



Kent Academic Repository

Becque, Paul (2009) *Tragedy and the limits of reason : Arnold J Toynbee's search for a middle way*. Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) thesis, University of Kent.

Downloaded from

<https://kar.kent.ac.uk/94202/> The University of Kent's Academic Repository KAR

The version of record is available from

<https://doi.org/10.22024/UniKent/01.02.94202>

This document version

UNSPECIFIED

DOI for this version

Licence for this version

CC BY-NC-ND (Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives)

Additional information

This thesis has been digitised by EThOS, the British Library digitisation service, for purposes of preservation and dissemination. It was uploaded to KAR on 25 April 2022 in order to hold its content and record within University of Kent systems. It is available Open Access using a Creative Commons Attribution, Non-commercial, No Derivatives (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>) licence so that the thesis and its author, can benefit from opportunities for increased readership and citation. This was done in line with University of Kent policies (<https://www.kent.ac.uk/is/strategy/docs/Kent%20Open%20Access%20policy.pdf>). If you ...

Versions of research works

Versions of Record

If this version is the version of record, it is the same as the published version available on the publisher's web site. Cite as the published version.

Author Accepted Manuscripts

If this document is identified as the Author Accepted Manuscript it is the version after peer review but before type setting, copy editing or publisher branding. Cite as Surname, Initial. (Year) 'Title of article'. To be published in *Title of Journal*, Volume and issue numbers [peer-reviewed accepted version]. Available at: DOI or URL (Accessed: date).

Enquiries

If you have questions about this document contact ResearchSupport@kent.ac.uk. Please include the URL of the record in KAR. If you believe that your, or a third party's rights have been compromised through this document please see our [Take Down policy](https://www.kent.ac.uk/guides/kar-the-kent-academic-repository#policies) (available from <https://www.kent.ac.uk/guides/kar-the-kent-academic-repository#policies>).

Paul Becque

Tragedy and the Limits of Reason:

Arnold J. Toynbee's Search for a Middle Way

Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in International Relations

University of Kent

Canterbury

May 2009

Acknowledgements

I would like to sincerely thank my two supervisors, Dr. Stefan Rossbach and Professor Andrew Williams both of whom have played important but slightly different roles. Andy as a historian sent me into the archives and did his very best to keep me grounded whilst always being open to my idiosyncratic reading of Toynbee provided I provided the supporting 'facts'.

Having done my best on that count, Stefan then engaged with the unorthodox logical-spiritual interpretation I attempt to bring to re-reading Toynbee. Stefan helped me articulate these ideas into some kind of intelligible form from what was a web of strands or insights. The result of their joint non-prescriptive influence herein is an unorthodox study but one that reflects what I wanted to write. Suffice to say therefore that the shortcomings and errors in this thesis are all mine alone.

I would also like to thank, remember and raise a glass to the late Dr. Keith Webb. Ten years ago I came to him with no academic background and Keith allowed me to sign up for an M.A. (against his better judgment) and unwittingly started me off on this intellectual odyssey. Whilst I am sad that he won't read this thesis, with his typically playful humour he would have retorted – "I'm not".

As is the Buddhist tradition, I would like to dedicate any merit in this study to my teachers in life- Daisaku Ikeda, the members of SGI, and my late parents Betty and Fred Becque. Mom gave me the heart to care, Dad, a critical mind and Ikeda Sensei and the SGI community showed me how to enlarge the former, polish the latter and subsequently enjoy both.

Finally, as expressed in Nichiren's Rissho Ankoku, this work is also dedicated to all those from all and any religious and philosophical persuasions who are engaged in challenging and transforming their own *hearts*, whilst and through embracing and respecting the hearts of 'others'.

Abstract

This thesis argues that Arnold J. Toynbee's life-work is of considerable importance for our understanding of contemporary world politics. His quest to understand the drama of history – best exemplified in his monumental *A Study of History* – forced him to attempt to transcend the limits of his own culture's thinking. Toynbee understood that his work was affected and indeed limited by the particular way of thinking prevalent in modern, Western societies. He understood these limits to be the limits of Western rationality, of the particular Western brand of reason. In his creative encounters with other, non-Western ways of experiencing reality, Toynbee's work explores these limits and pushes beyond them. In this context we suggest that Toynbee's interest in, and engagement with, Mahayana Buddhism was not an idle endeavour of a historian who had lost his way, as many of his academic critics would have it, but meaningful attempts to reach beyond the limits of his thinking. As we will explore in this thesis, Toynbee considered the Bodhisattva acting in the world as comparable to the Passion of Christ. The Bodhisattva action results from the logic and insights of 'emptiness/openess' (Sanskrit- Sunyata or Japanese- Ku) that are possibly 'without equivalent' in Western philosophical traditions, and accordingly it entailed one possibility to lead beyond the limitations of these Western traditions. Moving beyond these limits and their implications was the key motif in Toynbee's work. We thus re-appraise Toynbee's project from his evolving multicultural perspective, one that informed his interest in Buddhist thinking. He thereby assumes the role of a 'pioneer', of someone who explored and transcends the limits of Western rationality from within. This is where we discover his contemporary significance, as the limits of Western reason are a crucial factor in today's world politics.

Table of Contents

Part One 6

0. Introduction 6

0.1. Toynbee and IR: preliminary observations..... 9

0.2. Toynbee’s concerns within the context of contemporary IR theorizing I 12

0.3. Toynbee’s concerns within the context of contemporary IR theorizing II 20

0.4. Note on method and overview of thesis 25

1. Toynbee’s journey towards *A Study of History* 29

1.1 Intellectual influences and formal education 32

1.1.1. Family life and school education 34

1.1.2. The Oxford years 37

1.2. Philosophy, religion, history 41

1.3. Toynbee’s threefold epistemology 44

1.3.1. The analytical-empirical lens 44

1.3.2. The psychological-dramatic lens 47

1.3.3. The ethical-spiritual lens 48

2. *A Study of History* 53

2.1. History, science and fiction 54

2.2. Facts and fictions 56

2.3. *A Study of History*: From method to contents 60

2.3.1. Genesis 65

2.3.2. The psychological realm or field..... 68

2.3.3. Growth..... 76

2.3.4. Breakdown 80

2.3.5. The spiritual dimension 84

2.3.6. Universal states, universal churches, and higher religions 86

2.3.7. Science, Philosophy and Religion..... 89

2.3.8. Toynbee’s conclusions..... 93

3. Toynbee’s method: sources, origins, implications 97

3.1. Toynbee’s classical education 97

3.2. Toynbee’s categories and classifications 105

3.3. Holism as a structuring principle 106

3.4. Toynbee’s mytho-poetic tragedy and Aristotle’s *Poetics*..... 113

4. Reviewing the reviews 121

4.1. Ambition versus Self-Adulation 122

4.2. Facts, data, and empiricism 127

4.3. Civilizations and higher religions..... 132

4.4. Myth 135

4.5. Questions of method 136

4.6. Toynbee's 'philosophy of international relations'	138
4.7. Two subtle reviews: Voegelin and Mumford	140
Bridge	149
5. The limits of reason: a two thousand year crisis?	149
5.1 Aristotle's Laws of Thought	152
5.2 Critiques of Aristotle	159
5.3 Beyond Debate to Dialogue: The Buddhist Response	168
Part Two	178
6. A historical introduction to Middle Way thinking	178
6.1. Shakyamuni Gautama	179
6.2. Nagarjuna	184
6.3. The Yogacara school and the tathagata-garbha literature	188
6.4. Chih-I and the Lotus Sutra	193
6.5. Nichiren Daishonin	201
6.6. Daisaku Ikeda	210
7. Toynbee's encounters with Buddhism	213
7.1. The empirical-analytical study of Buddhism	215
7.2. The psychological-dramatic lens	217
7.3. The ethical-spiritual lens	221
7.4. The personal	225
7.5. The Toynbee-Ikeda dialogue	230
8. Conclusions	236
Bibliography	244

Part One

0. Introduction

This thesis argues that Arnold J. Toynbee's life work is of considerable importance for our understanding of contemporary world politics. His work generally, but especially the monumental *A Study of History*, was a quest to understand the 'essence' of history, and in this quest Toynbee was forced to attempt to transcend the limits of his own thinking. These attempts were largely inspired by three developments.

First, Toynbee's encyclopaedic analysis of world history inevitably brought him in contact with civilizations that were very different from the Western civilization within which he lived and worked. Toynbee was honest enough to appreciate these differences and to take them seriously as invitations to think differently and to let them affect the direction of his studies. Very few of his reviewers understood this existential dimension of his work – Eric Voegelin is perhaps the only one who analysed Toynbee's work as an existential quest (zetema) which increasingly had to reflexively confront and respond to the insights which it generated as it progressed. As is well known, traditional historians were unable to respond to Toynbee's *Study* because the type of work he conducted was outside their historiographical realm of experience and understanding.

The 'data' that Toynbee 'discovered' as he went through history in a very systematic and comparative manner was 'personal' in the sense that he encountered other civilizations as possible ways of living and thinking, as possible ways of experiencing and approaching reality. He thereby inevitably had to question and reflect on the living and thinking that characterized his own life and the historical epoch of which it was a witness. It is not an accident, therefore, that Toynbee produced *two* monumental works, the twelve volumes of the *Study* and a parallel thirty-two volumes of the *Surveys of International Affairs*.

We will argue in this thesis that Toynbee's encounter with Eastern religions – and especially with Mahayana Buddhism -- was particularly instructive. We suggest that Toynbee's declaration of 1956 that the last four volumes of the *Study* were written from

an “Indian standpoint”¹ is indeed significant and meaningful. We also know from his personal correspondence that he closely related to the experience of the Bodhisattva, which he compared to the Passion of Christ. Late in his life, Toynbee initiated a dialogue with the Japanese Buddhist religious leader Daisaku Ikeda, which was published posthumously under the title *Choose Life*. Toynbee’s encounters with Buddhism are documented and yet commentators so far have not been able to understand how central they were for Toynbee’s quest and how they unfolded quite logically from his life’s work.

This thesis will re-appraise Toynbee’s work from the very perspective which informed his interest in Buddhist thinking. In other words, we argue that these encounters are not idle endeavours of a historian who had lost his way (as some of his critics would have it) but meaningful attempts, informed by his life-long quest, to reach beyond the limits of his thinking. Toynbee understood that his work was affected and indeed limited by the particular way of thinking prevalent in modern, Western societies. His work explores these limits and pushes beyond them, and he understood these limits to be the limits of Western rationality, of the particular Western brand of reason. In his honest attempt to move beyond these limits, he was bound to leave behind his academic peers who were unable to comprehend and respond to his work. By exploring Toynbee’s life work, therefore, this thesis aims to provide a study of the limits of Western rationality.

The second development that affected Toynbee’s outlook is the obvious fact that the very rationality that had come under scrutiny in Toynbee’s monumental efforts was itself undergoing a period of profound and possibly terminal crisis in the form of the Second World War. In other words, Toynbee’s work is also a commentary on the self-destruction of Europe, and indeed of Britain’s role within that process. The historical epoch turned the question of world order into a question of existential importance. Three major intellectual influences on Toynbee, Jan Smuts, Henry Bergson and Gilbert Murray, were also active, either directly involved in the Versailles Treaty negotiations that were to lead to the League of Nations or in the institutions that were created as part of the League.² Toynbee’s work was meant to speak directly to the problems of the

¹ “This Indian standpoint is the one from which the last four volumes of my book have been written.” Arnold J. Toynbee “A Study of History: What I am Trying to Do” in M.F. Ashley Montague ed., *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* (Porter Sargent, Boston, 1956), 6-7.

² Smuts was directly involved in the peace negotiations. Bergson and Murray were primary figures in the League’s Committee for Intellectual Co-operation. Murray actually sent Toynbee as his representative on occasions. “I have written to Bergson proposing to send Professor Toynbee as my substitute to the

time, and especially the last four volumes of the *Study*, those written from an Indian perspective, were meant to have a soteriological or 'therapeutic' effect. In order to understand how this effect was to be achieved, however, we need to follow Toynbee's intellectual itinerary in order to see how he came to adopt this 'Indian perspective'.

Thirdly and finally, the crisis of history was mirrored in crisis periods in Toynbee's life. 1939 is not only the year in which Germany invaded Poland, starting the Second World War; it is also the year in which Toynbee's mother died and in which his son committed suicide. In 1941 his father dies in a sanatorium from what was diagnosed as a mental illness, thus renewing fears in Toynbee that he might have inherited the condition. In 1946, his 33-year marriage to Rosalind Murray comes to an end. These years of historical and personal crisis are precisely the years that separate the publication of volumes I to VI from the publication of the later and final volumes VII to X of the *Study*. It is important, of course, to acknowledge that much of the plan and work on the later volumes was done prior to the War, and thus we must resist the temptation to psychologise Toynbee's quest. At the same time, however, it is important to keep in mind that, as mentioned above, Toynbee's work had a strong personal dimension and that his self-understanding, to the extent that we can reconstruct it, will shed light on the meaning of his work.

If we are correct in reading Toynbee as someone who was exploring the limits of Western rationality from within, pushing beyond these limits, then he was indeed a 'pioneer', someone who goes before, blazing a trail for others to follow. As a result of what we call 'globalisation' – a process that Toynbee was aware of – civilizational encounters are not as exceptional today as they might have been in the past. On the contrary, these encounters have become daily events in the lives of many. According to some commentators, they also dominate the world of international politics. They are no longer mere academic exercises that require sophisticated theories; they are real phenomena that require political and, as Toynbee would argue, spiritual responses. We are all called to become pioneers and to explore and experience the limits of our various rationalities as we encounter other, different rationalities that appear to challenge the taken-for-grantedness of our approach to reality. This 'problem', if it is a 'problem', is much discussed in a wide range of subjects in the social sciences and humanities. There are many reasons, therefore, for going back to Toynbee and learning from his struggles, from his successes and failures.

meeting on May 11th." G Murray to Nitobe (Undersecretary of the League of Nations) April 27th 1925. Bodleian Library, Murray Papers, Sheet 266 folio 196.

0.1. Toynbee and IR: preliminary observations

Our assessment of Toynbee's significance stands in sharp contrast to his reception in the academic IR community. Within the IR literature, especially within theoretical debates, references to Toynbee are very rare indeed. He gets not a single mention in the many current standard introductions to IR.³ If we therefore wish to substantiate our claim that Toynbee's quest is relevant to contemporary IR debates, we must explain (a) why and how he has been ignored in the past and (b) where in contemporary IR theorising Toynbee's concerns are addressed.

As far as his reception in academic IR was concerned, E. H. Carr's polemic managed to do considerable damage. Carr's seminal *The Twenty Years Crisis* makes ten references to Toynbee, all of them critical. Toynbee is paraded as a typical example of a 'utopian moraliser'⁴ and as a defender of the privileged status quo.⁵ Carr's treatment of Toynbee is indeed a good example of how *The Twenty Years Crisis* simplified the debate with tragic consequences. Carr's polemic tended to label everyone he disagreed with as a 'utopian'; his rhetorical strategy was not very subtle. Toynbee, however, was not a utopian. He understood power and how it worked, but he wanted power to be used for a purpose. Power was not an end in itself but a means to achieve a purpose – Machiavelli would have agreed with Toynbee.

In an exchange with the pacifist Lord Allen, who had just moved to the Lords in 1938, Toynbee is concerned with the moral use of force. He wanted to see Britain use any power they still retained in an effort to establish international order and law. His own anti-nationalism is clear when he stated that if Britain's Empire were to continue merely along a path of self-aggrandisement he felt no great loyalty towards it as an institution:

³ Robert Jackson and George Sorenson, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches* 3rd Ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2007), John Baylis, Steve Smith Patricia Owens, *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), Jeffery Haynes *An Introduction to International Relations and Religion* (London: Pearson Education Ltd. 2007) R.J. Barry Jones, Peter M. Jones, Ken Dark and Joel Peters, *Introduction to International Relations* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), Chris Brown with Kirsten Ainley, *Understanding International Relations* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005) - Toys 'R' Us is the closest we get to Toynbee indexically!

⁴ "Professor Toynbee called the invasion of Abyssinia 'Signor Mussolini's deliberate personal sin'." E.H. Carr, *The Twenty Years Crisis* (Hampshire: MacMillan Press, 1981) 153n1.

⁵ E.H. Carr, "*The Twenty Years Crisis*". 77, here referring to Toynbee's critique of those countries using violence against the world order, a strategy Carr sees as the under-privileged legitimately confronting the privileged.

The only value the British Empire has for me personally is as an instrument for helping to bring about a better system of order in the world. If the British Empire is incapable of contributing towards this or if, which comes to much the same thing, the people in command of it, are unwilling to use it for this purpose, then for me it becomes salt that has lost its savour and I do not much care what happens to it.

He then questions Allen's commitment to a government policy that used power only to further its own nationalist ends:

One point that puzzles me in your attitude is why you support the present policy of the Chamberlain Government. The Government are, as far as I can judge, mainly concerned to prevent Germany getting the upper hand over this country and, with that aim in view, they are quite methodically trying to weaken Germany and strengthen Great Britain by purchasing Italy with bribes in Spanish and Abyssinian coin. But that is not the policy of peace; it is a policy of using war as an instrument of national policy, whereas my line, while equally non-pacifist, does at least aim at using war for an international purpose. As a Pacifist, are you not really less remote from people like me than you are from the Government? ⁶

Toynbee viewed the 'recent' ideologies of sovereignty and great power politics as moral and intellectual errors, which he wanted to see ended by a world federation based on law. If it was impossible to achieve this goal in a peaceful manner, he would have been prepared to allow for great power politics to impose such a system, and he looked to North America for leadership:

[I]f we throw our weight into the scales against the European dictatorships, then the World dominion which will be the prize of the struggle will fall, not to Germany and her confederates, but to North America. ⁷

It may be possible to label Toynbee a 'realist utopian', but this label only highlights the problematic nature of Carr's dichotomies. Carr attacks Toynbee for equating "national interests with morality" and "national interest with universal right", ⁸ but it is clear from

⁶ Bodleian Library, Toynbee Papers, Letter Toynbee to Allen May 16th 1938.

⁷ Bodleian Library, Toynbee Papers, Letter Toynbee to Allen May 11th 1938.

⁸ E.H. Carr, *The Twenty Years Crisis*, 72-74.

the quotes above that Toynbee refused to accept power and national interest as the limits of what can be said and thought.⁹ Norman Angell, another of Carr's targets, wrote to Toynbee after reviewing Carr's work in the journal *Headway*. Angell saw Carr's opus as a "mischievous justification of a do-nothingism", which left readers with "a general impression of a moral nihilism".¹⁰ Toynbee's response is revealing in that it shows that he clearly did not associate himself with the utopians criticized by Carr; in fact, the last sentence suggests that Toynbee was somewhat sympathetic with Carr's polemic:

Carr, as I see him, is a man of very great ability, with a powerful and trenchant mind. He is a consummate debunker and if debunking were all that one needed his book would be a very important contribution to the study of recent international affairs. The weakness of his position, and his work, is that debunking, however necessary and salutary, is only a preface to the real job; it is not the job itself. [...] [H]e leaves you in a moral vacuum and at a political dead point. Debunking is barren unless it leads you to a clearer view of what is morally right and wrong and what is politically constructive or disastrous [...]. Carr's book is [...] important, and it ought to be taken seriously. Its merit is that it puts the Utopians on their mettle.¹¹

Peter Wilson and David Long have recently revisited Carr's text and the interwar debates in an edited volume entitled *Thinkers of the Twenty Years Crisis*. They try to reconstruct the full complexity of the 'utopians' and 'liberals' of the time. Wilson's analysis is that "the inter-war idealists, so called, have been caricatured rather than read."¹² Carr's critique effectively dismissed utopians by labelling them as otherworldly, idealistic and weak, as contrasted with the realists, who were strong, present and 'this worldly'. In the same volume, Brewin finds many points of agreement between Carr and Toynbee, with both having 'idealist' and 'realist' tendencies.¹³ Yet Brewin in an otherwise balanced assessment still fails to bring any important new insights to our

⁹ According to McNeill, Carr was competing with Toynbee to head up a government foreign press and research department. Toynbee won but McNeill reports that Carr later took full advantage of publicizing the department's internal problems through letters sent to *The Times*. W.H. McNeill, *Arnold J. Toynbee, A Life*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 319, fn 5. Hereafter referred to as McNeill, "Toynbee".

¹⁰ Bodleian Library, Toynbee Papers, Letter Angell to Toynbee n.d. presumed January 1940 as the reply from Toynbee dated 23/1/40.

¹¹ Bodleian Library, Toynbee Papers, Letter Toynbee to Angell, January 23rd 1940.

¹² Peter Wilson "Introduction: The Twenty Years Crisis and the Category of 'Idealism' in International relations" in David Long and Peter Wilson, eds., *Thinkers of the Twenty Years Crisis* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 16.

¹³ Christopher Brewin, "Arnold Toynbee, Chatham House, and Research in a Global Context," in *Thinkers of the Twenty Years Crisis*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 296-97.

reading of Toynbee. Overall, he repeats the standard account with the usual references to psychology, religion and 'mystical' experiences. Ultimately, Toynbee's outsider role is reconfirmed: having dusted him off, he is put back on the shelf. The deeper question we ask in this thesis is, however, whether we can read Toynbee through lenses that Toynbee himself was developing in his work.

Another good example of Toynbee's conspicuous absence is Martin Griffith's volume *Fifty Key Thinkers in IR*, which has space for Carr, of course, and for Alfred Zimmern – one of Toynbee's tutors at Oxford – but not for Toynbee.¹⁴ Interestingly, the new 2008 edition of the book excludes Angell and Zimmern too. Neither edition features Toynbee anywhere in the Index. Carr is presented as an exemplar of realism and Zimmern ends up as the 'liberalist' (idealist) foil. The closest the earlier book gets to any kind of historical scholarship is in the Historical Sociology section, where we find Mann, Giddens, Tilly and Wallerstein. Again we see that contemporary IR scholarship has great difficulties appreciating Toynbee's contribution.

0.2. Toynbee's concerns within the context of contemporary IR theorizing I

It has become somewhat of a ritual to review the evolution of IR theory in terms of its 'great debates'. According to this tradition, since the first Chair in IR – named after Woodrow Wilson – was established in Aberystwyth in 1919, IR theory has gone through four distinct 'debates', which all revolved around a small number of core issues. The first debate was between 'utopian idealism' and 'realism' and concerned the question of whether war could be abolished through deliberate and coordinated human efforts. This concern in turn raised many other questions, including questions about the nature of power and the ability of institutions to tame power. The second debate focused on methodological issues and the question of whether scientific methods (positivism) were applicable in the study of international politics. The next debate involved various uses of the prefix 'neo', as new versions of old ideas struggled for intellectual supremacy. Neo-liberals, neo-realists and neo-marxists argued over a range of issues, including the significance of (international) political economy. This third debate also brought some epistemological issues to the fore, which were then developed further in a fourth debate, which radically questioned the very foundations of

¹⁴ Martin Griffiths, *Fifty Key Thinkers in International Relations* (London: Routledge, 1999).

knowledge, and of rational knowledge in particular, on which all these debates were based, thus introducing a strong self-reflective dimension.

Nevertheless, in spite of such reflective insights, it is striking how these debates were structured according to binary oppositions and, as noted above, dichotomies: realism/idealism, fact/value, structure/agency, mind/body, socialism/capitalism, communitarian/cosmopolitan etc. Even the most recent debate, though very sophisticated in terms of its epistemological and ontological references, appears to end up with a polarization between 'foundationalists' and 'anti-foundationalists'. The fact that IR debates often fall back on dichotomies may well explain both (a) that Toynbee is ignored because he is mislabelled and (b) that Toynbee's search for a middle way, beyond dichotomies, should be highly relevant for IR theorising. For whether such polarized debates actually amount to a dialogue is a genuine question.

The limitations of binary configurations have not gone unnoticed, however. 'Bridge building' is a common occupation among IR authors. Giddens, according to Griffith a key IR thinker, builds a bridge between structure and agency; Keohane and Nye try to bridge the gap between neorealists and neoliberals, etc. In order to be able to understand this practice of bridge building a little better, and in order to be able to appreciate the problems involved, we choose to take a brief look at Alexander Wendt's work, which aims to build a bridge between structure (anarchy) and process (interaction). Other bridge-builders will be referred to later, but we focus on Wendt mainly because – somewhat surprisingly – his concerns mirror Toynbee's in a striking manner. Like Toynbee, Wendt's dissatisfaction with binary modes of thought (e.g. dualisms) led him to question the basis of Western rationality in classical physics. We look at Wendt, therefore, in order to anticipate briefly concerns that we will later re-discover in our detailed discussion of Toynbee, thus showing that popular IR thinkers today struggle with issues which were well-known and well-understood by Toynbee. Moreover, Wendt's core concern – accounting for the phenomenon of 'action' – was a key concern for Toynbee too.

Wendt's bridge building efforts are partly inspired by the structuration theories gleaned from sociology, especially from Anthony Giddens. Wendt argues that constructivism could provide a bridge between 'agency' and 'structure'. His objective is:

[...] to build a bridge between these two traditions (and, by extension, between the realist-liberal and rationalist-reflectivist debates) by developing a

constructivist argument, drawn from structurationist and symbolic interactionist sociology, on behalf of the liberal claim that international institutions can transform state identities and interests. In contrast to the "economic" theorizing that dominates mainstream systemic international relations scholarship, this involves a "sociological social psychological" form of systemic theory in which identities and interests are the dependent variable.¹⁵

Wendt's 'search for a middle way' leads him to a kind of constructivism, in which "people act toward objects, including other actors, on the basis of the meanings that the objects have for them."¹⁶ In this framework, "actors acquire identities – relatively stable, role-specific understandings and expectations about self – by participating in such collective meanings." Therefore, "identities are inherently relational".¹⁷

Toynbee's own search for a 'middle way' leads him to a very similar approach; he also emphasizes the relational aspect of identity. In his *Study of History*, Toynbee explained that "the cause of the genesis of civilizations is not simple but multiple; it is not an entity but a relation."¹⁸ Moreover, these relations are to be found in 'fields' – fields of action for individuals and their interactions. Social relations are always already there as a precondition for any changes in the self-understanding of human beings:

Man [...] is essentially a social animal, in the sense that social life is a condition which the evolution of Man out of Sub-Man pre-supposes, and without which that evolution could not conceivably have taken place.¹⁹

Not unlike the proponents of the linguistic turn in social science and philosophy, Toynbee emphasizes the importance of language and, moreover, its social nature. He quotes at length from Smut's work *Holism and Evolution*:

It is through the use of the purely social instrument of language that I rise above the mere immediacy of experience and immersion in the current of my experience. Language gives names to the items of my experience, and thus

¹⁵ Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is What States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46, No. 2, Spring 1992, 391-425 (394).

¹⁶ Wendt, "Anarchy," 396-7.

¹⁷ Wendt, "Anarchy," 397.

¹⁸ Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History*, 12 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1948-1961), Volume 1: 271. In the following we will refer to the *Study* as Toynbee, "Study," Z:ABC, where Z is the volume number (non-roman), and ABC is the page number. Toynbee published two further 'volumes'; an Atlas (XI), and "Reconsiderations" (XII). We do not refer to XI, and we will refer to XII as "Reconsiderations".

¹⁹ Toynbee, "Study," 3:218.

through language they are first isolated and abstracted from the continuous body of my experience. Through the naming power of language, again several items of experience can be grouped together under one name, which becomes distinctive of their general resemblances, in disregard of their minor differences. In other words, the power of forming general concepts becomes possible only through the social instrument of language. Thus the entire developed apparatus of thought with which I measure the Universe and garner an untold wealth of personal experience is not my individual equipment and possession, but a socially developed instrument which I share with the rest of my fellows. The individual Self or Personality rests not on its individual foundations but on the whole Universe.²⁰

Toynbee is fully aware of the fact that language is based on social conventions. Moreover, language constructs reality by simplifying it:

It is hardly possible to write two consecutive lines of historical narrative without introducing fictitious personifications of institution and ascribing to them anthropomorphically the desires, feelings, thoughts, actions, and in fact all the psychic activities of human beings. [...] In making use of these mythological counters we are misrepresenting reality, yet, however conscious we may be of their falsifying effect, we cannot do without them.²¹

Wendt is quite aware of the same problem – the problem that ‘fictions’ are unavoidable in our accounts of reality – which is a problem that affects both social reality and social science:

Are States People Too? *Social Theory*’s claim that states are actors to which we can attribute human qualities is criticized by Cederman and Daase, Suganami, and especially Zehfuss, but their skepticism is probably widely shared among IR scholars. Although the discourse of state personhood pervades IR scholarship, few of us seem willing to say that states really are persons. We treat state personhood as a useful fiction, a convenient metaphor for the actions of individuals, not a description of how the world really is.²²

²⁰ Toynbee, “Study,” 3:218 quoting J. A. Smuts, *Holism and Evolution* (1927), 253-4.

²¹ Toynbee, “Study,” 1:422.

²² Alexander Wendt, “Social Theory As Cartesian Science: An Auto-Critique From A Quantum Perspective,” in Stefano Guzzini and Anna Leander Ed., *Constructivism and International Relations: Alexander Wendt and his Critics*, (New York, Routledge, 2005), 202.

Toynbee's use of Smut's philosophy indicates that he was familiar with the new developments in the sciences of complexity, relativity and quantum thinking – Toynbee's holism and the language of 'fields' were inspired by these developments. As Toynbee concluded from his studies that there were no essences or substances to be found in the evolution of civilizations, and that there were instead 'relations' and 'fields', he must have been intrigued by the quantum approach to reality as non-substantial. The discovery of quantum reality seemed to imply that the pursuit of the substance, of the ultimate thing, was an illusion. Reality was not what it appeared to be. The substance-based, classical approach to science came to an end once we entered the enigmatic realm of life and the realm of living beings. This approach to reality gave Toynbee's outlook a certain critical edge, which – as we have seen – did not shy away from taking on the great iconic 'substance' of the time, the nation. His constructivist tendencies perhaps explain Navari recently calling Toynbee a 'critical theorist'.²³

In his own search for 'causes' into the genesis of civilizations Toynbee concluded counter-intuitively that the 'entity' being searched for was ultimately not a thing but a relation. The illusionary nature of 'things' and the counter-intuitive view that 'relation constitutes substance' – rather than substances giving rise to (mechanical) relations – may explain Toynbee's interest in both quantum science and Mahayana Buddhism, which he understood as an account of reality that started and thus built on these insights.

It is interesting to see how Wendt, a more recent bridge-builder, eventually has to confront the limits imposed by the logic of classical physics and its assumptions. We note this key reference to the "standards of classical physics" in the following quote:

An attempt to use a structurationist-symbolic interactionist discourse to bridge the two research traditions, neither of which subscribes to such a discourse, will probably please no one. But in part this is because the two "sides" have become hung up on differences over the epistemological status of social science. The state of the social sciences and, in particular, of international relations, is such that epistemological prescriptions and conclusions are at best premature. Different questions involve different standards of inference; to reject certain questions because their answers cannot conform to the standards of classical

²³ Cornelia Navari, "Arnold Toynbee: Prophecy and Civilization," *Review of International Studies*, Vol.26 (2000), 289-301 (296).

physics is to fall into the trap of method-driven rather than question-driven social science.²⁴

Wendt implies that social scientific thinking in the western discourse asserts arguments ultimately based on the worldview of classical physics – a point that introduces a new twist to the discussion. Serious bridge building may require us to problematize the framework of thought provided by classical physics. Wendt continues to pursue this point in the ‘quantum’ essay quoted above. In this essay, Wendt questions his own reliance on the logic of classical physics, and contrasts this logic with the quantum approach to reality. He thereby intends to respond to the criticisms of his *Social Theory of International Relations*, in which he attempted to synthesize positivism and interpretivism by using a dualistic ontology of structure and agency where each is irreducible to the other.

In his ‘quantum essay’, Wendt explains that his previous book (*Social Theory*) contains two parts. The first, substantive part; “develops a theory of the international system as an emergent phenomenon [...] the elements of the system are assumed to be states, which are treated as intentional actors or “people”.”²⁵ Wendt defines the international system as an anarchic system from a cultural perspective, not from a material perspective. This culture can take three forms; “Hobbesian, Lockean and Kantian depending on whether states constitute each other as enemies, rivals or friends.”²⁶ Wendt is quite clear that for him international politics is about inter-state relations: “States are still the primary medium through which the effects of other actors on the regulation of violence are channelled into the world system.”²⁷ He also sees states as ‘actors’ in an anthropomorphic sense capable of doing and acting. Wendt situates his theory within interstate relations and anarchy but only in order to redefine both by suggesting that anarchy is what states make of it – as it is a culture constituted by the states themselves. As a result, their identity is open to re-conceptualisation.

While these ‘statist’ assumptions may look old fashioned and, therefore, controversial, Wendt concedes that the second part of his work is much more contentious as it attempts to bridge two positions – the positivist and the interpretivist position – by

²⁴ Wendt, “Anarchy,” 425.

²⁵ Wendt, “*Social Theory as Cartesian Science*,” 181.

²⁶ Wendt, “*Social Theory as Cartesian Science*,” 181.

²⁷ Stefano Guzzini and Anna Leander “Wendt’s constructivism: a relentless quest for synthesis” in Stefano Guzzini and Anna Leander Ed., *Constructivism and International Relations: Alexander Wendt and his Critics*, (New York, Routledge, 2005), 76.

“combining the epistemology of the one with the ontology of the other”.²⁸ Responding to Guzzini and Leander’s criticism,²⁹ Wendt explains that they view his book as “an attempted synthesis of previously opposed positions – positivism and interpretivism, rationalism and constructivism, realism and idealism- which now appear as aspects or moments of a larger whole [...] this calls attention to the importance of having metaphysical foundations that can ground such a synthesis.”³⁰ Ultimately, Wendt concedes, this foundation was implicitly supplied by a Cartesian dualism whereby mind (ideas) and matter (‘rump materialism’, in Guzzini and Leander’s terms) are distinct, irreducible substances. This philosophical argument is correct, Wendt suggests, to the extent that we are prepared to accept this dualism as a foundation or premise.

Wendt then suggests that few scientists and or philosophers take dualism seriously in the sense of holding both opposites together, and further observes that:

Contemporary thinking about the mind is dominated by the materialist worldview of classical physics, according to which ultimately reality is purely material. On that view, the mind is nothing but the brain, and *Social Theory*’s claim that ideas are ontologically autonomous must therefore ultimately be mistaken. Social science today shares this classical worldview.³¹

While it is well known that positivism in social science relies on the application of the methods of classical physics, interpretivists too “have never doubted the classical assumption that ultimately reality is purely material”, even if it is meaning that matters in social life. “Interpretivist work too has at least implicitly been structured by the mind body problem as conventionally (i.e., classically) posed, which asks how the mind relates to a material base.”³² Perhaps we should remind ourselves here that dualism takes two basic ‘forms’. The first is that mind and body are irreducible to each other (as e.g. in Plato). The second is that one position is reduced to the other – for example, when idealists suggest that all is ultimately mind, whereas the alternative materialist view suggests that mind is ultimately reducible to the materiality of the body. This latter view is the ‘classical’ view of physics and is the de-facto standard especially, as Wendt indicates, when ‘unexplainable phenomena’ are being considered. As a result, if science cannot validate a phenomenon, it is not deemed to be true or real.

²⁸ Wendt, “*Social Theory as Cartesian Science*,” 182.

²⁹ Wendt, “*Social Theory as Cartesian Science*,” 179.

³⁰ Wendt, “*Social Theory as Cartesian Science*,” 180.

³¹ Wendt, “*Social Theory as Cartesian Science*,” 180.

³² Wendt, “*Social Theory as Cartesian Science*,” 180.

Wendt then asks a 'heretical question': what if the limitations of contemporary social science and philosophy of mind alike lie in their common assumption that this relationship between body and mind must be compatible with classical physics? As a direct contrast, Wendt invites us to consider a 'quantum view' according to which:

Human beings are in effect 'walking wave particle dualities' not classical material objects. This possibility has been mooted by prominent philosophers and physicists since the quantum revolution in the 1920s, but it was only in the early 1990s – with ground breaking work by Stuart Hameroff, Roger Penrose, Giuseppe Vitiello, and others – that serious [quantum] scientific inquiry began.³³

In the second part of his 'quantum essay', Wendt explores the use of quantum science to revisit his *social theory*, which, he admits, was based upon the assumptions of classical physics and its metaphysics of substance. He acknowledges that 'post-modernists' have been suggesting a similar perspective but without any 'grounding'. The quantum approach would however be grounded in science, albeit in quantum science.

It is not the purpose of this thesis to evaluate Wendt's quantum science. What is of interest to us, rather, is the fact that a prominent bridge-builder in IR felt it necessary to confront the limits of thought as dictated by the assumptions of classical physics. What is of even greater interest for our purposes is the fact that Toynbee anticipated this discussion by a remarkable 70 years. In order to be able to understand how exactly he arrived at these questions, we need to follow his intellectual trajectory and pay attention especially to those moments that led him to depart from the traditions and common places of his academic peers – at great costs. Toynbee felt it necessary, as a result of his quest, to question habits of thought, which had been shaped over millennia. Where Carr diagnosed a twenty years crisis, Toynbee might have been looking for a 2000-year crisis, which – as we will suggest in this thesis – had its origins in the laws of thought that we find embedded in an 'orthodox' reading of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. We will argue that these laws – identity, non-contradiction and excluded-middle – entail a substance-based ontology, and that, when this ontology is questioned, the relevant laws of thought are questioned too. All this is highly relevant as these laws demarcate the limits of rationality in Western thought.

³³ Wendt, "*Social Theory as Cartesian Science*," 181.

It is not accidental that IR theory, under the pressures of the empirical phenomenon of globalisation, should encounter the limits of Western scientific rationality. Wendt, although idiosyncratic in his very own theorising, is representative in this respect: to the extent that we wish to overcome the dichotomies that have limited the previous major debates in IR, we must engage with the very framework within which we think. This thesis suggests that, in this context, Toynbee must be read as a pioneer.

0.3. Toynbee's concerns within the context of contemporary IR theorizing II

It is difficult to avoid entirely the public and academic attention paid to the concept of 'civilization' after the publication of Samuel Huntington's infamous *The Clash of Civilizations*.³⁴ The civilization was, of course, initially Toynbee's key unit of analysis, and one could have expected that perhaps the debate would look for inspiration in Toynbee's analysis of history's twenty-one civilizations. There are good reasons, however, why this did not happen,³⁵ and these reasons confirm us in our decision to bypass the 'Clash' debate. As a result of his work, Toynbee eventually came to acknowledge that civilizations, in fact, are not 'units' at all but 'fields'. They interact and mutually influence each other, giving rise to the 'higher religions'. Toynbee was able to establish this holistic point even without referring to the Buddhist notion of 'dependent co-arising'³⁶, one of the key features of its view of the phenomenal world. Toynbee's quest went much further and deeper than the debate sparked by Huntington's book.

³⁴ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations: And the Remaking of World Order* (London: Simon & Schuster 1996). His book answered his own question posed earlier in an essay in *Foreign Affairs* in 1993. He necessarily concludes in the affirmative that conflict between civilizations would dominate world politics. The answer to this he believes is a world order –some type of federation of civilizations. Having labelled the 'others' in a typically realist way, counter-intuitively and devastatingly the president of Iran (a prime 'other') Mohammed Khatami responded with his *Dialogue of Civilizations*, which subsequently became a UN theme in 2001. For critiques of Huntington see Edward Said's response *The Clash of Ignorance* (*The Nation* 2001, October 22), "Huntington is an ideologist, someone who wants to make 'civilizations' and 'identities' into what they are not: shut-down, sealed-off entities that have been purged of the myriad currents and countercurrents that animate human history, and that over centuries have made it possible for that history not only to contain wars of religion and imperial conquest but also to be one of exchange, cross-fertilization and sharing". See also Amartya Sen, *Identity and violence: The illusion of destiny* (London: Penguin 2006), 10. Sen views this civilization as "an remarkable use of imagined singularity" and Stephen Chan's "Reliving the Boxer uprising: or, the restricted meaning of civilization" in *Meaning and International Relations* Eds. Peter Mandaville and Andrew Williams (London: Routledge 2003), 155-6. Chan deconstructs Huntington's Other pointing out that both his own Western and his 'Other' are constituted by each other, "The point, and irony, is that in -Huntingdon's generalised world-each civilization constructs an Other and defends itself against this Other [...ironically...] Islam cannot do without the electronic communications invented and developed by its Other. The 'West' cannot do without the oil located within the geology of its Other."

³⁵ Huntington draws upon Toynbee's early analysis of civilizations but only to confirm their isolated singularities, ignoring Toynbee's conclusions that ultimately they interpenetrated creatively.

³⁶ Also referred to as 'dependent becoming'.

