

ing, created a parable of the rings to illustrate this problem.⁶⁴ History knows worse instances than the parable and the drama *Nathan der Weise* (the parable is narrated by Nathan, the protagonist of the play set during a crusade), such as the Holocaust, jihads, and the wars in former Yugoslavia. It is questionable if the dilemma could be solved by merely considering Jesus a Jew, as described by Jaspers, who lived according to the Old Testament and was made the founder of Christianity after his death by his followers. In our present world, conciliation between Jews and Christians seems to be conceivable. Thus Jaspers' model seems to include three fourths of humanity. I hope that a way can be found to reconcile the Christian and Islamic theologies. Proposals have been made to promote the symbolism of Abraham who is revered by all three monotheistic religions. Perhaps the magical power of all the rings of the three brothers (i.e., the three religions) created by Lessing could be restored one day. Perhaps they would not need the power of the ring to love and respect each other in some (foreseeable?) future. In any case, Jaspers showed us a model where most different cultures can co-exist without permanently opposing each other. Even though tolerance is still an unattained ideal, it is now time to sow the seeds for mutual acceptance and mutual respect.

⁶⁴ In the parable, a father has a precious ring with magical powers which he should only give to his heir. As he has three sons whom he loves equally, he did not want to favour a special one. Therefore he has two other rings made and gives one to each of his sons. With this act, the special power of the ring to make the wearer loved by all, seems to be lost, and the three brothers are now engaged in perpetual quarrel. They go to a judge who says there is no true heir as long as each one loves only himself and no one is loved by the others.

How to Overcome Ethnocentrism: Approaches to a Culture of Recognition by History in the 21st Century

如何超越種族主義：
二十一世紀建構肯認文化的史學途徑

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Keywords: historical culture, historical identity, theory of history, intercultural communication.

關鍵詞：歷史文化、歷史認同、歷史理論、跨文化社群

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§ 本文曾宣讀於 2004 年 4 月 8-10 日，由臺灣大學東亞文明研究中心、上海復旦大學歷史學系、紐約市立大學城市學院、喜瑪拉雅研究發展基金會聯合主辦之第九屆〈中華文明的二十一世紀新意義〉系列學術研討會：「二十一世紀的中國史學和比較歷史思想」。

Abstract

The paper starts with some observations on the international and intercultural discourse about historiography. It seems to be influenced by a way of historical thinking which is deeply rooted in human historical consciousness and works throughout all cultures and in all times: ethnocentrism. This ethnocentrism will be described as a wide-spread mode of doing history with special respect to the role history plays in the cultural process of forming identity. Identity is presented by so-called "master-narratives". These narratives define togetherness and difference as essential for identity in a way which causes tensions and struggles. They can be described as "clashes of civilisations" on the level of historical culture. Today tensions are one of the most severe problems of intercultural encounter and interaction on the level of culture, of the mental procedures by which humans understands their world and themselves.

The paper explicates the logic of ethnocentrism in historical thinking. It presents its main elements: asymmetrical evaluation, teleological continuity and centralised perspective. After that there is a discussion of the possibility of overcoming these three principles by replacing asymmetrical evaluation by normative equality, by replacing teleological continuity by reconstructive concepts of development, which emphasize contingency and discontinuity, and by replacing centralized perspectives by multi-perspectivity and polycentric approaches to historical experience.

This change in the logic of doing history can bring about a new mode of universal history. Most ethnocentric master narratives have a universalistic scope, so the underlying universalistic concepts can serve as ideological means in the struggle for power which mostly characterizes the international and intercultural discourse on historical identity. Nevertheless there are convincing arguments in favour of a concept of humankind with the help of which the problem of ethnocentrism can be solved. This idea of humankind conceptualizes the unity of the human species as being manifest in the variety of cultures and historical developments. This is in fact the traditional concept of historicism which can be further developed towards an outlook for historiography which responds the challenges of globalization for cultural differences.

