

How does the historian orient his or her account? I suppose that many or most general histories have been oriented toward political well-being; and, since war-making is an extension of politics, they have been oriented toward the peaceful resolution of conflicts. The central focus of the present work, the "world picture" of a civilization, has not been seen as a prime mover in civilizational history. Yet, a society's world picture suffuses the lives of its educated citizens in a variety of ways. Thus, in China and India, the terse sentences of Chinese political messages and the lengthy drawn-out style of Indian statements expressed the respective world styles. And the political processes of the general system superficially appear to go on independently.

Until recently general history politically or biographically oriented was considered to be the best oriented history, since the historian is attending to the makers and movers of the historical process. Yet, Fernand Braudel has given special attention to the physical or geographical framework of history, and with him is associated the *Annales* school of history. Perhaps the new world picture is at work in these developments. For Braudel and others, in contrast with earlier historians, the physical

framework of events has become a more acceptable subject of study. But I believe even this kind of history will improve when historians are fully aware of the roles that world pictures play.

Historical pessimism did not much interfere with the explosion of the new era's architecture. Architect Gropius' school of design in Weimar in 1919 was built of steel and could thus have curtain walls, largely glass. His school helped to revolutionize the teaching of painting, sculpture, the industrial arts, and architecture throughout the western world. The people of Weimar, however, found the Bauhaus disturbing; and their repugnance led the Weimar government in 1925 to close it down. Gropius moved the Bauhaus to Dessau where he designed several buildings but in 1933 Hitler's government closed it. Such was the mischief following upon the historical pessimism that arose in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and the early twentieth centuries¹⁵. In 1937 Laszlo Moholy-Nagy built a new Bauhaus in Chicago

4. SPENGLER'S INPUT

We know that the range of general historians' accounts is important to them. Arnold Toynbee's *Study of History*, for example, included both political and religious goals. Yet he and his predecessors were fairly oblivious to world styles, never musing about their impact on world history. Toynbee did not cleave to a strict dogma; but his *Study of History*¹⁶, like Theodor Mommsen's Nobel prize-winning *History of Rome*, usually passed judgment on political or religious figures or societies from a moral standpoint¹⁷. He knew almost nothing about world styles, but he was aware of their existence from his reading about "Prime Symbols" in Spengler's *Decline of the West*.

When we consider all the civilizations' world pictures, including those of ancient times in China, India, and the Middle East, we can detect the religious from the secular world pictures. Egypt, the Middle East, and India all had religious worldviews, while those of Greece, Western Civilization, Japan, and China were secular. As for Toynbee, he tolerated and approved of nearly all religions; he was latitudinarian and religious, but what of world pictures, particularly religious world pictures? That of the Middle Eastern accompanied Toynbee's Christian religion; and that of India

accompanies the Hindu, Jain, and Buddhist religions.

Civilizations' world styles survive the fall of the civilizations that created them. For the societies' central ideas and values have been symbolized in the works of painters, sculptors, and architects in enduring stone, metal, and wood. Wisdom writings like those of Egypt, Greece, and more ancient cities of Iraq, can reveal much of the world pictures. Perhaps the idea of education and Classics in Britain from 1100-1900 CE produced citizens of Western Civilization of modern times whose minds to some small extent were Grecian as well as Western or Modern.

But the co-existence of Christianity with the secular Modern world picture is a better example. Christian religion doctrine, like that of Judaism and Islam is Middle Eastern. A developed Christian citizen of twenty-first century America to some extent has a Middle Eastern world style. Yet, that person's Modern world picture far outweighs his or her Middle Eastern outlook. For most modern Christian believers the Middle Eastern quality of their religion supplies some ideas of symbols that occasionally affects their life-style. Thus a Modern Christian space-picture (mostly unconscious) is Einsteinian. It is a space affected by astronomical radiation, gravitation, and distances of stars. Yet, a Christian may sometimes revert to a Middle Eastern space-image. Here the perception will be a space that is the place of God¹⁸.

Such a co-existence of world styles, occurs whenever a deeply religious person's dominant world picture differs from that of the religion. Hindus living in the united Arab Emirates will perhaps have a dominant Near Eastern outlook and yet their religion will add India's world picture. Americans who join a Buddhist community and who practice the Buddhist religion will be at least slightly influenced by India's world picture. In the twenty-first century those Westerners who are especially dedicated and devout Christians may possibly be more motivated by the Middle Eastern world style than by that of the modern West.

I mentioned above that Toynbee knew a little about worldviews from having read Spengler's *Decline of the West* and learned a little about prime symbols. We should review prime symbols further.