Our analysis of Wendt is a much better starting point because it allowed us to trace in some detail how contemporary IR theorising reaches limit points, which invite experimentation with radical ideas – ideas which quite deliberately shake the foundations and habits of traditional ways of approaching reality. In this section, we need to briefly clarify that Wendt is not alone in experimenting with such ideas; indeed, among the radicals, he is probably one of the more moderate voices. But we also want to suggest that Toynbee would be able to converse with the radicals with ease. While a detailed analysis of his thinking and method has to be reserved for later chapters, we can already anticipate now some issues which were central to him and which re-surface in contemporary debates, thus highlighting again his role as a pioneer.

Roland Bleiker's two essays "*The Aesthetic Turn in International Theory*" and "*Forget IR Theory*" are a good place to begin.³⁷ In the former Bleiker explores the difference between the mimetic and the aesthetic use of language using the example of Rene Magritte's painting of a pipe that includes the text 'this is not a pipe'. In Saussurian terms, Bleiker highlights the gap between the signified and signifier because, obviously, the painting of the pipe is not the pipe but a representation. Bleiker then proceeds to extend this insight to argue that realist representations of IR have forgotten or failed to realise that their own representations are just representations. They have somehow closed the gap between reality and representations as if "aiming to capture world politics as-it-really-is [...]. [By contrast] an aesthetic approach [...] assumes there is always a gap between a form of representation and what is represented."³⁸ The gap is crucially significant because it is the very locus of politics, values and interests that inform the 'representation'. Bleiker, by turning to the aesthetic, attempts to mind the gap, indeed mine the gap for all the possibilities that are to be found in the multiplicity of potential representations.

As we noted above, Toynbee was very aware of the fact that especially in the realm of politics and history, language often poses as 'reality'. It was impossible, he argued, to write about history without introducing 'fictions', which somehow represent reality but never coincide with it. The gap between reality and representation in language was there to stay and in many ways marked the essence of the political. Accordingly, when his academic peers criticized him for failing to provide a positivistic account of world

³⁷ Roland Bleiker, "The Aesthetic Turn in International Political Theory," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* Vol. 30, No. 3 (2001) 509-533. Roland Bleiker "Forget IR Theory" in *The Zen of International Relations: IR Theory from East to West* Eds. Stephen Chan, Peter Mandaville and Roland Bleiker (Hampshire: Palgrave 2001), 37-66.

³⁸ Roland Bleiker, "The Aesthetic Turn in International Political Theory," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* Vol. 30, No. 3 (2001), 510.

history in which theories are deduced from facts, Toynbee replies that “neither [his] theories nor anyone else’s are or ever have been or ever will be generated in that way.” If indeed the word ‘empirical’ meant that theories were to be deduced from the facts, then he argued the word “would have no counterpart in reality.”³⁹ We will later learn how the Buddhist approach to reality suggests that the propositional use of is/is-not language can only capture the ‘first’ or conventional truth, but not the truth of ‘emptiness/openness’ (Sunyata or Ku)⁴⁰ or finally the Middle Way truth. As we shall see later, the problem identified by Bleiker can be seen from this Buddhist perspective as deriving from the notion that things in the phenomenal world are ‘empty’ of ‘self-nature’. Yet even before Toynbee came to appreciate these Buddhist concepts he would have agreed, we suggest, with Bleiker’s suggestion that politics and history unfold ‘in’ the gap between representation and reality.

We also note at this point that recently IR scholars seem to have re-discovered the Greek notion of ‘tragedy’. Mervyn Frost, Chris Brown, Richard Ned Lebow and others contributed to a subsequent debate.⁴¹ In 2003 Ned Lebow published his volume *The Tragic Vision of Politics*, in which he revisits the classic ‘realist’ texts by Thucydides, Clausewitz and Morgenthau and shows how they were guided by ‘tragedy’ as a leitmotif. ‘Tragedy’ is understood here in the Greek sense as an intricate relation between actors, circumstances, actions and their intended and unintended consequences. Lebow is aware, of course, of the great cultural significance of ‘tragedy’ for ancient Greek society, and he points out that the great philosophers including Plato and Aristotle were greatly influenced by the cluster of ideas and experiences that were articulated through the performances of tragedies. Ned Lebow comments that:

For Greeks, literature expresses truths that could not be conceptualized, a kind of wisdom that went beyond words. Thucydides and Plato were deeply influenced by this precedent, which became a model for their own writings.

³⁹ Toynbee, “*Reconsiderations*,” 243-4.

⁴⁰ Sunyata is the Sanskrit word and can be translated as Emptiness –indicating empty of self-nature; and Openness- indicating endless creative becoming. The first reflects a ‘negative’ warning against substantialism, the second is a ‘positive’ (and therefore anti-nihilism), but this ‘positive’ points to a relational process not an abstracted thing. We will use the terms emptiness/openness interchangeably depending on the emphasis we wish to make. Ku is the Japanese term for the same principle, and appears in Toynbee’s dialogue with Ikeda.

⁴¹ Mervyn Frost, “Tragedy, Ethics and International Relations”, *International Relations* Vol.17 No.4 (2003), 477-495. James Mayall, “Tragedy, Progress and the International Order: A Response to Frost” *International Relations* Vol.17. No.4 (2003), 497-503. Nicholas Rengger, “Tragedy or Scepticism? Defending the Anti-Pelagian Mind in World Politics”, *International Relations* Vol.19. No.3. (2005), 321-328. Richard Ned Lebow, “Tragedy, Politics and Political Science”, *International Relations* Vol.19. No. 3. (2005), 329-336. Chris Brown, “‘Tragic Choices’ and Contemporary International Political Theory”, *International Relations* Vol. 21, No.5, (2007), 5-13. This discussion or renewed interest was likely triggered by Stephen Chan’s essays in the earlier volume *The Zen of International Relations*.

They encouraged readers to aspire to wisdom, which they conceived of as something general and universal, that speaks to our life force or soul (psyche) and comes to shape our behaviour and view of the world.”⁴²

According to Lebow, tragedy was a performance that allowed the Greeks to ‘play out’ and to re-enact their experiences, which were full of contradictions:

Tragedy encourages us to develop and use our analytical facilities, but to be equally attentive to our imagination and feelings, to balance inference with prophecy and to recognize that the world is full of contradictions that we cannot resolve.⁴³

Tragedy brings out the complex and yet close relationship between the conscience of human actors, their actions, the situation within which they (must) act, the consequences of their actions and interactions, as well as the ethical dimension of the overall configuration. It also made explicit the link between action and suffering:

Greek tragedy was rooted in the empirical observation that there is no relationship between justice and suffering. It advanced a counter intuitive thesis: that efforts to limit suffering through the accumulation of knowledge or power might invite more suffering. Tragedy confronts us with our frailties and limits, and the disastrous consequences of trying to exceed them.⁴⁴

Toynbee, who had ‘internalised’ Greek culture through his education, embraced the notion of tragedy early on in his career. One of his earliest works was entitled *The Tragedy of Greece* (1920). The notion eventually became central to the very manner in which he approached the unfolding of a ‘civilization’:

Civilization. [...] is a tragedy with a plot, and history is the plot of the tragedy of civilization. [...] each is a variant of a single theme.⁴⁵

As we will discuss later, to understand civilization as a ‘tragedy with a plot’ entails a number of assumptions and implications, which shape Toynbee’s analysis. Tragedy

⁴² Richard Ned Lebow, *The Tragic Vision of Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2006), 21.

⁴³ Ned Lebow, “*The Tragic Vision*,” 20.

⁴⁴ Ned Lebow, “*The Tragic Vision*,” 20.

⁴⁵ Arnold J. Toynbee, *The Tragedy of Greece* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1921), 6.

also introduces notions of action, suffering and ethics to his thinking and thus creates additional areas of overlap with the clusters of ideas he also finds in Mahayana Buddhism.

There are IR scholars who, like Toynbee, have noted the significance of non-western approaches to reality. Stephen Chan has been one of the most consistent voices arguing for the exploration and inclusion of non-traditional, non-Western ways of experiencing and thinking. The issue is not just that there are different ways of writing academically but indeed different notions of knowledge and thus of reality. In the edited volume *The Zen of International Relations*, for example, Chan notes and uses the failure of 'rational political science' to interpret the 'irrational' Falun Gong in China as a warning and corrective to habitual hegemonic thinking. This simply prepares one for the opening to the book's multilogue. The purpose of the book is to help clear the path for "those Others of the world, and the thoughtful Others within international relations".⁴⁶ Chan, who is an accomplished poet, also implies that there are dimensions of reality, which cannot be understood or accessed with traditional, academic theorising. The Zen approach offers no theoretical position but utilizes its own methods to trigger non-theoretical insights:

The idea of an intellectual clarity that is so distilled it is no longer intellectual at all, but allows a sudden intuitive insight into the structure of the universe, or one's life within the universe.⁴⁷

However this method:

[...] is not unique to Zen. It is found within the Sufi practices of Islam; and is an intense manifestation of what, in English, is called 'epiphany'. What we are trying to do with this book, however, is to give a momentary insight, a flash, into Other views that would rewrite the foundations of IR.⁴⁸

As we shall see in our later chapters, Toynbee would have agreed with Chan's keen observation that even Giddens' structuration theory would look barbaric when

⁴⁶ Stephen Chan and Peter Mandaville "Introduction: Within International Relations Itself, a new culture Rises Up" in *The Zen of International Relations: IR Theory from East to West*, Eds. Stephen Chan, Peter Mandaville and Roland Bleiker (Hampshire: Palgrave 2001), 2.

⁴⁷ Stephen Chan and Peter Mandaville "Introduction: Within International Relations Itself, a new culture Rises Up" in *The Zen of International Relations: IR Theory from East to West*, Eds. Stephen Chan, Peter Mandaville and Roland Bleiker (Hampshire: Palgrave 2001), 9

⁴⁸ Ibid.

compared to the Buddhist analysis of agency, destiny and karma. Toynbee acknowledged just this in his late dialogue with Buddhist leader Ikeda: "Buddhism has made a subtler psychological analysis than any that has been made, so far, in the West."⁴⁹

0.4. Note on method and overview of thesis

The starting point for our thesis is the assumption that until now Toynbee's lifework – his quest – has not been fully understood and that there is something to be learned from both his quest and the failure of his academic peers to take him seriously. We will present Toynbee as a pioneer, who in his own search, was led to question the pillars of Western rationality and reason and who, in his attempt to overcome the limitations of this rationality, almost inevitably had to leave behind those who read his work still from within the very framework he had dared to question. This conflict allows us to study as under a microscope a configuration of ideas that is of great contemporary, political significance; as the Western world has to engage with cultures and ways of thinking and living that are not easily comprehended or appreciated from within Western modes of thought. What was for Toynbee still perhaps primarily an intellectual problem – though he knew that more was at stake – has turned today into a political problem that requires an urgent answer.

Our method is straightforward. We offer an 'internal reading' of Toynbee's work, a reconstruction of his intellectual trajectory. We cannot and do not wish to compete with the impressive biographical accounts that have been offered by McNeill and others, and so we selectively highlight those elements of Toynbee's development that led him to push beyond the limits of Western reason as he understood it. We are particularly interested in his epistemology, i.e. in the manner in which he understood 'knowledge' of history, of human affairs. We then re-interpret and review his work from the point of view that he had reached when he claimed that the final four volumes of the *Study* had been written from an 'Indian standpoint'. We also look at the reception of his work in order to examine the configuration of ideas that was at stake in the debates at the time. We then proceed, more creatively, to continue to travel on Toynbee's path and to take him seriously where his academic peers had stopped taking him seriously at all.

⁴⁹ Arnold Toynbee and Daisaku Ikeda, *Choose Life: A Dialogue* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 302.

Accordingly, this thesis has two parts. Part One is devoted to the reconstruction of Toynbee's approach to historical reality and to the response he received. The second part of the thesis focuses on Toynbee's engagement with Eastern thinking in the form of Buddhism. Though distinct, the two parts form a continuum as the second unfolds from the first as a response to Toynbee's implicit and explicit critique of Western rationality. The 'bridge' between the two parts is a chapter that suggests that Aristotle's laws of thought provide the metaphysical foundations of this rationality and thus form the underlying central target of Toynbee's criticism.

Chapter 1 provides a focused, condensed background-biography of Toynbee, showing some key influences through to the end of his formal education and teaching career at Oxford. As a result of this development, Toynbee took a multiple epistemology into his forty-year life project *A Study of History*. Chapter 2 looks in more detail at the *Study*, especially at its method. We will argue that the *Study* was not a mere historiography but a sociological, dramatic, psychological comparison of historical civilizations. It concluded ethically and actively with Toynbee speaking out against moral or sophist nihilism, ephemeral idolizations of nationalism, militarism and technological scientism. On the basis of the *Study*, Toynbee felt compelled to remind his readers that religion (spirituality) as well as – rather than instead of – philosophy (intellect) or science (materialism) was the 'serious business of humankind'.

Chapter 3 moves beyond the commonplace accounts of Toynbee and suggests novel ways of looking at this work. Initially we focus on Toynbee's classical education and looking closely at the trivium we reveal a grammatical reading of his work. Grammatica was the classical method or science and this distinction between classical science and 'modern Newtonian science' is significant. Secondly we stress Toynbee's holistic perspective, which relied heavily on the work of Jan Smuts, which in turn drew on the emerging new physics of Einstein, Bohr and others. This pervasive tendency towards holism in the *Study* led to inevitable conflict with analytical reason, which is primarily an exercise of abstraction from the whole. It also led to problems with Toynbee's empiricism, as the 'things' he was using as data, were no longer unitary things but 'fields', which were less tangible. When empiricism failed to answer the questions he asked of civilizational history, it led him to respond by engaging with other epistemic discourses such as myth and drama, ethics and religion. Thirdly, Toynbee wrote about civilizations under the dramatic heuristic of 'tragedy' and 'plot', influenced by Aristotle's *Poetics*. This mythopoetic view entails both a reading of history but also an implicit challenge to the myths of the times.

In Chapter 4 we review the response that the *Study* provoked in order to understand not only the rejection of his work by his peers but also the remarkable ferociousness of the attacks he had to endure. We examine these responses in order to establish what was at stake in Toynbee's *Study*. We note that two exceptional reviewers of Toynbee's work – Eric Voegelin and Lewis Mumford, both involved in intellectual enterprises of similar scope and range – offered an assessment of the *Study* that sympathized with Toynbee's ambition. Voegelin correctly understood Toynbee's lifework as a quest (zetema); Mumford is sympathetic to Toynbee's intentions but suggested that he was still hampered by an underlying dualism in his outlook. We take this assessment as an occasion to look at the foundations of such a dualism in more abstract terms.

Chapter 5 functions as our 'bridge', one that will help carry us into his 'Indian perspective' and complete Toynbee's journey 'east'. We firstly stress the limitations of the 'orthodox' readings of Aristotle's laws of thought and suggest that they entail a substance-based ontology. This discussion will help us understand the reason and method for Toynbee's injunction for a dialogue with Mahayana Buddhism and the middle term 'Emptiness/Openness'. We will show how Buddhism postulates four logical possibilities, which include the two favoured by Aristotle. The temporary suspension of epistemic judgement informs the tetralemma as a dialectic method. The result is counter-intuitively a non-substantial ontology – known in Mahayana vocabulary as 'Emptiness'. Though counter-intuitive to our western philosophical tradition, Emptiness offers a radical critique of reason itself and by so doing explicates a wider heuristic for interpreting 'Reality'. It does not dismiss reason but delimits and incorporates it under a wider set of epistemic possibilities. This new understanding clearly reveals a possible reading of the *Study* as Toynbee's intuitive struggle with rationality and reason itself.

In Part Two of our thesis, beginning with Chapter 6, we more fully explore the consequences of this analysis by looking at the principles and ideas of Mahayana Buddhism using key thinkers from this tradition. These include Gautama the Buddha, Nagarjuna, Asanga and Vasubandhu, all from India. We then look at the Chinese Buddhist Philosopher Chih-I or T'ien T'ai and finally the Japanese Buddhist philosopher Nichiren, who further developed these Indian and Chinese ideas. In contrast to the project of establishing a system of metaphysics, the Buddha's intent was to address the problem of suffering. This is captured in his Four Noble Truths. The first three of these define the 'reality' of suffering whilst the fourth provides a solution known as the Eightfold Path. This path is later condensed into the three practices, learnings or

trainings known as Precepts, Meditation and Wisdom. We consider Nagarjuna's explication of Emptiness/Openness and then its further development or interpretation as it moves eastwards. The relationship and principles of the epistemology of the Four Noble Truths and the path of Precepts, Wisdom and Meditation are 'tracked' across the three cultures from India to China and Japan. As these truths are explicated and clarified we find embedded the four logical possibilities being articulated and carried through to their logical conclusion. This is ultimately revealed in a threefold epistemic path – a multiple epistemology – that the Buddha suggested is simultaneously required to approach absolute reality. This approach is a key topic in Toynbee's dialogue with Daisaku Ikeda, who is a modern day interpreter and practitioner of Nichiren's Lotus Buddhism. Having fully explicated this epistemology we then compare these insights to the paths taken by Toynbee.

In Chapter 7, we review Toynbee's engagement with Buddhism in light of the previous analysis. We distinguish his four levels of engagement according to the different 'lenses' that Toynbee came to use in his work and illustrate each with examples from Toynbee's work and life. It is here that the 'Indian standpoint' becomes very explicit. The final Chapter 8 summarises our findings and draws conclusions, especially with regard to the implications of our analysis for IR theory.

1. Toynbee's journey towards *A Study of History*

We are arguing for a new understanding of Toynbee's epistemic approaches and paths to history. In this brief biographical sketch, we want to focus on *how* he thought rather than what he thought – though the two are of course ultimately inseparable. The first part provides a summary of his life; the second part will illustrate early educative and personal influences on how his thought developed up until he began to make plans for his *Study*.

Toynbee was born in 1889 and died in 1975. His father suffered from mental problems and died in a sanatorium (in 1941) whilst his mother was a degreed historian and was the dominant figure in his life until at least his marriage, where she still held a powerful background existence. His wider family was Christian. They were upper-middle class but with low income. He proved to be a prize-winning student, an achievement that gave him access to education at Winchester College (1902-07) and Oxford University (1907-10), whereupon he traveled to Italy and Greece in 1911-12 on the proceeds of his final year scholarly prize. Upon returning he started his new role as a young don at Balliol. He met Gilbert Murray who was the Regius Professor of Greek at Oxford (1908-1936) and Murray was to become a major private influence on his thinking. Toynbee married Murray's daughter Rosalind in 1913 and they had three children, one of whom committed suicide. They divorced in 1946.

During the First World War he left his teaching role (1915) and worked in the government. Lord Bryce initially used Toynbee to assist him writing propaganda. By 1917 Toynbee had been seconded to the Political Intelligence Department of the Foreign Office. Ultimately his work took him to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, providing historical support to the negotiators and politicians, whose 'realist' behaviour he held in disdain. After the war he took up the Koraes Chair of Byzantine and Greek Studies at the University of London. He later traveled to Greece and reported on the atrocities committed by the Greeks for the *Manchester Guardian*. He and his wife were involved in assisting refugees. His reports went against the prevalent pro-Greek norms in the UK and they resulted in his resignation from his Chair after difficulties with the UK Greek donors, who were the ultimate funders of the position.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ For a full account see Richard Clogg, *Politics and the Academy: Arnold Toynbee and the Koraes Chair* (London: Frank Cass, 1986).

In 1924 a connection from his earlier war work offered him a temporary role of producing a survey of international affairs, that helped him to ultimately assume the position of Director of Studies at the British Institute for International Affairs (BIIA), which was later to become Chatham House. In this role he wrote the annual *Surveys of International Relations* from 1924 to 1954. The very early volumes he wrote alone, the latter (and the majority of them) with assistance. His main help came from Veronica Boulter, who became his second wife after his divorce from Rosalind Murray in 1946. He also picked up the Chair of International History at the University of London through the sponsorship of Sir Daniel Stevenson. He later managed to extricate himself from any teaching, something he disliked and prevented him from writing.

His mother died in February 1939 followed a month later by his son, who committed suicide. In this period 1939-1945 Toynbee's personal suffering is acute; the loss of mother and son and the loss of his wife through divorce. The divorce was a tortured affair as they were separated for three years before the divorce, an agonizing period during which Toynbee couldn't clearly face the reality that she 'was going' (she had in fact gone). His new relationship with Veronica Boulter had already begun and she had even offered to step back should Rosalind come back. Hall advises that he undergoes psychoanalysis and has to fight his hellish inner feelings that left him "paralysed and waiting for either insanity or suicide to sweep on me".⁵¹ It is at this point that he gets the closest to 'practicing' Catholic Christianity. In this period of emotional confusion and immense psychological torment he corresponds with a Catholic priest Columba⁵² that he is using some of the prayer liturgy but significantly he never actually joins any church.⁵³ Hall also advises that once the divorce has been made that Toynbee quickly

⁵¹ Ian Hall "Sir Herbert Butterfield, Arnold J. Toynbee and Martin Wight and the crisis of international politics: a study in international thought" Unpublished PhD Thesis, (University of St Andrews June 2003) 102.

⁵² Father Columba Cary-Elwes was a priest at Ampleforth who kept up a forty-year correspondence with Toynbee, attempting unsuccessfully to convert the modern 'Augustine'. Indeed a later view was that it was a record of the conversion of Columba-Cary Elwes. C.B. Peper, ed. *An Historian's Conscience: The Correspondence of Arnold J. Toynbee and Columba Cary-Elwes, Monk of Ampleforth* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986). Hereafter referred to as Peper, "*The Correspondence*."

⁵³ He believed that all institutions were imperfect and added their own doctrinal impurities. "Christians don't effectively become humble by transferring their pride to the Church, for the Church is a projection of themselves, and a man is still proud when he exercises his pride through the agency of an institution. Apply this to secular institutions- empires, clubs, schools, regiments- and it is evident. Now, the Church too, is an institution on its manward-facing side, and I don't think it is exempt from this law. All the higher religions make the same claim to the unconditional allegiance of all mankind, and declare they have absolute authority [...] all of them are clogged with silt and flotsam they have picked up on their way through the world. Gradually- through suffering- the water will be filtered. Perhaps, in the end, they will coalesce...you cannot assent to these ideas, but you can see that I can only follow the truth as I see it, and learn as much by suffering as God allows me." Letter, Toynbee to Columba August 31st 1947, in Peper, "*The Correspondence*," 199.

pulls back from Catholicism to a deeper study of Jungian psychology (these influences appear in volume seven of his *Study*).

The Second World War found him working once again for the Foreign Office, as they used Toynbee and his team from BIIA (in preference to E.H. Carr's group) to provide them with intelligence and historical support. His *Study* volumes had been published in three tranches: the first three volumes came out in 1934, the second three in 1939, and the final four in 1954. They sold in surprisingly large quantities and became best sellers in the abridged version co-produced with Toynbee's admirer Somervell. By the 1950s he had become a household name and sage, due largely to his American audiences whose own worldview and perceived national mission resonated with Toynbee's elevation of religion to be the major factor in history. He retired in 1955 and he traveled the world and found a second highly favourable audience in Japan, thanks largely to his 'anti-western hegemony' outlook and his appreciation of other cultures, especially of India and the Far East, China and Japan.

By the sixties however his public star had faded along with his *Study*, which had been savaged by the academics. He wrote eclectically thereafter and this included some episodic history that he had never got around to writing in his pre-war years. According to his academic critics, his legacy is of one who promised much but wasted his talent on whims and effectively lost his way. His *Study* is rarely quoted except as an example of how *not* to write history. His IR legacy is that he was in some way important during the two wars, while IR was established as an academic discipline. E.H. Carr, as we noted, used him as a utopian foil for his *Twenty Years Crisis*. Apart from some occasional recognition of his *Surveys* for their utility value in their time, he is not engaged with any serious consideration. Most modern commentaries consider his thought as a reflection of a strange kind of politically naïve 'Idealism'. After suffering a stroke in August 1974, from which he never recovered, Toynbee died in October 1975.

Toynbee's published books began with *Greek Policy since 1882* (1914), *Nationality and the War* (1915) and ended sixty-two years later with the posthumously published *The Greeks and their Heritage* (1981). In those sixty-two years, he wrote not only the twelve volume *Study* and the thirty-two *Annual Surveys of International Affairs*, but also ninety other books.⁵⁴ As against the volumes of *Surveys* that he wrote, co-authored,

⁵⁴ Based upon the designations 'books' in S. Fiona Morton, *A Bibliography of Arnold J. Toynbee* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980). Morton provides item numbers for all of his work and distinguishes

edited or contributed to as his paid work, *A Study of History* was his private work, his major opus, and was itself the embodiment of his existential study of life. As we noted above, the two works not only influenced each other; there was a symbiotic relationship between the two. The *Study* was a forty-year journey, from its planning in 1921, when Toynbee was in his 30s, to the first volumes published in 1934, when he was 43, to the last volumes in 1954, when he was 63, to his final response to critics in *Reconsiderations*, published in 1961, when he was in his early 70s.

The *Study* covered six thousand years of history and twenty-three civilizations. Even in our short thesis we will have a lot of ground to cover in the examination of his intellectual evolution. He will ultimately take us to “the other side of the moon”,⁵⁵ as he described his experience of reading about Buddhism for the first time, and indeed in Part Two of this thesis we may feel we are a long way away from intellectual ‘home’.

As a preparation for examining his *Study*, we will now take a more detailed look at major influences on his intellectual development, as it will pertain to his method of approaching history. We start from his schooldays through to beginning work on his major opus.

1.1 Intellectual influences and formal education

Toynbee grew up in the late Victorian/early Edwardian period, a time when British society seemed to be progressing without end in its battles against the eternal challenges of famine and sickness although perhaps less well in poverty. War, however, was a different matter and though little progress had been made in eliminating war, happily there had been a sixty-year period of relative stability. Things were about to change.

Environmentally, the world had entered a new ‘iron age’, where master engineers such as Brunel had set in motion a massive attempt at controlling and reshaping the natural physical world through new technology. Enormous bridges, ships, and tunnels were built; vast projects on a scale that dwarfed human beings. This was an age of mastery over nature and European mankind was in the engineering fast lane.

between books and articles. The sum of those items designated as Books = 94 items. Separately there are thirty item numbers for the Surveys with two of these being 2 Vol. items = 32 items.

⁵⁵ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 10:221.

Sociologically, scientific research and the industrial revolution heralded a new age of inventions, with considerable economic and social impact. Goods and knowledge were being exchanged and transported around an ever widening and shrinking globe. Steam power, combustion engines, electricity, telegraphic communications were announcing themselves, fueled by a new knowledge in chemistry and physics. At the center of this revolution was the British Empire, at its zenith as the new 20th century dawned.

Philosophically, the 'dark' middle ages of religious superstition had been replaced by the 18th century enlightenment. Socio-politically, progressive liberalism informed by scientific rationalism was in full swing. This was the time of Darwinism, Spencer and Mill. The British elite were triumphal in their achievements, informed by a heady mixture of scientific certainty and Christian evangelism underpinned by classical Greek and Roman intellectual training. This in turn led them to perceive their own role as leaders of the world carrying the responsibility of Kipling's 'white man's burden' (joyfully oblivious to the real burden carried by everyone but these elite white men).

Psychologically, all was not perfectly well however, for both Britain and Europe were entering a period best described as a period of anxiety, a tendency that Toynbee acknowledged he suffered from individually so that certainly at least in this small detail he was a man of his times.⁵⁶ The new scientific certainty also nurtured seeds of existential doubt, so that a set of ideas was emerging almost as a corrective or challenge to the industrialized, mechanized, clockwork culture. If the 18th century philosophers saw Reason as the mainspring of human endeavour and behaviour, the late 19th century saw instincts, impulses, irrational drives and the will to power as the underlying motive forces of the individual. The 18th century pillars of Newtonian science, Greek rationality and Christian faith were cracking under the challenge of Einstein's new-physics, Freud's investigations into the irrational and Nietzsche's declaration that God was dead.⁵⁷

The cracks of the inner world would soon reflect in the outer world. Within just two decades of Victoria's triumphal celebrations, Britain would see the beginnings of its collapse as a hegemonic power. Two further decades and Britain would have to

⁵⁶ "When I was a child at school, the spur that I was first conscious of was anxiety." Arnold J. Toynbee, *Experiences* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), 87.

⁵⁷ Roland N. Stromberg, *European Intellectual History Since 1789* (Prentice Hall 1994). Arthur Herman *The Idea of Decline in Western History* (Free Press 1997), and Steven Kreis, "History Guide; Lecture 8", www.thehistoryguide.org (accessed 9/2/08).

liquidate nearly every material and financial resource it could access in order to survive. Europe's great power balance shifted over to the USA and the Soviets. A perceived twist of fate therefore awaited Toynbee and others who would go through the classical education of an English gentleman trained to lead Empire.

1.1.1. Family life and school education

Born in 1899, Toynbee was the first son of an upper-middle class family, who had fallen on financially difficult times. Toynbee's father, Harry Valpy Toynbee, was a social worker who had lost his own father (a renowned doctor to Royalty) through a bizarre self-inflicted accident whilst experimenting with chloroform. Harry Valpy would later work for a charitable organisation that attempted to look after the less fortunate and was paid a skeleton salary, which meant that whilst the family background was well-educated and well-to-do upper middle class, its social status was not reflected in real income.⁵⁸

Toynbee's academic influences started with his family. Toynbee's mother was one of the first women to achieve a degree from Cambridge University and wrote a book for children on Scottish history. His mother would read her own historical essays to him as a child instilling and inspiring his interest in history. His two academically and socially well known uncles were Paget, a Dante scholar who would encourage him unsuccessfully 'to specialise' in his academic approach, and his uncle Arnold of the same name, who was a noted social worker and activist engaged with the poor.⁵⁹ Toynbee's first home was at his Uncle Harry's, who was a seaman who lived in London. According to Toynbee's biographer McNeill, Captain Harry was a religious fanatic, who had written a book entitled *The Basest Thing in the World*, which concluded that "man's greatest failing" was "idolatry of the self".⁶⁰

According to Stromberg, the family were "intellectually and spiritually, a distinguished one. Its outstanding characteristics were a love of scholarship, humanitarianism and a

⁵⁸ William H. McNeill, *Arnold J. Toynbee: A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 1-7.

⁵⁹ He wrote a memorable commentary on social issues, had 'Toynbee Hall' named after him but sadly died just past his thirtieth year.

⁶⁰ McNeill, "Toynbee," 7.

deep Christian piety (Anglican, latitudinarian).”⁶¹ The young Toynbee memorised and recited long passages of the Bible for Uncle Harry. McNeill suggests,

His extraordinary exposure to an aggressive, puritanical form of protestant piety seeped into the young boy’s consciousness and though [...] never accepting his great uncle’s viewpoint uncritically [...] a residue remained and it constituted an important background and context for all of Arnold J. Toynbee’s later thinking and writing.⁶²

So we find serious, historical, academic, and religious influences on his infant upbringing. His earliest written stories, no doubt influenced by his mother’s historical readings, were about historical battles between rival armies in a biblical and empire context, reflecting the influence of his family members and country.⁶³

At the age of ten, Toynbee was sent to boarding school. 60 years later he reflected how “[t]il that moment, I had felt completely secure. I have never since captured that Eden-Like state of existence.”⁶⁴ He did not feel confident at school berating himself, “I am Toynbee and an Ass.”⁶⁵ His mother wrote to him to encourage him but also provided pressure with her expectations, asking what prizes he had won?⁶⁶ In spite of his insecurities or perhaps because of them, Toynbee got through boarding school through hard work and after failing the first time, in 1902, he won a scholarship and indeed made it into the prestigious Winchester College. The English upper class educational structure determined that those entering the right schools would inevitably lead to the higher echelons of society or into the elite areas of government or industry. McNeill explains that there were two types attending, the moneyed class with high birth-status and the academic bright boys on scholarships. The elite never really accepted the others and Toynbee always felt an outsider. This exclusion would have been magnified by his family’s poor economic situation. Toynbee four years later confides to his mother, “I always feel lonely here: I can never settle down or really identify myself with the School...[and therefore]. I don’t want to be Prefect of hall.”⁶⁷

⁶¹ Roland Stromberg, *Historian for an Age in Crisis*, (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1972), 3.

⁶² McNeill, “*Toynbee*,” 8.

⁶³ McNeill, “*Toynbee*,” 8.

⁶⁴ Toynbee, “*Experiences*,” 3.

⁶⁵ McNeill, “*Toynbee*,” 11.

⁶⁶ McNeill, “*Toynbee*,” 11.

⁶⁷ McNeill, “*Toynbee*,” 9.

At 14 years, whilst recuperating from an illness in Birmingham with his Aunt, Toynbee read an historical atlas of the world, learning – in his words – “volumes from it.” He made drawings of both the Roman and Alexander’s empire from Britain in the west to Oxus and India in the east. He drew his own maps of the world in different historical times, the 10th century, the 12th century etc. This familiarity with many other cultures and geography evolving over time gave him a wider knowledge base to draw upon and provided him with a competitive edge at school.⁶⁸ In a school essay, Toynbee discusses the question of “[w]hether a state can preserve its freedom at home whilst holding empire over others?” Against the imperial milieu of his times and family, he concludes not.⁶⁹ Yet another school essay deals with an imaginary visit to London by a Roman general, which allows the young Toynbee to demonstrate considerable knowledge of ancient history and modern day international relations,⁷⁰ a pairing that was to become the main subjects of his life’s work and writing.

McNeill notes Toynbee’s desire to write a large historical work as early as Winchester, where he writes to his mother, “it would be a splendid task to carry on Herodotus’ story [...] but it would be too vast”.⁷¹ His school essays are littered with many of the main themes, the central assumptions, and the thinking habits that are later constitutive of his approach to his *Study of History* and his approach to IR. In spite of his personal fears and anxieties he persevered and the final years at school resulted in essays of the highest order, as McNeill reveals, noting that one prize-winning essay was of MA dissertation quality! His writings included “a sketch of Venetian history, an account of the Russo-Japanese war [...] and] a history of Byzantium under the Macedonian dynasty [...]”.⁷² McNeil notes these works were all impressive especially when one considers that a 17-year and 18-year old student wrote them.

His father had been out of work for a while and was in the process of changing jobs, which put financial worries on the family, and would become a problem over the next few years. However, Arnold’s school career had been outstanding and in the penultimate year he enthusiastically announced to his parents that he had won the German prize and later in the same month the Goddard prize. Incredibly, the final year he did even better and won 4 out of 7 prizes. “A more brilliant climax to a school career

⁶⁸ McNeill, “Toynbee,” 18.

⁶⁹ McNeill, “Toynbee,” 18.

⁷⁰ Bodleian Library, Toynbee Papers, Juvenilia.

⁷¹ McNeill, “Toynbee,” 30.

⁷² McNeill, “Toynbee,” 17.

would be hard to imagine,”⁷³ McNeill comments, but sums up cautiously that Toynbee “felt inwardly compelled to excel and be admired [...] he was simultaneously [academically] sure and [socially] unsure of himself [...] and would find it harder [at Oxford] to fulfil [...] the great expectations aroused in a wider circle by the extraordinary record [...] at school.”⁷⁴ Toynbee, aged 17, finally gets to Oxford in 1907, characteristically passing the entrance exam and winning himself a much-needed scholarship.

We can see a young Toynbee, precocious but anxious, academically brilliant but socially lacking confidence. He is an outsider in the insider elite culture and through being or feeling rejected competes to gain self-respect and respect from others. He has a strong relationship with his mother, but his father is a source of anxiety as he is fearful that his father’s weak mental condition might be hereditary. McNeill notes that he seems to childishly challenge or go against all the influences around him in a game of one up-man-ship, reflected in his going against his uncle’s advices, his mother’s and others. This is his competitive streak. We see his thinking habits emerging, a visionary scope with literary flair, utilising secondary sources uncritically, a focus on style over substance. His interests include using ancient historical frameworks to analyze modern day political situations. He follows Herodotus’ framing of ‘east’ and ‘west’ and views civilizations as autonomous and is interested to see what influences their development. In his love of atlases and maps he demonstrates a strong interest in the geographical as well as the historical. He has criticised the self-satisfaction and lack of gratitude exhibited by Western cultures. He has little engagement yet with religion in the role of things. His themes are grand and he has historical ambition; he is about to enter the next level of elite bastions, and he is only eighteen years old.

1.1.2. The Oxford years

Though middle class in status, Toynbee’s economically poor family situation meant he was always under financial pressure to pay his own way. His father’s deteriorating economic situation led to a rapid mental deterioration and between 1908 and 1909 he went from being in work to out of work and then to being in need of mental health assistance. He indeed entered a mental hospital after a breakdown. In that same year Toynbee’s Uncle Harry died. The double pressure, emotional and financial, on

⁷³ McNeill, “*Toynbee*,” 15.

⁷⁴ McNeill, “*Toynbee*,” 20.

Toynbee's mother caused her to suffer terribly and she looked to Arnold for help. The help however was not forthcoming as this was outside of her son's ability emotionally and indeed he succumbed to this pressure by having a mini breakdown of his own. However he was able to continue his studies using them to escape the emotional problems, he continued winning prizes in 1908 and 1910.

At Oxford he encountered many of British society's 'great and the good' facilitated by being a fellow at the college of Asquith's "effortless superiority".⁷⁵ At first, as with Winchester, he did not like Oxford, but as he matured and developed confidence, he eventually claimed to like it but only when he felt for the first time a part of it, when he was asked to become a don. This outsider fighting the establishment insiders, though perhaps wanting to be an insider, was another motif running throughout his life.

The most significant encounter for his personal and intellectual life was meeting Gilbert Murray, then the Regius Professor of Greek at Oxford. Murray invited undergraduates to tea and this began a long friendship and mentorship for Toynbee. He was attracted by Murray's aristocratic world and became bewitched by it though he indicates he felt unsure of himself when conversing on topics such as politics with Lady Murray and Gilbert Murray. Toynbee wrote to his mother that the Murray's home was grand and a thrill to visit.

Murray translated Greek plays that were regularly performed on the stage in London and two points stand out for our enquiry as regards possible influences on Toynbee. One was that Murray believed that Greek plays were relevant to the current times; McNeill indicates that Murray's interpretation "to treat the ancients as though they were contemporaries with things to say to twentieth century audiences was both novel and intriguing at the time."⁷⁶ Could Murray's approach have anticipated and even directly influenced Toynbee's belief in ancient history as having the same contemporary significance for International Affairs? Murray's biographer Duncan Wilson indicates:

He was intensely interested in the technique of lyric poetry and of drama. He was moreover a political man of his own time. Like many Victorian statesmen and historians before him, he was inclined to interpret classical Greece in the light of his own political interests and convictions, and in some hope that the solution of current British problems, particularly those of empire, could be eased

⁷⁵ McNeill, "*Toynbee*," 21.

⁷⁶ McNeill, "*Toynbee*," 26.

by proper attention to Greek examples. He was above all a moralist, who judged literature and civilizations by their contribution to the progress of the human spirit.⁷⁷

Furthermore, encouraged by the influence of Jane Harrison – a contemporary Greek scholar much interested in religious influences on classical Greece – Murray developed an interest in the role of religion in the Homeric tragedies. Wilson goes on to say,

Murray was led by his literary studies to consider deeply the religious beliefs, ostensible, half-hidden, or implied, which lay behind much of the work of the Greek Tragedians. He was an agnostic, ready to mock politely the complacent assumptions and unthinking formulas of any established church. However he was also deeply interested both in the problems involved in man's relations with an unseen world, and also in the practice of generations of men in formulating and ritualising these relations – in other words in the history of religion. Friends described him as a 'collector of religions'.⁷⁸

These three Murray themes, Ancient History and Contemporary Affairs, Religion and History, and Civilizations as contributors to Progress, are later to become primary in Toynbee's schemas and ideas.

Toynbee not only received important intellectual influence and inspiration from Murray, but also a filial relationship ensued, he fell in love with Murray's daughter Rosalind and we have seen they were married in 1913. McNeill observes that Toynbee became the intellectual son that Murray had wanted, having been disappointed by his own two sons.⁷⁹ Whilst for Toynbee, Murray replaced the father that Toynbee did not have in terms of someone who could relate to him intellectually. That the two men were sharing the same interests in the Classical world must have brought them even closer together intellectually. As an example, a year after the marriage, Murray the father in Law responds to Toynbee's draft, "I think your sketch of Greek history quite wonderful [...] your notes interested me more than I can say."⁸⁰ Murray provided a 30-point critical analysis of the work and Toynbee was thrilled beyond belief with the reaction and response he had triggered in Murray. Murray influenced Toynbee not only in terms of

⁷⁷ Duncan Wilson, *Gilbert Murray OM 1866-1957* (Clarendon Press, Oxford 1987), 116.

⁷⁸ Wilson, "Gilbert Murray," 117.

⁷⁹ McNeill, "Toynbee," 27.