Finally, the paper gives an outline of theoretical and methodical issues in historical studies which bring this idea of humankind into the work of historians thus enabling it to contribute to a new culture of recognition. The paper is based on the assumption that the creation of such a culture is the most important task of scholarly work in the humanities in general and historical studies in specific at the beginning of the 21st century.

摘要

這篇論文從觀察一些跨國以及跨文化史學的論述開始。在傳統史學中編撰史學的方法似乎深受種族主義的影響，這種歷史的思維模式已經深植在人類的歷史意識之中，而且在不同的文化和時代都有其作用。我將種族主義描述成是一種普遍的歷史處理模式，尤其就文化認同形成過程中，歷史所扮演的角色而言。認同通常是透過「大論述」(master narratives)呈現出來的。這些論述定義異同，並以之作為認同的基礎座標，也因此製造了緊張和衝突。這些論述可以被描寫成歷史文化層次的「文明間衝突」(clash of civilizations)。在論及跨文化的相遇、文化層次的互動、

及涉及到人類族群認知自身和世界的心理過程時，這種緊張狀態是最為嚴重的問題之一。

本文將闡釋史學方法中種族主義的邏輯，呈現出種族主義的主要元素：「本位主義的價值評比」、「直線歷史終結觀」和「中心化的觀點」。之後，我將討論超越這三個元素的可能，試圖以「規範性平等」來取代「本位主義的價值評比」；以強調歷史的可取代性和不連貫性的「建構性史學概念」來取代「直線歷史終結觀」；最後以「多元觀點」來取代「中心化的觀點」。

這篇文章將提供歷史研究在理論和方法論上的大體輪廓，將人類的概念帶進史學家的著述之中，因而對新的認同文化有所貢獻。本文的著述假設前提認為：在二十一世紀的開端，這種新文化的創造將是史學甚至是所有人文領域學者的當務之急。

Die wahre Liberalität ist Anerkennung.

— — Goethe¹

The Danger of Ethnocentrism in Historical Thinking Today

We are living in a world of globalization, which brings different traditions and civilizations in closer and closer contact and relations. This growing density in intercultural communication is a challenge to historical thinking. It is history where people formulate, present and discuss their identity, their belonging to each other, their togetherness and at the same time their difference from others. The globalization process confronts traditional historical identities with an accelerating change of life conditions, which highly problematizes the traditional distinction between the internal realm of the life of one's own people and the external realm of the lives of the others. Both become intermixed, and universalistic elements of cultural life like the internet and important sectors of the culture industry require a redefinition of what makes the difference between myself and the others in another culture. Only in this way I can know what my identity is.

In order to strengthen and to develop one's own historical identity vis-à-vis the challenge of uniforming tendencies in cultural life, one has to sharpen the awareness of differences in the historical presentation of one's own collective identity. Doing so, the already established and permanently used cultural strategies of historical identity formation will be set into power again, and can be applied to the changing conditions of present-day-life. This application of the traditional mode of presenting historical identity in the form of a so-called master narrative causes problems, since the logic of these master narratives is ethnocentric. It works with an unbalanced relationship between the image of oneself and the different image of the others in such a way, that the necessary self-esteem of a powerful historical identity is brought about at the cost of the otherness of the others.

A simple example of an ethnocentric concept of historical identity is the distinction between civilization and barbarism. This distinction has been used all over the world: One's own people historically stand for civilization and its achievements, whereas the otherness of the others is a deviation from these

¹ (True liberality is recognition.) *Maximen und Reflexionen*, WA I, 42.2, p. 222.

standards. (Sometimes we can find a reversed evaluation. In this case the hopes of bettering one's own life form is projected onto the otherness of the others. But this is of secondary importance, and in fact it does not essentially change the inequality in the interrelationship between selfness and otherness, togetherness and being different.) This inequality inevitably causes a "clash of civilizations" since the others follow the same logic thus gaining self-esteem at the cost of others.