Here is an example of Spengler's idea of a prime-symbol:

"And when we say, as henceforth we shall say, that the prime-symbol of the Classical soul is the material and individual body, that of the Western pure infinite space"¹⁹.

and, again:

"for the Western infinitely wide and infinitely profound three-dimensional Space, for the Arabian the world as a Cavern"²⁰.

This is not quite correct, since, contrary to Spengler's belief that a culture or "soul" of a culture has only one prime-symbol, such a cultural "soul" or world picture has many "prime-symbols" or key parts. Spengler merely chose the symbolic idea or value in a world culture that was most evident to him. He believed that the "prime symbol" could only be intuited, never rationally understood. He was unaware of his contemporary, C.G. Jung's method of rationally understanding a symbol, idea, or value in the unconscious. Jung had empirical and replicated evidence, namely the reported symbols, ideas, or images of his patients. Similarly as Jung got at the personal unconscious through his mental patients' symbols, we can interpret the symbolic import of artifacts of an ancient society's philosophies, customs, and the like. In this manner we can thus decrypt civilizational worldviews.

As for Spengler's model of prime symbol, it is only in regard to symbolic form that my theory contacts his theory. As to the many differences, I do not, for example, necessarily attach the existence of civilizations and their worldviews to each other. A world picture, such as that of China, once it exists, may diminish in power but is as imperishable as China's ideas, customs, and artifacts. Even the worldview of the Mayan Civilization may someday be recovered. And, someday, to some extent the Mayan world may be re-experienced by those under its influence. Thus world styles are powerful enough through their artifacts even to survive the complete disappearance of the attached culture for hundreds of years.

Arnold Toynbee accepted Spengler's incorrect judgment that prime-symbols cannot be penetrated rationally. Late in his life, I corresponded with him and tried to persuade

him that worldviews could be decoded, for I had determined that Western Civilization has acquired a new world picture through the West's assimilation of both China and India and later Japan's ideas and values. Toynbee, though, was almost completely out of his mental element when he tried to understand world pictures.

He dismissed as unreal Spengler's idea of a "Magian" or "Arabian" [Middle Eastern] Culture. He was, therefore, unaware that the Middle Eastern civilization had a world picture. Except for that, he was well informed about the Middle East, and he discussed the "Syriac" and other Middle Eastern civilizations in his grand list of "higher cultures." To do so he accepted the whole Near Eastern ecumene as Spengler understood it but believed the medieval "Arabic" Culture was a revival of the pre-Hellenistic "Syriac" Culture. On the contrary, the Middle Eastern world picture has probably existed ever since the late times of the Sumerian Civilization and still existed in the Middle East in the year 2003. It accompanied Middle Eastern religions when their believers moved out of the Near East. The Middle Eastern world picture probably exists in devout Christians, Jews, and Muslims side by side with their dominant worldviews. Thus, it occurs in Chinese Uighers, in New York Hassidic Jews, and in Calcutta Christians. Ukrainian Marc Chagall's mystical paintings are splendidly Modern and Global, but they probably have a Middle Eastern element in them. If these are true conclusions, then perhaps perspective of world pictures in general historians can deepen their vision.

Spengler was on the right track in his *Decline of the West*, despite his pessimism and his many factual and interpretative errors. His *Decline of the West* is full of brilliant insights into civilizational world styles, for he was an historical genius, and he probably had a remarkably retentive memory. It is on the basis of such a memory that I can account for the dazzling series of descriptions of royal courts, artists, works of music, painting, drama and the like in his big book.

Thus he wrote,

"The same symbolic meaning attaches to clouds. Classical art concerns itself with them no more than with horizons, and the painter of the Renaissance treats them with a certain playful superficiality. But very early the Gothic looked at its cloud-masses, *and through them*, with the

long sight of mysticism; and the Venetians (Giorgione and Paolo Veronese above all) discovered the full magic of the cloud-world, of the thousand-tinted Being that fills the heaven with its sheets and wisps and mountains. Grunewald and Netherlanders heightened its significance to the level of tragedy. El Greco brought the grand art of cloud-symbolism to Spain"²¹.

In 1985, I heard William McNeill in a lecture give his opinion that no general historians would soon be forthcoming. His excellent *Rise of the West* (still selling well today, as in 1985) covers civilizations globally. But its orientation is political, religious, and cultural, and the main emphasis is political²². A general historian probably would have an enlarged orientation if it included world pictures.