⁸⁰ Bodleian Library, Toynbee Papers, letter, GM to AJT, July 20th 1914.

the subjects they would consider worthy of their interests but also in terms of the very meaning and purpose of scholarship and a scholars 'religion'. Murray's view is found later articulated in his *Religio Grammatici*, in this short address to the Classical Association he feels man is "imprisoned in the external present" so that his 'religion' offers him an escape from the external now into an inner now, "a present so enlarged and enfranchised" it becomes a "free world". "Religion [...] is always looking for Soteria", ⁸¹ and for the man of letters this in turn means:

A scholar, I think, secures his freedom by keeping hold always of the past and treasuring up the best out of the past, so that in a present that may be angry or sordid he can call back memories of calm or of high passion, in a present that requires resignation or courage he can call back the spirit with which brave men long ago faced the same evils. He draws out of the past high thoughts and great emotions; he also draws the strength that comes from communion or brotherhood. [...] And the student, as he realizes it, feels himself one of a long line of torch-bearers. He attains that which is the most compelling desire of every human being, a work in life which it is worth living for, and which is not cut short by the accident of his own death.⁸²

Murray's later essay *Satanism and the World Order* (1919) expounds the faith behind Murray's efforts to establish a new order of international relations and Wilson remarks that, "[a]t the end of his life [Murray] could say he had never wavered in the pursuit of his main objectives – an understanding of ancient Greece and the achieving of peace between nations." ⁸³

These interests of Murray's bear remarkable similarities to what was to become a hallmark of Toynbee's project and career. Toynbee was preoccupied with order and peace between nations, the role of religion in achieving this, and in the lessons ancient history might have for modern affairs. As we shall see later he also enlarges his ambition to produce a huge academic work, for which the Murray point – to not die young by accident – will emerge in a notable and possibly tragic way when McNeill

⁸¹ Gilbert Murray, *Religio Grammatici: The Religion of a Man of Letters* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company MCMXVIII), 6-7.

⁸² Gilbert Murray *Religio Grammatici: The Religion of a Man of Letters* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company MCMXVIII) 6-7. The influence expressed in this quote may provide an interesting point of consideration (not an 'excuse') for Toynbee's decision later to avoid the draft into WWI. As McNeill also noted - Toynbee's words were his sword.

⁸³ Wilson, "Gilbert Murray," 269.

makes the implicit case that a 'cowardly' Toynbee evades the draft into WW1 and McNeill argues by so doing devalues his classical heritage and himself.⁸⁴

1.2. Philosophy, religion, history

Toynbee had been raised in a Christian tradition socially and spiritually, but at Oxford he is exposed to wider intellectual and philosophical ideas. Through a fellow student, Lindsey, he first came across the ideas of Henri Bergson and his *Creative Evolution*, and *Deux Sources de la Morale et Religion* and these were to have a major influence on his developing thought and his religious orientation. In a serious philosophical essay penned during this time, Toynbee wrote;

The whole universe – my consciousness, my body, my safety razor – is all a machine, and the paradox of the machine is inherent in the whole of it. It partakes of two orders of being [...] life, which we know because that is what we are, and that other, which we do not know because we are not it, but which is Life's environment and object of activity [...].⁸⁵

Toynbee concludes that "these two orders of being fight each other, like a pair of wrestlers, and that with every success that comes to 'life', its opposite, 'mechanisation' advances as well."⁸⁶ Toynbee then concludes this thirty-page exposition on a Bergsonian theme with the conclusion of a, "complex, tragic, dualistic world which is the only reality there is." McNeill focuses on this final sentence as the point at which Toynbee repudiates the existence of God and his Anglican upbringing.⁸⁷ In the collection of letters between Toynbee and Father Columba, the chronology of Toynbee's life has him 'losing faith' in 1907 at Oxford.⁸⁸ This was somewhere between 1907-1911 between the ages of 18-21. Toynbee in 1974 confirmed this understanding when writing to Hedley Bull about Martin Wight,

⁸⁴ McNeill, "Toynbee," 64-70.

⁸⁵ McNeill, "Toynbee," 28.

⁸⁶ Bodleian Library, Toynbee papers, Juvenilia.

⁸⁷ McNeill, "Toynbee," 28.

⁸⁸ Christian B. Pepper ed., *A Historian's Conscience: The Correspondence of Arnold J. Toynbee and Columba Cary-Elwes, Monk of Ampleforth* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986), XIX.

I remain agnostic, that I became when I was an undergraduate, yet, though, as you note, I do not share Martin's religious faith, I do share his conviction that religion is the most important thing in human affairs.⁸⁹

In terms of his developing views on history, in 1910-11 Toynbee writes an essay on 'what the historian does':

[T]he historian must have second sight that is called intuition, so as to be able to see the past as though it were present before him [...] art and history resemble each other in both being activities of the imagination working upon experience.⁹⁰

This role of imagination working on experience or the empirical realm was to prove fundamental to his methodological approach to his study of history. Though his opus *A Study* was to be imaginatively far ranging, Toynbee's macro-historical bias was not however of Oxford's making, according to McNeill. At Oxford,

Tutorials centred on specifics, texts were read word by word. Accuracy and detail were all. Truth would take care of itself so long as the student stayed close to the sources. Toynbee obediently conformed to these expectations and indeed excelled in his mastery of detail.⁹¹

That he could master and use accurate details 'properly' McNeill further evidences in comments on three later essays submitted to Strachan-Davidson the master of Balliol. These were, in McNeill's evaluation, "lengthy, learned, exact."⁹² The desire to write a great historical work is becoming more apparent, however, by 1911 when he writes to his colleague Darbishire:

As for ambition, with a great screaming A, I have got it pretty strong [...] I want to be a great gigantic historian – not for fame but because there is lots of work in the field to be done, and I am greedy for as big a share as I can get [...]. I am going to research and become a vast historical Gelehrte.⁹³

⁸⁹ Bodleian Library, Toynbee Papers, Letter, Toynbee to Hedley Bull 18th April 1974.

⁹⁰ Bodleian Library, Toynbee Papers, Juvenilia.

⁹¹ McNeill, "*Toynbee*," 30.

⁹² McNeill, "*Toynbee*," 293, footnote 27.

⁹³ McNeill, "*Toynbee*," 31. We also recall this was the times of Scott of the Antarctic and 'epic' goals.

In 1914 he is teaching as a young don at Oxford though he will soon change direction looking for the right job that would allow him to pursue his project and earn enough money to support an elite lifestyle. This results in him firstly working for the government (1915), secondly as a professor at the University of London (1915), and finally in the British Institute for International Affairs (BIIA, 1921) producing annual *Surveys of International Affairs*. It is in this later position that he finds the conditions that permit him to write his own opus. Indeed he drafts his plan for this opus in September of 1921.

We have seen an intellectually precocious youngster who wins entry into elite education through his talent. He is socially unsure and anxious, meeting and mixing with the great and good to come. Academically he can and did write “lengthy, learned and exact” history, so we know this was not beyond him or something he was incapable of. Moreover, Toynbee was taught to think and express himself in Greek and Latin even to the detriment of his English. He could and did express himself in Greek and Latin as his first languages even writing poetry in this vocabulary in preference to English.⁹⁴ McNeill also notes that he was not good at modern science and that the ancient literatures and languages became his single focus.

At Oxford he meets his social nemeses in the form of elites, but gradually develops confidence once again through his prizewinning work. He leaves behind his Anglican faith and finds Bergson. He does not like philosophy per se; indeed he finds it is ‘weary wading’. His idealism in the ancient Greeks is shaken when he travels to modern Greece on a number of occasions and experiences realities in the form of conflict, atrocities and politics. In 1921 he gets involved in politics through his criticism of Lloyd George’s Greek policies in reports he submits to the *Manchester Guardian*. This later became the core of his book *The Western Question in Greece and Turkey* (1922) in which he sees the problem between these two communities being caused by the ‘Western’ meddling, he was always ready to see things from the ‘others’ side.⁹⁵

He wants to write a great project; he wants to take up a wider perspective. He writes about historians requiring Intuition in order to be able to see into the past, applying imagination to experience. He meets Gilbert Murray, who becomes his intellectual guide, and as we have seen, Murray has specific interests, the ability of the ancient

⁹⁴ McNeill, “Toynbee,” 15.

⁹⁵ William H. McNeill, Arnold Joseph Toynbee 1899-1975, Obituary in *Proceedings of the British Academy* Volume LXIII 1977, (Oxford: OUP, 1977), 441-469

world to enlighten the modern. The role of ancient Greek religion in its drama, poetry and tragedy are his primary interest. Murray believes a scholar should focus and complete a major work as his life project and it should not be cut short by an early death.

As Toynbee's formal education comes to a close, he finds himself in the real world as a teacher, commentator, activist, and government propagandist. The First World War, realist politics, his experiences with atrocities and refugees, all stir his concerns over nationalism as being a divisive institution, all of which result in his commitment to his developing consciousness of wider community and ecumenical concerns. We will now illustrate how this informs a developing set of lenses he will use in his study of history.

1.3. Toynbee's threefold epistemology

We will argue that Toynbee's *Study* ultimately evolves three lenses or methods: empiricism, myth, and religion. These reflect or embody scientific, psychological, and ethical interpretations. These lenses were adopted gradually as Toynbee grew into his role as the chronicler of civilizations and world history. His growing confidence is visible in his published responses to his critics, in which he accepts that he was a 'combatant' in a 'battle' between 'rationalists and many others', siding with 'the others'- the trans-rationalists. In order to briefly demonstrate his development we will take snapshots of when these three lenses emerged.

1.3.1. The analytical-empirical lens

We begin in April 1915, when the First World War was eight months old. Germany and Britain were blockading each other, Churchill's strategy in the Dardanelles and Gallipoli had begun, and things were about to get unimaginably horrific with the use of chemical gas in attacks at Ypres. At about this time the twenty-six year old Toynbee had just published his analysis of the situation under the title *Nationality and the War*. In this work, Toynbee was already looking ahead to the map of post-war Europe and how it might need to be reconstructed. He explains his approach in a letter to his Uncle Paget Toynbee:

The real object of the book is to give an account of the various national problems as they stand at present. And thereby to get at what Nationality means. It is probably rash to propose solutions, and I have bared my self to criticism which I am getting from both sides- some people say that I have demanded sacrifices from Germany which we shall be quite unable to exact from her [...] My general scheme is to weaken Germany by breaking up her allies, and conciliate her (perhaps a hopeless idea) by leaving her the maximum elbow-room in the colonial areas.⁹⁶

Using geopolitical analysis, Toynbee's book raises concerns over the tensions of nationalism (as divisive) and economics (as collaborative) as a source of conflict. Three years later in May 1918 with the war still continuing, we find further signs of disillusionment with nations and nationalism and a developing consciousness of a wider whole, he writes to his closest friend Robert Darbishire,

I am going to write a short history of Greece and a much larger history of how Rome destroyed the world. I don't see myself writing a history of this war. [...] I sometimes think of a history of European civilization from the dark ages to 1914 [...] treating it as a unity and not as a bundle of separate nation states.⁹⁷

In April 1919, the war was over with twenty million dead, nine million of whom were civilians. Toynbee had been working for the government propaganda department during the war and now found himself working for the historical section of the British delegation attending the Paris Peace Conference. A lack of progress and the realization of immense suffering were making its mark, he writes to Darbishire,

I sit here [...] with a sense that all this activity is leading to no result, and like most others, I am profoundly depressed. It is possible that I get a too pessimistic impression – one feels all the jolts and jars when one is tending the machine. I don't know though – the devastation of the war in people's psychology is worse than the devastation of their houses and cathedrals – and it's this psychological devastation, much more than the shortcomings of the poor old tin-god [...] which is making the thing so slow and so ineffective.⁹⁸

⁹⁶ Bodleian Library, Toynbee Papers, Letter, AJT to Uncle Paget Toynbee April 20th 1915.

⁹⁷ Bodleian Library, Toynbee Papers, Letter, AJT to Darbishire, May 5th 1918.

⁹⁸ Bodleian Library, Toynbee Papers, Letter, AJT to Darbishire April 13th 1919.

If the politics of war had proven dreadful, the politics of peace was no better at reassuring him; indeed he later recalled that,

On the eve of the peace conference I had been given the job [...] of suggesting – with a map – the bounds of a possible Greek enclave round Smyrna. I carried out these instructions, and learnt, in doing so, that this plan was a geographical absurdity [...]. I remember telegrams arriving in Paris from the American, French and British Consular, naval, and military authorities of Smyrna all pleading unanimously; much best to send no troops to Smyrna, but, if you insist, then send troops of any nationality other than the Greeks. These telegrams were ignored [...] spiting the Italians. The Italians did deserve to be paid out, but not in this disastrous way.⁹⁹

The peace conference thoroughly disappointed him and many others in the delegation. His colleague Eric Forbes Adams wrote to him in July 1918:

[T]he signature of the German treaty [...] at which by the way the whole delegation nearly were present – an unimpressive spectacle [...] with no note of reconciliation in the ceremony.¹⁰⁰

Toynbee's observations show that he was perfectly capable of thinking in empirical and 'realist', geopolitical categories. He was not naïve. But there is always a tendency to look at the day-to-day affairs of international politics in a much wider framework. For example: as the climax of the European Dark Ages; the epilogue to a history in which 'Rome destroyed the world'. He understood nations as actors and he understood how actors were often driven by power and self-interest. But, looking at history from a greater distance, he was dismayed by the sheer ignorance of the politicians who were taking decisions affecting millions of people. From Toynbee's broader perspective, there was nothing necessarily wrong with nations pursuing their self-interest, but these nations, lacking a profound appreciation of the broader movements of history, simply misunderstood their self-interest. Toynbee did not deny or ignore the realities of power but he was sensitive to their real and long-term impact on both the material and spiritual existence of men and women.

⁹⁹ Bodleian Library, Toynbee Papers, Letter, Toynbee to Arthur Walworth July 5th 1968.

¹⁰⁰ Bodleian Library, Toynbee Papers, Letter Eric Forbes Adams (British Delegation in Paris) to Toynbee July 8th 1919.

1.3.2. The psychological-dramatic lens

Encouraged by his influential classicist father-in-law Gilbert Murray, Toynbee wrote the *Tragedy of Greece* (1920), which was well received. In this he follows a Thucydidean theme of tragedy that results from Hubris. He had also travelled to Anatolia and witnessed massacres by the Greeks and Turks. He came back changed again, and by 1921 Toynbee had drawn the threads of history, tragedy, psychological suffering, and civilization together. He began weaving and articulating the study of history through a new dramatic lens, as he stated in a lecture to classical students:

A civilization, the work of countless individuals and many generations, differs, I believe, in this respect from a poem or a statue not in kind but only in degree. It is a social work of art, expressed in social action, like a ritual or a play. I cannot describe it better than by calling it a tragedy with a plot, and history is the plot of the tragedy of civilization.¹⁰¹

In the very same month he penned out his plan for a ten-volume study of history. It would be thirteen years later in 1934, that the first three volumes were published. By 1939, a further three volumes were published. His empirical search through 5000 years of history had resulted in the discovery of twenty-one civilizations; they were however analyzed under a psychological heuristic of tragedy and drama utilizing mythology and literature. Whilst most civilizations had emerged, grown, declined and ultimately disintegrated, the Study's volumes determined that the tragic history of civilizations had been instrumental in fostering the emergence of higher religions, themselves a new and higher species of society. Meanwhile, back in the 'political world', the interwar period had witnessed a different struggle. A battle between utopianism and realism fought for the hearts and minds of the academic and the political communities.

The nationalistic power politics surfaced in the public sphere in what the then forty-nine year old Toynbee saw as Britain's 'moral failure' over Abyssinia, and he was ethically inspired and intellectually on the move again. The 'tragic western drama' now expanded to incorporate an ethical responsibility that found articulation in the eastern principle of 'karma'.

¹⁰¹ Arnold J. Toynbee, *The Tragedy of Greece* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1921), 6.

1.3.3. The ethical-spiritual lens

In a 1938 lecture at Nottingham University Toynbee spoke out with a gentle but pointed message concerning the moral responsibility for the Japanese actions in Manchuria:

Some of you may also be familiar with the Buddhist doctrine of Karma. The word simply means action, but in the Buddhist philosophy it signifies the accumulated weight of past actions extending over many incarnations. For good or for evil, the sum total of our Karma enters into all our actions and gives them an impetus for weal or for woe. It may be a terrible conception, but it may hit the path, for all that. [...] In 1838 Shanghai did not exist and British trade with China practically did not exist either. In 1838 both China and Japan were in a state of profound peace; they had not much to do with each other and they had not much to do with the outer world. They were in a state of peace which seemed rather a secure peace, because it was based on very vivid and dreadful memories of the evils of war- memories of AD 1185-1603 in Japan, and of 634-221 B.C. in China. [...] What broke the Chinese peace and the Japanese peace? The Chinese peace was broken by British guns, and the Japanese peace was broken by American guns. In 1838 the British were already pushing very hard to extend their trade in China. Places like Nottingham were then springing up and we were thirsty for new markets. So we went to war with China in 1840-42 took Canton, forced a treaty upon China and compelled her to open her ports and allow our merchants to settle there, and this was how the trade in Hong Kong and Shanghai was started. How was Japan opened to foreign trade? In 1853 America decided to send a navel expedition to Japan and Commodore Perry's guns opened Japan to the rest of the world without firing a shot.¹⁰²

In 1939 the Second World War broke out and by 1945 the world had seen a second generation of 72 million dead, of which 47 million were civilians. In 1947 he had begun writing his final four volumes and more than ever Toynbee viewed 'religion' as absolutely central in the development of human societies. In the November Creighton lectures at the University of London he spoke out loudly again:

¹⁰² Bodleian Library, Toynbee Papers, *University College Nottingham Cust. Foundation Lecture 1938*. "British Interests in the Far East," Nov 28th 1938, (Nottingham: Citizen Press Ltd).

Of one thing we can be fairly confident; religion is likely to be the plane on which this coming centripetal counter-movement will first declare itself; and this probability offers us a further hint for the revision of our traditional western methods of studying history. [...] in studying history as a whole, [we] should [...] relegate economic and political history to a subordinate place and give religious history the primacy. For religion, after all, is the serious business of the human race.¹⁰³

The final volumes of the *Study* were published in 1954 written as a further act of defiance to the 'moral bankruptcy' of nationalism, militarism and its discontents. The religious overtones in these publications provoked accusations of "a strange, exalted, excited note, more fitted to prophecy than science."¹⁰⁴ Toynbee responded simply that these four volumes were written *after* the atom bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. If all civilizations had disintegrated via suicidal conventional wars, the problem now was that nuclear war could be the last war, i.e. the end of mankind. In 1958 Toynbee began his reply to the army of critics the *Study* had solicited and it was published three years later as a 740-page volume XII. Following a minutely detailed response on all manner of topics, terms, definitions, methods, and a lengthy section responding to the ad hominem attacks (some of which were quite rabid), he displayed humour at his apparent failures:

[Professor] Kuhn gives me a splendid funeral [stating,] "As Hegel before him, so Toynbee undertakes to rewrite Saint Augustine's principal work by interpreting the City of Man as the City of God in *statu nascendi*. In both cases the result is a magnificent failure."¹⁰⁵

Aptly the final passage in his *Reconsiderations* points to the new starting point of our thesis. Toynbee quotes an anonymous reviewer for the *Economist* magazine, who ends by saying:

At one level Dr. Toynbee is thus a student of what may be called the sociology of history; at another and far deeper level he is a seeker after, and an expounder of, what to him (and to many others) is the ultimate meaning.

¹⁰³ Bodleian Library, Toynbee Papers, Toynbee's Creighton lecture 1947-48, University of London 17th November 1947: "*The unification of the world and the change in historical perspective*," 25-26.

¹⁰⁴ Hourani quoted in Arnold J. Toynbee, *Reconsiderations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961) 5.

¹⁰⁵ Toynbee, "*Reconsiderations*," 656.

Toynbee comments,

The passage [...] quoted brings out the sharpness of the religious cleavage, in the World today, between the rationalists and the 'many others' of whom my unknown reviewer and I are two representatives. This a battle in which I myself am a combatant and in which my work is, in a minor way, contested ground. Since I am so deeply implicated, I am evidently in no position to try and deliver judgment on the issue at stake. The verdict [...] will be rendered, if it is ever rendered, by posterity.¹⁰⁶

The quote shows that Toynbee had a very clear and sophisticated understanding of himself and his work. He is a 'combatant' and his work is 'contested ground' in the battle between rationalists and those who, like he, are engaged in a quest for ultimate meaning. The battle with rationality and reason is at the centre of understanding Toynbee's work, and Toynbee was clearly aware of the fact that he was 'so deeply implicated' in this battle. He also pointed to a solution of the problem, but his academic readers especially were unable to follow him. As far as his critics were concerned, he had disqualified himself as a serious historian through his reference to Platonic mythology, spirituality, morality and ethics. For the critics, therefore, his declaration that the final volumes of the *Study* had been written from 'an Indian standpoint' was nothing but further evidence of his 'monstrous' irrationality (A.J.P. Taylor). For Toynbee, however, this 'standpoint' unfolded naturally from – and then informed – his quest. As he wrote in 1956, following the completion of the *Study*,

I believe that Buddhism and Hinduism have a lesson to teach Christianity, Islam, and Judaism in the 'one world' into which we are now being carried by 'the annihilation of distance'. Unlike the Judaic religions, the Indian religions are not exclusive. They allow for the possibility that there may be alternative approaches to the mystery of existence; and this seems to me more likely to be the truth than the rival claims of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam to be unique and final revelations. *This Indian standpoint is the one from which the last four volumes of my book have been written.* For each of us, the easiest approach to the mystery of the Universe is, no doubt, his ancestral religion; but this does not

¹⁰⁶ Toynbee, "Reconsiderations," 657.

mean that he ought to rule out the other approaches that the other religions offer. *If one can enter into these, as well as into one's own, it is gain, not loss.*¹⁰⁷

At the age of 80, Toynbee continued his explorations of Eastern religions and philosophies by instigating a dialogue with a Buddhist lay-leader Daisaku Ikeda. They corresponded and met between 1972 and 1974; their correspondence was published posthumously in 1976.¹⁰⁸ In this dialogue, Ikeda outlines the principles of Buddhist epistemology and then sincerely invites Toynbee's opinion. Toynbee replies:

The ancient Greek school of philosophy is the one with which I am most familiar. The Buddhist Santai [three truths] theory seems to me to agree closely with Aristotle's modification of Platonism. I think *the addition of the middle term Ku*, makes the relations between particulars and universals more intelligible. [...] The Buddhist Santai theory seems to me to have some affinity with the modern Western philosopher Hegel's concept of the production of a synthesis through a confrontation between a thesis and an antithesis. At any rate, the Hegelian, like the Buddhist, three-term theory is dynamic. It sees reality on the move in the time dimension. By contrast, *both Plato and Aristotle's two term theory is static*, like the present day Western sociologists' analyses of human affairs in instantaneous cross-sections in which the time dimension is ignored. The dynamic theory that takes account of the time dimension seems to me more likely to correspond to reality.¹⁰⁹

Part two of our thesis will explore the 'addition of the middle term Ku'. Ku is a Japanese term that is perhaps more commonly known in the west by the Sanskrit term Sunyata or *Emptiness/Openness*. By explicating the *Emptiness* principle and the logic it is founded upon we will attempt to demonstrate how the Emptiness term will help us discuss the late developments in Toynbee's *Study* as meaningful attempts to reach beyond the limits of his own thinking rather than as evidence of 'monstrous irrationality'. In brief, Aristotle in his *Metaphysics* applies and perhaps establishes the 'laws of thought' that have predominated western rationality: Identity, Non-Contradiction and Excluded-Middle. This analytical way of thinking results in the

¹⁰⁷ Arnold J. Toynbee "A Study of History: What I am Trying to Do" in M.F. Ashley Montague ed., *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* (Porter Sargent, Boston, 1956), 6-7. (Our emphasis).

¹⁰⁸ A.J. Toynbee and Daisaku Ikeda, *The Toynbee-Ikeda Dialogue: Man Himself Must Choose* (Kodansha International Ltd. 1982).

¹⁰⁹ A.J. Toynbee and Daisaku Ikeda, *The Toynbee-Ikeda Dialogue: Man Himself Must Choose* (Kodansha International Ltd. 1982), 277-8. (Our emphasis)

categories that separate what we now call the disciplines and subjects. What is not so apparent is that Aristotle's laws of thought, when critically examined, are seemingly embedded in an ontological commitment to 'substance'. This substance ontology then permeates and influences everything 'above' it, not only our categories and subjects but also more generally the very boundaries of reason and rationality; in other words, it stipulates just what aspects of reality we can articulate and still be considered 'rational'.

The emptiness/openness principle or doctrine is counter-intuitively – and perhaps paradoxically – an 'ontology' (conventionally speaking) of non-substantiality. This new 'ontology' suggests that when the logic of reason is applied to existence and causality it actually becomes a critique of reason, and we find ourselves *perceiving the conceptual* limits of reason and rationality. Reason as a structure of thought, and rationality as its resulting content, are revealed as conceptual constructs that – whilst valid as one epistemic channel – limit our full epistemic access to 'ultimate reality'. In their own, delimited domain, reason and rationality are but one valid interpretative access to ultimate reality – a reality, however, that will require other modes of access if we are to move outside the delimited domain of reason and rationality.

Toynbee's 'monstrous irrationality' suddenly becomes itself an epic intellectual struggle with the limits of rationality and reason with tragic consequences. He had to articulate what he intuitively *perceived* through a *conceptual* language embedded or permeated with an ontological commitment (to substance) and its concomitant epistemic limit. This battle with modernity and 'science' led Hans Morgenthau to write that his:

[...] Icarean effort does for our age what the great representative works of the mind have done for others. It presents its spirit and attempts to transcend it in the search for the perennial truths by which all ages must be judged. His achievement belongs to the ages; his failure belongs to his own and hence, is ours as well as his.¹¹⁰

¹¹⁰ Hans Morgenthau "Toynbee and the Historical Imagination" in M.F. Ashley Montague, Ed., *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* (Porter Sargent: Boston, 1956), 199.

2. A Study of History

The *Study* was published in three stages. Volumes I-III were published in 1934; volumes IV-VI were published in 1939, and volumes VII-X in 1954. A subsequent Atlas/Gazetteer was published as volume XI and more importantly a final volume XII entitled *Reconsiderations*, in which Toynbee replied to his critics, was published in 1961. His *Study* both informed and was informed by his war-work for the intelligence departments of the British Government during two world wars. And also the writing of the *Annual Surveys of International Affairs* published under the auspices of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, later known as Chatham House. Toynbee stated that he wrote the *Study* and the *Surveys* side by side from 1927 onwards.¹¹¹ The *Study* acted as the larger historical and philosophical background informing his political views and activities, whilst his *Surveys* and political activities equally informed his ongoing historical *Study* by bringing to life the past through the present.¹¹²

His plans for the *Study* were formulated soon after the experience of the First World War and the 'industrial' slaughter of millions. What did Toynbee think had gone wrong? Nationalism, industrialism and specialization were the errors of his age. He believed the worship of these idols had led to the crisis. The Western European domination of the world with its middle class oligarchy dominating the rest of the population of Europe led to a "brief and abnormal period of history [...] [where] the 'lower classes', 'the colonials' and 'the natives' did not count [to this] [...] tiny minority of the human race and this [...] set the pattern for the Western historians of that age."¹¹³

Before we engage his text as a whole, we will extract a particular digression he makes within the first volume; on history, science and fiction. These are what he regards as three techniques for studying life and he explains how he understands them, where they come from and how they can be applied. It is illuminating for us as it draws attention to his sense of time, the subtleties of language, the traps of simplistic documentary empiricism and the fiction of 'facts'.

¹¹¹ Arnold J. Toynbee, "What I am trying to do," in Ashley Montague, M.F. ed., *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* (Porter Sargent: Boston, 1956), 3.

¹¹² *Ibid.* 3-5.

¹¹³ *Ibid.* 4.

2.1. History, science and fiction

In the *Study* Toynbee declared that his techniques for studying phenomena were history, science and fiction.¹¹⁴ He acknowledges that these techniques or 'styles' come from Aristotle but, as we shall discover later, he goes on to challenge Aristotle.¹¹⁵ It is instructive to examine his 'multi-epistemic' approach, as he himself argued that he was not writing history but *studying* history.¹¹⁶ In his *Reconsiderations* Toynbee later reflected, "the present book began as an analytico-classificatory comparative study of human affairs and turned into a metahistorical enquiry *en route*." ¹¹⁷

In the *Study* Toynbee's digression into epistemology comes by means of an appendix in volume one where we find him "making a rather wider survey of the methods which we employ in our intellectual activities." ¹¹⁸

We have empirical knowledge of three different methods of viewing and presenting the objects of our thought, and, among them, the phenomena of human life. The first method is the ascertainment¹¹⁹ and record of particular 'facts'; the second is the elucidation and formulation of general 'laws' through a process of comparative study; the third is the form of artistic creation and expression known as 'fiction' [...]. According to the popular view, the ascertainment and record of particular 'facts' is the technique of 'history'; and the phenomena in the province of this technique are the social phenomena of civilizations. The elucidation and formulation of general 'laws' through a process of comparative study is the technique of 'science'; and, in the study of human life, the science is Anthropology and the phenomena [...] the social phenomena of primitive societies. 'Fiction' is the technique of the Drama and the Novel; and the phenomena in the province of this technique are the personal relations of human beings. These popular equations have a respectable origin – they can be traced back to Aristotle – but they break down under examination. ¹²⁰

¹¹⁴ Toynbee, "*Study*," 1:441.

¹¹⁵ Toynbee, "*Study*," 1:441. Toynbee states, "according to the popular view [...] the techniques [...] History [...] Science [...] Fiction [...] can be traced back to Aristotle [...] but they breakdown under examination."

¹¹⁶ Toynbee, "*Reconsiderations*," 229.

¹¹⁷ Toynbee, "*Reconsiderations*," 229.

¹¹⁸ Toynbee, "*Study*," 1:441.

¹¹⁹ Original Footnote reads: 'Ascertainment or "establishment" in the subjective sense of the French word 'onstatation'. Toynbee, "*Study*," 1:441 footnote 1.

¹²⁰ Toynbee, "*Study*," 1:441.

Toynbee's approach is to use all three methods with a slight adjustment for the disagreement he has with Aristotle. He refers to him as the source of these popular methods but does not say exactly where in Aristotle's work these are described.¹²¹ As the disagreement is about the nature of history and poetry, we can assume two of the methods he has chosen – history and fiction – are informed or modified by this debate he has with Aristotle's *Poetics*.

The scientific aspect of his tripartite method is indicated above as an analytico-classificatory comparison. He will identify civilizations as a species of the genus society and we can consider this classificatory scheme as Aristotelian. The fact that he is describing his enterprise as a comparison may indicate a more modern influence coming from the methods being applied in anthropology. He suggests that history is to civilizations as anthropology is to primitive societies, and points out that anthropology was being accepted as a scientific method for studying primitive societies. According to Toynbee, therefore, history can and should be accepted as part of a scientific approach to studying civilizations or 'societies with histories'.

Toynbee however believed that Aristotle was confused about history and science. Aristotle considered history as the study of particulars whilst poetry – and therefore drama and the novel – as the study of universals. Consequently Aristotle sees poetry as a higher form of enquiry than history, which only teaches or studies particulars. Toynbee points to a key section in Aristotle's *Poetics* (1451b) as the centre of the dispute:

The historian differs from the poet in this, that the historian presents what did happen while the poet presents what might happen. For this reason Poetry is more philosophic and less trivial than History; for poetry presents generalities, History merely particulars. Generalities mean the kind of thing that this or that person is apt or bound to say or do; and this is what poetry aims at presenting under the mask of the proper names which it confers on its characters. Particulars mean what Alcibiades did or had done to him.¹²²

Toynbee notes that by

¹²¹ We will later suggest that this threefold approach was informed by the Trivium. See chapter 3 below.

¹²² Toynbee, "Study," 1:441. Footnote 2.

[...] identifying the creations of 'fiction' with generalities, Aristotle would appear to be confusing the technique of the drama and the novel with the technique of science, in order to distinguish them both from the technique of 'history' (so called).¹²³

The key issue for Toynbee is that he wants 'history' to be recognized as an area of study, or as a technique of observation, that deals and reveals generalities. The historian, too, looks for that which is universal in the phenomena he or she is studying. In this sense, the historian has to engage with 'fictions'; there are creative elements to historical writing without it becoming an arbitrary act of the imagination.

Toynbee goes on to discuss the nature of fictions in detail in the *Study* and we will pick up the discussion at this point below. The relevant point from our current discussion and reference to his noted method is that he comes to the project with three techniques or methods. These are historical empiricism, scientific comparison (looking for laws), and fiction or mytho-poetic dramas that reveal psychological truths (universals).

2.2. Facts and fictions

While looking for the causes of the genesis of civilizations, Toynbee eventually shifts from external geographical, environmental factors to the actors' inner landscapes. In doing so he looks to mythology in order to understand how these actors thought and how they approached the realities they were facing. This appreciation of myth amounts to a critique of historiographical positivism in the Rankean sense. We have anticipated parts of this discussion above, where we outlined the three techniques of history, science and fiction. In the present discussion we will listen to Toynbee as he clarifies and expands his perception of 'fictions and facts':

History grew out of mythology, a primary intuitive form of apprehension and expression in which the drama and the novel likewise took their origin. In mythology, the distinction between facts and fictions is left undrawn; whilst 'history' has differentiated itself from mythology by making an effort to extract

¹²³ Toynbee, "*Study*," 1:442.

the facts, it has never succeeded in dispensing with fictitious elements altogether.¹²⁴

If distinguishing between fact and fiction is clear within classical science and its investigation of physical matter, it is not so clear-cut when looking at human relations. Toynbee examines the nature of myths, fact and fiction and argues that history not only studies myth but in fact employs myth as it gives an account of the historical development of societies. We already noted the importance of the following quote earlier when we drew attention to Toynbee's 'constructivist leanings':

[...] it is hardly possible to write two consecutive lines of historical narrative without introducing fictitious personifications of institutions and ascribing to them anthropomorphically the desires, feelings, thoughts, actions, and in fact all the psychic activities of human beings [...]. In making use of these mythological counters we are misrepresenting reality, yet, however conscious we may be of their falsifying effect, we cannot do without them.¹²⁵

For example, Toynbee explains that we cannot record the history of our 'Western Society' without referring to the mythological names of the relevant states. As we use names such as Britain, France, Czechoslovakia, we are treating these fictitious persons as though they were human beings in personal relations with each other. He emphasizes, however, that France is no nearer to reality than the 'Gallic Cock', and 'Britain' is no nearer to reality than 'John Bull', and we hardly get closer to reality by writing 'Republique Francais' or 'His Majesty's Government'. We can apply the same destructive analysis to the organs and officers and activities of 'the Church', 'the Bar', and 'the Press'. In fact, in viewing and presenting social institutions and recording their work, the use of fiction appears to be an indispensable artifice of thought. Toynbee prefers the most blatant forms (British Bulldog, Gallic Cock) as the least objectionable, because they are the least likely to be mistaken for realities.¹²⁶ He further indicates that the natures of institutions are difficult to describe accurately:

[...] it seems wiser to admit [...] it is at present beyond our intellectual capacity to express the realities of institutions in direct terms [...] we can only present

¹²⁴ Toynbee, "Study," 1:442.

¹²⁵ Toynbee, "Study," 1:422.

¹²⁶ Praised from Toynbee, "Study," 1:442-446.

institutions through the medium of fictions [...] the best we can do is to make allowance all the time for a distorting effect which we cannot avoid [...].¹²⁷

He quotes the Hellenic historians and Thucydides as examples of writers who did just this, using fictitious speeches to illuminate feeling with greater psychological profundity, than any other expedient.¹²⁸ Toynbee criticizes the modern Western historians, who reject this expedient means, deluding themselves "supposing their own subterfuge of 'composite photographs' [...] [are] any less fictitious for being psychologically jejune".¹²⁹ He sees it as idle protest to suggest that the myriad state papers, articles, parliamentary debates, letters to editors, that have been incorporated into their own synthetic histories are the 'ipsissima verba' of those people who decided public policy or opinion. It is better to use 'fictions' with complete self-awareness than to delude oneself that one is stating fact when one is describing these illusive and enigmatic institutional relations. He even suggests that had the West been more aware of these fictitious terms and recognized Western Christendom rather than Western Europe as a more accurate self-description, it would have had to recognize another Christendom in the Eastern orthodox version and thereby would have had to recognize civilizations in the plural, with a capital C, and perhaps could have avoided the fragmentation into euro-centric parochialisms. Clearly, the fictions of history, although they are fictions, have a very real impact.

In regards to logic and science in historiography, Toynbee argues that the methods of social science have made inroads into the study of 'civilizations' as found in political economy, political science, and literary criticism. Historians use all of these in their accounts seeing them as "great advancements that the study of history has made in recent times".¹³⁰ He also points to ethics as a natural well that historians dip into. He discusses the reality that biography requires fictions too, and that both 'fictional' drama and novels, whilst generally understood as fiction, have to contain 'truths' whether as background contexts or morals or plots without which the novel or drama would be so unrecognizable as to be unintelligible. If novels or drama were without truth, what would be their appeal?

¹²⁷ Toynbee, "Study," 1:444.

¹²⁸ Toynbee, "Study," 1:445.

¹²⁹ Toynbee, "Study," 1:445.

¹³⁰ Toynbee, "Study," 1:446.

The purpose of the digression is to conclude that there can be nothing in the intrinsic nature of the study of civilizations, primitive societies, and personal relations in biographies and novels, that apriori requires any one technique only in the ascertainment of facts, the elucidation or formulation of laws, and the use of fiction to reveal and or present truths. One further consideration that Toynbee introduces to support this claim is to consider the amount of information that each of the three techniques – history, science and fiction – might be suited to deal with. In an interesting proposition Toynbee suggests that when the quantity of data is so small (Aristotle's singular experience) it is naturally suited to specifics as in biography. However, when it reaches a certain numerousness (Aristotle's evolving conception of a universal) it becomes susceptible to 'generalizations' and 'laws'. Finally when the volume of information becomes too astronomically large it is better captured by fictions that tell the underlying truth without referent to a specific case – in a manner that is similar to the workings of 'statistics'.¹³¹ As he puts it,

[...] the sole but indispensable condition for the eventual supremacy of the technique of fiction in the domain of history is the passage of time without the annihilation of the record.¹³²

He provides an example of this approach by using an astronomical forecast that the earth may continue to exist for a further one thousand million years. On the basis of his analysis of history, he extrapolates the possibilities of an enormous number of future civilizations:

Imagine 1,743 million completed histories [...]. Our powers of imagination fail. By what technique should we handle 'historical data' [...] in quantities so great as these? [...]. Only perhaps by the technique called fiction which our dramatists and novelists employ in our time to communicate to their fellow men their thoughts and feelings about the personal relations of human beings [...] about loves and deaths, [...] successes and failures [...] individual hopes and fears, which have repeated themselves since Mankind became human, until their name [and number] is legion.¹³³

¹³¹ He refers to the fact that in economics this technique is happily used to establish insurance risk analysis. He also indicates Aristotle does this in the *Politics* comparing local Greek constitutions, Arnold J. Toynbee and G.R. Urban, *Toynbee on Toynbee* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), 19.

¹³² Toynbee, "Study," 1:459.

¹³³ Toynbee, "Study," 1:463-64.

From his digressions and discourses on method, we can better understand what is to come. Toynbee is effectively suggesting that due to ignorance of their own prejudices (mistaking constructed fictions for facts and vice-versa) historians are sometimes ignorant of their own biases. His critical self-reflexivity anticipates later debates in IR theory. In revealing these points he explains why he feels it is legitimate to break down pre-established disciplinary boundaries in regards to subject matter and techniques. He also shows us his extraordinary awareness of time scales. The hypothetical expansion into 1,743 million possible civilizations helps develop a more humble spirit towards any notions we might hold that our own parochial histories or indeed 'facts' may entail a full account of the absolute. Toynbee's encyclopedic efforts lead to a relativisation of the present. He also advises us that his own labels, types and categories are 'fictions', constructivist symbols – they are necessary but they do not represent absolute certainties for the subject matter to come. It may be useful to understand them as 'indices' of a particular understanding of, and approach to, history.

2.3. *A Study of History*: From method to contents

Toynbee's key index is the 'civilization'. He takes civilizations as wider and more embracive wholes than nations. In order to understand a 'nation', Toynbee suggested, we need a larger context in order to make the nation intelligible. England, for example, had no intelligible meaning outside its wider setting – Europe and the wider Western Christian society. The same applied to France and Germany. He contrasts the deep currents of thousands of years of 'world history' against the surface flotsam and foam of modern nationalistic history. Toynbee's well-documented anti-nationalism was based on the conviction that nations are intellectually constructed fragments of a more intelligible whole. It was fundamentally wrong, therefore, to consider nations as the terminal points of history. Toynbee credits historian E.A. Freeman for broadening his horizon as Freeman's essays "opened up for me vistas of Western and Hellenic history that led me out into the great open spaces beyond."¹³⁴ Choosing 'civilizations' as the intelligible unit of history was partly a move against the parochialism of nations, which he saw at the centre of the crisis of his times.