These tendencies are powerful even in the realm of historical studies. The clash of civilizations is an even issue here in the academic discourses though most of the participants aren't aware of it. But if we look at the logical presuppositions of the international and intercultural discussions on world civilizations one can observe ethnocentric attitudes. These attitudes appear in different manifestations: There is a very traditional one in the Western countries. Here the dominant issues of historical thinking generally are Western themes of history. Non-Western history normally plays a marginal role. The curricula of historical learning in schools and universities give non-Western cultures only little space, if any at all. Non-Western history normally becomes a part of the curriculum in the context of Western colonialism and imperialism. The authenticity of non-Western traditions generally is no issue.

But this is only a surface observation. More important is the way cultural difference is thematized and approached in historical studies. More important are the hidden presuppositions of academic historical thinking when different cultures are at stake. The most obvious indication of this presupposition is the way cultural difference is illustrated in presenting a historical argumentation about it. Most of the sketches presented by the speakers in academic discourses use the picture of separate circles, each circle representing one culture.



The symbols are clear: The interrelationship between different cultures essentially is an external one. Logically cultures exclude each other. Belonging to a culture is an "either – or" matter. Each culture is a universe in itself and has a clear borderline separating it from other cultures. This is only a picture, but there are elaborated typologies of cultural differences, which exactly follow this way of thinking. The most prominent thinkers of this exclusiveness are Oswald

Spengler and Arnold Toynbee. A contemporary academic who conceptualizes his universal typology of cultural difference in the same way is Johan Galtung.²

(A revealing indication of this hidden ethnocentrism in academic life was the introduction to the major theme of global history in the world historians meeting at Oslo in the year 2000: The introduction presented the history of global historical thinking without any non-Western examples.³ Other presentations followed the same one-sidedness of the historical perspective at global history.)

What is the problem with this way of conceptualizing cultures or civilizations and their interrelationship? It follows a traditional logic of identity-formation and related modes of historical thinking, in which separation is prior to integration and which does not have cultural elements going across differences. There is an epistemological difficulty in presenting this type of typology: Where is the place of the academic who presents this typology? Is it possible to step out of one of the cultural types? Stepping out and looking at the totality of different cultures would give the academic a godlike position, an absolute standpoint, which is impossible to take vis-à-vis the different semantics of cultures.

This might be of interest only for philosophers; but the conceptual separation of cultures implies a fundamental weakness in respect to the normative dimension of identity-formation in an intercultural context. Identity has always been an issue of values. A convincing concept of identity furnishes people with self-esteem. Since identity has always been grounded on a difference from the otherness of the others, the positive evaluation of oneself logically leads to a negative view on the otherness of the others. And this is the problem of ethnocentrism – the deeply rooted and universally spread mode of filling the difference between self and others with positive and negative values. Since the others follow the same logic of one's own people, there is a mutual devaluation in intercultural relationship. By this logic of identity-formation, a fundamental and universal clash of civilizations is constituted.

² Galtung, Johan, "Six Cosmologies: an Impressionistic Presentation," *Peace by Peaceful Means* (London: Sage Publications, 1996), pp. 211-222.

³ Patrick O'Brian, *Making Sense of Global History*, Solvi Sogner ed., The 19th International Congress of the Historical Sciences, (Oslo, 2000), commemorative volume (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 2001), pp.3-18.

The histories of all civilizations are full of this asymmetrical evaluation in the process of identity-formation. People ascribe positive values to themselves and define the otherness of the others by deviations or even contradictions to these values. The distinction between civilization and barbarism is one of the most prominent examples. In archaic civilizations even the quality of humanness was exclusively ascribed to one's own group.⁴ The others were non-humans (and could be treated in a way that nobody would dare to treat the members of one's own group). This tension or clash does not principally vanish if the quality of being a human being is universalized, since this universalism does not dissolve the difference between selfness and otherness, which is constitutive for identity in principle. Vis-à-vis universalistic concepts of humankind the specifics of one's own people in difference to other peoples is normally conceptualized as a realization of these universal values to a higher degree.

There is a fundamental self-relatedness in human life, which constitutes the subjectivity of individuals and social units. This self-relatedness is the starting point for identity. For the purpose of mental survival it is necessary to fill this constitutive self with a positive self-esteem as a mental condition for practical life. (This basic logic of self-esteem is clearly presented by the following picture from a comic strip.)