5. JUNG'S IDEA OF WORLD PICTURE

As we will see, my analysis will become a critique of historical reason. I have encountered plentiful evidence that probably refutes Wilhelm Dilthey and Spengler's claim that history and "Prime Symbols" cannot be understood, but only intuited. Dilthey and Spengler's opposition to reason in the study of history, in favor of hermeneutics or intuition, respectively, might have lessened if they had known more about unconscious mentality. And Spengler's careless accumulation of errors especially in Book two of his *Decline of the West* (he worked over the first book), together with his utter pessimism about modern culture much lessened his reputation. But, to repeat, Spengler's great book is full of brilliant and accurate insights as well as errors. I am much indebted to Spengler but found C.G. Jung to be a more systematic guide in my study of the nature of world styles.

I am going to extend, but not much change, C. G. Jung's theories of the unconscious and of world styles. He wrote a great deal about his psychiatric patients at the Burgholzi Mental Hospital in Zurich, and his work was based on his theory of the personal unconscious. Still, Jung did not go as far as he might have in his studies of the unconscious, for he "felt that Freud had covered the topic very well." Here, the word "unconscious" is the common usage, though it would be more explicit to say "unconscious psyche" or "unconscious contents"²³ Jung wrote extensively on the personal unconscious and on the collective unconscious, and such are the types of

unconscious in his view. I will be referring almost entirely to what he called the "personal unconscious". For it is probably in the personal unconscious that nearly all of a person's worldview exists.

We are consciously aware of very little of the contents of a world picture. This world picture exists partly in consciousness but mainly in our personal unconscious. Our awareness of a world picture is perhaps comparable to our knowledge, say, of the nature of the beaver species or the redwood tree species. Consciously a member of the civilization knows some general qualities and perhaps a few particularities of the worldview, but not the multitude of details. Let us consider a Chinese example of a general quality consciously seen. Thus, the enormous importance in T'ang China's regimes of upper-class family relationships was significant as regards the central importance of relations in the Chinese life style. And therefore, in the Chinese person's world image, this general idea might very well have been an object of self-consciousness. It must be associated with "good face," i.e., good reputations, for these relationships are external to consciousness rather than internal. We may compare the Western experiences of guilt expunged guilt feelings which are internal or within consciousness. Western ethics relates primarily to such internal experiences.

Jung's "psychological types" (intuition, feeling, sensation, and reason) are not more difficult to understand than such things in physical science as gravitation, simultaneity, matter-energy, curvature of space, or electricity. Without knowing precisely what these cosmic entities are, physicists have explored interesting relationships between them and have put their knowledge to good use, as in building atomic energy plants. As for Jung's assertions about the psychological types, they are based on his studies and histories of patients, which contain results that a layman can easily understand. Yet he never claimed to learn "the thing in itself" (Kant's *ding an sich*). He believed, like Kant, that actual things we claim to know categorically, e.g., psychological functions, within the brain or body, we cannot know except through human forms of awareness.

Jung wrote a lengthy essay on the nature of *Weltanschauung*, realizing that an exclusively conscious and rational worldview did not suffice. He probably followed Dilthey's well-

known model of *Weltanschauung*, describing worldview in general terms. Dilthey applied his worldview theory to philosophy, metaphysics, world-culture, and several other subjects. As we shall see, this general approach obstructed Dilthey's youthful intent to write a "Critique of Historical Reason".

Jung's idea of *Weltanschauung*, which he got probably from Dilthey evidently left him dissatisfied; for it did not deal with emotions. He therefore theorized that "attitude" is important in connection with his model of world style. As a matter of fact, Jung's "attitude" is probably closer than his *Weltanschauung* to my model of world picture. It did not occur to Jung to analyze "attitudes" and possibly discover the activity of the personal unconscious shaping attitudes. His notion of attitudes, though, is of no specific use in the study of world styles. Instead, he pursued, with many published books, his theory of the collective unconscious and its activities. He was obsessed with the collective unconscious and its products.

6. JUNG'S THEORY OF THE PSYCHE

Of great use to me, however, is his idea that a psyche exists in human beings and possesses conscious and unconscious processes. Thus, the psyche or, more accurately, the personal unconscious, remembers much, perhaps most, of one's conscious experiences. Jung theorized that one's personal unconscious can initiate creative processes on its own, using contents already deposited. Thus he writes

"We have reason to suppose that the unconscious is never quiescent in the sense of being inactive but is ceaselessly engaged in grouping and regrouping its contents".

Besides this, the personal unconscious receives unconscious excitations instinctively, in Jung's terms, "from the collective unconscious."