Placing civilizations into the centre of history also corresponded to Toynbee's holism, which drew on the most recent developments in science and yet was at odds with the

¹³⁴ Toynbee, "*Study*," 10:223.

dominant trends in the writing of history at the time. Toynbee perceived an imbalance between analytical methods and synthesis. At some stage the mined data had to be synthesized so as to imaginatively reflect and return to the unified 'reality' of one holistic world. Toynbee suggested that Bergson was right on the mark when he wrote that although "the intellect is specifically constructed to isolate our apprehension of physical nature so we may act upon it [...] there exists a human faculty which insists on not looking upon inanimate nature, but upon feeling Life and feeling it as a whole."¹³⁵

Questioning the effects of 'classical science' and 'industrialism' and its potential effect on how people live and think, he sees a real problem in investigating life and human activities with a scientific method used to investigate inanimate matter.¹³⁶ For an alternative 'scientific' corrective he refers to Einstein. Science, he explains, had now begun to "think about the physical universe as a whole and not just this or that slice of reality".¹³⁷ Furthermore, "this comprehensive way of thinking has been an essential condition of Einstein's achievement."¹³⁸ The theory of Relativity explains the inseparability of time and space. In a simple connection Toynbee realizes that an historical version of this relativity is central to historical writing but the conditions of industrial societies do violence to creativity:

This deep impulse to envisage and comprehend the whole of Life is certainly immanent in the mind of the historian; and such violence is done to it by the division of labour which the analogy of the industrial system imposes on historical thought.¹³⁹

The historian's obsession with the mining of 'facts' or 'data' on a new industrial scale he views as a symptom or mirror of industrialism, of modernity's 'violence in thought'. He laments over Acton and Mommsen's historical genius being lost in pedantic, fact-mining studies. He cites them as two examples of 'failed imaginations', both lured into their academic black holes by the excessive 'industrial mining' of the exploding archives of Western Governments.

For Toynbee, Acton's unrealised dream of both a 'history of liberty' and a 'universal history' is a tragedy due to Acton's obsessive "desire not to speak before he had read

¹³⁵ Toynbee, "Study," 1:8.

¹³⁶ Toynbee, "Study," 1:3.

¹³⁷ Toynbee, "Study," 1:3 footnote 3.

¹³⁸ Toynbee, "Study," 1:3 footnote 3.

¹³⁹ Toynbee, "Study," 1:8.

everything that was relevant, whether in print or manuscript, that hindered so severely his output.”¹⁴⁰ Toynbee remarks further,

A History of Liberty [...] to be based entirely on original sources [...] and taking note of all that scholars had written about every several portion of the subject, was, and is, beyond the reach of a single man. Probably towards the close of his life Acton had felt this. The *Cambridge Modern History*, which required the co-operation of so many specialists, was to him really but a fragment of this great project.¹⁴¹

Acton's failure, together with Mommsen's desire to be remembered ironically for his *Roman Constitutional Law* rather than his earlier *History of the Roman Republic*, suggested to Toynbee that both failed as historians because writing history required a creative, synthesizing input. It was not that he disparaged facts in themselves; rather he felt that data, if it was to have any meaning at all, needed to be placed in broader contexts in a synoptic fashion. There was a rhythm to historical scholarship that moved from fact-finding to interpretation and back:

[...] scholarship itself, which makes its progress by a rhythmic alternation between two activities – the collection of materials and their arrangement, the finding of facts and their interpretation. [...] And no synthesis or interpretation is ever final, because there are always fresh facts to be found after the first collection has been provisionally arranged. This rhythm is native to all thought in all its different channels.¹⁴²

Civilizations, then, initially became Toynbee's intelligible units of history. He compares their histories under a heuristic of genesis, growth, breakdown and disintegration. He concludes that all civilizations have followed these patterns and thus historical laws are revealed. These laws however are not predictive scientific laws of 'cause and effect' relationships but psychological laws of 'challenge and response'.

Creative Individuals respond to challenges and lead mimetic followers, which generate genesis and growth. When the true creativity fades and ultimately fails, through hubris, greed, anger etc., the attempts to recover all run their failed courses, and civilizations

¹⁴⁰ Toynbee, "Study," 1:47. Footnote 1.

¹⁴¹ Toynbee, "Study," 1:47. Footnote 1.

¹⁴² Toynbee, "Study," 1:49.

disintegrate. The historical record has been constituted by civilizations passing through their phases of existence. Toynbee does not imply, however, that the cycle is deterministic. Self-determination through agency is creatively always open.

In spite of the failures, something continues. As with wheels that carry a cart forward with each turn, the civilizational cycle (wheel) have resulted in the emergence of the lower and then the higher religions (cart). Four higher religions have emerged, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism. These he concluded were history's highest forms of society or community yet seen. They are 'higher' as they all argue for a direct relationship between the individual and the ultimate creator/law, and they do not claim to represent any particular nationalist or territorial group. They are 'universal'. Lower religions are those that claim particularity, for example territorially or racially.

According to Toynbee, therefore, even civilizations are not the terminal point of history. The civilizations failed as a form of ultimate society because they aimed at secular, materialistic, and intellectual goals, which feed the egocentric experience, rather than spirituality and self-mastery, which promote an ecumenical and other-oriented attitude to existence. Scientific, mechanistic cause and effect relationships do not explain history; psychological laws affecting 'challenge and response' relationships are better at revealing historical patterns. These patterns, in turn, are not just intellectual insights but entail a practical impetus. Spiritual self-mastery as found in the examples of Christ and the Bodhisattvas, who engage in the world of suffering to assist people, are the supreme example of the 'response' needed to meet the 'challenge' that faces humanity writ large. In this last sense, he concluded religion was the 'serious business of mankind'. But we are ahead of ourselves.

The Study begins with the rise of civilizations, they are the processes that will later bring higher religions into existence. Following Aristotle's categorical method, he establishes the 'society' as his genus; and adds his new species 'civilization' to the existing species 'primitive society', which was studied by anthropologists. The newer form emerged out of the primitive. Toynbee explains:

[W]e have established the existence of societies which (unlike their articulations called states) are independent entities in the sense that each of them

constitutes by itself an 'intelligible field of historical study', but which at the same time are all representatives of the same species.¹⁴³

How many civilizations are there? His plan was to first start with five living representatives of the species and second search for representatives of the species belonging to older generations.¹⁴⁴ He identifies the first members of his set, the currently surviving recognisable civilizations: the Modern Western, the Orthodox Christian (adding S.E. Europe to Russia), the Islamic, the Hindu, and the Far Eastern (including Japan and Korea with China) civilizations.¹⁴⁵ Then, through a process of affiliation – societies coming from a previous one – or appresentation – societies emerging out of their own efforts – Toynbee finds and identifies a further sixteen societies. Toynbee acknowledged the influence of E. Meyer on his approach:

Meyer [...] helped me to break away from [...] history as a *play in three acts* – Ancient, Medieval, and Modern – by showing me that the history of 'Greece and Rome' was a unity, and that this unity was a whole that was complete in itself. [...] This led me to look for a unitary name to describe the society whose history this was. I labelled it 'the 'Hellenic Civilization', and, when once I had identified one civilization, twenty other societies of the same species came into focus, one after another.¹⁴⁶

Gone was any serial, chronological reading of history; instead Toynbee offered a philosophically contemporaneous study of those civilizations that had come and gone. The features these civilizations must exhibit to gain membership of his comparative set is characterised by a completion of the phases of genesis, growth, breakdown, and for the 'dead' ones -disintegration. He will take each of these categories in turn and develop motifs to describe or explain these four patterns. Those currently existing civilizations must show they are in one of these four phases. The *Study* will be a comparison of these civilizations, suggesting "comparative treatment can be extended to the whole of history [...]. The human sciences like the natural sciences, make a

¹⁴³ Toynbee, "Study," 1:51.

¹⁴⁴ Toynbee, "Study," 1:51.

¹⁴⁵ Tangye Lean, "A Study of Toynbee," in M.F. Ashley-Montagu, Ed., *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1956), 23.

¹⁴⁶ Toynbee, "Study," 10:233.

comparative study of their data in order to discover the structure of the facts and the events.”¹⁴⁷

2.3.1. Genesis

Having established the members of the set, the next step is to ask how each ‘civilization’ may have differentiated or emerged in the first place. In other words, the genesis of the cases needs to be accounted for. This begins with an exploration into the reasons for their emergence either from primitive or out of previous civilized societies. This happened, he suggests, when individuals no longer look backwards at tradition but creatively forge a new future. This turning away from the past and towards the future generally participates in a wider historical movement and trend towards wholeness and integration. Bergson’s creative mystics, Smut’s holism, and Jung’s psychology inform his thinking on these issues. He is convinced that there is an inner motivation or drive towards wholeness and integration, citing firstly Smuts, who identifies “a tendency towards unity, an ordering of multiple elements into new unities [...] from heterogeneous multiplicity again to [...] co-operative ordered structural unity”.¹⁴⁸ Toynbee also quotes a psychologist, Heard, who sees a trend towards unity and wholeness in the development of consciousness “from co-consciousness has been evolved self-conscious individuality [...] and in the course of evolution [...] a common self-consciousness?”¹⁴⁹ Finally, an anthropologist, Murphy, is quoted in support of the move towards wholeness, as Murphy too asserts that there is “the quest for unity [...] towards new and higher integration.”¹⁵⁰ Bergson’s vision is that “The great mystic has felt the truth flow into him from its source like a force in action. [...] He alone is aware of a change which raises him to the rank of *adjutores Dei* who are passive in their relation to God but active in their relation to mankind.”¹⁵¹

But what makes individuals break with the past? How do they become creative? Even if various sciences suggest that there is a ‘trend’ towards wholeness and integration, this trend still needs to be instantiated by concrete individuals in concrete circumstances. Toynbee initially proceeds in parallel with a scientific investigation of

¹⁴⁷ Toynbee, “What I am trying to do” in M.F. Ashley Montagu, Ed., *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1956), 5.

¹⁴⁸ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 1:197.

¹⁴⁹ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 1:197.

¹⁵⁰ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 1:197-98.

¹⁵¹ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 3:234+256.

the physical realm searching for 'causes' or 'laws' and looks for 'external factors' that may contribute to creativity. Factors such as race and the environment are examined and eventually dismissed as causes of civilizational breakthroughs.

At this point Toynbee explains why a shift is necessary from the outer physical to the inner psychological world: "[W]e have so far been employing the tactics of 'the classical school' of our Western Physical Science. [...] Thinking in abstract terms and experimenting with the play of soulless forces".¹⁵² This approach was based on the 'apathetic fallacy' of using a language and method designed for inanimate nature to the study of living creatures. This was in turn a clever reversal of the traditionally recognized 'pathetic' fallacy where inanimate objects are given 'life'. The result of Toynbee's departure from this mode of explaining leads him away from positivist methods and data to a different type of data as found in mythology, which express the inner psychological motives of human beings in society.

In making a final attempt to solve the riddle that has been baffling us, let us follow Plato's lead and try the alternative course. Let us shut our eyes, for the moment, to the formulae of Science in order to open our ears to the language of Mythology.¹⁵³

Here we see his 'public' shift from a monocular to a binocular epistemology. It has been there from the start but he has led us to this point where we can see that a more complex approach is need. He heads out on an empirical search for examples of these psychological factors and encounters. He finds them articulated in Hellenic drama, Milton's poetry and from sources such as Goethe's *Faust*, the Bible's Adam and Eve, Scandinavian epic literature and Greek tragedies. In these sources we find expressed ways of articulating the experience of a challenge – a challenge, which requires a response:

The environment resolves itself into an omnipresent object confronting the omnipresent power which manifests itself in Life. We may conceive of this object as an obstacle lying across the path of the *Élan Vital* or as an Adversary challenging a living God to halt or do battle.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵² Toynbee, "Study," 1:271.

¹⁵³ Toynbee, "Study," 1:271.

¹⁵⁴ Toynbee, "Study," 1:270.

In his mythological move a number of subtle things are taking place. The 'method' of empirical history as the gathering of facts and data is being extended into collecting and investigating myths but still as empirical (textual) data. In addition this departure from physical data to psychological data moves him away from the monocular scientific model into intuitive hermeneutical heuristics. He would later state;

I prefer not to use the word 'science' for the study of the psychic and spiritual side of human nature, including social relations, living creatures and human beings above all have some freedom of choice. Therefore in investigating and describing human affairs, I think in terms of 'challenge and response', not of cause and effect.¹⁵⁵

However, the challenge is no longer necessarily an external one. He states the field has shifted to an internal battle in oneself found in the very structure of life itself: "The challenger is God – that is, absolute Reality approached anthropomorphically – even when the challenge comes ostensibly from Man or Nature."¹⁵⁶ The terms challenge and response are used to break from any deterministic causality and in order to capture the unpredictable nature of creativity itself. This potential for creativity through challenge and response is the structural reality of life. In anthropomorphic Christian terms, it is the battle God throws out.

At this point in the *Study* he has explained at length the reasons for the introduction of myth as valid data and asked us to understand that the role of myth and poetry is to describe the unseen but real psychological forces at work involving living human beings. He concludes that in the emergence of civilizations there is no single essence or 'entity' that can be identified as 'the sufficient cause' in the billiard ball method of the old physics. What is proposed is that the inherent structural tension between good and evil in each individual is the more probable decisive factor, and this must be accessed through a dynamic psychological view:

So far by the process of exhaustion, we have made one discovery: the cause of the geneses of civilizations is not simple but multiple; it is not an entity but a relation. We have the choice [...] conceiving this relation either as an interaction between two inhuman forces like the petrol and air [...] in the engine of a motor-

¹⁵⁵ Bodleian Library, Toynbee papers, Letter Toynbee to Wakaizumi March 27th 1968.

¹⁵⁶ Toynbee, "*Reconsiderations*," 256-57.

car - or as an encounter between two superhuman personalities. Let us yield our mind to the second of these. [...] Perhaps it will lead us towards the light.¹⁵⁷

In attempting to express the new 'things' that require explanation and investigation he runs up against the 'new wine in old bottles' problem of using the existing vocabulary to express new concepts.

The very concept of 'relations' between 'things' or 'beings' involves the logical contradiction that something which is ex hypothesi separate and self-contained and individual and exclusive has also to be conceived as somehow overlapping with other entities of the same order. How is this contradiction to be transcended? Only, perhaps, by substituting 'actions' for 'things' and 'agents' for 'beings' and 'interaction' for 'overlapping' as our formulae for describing 'the nature' – or rather 'the working' – of the Universe.¹⁵⁸

Perhaps these ideas sit more easily in the twenty-first century with wave-particle dualities, quarks and string theories now part of everyday vocabulary, but in his day these ideas were revolutionary in science, let alone history, sociology and IR. The point Toynbee is making is that at the 'deepest' levels there are no 'things' only relations and events. The world of things and indeed knowledge about things are an abstraction, an ultimately 'fictional' but necessary edifice about reality built upon a particular scale of observation. Toynbee is not suggesting that we should dismiss the language of 'things' as fiction because it remains a necessary and valuable edifice. But we must recognise the limits of this language, and accordingly take a less parochial and rather more tempered, humble attitude to our intellectual certainties. This is what for him the good historian and history could bring to our understanding through its synoptic sense of scale. He did not dismiss science; he too was pushing the boundaries to discover what possible 'laws' or regularities may exist but he realized the limits of this intellectual project. As he realized these limits, he left his Aristotelian ground and took off to Platonic skies or Jungian depths.

2.3.2. The psychological realm or field

¹⁵⁷ Toynbee, *"Study,"* 1:271.

¹⁵⁸ Toynbee, *"Study,"* 3:223.

This radical methodological shift leaping out of the 'scientific-empirical' into the 'dramatic-mythical' involves using a new epistemic lens to access the inner forces at work in the genesis of his civilizations. Drama is the new heuristic, and all dramas have plots. These plots he thinks can be explored: "let us try to analyse the plot of this story or drama which repeats itself in such different contexts and in such various forms."¹⁵⁹ This dramatic lens was no sudden discovery; it was part of his toolbox from the earliest planning of the work. In 1921, as quoted earlier, Toynbee noted that a civilization was "a tragedy with a plot, and history is the plot of the tragedy of civilization [...] each is a variant of a single theme."¹⁶⁰

In this section we will explore an example of how Toynbee uses myth and literature in order to show how in a range of cultures and media of expression, the same pattern of forces and tensions and hence the same experience can be found. Yin and Yang, Faust and Job, Artemis and Aphrodite are all discussed in order to reveal an underlying dramatic principle, which arises when two opposing forces are brought together in tension. Toynbee's implicit assumption here is that the symbolisms used are indeed profoundly equivalent in the sense that they all articulate in mythological form a fundamental principle and experience of living in the world, of taking part in the 'play':

The play opens with a perfect state of Yin. In the Universe Balder keeps all things bright and beautiful [...]. On Earth, Faust is perfect in knowledge; Job is perfect in goodness and prosperity; Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden are perfect in innocence; Gretchen, Danae, Hippolytus – are perfect in purity and beauty [...]. In the biologist's universe, the Species is in perfect adaptation to its environment.¹⁶¹

The world, however, is *dynamic* and no *static* theory or ontology can suffice to explain it. Any period of Ying or passivity must pass over into a state of Yang or creative activity. The biological equivalent of the principle is taken from Darwin's idea of the fittest being constantly challenged by the environment. The Biblical reference to Adam and Eve is the same principle in yet another vocabulary. There is a critically important philosophical point contained in the use of mythological language.

¹⁵⁹ Toynbee, "Study," 1:273.

¹⁶⁰ Bodleian Library, Toynbee Papers, *The Contemporary Review*, September 1921, 422.

¹⁶¹ Toynbee, "Study," 1:276.

The event can be best described in these mythological images because they are not embarrassed by the contradiction that arises when the statement is translated into logical terms.¹⁶²

Toynbee perceives the logical contradiction that the mythological position entails. Science and reason abhor contradiction due to Aristotle's basic laws of thought and reason. The law of non-contradiction allows only for one, either/or.

In logic, if God's universe is perfect, there cannot be a Devil outside it, while, if the Devil exists, the perfection which he comes to spoil must have been incomplete already through the very fact of his existence. This logical contradiction, which cannot logically be resolved, is intuitively transcended in the imagery of the poet and the prophet.¹⁶³

His perception of logic's inability to express the 'contradiction' will be a key point for us to explore later in the thesis. Toynbee resolves it by using vocabularies that can embrace the contradiction, albeit poetically or mythologically. Toynbee was drawn to other vocabularies precisely because it provided a discourse that embraced the contradiction, which, as myths shows is part of living in the world.

The omnipotent God of the poets and prophets, however, is subject to two limitations. Toynbee elaborates,

The first limitation is that, in the perfection of what He has created already, He cannot find an opportunity for further creative activity. If God is conceived as transcendent, then

Die unbegreiflich hohen werke –
Sind herrlich wie am ersten Tag.¹⁶⁴

The works of creation are as glorious as ever they were, but they are not 'changed from glory to glory'.¹⁶⁵ At this point, the principle that 'where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty'¹⁶⁶ fails; and, if God is conceived as immanent, the same limitation still holds:

¹⁶² Toynbee, "Study," 1:278.

¹⁶³ Toynbee, "Study," 1: 278-79.

¹⁶⁴ Toynbee, "Study," 1:279, quoting Faust (Prologue Lines 249-250). George Madison Priest Translation "The lofty works beyond us tower: Sublime as on the first of days". Available at <http://www.einam.com/faust/index.html> (accessed 23/2/98).

¹⁶⁵ Corinthians iii. 18, Bible, King James Version.

¹⁶⁶ Corinthians iii. 17, Bible, King James Version.

Der Gott, der mir im Busen wohnt
Kann tief mein Innersted erregen,
Der uber allen meinen Kraften thront
Er kann nach aussen nichts bewegen.¹⁶⁷

The second limitation upon God's power is that when the opportunity for fresh creation is offered to Him from outside, He cannot but take it. When the Devil challenges Him, He cannot refuse to take the challenge up. Live dangerously, which is the Nietzschean Zarathustra's ideal, is God's necessity.¹⁶⁸

Toynbee argues that God is bound to accept the challenge thrown upon him or he will deny his own nature of containing or being the whole that includes the challenge. By accepting the challenge and existence of the 'other's' challenge we resolve one contradiction, but raise another, because "if God is therefore not logically omnipotent. [Toynbee asks] is he still mythologically invincible"? ¹⁶⁹ In other words, how is this issue resolved in the mythical and prophetic language? Is God necessarily bound to win the battle? Here lies another dilemma. If he is bound to win, then the battle is a sham, because the outcome is predetermined- we are in a deterministic world. Assuming then that the battle is a real one that allows for real choice, is it at all conceivable that God could actually lose? This dilemma is resolved for Toynbee in *Faust* and *Job*, where two different vocabularies are used to express the same principle.

We shall look firstly at *Faust*. In *Faust*, God and the Devil (Mephistopheles) have a wager over the devil's ability to win Faust's soul. In the setting of the bargain, God freely allows the Devil to do as he wants with perfect freedom. There is no apparent antagonism from God to Mephistopheles. Indeed Mephistopheles leaves the meeting saying,

I like to see the Old Man not infrequently,
And I forbear to break with Him or be uncivil;
It's very pretty in so great a Lord as He
To talk so like a man even with the Devil.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁷ Toynbee, "Study," 1:279, quoting Faust (Lines 1566-9). George Madison Priest Translation: The god that dwells within my soul/ Can stir to life my inmost deeps./ Full sway over all my powers he keeps,/ But naught external can he ever control. Available at <http://www.einam.com/faust/index.html> (accessed 23/2/98).

¹⁶⁸ Toynbee, "Study," 1:279.

¹⁶⁹ Toynbee, "Study," 1:280.

¹⁷⁰ Faust lines 350-54. Translation by George Madison Priest, at <http://www.einam.com/faust/index.html>.

In the final outcome, the devil, believing he has secured Faust's soul at death, finds himself distracted at the last moment when Faust is 'spirited off' to the good place. In this drama the devil is proven only to have been able to 'frustrate' or 'facilitate' God's plan. The battle is real for Faust, and God has to risk 'losing' in order for Faust to find a bigger truth. Toynbee understands this to indicate that when God's realm is challenged, he is bargaining a part of Himself. The cosmos is constantly recreating itself. Toynbee quotes Smuts for a scientific metaphor to help make the theological or dramatic structural (holistic) point:

A change in equilibrium does not mean an alteration in the position and activity of one element of the structure only; there is a redistribution which affects all elements. It is the very nature of the structure in changing its equilibrium to distribute the change over all its component elements.¹⁷¹

Toynbee takes this to indicate that the nature of the world is creatively holistic and therefore the temptation of Faust (a smaller whole) by the Devil (imminent in God's nature) provides God (the whole) a new chance to recreate Himself. The Devil's intervention accomplishes the function of triggering the creative activity of Yang from Yin. "The Devil, in meddling with God's work, cannot frustrate but can only serve the purpose of God".¹⁷² Toynbee finds further support for this interpretation in Steuart's popular book *The Inward Vision*, which is quoted thus:

[...] Not *through* pain and defeat and death does Christ come to victory – but [...] these things are the victory [...] we can see how Evil, against which we yet must strive, runs its course and is found to be the good which it seemed to be resisting and destroying.¹⁷³

Toynbee identifies the same pattern in Scandinavian mythology: "Loki [...] he becomes a comic figure [...] the trickster who is predestined to be overreached".¹⁷⁴ Toynbee continues that as Faust is,

[...] created by God and abandoned to the Devil, he is seen, in the prophets vision, to be an incarnation of both his Maker and his Tempter, while in the

¹⁷¹ Toynbee, "Study," 1:284.

¹⁷² Toynbee, "Study," 1:282.

¹⁷³ Toynbee, "Study," 1:282. Citing R.H.J Steuart *The Inward Vision* (London: Longmans; 1930), 62-3.

¹⁷⁴ Toynbee, "Study," 1:283.

psychologist's analysis, God and the Devil alike are reduced to conflicting psychic forces in his soul – forces which have no independent existence apart from the symbolic language of Mythology.¹⁷⁵

This analysis of Toynbee's is very pertinent for our later chapters. He is arguing metaphysically that Faust the creature has a double aspect to its nature reflecting both God as the good aspect and the Devil as the evil aspect.

The conception that the object of the wager between God and the Devil is an incarnation of God is familiar. [...] It is the central theme of the New Testament. [...] The conception that the object of the wager is at the same time an incarnation of the Devil is less familiar but not [...] less profound.¹⁷⁶

The part and whole therefore contains and embraces both aspects, the individual as a holistic part of the wider whole. Toynbee again quotes Smuts in order to underline the point:

The individual and its parts are reciprocally means and end to one another; neither is merely self-regarding but each supports the other in the moving dynamic equilibrium which is called Life.¹⁷⁷

The parts in a holistic system are microcosms of the whole as macrocosm. The parts are not reduced to bit players as in a non-holistic system.¹⁷⁸ This quantum part/whole relationship is distinct from the classical-mechanical part/whole understanding, and is the key for assisting our understanding of Toynbee's thought especially about how man and God – and man and society – relate to each other.

¹⁷⁵ Toynbee, "Study," 1:285-86.

¹⁷⁶ Toynbee, "Study," 1:286.

¹⁷⁷ Toynbee, "Study," 1:286.

¹⁷⁸ The late quantum scientist David Bohm clarifies this relationship between parts and wholes for us. Bohm was someone Einstein admired and respected. Bohm used the hologram and a photograph as the two ways of understanding reality. In the photograph, there is a point-to-point relationship between the object being photographed and the negative. If one were to cut the negative in half one would lose half the information. The holographic plate however records the wave pattern from a laser bounced off the object with the original laser source. The two collide and the interference pattern is recorded. The effect is that if one were to break the plate into pieces, any piece will provide the whole image of the object though in lesser detail. The point here for us is that holist parts are not pieces in the point-to-point negative-mechanistic sense, but parts are wholes in themselves. Incidentally Bohm explains that when all the pieces of the holographic plate are used the full detail/resolution is restored. This indicates that each piece has a unique 'part' to play in the whole. See David Bohm, *Wholeness and the Implicate Order*, (Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, Boston, 1980), and Lee Nichol ed., *On Dialogue: David Bohm* (London: Routledge, 1992).

Restating the conclusions drawn above we find that Faust is both 'evil and goodness' incarnated. The evil 'exists' within an individual but only as a means to enable goodness to express itself, by providing it some resistance. Evil has no separate independent omnipotent existence. It is real in the sense that it exists as a function to help reveal the 'true' nature of goodness. Finally both the good and the evil must be inseparable aspects of both smaller whole 'parts' (individuals) and the larger whole (God, or the cosmos). Once again we find a logical contradiction if framed within our western logic. A person (or state) is falsely framed as either evil or good in the language of Aristotelian logic.

God thus (defined as good) is either good or non-existent. However in this mythological language we find God's world contains the devil within it. God's nature (expressed as the whole of creation) contains the potential for evil within it and the 'battle is always on'. The ultimate nature of Evil then, paradoxically, is God. But they are not identical. God is God or goodness: the Devil is the Devil or evil, but which is a function of God. Western rational language is unable to rationally express this logic of two but not two. It is a contradiction, and this is the reason why Toynbee points out that mythological and dramatic vocabularies are required to capture it. Toynbee then continues to develop this theme:

It remains to consider the role of this 'Devil-God', this part and whole, this creature and incarnation, this arena and combatant, this stage and player; for in the wager version of the plot, the encounter between the powers of Hell and Heaven is only the prologue, while the passion of a human figure on Earth is the substance of the play. In every presentation of this drama, suffering is the keynote of the human protagonist's part.¹⁷⁹

Toynbee portrays Jesus, Job, Faust and Gretchen, Adam and Eve, Hippolytus and Phaedra as examples of protagonists of the drama. A detailed exposition of the various experiences of these actors all point at a single theme: suffering. Their ordeals are the various stages that each has to undergo to serve God's and ultimately their own best purpose. The first stage is a reaction to the tempter, setting in motion the change from the ideal Yin to an active Yang. The response can be base or sublime, he says. The Ancient Mariner shoots the Albatross; Loki shoots Balder with the blind God Hoder's hand. For a sublime example (quoting Matthew, Mark and Luke) Jesus in the

¹⁷⁹ Toynbee, "*Study*," 1:286.

temptation rejects the traditional Jewish role of the militant Messiah destined to lead by the sword to achieve the Chosen People's dominion. In all of these examples he says, "[t]he essence of the act is not its moral character but its dynamic effect."¹⁸⁰ The Ancient Mariner changes his ship's destiny; Jesus provides a new conception of the messiah; Job curses the day he was born and in so doing raises the issue of God's Justice. In Faust's story, Faust is already making efforts on his own to break out of his Yin state – his unsatisfying 'perfect mastery of human knowledge'. He is seeking an escape from his spiritual prison through magic, when Mephistopheles enters the picture with his temptation.

In all of these dramas, the first stage is the transition from Yin to Yang through a dynamic act triggered by the tempter. This allows God to resume creativity through the crisis that the actor faces as a result of the tempter's dynamic act. Paradoxically, it liberates God into creativity once again, but simultaneously the creature embarks on a journey of suffering and death. Toynbee sees this crisis as resolved only when the actor realizes that through his actions he embodies a 'mission', which is to be an instrument of God, for the Glory of God. The individual as a microcosm participates within the larger whole or macrocosm. In religious anthropomorphic terms, the macrocosm is God. Metaphysically Toynbee is pointing at the indivisibility of the individual (micro) and the cosmos (macro). They are not two separate things in a relation; rather, the relation is the true reality. This is why selflessness and concern for the other is so important, and why the 'is' and the 'ought' are ultimately indistinguishable – more on this in Part Two of this thesis.

Toynbee defines God – used anthropomorphically throughout the *Study* – as 'love', so individuals participate as instruments in and of 'love'. The process is key as "this activity through passivity, this victory through defeat, brings on another cosmic change".¹⁸¹ This second act triggers the move back from Yang to Yin, from storm to calm, discord to harmony. This return to Yin is the third stage. The actor or sufferer returns to a state of peace and joy that is higher than the original Yin state before the tempter's intervention. This is a completed progressive spiral rather than a deterministic redundant circle. The new Yin state is qualitatively higher than the original state.

¹⁸⁰ Toynbee, "*Study*," 1:288.

¹⁸¹ Toynbee, "*Study*," 1:293.

Through Faust's dynamic act and Gretchen's act of resignation, the Lord has been enabled to make all things new; and, in this new creation, the human protagonists in the divine drama have their part.¹⁸²

Two final points are made. The first is that God (the cosmic whole) is not seen as the harsh master of the world – the universe is not against us! – But as a considerate enabler because through the suffering (process) the actor (individual) realizes or actualizes God's (whole) love, which is then experienced by the individual as his truer self (truer happiness).¹⁸³ Secondly the actor who undergoes this process is a creative pioneer in their particular environment pointing at a way for others to follow¹⁸⁴. Toynbee recapitulates here,

By the light of Mythology, we have gained some insight into the nature of challenges and responses. [...] Creation is the outcome of an encounter [...] or – to re-translate the imagery of myths into the terminology of Science – genesis is a function of interaction.¹⁸⁵

Toynbee then proceeds to examine all twenty-one civilizations searching for the 'particular' factors that triggered their respective geneses, expressing the 'laws' of the plot in each ensuing drama.

2.3.3. Growth

Toynbee notes that not all civilizations prospered and reached full maturity. Polynesians, Eskimos and Nomads did not go on to become civilizations though they did carve out a specific lifestyle in accord with their environment. He examines two kinds of techniques that feature in growth. These are, control over the natural environment and control over other societies; the first concerns technical control over conditions of survival, the latter concerns a society's ability to cope with military threats or to exploit opportunities for military conquest. Perhaps surprisingly, Toynbee's assessment is that growth is not linked to either as an ultimate stimulus or relation. Civilizations can decline even if successful militarily; indeed, he sees military expansion

¹⁸² Toynbee, "Study," 1:298.

¹⁸³ Toynbee, "Study," 1:297. "bliss on a higher level".

¹⁸⁴ Toynbee, "Study," 1:298.

¹⁸⁵ Toynbee, "Study," 1:299.

as a form of decline. Growth, he argues, originates from creative individuals and mimetically inspired minorities through an inner self-development or self-determination.

"The process which we are examining involves not merely a simplification of apparatus but a consequent transfer of energy, or shift of emphasis, from some lower sphere of being or sphere of action to a higher sphere. Perhaps we shall be describing the process in a more illuminating way if we call it, not 'simplification', but 'etherialization.'" ¹⁸⁶

This motif shifts the focus from external geographic, economic, material concerns to the inner role of the intellect and then the spirit. After a lengthy discussion on how progress can be achieved through simplification – as for example through the introduction of the wheel, or the zero in math – he asks whether there was a principle parallel to 'Occam's razor' also at work in the inner world. He explores the idea that inner etherialization is a self-determining, taking control of one's life direction, which then helps the individual to ignore the manifold bewitchments that continuously bombard one and lure one into false engagement. Taking the reins of one's life is a process that was lived and studied by Socrates when moving from concerns over knowledge of physics and truth about the external world to examining the inner realm of ethics and the good. Toynbee cites Gandhi's spinning wheel as a symbolic advocacy of a reversion from the material to the spiritual plane of action.¹⁸⁷ He quotes Matthew for the Christian version of the same principle, ending with "seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness". Citing Bergson, he suggests the individual experiences "a moment [that] has come at which the religious spirit has turned away from the Outward towards the Inward, from the static to the Dynamic"¹⁸⁸ He also refers to Smuts who describes the 'unified personality' as the same mystical source and ends up with a synthesis of these two concepts.¹⁸⁹ These creative individuals break with the customs of their societies, but this entails some discomfort for both. "The emergence of a superman or a great mystic or a superior personality inevitably precipitates a social conflict. [...] Some conflict is inevitable, since the social equilibrium which the genius has upset by the mere fact of his personal emergence has eventually to be restored either by his social triumph or by his social defeat."¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁶ Toynbee, "Study," 3:182-3.

¹⁸⁷ Toynbee, "Study," 3:190.

¹⁸⁸ Toynbee, "Study," 3:184-5.

¹⁸⁹ "In the South African philosopher's analysis of Personality and in the French philosopher's account of the mystical experience we are given a glimpse of the process by which, in the souls of certain individual human beings, a new spiritual species- a veritable Superman- emerges." Toynbee, "Study," 3:233-34.

¹⁹⁰ Toynbee, "Study," 3:236.

Toynbee then examines the relationship between individuals and the group. Again he draws upon ideas from Bergson, Smuts and indeed classical philosophy that all make similar claims for the individual souls being co-extensive with the cosmos and he concluded that the society is the 'field of interaction' for relations between individuals and the individuals are the only source of action.¹⁹¹ He arrives at the conclusion that real progress is to be found in 'etherialization'.¹⁹² Bergson's mystics are the "superhuman creators *par excellence*".¹⁹³

This begins the process of linking the inner spiritual life of human beings with the external body social. Toynbee concludes that growth occurs when successful responses to challenges move from the external field to the internal field and thereby set in motion a "progress towards self-determination."¹⁹⁴ He next explores how self-determination articulates itself in the micro-macro relation by looking at the nature of the 'relation' between the inner world of the agent and the external body social, or between individuals and societies. He concludes firstly that:

The truth seems to be that a human society is, in itself, a relation; a particular type of relation between human beings who are not only individuals but are also social animals in the sense they could not exist at all – or at any rate not humanly – without being in this social relation with one another.¹⁹⁵

He therefore rejects the image of societies as aggregated atomistic individuals; he also dismisses (Spengler's) organic society viewing individuals as cells. The source of action is always individuals, but these individuals are not simple 'things' – Newtonian balls bouncing off one another. His understanding of society is holistic; drawing on Smut's quantum thinking. He views societies as fields of action within which the individuals' fields interact. For an illustration of these fields he quotes again Smuts who uses electromagnetism as an example of a field of force,

¹⁹¹ Toynbee, "Study," 3:217-231.

¹⁹² Toynbee, "Study," 3:191.

¹⁹³ Toynbee, "Study," 3:232.

¹⁹⁴ Toynbee, "Study," 3:217.

¹⁹⁵ Toynbee, "Study," 3:223.

Every 'thing' has its field, like itself, only more attenuated; every concept has likewise its field. It is in these fields and these fields only that things really happen [...] the hard secluded thing is barren because abstract, and but for its field could never come into contact with any other thing or concept.¹⁹⁶

Smuts suggests that without understanding this field we cannot get a grasp of how 'things' interact with each other. The comment that the 'thing is barren because abstract' is pointing directly at the paucity of classical scientific thought in accessing this holist dynamic inner/outer reality of relation. This again illustrates Toynbee's awareness of a new way of viewing reality. The outer environment and the inner realm of the person are inextricably linked but the only way to express this link linguistically is 'mythologically'.

According to Toynbee, societies are institutional spaces where individuals' fields of influence interact. He concludes that agency – and specifically the creative individuals' inner development – is the key factor in any growth on the macro scale. The idea that there are minorities or rare individuals that develop themselves to such an extent that they can help transform a whole community is explored. The link is that the transfigured individual can influence the society either through inspiring the masses through imitation (*mimesis*) or through mystic instruction or education on a one-to-one basis.¹⁹⁷

Ultimately it is the creative individual that inspires others in a mimetic way. The creativity comes from the individual's inner reformed life. Though it can take various forms – scientific, artistic, and intellectual – the most significant is an inner spiritual transformation or 'transfiguration'. This achievement results in a person who has mastered himself or herself on a profound level and is therefore altruistically inspired to *act*. This transfiguration can inspire a new type of community or society. Along with this creative person comes the motif of withdrawal and return. In the former stage the inner inspiration or realisation occurs; in the latter stage the actor returns to the group and the process of *mimesis* begins. The great spiritual masters are used as examples: Christ, Buddha, Bodhisattvas along with saints. But indeed Toynbee gives examples

¹⁹⁶ Toynbee, "Study," 3:224.

¹⁹⁷ Citing Bergson, "How is one to get purchase upon the will [of another person? There are two ways open to the educator. The one way is by drill (dressage) [...] the other is by mysticism... The second method induces the imitation of another personality, and even a spiritual union, amore or less complete identification, with it." Toynbee, "Study," 3:245. Toynbee compares this 'one to one' instruction with Plato's letters No 7. 341 B-E, when Plato indignantly refuses to write down a short exposition of his philosophy for Dionysius.

from the world of politics, including Machiavelli. The masses can embrace or gain access to this creativity through mimesis or imitation, which functions as a short cut for those who have not yet transformed themselves. In itself mimesis is useful at first but it later proves to be a problem when the mimetic followers lose interest or habit sets in.

2.3.4. Breakdown

Toynbee noted three typical features of the breakdown of civilizations:

[T]he nature of the breakdown of civilizations can be summed up in three points: a failure of creative power in the minority, an answering withdrawal of mimesis on the part of the majority and a consequent loss of social unity in the society as a whole.¹⁹⁸

Toynbee rejects theories that explain civilizational breakdowns in a deterministic fashion. Spengler's biological view is rejected because civilizations/societies are not organisms; they are fields of action. Secondly, racist theories suggesting that civilizations die when races interbreed are also rejected. Finally, a modern 'Platonic' idea of an inevitable winding down of a deterministic clockwork civilization is also rejected, on timescale issues.¹⁹⁹

Toynbee then moves on to discuss the idea of time cycles. "We still have to consider one further [...] hypothesis [...] the theory of cycles to the history of Mankind".²⁰⁰ A discussion ensues about the possibility of a necessary and recurrent cyclical nature of the universe as found e.g. in Epicurus and Lucretius. Toynbee implies that this idea is to be resisted when he refers to Gautama Buddha; as one of the surest marks of his greatness was his own "heroic struggle with this dominating and paralyzing idea, until at last he conquered it by finding a way of escape out of the Wheel of Existence into Nirvana [...]".²⁰¹ Indeed under this motif of a redundant cycle versus a progressive spiral, he finally resolves the apparent stalemate of the either/or framework by suggesting a combination of both:

¹⁹⁸ Toynbee, "Study," 4:6.

¹⁹⁹ Toynbee, "Study," 4:24-27.

²⁰⁰ Toynbee, "Study," 4:23.

²⁰¹ Toynbee, "Study," 4:28, footnote 3.