Social interrelationship is a permanent struggle for this positive self-esteem confirmed by others and togetherness is constituted by a life form, in which this confirmation takes place.

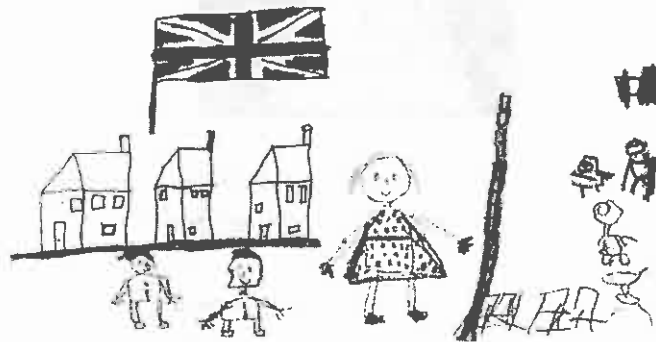
⁴ Cf. Klaus E. Müller (ed.), *Menschenbilder früherer Gesellschaften. Ethnologische Studien zum Verhältnis von Mensch und Natur. Gedächtnisschrift für Hermann Bau-mann* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 1983).

The master narratives of a social unit are cultural manifestations of this confirmation. They tell people a story, in which they find themselves belonging to each other on the basis of a shared life form, within which they find themselves accepted and confirmed. Belonging to this group, to this nation or civilization gives them self-esteem, makes them proud of the achievements of one's own people.

The Logic of Ethnocentrism in Historical Thinking

How do the master narratives tell people who they are and who the others are with whom they have to live together? There are three basic operations and qualities in bringing about convincing master narratives: (a) An asymmetrical distribution of positive and negative values into the different realms of oneself and into the otherness of the others, (b) a teleological continuity of the identity-formation value system and (c) a monocentric spatial organization for one's own life form in its temporal perspectivity.

(a) Concerning its guiding value-system ethnocentric historical thinking is based on an unbalanced relationship between good and evil. As I have already pointed out, positive values shape the historical image of oneself and negative ones the image of the others. I want to give you a pointed example from the level of daily life, which comes from the context of the Irish-British struggle in Northern Ireland. It is the drawing of an eleven year-old pupil presenting his Protestant identity as being sharply distinguished from the Irish one.



On the higher level of sophisticated historical discourse of today we can observe a new mode of ethnocentric argumentation, which seems to have given up its internal violence and aggression to others: It is the wide-spread strategy of self-victimization. Being a victim makes one innocent; and vis-à-vis the permanent suffering in historical experience guilt and responsibility for this suffering is put into the concept of otherness.