As to our entire mentality, Jung calls this the self or psyche. We can (like Jung) define 'self' as an entity containing both consciousness and unconsciousness. Together, consciousness and unconsciousness compose the psyche. Self also contains the collective unconscious and its archetypes, which are our instinctive faculty and its largely emotional results. Jung believed that we could never discover the source of the archetypes of the collective unconscious

(instinctual processes). Yet, he wrote books about the symbols or archetypes emanating from the collective unconscious. He examined such symbols as the Mother figure, the figure of Romantic love, the Daughter figure (suffused with such instincts as Daughterhood and Motherhood), sexual attraction, and the instinctive desire to be mothered in one's childhood. To be particularly noted is that even these symbols are archetypal, though their source is not. They are "archetypal" in the sense that from them emanate a variety of other symbols and images, as in instances of mother figures or old man types.

Except for the foregoing, I will not be referring to these archetypes of the collective unconscious but, instead, to contents of the personal unconscious; for it is the latter, along with conscious values and intuitions, that specifically compose a world picture. As to the influence of our instinctive processes on the personal unconscious (as when an instinctive impulse of fright or mother-image is retained unconsciously), we probably can omit any study of instinctive processes; and instead attend to the meaningfulness of world pictures. Thus, I do not consult Jung's archetypes of the collective unconscious in decoding civilizational life-styles. They pertain generally to civilizations, not to the specifics of world styles.

Central and peripheral "icons of one's world picture" originate both in consciousness and in the personal unconscious. I mention, for example, such symbols as "fields of energy," "hammer and scythe," "Baroque," and "abstract painting." I also have in mind Jung's ability to figure out rationally the meaning of the symbols in his patients' dreams (in the personal unconscious) by their word associations, and in their compulsions and habits. It occurred to me that the rich symbols in works of art, e.g., in a world culture's paintings and architecture, are also susceptible of rational interpretation.

Spengler, on the contrary, was convinced that world cultures can only be experienced by ineffable intuitions. Nonetheless, in spite of himself, he interpreted rationally a multitude of symbols in the art works, religions, mathematical systems, and politics of the various world cultures.

A world picture (*Weltanschauung*) is not the simple model of it that consciousness is capable of viewing, no more than the simple model we

have of a beaver suffices to define the animal. For, like the actual beaver, a world picture is enormously complex. I propose such a complex model of world pictures because, as Spengler would probably agree, a "prime-symbol" is almost entirely unconscious and thus is not within the purview of rational study. That part of the psyche called the "personal unconscious" was so named by Jung. And its contents partake of the complexity of the brain.

NOTES

¹ Mandelbaum, M., *History, Man and Reason: A Study in Nineteenth Century Thought*. Baltimore and London, Johns Hopkins Univ., 1971, 42.

² *Ibid.*, 42.

³ Mannheim, K., *Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge*. London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1952, 130.

⁴ Breisach, E., *Historiography: Ancient, Medieval, Modern*. Chicago, Univ. of Chicago, 1994, 133.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 91.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 92.

⁷ Richardson, D., "Toward a Formal Model of Civilizational World-Styles". *Scientia*, V-VIII (1974).

⁸ Pepper, S. C., *World Hypotheses*. Berkeley, Univ. Calif., 1961, 232.

⁹ Cassirer, E., *The Problem of Knowledge: Philosophy, Science, and History Since Hegel*. New Haven, Yale Univ., 1950, 220.

¹⁰ Leibniz, G. W., *Philosophical Papers and letters*. Chicago, Univ. of Chicago, 1956, 448-454.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 454.

¹² Lewis, W.B., *The Poetry of Hart Crane: A Critical Study*. Princeton, Princeton Univ., 1967, 141.

¹³ Hotz, R. L. *Los Angeles Times* article on infants, reported in *The Charlotte Observer*, January 1 of 1999.

¹⁴ Jung, C.G., "The Personal and Collective Unconscious", in *Two Essays in Analytical Psychology. Collected Works*. Princeton, Princeton Univ., 1953.

¹⁵ Herman, A., *The Idea of Decline in Western History*. New York, The Free Press, 1997, 109-256.

¹⁶ Toynbee, A., *A Study of History*. Vol. XII. London, Oxford Univ., 1961.

¹⁷ Mommsen, T., *The History of Rome*. Glencoe, The Free Press.

¹⁸ Jammer, M., *Concepts of Space: The History of Theories of Space in Physics*. New York, Dover Publications, 1993, 47.

¹⁹ Spengler, O., *The decline of the west*. Nueva York, Alfred Knopf, 1939, 175.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 174.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 139-140.

²² McNeill, W.H., *The New York Review of Books*, 2000.

²³ Mattoon, M.A., *Jungian Psychology in Perspective*. New York and London, The Free Press, 1981, 22-23.