The harmony of two diverse movements – a major irreversible movement which is borne on the wings of a minor repetitive movement – is perhaps the essence of what we mean by rhythm. [...] The annual procession of the seasons, which brings with it the annual withdrawal and return of vegetation, has made possible the secular evolution of the vegetable kingdom. The somber cycle of birth and reproduction and death has made possible the evolution of all the higher animals up to Man himself.²⁰²

Still meditating on the cyclical view of history, Toynbee again refers to the Buddhist perspective, according to which “the Wheel of Existence, from which the Buddhist discipline promises release, produces the abiding and cumulative burden of *karma* which is handed on from one incarnation-cycle to the next and thereby transforms a trivial round into a *tragic* history”.²⁰³ And of course each round renews the whole and so finally he suggests that:

[I]f any inference can be drawn at all [... it is] that it is not recurrent but progressive [...]. We are not condemned to believe in the cyclic version of predestinarianism as the supreme law of our human history. [...] This is a message of encouragement for us children of the Western Civilization [...]. Manifestly ‘the door of death is not closed’.²⁰⁴

The conclusion of a long trawl through many civilizations is that no external cause that can be found for the breakdown of a civilization; indeed, an inner cause has to be assumed. If growth was conditioned by the self-determination or development of the creative individual, which then inspired the masses, it seems likely that a breakdown is a *reversal* of this process:

A loss of self-determination is the ultimate criterion of breakdown; and this conclusion is what we should expect, since it is an inverse of [...] that progress towards self-determination which is the criterion of growth.²⁰⁵

This is captured in the poetry of George Meredith, quoted in the *Study*:

²⁰² Toynbee, “*Study*,” 4:36.

²⁰³ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 4:37.

²⁰⁴ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 4:37-38. Citing Lucretius.

²⁰⁵ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 4:132-33.

In tragic life, God wot,
No villain need be! Passions spin the plot:
We are betrayed by what is false within.²⁰⁶

There are a number of other motifs and principles he develops under this theme of breakdown and its sub-theme of a lack of self-determination. The latter has three aspects. The first is a change to a ritual mechanical mimesis – in other words the inspiration that originally induced the masses to imitate the creative individual now becomes a mechanical habit rather than an discipleship driven by inner conviction. Secondly institutions become intractable in their old age. They ossify into ritual and fail to change. The third aspect is the nemesis of creativity – idolatry, which is defined as the worship of the part rather than the whole.²⁰⁷ Idolization of the self takes both the passive form of 'resting on one's oars' and the active form of 'rushing to doom' through overconfidence in self.

Toynbee warns against infatuation with the past and the self. Furthermore he extends this warning into the realm of institutions. The idolisation of political sovereignty incarnated in a human being is exemplified in the French 'Son of Re', King Louis XIV. He also notes that it is possible to idolise "not a man but a committee", as e.g. a parliament.²⁰⁸ The passive resting on one's oars corresponds to placing oneself on a pedestal through past achievements and thereby removing oneself from life in a creative sense.²⁰⁹ It means that parts of society begin to project themselves as the ultimate whole. The Judaic Chosen People syndrome²¹⁰ and the Athenian 'Educators of Hellas' syndrome are offered as examples of this phenomenon.²¹¹ In the latter case, "in clinging to her outworn role of being "the Educator of Hellas" in a particular mental grove, Athens fulfilled her ideal of herself in an unfortunately literal way by turning herself into a university town".²¹²

The active form of idolization of the ephemeral self manifests itself as overconfidence; the 'pride comes before a fall' attitude. Militarism is included in this mistaken attitude.

²⁰⁶ Toynbee, "Study," 4:120. Quoting Meredith's poem, "Loves Grace".

²⁰⁷ Toynbee, "Study," 4:261.

²⁰⁸ Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History: Abridgment of Volumes I-VI* by D.C. Somervell (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1987), 322-23.

²⁰⁹ Toynbee, "Study," 4:261.

²¹⁰ Toynbee, "Study," 4:262.

²¹¹ Toynbee, "Study," 4:263. We could add the "British Empire", the "Japanese Emperor", the "Middle Kingdom", etc.

²¹² Toynbee, "Study," 4:271.

Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union is an obvious example. The idolization of mechanical humanity writ large would be Communism. Finally, idolization of ephemeral institutions is the worship of the city-state or nation-state.²¹³ Toynbee quotes Berdyaev to underline these assessments:

Men's self-affirmation leads to his perdition; the free play of human forces unconnected with any higher aim brings about the exhaustion of Man's creative powers. [...] The will to power [...] destroys the personality.²¹⁴

In a further digression, Toynbee suggests that those who are the creative minorities in times of war are necessarily not those who are best for winning the peace. War cabinets attract the short-term characteristics required for waging war successfully, whereas these characteristics are often the wrong requirements for achieving peace. He cites peace conferences as examples of this principle – an assessment based on his personal experience of the moral failure of two such peace conferences.²¹⁵

The success or failure of mimesis is “[i]n the interaction between leaders and led, mimesis and power are correlatives and power is a force rarely brought into play without being abused [...] the tenure of power is an abuse in itself if those who hold the power have lost the faculty of leadership”.²¹⁶ Toynbee proposes that mimesis can fall prey to bad leadership and thus “the successive transformations of the prophet into the drill sergeant and of this martinet into a terrorist explain the declines and falls of civilizations in terms of leadership.”²¹⁷ When this happens the creative minorities become the dominant minorities and the once happy mimetic followers now become the alienated proletariat.

Disintegration is the final phase of a breakdown. A key factor in this final phase is the schism of the body social into three factions: a dominant minority, an external proletariat, and an internal proletariat. Each of these factions has a characteristic achievement. The dominant minority creates a universal state; the internal proletariat

²¹³ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 4:303.

²¹⁴ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 4:258, Footnote 8.

²¹⁵ Toynbee attended the peace conference in Versailles after WWI. He reported he worked with Lawrence ‘of Arabia’. Nicolson also refers to working with Toynbee. Nicolson was also less than impressed with the conference; he finished his own diary of the conference “to bed, sick of life”. See Harold Nicolson *Peacemaking 1919* Gloucester: Peter Smith 1984), 113/371. Toynbee also worked as a delegate for the Foreign Office at the 1946 Paris conference following WW2.

²¹⁶ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 4:131.

²¹⁷ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 4:132.

creates a universal church, and the external proletariat creates barbarian war-bands.²¹⁸ As he explores the implications of these themes and phenomena he finds that in the creation of universal churches through the internal proletariat, an insurmountable problem arises, which becomes the major turning point in his whole opus.

If a religion has an alien inspiration, then manifestly the origin and the nature of that religion cannot be understood without taking account of a contact between at least two civilizations [...]. This point [...] is simple and self-evident; but [...] it compels us to make a radical new departure; for it requires us to relinquish the basis on which this Study has so far been built up.²¹⁹

Toynbee has been applying his comparative method on the assumption that all civilizations are separate societies or social wholes. His original critique of histories that make the nation the central unit of study was that nations were fragments rather than wholes; in some sense, they were not even 'parts' either. As he searched for the true wholes that contained these fragments he identified the civilizations. Now however, the higher religions are unintelligible within a single civilization (as it takes at least two for a higher religion to be understood). We have a 'higher level whole', a new unit of study in the higher religion and as a result, Toynbee comments, "we shall find that our new field also extends into a different spiritual dimension [...] and the sea on which we are sailing is no longer the familiar land-bound *Mare Nostrum*." ²²⁰

2.3.5. The spiritual dimension

Here then we observe the prologue to Toynbee's leap into the inner spiritual realm of the human consciousness. He will eventually reveal that higher religions are actually different species of societies; they are not new civilizations. We might suggest in the terms of Jan Smuts' philosophy that he moves from a level five to a level six-type whole, from super-personalities as in states or associations (civilizations) to the spiritual ideal or order (higher religions).²²¹

²¹⁸ Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History: Abridgment of Volumes I-VI* by D.C. Somervell, (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1987), 583-84.

²¹⁹ Toynbee, "Study," 5:372.

²²⁰ Toynbee, "Study," 5:375-76.

²²¹ Smuts outlined six levels of evolution – we will discuss and illustrate these in chapter three where we provide some initial evaluations on his project. See also beginning of chapter seven.

This focus on consciousness and spirituality is, we will submit, also part of his move to an Indian perspective. Indian traditions such as Vedanta, Hinduism and Buddhism focus on the relation between the inner consciousness and the outer world. So too do Chinese philosophies such as Confucianism and Taoism. Confucian 'inner harmony' leads to 'outer harmony'. In these traditions, if one wants to change the world, the change must flow from an inner change primarily. This is because the inner state manifests itself in or as the external world. Toynbee notes,

A schism in the souls of human beings will be found at the heart of any schism that reveals itself on the surface of the society which is the common ground of these human actors' respective fields of activity.²²²

In the analysis which follows he therefore investigates 'schism in the soul' in order to 'explain' the perceived 'schism in the body social'. There are three aspects found in the two schismatic realms. These are found in behaviour, feeling and life. In each of these areas he develops a pair of characteristics, one passive and one active. In the realm of personal behaviour, instead of creativity he finds 'abandon' and 'self-control'. If 'abandon' is a 'why bother', 'why try', 'why care', then 'self-control' is the athletic opposite, a mastery over nature and the body through discipline. In the realm of social behaviour, in lieu of mimesis he finds 'truancy' and 'martyrdom' – the former is a running away from responsibilities; the latter is an 'I'll die anyway' for the (now hopeless) cause.

In the realm of personal feeling, the creative force or *elan* is replaced by 'drift' and 'sin'. 'Drift' refers to, for example, a feeling of resignation because 'everything is against one'; whereas the active 'sin' is a feeling of failure "to master and control the soul's own self", which gives rise to a sense of guilt.²²³ In the realm of social feeling (style) the passive is 'promiscuity'; the active is 'unity'. Toynbee explains that the former is a tendency to accept that 'anything goes', so that customs or traditions are no longer seen as relevant and are ignored. The active pole represents the search for new values, even if they have to be found elsewhere in other traditions; it is the search for something to hold on to.

In the realm of life Toynbee finds two pairs. Etherialization is replaced during periods of disintegration by the passive 'archaism' (a nostalgic longing for the past) and the active

²²² Toynbee, "Study," 5:376.

²²³ Toynbee, "Study," 5:380.

'futurism' (revolution as a short cut to an idealized future). Toynbee explains that "in both Archaism and Futurism the effort to live in the Microcosm instead of the Macrocosm is abandoned for the pursuit of a Utopia [...] without any challenge to face the arduous change of spiritual clime".²²⁴ Both of these are attempts at transfer in terms of time- to another imagined 'utopian' time. In a disintegrating society, none of the pairs of motifs so far effect any change that would revert or even stop the process of disintegration because they do not operate on the inner problem of the heart or soul. The relevant activities all focus on the external society.

The final pair does achieve a transformation from the external realm to the inner realm: the passive 'detachment' and the active 'transfiguration'. Detachment, whilst being noble intellectually, leads however to suicide from the 'world'; whereas transfiguration, is the movement of the one who from the inner transformational strength of a 'transfiguration' actively returns (metaphorically) to the external body social. The result of this movement is palingenesia, the birth of a new society – a higher whole.

The final analysis in book VI examines the relation between individuals and the disintegrating society. In the growth stage creative individuals are the catalysts for growth. In the disintegrating society they appear as ephemeral saviours, who can take on various forms. The 'saviours with the swords' are the founders of universal states (see below) and rely on militarism. Archaists look for 'idealized pasts' and futurists are revolutionaries chasing idealized futures. Detachment generally as found in the Stoics or specifically Plato's philosopher king is analyzed and rejected on grounds of his detachment (as a form of suicide from the social) conjoined with elite political rule. The solution, for Toynbee, is the transfigured forms of Christ and Bodhisattvas, who return to the body social from their inner transfigured state. Disintegration, when it does happen, follows a pattern of rallies and routs, motifs include 'times of troubles', 'Indian summers' etc., and he finds a standard pattern for all disintegrating civilizations. It is under this spiritual analysis and evaluation that we find his 'Buddhist' perspective coming to the fore. He philosophically equates Christ and the Bodhisattvas.

2.3.6. Universal states, universal churches, and higher religions

Universal states are the achievement of the dominant minority in their attempt to rescue a disintegrating society. There is always a temptation, Toynbee declares, that

²²⁴ Toynbee, "*Study*," 5:383. This incidentally provides a new interpretation or understanding for his alleged 'utopianism' as one based upon an inner change not an outer.

these universal states are considered as ends in themselves, “universal states show a strong tendency to behave as though they were ends in themselves, whereas in truth they represent a phase in a process of social disintegration. [...] any significance beyond that [...] is] in virtue of being a means to some end that is outside and beyond them.”²²⁵ In fact, the real purpose of universal states is to provide the conditions for the emergence and rise of the higher religions, which operate on the realm of the inner spirit.

Universal states are imposed on subjects who accept them as a panacea for the time of troubles. The explicit aim of these empire builders is to establish peace, and yet, as Toynbee is quick to point out, principles of non-violence, of peace, must come from within the heart and mind; they cannot be imposed from the outside. Universal states will seek concord with others where possible. During periods of calm, the order provided by these states create an environment where the higher religions can establish themselves and grow until the universal state and the higher religion find themselves at odds.²²⁶

Toynbee examines universal churches in Book VII of the *Study*. As explained, universal churches are the achievement of the internal proletariat in a disintegrating society. Two possible roles for the universal churches are explored. The first role proposed is as a ‘cancer’ or ‘parasite’ on the universal state. The state’s primary function is to survive, as it is the representative of the disintegrating society; it is by nature not creative. The universal churches benefit from the conditions preserved by the universal state but their goals are not the same. Still, the argument that the churches operate as a ‘parasite’ is eventually rejected because the churches promote social cohesion.²²⁷ They fill a spiritual vacuum rather than create one. They are the “bread of social, as well, as spiritual, life.”²²⁸ But, he continues, “are spiritual values and social values antithetical and inimical to each other”? His answer is negative because seeking God (as Love) is actually performing a social act.²²⁹ Society is the only field of action for the individuals’ relations with each other, and they cannot exist except in society with each other.²³⁰ Citing the Hellenic and Indic cases, he suggests

²²⁵ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 7:6.

²²⁶ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 7:70-73.

²²⁷ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 7:381-91.

²²⁸ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 7:392.

²²⁹ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 7:387.

²³⁰ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 7:387.

philosophers and saints both arrived after the civilizations had begun their breakdowns and therefore cannot be the cause of the breakdown.

The second possible role of universal churches is as a chrysalis: do the churches play a role in the emergence of new civilizations out of older variants? The answer is both yes and no. From the seven primary civilizations – Egyptian, Andean, Sumeric, Indus, Minoan and Shang – a further seven civilizations emerged. These are: Yucatec (from Mayan), Babylonian (from Sumeric), Mexico (from Mayan), Abortive First Syriac (from Sumeric), Hittite (from Sumeric), Indic (from Indus), Syriac Hellenic (from Minoan), and Sinic (from Shang). These secondary civilizations emerged through dominant minorities (the first two) and external proletariats (the latter five) but without any influences from the then non-existing higher-religions. However the third group of civilizations – the tertiary civilizations – emerged through the higher religions as a chrysalis. These tertiary civilizations are: Hindu (from the Indic through Hinduism), Iranian/Arabic (from Syriac through Islam), Abortive Far Eastern Christian (from Hellenic through Christianity), Western Christian, Orthodox Christian, and Orthodox Russian Christian (from Hellenic through Christianity), Abortive Far Western (from Hellenic through Christianity), Abortive Scandinavian (from Hellenic through external proletariat), and Far Eastern in Korea and Japan (from Sinic through Mahayana).²³¹ As the secondary range of civilizations emerged without the chrysalis of churches, it is safe to conclude that churches are not a necessary condition for the emergence of new civilizations.

At this point Toynbee further develops the new counter-intuitive hypothesis that universal churches may be a higher species of society than civilizations:

If we ask ourselves why the descending movement in the revolution of the wheel of civilization should be the sovereign means of carrying the chariot of Religion forward and upward, we shall find our answer in the truth that Religion is a spiritual activity, and that spiritual progress is subject to a 'law' proclaimed by Aeschylus.²³²

Toynbee implies that when all is going well and mankind is self-satisfied or absorbed in their own accomplishments, the higher spiritual aspect of life tends to be forgotten. When things go wrong and mankind faces imminent disaster then the spiritual eyes

²³¹ Toynbee, "Study," 7: Annexe Table IV -Primitive Societies, Civilizations, Higher Religions.

²³² Toynbee, "Study," 7:423. Aeschylus's law is- through suffering – wisdom.

and ears are re-awakened and spiritual illumination can take place. Revelation is achieved through tribulations.

Spiritual and secular ideals are at variance; they are perpetually striving with one another for mastery over human souls; and it is therefore not surprising that souls should be deaf to the call of the Spirit in times of secular prosperity, and sensitive to the neglected whisper of the still small voice when the vanity of This World is brought home to them by secular catastrophes and when their hearts are softened by the sufferings and sorrows these catastrophes inflict.²³³

The interregna that secular societies experience, i.e. the gaps between one disappearing society and another emerging, are the macro version of the inner spiritual dimension too. Especially during these periods, religions may display intermittent periods of growth and decline. There may be “flashes of intense spiritual illumination and bursts of fervent spiritual activity”.²³⁴ Catastrophe can then act as the bringer or instigator of good – a Faustian principle.²³⁵ Toynbee then observes that most or indeed all universal churches hold that their – and only their – account of reality is true. In other words, these churches are exclusive as far as the possession of truth is concerned. He concludes that they may well have to change in the future. After all, they are already confronting a major challenge in the form of modern science as well as older philosophy. This discussion on theology, philosophy and science brings us closer to an appreciation of the need for multiple epistemic lenses and the subtleties of language.

2.3.7. Science, Philosophy and Religion

Though using mythological discourses in order to break out of modernity's rational constraints, Toynbee defends modern science and its methods:

Science need abandon neither her belief in her mission to give Man an ever-increasing command over Non-Human Nature nor her confidence in her ability to go on winning successes in her own proper field.²³⁶

²³³ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 7:425.

²³⁴ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 7:425.

²³⁵ Faust lines 1335-6: “Nur gut, wer bist du denn?– Ein Teil von jener Kraft, Die stets das Böse will und stet das Gute schafft.”

²³⁶ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 7:485.

In fact Toynbee went even further by suggesting “[r]eligion ought to be prepared to surrender to science every province of intellectual knowledge traditionally within religion’s field, to which science might succeed in establishing a title.”²³⁷ Statements like these invited criticism from Christian scholars, including Martin Wight:

What is Religion to do when a Freudian or a Behaviourist Psychology assert a title to the province of Moral Philosophy? [...] Is Religion not to defend its own truths?²³⁸

In his reply, Toynbee insists that scientific method should reign in its valid domain:

It was the intellectual glory of a Modern Western Science that it was always willing to put its successive hypotheses to the test of a free and unfettered examination. [...] This admirable empirical method of inquiry [...] usually resulted in course of time in producing agreed and assured additions to scientific knowledge.²³⁹

The other side of the same argument is, of course, that science should limit itself to its domain. Science, in other words, was not universal. There were areas of human knowledge that its methods and epistemology could not reach:

Man’s intellect is always in danger of being dazzled by its own triumphs through overlooking the sobering truth that, by comparison with the Soul, the Intellect has an easy task. The field within which the Intellect makes its conquests is relatively narrow, and the objects with which it deals are relatively tractable.²⁴⁰

Toynbee believes that “[t]he truth is that the command over Non-Human Nature is of almost infinitely less importance to Man than his relations with himself, with his fellow men, and with God.”²⁴¹ He quotes the theologian Emil Brunner in order to support this point:

²³⁷ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 7:489.

²³⁸ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 7:489, Footnote 3.

²³⁹ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 7:489, Footnote 3.

²⁴⁰ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 7:486.

²⁴¹ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 7:487.

Abstract Reason does not tend to communion, but to unity. In thinking, I am related to general truth, to ideas, but not to the Thou of my neighbour.²⁴²

According to Toynbee, science was, however, performing an important service to the benefit of Christianity (and by default this would include and apply to all religions) because it allowed religion to focus on its proper domain; science helped clarify the boundaries of the spiritual:

In [...] 1952 [...] in carving out for itself a new province labelled psychology, a post-modern Western science would be imposing upon Christianity the most painful and at the same time perhaps most beneficent of all its acts of liberation by stripping away from a Christian theology some of those anthropomorphic veils that had proved in the past to be the most tenacious of all the barriers between the Human Soul and its Maker. In performing for Christianity this excruciating service, science, so far from depriving the soul of God, would assuredly prove to have brought the Soul one step nearer [its goal].²⁴³

The analysis is leading to the conclusion that science has its own valid realm of truth, which had been the mastery of physical nature. Science's achievements in this realm have been breathtaking. In comparison, however, he believes that this realm, and by implication science, is less important to mankind's happiness than is the knowledge of the soul or the realm of the heart. Science, therefore, needs to understand its place and its foundations:

Man's intellect would never have had a chance [...] if Primitive Man had not risen to this spiritual occasion so far as to school himself in those rudiments of sociality that are the Intellect's indispensable conditions for performing its co-operative and cumulative work.²⁴⁴

Religion, in turn, must refrain from using the language of science and indeed philosophy to justify and explain itself. Historically, theology's attempts to conscript philosophical reason in support of its arguments ended in a failure to engage with the world. In Greek Philosophy, it ends up in Stoic isolationism;²⁴⁵ in Hinayana Buddhism, it

²⁴² Toynbee, "Study," 7:487.

²⁴³ Toynbee, "Study," 7:492.

²⁴⁴ Toynbee, "Study," 7:487.

²⁴⁵ Toynbee, "Study," 7:515.

ends up in detachment. The attempts by religion to take on board and utilise philosophical language for their own arguments did not achieve any real bon-accord between the rivals. As Toynbee comments:

It had proceeded on the mistaken assumption that spiritual truth could be formulated in intellectual terms. In a twentieth-century Westernizing World the Heart and the Head would be well advised to take warning from this historic failure [...] to achieve a reconciliation on erroneous lines.²⁴⁶

Martin Wight, however, again takes issue and asks how the reconciliation between 'reason' and the 'subconscious' cannot but rely on some systematized and stated formulation for its articulation – "such a formulation is the proper work of Reason itself".²⁴⁷ Toynbee responds in a manner that is consistent with his appreciation of the importance of myth and intuition:

I do not accept your postulate that a reconciliation between reason and the subconscious must be communicated by reason in some systematized formulation. Plato for example scrupulously refrained from attempting this.²⁴⁸ He yokes reason and intuition to his winged chariot side by side [...]. I appeal to Plato's example.²⁴⁹

The underlying issue in this debate is the role of language, i.e. how language is used and for what purpose. Toynbee quotes Walter Terence Stace in support,

All religious propositions are symbolic, but come to be taken literally. For literal language and the language of fact are identical. This is everywhere the trap, which lies in the path of the religious consciousness. It mistakes its own utterances for literal statements of fact. Its doom is then sealed. For always in the end it turns out that the alleged facts are not facts, but fictions. And the discovery of this, whether by Science or Philosophy, or merely by Common Sense, is the triumph of Scepticism.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁶ Toynbee, "Study," 7:494-5.

²⁴⁷ Toynbee, "Study," 7:501, footnote 1.

²⁴⁸ "It was a discovery of Plato's that the mythopoeic activity of the human spirit was 'primary' not only in the sense of being 'primitive', but also in the sense of being 'profound', so that even the philosopher, in his highly sophisticated quest, might succeed in penetrating beyond the furthest limits to which reason and logic could carry him by bringing his mythopoeic faculty into play." Toynbee, "Study," 3:259, footnote 3.

²⁴⁹ Toynbee, "Study," 7:501, footnote 1.

²⁵⁰ Toynbee, "Study," 7:503, footnote 8.

Toynbee explains that the rational and intuitive areas of the psyche are constrained by both having to use one language to express two kinds of truth. These relate to the many different

[...] aspects, planes, and dimensions of reality [...] here [therefore] lay the remediable cause of the insoluble and estranging verbal controversies that had arisen between Science and Religion.²⁵¹

Using the example of the bread and wine of the Eucharist, Toynbee is effectively asking which is the more significant, the spiritual truth of the communion or the dietary value of the bread: “Does not this mythological use of language aptly express the truth of the Heart? And if it does, is this not the most important of the alternative uses to which words can be put?”²⁵² Here we find evidence of Toynbee’s constructivist understanding of language being used not theoretically but symbolically as carrying spiritual rather than intellectual meaning.

2.3.8. Toynbee’s conclusions

Clarifying the relationship between churches and civilizations, Toynbee concludes that the breakdown of a civilization is not a disaster if it gives rise to a universal church of a higher religion; breakdown signifies a regression, however, if the civilization emerges from a previously established church, i.e. if the people go back to worshipping the part after having found the whole. The microcosmic individual must establish an inner relation with the macrocosmic God, who (or which) is defined as love – for other, not self. Mimesis of any ‘thing’ (part) other than God (the whole) is ultimately doomed. By aiming at the *Civitas Dei*, the target beyond the target, mankind can establish a non-tragic world in this realm of time and space. By communion with God as love, the individual can recharge unlimitedly their own spiritual selves and do good in this world.

Sages and Saints who aim merely at ‘spiritual prowess’ are not the proper source for mimetic discipleship, and neither are intellectuals as they are focussing on the head only rather than the twin ‘horses’ of Plato. Christ is held as the supreme example, as

²⁵¹ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 7:502

²⁵² Toynbee, “*Study*,” 7:503.

God incarnate, because he always aimed to do the will of the Father.²⁵³ Whilst the Bodhisattvas also philosophically qualify for this role, there is an emphasis on Christianity and temporarily on some Catholic perspectives in particular.²⁵⁴

This 'return' from the 'external' to the 'inner' spiritual realm, Toynbee argues, is also the guidance we receive from both Socrates and Plato.²⁵⁵ Socrates abandoned science for the inner realm of ethics. Plato argued that the intuitive route to 'truth' is necessary. In other words, the true intellectual is the one who pursues rational truth but who also realizes the need for spiritual nourishment. The higher religions are the diverse projections of the one and the same Civitas Dei, which is of a higher order than the species of civilizations.

Thus, civilizations are bigger wholes than fragmentary parochial nations; however, ultimately the higher religions as an ecumenical spiritual order without parochial territorial boundaries are yet higher still. There is a further exposition of the 'expansion of the field of study', which illustrates that when in genesis, growth and breakdown, civilizations can be understood as intelligible fields of study. But in the final disintegration phase the cross influence that gives rise to the higher religions – as for example in areas such as Syria and the Oxus-Jaxartes Basin where Christianity and Mahayana emerge – means that they are no longer separate and no longer comparatively intelligible.

The wide scope of historical civilizations that have been used throughout to empirically illustrate his themes and motifs draws to a close as he focuses his attention more towards the prospects of the modern civilization of the West. Even though all

²⁵³ Toynbee anthropomorphically describes God as emptying himself into the historical world as Christ so that he can experience the human dimension and set the example of how to live for others. This term emptying is very interesting for our later discussion on the concept of Emptiness in the Buddhist discourse. Toynbee was not using the word from the Buddhist discourse but arrived at a very subtle articulation that stands at the edge of the Buddhist intelligibility.

²⁵⁴ As we covered in his life story, his own 'times of troubles' brought him very near Catholicism in order, we suspect, to prevent his wife Rosalind from leaving him. In this sense we can understand the temporary 'emphasis' on the Catholic perspectives. Indeed Gilbert Murray found him in a confused state during this period as witnessed in a letter Murray wrote in 1940 to his friend Barbara Hammond, "As Catholicism under Rosalind's influence grew upon him, he was worried by its obvious inconsistency with his theory of civilisation [...] then in an amazing collapse of common sense, he finds the essence of the True Religion in the Catholic Hierarchy and the Mass [...]. I think he became alienated from Modern Civilization at the Abyssinian crisis and after, he felt that all statesmen were pursuing gross worldly and material aims and neglecting higher considerations. He was in a state of great emotion about this, and I suspect that R somehow got him to identify the 'higher things' with Catholic Christianity. He was [however] alienated from the Catholics by their behaviour in Spain." In Wilson, "*Gilbert Murray*," 345. Murray found it 'deplorable' and a 'curious business'.

²⁵⁵ Even Aristotle too, by some accounts of his thinking developed in the Nicomachean Ethics. See chapter 5 references to Christopher Long's *The Ethics of Ontology*.

civilizations have ultimately disintegrated there is no necessary reason for the West to follow the same route. There are patterns but the underlying 'laws' are not deterministic; choice is at the essence of what transpires. Finally, even if a world society emerged through institutional means, or under a universal state, order, peace and security are not guaranteed because every day 'original sin' begins anew.

Whatever happens in the 'mundane world' the only sureness lies in the 'Civitas Dei' – which is the continuing attempt to behold the ultimate (God as love) in the heart. In Jan Smuts' terms, an acknowledged influence on Toynbee (see below), the individual born into the world has to travel through the process from existing as a biological, instinctive whole, through controlled self-consciousness, to 'group consciousness' as a member of a community, to 'super-consciousness' contributing to a higher spiritual order through establishing an inner spiritual consciousness. This latter whole is the highest form of whole as yet seen or evolved. The tragedy of civilizations is that so far they keep missing the mark; during periods of disintegration, love of ego-self (fragment) makes us regress where love of God (whole) should make us progress. This is Toynbee's conclusion from his journey through six thousand years of history and twenty-one civilizations. Whilst science and technology, philosophy and political theories are worthy and outstanding achievements, without the right heart or soul there could be no 'ultimate' solution. As he wrote to Lionel Curtis,

I don't believe that mankind is going to find its salvation in politics. I think both politics and economics are like drains. If you let them go wrong, appalling things happen, but to keep them in order is neither the object of life nor an object that is attainable by aiming at it directly. I think if the peoples religious relations are right, then politics and economics come right automatically and incidentally, while, if religious relations are wrong, politics and economics are past praying for.²⁵⁶

Though he was convinced of the centrality of spirituality, just what difference the higher religions will make in the future, however, is yet to be seen – as Gilbert Murray wrote to him after seeing his draft of the *Tragedy of Greece*:

²⁵⁶ Curtis MSS 27/112/23-5, Letter Toynbee to Curtis, March 24th 1934.

The sea is distilled in vapours, the rivers run again, the same old experiment begins again in diff conditions, but at least we have the experience of the past treasured up for our better understanding of the new play [...].²⁵⁷

²⁵⁷ Bodleian Library, Toynbee Papers, Letter Gilbert Murray to AJT, Nov 15th 1920.

3. Toynbee's method: sources, origins, implications

Toynbee's approach in the *Study* drew heavily on his classical education, but was fruitfully enriched by the holistic perspective proposed by the new physics of relativity and complexity, thus giving rise to what we could call a 'holist interpretation' of human history. For Toynbee, this interpretation was always geared towards action rather than detached scientific observation. We suggest that especially the last four volumes of the *Study* reflected Toynbee's attempt to 'act in the world', to respond to the crisis he felt and diagnosed; and this 'action' was the immediate result of his observation and interpretation of world history. We will explore this reading of the *Study* as an 'act' (rather than information) further in the second part of this thesis. Before this we will look at some aspects of his method that have not been fully explored. Though the influence of Bergson for example was immense as regards the use of his notions of intuition, creativity and creative individuals etc., as well as the co-extensive equating of the soul and the cosmos- these were also reflected or found in Plato too and it is Toynbee's eclectic mix of classical ideas and 'modern' concepts that stands out. We will now focus on what we perceive are three underdeveloped aspects on his thinking.

3.1. Toynbee's classical education

While it is generally acknowledged – also by Toynbee himself – that his approach to reality was influenced by his classical education,²⁵⁸ the nature of this influence is unclear. In what ways would Toynbee's education impact on the approach later taken in the *Study*? None of his critics have bothered to explore this question even though, as we will argue below, the question sheds light on some of the key assumptions underlying the *Study*. Toynbee's holism could claim to be derived from both the ancient classical method of study and the sciences of relativity and complexity. There is a possibility, indeed, that the latter was a mere modern rationalisation of ideas that Toynbee first encountered in his study of Greek and Latin and the classical authors²⁵⁹ writing in these languages. Toynbee did not just study these subjects as a way of accumulating information but he absorbed them as a way of thinking, and of

²⁵⁸ Kenneth Winetroun Ed., *After One Is Dead: Arnold Toynbee As Prophet: Essays in Honor of Toynbee's Centennial* (Hillside Press, 1989), Chapter 4.

²⁵⁹ For background to these 'classics' see John Edwin Sandys *A History of Classical Scholarship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1903), and Leon Robin, *Greek Thought and the Origins of the Scientific Spirit*, (London, Kegan Paul, 1928)

approaching reality. As he noted on occasion, he felt more at home in Greek and Latin than in English.

Toynbee's education included what is known in modern terms as the seven liberal arts, and these were divided into the trivium²⁶⁰ and the quadrivium. The quadrivium consisted of the study of astronomy, music, geometry and arithmetic. Of particular interest to us is the trivium as it was the branch of learning that dealt with methods of study, comprising grammar, dialectics and rhetoric. By the early 20th Century, other subjects were being taught at Winchester on the basis of the foundation provided by the trivium and quadrivium:

Classics was a significant part of the curriculum, by the early 20th century, the boys were also taught Maths, Chemistry, Divinity, English Literature, German and French, Geology, Natural Sciences and History. Arnold would have studied all of these at some point during his school career. In addition, there were extra more informal classes. One of the dons, later the headmaster, gave illustrated lectures on Italian art and art history. There were also occasional visiting lecturers - a quick look through the school magazine for 1905-1907 shows lectures on archaeological excavations in Rome, exploration in Antarctica, the Japanese Alps, Greece and the Olympic games. Toynbee was also a member of the 'Sixteen Club', whose members read papers on a variety of subjects. In April 1907, Toynbee read a paper on 'the Byzantine Empire under the Macedonian Dynasty'.²⁶¹

The trivium defined the classical method of study and thought and thus provided a first systematic introduction to 'theories of knowledge'. In order to better understand what was at stake in the trivium, it is instructive to look at McLuhan's classic work on the subject.²⁶² McLuhan's work is a synoptic study of western intellectual history ranging from Antiquity to the Middle Ages focusing on the meaning and significance of grammar, rhetoric and dialectic; the three components of the trivium. In the classical understanding, grammar (*grammatica*) was not understood as simply relating to

²⁶⁰ For an introduction to the trivium see Sister Miriam Joseph, *The Trivium: The Liberal Arts of Logic, Grammar, and Rhetoric*. Ed., Marguerite McGlinn, (Philadelphia: Paul Dry Books, 2002), for the role in education see, Suzanne Reynolds *Medieval Reading: Grammar, Rhetoric and the Classical Text*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), for a wider background see Lia Formigari, *A History of Language Philosophies*, translated by Gabriel Poole (Amsterdam: John Benjamin Adams Publishing 2004).

²⁶¹ Suzanne Foster, archivist at Winchester College, Email correspondence with Author, August 7th 2008.

²⁶² Marshall McLuhan, *The Classical Trivium: The Place of Thomas Nash In The Learning of His Time*, ed. W. Terrence Gordon (California: Ginko Press, 2006).

speech parts and structure but as constituting one of three dimensions of learning. Grammar was the art of interpreting not only literary texts but all phenomena; grammar entailed a fully articulated science of exegesis, or interpretation.²⁶³ Dialectics was about 'testing evidence', about how to prove arguments, and about logic. Rhetoric, finally, dealt with complex features of discourse.²⁶⁴ Terence Gordon the editor of McLuhan's work notes he examines western intellectual history as a "history of the rivalry amid practitioners of grammar, rhetoric and dialectics, adding that it cannot be written without adopting the viewpoint of one of them."²⁶⁵

Grammar is situated between the names of things and the things themselves. In Plato's dialogue *Cratylus*, Socrates and Cratylus discuss the role of names. Socrates asks how the givers of names had the knowledge to do so, and Cratylus answers that "a power more than human gave things their first names, and the names that were thus given are necessarily their true names."²⁶⁶ McLuhan notes, "with this kind of importance associated with the names of things, and of gods, heroes, and legendary beings, etymology would be a main source of scientific and moral enlightenment."²⁶⁷ In this effort "grammar or the allegorical exegesis of natural phenomena [...] folk myths [...] Homer and Hesiod, enjoyed many advantages for the task."²⁶⁸

The logos, however, is equally important in understanding this 'power more than human that gave things their first names' because the challenge of understanding reality is not just to 'trace' the true name of things but also to trace how the truth of the things is reflected in the name. Reconstructing the 'name' is a mere means in a quest to uncover the truth of things. McLuhan criticises the modern view that "ancient grammarians regarded language as a product of nature and onomatopoeia as the origin of language". This mistaken view effectively dismisses grammatical science as a form of primitivism.²⁶⁹ For grammar was closely connected with philosophy and the quest for the truth of things, for their true essence.

²⁶³ Gordon's "Introduction" in McLuhan, *The Classical Trivium*, xi. Defined later by Varro as *lectio* (reading aloud), *enarratio* (interpretation of texts), *emendatio* (their correction), and *iudicium* [sic] (their evaluation) in Formigari, "Language Philosophies," 30.

²⁶⁴ McLuhan, *The Classical Trivium*, xi. These involved five dimensions: *inventio* (discovery), *dispositio* (arrangement), *memoria* (memory), *elocutio* (style), and *pronunciatio* (delivery).

²⁶⁵ McLuhan, "The Classical Trivium," xv.

²⁶⁶ McLuhan, *The Classical Trivium*, 15: Citing Jowett, *The Dialogues of Plato*, 1, 678.

²⁶⁷ McLuhan, *The Classical Trivium*, 16.

²⁶⁸ McLuhan, *The Classical Trivium*, 16-17.

²⁶⁹ McLuhan, *The Classical Trivium*, 14.

With the opening of the Christian era, the doctrine of Cratylus gained new significance from scriptural exegesis, and especially from Genesis 2:19, where God forms all beasts and brings them to Adam to name and “whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.”²⁷⁰ The ‘naming doctrine’ is thus a doctrine of essence and not of mere oral terminology. Accordingly, McLuhan explains, scriptural exegesis shows how grammarians viewed Adam’s power of naming as a genuine metaphysical knowledge, which he possessed initially and then lost as a result of the ‘Fall’.

According to McLuhan, Plato asserted that dialectics was superior among the three elements of the trivium but he ‘habitually employed the grammatical works of poetry and myth to express his own most significant and esoteric teaching’, thus showing that “he is far from confident that grammar can be or ought to be entirely superseded.”²⁷¹ “Inseparable from the doctrine of the logos is the cosmological view of the *rerum natura*, the whole, as a continuum [...] this is the basis of Plato’s *Timaeus* [...] and should be seen as a statement of a cosmology already many centuries old.”²⁷² Grammarians typically perceive a strong relationship between “the order of speech and language and the order of nature.”²⁷³ From Antiquity to the Middle Ages, grammar and rhetoric competed with each other, with dialectics used as a means by both camps. Varro is considered an important representative of grammatical thinking. In his *De Lingua Latina*, Varro explains the levels involved:

Now I shall set forth the origins of the individual words, of which there are four levels of explanation. The lowest is that to which even the common folk has come [...]. The second is that to which old time grammar has mounted, which shows how the poet has made each word which he has fashioned and derived [...]. The third level is that to which philosophy ascended, and on arrival began to reveal the nature of those words which are in common use [...]. The forth is that where the sanctuary is, and the mysteries of the high priest; if I shall not arrive at full knowledge there, at any rate I shall cast about for a conjecture [...].

²⁷⁴

²⁷⁰ McLuhan, “*The Classical Trivium*,” 16.

²⁷¹ McLuhan, “*The Classical Trivium*,” 17.

²⁷² McLuhan, “*The Classical Trivium*,” 20-21.

²⁷³ McLuhan, “*The Classical Trivium*,” 21.

²⁷⁴ McLuhan, “*The Classical Trivium*,” 27.

These four levels of interpretation remained a constant in grammatical thinking for centuries and are closely related to the pursuits of physics, ethics, politics and religion. McLuhan notes that Philo was a professional grammarian who applied various levels of signification from the art of grammar to the Old Testament. Philo also “regards history as a theodicy, vindicating the ways of God to man [...] [and] thus the very events of history are a gigantic and complex statement to which the methods of grammatical exegesis are applicable.”²⁷⁵ In other words, the grammatical approach was applicable to history as well.

How does the grammatica method relate to education? Citing Aubrey Gwynn’s work on *Roman Education from Cicero to Quintilian* (1926), McLuhan notes that “the general character of grammar schooling [...] corresponds to a simultaneous application of the disciplines which are today associated with literary research and criticism. Etymology and semantics, the study of figures of speech, of thought, and emotion, prosody, textual criticism, historical *explication de texte*, and practical criticism were all brought into play in a word by word, line by line reading of the poets.”²⁷⁶ These disciplines are conventionally organised into the four phases of *lectio*, *emendatio*, *enrratio*, *judicium* as found in Henri-Irénée Marrou’s *St Augustine et la fin de la culture antique* (1938). De Labriolle in his *History and Literature of Christianity* indicates how

In the course of the enrratio or commentary on a poem, the grammarian was expected to offer general instruction in all of the arts: agriculture, medicine, architecture, history, rhetoric, logic, music, astronomy, geometry, and the rest.²⁷⁷

Quintilian, though a rhetorician, and ‘jealous of grammarians trespassing into their province’ recognizes that

the elementary stages of the teaching of literature must not therefore be despised as trivial [...] as the pupil gradually approaches the inner shrine of the sacred place, he will come to realise the intricacy of the subject [...] calculated not merely to sharpen the wits of a boy but to exercise even the most profound knowledge and erudition.²⁷⁸

²⁷⁵ McLuhan, “*The Classical Trivium*,” 29.