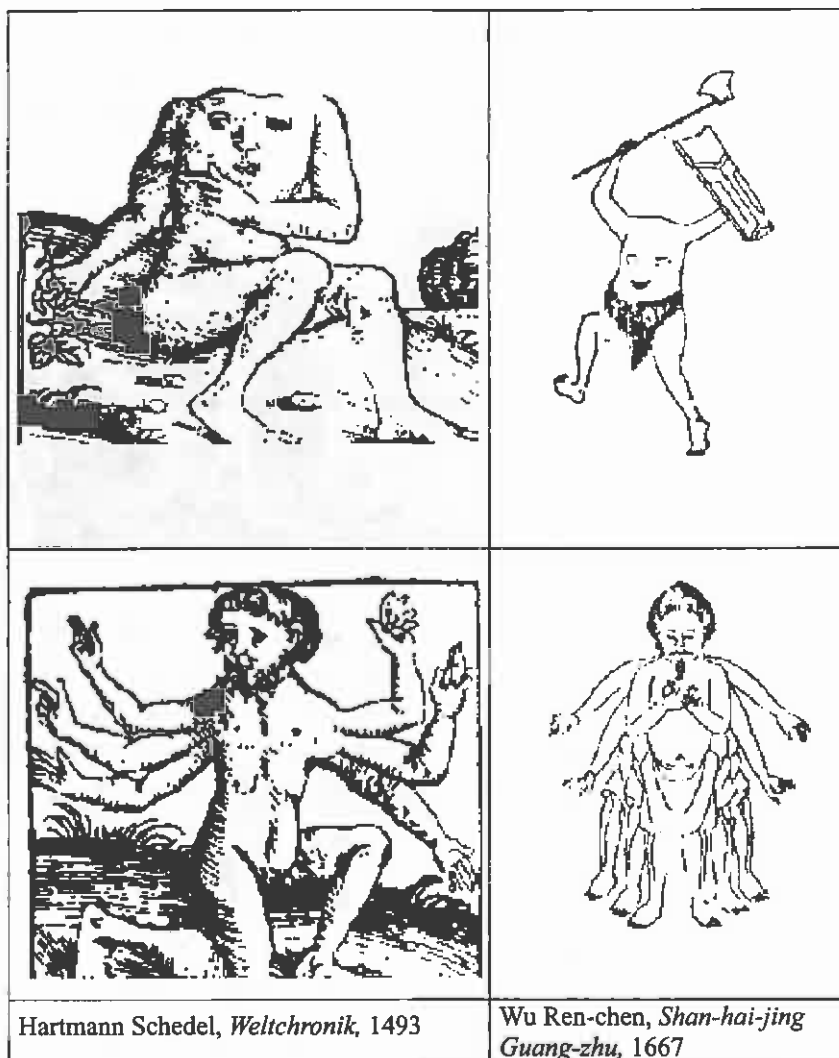
(b) Teleological continuity is the dominant concept of time, which rules the idea of history in master narratives. Traditionally the historical development from the origins of one's own life form through the changes of time to the present-day situation and its outlook into the future is a temporally extended version of all those elements of this special life form, which constitute the mental togetherness of the people. In the traditional way of master narratives the identity-formation value system is represented in the form of an archetypal origin. History is committed to this origin, and its validity furnishes the past with historical meaning and sense. History has an aim, which is the moving force of its development from the very beginning. This origin is always a specific one, it is the origin of one's own people. Otherness is either related to different origins or to an aberration from the straight way of one's own development guided by the validity of the original life form.



(Above: European idea of the Chinese in medieval time; below: Chinese idea of the Europeans)
 Vasizek, Zdenek: *L'Archéologie, L'Histoire, Le Passé. Chapitres sur la Présentation, L'Épistémologie et l'Ontologie du Temps Perdu.* (Sceaux (Kronos), 1994), p. 116

(c) The spatial equi-

valent to this temporal perspective is a monocentric world. One's own people live in the centre of the world, and otherness is situated and placed at the margins. The longer the distance from the centre, the more negative is the image of otherness. At the margins of one's own world live the monsters. That has been done in astonishingly similar ways in the West and China, perhaps even without knowledge of one another:



European and Chinese Presentation of Otherness in Early Modern History

I have presented the three main strategies of ethnocentric master narratives in a very schematic way. Its concrete realization is presented in a broad variety and then extended to multitude of different historical cultures and their developments and changes. It is necessary to see through this variety and identify the underlying anthropologically universal rules of identity formation. Only if the logic of this way of identity-formation by historical thinking is stated clearly, can we identify its power in many manifestations and efforts of the historical culture of today, including the academic discourses of professional historians.

A Non-Ethnocentric Way of Historical Sense Generation

How can the logic of ethnocentric historical identity formation be overcome and how can its inbuilt clash of civilization be avoided? On the level of logical principles of historical thinking, the answer is rather simple:

(a) In respect to the unequal evaluation, the identity-forming value system must include *the principle of equality* going across the difference between self and others. Then the difference itself loses its normatively dividing force. But equality is an abstraction going beyond the essential issue of identity: difference of engraved historical experiences and obligatory value systems. If one applies the principle of equality to identity formation and, at the same time, keeps up the necessity of making difference, the logical result will be *the principle of mutual recognition of differences*. Mutuality realizes equality, and in this form equality has the form of a balanced interrelationship. If we attribute to this interrelationship a normative quality (which is necessary since the issue of identity is a matter of constituting values) it becomes the principle of recognition.