²⁷⁶ McLuhan, “*The Classical Trivium*,” 30.

²⁷⁷ McLuhan, “*The Classical Trivium*,” 31.

²⁷⁸ McLuhan, “*The Classical Trivium*,” 31



According to McLuhan, just as there is a strong link between grammar and philosophy, there is a strong link between grammar and theology: "Quintilian's ideal grammarian is for St Augustine the ideal theologian."²⁷⁹ It is not surprising, therefore, that McLuhan saw Bonaventure as the ultimate expression of the grammatical method. In Bonaventure, the crucial link between names and things is mediated through scripture via analogy:

Since the universe was offered to his eyes as a book to read and he saw in nature a sensible revelation analogous to that of scriptures, the traditional methods of interpretation which had always been applied to the sacred books could equally be applied to the book of creation. Just as there is an immediate and literal sense of the sacred text, but also an allegorical sense by which we discover a moral precept behind a passage in the form of a historical narrative, and an analogical sense by which our souls are raised to the love and desire of God, so we must not attend to the literal and immediate sense of the book of creation but look for its inner meaning in the theological, moral and mystical lessons that it contains. [...] the terms employed by any science designate things, those which scripture employs also designate things, but these things in their turn designate truths of a theological, moral or mystical order. We have done nothing but apply to the sensible world the ordinarily acceptable methods of scriptural exegesis in treating bodies and souls as allegories of the creative Trinity, and it is only in this way that the universe has revealed its true meaning.²⁸⁰

McLuhan also draws on Etienne Gilson's work on Bonaventure in order to highlight the priority of analogy over dialectics:

Gilson observes that the role of things as sign in the order of revelation sanctions the same role for them in the order of nature. [...] Gilson proceeds to show that these guiding principles of interpretation are managed in their application not by the logic of dialectics of Aristotle, which are adapted to the analysis of a world of natures and leaves us 'without the means to explore the

²⁷⁹ McLuhan, "*The Classical Trivium*," 31-32.

²⁸⁰ McLuhan, "*The Classical Trivium*," 35.

secrets of a symbolic world such as that of the Augustinian tradition,' but *by the reasoning of analogy*.²⁸¹

It was Aristotle who established the non-grammatical method in his *Posterior Analytics* but, as Bonaventure demonstrates, the grammatical approach to reality remained dominant until the 12th Century. The decline of grammar is sealed with Descartes' mathematical sciences until it reappears in the 20th Century with the rise of anthropology and psychology. In the 1960s, during the period of social upheaval that included the Vietnam War and student riots, McLuhan notes, "the pursuit of psychological order in the midst of a material and political chaos is the essence of grammatica."²⁸²

Toynbee's work, we suggest, also stands in the tradition of the grammatical; he approached human history from a grammatical point of view. His 'objects' were grammatical 'objects'²⁸³ rather than 'modern scientific'. As we noted, it is not difficult to reconstruct his academic education, and so we know that it was modelled on the trivium. Toynbee studied the classics not just as pieces of information, but he absorbed and internalised their way of thinking. He studied Latin from age 7, Greek from age 10, both through to his 22nd year as he finished his studies at Oxford.²⁸⁴ In his *Reconsiderations*, he wrote that he was more comfortable in Greek and Latin than in English and apologises for his "Latinizing way of writing English".²⁸⁵

We find Varro's four levels of grammatical interpretation reflected in Toynbee's 'method' – history, science, fiction – as well as in his epistemic lenses of empiricism, myth, ethics and religion. And in the grammarian's emphasis on logos, we find Toynbee's quest to synthesize the universe of human history and the direction of its development. We also find in these ideas an appreciation of the mystery of the naming of things, and thus an acknowledgement of the finitude human knowledge. For Toynbee, this means that we must accept that our knowledge will be limited by our

²⁸¹ McLuhan, "*The Classical Trivium*," 36. Our emphasis.

²⁸² McLuhan, "*The Classical Trivium*," xi.

²⁸³ "Most of his definitions are literary rather than scientific, and much of his terminology has that breadth and vagueness which generally characterizes spiritual interpretations of history." Kenneth Thompson, *Toynbee's Philosophy of World History and Politics* (Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1985), 216. But as McLuhan is pointing out in the 'ancient' world grammatica is science.

²⁸⁴ "Education at Winchester in the years 1902-7 was nine-tenths classical [...] at the age of sixteen [...]. In order to escape calculus and facilitate] reading Greek and Latin literature more widely...I chose to give up mathematics [...] I have lived to regret this keenly." Arnold Toynbee, *Experiences* (Oxford: OUP, 1970), 11-20

²⁸⁵ Toynbee, "*Reconsiderations*," 587-589.

preconceptions, which serve no other purpose but to give some preliminary contents to the mystery. Our preconceptions are assumptions that we have to make in order to start somewhere; the best we can do is to be aware of them and to make them as explicit as possible. We cannot know without preconceptions, without blind spots. The knowledge we do gain in this process is tested, rejected or validated not in scientific experiments but in the very real lives that we live and in the societies we create. This is why history ought to become a primary focus of our grammatical efforts.

There are two further existential issues that must have convinced Toynbee that the classical perspective of grammatica was the proper way of studying history. First of all, Toynbee felt that there was an advantage in using a perspective that was older than the modern Western world in which he lived. Using an approach first designed in Antiquity and then re-invented during the Renaissance allowed him to “see the Western World with the eyes of those fifteenth-century scholars. [...] Seen from this “classical” standpoint, our familiar Western World undergoes a metamorphosis that is startling but instructive.”²⁸⁶ Instead of regarding one’s own society as coextensive with the world, the grammatical perspective reveals to the observer that the Western world looks “less large and looks less grand. Its appearance on the scene strikes him as being, at best, an epilogue that makes an anti-climax. At worst it seems an impertinence or even an outrage.”²⁸⁷ In other words, his classical education allowed Toynbee to stand outside his own culture as he adopted an anti-hegemonic outlook, thus relativising the significance of the present.

Second, we must remember that the *Study* was conceived at a time when the world, and especially the Western world, underwent a crisis that from a distance may well have looked like a terminal crisis. Given the upheavals in Toynbee’s own life, we can understand that the search for order ‘in the midst of chaos’ (see McLuhan above) was a crucial existential concern for Toynbee. For the Greeks, knowledge always had to have an educational purpose; it had to teach lessons, which ultimately would help the soul to assume or resume an ordered, balanced existence. The *Study* was meant to serve a very similar purpose not just for Toynbee, but also for his readers. As such it constituted an ‘act of resistance’ against the prevailing disorder of the time. We will return to this theme in Part Two of this thesis.

²⁸⁶ Toynbee, “*Reconsiderations*,” 581.

²⁸⁷ Toynbee, “*Reconsiderations*,” 581.

3.2. Toynbee's categories and classifications

At least initially, Toynbee's classifications – the main units of his analysis, their characteristic features, the 'genus' and the 'species' of his work – all seem to be influenced by Aristotle's method of finding universals. In the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle identifies man as a rational animal, a species of the genus 'animal'. According to the famous opening of the *Metaphysics*, all men by nature love knowledge; they also love their senses and they have a preference for sight over the other senses. Impressions and memory are the key foundations of our view of reality, "but the human race lives also by art and reasoning," ²⁸⁸ furthermore:

Art is produced when from many notions of experience a single universal judgement is formed with regard to like objects. ²⁸⁹

In other words, after multiple singular experiences the artist conceptualizes a universal truth. "[E]xperience is knowledge of particulars, but art of universals". ²⁹⁰ Thus, Aristotle distinguishes between empirical experiences (as singulars) and the rational or reasoned conceptual extraction or recognition of universals. If there are sufficient similar cases, then one universal concept (a law or principle) may emerge from them. The person who does this abstracting or recognition is the artist. As Aristotle indicates also in his *Poetics*, the particular singulars are to be found in what has happened, i.e. in history. The generalizations are articulated in the higher level art of poetry as it reveals universals.

Toynbee's early steps in the Study were guided by similar principles. He established 'society' as the genus, and then identified different species. 'Primitive societies' were one species, and they were studied by anthropology and archaeology. 'Civilizations', as we know, was a second species, and they were studied by history. Using the Hellenic civilization as his template, he developed criteria that would define the species. These criteria were the patterns of genesis, growth, breakdown and disintegration. On the basis of these definitions and criteria, other definitions and criteria were developed: creative individuals, mimetic disciples, dominant minorities,

²⁸⁸ Aristotle, "*Metaphysics*," book I 980b, cited from <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text.jsp?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0052%3Abook%3D1%3Asection%3D980b> Aristotle in 23 Volumes, Vols.17, 18, translated by Hugh Tredennick. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press; London, William Heinemann Ltd. 1933, 1989.

²⁸⁹ Aristotle, "*Metaphysics*," book I 981a.

²⁹⁰ Aristotle, "*Metaphysics*," book I 981a.

creative minorities, internal and external proletariats etc. In contrast to Aristotle, however, Toynbee considered history to be a higher art not unlike poetry as history too could reveal universal laws and principles.

Aristotle's scheme provided guidance for Toynbee's endeavour for some time until he ran into the problem that 'civilizations' – especially during periods of disintegration – are not separate entities and thus can no longer be compared in a meaningful manner. As Toynbee sees himself forced to move to higher religions as the new foci of the *Study*, Aristotle's scheme reaches its limits. In fact, the tension between Aristotle's conventional scheme and Toynbee's quest was increasing as soon as Toynbee understood his 'intelligible units of history' not so much as units but as 'fields of action', which qua fields could overlap. We must keep in mind, however, that Toynbee's early efforts were guided by fairly rigid and clear principles, and we draw attention to this fact here in anticipation of our later review of the criticisms he encountered. Toynbee did follow a method throughout his *Study*. If later critics complained that his work was 'unscientific', they fail to understand that Toynbee's 'science' was older than the science of e.g. modern sociology. The fact that he later suggested in his *Reconsiderations* that his civilizations were to be understood as Weberian 'ideal types' only confirms this impression.²⁹¹ Given the foundations of the *Study* in classical understandings of method, universals and 'science', it was quite predictable that scientists and academics who were familiar only with the modern understanding of 'science' would find the *Study* impenetrable. The fact that Toynbee attempted to draw on the most recent developments in the sciences of relativity, complexity and evolution was always likely to confuse his readers even more.

3.3. Holism as a structuring principle

We already noted that 'holism' was one of the key principles informing the *Study*, and we identified Jan Smuts' book *Holism and Evolution* as one of Toynbee's key inspirations.²⁹² Toynbee acknowledges in volume ten that,

²⁹¹ Toynbee, "*Reconsiderations*," 159.

²⁹² Navari picks this up without developing it. "It was an evolutionary schema, which Toynbee attributed to his reading of Job but which probably derived from J. C. Smuts' *Holism and Evolution*, one of his acknowledged influences." Cornelia Navari, "Arnold Toynbee Prophecy and Civilization" in *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 26 (2000), 292.

General J. C. Smuts, in his *Holism and Evolution*, communicated to me his insight into the cosmic movement in which reality passes through different orders of being without losing its continuity or its identity. The orders differ, but the genius of creation and the goal towards which its course is set are the same at each and every level of the rising hierarchy of successive creatures.²⁹³

Smuts was a highly recognized and decorated statesman; the fact that he also aspired to be a philosopher and scientist is less well known. The ideas of *Holism and Evolution* go back to his years at Cambridge University, where he received prizes and firsts in his law and jurisprudence degree. Smuts initially wrote about the evolution of personality and completed a study of the poet Walt Whitman. It was never published in his lifetime,²⁹⁴ but the ideas articulated there were later broadened and extended after he had come into contact with Einstein's theory of Relativity. It appears that Smuts sent a copy of *Holism and Evolution* to Einstein, who, according to the legend, wrote back that he (Smuts) was one of only about a dozen people who truly understood his theory of relativity.²⁹⁵

Smuts' volume attempts to create a new conceptual framework in which it was to become possible to consider the workings of matter, life and mind as One. Drawing on Darwin's theory of evolution and Einstein's theory of relativity, *Holism and Evolution* offers a synthesis of 'life's personality'. According to Smuts, evolution is not driven by physical force as understood by Newtonian mechanics but by creativity embedded in matter. Smuts believed that the new physics revealed a unified creative reality; his book was a contribution towards the development of a new scientific vocabulary needed to articulate this new understanding of reality.

Smuts argued that philosophy by demarcating a province of universals and principles had moved away from the scientific focus on particular concretes. Science divorced from philosophy, however, only sees structures in purely mechanistic terms. Such a limited understanding of both philosophy and science was inadequate because the

²⁹³ Toynbee, "Study," 10:234-5.

²⁹⁴ A copy was published in 1973, Alan L. McLeod Ed., *Walt Whitman: A Study in the Evolution of Personality by Jan Christian Smuts* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1973).

²⁹⁵ Attributed to Gail Natrass and S.B. Spies Eds., *Memoirs of the Boer War Jan Christian Smuts* (Johannesburg: J.Ball, 1994), 19. But I have not been able to confirm this.

“real world is neither a mere principle nor a mere structure, neither a disembodied soul nor a soulless mechanism.”²⁹⁶ Evolution was both structure and principle:

Interpenetrating each other [...] the universal realises itself [...] in and through individual bodies, in particular things and facts. The Temple of the Spirit is the structure of matter. The universal dwells in the concrete particular. Neither is real nor true apart from the other.²⁹⁷

Thus, “[c]oncepts must be developed which will include the material and the view-points of both science and philosophy.”²⁹⁸ While the worldview of classical physics articulated a mechanical relationship between substance-based parts, which were then aggregated in order to produce wholes, the quantum world was entirely different. The ontology of substance does not apply at the deepest level. At this level, fields of energy are the ‘stuff’ of reality. ‘Static things’ are revealed as ‘dynamic events’, and whilst they have a central sensible realm (the old classical ‘thing’), they also radiate a field of influence. Just as light is both composed of particles and waves, the ‘old’ things were both things and fields. This new view of fields and relations provided Toynbee with the vocabulary to write about civilizations. We find a total of fifteen direct quotes from Smuts’ work in the first three books of the *Study*.²⁹⁹ We will briefly review some of Smuts’ key ideas as presented in *Holism and Evolution*.

Smuts proposes that holism is the ultimate principle of the universe. Instead of the traditional view of an inert universe of dead matter that coalesces into larger lumps through physical laws such as gravity, Smuts posits a universe with a creative tendency to produce wholes: “[i]t is the motive force behind Evolution”.³⁰⁰ Smuts lays out six evolving stages or levels of holism:³⁰¹

- 1) Material structures as in chemical compounds.
- 2) Functional structure as in living bodies.
- 3) Co-operative activity, implicit and un-conscious.
- 4) Conscious and central control leading to personality.

²⁹⁶ Jan Christian Smuts, *Holism and Evolution: the original source of the holistic approach to life* Sanford Holst Ed., (California: Sierra Publishing, 1996), 101.

²⁹⁷ Smuts, “*Holism*,” 101.

²⁹⁸ Smuts, “*Holism*,” 101.

²⁹⁹ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 1:197, 272-3, 277, 279, 284, 286, 432.

Toynbee, “*Study*,” 3:123-4, 127, 218, 223-4, 225, 227, 233, 234.

³⁰⁰ Smuts, “*Holism*,” 109.

³⁰¹ Smuts, “*Holism*,” 116-7.

- 5) In human associations – ‘super-individuality’ such as found in the ‘state’ and other group organizations.
- 6) Ideal wholes or values disengaged from personality (as self-interest), the building of a spiritual world – truth, beauty, goodness – a new order in the universe.

We immediately note the crucial transition from level 5) to level 6), which reflects Toynbee’s move from civilizations to higher religions. Against the background of Smuts’ evolutionary scheme, the shift from civilizations to higher religions is not simply a ‘leap’ from one institution to another, but a ‘leap’ from one order of being to another. In Smuts’ terms, *“the whole is not something additional to the parts, but is just the parts in their [creative] synthesis, which may be physio-chemical or organic or psychical or personal.”*³⁰² (italics in the original).

Smuts considers Plato’s understanding of the soul as an indivisible and immortal whole as a static view, which is counter to the phenomenal reality of creative change.³⁰³ He also dismisses two common approaches to the origins and development of the universe. First, there is the view that everything that ever will be is already entailed in the origin, so that everything that ever will be has already been created in some sense. The second view is that the universe is unfolding according to fixed laws. This view, according to Smuts, is implicit in Hegel’s account of history, which is an unfolding of implicit beginnings according to the deterministic laws of dialectics. The initial conditions and the laws of development limit the possible variations.

Hegel’s Idea is just such an attempt at a logical unfolding of the universe [...] the explanation of the universe is in the past, at the beginning: that beginning rules all and predetermines all.³⁰⁴

In Smuts’ view, every time new higher-level wholes are created, their origins are also new, representing new ‘initial conditions’, and permitting further original variations. Accordingly, there is a limitless creativity of possibilities. There is, of course, materiality, but it is not deterministic; it is inherently creative. Traditional science only perceives the mechanistic external relationship between ‘things’ (e.g. the movement of billiard balls bouncing off each other) and fails to perceive “an interior element or action

³⁰² Smuts, “Holism,” 96.

³⁰³ Smuts, “Holism,” 112.

³⁰⁴ Smuts, “Holism,” 98.

of bodies [...] dynamic, organic, evolutionary, creative [...] enough to negative [sic] the mechanical conception".³⁰⁵

Einstein's theory of relativity bridged the gap between time and space, and in order to be able to fully appreciate the implications of this insight, Smuts suggests that the separate realms of life, matter and mind must also be bridged. What used to be 'things' are dynamic 'events', and these events have fields of action that radiate from the centre to the infinite. These fields not only have a material existence, they also reach out into the conceptual realm, thus undermining the traditional scientific separation between observers and observed. "[F]rom this point of view bodies and things are not real but abstractions. While events, which involve. [...] Action in Space-Time are real and form the units of reality."³⁰⁶ Gone is the simplistic 19th Century account of causality and determinism; instead we find a new understanding of reality. Smuts makes it clear that neither the cogito intellect nor Bergson's subjective time duration alone are capable of providing the required bridge or synthesis. What is required, rather, is a synthesis of intellect and spirit with action, built upon a concrete, scientific foundation.

The wholes arise and emerge at multiple levels, starting at the physical level with structures such as gases, liquids, solids and colloids. At higher levels we find organic plants, the unconscious animals, the conscious human, the 'personality', the super-groups, states, associations and institutions, and the spiritual high value ideals.

The idea of wholes and wholeness should therefore not be confined to the biological domain. It covers both inorganic substances and the highest manifestation of the human spirit.³⁰⁷

Smuts emphasized that this new holism required scientists to study vast areas of knowledge; 'micro specialization', a hallmark of the traditional science, was no longer adequate. In fact, the old boundaries between micro and macro needed to be crossed and indeed dissolved. Based on Smuts we can make some initial observations.

At the level of the individual units, it may be possible that 'cause and effect' relationships can be conventionally established, but at a higher level of aggregation – at the level of a new 'whole' – phenomena cannot be reduced to the lower level. This

³⁰⁵ Smuts, "Holism," 113-4.

³⁰⁶ Smuts, "Holism," 24. (Italics in the original)

³⁰⁷ Smuts, "Holism," 94.

problem of explaining phenomena across different levels of aggregation and organization do occasionally come up in fields such as sociology, e.g. in relation to Durkheim's structuralism. Durkheim argued against reductionism and proposed that higher-level phenomena can only be explained at the very same higher level so that, for example, social 'facts' have to be explained in terms of other social 'facts' and not in terms of the wills and intentions of individuals. A similar type of problem is well known in theoretical physics, where researchers have to reconcile the determinacy and reversibility of time based on the Newtonian laws with the second law of thermodynamics (entropy), which states the irreversibility of time. Ilya Prigogine has spent a lifetime working on this reconciliation. Already in the 19th Century, Poincaré had written:

Perhaps the kinetic theory of gases will serve as a model [...] Physical laws will then take on a completely new form; they will take on statistical character.³⁰⁸

Prigogine comments:

Now more than one hundred years later, we are beginning to understand how probabilistic concepts emerge when we go from dynamics to thermodynamics. Instability destroys the equivalence between the individual and statistical levels of description. Probabilities then acquire an intrinsically dynamical meaning. This knowledge has led to a new kind of physics, the physics of populations.³⁰⁹

Theorists now argue that group properties are not explained by the parts, but emerge from the new 'groupness'. Commenting on 'phase transitions', which occur e.g. when ice turns into water and then into steam, Prigogine continues:

As long as we consider merely a few particles, we cannot say if they form a liquid or a gas. States of matter as well as phase transitions are ultimately defined by the thermodynamic limit. The existence of phase transitions shows that we have to be careful when we adopt a reductionist attitude. Phase transitions correspond to emerging properties. They are meaningful only at the level of populations, and not of single particles.³¹⁰

³⁰⁸ Ilya Prigogine, *The End of Certainty: Time, Chaos, and the New Laws of Nature* (London: The Free Press, 1997), 35.

³⁰⁹ Prigogine, "The End of Certainty," 35

³¹⁰ Prigogine, "The End of Certainty," 45.

Quantum reality has shown that the reality of 'higher levels' of wholeness exists not only in an upward direction but also 'downwards' or 'inwards'. Beneath the conventional 'individual unit' (the atom) we find sub-atomic particles, which take on different aspects when they occur in 'populations', i.e. when they form new, higher wholes. The conventional individual, therefore, turns out to be an abstraction; its reality is best understood in statistical terms.

We suggest that the problem of the emergence of 'new wholes' – phase transitions, emergent orders – is present also in the *Study*. Toynbee deals with it in the digression where he discusses the necessary use of 'fictions' to capture statistical patterns in 'enormous amounts of data'. Toynbee draws on myth in order to express truths, which properly refer to new levels of aggregation and wholeness; these myths express patterns of beliefs and behaviour, which cannot be expressed in a reductionist manner in terms of what individuals want or intend to do. Societies use this mode of expression because, intuitively, they know that truths, too, have different levels and layers. As a result of the *Study*, Toynbee follows the evolutionary path of new wholes emerging from lower levels of aggregation. Based on Smuts, he understands these new wholes as genuine creations; they create new initial conditions for subsequent developments. Yet they are 'leaps' that occur within one evolutionary process.

We can now briefly summarise the different ways in which Smuts influenced Toynbee's approach in the *Study*. First, Toynbee's commitment to holism provides the foundation for his criticism of the 'fragmentary' and 'parochial' histories of nation-states. Nation states, which are 'fictional constructions', are lesser wholes than the higher civilizations, which in turn are lesser wholes than the higher religions. Second, Toynbee's anti-hegemonic bias is informed by his conviction that partial knowledge of the part must never be mistaken for knowledge of the whole. No part can pose as a 'true image' of the whole – this insight entailed a criticism of modern Western society and its self-understanding as the pinnacle of human progress. Third, influenced by the cluster of ideas that can be found in Smuts' holism, Toynbee could not but be critical of the ever-increasing division and specialization of knowledge that was evident in all the sciences, including the humanities.

The excessive analysis of smaller and smaller areas of research was a mirror reflection of the industrial techniques of the division of labour, which had proven so 'successful' in the realm of economics and industry. Instead of breaking up the wholes into parts and focusing on the parts, a synthesis was required that put the wholes 'back together'.

This 'putting back together', however, was an intuitive creative act because the wholes were more than the sum of the parts. This is one of the many points of contact between Smuts' holism as understood by Toynbee and the grammatical approach to reality as found in the trivium. Clearly, Toynbee could not be sympathetic with the 'industrial historiography', which was concerned with mining every single fact before telling the story.

Fourth, Toynbee's holism implied that he could not take disciplinary boundaries very seriously. History, social science, politics, law, religion should all be drawn upon to make sense of human history. Holism implied that researchers had to engage, in Smuts' words, in a "wide ranging exploration surveying large districts",³¹¹ – a dictum that Toynbee must have taken literally. In this 'wide ranging exploration', all realms of human 'life' had to be taken into account – matter, intellect, soul, emotion, spirituality – and each with its own meaning. We have already alluded to the more detailed correspondence between Toynbee and Smuts, e.g. when Toynbee moves from 'civilizations' to 'higher religions'. Overall, therefore, we can conclude that Toynbee found in Smuts' holism and other developments from the insights³¹² of theoretical physics a language that allowed him to articulate an approach, which ultimately had its roots in the Greek and Latin classics.

3.4. Toynbee's mytho-poetic tragedy and Aristotle's *Poetics*

As Toynbee's *Study* moved to higher wholes, the language of cause and effect had to be left behind and the language of myth and literature had to be taken into account. 'Myths' were not 'fictional' stories with an 'irrational' content, but reflections of a deeper truth that concerned man's spiritual life, his innermost experiences and feelings. Traditional sayings, folk tales and myths about Prometheus, Zeus, Faustian characters etc. were accepted as 'evidence' that required interpretation. World literature thereby becomes a rich source of insights regarding the inner feelings of the people who inhabit nations and civilizations. From Toynbee's perspective, it was inexplicable how one could study human history without drawing on these insights. In this section, we suggest that the main heuristic used by Toynbee in his approach to myth and 'psychological truth' (i.e. truth regarding the human psyche or soul) is 'tragedy'.

³¹¹ Smuts, "Holism," 8.

³¹² Toynbee was no scientist in the modern sense; his appreciation of Einstein was through his intuitive recognition of the wholeness found in the insights of the new physics.

The term 'tragedy' is a combination of the Greek terms 'tragos', which means 'goat', and 'oide', which means song. A tragedy, therefore, is a goat-song. It is a story or drama based on human suffering. The reference to the goat implies a link to rituals, which included animal sacrifices (mostly goats). For a story or drama to become a 'tragedy' it must meet a number of conditions. For example, it must feature completion, astonishment, errors, reversals etc.

In September 1921, whilst travelling from Constantinople to England on the Orient Express, Toynbee outlined the structure and volume headings that ultimately became those of the *Study*.³¹³ We have already quoted a crucial statement that resulted from these meditations.³¹⁴ In his *Tragedy of Greece* he clarifies his approach further,

Students of the drama, from Aristotle onwards, will tell you that nearly all the great tragedies in literature are expositions of quite a few fundamental plots. And I suspect that the great tragedies of history — that is, the great civilizations that have been created by the spirit of man — may all reveal the same plot, if we analyse them rightly.³¹⁵

When he approached civilizations as a 'tragedy with a plot', Toynbee was looking for the stages and turning points – the 'acts' – that one would typically find in a tragedy. The suffering that is at the centre of tragedy corresponds to the breakdown and disintegration of a civilization, which Toynbee divided into three 'acts': 'surfeit', the "[p]sychological condition of being spoilt by success",³¹⁶ leading to, "outrageous behaviour", and the "[c]onsequent loss of mental and moral balance"³¹⁷ that in turn results in disaster or a "[b]lind headstrong ungovernable impulse that sweeps the unbalanced soul into attempting the impossible."³¹⁸

The plot is a tragedy in three acts which are familiar in Greek Literature [...]. This active psychological catastrophe in three acts was the commonest theme [...] in the fifth-century Athenian tragic drama. It is the story of Agamemnon in Aeschylus's play, [...] of Xerxes in his *Persae*; the story of Ajax in Sophocles,

³¹³ Toynbee, "Study," 7:x.

³¹⁴ "Civilization is 'a tragedy with a plot, and history is the plot of the tragedy of civilization [...]' each is a variant of a single theme" in chapter 1 above.

³¹⁵ Arnold J. Toynbee, *The Tragedy of Greece* (Oxford: Milford, 1921), 6.

³¹⁶ Toynbee, "Study," 4:258.

³¹⁷ Toynbee, "Study," 4:258

³¹⁸ Toynbee, "Study," 4:258

[...] of Oedipus in his *Oedipus Tyrannus*, [...] of Creon in his *Antigone*; and [...] Pentheus in Euripides *Bacchae*.³¹⁹

Toynbee also quotes Plato's *Republic* (491A) as stressing the "[a]ctive moral aberration as a cause of social breakdown".³²⁰

The standard treatment of tragedy is Aristotle's *Poetics*, which Toynbee was clearly familiar with. We have already seen how Toynbee refers to a passage from Aristotle's *Poetics* in his commentary on history, the first of the three techniques of history, science and fiction.³²¹ Toynbee also introduces a number of key elements of tragedy, which are discussed and listed in the *Poetics*. Toynbee uses the elements of mimesis signifying imitation,³²² peripeteia signifying a 'reversal of roles',³²³ and hamartia signifying an error as in 'missing the mark' (with unintentional outcomes). These elements make up the history of civilizations just as they make up the plot of a tragedy.

It is often argued that the *Poetics* was written as a response to Plato's views on poetry.³²⁴ Plato saw imitation as twice removed from the 'forms' and therefore found imitation problematic; and because poetry was based on imitation, it was problematic too. Aristotle agreed that imitation was the essence of poetry but maintained that artistic imitation could have cathartic functions. Imitation need not be a straightforward copy of the object imitated; it could be abstract and oblique. Moreover, the imitated object does not have to exist (though it might exist). Rather, probable or plausible actions are imitated: the tragedy shows how gods and men could – and with a certain likelihood, would – act. Narratives that include only action that did happen are referred to as 'histories'. Speaking of probable and plausible actions assumes a background or context of expectations, and this background, which is revealed in the tragedies, reflects the universals, patterns, dispositions and typical configurations of human action and interaction. It is not surprising that Aristotle considers 'completeness' as one of the key characteristics of tragedy because, for the plot to unfold, the configuration of dispositions and actions must be allowed to follow its whole course from beginning to

³¹⁹ Toynbee, "Study," 4:259.

³²⁰ Toynbee, "Study," 4:259 footnote 4.

³²¹ Toynbee, "Study," 1:441.

³²² Toynbee, "Study," 1:191-2. Toynbee states: "In this study μίμησις is used in order to avoid connotations of unintelligent imitation or satirical imitation which attach to the derivative English word mimicry. Mimesis as used here, denotes social imitation 'without prejudice'."

³²³ Toynbee, "Study," 4:245-246. Here Toynbee states 'See Aristotle Poetics chap11 [...]see [...] Butcher (1902) the word [...] means not just a change of fortune' but a change in the form of a 'reversal of intention' when an act or a policy produces the opposite result from that which the agent has expected and desired.'

³²⁴ As found in book 10 of Plato's *Republic*.

end. Poetic imitation as expressed in tragedy, therefore, must be complete in that it must have a beginning, middle, and an end:

A whole is that which has a beginning, a middle, and an end. A beginning is that which itself does not follow necessarily from anything else, but some second thing naturally exists or occurs after it. Conversely, an end is that which does itself naturally follow from something else, either necessarily or in general, but there is nothing else after it. A middle is that which itself comes after something else, and some other thing comes after it. Well constructed plots should therefore not begin or end at any arbitrary point, but should employ the stated form.³²⁵

A 'well constructed' plot, in other words, must follow its entire course; the full consequences of dispositions, assumptions, actions must be allowed to run their course for it is in their end that we can perceive and understand their true nature and meaning. This, then, is what brings tragedy, myth and Toynbee's history together: they all represent, in their structure and contents, truth about the true consequences of human dispositions and actions. By extending the structure of tragedy to empirical history, Toynbee of course undermines Aristotle's distinction between poetry and history, but he does so in a manner which in some sense remains sympathetic to Aristotle's analysis. Aristotle would probably object that history does not have an end in the same sense in which a tragedy is made to have an end. But Toynbee could respond that while 'history' as such does not have an end, civilizations do. They either disintegrate and disappear or they develop into higher religions (and disappear as a result). We can see here how Smuts' evolutionary scheme, with its leaps from lower-level to higher-level wholes, introduces the ruptures into history, which allow Toynbee to posit 'ends' and thus to approach history in terms of 'tragedy'.

In addition to the structural elements of tragedy, Toynbee is very aware also of the typical contents that make up a tragedy. According to Aristotle, a tragedy typically includes astonishment,³²⁶ a change of fortune involving reversal,³²⁷ recognition,³²⁸ suffering³²⁹ or a mixture of all of these. The possible effects of tragedy upon the

³²⁵ Aristotle, *Poetics*, translated and edited by Malcolm Heath (London: Penguin 1996), 13-14. (we also note in passing the 'syllogistic structure' to this completeness)

³²⁶ Aristotle, "*Poetics*," in Heath (1996) 17.

³²⁷ Aristotle, "*Poetics*," in Heath (1996) 18.

³²⁸ Aristotle, "*Poetics*," in Heath (1996) 18.

³²⁹ Aristotle, "*Poetics*," in Heath (1996) 29.

audience are pity and fear and catharsis.³³⁰ Astonishment is provoked through a well-structured plot, not through chance. The Oedipus story is a classic example of a change of fortune: news delivered with good intent by a messenger turn out to be an error (hamartia) leading to recognition (he had killed his father and married his mother) and the subsequent reversal of good fortune. Aristotle notes that hamartia in tragedy should not be directly linked to the hero's character (as e.g. in hubris), because the audience will not feel pity for him. Other authors, such as Aeschylus, do link error with character. According to the *Poetics*, it is the main character in the tragedy that experiences suffering. Suffering is pathos, and the audience responds with pity (elos) through compassion, and fear (phobos) through identification. Aristotle suggests that this response will have a cathartic effect on the audience.

The tragedy of civilizations, according to Toynbee, includes equivalent elements. There is a reversal that initiates the process of disintegration; and the reversal is the result of an error (hamartia), which generally corresponds to the worshipping of ephemeral idols – be they parochial institutions (nations and states), ephemeral selves (saviours with the sword, military power), or idealised pasts or futures. In other words, 'missing the mark' means to mistake the part for the whole. Inspired by Aeschylus, Toynbee also recognises hubris as another type of error that may initiate the reversal of fortunes.

While we have established so far that Toynbee approached the history of civilizations as if they were tragedies, we still need to address the fact that Toynbee's claim is much stronger: civilization is 'a tragedy with a plot'. If we take this claim literally, and if we follow Aristotle's standard account of what a tragedy is, we have to establish in what sense civilizations are imitations. Toynbee's account here is implicit rather than explicit but it is clear that he links the external facts of civilizations and their fates with the inner spirituality of man, with the former in some sense 'imitating' the latter. Where Plato, in the *Republic*, wrote that the city was 'man written large', Toynbee suggests that the civilization is 'man written large'. In this correspondence between civilization and soul, the emergence of higher religions corresponds to a transfiguration of the soul through suffering.

Transfiguration is the reversal of the reversal, and Christ's transfiguration is an obvious but not the only example. It is not accidental, therefore, that hamartia and pathos are New Testament terms, where hamartia is usually translated as 'sin'. The ultimate

³³⁰ Aristotle, "*Poetics*," in Heath (1996) 10.

purpose of transfiguration is not other-worldliness but action. Toynbee's heroes are not to be found among the Stoics and Hinayana intellectuals, who cultivate a posture of detachment in order to avoid suffering. In contrast, Toynbee's transfiguration is embodied by Christ and the Bodhisattvas, who both return to the world from 'transfiguration' in order to help fellow human beings on their journey and thereby create the inner City of God within the outer City of Man; the tragedy of the outer City of Man, of civilization, comes to an end to the extent that the inner City of God is allowed to radiate outwards and transform the outer City into an image (imitation) of itself.

It is at this point that we can begin to ask questions about Toynbee's self-understanding. What is the purpose of the grammarian who tells the tragic tale of civilizations? His purpose is ultimately similar to the poet³³¹ who writes tragedy: he warns and cautions; he confronts us with the likely consequences of our possible actions. The historian of civilizations has 'suffered' through their tragedies; he is a witness of the truth they manifest. The author Harry Slochower has written extensively on mythopoesis. Myth he suggests, proposes answers to the typical existential questions of, who am I, where do I come from, where am I going, "in mythic language the problems deal with Creation, with Destiny and with the Quest."³³² The centre of the life of every epoch is informed by its own myths, which gives it the,

"[t]one, manner, and rhythm to its existence, permeates its institutions and thought, its art, science, religion, politics, its psychology and its folkways- that is the myth organizes the values of its epoch. The literary form of the myth preserves its symbolic values which transcend the drossy historical surface."³³³

Greek legend holds that memory was the mother of the muses, mythology therefore draws upon our oldest memories. "Myth unfolds the living chain which connects the recurrent recognition scenes of the human drama."³³⁴ The role of the poet then is to reconnect his/her era with the unity of human experience. "The drama begins with a First Act [Yin] of communal harmony." In the next act [Yang] this,

³³¹ Toynbee's view on the difference between poetic truth and scientific truth is made clear, "poetic truth is absolute because it is static in the Time-dimension; scientific truth is relative because it is cumulative in the Time-dimension." Toynbee, *An Historian's Approach to Religion*, (Oxford: OUP, 1979), 123. Here he is arguing that poetic truth is timeless and 'always' true, whereas scientific truth is cumulative and therefore relative at any point in time.

³³² Harry Slochower, *Mythopoesis: Mythic Patterns in Literary Classics*, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1970), 15.

³³³ Slochower, "Mythopoesis," 17.

³³⁴ Slochower, "Mythopoesis," 14.

“harmony is disturbed by the emergence of the hero who sets out on his Quest, which entails a challenge to his group. The Quest is pivotal for the mythopoeic drama. For it is through his challenge and revolt that the hero can become a creative agent of his community.”³³⁵

This leads to the final third act (new Yin) of the homecoming, or the original harmonious state, except that this, “harmony attained carries within itself the earlier moments of dissidence and contains the seeds of a renewed conflict. This determines the Epilogue, which makes for the tragic residue in the mythopoeic drama.”³³⁶

We can see that the mythical reading of the creative agents in the genesis of civilizations, which Toynbee reads as challenging the status quo, he witnesses so strongly it impacts upon him so deeply, that he in fact becomes just such an actor or poet within his own culture, as he challenges the status quo of his own era or epoch. The seeds of the next tragedy are always implicit in the structure of the journey. “Prometheus is carried forward by Hercules, Oedipus by Polyneices [...] mythic transcendence does not allow for a paradisiac ending, and reconciliation in the mythopoeic drama is on a tragic plane.”³³⁷ In spite of the opportunity for re-Creation manifested in the spiral from one harmonious state to another, these tragic rounds leave Toynbee dissatisfied, he wants to understand how mankind might break out of this pattern and to this end he looks to the spiritual realm of transfiguration and the spirit and is why he views the higher religions as this next break point- in the individuals suffering or transfiguration we find the reversal of this tragic pattern and the creation of a new higher level whole.

By writing the *Study* as a report of his own journey, he invites and challenges us to take the same journey so that we can reach the same vista that he has perceived in history and so that we can understand his appeal to spiritual action:

Life is Action. A life which does not go into action is a failure, and this is just as true of a prophet's, a poet's, or a scholar's life as it is true of a man of action in the conventionally limited popular use of the term.³³⁸

³³⁵ Slochower, “*Mythopoesis*,” 22.

³³⁶ Slochower, “*Mythopoesis*,” 22

³³⁷ Slochower, “*Mythopoesis*,” 26.

³³⁸ Toynbee quoted by Lewis Mumford, “The Napoleon of Notting Hill” in M.F. Ashley Montagu ed., *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1956), 143.

Lewis Mumford, one the few more subtle reviewers of the *Study*, draws the obvious conclusion:

This *Study of History*, then, is at bottom a great act: an assertion, against the materialism and nihilism of our time, of the dignity of human life and the importance of history itself.³³⁹

As we shall see in the next chapter, very few of his academic readers understood the approach taken in the *Study*. Some of his critics accused him of being a moralizer and prophet. The criticism is accurate of course, but given Toynbee's grammatical and holistic approach to civilizations as tragedies, it is very difficult to see how he could have avoided or denied the prophetic³⁴⁰ dimension of his work. Toynbee quite consciously adopted this role because he came to understand, as a result of his work, that it was implied in his work. We will return to these questions in Part Two of this thesis.

³³⁹ Lewis Mumford, "The Napoleon of Notting Hill" in M.F. Ashley Montagu ed., *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1956), 143.

³⁴⁰ Toynbee clarified his meaning of prophecy, "'Prophecy in the original sense in which the word means, not a forecast of the future, but the revelation of a mystery that is out of the Intellect's reach. The literal meaning of 'prophecy' is the 'utterance' of Truth from a hidden source from which Truth cannot be extracted by intellectual process." Toynbee, *An Historian's Approach to Religion*, (Oxford: OUP, 1979), 123, footnote 1.

4. Reviewing the reviews

Now that we have surveyed Toynbee's study and its development, we can return briefly to the work's reception. As already noted, while the work was hugely popular with the public, the academic reception was mostly cold and hostile. The previous analysis of the *Study* allows us to understand why many academic observers and colleagues were unable to respond to Toynbee's efforts in a detached manner. Toynbee's work shook the world of reason, and it revealed the limitations of those who had made this world their home.

The first of the reviews appeared shortly after the publication of the first three volumes. The American historian Edward Gargan later reported that *The English Historical Review*, at that time the major historical journal in England, did not review the work until 1956. This was two years after the final volumes had been published and twenty-two years after the first volumes. He suggests "many historical journals tended to treat Toynbee's work as nearly outside the scope of the professional historian."³⁴¹ Toynbee himself did not exactly invite polite reviews as he often failed to hide his dismissive attitude towards monographs and specialist histories. The review of Toynbee's first volumes fared no better across the pond. *The American Historical Review* published a report on the early volumes with no less a reviewer than Charles A. Beard. But as Gargan reports, Beard's two page review was scathing and this set the tone for others to follow, including one in *The Journal of Modern History* by Lynn Thorndike who "proceeded to condemn the Study utterly".³⁴² Following the publication of volumes IV to VI in 1939, Beard once again reviewed them negatively calling Toynbee "a wild metaphysician."³⁴³ However, *The Journal of Modern History* this time printed a review by Pitirim A. Sorokin, a sociologist, and although Sorokin was critical of Toynbee's units of history and organic patterns, he found the Study a "most stimulating and illuminating work of a distinguished thinker and scholar."³⁴⁴

In 1956 a cross section of an eclectic mix of reviewers was captured in a single volume of thirty authors that included an essay from Toynbee himself. The book was published under the title *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* and was edited by

³⁴¹ Edward T. Gargan, "Introduction" in *The Intent of Toynbee's History* edited by Edward T. Gargan, (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1961), 12.

³⁴² Ibid., 16.

³⁴³ Ibid., 17.

³⁴⁴ Ibid., 18.

M.F. Ashley Montagu. A further volume, *The Intent of Toynbee's History*, was edited by Edward T. Gargan and was published in 1961 with essays from eight authors, including W.H. McNeill, who would later write a biography of Toynbee, and Lewis Mumford and Eric Voegelin. Toynbee replied and responded to all of these critics with a comprehensive 750-page volume published under the title *Reconsiderations*, which effectively became Vol. XII of the *Study*. It was not until after Toynbee's death in 1975, and in commemoration of Toynbee's birth centenary, that another review volume was published in 1989, entitled *Toynbee Reappraisals*, by McIntire and Perry. Our analysis is mainly based on these three review volumes, with references to additional journal articles and Toynbee's own *Reconsiderations*.

4.1. Ambition versus Self-Adulation

The *Study* poses considerable problems for a reviewer as it covers such a wide range of historical material, exceeding the expertise of most 'experts'. In fact, Toynbee's work did not properly belong to any particular field of research, but it contributed to many fields. Accordingly, historians, systems theorists, sociologists, geographers, anthropologists, political scientists, orientalist and many more were called upon to comment on Toynbee's effort. Yet they all had to approach the work from within the limitations of their respective fields. Christopher Dawson observed "one cannot lightly pass judgement on a work of 6,000 pages which has been written with so much erudition and conviction. Nor can one get much help from the judgement of others working in the same field for they hardly exist".³⁴⁵ Even for the critics, therefore, it became a matter of habit to acknowledge the Herculean dimensions of the *Study*. Hans Morgenthau noted "the last four volumes of Mr. Toynbee's work confront the reviewer with formidable difficulties. They are the culmination of a gigantic effort, gigantic both in quantity and quality, the like of which no other contemporary has dared to undertake."³⁴⁶ Ernest Barker similarly starts his review with an acknowledgement of the sheer scope of the work: "Exegit monumentum – Dr. Toynbee has finished a monument. He has built a work which is a pyramid of piled learning, and a pyramid with

³⁴⁵ Christopher Dawson, "The Place of Civilizations in History", in *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed. M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 129.

³⁴⁶ Hans Morgenthau, "Toynbee and the Historical Imagination, *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 191.

a plan. [...] Toynbee's sweep of knowledge – through time and space, through all manner of institutions and every aspect of human affairs – is almost incredible.”³⁴⁷

Especially among the more sympathetic readers, the incredulity was sometimes mixed with a dim awareness that somehow the value of the work would transcend the question of empirical accuracy. For example, Montagu noted that the “erudition [...] so vast and convoluted that most among those who read him [...] the wonder grows, that one small head can carry all he knows.” Indeed, he continues, “it has been urged by some that the value of Toynbee's work does not rest so much upon its empirical accuracy as upon the insights and carefully considered judgements of an exceedingly well-informed mind – one schooled by action as well as reading – concerning an immense range of matters bearing upon the present plight and probably future of humanity.”³⁴⁸ Warning that ‘some’ scholars are on uncertain grounds when they criticise Toynbee for “forsaking the severe and restraining grooves of academic discipline for the more expansive groves of intuition and prophecy. The scholars may succeed in avoiding the smaller errors but fail in the grander vision of the Magister.”³⁴⁹ Rushton Coulborn adds,

The value of Toynbee's contributions is considerable – greater, in my opinion, than other scholars, especially other historians, have usually been prepared to grant. Toynbee is among the great historians. His discernment is profound; it is true much more often than not, and, less often, it is quite novel.³⁵⁰

Among the critics, however, the scope of the work itself was exactly one of the key issues. How could one man claim to be in a position to comment intelligently and intelligibly on so vast a subject? Was Toynbee a megalomaniac? Was his effort marked by hubris? Altree criticises the scale of Toynbee's attempt suggesting that one person could not handle a single history let alone all of them. For each specialist field that Toynbee addressed there was always more literature that could have been considered. Altree suggests that Toynbee's account of Chinese history does not match the standards set by the experts in the field:

³⁴⁷ Sir Ernest Barker, “Dr Toynbee's Study of History” in *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 89, 94.

³⁴⁸ Arthur Bestor, in a review of Toynbee's last four volumes in the *Progressive*, December 1954, p32. Cited by Ashley Montagu, “Editors foreword” in *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), viii.

³⁴⁹ M.F. Ashley Montagu, “Editors foreword” in *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), viii.

³⁵⁰ Rushton Coulborn, “Fact and Fiction in Toynbee's Study of History”, *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 148.

It is not to be expected that the material will ever be sufficiently complete to make possible an exact account of Chinese history, but the quality of sources available to Toynbee furnish legitimate reason to question the final significance of his attempt to write such an account.³⁵¹

Lawrence Stone found Toynbee's learning "stupendous, indeed unique" but he criticised that the *Study* drew mainly on literature from before the 1920s, thus ignoring important advances made in the relevant fields since then. But Stone went on to question the endeavour as a whole:

It may be objected that over so vast a field such a task is impossible for one man to achieve. Precisely! That is just what the historians hold against Dr. Toynbee. They argue that 6,000 pages of arbitrarily selected facts torn out of their contexts, of speculative possibilities dressed up as certainties, are of little help in advancing the frontiers of knowledge or increasing the range of understanding.³⁵²

Trevor-Roper, perhaps Toynbee's most ferocious opponent, was most explicit in accusing Toynbee of intellectual totalitarianism. According to Trevor-Roper, the problem with Toynbee's work was not only that its ambition exceeded the abilities of any single scholar but that the very ambition itself was evidence of a:

[...] truly monstrous self-adulation, combined with his fundamental obscurantism [they] indeed emotionally repel me [...]. Toynbee is still the philosophic ally of any conqueror who will destroy the West [...]. Toynbee detests Western civilization because it is basically liberal and rational. Detesting it, he wishes to see it destroyed, and he does not care who destroys it. On its ruins he envisages a new society, or rather, the religion only of a new society. The new society itself, as far as he is concerned, can be the nightmare society of 1984, provided that the religion is the religion of Mish-Mash, of which he is the prophet and Messiah. [...] I do not consider it *a priori* inconceivable that Toynbee should regard himself as the Messiah. And in fact, if we examine the

³⁵¹ Wayne Altree, "Toynbee and Chinese History" in *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 272.

³⁵² Lawrence Stone, "Historical Consequences and Happy Families" *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 112.

autobiographical part of his work in a little more detail, we can hardly help observing the repeated evidence that this is how he does regard himself.³⁵³

In his infamous *Encounter* article, Trevor-Roper would go as far as to compare Toynbee with Hitler, this was picked up in an interview with Ved Mehta,

Hitler, like Toynbee [...] ranged over the centuries and crammed such facts as he found convenient to select into a monstrous system. Did not both Hitler and Toynbee see themselves as the phoenixes of the centuries, Messiahs who [...] opened up a new age.³⁵⁴

Dutch historian Peter Geyl similarly found Toynbee's "ostentation of detachment from his own heritage [...] prideful", 'sinful', and 'ridiculous.'³⁵⁵ Toynbee commented briefly on Trevor-Roper's infamous 'review', noting that his acknowledgments in Volume X, listing the influences on his life and work along with a prayer,³⁵⁶ "has given Trevor-Roper an opening for making some amusing play with it," adding "on the article as a whole, no comment."³⁵⁷ Zaki Saleh eventually wrote a short book on Trevor-Roper's attack on Toynbee, describing the attack as "intellectual chaos".³⁵⁸

While the question of the scope of the work and its feasibility and empirical accuracy was clearly within the remit of scholarly debate, Trevor-Roper's attack was something quite different. That Toynbee's work could be misunderstood as an attack on Western civilization may well be an indication of the spirit of the time in the late 1950s, when one had to be 'for' or 'against' the Western world. But Toynbee was not 'anti-Western'; rather, Western civilization was one among many. Moreover, Toynbee's detached perspective did not see the crises of the First and Second World War and indeed of the Cold War as phenomena that were 'external' to the West. There was no framework of 'us against them'; instead, there was an interest in understanding the dynamics that would cause a crisis in which in some sense all involved were both contributors and victims. Toynbee's work did not allow for easy dichotomies and oppositions; the causes for growth and decline were mostly internal rather than external.

³⁵³ H. Trevor-Roper "Arnold Toynbee's Millennium" in *Encounter* Vol. 8 No.6 (London: June, 1957), 14-28.

³⁵⁴ Ved Mehta, *Fly and the Fly Bottle: Encounters with British Intellectuals* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1962), 109.

³⁵⁵ Toynbee, "Reconsiderations," 584.

³⁵⁶ Toynbee, "Study," 10:140-44.

³⁵⁷ Toynbee, "Reconsiderations," 574, footnote 4.

³⁵⁸ Zaki Saleh, *Trevor-Roper's Critique of Arnold Toynbee: A Symptom of Intellectual Chaos* (Baghdad: Alma'aref Press 1958).

Toynbee was not 'conquering'; he was using a three-fold perspective that allowed him to see many phenomena as instances of the 'same' – variants of a single theme. Of course, this perspective would undermine the alleged uniqueness of each of these phenomena – their 'parochialism', as Toynbee would say – which would invite the criticism of their representatives and spokesmen and women. The representatives of faith groups were among the most outspoken critics of Toynbee. Given Toynbee's account of the emergence of the 'higher religions', it is not surprising that Jewish readers would object to the presentation of their religion. Frederick E. Robin, editor of *The Reporter*, remarks that Toynbee presents Judaism as a fossil, which introduced bigotry into Christianity and Islam. According to Robin, Toynbee's analysis implies that Israel is an act of impiety – a dangerous archaism. The Israeli ambassador to the U.S., Abba Eban claimed that "Toynbee's analysis [is] a significant event in contemporary scholarship. Here we have no partial or selective criticism of the Jewish historic performance. We have an almost total negation of anything affirmative in the entire record."³⁵⁹ But the criticisms from Christian writers were equally harsh. When Toynbee suggested in a 1951 broadcast that "[i]t [was] likely that the West would be converted to a new religion coming from the East, as Rome had been converted to Christianity"³⁶⁰, Linus Walker, a Catholic writer, was distinctly unimpressed: "It is even more regrettable that such a devoted historian of genius as Professor Toynbee has sought to be a prophet and preacher as well."³⁶¹ Even the Christian academic who was assisting Toynbee, Martin Wight, takes Toynbee to task over his misrepresentation of the fundamentals of Christian beliefs.³⁶²

The problems that these criticisms reveal are related to missing Toynbee's holism – every phenomenon is part of a whole; and the parts are co-arising; they are not separate from each other. The whole is in the parts and vice versa. No part is immune to the drama of history, and no part can make the exclusive claim to represent the whole. Toynbee's perspective relativizes the present and those who act in the present.

³⁵⁹ Abba Eban, "The Toynbee Heresy" in *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 323-5.

³⁶⁰ Linus Walker, "Toynbee and Religion A Catholic View" in *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 339.

³⁶¹ Linus Walker, "Toynbee and Religion A Catholic View" in *Montagu Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 346.

³⁶² Toynbee, "Study," 7.

4.2. Facts, data, and empiricism

Most reviewers zoomed in on the question of the historical accuracy of the 'facts' of Toynbee's narrative. Given the scope of the work, Toynbee was vulnerable on all fronts. The specialists in their various fields used the opportunities provided by the reviews to draw attention to literature that Toynbee did not but should have consulted. Pitikrim Sorokin, for example, criticizes Toynbee for trying to turn Aeschylus's 'learning by suffering' principle into a law of spiritual progress because suffering does not always have positive effects. He also points to shortcomings in Toynbee's 'war-peace cycles' and in his use of Jung's theory of the unconscious. He also disagrees with Toynbee's observation that 'all but the current Western civilizations are dead or dying'. Many of these errors were the result of the fact that Toynbee failed to consult the specialist literature in the field of the specialist writing the review:

Despite vast literature quoted and referred to in Toynbee's volumes, they contain almost no references to hundreds of important studies by psycho-social scientists of the problems treated by Toynbee.³⁶³

Lawrence Stone, too, finds it difficult to identify 'empirical deductions' in the work:

It is this inability to distinguish unverifiable presuppositions and subjective value-judgments from empirical deductions from the facts, that makes Dr. Toynbee's work so suspect to the academic historian or philosopher.³⁶⁴

One such academic historian was A.J.P. Taylor, who flatly denied that Toynbee was a 'scholar':

It is late in the day to debate the merits of the "Toynbee method." The general public has given one answer; the professional historians another. The first six volumes have broken all records as best-sellers; they rank second only to whisky as a dollar-earner. The scepticism of historians seems of small account in comparison. Yet a professional scholar would be false to his conscience and his calling if he did not raise his voice in dissent, however ineffectual, and if he did not declare that this is not history, as he understands it. Professor

³⁶³ Pitikrim Sorokin, "Toynbee's Philosophy of History", in *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 189.

³⁶⁴ Lawrence Stone, "Historical Consequences and Happy Families", in *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 112.

Toynbee's method is not that of scholarship, but of the lucky dip, with emphasis on the luck.³⁶⁵

These criticisms were not entirely without foundation, of course, as Toynbee was in the habit of trusting his intuitive insights of connections that revealed themselves to him. Unsurprisingly, this intuition was criticised by the 'rational scientific' method that requires different criteria for validation. W.H. McNeill recognized both the potential and the dangers of Toynbee's intuitive method. He found instances of "masterful and persuasive [...] novel relationships or discerning new points of view" but also complained that "sometimes his imagination seems to run amuck."³⁶⁶

In his usual sarcastic style, Trevor-Roper too questions Toynbee's commitment to empirical accuracy – accuracy, which we would have to expect "if he were an ordinary historian, like Gibbon or Macaulay."³⁶⁷ He begins,

Not only are Professor Toynbee's basic assumptions often questionable, and his application of them often arbitrary, but his technical method turns out to be not "empirical" at all. The theories are not deduced from the facts, nor tested by them: the facts are selected, sometimes adjusted, to illustrate the theories, which themselves rest effortlessly on air.³⁶⁸

After a commentary on Toynbee's serious errors of fact and his selective use of data, Trevor-Roper 'apologises' for picking out "small errors in a great work" and concludes in the negative:

[W]e are told that the theories are "empirically" proved by the facts [...]. [...] We can now go on to the next stage in the argument. But in truth this is neither empiricism nor proof, nor even argument: it is a game anyone can play, a confusion of logic with speculation. Of course, Professor Toynbee is free to speculate.³⁶⁹

³⁶⁵ A.J.P. Taylor, "Much Learning" in *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 115.

³⁶⁶ William H. McNeill, "Some basic assumptions of Toynbee's *A Study of History*" in Edward T. Gargan ed., *The Intent of Toynbee's History* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1961), 41.

³⁶⁷ Hugh Trevor-Roper, "Testing the Toynbee System", *Montagu Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 122-23.

³⁶⁸ Hugh Trevor-Roper, "Testing the Toynbee System" in *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 122-23.

³⁶⁹ Hugh Trevor-Roper, "Testing the Toynbee System" in *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 124.

W.H. Walsh, another Oxford historian, argued that Toynbee could not possibly be an empiricist because of the preconceptions that were implied in the *Study*:

In calling himself an empiricist Mr. Toynbee seems to be implying that he is approaching history without preconceptions--a claim that could certainly not be sustained. Whether we find his reading of history convincing or the reverse seems ultimately to depend on whether we share his preconceptions or not.³⁷⁰

Toynbee had to take such criticisms seriously because, at least from the points of view of the reviewers, the questions of empirical accuracy was crucial for Toynbee's credibility as a scholar and historian. Toynbee summarises the criticisms as follows:

I maintain my claim that I have tried to be empirical [...] by applying the theory to the phenomena. [...] To try however is not enough [...] I have been criticized on six accounts [...]. [These are] using examples [...] taken out of context, [...] citing too many examples that clutter up my argument [...] selecting them to fit my theories [...] when they don't fit [...] forcing them with procrustean violence [...]. [That] I have a rigid apriori scheme [...] and if [...] awkward facts [don't] conform I ignore them [...]. Some of these charges cancel each other out but what is left is still formidable.³⁷¹

Well-known authors defended Toynbee's 'empiricism'. Mumford explained that Toynbee "usually gives enough free play to the data to provide his reader with the necessary correction, and sometimes generously enlists the aid of other critical minds to correct his own bias". According to Mumford, Toynbee was "empirical in the sense of qualifying doubtful conclusions in one place by contradictory data in another place."³⁷² But the issue was more fundamental, as Toynbee acknowledged. Having been accused of letting his preconceptions dictate his 'selection' of 'facts', Toynbee wondered whether indeed it was possible to be 'empirical' without having preconceptions:

I am not claiming that I approach the historical record of human experience without preconceptions [...]. 'Some theoretical framework and some working

³⁷⁰ W.H. Walsh, "The End of a Great Work" in *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 127-128.

³⁷¹ Toynbee, "Reconsiderations," 245-7.

³⁷² Toynbee, "Reconsiderations," 248.

hypotheses are unavoidable' [...]. When Trevor-Roper says that [...] 'the theories are not deduced from the facts', the answer is that neither my theories nor anyone else's are or ever have been or ever will be generated in that way. If being 'empirical' meant this, the word would have no counterpart in reality.³⁷³

Toynbee can quote a more sympathetic reviewer, Baudet, who offers a similar defence:

Many critics have censured Toynbee's primary vision on the theoretical grounds that it is "apriori". Certainly it is, as they say. But "epistemologically", is not an "apriori" of this kind a basis [of mental operations] which speaks for itself because it is unavoidable? [...] 'All vision is engendered on an "apriori" and [...] an "apriori" of this kind has its roots – as all thinking has *au fond*-- in will and passion.'³⁷⁴

Toynbee understood very well that 'facts' do not speak for themselves. Without preconceptions, how would we know what 'facts' we should select for inclusion in our narratives? The criticisms reveal a remarkable lack of self-reflection. Are Trevor-Roper (who would later authenticate the so-called *Hitler Diaries*) and Taylor just reporting 'facts'; do they 'add' anything to those 'facts'? Toynbee's openness on these questions must have challenged and perhaps undermined the confidence of the professional historians who considered themselves honest brokers of the empirical truth. By questioning the very possibility of an empiricism that was free of preconceptions, Toynbee questioned their very ethos. Kenneth E. Bock understood this very well:

Scholars have clearly been disturbed by what Toynbee has written; the vehemence of their response bespeaks a deep concern with questions he has raised [...]. His reliance on Myth, his self-conscious recognition of his own life experience as a clue to history, and his careful development of a transrationalist epistemology, are a very far cry from what most of us recognize as the tradition of English empiricism [...] whereas another historian might leave his presuppositions unstated and convey the impression that the facts are speaking

³⁷³ Toynbee, "Reconsiderations," 243-4.

³⁷⁴ Toynbee, "Reconsiderations," 244.

for themselves, Toynbee makes it painfully clear just what wooing Clio involves. There are those who will not forgive him that obscenity [...].³⁷⁵

Just like Trevor-Roper, A.J.P. Taylor seemed personally offended by Toynbee's transrationalist approach: "These monstrous volumes with their parade of learning are a repudiation of rationalism."³⁷⁶ We will argue later that this rationalism was itself based on certain preconceptions – preconceptions that Toynbee struggled to overcome. In contrast to his opponents, Toynbee was quite open about his own preconceptions as he was fully aware that all knowledge was situated knowledge, i.e. knowledge that depended on certain foundations (preconceptions) for its validity. Moreover, he was prepared to accept that his knowledge was transitory. In contrast to those historians who believed they have written definitive specialist history, Toynbee dismissed any notion that his 'theories' or 'findings' would or should be understood as being permanent or fixed. Toynbee quotes Pasteur (via Flexner) in support of the transitoriness of scientific theories and findings:

The generalisations will not endure; why should they? They have not endured in mathematics, physics and chemistry. But then neither have the data. Science, social or other, is a structure. 'A series of judgments, revised without ceasing, goes to make up the incontestable progress of Science. We must believe in this process, but we must never accord more than a limited amount of confidence to the forms in which it is successively vested.'³⁷⁷

After all, it was *A Study of History*, not *The Study of History*, which was being scrutinized. But Toynbee not only acknowledged that he had 'preconceptions', he also readily admitted that these very preconceptions changed during the course of – and as a result of – the *Study*. As we already noted, he declared it started as an empirico-analytical comparison, became a metahistorical enquiry and that the final four volumes of the *Study* were written from an Indian perspective (rather than from Western preconceptions). Declarations such as these suggest that Toynbee's 'empiricism' was much more radical than the empiricism of the professional historians. Toynbee encountered 'facts' as experiences and he allowed these experiences to affect his thinking and work. He was involved in what would later be called the 'hermeneutic

³⁷⁵ Kenneth E. Bock's Review of *A Study of History*, Volume XII: Reconsiderations by Arnold J. Toynbee, in *History and Theory*, Vol. 2, No. 3. (1963), 301-307.

³⁷⁶ A.J.P. Taylor, "Much Learning" in *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956) 117.

³⁷⁷ Abraham Flexner (quoting Ducleaux who is quoting Pasteur) *The History of a Mind* (1920), 111.

circle'; he was not a detached observer, who looked at facts from the outside. Rather, he was involved in the drama he was describing. From the point of view of his critics, this involvement was a mistake, an error, a repudiation of rationalism; for Toynbee, it was the obvious result of his studies and a deliberate choice.

4.3. Civilizations and higher religions

Toynbee's initial decision to use 'civilizations' as the 'unit' for his study was also a popular target for critics. Ernest Barker commented that "civilizations' are 'mental constructions [...] an admission of subjectivity.'" Toynbee's choice was an attempt to escape from the parochialism of states and nationalism – phenomena that he had identified as both causes and symptoms of the crisis of his times. But Barker responded that "a "parochial State" may not "appeal to the Subconscious Psyche", but it is certainly a fact which starts to the eye and has a meaning for the understanding."

³⁷⁸ Philip Bagby wrote an 'anonymous' review for *The Times*, suggesting that Toynbee's 'civilizations' are just one example of a list of concepts without clear definitions:

When we attempt to evaluate Dr. Toynbee's central thesis and to test its empirical validity, we find that we have set ourselves an impossible task. None of his major concepts is sufficiently well defined to permit us to judge when it applies and when it does not. His rather inadequate definition of a civilization as "an intelligible field of historical study" is tacitly abandoned in the first few pages of the first volume.³⁷⁹

In his *Reconsiderations*, Toynbee clarifies and responds that civilizations are:

[...] an endeavour to create a state of society in which the whole of mankind will be able to live together in harmony, as members of a single all-inclusive family. This is, I believe, the goal at which all civilizations so far known have been aiming unconsciously, if not consciously.³⁸⁰

³⁷⁸ Sir Ernest Barker, "Dr Toynbee's Study of History" in *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 95. It begs the question who has ever 'seen' a state?

³⁷⁹ P. Bagby, "A Personal View of History" in *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 105. Bagby later told Toynbee he was the reviewer. Toynbee, "*Reconsiderations*," 62, footnote1.

³⁸⁰ Toynbee, "*Reconsiderations*," 279. This would also fit with the Smuts 'level 5' whole.

Hourani questions two aspects of Toynbee's civilizations. First, in the Study, civilization is presented as the ultimate goal of human endeavour. Second, "all growth in civilization is equated with progress towards sainthood".³⁸¹ But while Toynbee would eventually move from civilizations to higher religions, he never distanced himself from this second aspect of his understanding of civilizations. For him, man's inner self-development, his self-understanding, and thus his spirituality were the ultimate root of civilizational progress or decline. But causes aside, the pattern of civilizational development too did not escape criticism. Many reviewers found that the sequence of genesis, growth, breakdown and disintegration was too simplistic. Ernest Barker wrote:

All in all there is something of a cloudy impersonality, mixed with an ingenious and fertile play of subjectivity. He sees Brocken-spectres of superhuman dimensions ('civilizations', 'laws', 'dominant minorities', 'internal proletariats', 'Herodianisms', and 'Zealotisms') walking along the ridges of history.³⁸²

The few reviewers who were generally sympathetic to Toynbee's use of his units were then hostile towards the 'higher religions'. For example, Christopher Dawson found that 'civilizations' were much more tangible and empirical than 'higher religions':

If there were difficulties in his original thesis of the philosophical equivalence of civilizations, the objections to the theological equivalence of the higher religions are even more serious. In the study of civilizations, the historian is dealing with a field, which is subject to temporal and spatial limitations and can be judged by historical criteria. But when it comes to the world religions, he is in a world which, of its nature, transcends the sphere of history and is not amenable to empirical study.³⁸³

Bagby too thought that the 'higher religions' and the laws of inner development that they reflected were inaccessible to reason.

³⁸¹ Toynbee, "*Reconsiderations*," 279. Citing Hourani in *The Dublin Review*, vol. 229, No. 470 (December 1955), pp. 384-5.

³⁸² Sir Ernest Barker, "Dr Toynbee's Study of History" in *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 96.

³⁸³ Christopher Dawson, "The Place of Civilizations in History", in *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 134.

Dr. Toynbee feels, the laws of history may be transcended in the 'Law of God, which is perfect Freedom,' thus turning a moral insight into an epistemological principle which makes all reasoning impossible.³⁸⁴

Religions, however, are also institutions; they have a concrete and even material reality. They have symbols, rituals, ideas and beliefs – all of which can be studied empirically. Similarly, the spirituality of man is a field of inquiry that can draw on man's self-interpretation, which too involves symbols, rituals, ideas, beliefs and actions. Spirituality may not be a notion that is amenable to positivist analysis, but that alone does not imply that it is irrelevant. Toynbee was against method-driven research. It is reality that determines the relevance of the phenomena we encounter; not our 'methods'. If spirituality is important – and for Toynbee it clearly was important – then we must study it as best as we can. We cannot ignore phenomena only because our methods are incapable of studying them with perfect precision. In other words, we must not impose the limits of our methods onto reality. Moreover, the assumption that one cannot use 'reason' to analyse matters of 'inner beliefs' needed serious review. This assumption seemed to emerge from the religious wars in the West during the 17th Century; it is in itself therefore a feature of Western civilization, but it cannot simply be hypostatized as a universal truth.

Like other readers Dawson was also mystified by Toynbee's comparison of the 'historically based' religions of the monotheists with the 'unhistorical' traditions of the east.

On the one hand, the religions of the Far East – Hinduism and Mahayana Buddhism – adapt themselves well enough to Dr. Toynbee's ideal of religious syncretism, but they do so by denying the significance of history and creating a dream world of cosmological and mythological fantasy in which aeons and universes succeed one another in dazzling confusion and where the unity of God and the historical personality of Buddha are lost in a cloud of mythological figures: Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, gods and saktis, demigods and spirits. On the other hand, the three higher religions of the West-Judaism, Christianity, and Muhammedanism – have followed quite a different path. Their very existence is

³⁸⁴ (Philip Bagby) Times Literary Reviewer, "A Personal View of History" in *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 108.

bound up with the historic reality of their founders, and with the establishment of a unique relation between God and His people.³⁸⁵

Toynbee's notion of 'higher religions' seemed to imply a certain equivalence between Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism, but this equivalence did not imply that they were the same. The four higher religions shared as a common feature the fact that they effectively transcended the civilizations from within which they emerged. Moreover, Toynbee's Study may well be better understood as an attempt to engage in a dialogue with Eastern thought rather than as the objective description of commonalities. Even if the symbols are different, the underlying spiritualities may well share common aspects, and in order to be able to reveal them, the researcher needs to engage with the material in a manner that goes beyond detached and distant observation.

4.4. Myth

Toynbee's use of 'myth' as historical data – data that revealed how cultures understood themselves and their cosmos – was a further issue of contention. Raynier's review is a good example of the type of criticism Toynbee had to confront on how to read myth:

[...] as the basis for subsequent reasoning and classification [...] Faust, Job [...] Yin and Yang, Hippolytus and Phaedra, Hoder and Balder. Play with mythology leads us nowhere beyond mythology. It provides us with hypotheses – and what is there that does not? – but never with proofs. [now quoting Toynbee] 'For here we see the same "great refusal" that the creators of the Egyptiac Civilization made in the age of the Pyramid-Builders, and that Zeus would have made at the dawn of Hellenic history if he had not been saved from it, in spite of himself, by Prometheus'. [...] There never was a Zeus! What Zeus said or intended is not evidence. On the few pages that follow the statement I have just quoted, I underline the words 'mythology, allegory, Epic, poet, poem, feeling, anthropomorphically, allegorical imagery, allegory, hypothetical, a hypothesis which has to be taken on faith, parallel,

³⁸⁵ Christopher Dawson, "The Place of Civilizations in History", in *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 135.

the primordial images of Mythology, intuitive form of apprehending and expressing universal truths.' Why not just one single fact?³⁸⁶

Raynier's remarks gave Toynbee another opportunity to explain why myth was important:

When G. N. Raynier objects that 'what Zeus said or intended is not evidence because there never was a Zeus' my answer to him is to ask him 'evidence for what?' If the action I had attributed to Zeus has been military, political, economic, or any other kind of social action, I should, of course, stand convicted [...]. 'Zeus' and 'Prometheus' are symbols for psychological forces that can only be described in symbolic language [...]. I use the word 'myth' in the Platonic sense [...]. Plato does this when he feels he has reached the limit beyond which his logical thinking will not carry him [...]. The pertinent question [...] is [...] do I use it in fields where reason would serve and whether, if I do use it for reconnoitring the trans-rational field of Reality, my use of it here is a legitimate one [...]. Myths as I use them [...] are symbols of psychological phenomena. Being symbols, they are models, and, being models, they are heuristic hypotheses for exploring psychological dramas within a single human soul and in the relations between two souls or more.³⁸⁷

Furthermore, Toynbee explains "why [...] the rhythm of civilizations correspond[s] with the fluctuations in Man's inner life as seen by mythical speculation." After all, civilizations are nothing but relations between individual persons, and what is distinctively human about a human being is his/her inner life. "The invisible world of the psyche can be expressed only in the symbolic terms that we call myths [...] in the Platonic sense [...]. Mythical models are heuristic instruments for probing psychological phenomena."³⁸⁸ He later believed that Jung's work vindicated his method (he even categorised the higher religions using Jung's psychological types) though it was originally informed by Plato's example.

4.5. Questions of method

³⁸⁶ G.J Reynier, "Toynbee's Study of History" in *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 74-75.

³⁸⁷ Toynbee, "Reconsiderations," 251-2.

³⁸⁸ Toynbee, "Reconsiderations," 252.

The previous issues raised by the reviews were all related to questions of method: what does empiricism mean? What is the role of preconceptions? What should be the 'units of analysis' and how are they and other concepts to be defined? What is the nature of 'myth' and what is its significance in the study of history? The debates on method covered many other aspects of Toynbee's work as well. W.H. Walsh, for example, questioned whether historians could be comparativists:

A comparative study of the rises and falls of civilizations as such is not the same as a history of any particular civilization, nor can it be a substitute for a collection of such histories; for it is possible only when histories of particular civilizations first exist. And the point of view of one who undertakes a comparative study of civilizations is different from, though not for that reason incompatible with that of the historian proper: while the former looks for general patterns and laws, the latter concentrates, entirely correctly, on the connexions between individual events. His comparative study of the rises and falls of civilizations should be taken as a contribution, not to history, but to Social Dynamics.³⁸⁹

Just as thinking cannot operate without preconceptions, we may wonder whether there is a mode of thinking that does not rely on comparing. Even specialist historians, if they want to relate to the objects of their research, inevitably have to relate their knowledge and experience to what they find in their research.

Some commentators found Toynbee's scheme of 'challenge and response' too simplistic. Kenneth Thompson argued that 'scientific historians' would find Hegelian or Marxian dialectics far more convincing:

Mr. Toynbee's formula is both more difficult to verify objectively and more likely to encompass most of the unfolding events of history [...]. The main objection which scientific historians would raise to this conception is that it is too simple in character.³⁹⁰

What is forgotten here is that Toynbee had preferred the scheme of 'challenge and response' precisely because cause and effect relationships, normally preferred by

³⁸⁹ W.H. Walsh, "The End of a Great Work" in *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 126.

³⁹⁰ Kenneth W. Thompson, "Toynbee's Approach to History" in *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 217.

science, were too simplistic and far too deterministic for Toynbee's subject matter, which included the complexities of the human ability to subjectively interpret their own reality and act upon it. To be sure, how exactly the scheme was to be operationalised in concrete research was a genuine problem, though not more problematic than operationalising cause and effect relations if the causes were in the will of people. Toynbee explained that he uses challenge and response as a heuristic device for probing and capturing the structural tensions in the souls of people, a tension between good and evil or positive and negative. Anthropomorphically he calls this tension the challenge from God, i.e. the challenge from Life to create.

Finally a more recent work by Marvin Perry has provided a well-balanced account of Toynbee looking at his role in the Western Tradition. Perry is sympathetically sensitive to the 'peculiarities', but by finally assessing he was often "more poet and artist than social scientist, more religious moralist than historian"³⁹¹ we argue this perspective is still unconsciously 'trapped' in a particular binary view of the central issues. We do recommend Perry's otherwise concise, clear, balanced and sympathetic reading, but the binary labels indicate why we need to address these issues, because this was at the heart of Toynbee's very struggle with 'reason', and we do this shortly through two final reviewers.

4.6. Toynbee's 'philosophy of international relations'

Some later reviewers read Toynbee's work more specifically as a contribution to IR scholarship. Kenneth W. Thompson is one of the key reviewers who adopted this approach. Hans Morgenthau supervised Thompson's doctoral dissertation entitled 'The Philosophy of International Relations of Arnold J. Toynbee'. Although a number of essays derived from this work, a book length publication did not appear until 1987 under the title *Toynbee's Philosophy of World History and Politics*.³⁹² In 1980 Thompson published a volume entitled *Masters of International Thought*, which included chapters on Morgenthau, Carr, Butterfield, Wight, Niebuhr, Mittrany and others. The final chapter was devoted to Toynbee. Thompson's later (1996) volume *School of Thought in International Relations: Interpreters, Issues and Morality* only has a cursory two-page reference to Toynbee.

³⁹¹ Marvin Perry, *Arnold Toynbee and the Western Tradition* (New York: Peter Lang, 1996), 127.

³⁹² This is gleaned from C. T. McIntire's review of Kenneth W. Thompson, *Toynbee's Philosophy of World History and Politics* (Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1985) in *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 92, No. 4 (Oct, 1987), 924-925.

Thompson's analysis of Toynbee is in many ways typical of the reception of Toynbee as an 'IR thinker'. As we noted in the introduction to this thesis, IR debates tend to revolve around binary oppositions. Accordingly, writers will always be categorized according to the main categories and positions that take part in the relevant debate of their time. For Toynbee – as we have seen already in Carr's reviews – the key question is whether he was a 'realist' or an 'idealist'. Thompson's assessment is only slightly more sophisticated than Carr's in that he allows Toynbee the privilege of moving from one position (early idealist) to another (later realist) in some kind of 'growing up' process. This assessment is, however, hampered by the very dichotomies that it takes for granted. Toynbee simply did not quite fit into such rigid schemes, and often enough reviewers blamed him rather than their schemes!

One of the first published monographs on Toynbee was Henry Mason's *Toynbee's Approach to World Politics* (1958). Mason compares Toynbee's contribution to IR classics such as Hans Morgenthau, Quincy Wright, and Frederick L. Schuman. The comparisons are instructive although the final conclusion is disappointing. "Toynbee's approach fits to some extent into the framework of certain contemporary writers on international politics."³⁹³ These include Morgenthau, Schuman, Wright et al, but Mason sees these authors as 'limited' as they "have certainly have not penetrated very far into the complexities of international society- perhaps not as far as, for example, the "behaviouralist" or students of "decision-making"...[though]... their influence is still considerable."³⁹⁴

Toynbee to the degree that he has similarities with these authors 'fits in' but "it cannot be said he has added very much which is particularly new, except of course his religious solution."³⁹⁵ Toynbee's 'lack of originality' (!) is attributed to the universal scope of his Study which for Mason "condemns its author to the status of a semi-amateur in many of the fields he covers."³⁹⁶ Where Morgenthau's analysis emphasizes the 'moral strength of the statesman' because intelligent social and political action is found "in the insight and the wisdom that more-than-scientific man elevates his experiences into the universal laws of human nature."³⁹⁷ Toynbee pushes further and explored world politics in terms of Platonic 'spirituality'. Ultimately, for Mason citing

³⁹³ Henry L. Mason, *Toynbee's Approach to World Politics* (New Orleans: Tulane University, 1958), 116.

³⁹⁴ Mason, "Toynbee's Approach," 116.

³⁹⁵ Mason, "Toynbee's Approach," 116.

³⁹⁶ Mason, "Toynbee's Approach," 116.

³⁹⁷ Mason, "Toynbee's Approach," 104.

Zahn³⁹⁸, Toynbee turns out to be a 'preacher', not a theorist. Still, Mason makes an interesting suggestion by noting that Toynbee's *Study* like Plato's *Republic* links the chaos in society to mankind's spiritual nature.³⁹⁹ The comparison with the *Republic* could imply that the *Study*, too, had a therapeutic purpose, and we will see later that this impression is not entirely mistaken.

The comparative work is continued in Ian Hall's recent doctoral dissertation on Butterfield, Toynbee and Martin Wight.⁴⁰⁰ Hall argues convincingly that Toynbee exerted a lasting influence on Wight notwithstanding their disagreements. Toynbee and Wight were very close. Wight defended Toynbee when attacked by Jerrold, and also advised him not to publish his final volume twelve of the *Study* entitled *Reconsiderations*. Wight was asked by Chatham House to edit a volume on Toynbee but declined due to the fact that he did not want to trigger a set of shallow attacks or 'cockfights' and instead suggested a volume on Toynbee's lasting influence on other thinkers. Toynbee later appointed Wight a literary executor but Wight died before Toynbee. Wight considered it his Christian duty to reproach Toynbee for what he perceived as misreadings of the Christian revelation, thus demonstrating that Toynbee did not even fit easily in the Christian 'box'. Toynbee's 'faith' continues to confuse his readers to this day.⁴⁰¹ Within IR, as with history therefore, the reception struggled to comprehend Toynbee, as he never quite seemed to fit the categories employed by his reviewers.

4.7. Two subtle reviews: Voegelin and Mumford

While the academic reaction overall tended to be hostile, there were nevertheless some interesting reviews, which took Toynbee's enterprise seriously. And even those who found deficiencies in the work were moved to acknowledge their admiration for Toynbee's ambition and effort. Whatever the problems, the *Study* signified an achievement. George Catlin observed:

³⁹⁸ "One seems to hear the voice of a preacher...the true achievement of Toynbee lies by no means in the realm of theory." E.F.J. Zahn *Toynbee und das Problem der Geschichte* (Cologne:n.p. 1954), 37,45. In Mason, "*Toynbee's Approach*," 117.

³⁹⁹ Mason, "*Toynbee's Approach*," 117.