In order to introduce this principle it is necessary to break the power of self-esteem and its shadow of devaluing the otherness of the others. This demands another strategy of historical thinking: The necessity of *integrating negative historical experiences* into the master narrative of one's own group. Thus the self-image of the people becomes ambivalent, and this enables people to recognize otherness. A short look at the topical historical culture in Europe will provide many examples. The catastrophic events of the 20th century are a challenge to raise this ambivalence in the historical self awareness of the Europeans.

Such an integration of negative, even disastrous and deeply hurting experiences into one's own identity causes a new awareness of the elements of loss⁵ and trauma in historical thinking. New modes of dealing with these experiences, of working them through, become necessary. Mourning⁶ and forgiving⁷ could be such cultural strategies in overcoming ethnocentrism.

(b) In respect to the principles of teleological continuation the alternative is an idea of historical development, which is conceptualized as a reconstruction of a temporal chain of conditions of possibility. This kind of historical thinking is a gain in historicity: One definitely looks *back* into the past and not forward from an archaic origin to the present. Instead, the present life-situation and its future perspective are turned back to the past in order to get knowledge about the pre-conditions for this present-day life situation and its intended change into the future. Such a way of historical thinking strengthens elements of contingency, rupture and discontinuity in historical experience. Thus the ambivalence and

⁵ Cf. Frank R. Ankersmit, "The Sublime Dissociation of the Past: Or How to Be(come) what One is No Longer," *History and Theory* (2001:40), pp. 295-323; Jörn Rüsen, "Crisis, Trauma, and Identity" (Chinese: Weiji, chuangshang yu rentong), *Zhongguo xueshu* [China Scholarship] 3 (2002), Nr. 1, S. 15-38; Saul Friedländer, "Trauma, Memory, and Transference," Hartman, Geoffrey H. ed., *Holocaust Remembrance: the Shapes of Memory* (Oxford: Cambridge Blackwell, 1994) S.252-263; Bernhard Giesen, "National Identity as Trauma: The German Case," Bo Strath ed., *Myth and Memory in the Construction of Community: Historical Patterns in Europe and Beyond* (Brüssel: Lang, 2000), pp. 227-247; Dominick LaCapra, *History, Theory, Trauma: Representing the Holocaust* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994); Dominick LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001); Michael S. Roth, *The Ironist's cage. Memory, Trauma, and the Construction of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995).

⁶ Cf. Burkhard Liebsch and Jörn Rüsen eds., *Trauer und Geschichte* (Beiträge zur Geschichtskultur, Bd. 22) (Köln: Böhlau, 2001); Jörn Rüsen, "Historical Thinking as Trauerarbeit. Burkhardt's Answer to Question of Our Time," Andreas Cesana, Lionel Gossman eds., *Begegnungen mit Jacob Burckhardt (1818-1897)* [Beiträge zu Jacob Burckhardt, Bd. 4] (Basel: Schwabe, 2003); Dominick la Capra, "Revisiting the Historians' Debate. Mourning and Genocide," Ne'Emanarad Gulie ed., *Passing into History: Nazism and the Holocaust beyond Memory*. In honour of Saul Friedländer on his 65th Birthday. *History and Memory*, Vol. 9, NO 1-2, Fall 1997, S 80-112; Jay Winter, *Sights of Memory, Sights of Mourning. The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

⁷ Eva Mozes Kor, "Echoes from Auschwitz: My journey to healing," *Kulturwissenschaftliches Institut* (Jahrbuch ed. 2002/03). Essen: Kulturwissenschaftliches Institut, pp. 262-270, 2003; Paul Ricoeur, *Das Rätsel der Vergangenheit. Erinnern- Vergessen- Verzeihen* (Essener Kulturwissenschaftliche Vorträge, Bd. 2) Göttingen (Wallstein) 1998.

ambiguity of the identity-forming value system in the realm of historical experience can be met.

Under the guidance of such a concept of history, the past loses its quality of inevitability. Things could have been different, and there has been no necessity in the actual development. If one implies this logic to the European historical identity, a remarkable change will take place: One has to give up the idea that present-day Europe and the topical unification process are an inevitable consequence from the very beginning in antiquity. Instead, Europe has not only changed its spatial dimensions, but its cultural definition as well. Its history becomes more open for alternatives; and this kind of historical awareness opens up a broader future perspective and gives space for a higher degree of freedom in the interrelationship between future and past, which belongs to the historical feature of identity.

(c) In respect to the spatial monoperspectivity the non-ethnocentric alternative is multiperspectivity and polycentrism.

In the case of Europe this multiperspectivity and polycentrism is evident: Each nation and even many regions have their own perspective representing the past; and Europe has many capitals. Instead of one single centre Europe has a network of communicating places.

But multiperspectivity and the multitude of voices raise a problem: What about the unity of history? Is there only a variety, diversity and multitude and nothing comprehensive? The traditional master narratives of all civilizations contain a universalistic perspective; and the West has for long been committed to such a comprehensive "universal history" as well. Do we have to give up this historical universalism in favour of a diverse multiculturalism? Many post-modernist historians and philosophers are convinced that this is inevitable. But such a multiculturalism is only plausible, if any comprehensive truths claims are given up. So the consequence would be a general relativism. But this relativism would open the door for an unrestricted "clash of civilizations". If there is no possibility of integration and agreement upon a comprehensive perspective, which may mediate and synthesize cultural differences, the last word concerning the relationship between the different perspectives is pluralism and competition. Under certain conditions this would lead to struggle and mental war.

Since it is impossible to step out of one's own cultural context and to gain a standpoint beyond the diversity of cultural traditions what can be done about these multitudes? We have to find principles, which may mediate and even syn-

thesize the different perspectives. In the academic discourses, such universalistic elements are truths claims of historical cognition, which stem from the methodical rationality of historical thinking and which are valid across cultural differences. (This is at least true for source critique; but even for the higher level of historical interpretation one can find universalistic principles, which every historian is committed to: logical coherence, relatedness to experience, openness for argumentation etc.)

But these principles are not sufficient to solve the problem of multiperspectivity and multiculturalism. I think that the solution will be a *principle of humankind*, which includes the value of equality, and can lead to the general rule of mutual recognition of differences. Every culture and tradition must consider whether and how it has contributed to the validity of this rule and whether it can serve as a potential of tradition to inspire the topical discourses of professional historians in intercultural communication.

Applications

How can this non-ethnocentric way of historical sense generation be applied to the topical discourses of historical studies? The first application is a reflection about the mode or logic of historical sense generation in historical studies. We need a growing awareness of the presupposed or underlying sense criteria of historical thinking. Philosophy of history or theory of history should become an integral part of the work of the historians. Only if this is the case, is it possible to consider the power of ethnocentric thinking and the effectiveness of some of its principles. This reflection should lead to a fundamental criticism on the level of the logic of historical thinking. Using a concept of culture or civilization should always be accompanied by a reflection on whether this concept stems from the tradition of Spengler and Toynbee and therefore defines its subject matter in an exclusive way. Such a higher level of reflexivity will enable the historians to observe themselves whether they directly or indirectly thematize otherness while presenting the history of their own people. Within such a new awareness one has to check the extent of recognition or at least the willingness to give the others a voice of their own.

This consequently leads to a new critical attempt in the history of historiography. Since every historiographical work is committed to a tradition, it is necessary to check this tradition in respect to those elements, within which the

historians can achieve recognition of otherness. In this respect the hermeneutic tradition of understanding is very important. So that we can understand to what degree the established methods of historical interpretation allow the idea of a multitude of cultures and their crossing over the strong division between selfness and otherness.

There is one interpretative practice of historical thinking, one which comes close to the achievement of recognition. Historians should explicate and reflect their own historical perspectives and concepts of interpretation. They should confront them in a systematic way with the perspectives and concepts of interpretation, which are a part of those traditions and cultures they are dealing with. This mutual checking is more than a comparison: It introduces elements of methodically rationalized empathy into the work of the historians, and empathy is a necessary condition for recognition.

One of the most important fields of applying a non-ethnocentric way of historical thinking to historical studies is intercultural comparison. Here cultural difference as a logical impact of every concept of historical identity is at stake. In order to pursue a non-ethnocentric treatment of cultural difference it is necessary to explicate and reflect the parameters of comparison first of all. Very often the topical settings of one's own culture serve as such a parameter; and this is already an ethnocentric approach to otherness. Therefore it is necessary to start from anthropological universals valid in all cultures and proceed by constructing ideal types on a rather abstract level, into which these universals can be concretized. Cultural peculiarity should be interpreted with the help of these ideal types. They can make it plausible that cultural difference is not rooted in specific essentials unique only for one culture, but that cultural particularity is an issue of a composition of different elements, each or at least most of which can be found in other cultures as well. Thus the specifics of cultures are brought about by different constellations of the same elements.

The theoretical approach to cultural difference, which is guided by this idea of cultural specifics does not fall into the trap of ethnocentrism. On the contrary, it presents the otherness of different cultures as a mirror, which enables us to get a better self-understanding. It does not exclude otherness constituting the peculiarity of the cultural features of oneself, but includes it. Cultural specifics bring about an interrelationship of cultures that enable the people to come to terms

with differences by providing them with the cultural power of recognition and acknowledgement.⁸

In addition to these theoretical and methodical strategies of overcoming ethnocentrism, we need a practical one as well. Professional historians are able to discuss their issues across cultural differences. But as soon as these issues touch their own identity, the academic discourse acquires a new quality and requires a sharpened awareness and a highly developed sensitivity for the entanglement of historical studies in the politics of identity, in the struggle for recognition among peoples, nations and civilizations or cultures.

The so-called scientific character of academic discourse is characterized by a principal distance to issues of practical life. This distance enables professional historians to produce solid knowledge with inbuilt criteria of plausibility. At the very moment when identity issues enter the academic discourse, this distance becomes problematic.⁹ Nobody can be neutral when one's own identity is in question. Identity is commitment. But this commitment can be pursued in different ways. There is one way, which establishes an equivalent to distance and to truth claims: the way of arguing. Bringing the issue of identity into an argumentative discourse will open up the fundamental involvement of the historians in their historical identity. It may allow an awareness that the others are related to their own historical identity as well, and that there is a chance of mutual recognition.

In order to realize this recognition we need the pragmatics of intercultural communication, in which the mode and the rules of such an argumentation about identities are reflected, explicated, discussed and applied to the ongoing communicative process. This is what we all should do, and doing so we will realize an enrichment in our own historical identity by recognizing others.

⁸ Cf. Jörn Rüsen, "Some Theoretical Approaches to Intercultural Comparison of Historiography," *History and Theory*, Theme Issue 35: Chinese Historiography in Comparative Perspective (1996), pp. 5-22 [in Chinese: Kua wenhua bijiaoshixue de yixie lilun zongxiang, in S. Weigel-Schwiedrzik, Axel Schneider (eds), *Zhongguo shixueshi yantaohui cong bijiao guandian chufa lunwenji*. Bangiao, Kreis Taipei (Taoxiang chubanshe) 1999, S. 151-176].

⁹ Cf. Jörn Rüsen, Introduction: "Historical Thinking as Intercultural Discourse," in: id. (ed.): *Western Historical Thinking. An Intercultural Debate* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2002), pp. 1-14.

The Orientalization of a European Orient: Turkquerie and Chinoiserie in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Poland

一個歐洲東方觀的東方化過程
(論十六至十七世紀波蘭的土耳其風和中國風)

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關鍵詞: 東方學、波蘭、「中國風」、認同、大眾文化

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