⁴⁰⁰ Ian Hall, "Sir Herbert Butterfield, Arnold J. Toynbee and Martin Wight and the crisis of international politics: a study in international thought" Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of St Andrews June 2003.

⁴⁰¹ Cornelia Navari, "Arnold Toynbee: Prophecy and Civilization," *Review of International Studies*, Vol.26 (2000), 289-301.

What impresses [...] is the erudition [...] and what attracts is the prophecy [...] no one can fail to admire so determined an act of faith.⁴⁰²

The anonymous reviewer for the Times wrote along the same lines:

His vast learning, his unflagging industry, the graces of his literary style, his moderation and urbanity, all these must command our admiration and respect.⁴⁰³

Ernest Barker, who otherwise had much to criticise, could not withhold his admiration:

Admiration is mixed with criticism [...]. The admiration is warm, and the greater of the two: the criticism makes him almost ashamed (who is he to criticize a work so remarkable, and, as the French say, of so 'long a breath'?), but it must in honesty be reported.⁴⁰⁴

Lawrence Stone commends Toynbee for helping historians and the public at large break out of their parochial Western centric views, initiating a more detached world consciousness. Toynbee's achievement was

[...] all the more remarkable because Dr. Toynbee is himself so deeply affected by much that is best in our western civilization: he is to the root of his being a classicist, a humanitarian, and – in a very individual way – a Christian.⁴⁰⁵

Pitikrim Sorokim, who found many problems at the level of details, also concludes favourably, finding the study 'an eclectic mix of history, ethics, politics, theology and religion'. There were weaknesses and strengths, misreadings of historical events and fruitful interpretations. Overall, he concludes:

Even when Toynbee speaks as a prophet, religious thinker, philosopher, or moralist, his utterances deserve our full attention [...] it is one of the significant

⁴⁰² George Catlin, "Toynbee's Study of History", in Montagu *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 167.

⁴⁰³ (Philip Bagby) Times Literary Reviewer, "A Personal View of History" in *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), and Anonymous reviewer in Times Literary Supplement, No2715, Oct. 22, 1954, 665-66.

⁴⁰⁴ Sir Ernest Barker, "Dr Toynbee's Study of History: A Review" in *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 97

⁴⁰⁵ Lawrence Stone, "Historical Consequences and Happy Families", in *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 114.

works of the middle of the twentieth century in the field of historical and social science.⁴⁰⁶

Hans Morgenthau regretted that Toynbee's work was misread in 'an age which tries to reduce truth to science.' Rushton Coulborn's essay finds many reasons for attacking Toynbee's method and findings, yet he too concludes with an expression of admiration:

The errors are in fact, bound up with profound insights, and the condemnations may, accordingly, be dismissed as a rather senseless noise [...]. Toynbee is finally to be judged as an artist. He is a great artist if rather a strange one. He is an idealist working in a medium where idealism is bound to create some error. For Toynbee's art is not one of words; or, if it is so in part, that is a part of his art in which he does not excel. His art is an art of representation, using historical knowledge as its medium. His subject is the whole career of man. Like all idealists, he draws upon the work of the realists in constructing his own technique. Like all idealists too, he subjugates the techniques of the realists to the idea, which dominates him. His misfortune is that he happens to do this at a time when the realists, powerfully driven by scientists in their rear, are claiming the whole historical domain. But his misfortune is our good fortune. He reminds us, if we will, that the study of history is a larger matter than the best possible methodology.⁴⁰⁷

There were two reviews, however, which were exceptional in that they were written by scholars who were engaged in enterprises not dissimilar from Toynbee's. Eric Voegelin was working on a monumental study of 'Order and History', which would eventually comprise five volumes. Lewis Mumford too was engaged in the study of civilizations, focusing on the role of 'technics' and technology.

Eric Voegelin describes Toynbee's effort as a *zetema*, or quest for the truth and order of history. He draws a distinction between the cognitive and existential dimension of Toynbee's work. The philosophical quest is always searching for "truth both cognitive and existential. Definitions in the *zetema*, however, are cognitive resting points, which articulate the view of reality that has been gained at the respective stage in the

⁴⁰⁶ Pitirim A. Sorokin, "Toynbee's Philosophy of History", in *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 172.

⁴⁰⁷ Rushton Coulborn, "Fact and Fiction in Toynbee's Study of History", *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 166.

existential advance toward truth.”⁴⁰⁸ Therefore, “the validity of the definitions has two dimensions [...] they must be tested against the data of reality to which they purport to refer [...] and [...] they must be measured by the existential level reached in the search for truth.”⁴⁰⁹ In other words, the concepts, definition and results achieved during the quest are mere ‘indices’ of the existential progress the philosopher undergoes during the quest.

As the quest impacts on the soul, we must expect to see definitions evolve from the early volumes to the later. Indeed he concludes that this is just what happens in the *Study* and therefore, “the earlier definitions have been modified, if not invalidated, from the newly reached positions.”⁴¹⁰ The *Study* is a record of indices reflecting different existential realities, which previously we have referred to as ‘lenses’. The change of the indices, Voegelin warns, can be an ‘inconvenience’ for the reader who identifies truth with information. However, he reconfirms that this change in the underlying existential positions, which is found in Toynbee’s study, is a typical aspect of a genuine *zetema* or quest.

Voegelin then asks whether Toynbee’s quest has reached its goal, before answering in the negative:

A search for truth is supposed to reach its goal, that is, a view of reality existentially informed by the *philia* of the *sophon* in the Platonic sense, or by the *intentio anima* toward God in the Augustinian sense. Toynbee does not reach this goal of the love of God, but stops short at a sensitive spiritualist’s and a historical connoisseur’s sympathy with religions. Hence the *zetema* had not come to its end when the author wrote his profound *Finis* at the physical end of his work.⁴¹¹

In Voegelin’s opinion, Toynbee fails in his *zetema* because he fails to accept the Christian revelatory truth – the mystic’s ecstasy obtained through faith alone. Voegelin finds evidence for Toynbee’s failure in the latter’s dialogue with Martin Wight, which is

⁴⁰⁸ Eric Voegelin, “Toynbee’s History as a search for truth” in Edward T. Gargan ed., *The Intent of Toynbee’s History* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1961), 183.

⁴⁰⁹ Eric Voegelin, “Toynbee’s History as a search for truth” in Edward T. Gargan ed., *The Intent of Toynbee’s History* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1961), 183-4

⁴¹⁰ Eric Voegelin, “Toynbee’s History as a search for truth” in Edward T. Gargan ed., *The Intent of Toynbee’s History* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1961), 184.

⁴¹¹ Eric Voegelin, “Toynbee’s History as a search for truth” in Edward T. Gargan ed., *The Intent of Toynbee’s History* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1961), 184

interspersed in Volume VII of the *Study*. Toynbee introduces Wight as a Christian academic, who continuously questions Toynbee's account of Christianity, the key problem being that Toynbee refused to accept Christian claims to uniqueness. Toynbee is quite content to accept the 'equivalence' of the higher religions without having to choose a personal favourite. But why then bring in Wight as a reference point? For Voegelin, this move illustrates Toynbee's lack of finality in his quest. He acknowledges Toynbee's "awareness that he is indeed engaged in a *zetema*, even if he baulks, like the prisoner in the cave [...] and refuses to let himself be dragged all the way up to its mouth." While the admission of an alter ego in the person of

Mr. Martin Wight, to be sure, is existentially not equivalent to the personal completion of the ascent, it is something like an act of atonement. [...] For we cannot, when engaged in a search for the truth, stop where the view is pleasant and declare a way station to be the summit without betraying the Guide who has bought us thus far.⁴¹²

Voegelin then agrees with Toynbee's interlocutor Martin Wight for charging Toynbee with hubris for having transformed, in his treatment of the universal churches, "the divine mystery of history into the manageable topic of a humane study."⁴¹³

Voegelin's analysis is instructive. By looking at the cognitive and existential dimension of the Toynbee's efforts, Voegelin helps us understand that Toynbee's method was not 'monstrously irrational'; rather, the different indices that we find referred to in the *Study* – geographical data, mythical symbols etc. – are all part of one coherent quest. Moreover, the different lenses adopted at each stage of existential development may assign different meanings to different types of data "insofar as the question which is a datum of reality depends for its answer on the existential level reached."⁴¹⁴ However, Voegelin's conclusion is odd, especially considering his own later failure to include a proper study of Christianity in his (unfinished) *Order and History* series. Nevertheless, the question posed is very relevant: does Toynbee's quest reach a conclusion? We must leave the answer to this question to Part Two of our research. However, we can already suggest here that Toynbee's engagement with Buddhism – his quest for a 'middle way' – may well be the attempted ascent that Voegelin failed to recognize in his review. In other words, the conclusion that Toynbee offered may well have been too

⁴¹² Eric Voegelin, "Toynbee's History as a search for truth" in Edward T. Gargan ed., *The Intent of Toynbee's History* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1961), 185.

⁴¹³ Ibid., 185

⁴¹⁴ Ibid., 184.

radical for Voegelin to recognize.

Lewis Mumford, like Voegelin, found many noble aspects in Toynbee's *Study*. He acknowledged and agreed with Toynbee's humanitarianism, his anti-parochialism and anti-nationalism. He also noted that Toynbee countered the prevailing Western centric exaltation of Hellenic and later European civilization over and above nineteen other significant societies. In complete contrast to Trevor-Roper, Mumford viewed Toynbee as "pure in heart [...] one who has not lifted his soul up to vanity: witness his judgement on consistently brutal ways of the English speaking peoples in dealing with native populations."⁴¹⁵ Mumford also supports Toynbee in taking spirituality seriously:

Furthermore, this is one of the few works of modern scholarship, not expressly devoted to theology, that does justice to the immense part played by religion in the development of human society: a correction of the rationalist illusion which regards religion as a primitive aberration and incidentally a confirmation of Benjamin Kidd's⁴¹⁶ unfashionable insight more than half a century ago.⁴¹⁷

But just like Voegelin, Mumford feels that Toynbee fell short of the objectives he set himself. For even if,

Toynbee, in the very conception of his great work, broke free from many of the idols of modern civilization, he did not, unfortunately, escape an older set of idols. In particular, he succumbed to that naive dualism which is almost engrained in the grammatical structure and vocabulary of our Western languages, with its flat distinctions between matter and spirit, dynamic and static, form and process. [...] The fact is that Toynbee's dualistic metaphysics and theology run like a deep fissure through his whole argument and weaken even the soundest parts of it. Matter and Spirit, External and Inner, Macrocosm and Microcosm, Society and the Individual Soul - these oppositions and antinomies are treated by him as if they in fact were exclusive and separate.⁴¹⁸

⁴¹⁵ Lewis Mumford, "The Napoleon of Notting Hill" in M.F. Ashley Montagu ed., *Toynbee and History: Critical Essay and Reviews* (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1956), 145. Also Toynbee, "Study," 1:465-67.

⁴¹⁶ Kidd was an Irish born British writer who argued that Christianity had made significant contributions to western civilization. His main works were *Social Evolution* published in 1894 and *Principles of Western Civilization* in 1902.

⁴¹⁷ Lewis Mumford, "The Napoleon of Notting Hill" in M.F. Ashley Montagu ed., *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1956), 145.

⁴¹⁸ Lewis Mumford, "The Napoleon of Notting Hill" in M.F. Ashley Montagu ed., *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1956), 145-6.

Is Mumford's criticism justified? Toynbee clearly quoted Einstein's sense of the whole, he quoted Bergson's desire to feel life and feel it as a whole, he quoted Smuts holistic principles throughout. He was aware of the limitations of thought and rationalism. In his later *Reconsiderations* the very first forty plus pages are devoted to 'The inadequacy of our means of thought':

All study [...] is subject to the limitations of human thought; and the first and greatest of these is that thought cannot help doing violence to Reality in the act of trying to apprehend it. For all we know, Reality is the undifferentiated unity of the mystical experience. We cannot know whether it is or is not, because we cannot know anything without being in a state of consciousness [...] without our mental image of Reality- or Reality's image of itself, mirrored in a human mind- being diffracted or articulated into subject and object [...]. [This] articulative act, goes on to dissect Reality farther into the conscious and the unconscious, soul and body, mind and matter, life and environment, freedom and necessity, creator and creatures, god and devil, good and bad, right and wrong, love and power, old and new, cause and effect, and so on. Such dichotomies are indispensable categories of thought; they are our means of apprehending Reality, as far as this is within our power [...] we cannot do without them, yet we cannot do with them either. We cannot afford either to discount them completely or to take them at their full face value [...].⁴¹⁹

Here then is Toynbee's position in the clearest exposition. We see his intuitive sense of the unity of reality. We see his understanding that thinking by its very nature dichotomizes and does violence, but there seems to be no alternative to thinking and so we must behold both points of view- not avoiding and not accepting. Mumford, however, would not have been convinced for he continues,

But surely all sound thought, not least that of our own age, is an attempt to bring together, as diverse aspects of a dynamic, holistic, unified process, forces that the mind, through the very separateness and fixation of its categories, tends falsely to hold apart as self-sufficient entities. This radical flaw in Toynbee's metaphysics makes it impossible to do justice to formative and purposive acts that are at work at every level of life, giving meaning to material circumstances and giving visible shape and form to what, a moment before,

⁴¹⁹ Toynbee, "*Reconsiderations*," 8-9.

was an invisible idea or dream; so that even minor and menial tasks attain dignity just to the extent that they serve the whole process. 'Nor soul helps body more,' to quote one of Toynbee's favorite poets, Browning, 'than body soul.' For Toynbee, meaning and value and form come into their own only when the hampering body has been minimized or left behind: cut off from their sources in life, they exist for him in a final act of transfiguration that brings man close to God.⁴²⁰

If, as Mumford argues, this naïve dualism is embedded in the grammatical structure and vocabulary of our western language – short of using a totally foreign language – how was Toynbee to express anything? Toynbee is at pains to explain his use of mythical vocabulary and the need to move beyond 'logical' languages that fail to grasp the true contradictions. Nevertheless, it might be the case that Toynbee fell into the trap of a dichotomous ontology against his own will, simply by using his native language. This appears to be Mumford's conclusion, who finds Toynbee suspended in Platonic/Augustinian dualism:

Since this final act, [transfiguration] as Toynbee sees it, does not become generally possible till life in this world is shattered and desperate, every formative and creative moment in civilization – or of personal existence – serves not as a partial revelation of the Ultimate but just the opposite – nothing less than a postponement of man's final happiness, since that happiness becomes possible only when man renounces the hope of any earthly felicity. Toynbee's conclusion is orthodox Augustinian doctrine; and it brings him very close to Reinhold Niebuhr's position in our own day; but it lacks the robust sense of health that one finds in the dualism of Thomas Aquinas, for the reason that Aquinas, like Aristotle before him, was essentially both a better sociologist and a more hopeful contemplator of life's natural circumstances and possible goods. My conclusion is that the problems that Toynbee set himself to answer in *A Study of History* cannot be answered in terms of the metaphysical and sociological framework that he has used. For this reason, these problems seem to him insoluble 'In This World' and he is therefore driven to seek an Other Worldly exit, forced upon him by his original presuppositions.⁴²¹

⁴²⁰ Lewis Mumford, "The Napoleon of Notting Hill" in M.F. Ashley Montagu ed., *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1956), 146.

⁴²¹ Lewis Mumford, "The Napoleon of Notting Hill" in M.F. Ashley Montagu ed., *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews* (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1956), 146.

That Toynbee came to emphasize spiritual matters over worldly affairs is not surprising given the historical background. What Mumford suggests is that he lost his balance in the process, falling back on a dualism in which the material/bodily/worldly realm is opposed to the spiritual realm. While the writings occasionally displayed this tendency towards dualism, his theoretical analysis was generally more sophisticated. The City of God was not unobtainable as in Mumford's reading, one that left it as guilt in the souls of men, but was rather to be built in the souls of men through love, and as a result, the City of Man would prosper. There is no lack of hope that 'earthly felicity' was possible, only that the preconditions for this happiness were to be established *in* the souls of men. Toynbee was aware, as we have seen, of the problem of dichotomies and dualisms, and of how language structures could compel us to think in terms of dichotomies. But both Voegelin and Mumford seem to suggest that he fell short in his noble endeavours. He was self-aware of the problem, but failed to overcome it. Still, neither Voegelin nor Mumford looked in detail at Toynbee's dialogue with Buddhism. We will argue in the following sections of this thesis that it is this dialogue which for Toynbee offered the prospect of a 'conclusion' (to respond to Voegelin) and of an 'exit' (to respond to Mumford). In order to be able to follow Toynbee on this path, we must first clarify again the nature of the problem and then the nature of the 'answers' that he found in Buddhist thought.

Bridge

5. The limits of reason: a two thousand year crisis?

Toynbee's 'quest' as we have come to understand it, reached a crucial point of reflection when he came to write Volumes VII-X of the *Study*. These volumes embody the first application of the results of his exploration, in so far as he took all the insights and implications he had gleaned from the previous volumes and then used them to interpret modern western civilization. The time in which they were produced was one in which western societies, given the advent of World Wars, nuclear technology and so on, were in a period which promised, and indeed delivered, catastrophe so great that it was seen to be mythical. Thus it was also a period of great contemplation, reflection, doubt and dynamism; it is onto this situation that Toynbee poured his insight. It should also be remembered that this was not the act of a 'researcher' with a comfortable distance between himself and the thing he studied; Toynbee looked at the contemporary world, and his own place within it, through the lenses he had so carefully developed. Thus in these multifarious ways, which at the same time are unified, the study, the life-work, turned in on itself.

The critical reflections of Voegelin and Mumford, extrapolated in the previous chapter, raise important questions about Toynbee's work. Indeed, more properly they raised the prospect of limitations, in both the endpoint of his life-work trajectory (the 'conclusion') and the process itself as far as his alleged 'dualism' is concerned. These suggested limitations lead us to look more closely at Toynbee's inherited 'starting point' in terms of the dualistic apprehension of reality, which has become entrenched in Western thinking and language, substantially under the influence of Aristotelian thought. Thus, we must look at the *why* of Toynbee's struggle to 'use but not-use' dichotomous language indices, to see exactly what the strictures were that he had to work within.

Indeed, while Mumford argues that Toynbee's life work was restricted by this tradition, we instead suggest that Toynbee, aware of such limitations, sought out dialogues with other ways of thinking he had encountered, such as Buddhism, because they offered possibilities to 'overcome' such limits. Given Toynbee's statements quoted in the conclusion of the previous chapter, it is difficult to argue that he was not aware of his limitations: his quest was a quest precisely because it was self-aware, self-reflexive and sought to overcome the existential limitations it was in the process of identifying.

As previously elaborated upon, Toynbee needed to express contradictoriness, best exemplified by the previous analysis of Faust and the devil-god but could not do this within the 'logical' or 'rational' parameters of his language and therefore shifted to the language of myth. The question we need to address is why he could not find a logical vocabulary to deal with such contradictories and why this caused such a problem. As we are suggesting that Western rationality is based predominantly upon 'laws of thought' articulated by Aristotle, we will examine Aristotelian logic and metaphysics and then look more closely at the Buddhist response to these same issues; this Buddhist response, in turn, was a significant part of Toynbee's response to the problems and limitations of his life-work as they emerged to him through his quest.

When we survey the western tradition for the responses to the types of problems Toynbee encountered, we find that it has found 'rational' ways of dealing with contradictory propositions, either through various kinds of dualisms, or materialist and idealist reductionism for example. Each of these 'solutions', however, requires us to decide between the two sides of the contradiction. In this tradition, therefore, a contradiction is a 'crisis', a bifurcation, which is resolved by choosing one side at the expense of the other. Toynbee's research, in contrast, made him question the very manner in which contradictions (and paradox) are 'denied' in this process. The 'devil-god' he found in the many mythical narratives he studied seemed a prime example of the 'both' rather than the 'either/or'. Myth, it seemed, was a form in which it was possible to behold contradictions and attribute truth to them.

Inspired by Einstein's well-known injunction that 'the significant problems we face cannot be solved by the same level of thinking that created them',⁴²² we suggest to explore the foundations of the rationality that denies truth to contradictions and paradox. When faced with the problem of a contradiction, rather than choosing between the existing choices that the Aristotelian discourse presents us, we question the framework of rationality that requires us to separate them and to choose between them.

In terms of rationality in our Western tradition, there are certain postulates that have been developed as the 'laws', which govern rational thought. These three laws, of Identity (what is-is: P is P); Non-Contradiction (Nothing both is and is not: not(P and

⁴²² <http://quotationsbook.com/quote/32470/> (accessed 5/5/09).

not-P)); and Excluded-Middle (either it is or it is not: P or Not-P), have been canonised in the West. Sommerville has neatly surmised the three laws as essentially saying the same thing. He posits,

[Aristotle's] three laws really make the same [discursive] point from three different angles; positively, by saying that a thing can be only what it is; negatively, by saying that a thing cannot be what it is not; and dichotomously, by saying that there are only two alternatives – to be A or not to be A – and they are mutually exclusive.⁴²³

The three laws admit assertion (Identity), negation (Non-Contradiction) but exclude the 'both' position (Excluded Middle); interestingly the logical 'neither' position is not even mentioned. As previously discussed, Aristotle was a considerable influence on Toynbee. Yet in this case, there is perhaps an influence, which may have stunted Toynbee's approach, as the very language preventing Toynbee from fully articulating his discoveries rationally was logically structured by Aristotle's laws. This in turn indicates why Toynbee had to move to Platonic myth. There is a history to this Platonic-Aristotelian divide that is interesting and illuminating and it gives us another context for exploring Aristotle's thought which we will come to discuss later. Nevertheless, it is first necessary to undertake a more detailed investigation of Aristotle's thinking.

⁴²³ J. Somerville, Chapter 1: "The Nature of Reality: Dialectical Materialism" (3-39); Chapter 2: The Nature of Thought: Logic and Dialectics (41-77). In *The Philosophy of Marxism: An Exposition*. (Minneapolis: Marxist Educational Press. (1967/1983), 45.

Aristotle's three laws of logical thought are foundational for western thought, even though they are contested, to differing degrees, in a range of academic and non-academic fields. Nevertheless, in the West at least, it is difficult to conceive of 'rational thinking' without invoking the laws in some form. Aristotle is often presented as the father of logic by many of his biographers and enthusiasts, although some point to the fact that Aristotle, rather than originating the ideas, formulated them from existing discourses that had been developing for many years.⁴²⁵ Nevertheless, as an example of the gusto with which Aristotle's work on logic is regarded, we typically find the words of Will Durant who contends that "[a]lmost without predecessors, almost entirely by his own hard thinking, he created a new science – Logic." Furthermore, Durant goes on to note that "[b]efore Aristotle, science was embryo; with him it was born."⁴²⁶ Moreover, Marjorie Grene asserts that, "[i]n logic [...] he may fairly claim to have had no predecessor",⁴²⁷ while Lloyd echoes these sentiments claiming that Aristotle's logic was "very largely original."⁴²⁸ To underline the feat with which Aristotle has been credited, the words of Alfred Weber are instructive as he clearly states that Aristotle is the 'real founder of logic' and that his work was the culmination of a process becoming conscious of itself:

⁴²⁴ The following analysis is based upon an 'orthodox' reading of Aristotle's 'ontology' as that of a static being as the prime substance. There are however coherent arguments that the true subtlety of his position has been missed by the historical 'orthodox' readings that we rehearse here. We accept this subtlety may indeed be inherent and may be a better reading- as for example - the discussion over the nature of 'ousia', 'nous', the relation between the continuing aspect and the changing aspect of 'substance' in turn involving its 'history' and immanence rather than the orthodox 'static transcendent principle' that informs arche etc. This alternative 'dynamic' reading however is not the central issue for us here as there has undoubtedly been an orthodox reading or acceptance that his 'laws' (or their application together with the static substance) gave rise to the label 'ontology' as it has come down to us. For our purposes and interests these orthodox if unintentional or misread laws inform much of our 'western rationality'. Exploring Aristotle for the laws of thought is therefore reasonable we argue for 'locating' our source of Toynbee's problem (if it is a problem) though we accept this orthodoxy may not be entirely Aristotle's. For one subtle reappraisal see Christopher Long, *The Ethics of Ontology: Rethinking an Aristotelian Legacy* (SUNY Series in Ancient Greek Philosophy 2005) For an orthodox critique see Henry Staten, "Wittgenstein and Derrida" (University of Nebraska Press; 1986). For translations on the original vocabulary at the centre of these discussions see George Henry Liddell and Robert Scott. *A Greek-English Lexicon*. 9th ed. (Oxford: The Clarendon Press. 1968).

⁴²⁵ For a notable analysis of the lines of thought developed from Thales to Aristotle, see Gordon H. Clark, *Thales to Dewey: A History of Philosophy* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Riverside Press, 1957), 3-144. For two classics on Greek thought, see, Leon Robin, *Greek Thought and the Origins of the Scientific Spirit* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co Ltd. 1928) and John Edwin Sandys *A History of Classical Scholarship* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1903)

⁴²⁶ Will Durant, *The Story of Philosophy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1926), 67, 72.

⁴²⁷ Marjorie Grene, *A Portrait of Aristotle* (Chicago: University Press, 1963), 6.

⁴²⁸ G. E. R. Lloyd, *Aristotle: The Growth and Structure of His Thought* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 111.

[T]he discussions of the Eleatics, the Sophists, and the Socratics, have shown us how reason gradually became conscious of the processes which it originally employed instinctively; thus the elementary axioms [...] and without doubt also the more special rules of the syllogism came to be formulated. But it required the genius of an Aristotle to co-ordinate these elements, to complete them, and to formulate them into the system of deductive logic, which constitutes his chief claim to fame.⁴²⁹

What is significant for our study here is that Aristotle is indeed recognised as the chief originator of 'logical thinking', thus we are approaching the source of the problems we identified in Toynbee's work. Moreover, while it need not detain us here, it seems significant that Aristotle's self-understanding was that he was a pioneer of deductive logic, as he wrote that as,

Of the present inquiry [the formalistic structure of syllogistic reasoning], on the other hand, it was not the case that part of the work had been thoroughly done before, while part had not. Nothing existed at all. [...] [W]hereas on the subject of deduction we had absolutely nothing else of an earlier date to mention, but were kept at work for a long time in experimental researches.⁴³⁰

As we find in the *Metaphysics*, in agreement with Brown, "Aristotle regarded it [logic] as a preliminary study to all branches of knowledge calling it an instrument (organon) of study."⁴³¹ Nevertheless, while we will refer to Aristotle's 'logic' throughout, as this has become the common referent, he did not commonly use the term 'logic.' He instead referred to 'analytics'; for example *Prior Analytics* is the name of his key text on deductive logic and *Posterior Analytics*, the name of his text on induction. At the core of Aristotle's logic was the syllogism. His syllogism was a logical deduction defined in *Prior Analytics* as:

[A] discourse in which, certain things being stated, something other than what is stated follows of necessity from their being so. I mean by the last phrase that it follows because of them, and by this, that no further term is required from without in order to make the consequence necessary.⁴³²

⁴²⁹ Alfred Weber, *History of Philosophy*, translated by Frank Thilly (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925), 78.

⁴³⁰ Aristotle, *Sophistical Refutations*, 183b.34f.

⁴³¹ Colin Brown, *Christianity and Western Thought* (Downers Grove: Inter Varsity Press, 1990), 40.

⁴³² Aristotle, *Prior Analytics*, 1.24b.19-22,

This logical deduction was for Aristotle a tool to guide investigation into the truth. The question that we will posit later in this chapter, is whether these tools or guides in fact become a hindrance, constraining rather than opening up 'truth', or more accurately leading towards a particular kind of truth that may simultaneously close off paths to any other truth/s.

The 'axioms' or first principles that support his 'laws' are found in the *Metaphysics*, but before we explore this particular text, we will provide a little background. There are a number of Aristotle's works that deal with 'logic' originally grouped under the title the *Organon*. The first work in this group is *Categories*, which explains how 'categories' are established by asking questions about things and how there are only ten possible kinds of things which can be the subject of the predicate of a proposition: substances, quantity, quality, relation etc. The *Prior Analytics* deals with deductive logic, the *Posterior Analytics* deals with inductive logic. The *Topics* is a text on dialectical argument. *On Sophistical Refutations* outlines fallacies in arguments and *On Interpretation* lays out his examination of language and logic, syllables, nouns, verbs, sentences, meanings and truth conditions. The *Metaphysics* sits 'outside' the *Organon* as it is his examination or search for the prime substance through what he calls the 'first philosophy'. We can understand it to be the study of 'being qua being'. If we divide the book into three parts, we find that part one establishes 'first philosophy' as the knowledge of causes of things. It then focuses on the logical method based upon the principle of non-contradiction. The middle part looks at the various senses of 'being' and the last part arrives ultimately at some 'conclusions' regarding divine 'things'. What is of interest to us is how Aristotle uses the logic of non-contradiction in his search for 'being'. Of course, when Aristotle talks about 'substance' we need to be aware that he is not referring to a physical or material substance but to an essence or principle that manifests as form and matter as captured by the term 'hylomorphism' from the Greek words for matter and form. In his search he draws upon and applies his analytical methods developed in the various works of the *Organon*.

The Metaphysics opens with a description of man; with the famous line that; "All men naturally desire knowledge."⁴³³ Aristotle goes on to identify the non-utilitarian pleasure

⁴³³ Aristotle, *Metaphysics* Book 1, 980a cited from:
<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text.jsp?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0052%3Abook%3D1%3Asection%3D980a> Aristotle in 23 Volumes, Vols.17, 18, translated by Hugh Tredennick. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press; London, William Heinemann Ltd. 1933, 1989. (Accessed 5/4/09). Hereafter all citations are from this website and its electronic version of this translation.

man receives from his senses/sensation as the basis of his desire to know. Moreover, among the senses, he tells us, man loves sight over all others, as this is what helps him distinguish between things. While the opening of the *Metaphysics* is well known, we note the fact that even in the first few paragraphs is an indication of the direction of Aristotle's thought – that of identifying things, differentiation, and securing knowledge of them. In other words, it is an approach that already indicates the possible outcome of the study, to put in place a system which in its search for ultimate substance, formalises differentiation, and – when taken to its 'methodo'–'logical' conclusion – binary oppositions.

Aristotle then establishes a hierarchy of professional paths one can take, which in turn indicate the manner in which they experience the world. He discusses the relative merits of the craftsman who creates out of habit, and the artists who realize some universal truth out of many experiences of singular events. Aristotle finally opines that wisdom is the true knowledge of 'why' something is as it is, why fire is hot for example, and as such is of primary importance because it means the individual investigates and understands the first 'causes and reasons' of things as they are. He argues that

[w]e consider that knowledge and proficiency belong to art rather than to experience, and we assume that artists are wiser than men of mere experience (which implies that in all cases wisdom depends rather upon knowledge);and this is because the former know the cause, whereas the latter do not [...]. The master craftsmen in every profession are more estimable and know more and are wiser than the artisans, because they know the reasons of the things which are done; but we think that the artisans, like certain inanimate objects, do things, but without knowing what they are doing (as, for instance, fire burns);only whereas inanimate objects perform all their actions in virtue of a certain natural quality, artisans perform theirs through habit. Thus the master craftsmen are superior in wisdom, not because they can do things, but because they possess a theory and know the causes.⁴³⁴

Following this statement, he reaffirms and then concludes that wisdom is equal to knowing first causes. In the following we note typical passages, which are potentially problematic in that they show how Aristotle wants us to follow him in his reasoning and

⁴³⁴ Aristotle, *Metaphysics* book 1 981a- 981b.

to subscribe to his conclusions without revealing on what logical grounds he is able to reach those conclusions:

[t]he man of experience is held to be wiser than the mere possessors of any power of sensation, the artist than the man of experience, the master craftsman than the artisan; and the speculative sciences to be more learned than the productive. Thus it is clear that Wisdom is knowledge of certain principles and causes.⁴³⁵

The argument here presented is that experience is adjudged better than just having sensations, the artist better than the experienced, the master-artist better than the handicraftsman who acts merely from habit, and speculative philosophers better than people who just produce. Aristotle is taking us down a particular path, which as indicated previously, is one of discernment, but only in a particular sense. He means for us to understand wisdom as the ability to differentiate causes, to distinguish between things and finally the causes of things, much as he actually does in the text by distinguishing between the artist, the handicraftsmen and so on. In that he assumes as 'obvious' that such clear distinctions are necessary and functional in the pursuit of knowledge of reality, he is already binding us to his preconceptions and more significantly to the laws of logic he will subsequently establish and use. If we accept uncritically the validity of these early postulations and his 'discourse' we are acceding to what will eventually come.

From here Aristotle moves on to the central issues that concerns us. This is the role of logic in establishing substance or things or, we suggest, the role of substance or things in the establishment of 'laws' of thought. Firstly he establishes that the science of substance is the first philosophy, before he then establishes his method for deducing the truths of the 'ultimate substance'. Assuming that his science of substance is sovereign and prior, and the philosopher is the authority at identifying or establishing the axioms, somehow leads him to further question this 'subject matter' of substance. This is because it is not the 'substances' of other sciences such as mathematics or physics that he is searching for, but the substance more fundamental to all of these – being qua being. Having clarified this, he establishes his method as a deductive method, based upon certainties that can in turn provide us with foundational knowledge of this ultimate substance. The key principle used in this context is the principle of non-

⁴³⁵ Aristotle, *Metaphysics* book 1 981b -982a.

contradiction, thus leading us to ask whether he uses logic to establish 'substance' or whether he uses 'substance' to establish logic. The search for substance and the laws of thought seem to be implied in each other. We have identified a number of key arguments that help to illustrate how he approaches this nexus of problems, the first of which involves the law of identity. This is established by the argument that to reject or negate indicates something must exist in order to negate:

[f]or that which is shedding any quality retains something of that which is being shed, and something of that which is coming to be must already exist. [...] And in general if a thing is ceasing to be, there will be something there which is; and if a thing is coming to be, that from which it comes and by which it is generated must be; and this cannot go on to infinity.⁴³⁶

Here he firstly *assumes* substance for the purposes of then discussing whether one can reject it. He concludes that any attempt to negate means some thing must exist. Secondly he states that there must be some 'essence' that is undergoing corruption or, if being produced, it must come from some substance or essence. In the next quote we find the law or principle of non-contradiction articulated. It is a form of self-deception, he suggests, to reject the law:

[c]learly it is impossible for the same man to suppose at the same time that the same thing is and is not; for the man who made this error would entertain two contrary opinions at the same time. Hence all men who are demonstrating anything refer back to this as an ultimate belief; for it is by nature the starting-point of all the other axioms as well.⁴³⁷

He eventually moves on to outline the law of excluded-middle:

Nor indeed can there be any intermediate between contrary statements, but of one thing we must either assert or deny one thing, whatever it may be.⁴³⁸

Aristotle's point here, that there is no mean between a contradiction and that, therefore, asserting or denying becomes 'necessary' is a very clear statement on the boundaries that he assumes have to hold if 'rational' thought is possible. This is evidently a limit

⁴³⁶ Aristotle, *Metaphysics* Book IV 1010a.

⁴³⁷ Aristotle, *Metaphysics* Book IV 1005b.

⁴³⁸ Aristotle, *Metaphysics* Book IV 1011b.

point, which when it is actualised within his linguistic system of rational thought, means that it insists that reality operates in this way, so that there must always be an either/or choice. This excluded middle law is however just an extreme version of the law of non-contradiction. The law of non-contradiction only states that it is not possible that something 'is and not is' at the same time and place. The law of excluded-middle appears to harden this position to suggest that we must 'necessarily' choose between the two poles of the contradiction.

Following this, he restates that because we have assumed it impossible to think otherwise than this we have thus demonstrated it as knowledge,

There are some, however, as we have said, who both state themselves that the same thing can be and not be, and say that it is possible to hold this view. Many even of the physicists adopt this theory. But we have just assumed that it is impossible at once to be and not to be, and by this means we have proved that this is the most certain of all principles.⁴³⁹

We must state some initial concerns here that there seems little argument to sustain these laws when compared for example with Aristotle's own rules of deduction, where if the premises are valid and the argument sound then the conclusion necessarily follows. There are no premises offered that lead to the necessary conclusion for each law. We posit that Aristotle does not fully explore the possibilities he rejects. This is due, perhaps, to the tradition from which he came, along with a need to make what he saw as 'rigorous' the manner in which one pursues knowledge. However, it is possible to see in Aristotle's work some nuances that suggest that his thinking was not entirely closed off by the 'laws' he stipulated.

If we consider the 'laws of thought' found in the *Metaphysics* as guidelines and analytical aids which might help promote clear and logical *discourse* about ontological questions rather than immutable statements about the nature of being per se, then the 'openness' of Aristotle's philosophy depends on the phenomena that these first principles and axioms or laws are applied to in order to deduct further true statements. The premises are established through nous (intellect), which is the eternal aspect of the soul. In this reading, the primary function of the 'laws' is to protect the truth of the insights provided by nous so that the original truth is carried through to the statements

⁴³⁹ Aristotle *Metaphysics* Book IV 1005b-1006a.

derived from those insights. The flexibility of this configuration of ideas is lost, however, if the 'laws' become detached from the operation of nous.

If we follow this line, then it is possible to see that the problem created for Toynbee by Aristotle's work can be attributed in part to the reception and dogmatisation of his laws, especially during the scholasticism of the Middle Ages. Nevertheless at the same time, as we will see in more detail below, Aristotle's desire to create a ground for ontological discourse, the ground that we receive today as the 'laws', even if it is taken tentatively, still pushes us towards dichotomous thinking, suggesting that increased differentiation will eventually unearth the substances of reality. Indeed, the result of his laws as we find them today seems to reveal their underlying tendency; rooted, and if not static, then certainly difficult to move beyond. It is not surprising, therefore, that his logic, especially if taken as a statement about the reality of 'things' (including 'ultimate things'), proved to be a stumbling block – and not just for Toynbee.

5.2 Critiques of Aristotle

There are of course a range of varied and nuanced critiques available of Aristotle's work on the three laws, substance and so on. In this section we will look at some more closely so as to establish more substantially the issues raised in the previous section. Karl Popper is a well-established anti-Aristotelian as regards inductive knowledge. In Popper's well-known work on Parmenides he argues that all thinkers before Aristotle and Protagoras distinguished "between knowledge (*saphes*, *aletheia* later *episteme*) which is divine and only accessible to the gods, and opinion (*doxa*) which mortals are able to possess."⁴⁴⁰ Popper believes that Protagoras was first to break with this tradition because he felt the gods were unknowable and so too whatever they knew was unknowable to man. Therefore Protagoras proposed or held that 'man is the measure of all things'. Moreover Popper understands Protagoras as an empiricist rebelling against rationalism. Popper argues that Parmenides, Socrates and Plato all held to this distinction between 'divine knowledge' and 'opinion'. As a result he goes on to argue that it is Aristotle who breaks with this "reasonable tradition that says we know very little. He [Aristotle] thinks he knows a lot; and he tries to give a theory of *episteme*, of demonstrable knowledge."⁴⁴¹ The flaw in Aristotle, according to Popper, is that his

⁴⁴⁰ Karl Popper *The World of Parmenides* ed. Arne F. Petersen assisted by Jorgen Mejer (Routledge 1998), 1.

⁴⁴¹ Popper, "The World of Parmenides," 1.

starting assumption that there is demonstrable knowledge necessarily involves him in infinite regression.

This knowledge if demonstrated, must be logically deduced from something else and so on. How can this infinite regress be stopped? [...] by the doctrine that the real original premises are statements of definitions [...which] on the one hand give to words a meaning by convention and are therefore certain (analytic, tautological). But if they are only conventional, and therefore certain, then all episteme is truth by convention [...] all episteme is tautological, deduced from our definitions.⁴⁴²

To overcome this problem Popper suggests Aristotle proposes there exist definitions that are not conventional but are the result of:

[...] seeing the essence of a thing, and so synthetic; they are the result of induction [...] the description of this essence is one of his fundamental principles, the *archai*. In Aristotle these principles are definitions [...] and they become [...] by some type of 'double talk' [...] the certain truth that only conventional and tautological definitions can have.⁴⁴³

Popper thinks Aristotle had a bad conscience over this and also proposes that Aristotle artfully but falsely uses a Socratic method of critically evaluating these essences:

[...] in part by considering many cases, many instances of it [...] this leads to the construction of a kind of inductive syllogism. Premises; Socrates is mortal; Plato is mortal, Simmias is mortal and so on [...] All these are men [...] Conclusion (which Aristotle knows is invalidly reached) All men are mortal [...]. Aristotle himself is perfectly clear that an inductive syllogism is invalid; but he does believe that we somehow arrive, by its help and the intuition of the essences of things referred to, at statements that describe these essences or properties [...] and that these statements are, as definitions, true and certain and can serve as the ultimate premises of episteme, of demonstrated scientific knowledge.⁴⁴⁴

⁴⁴² Popper, "The World of Parmenides," 2.

⁴⁴³ Popper, "The World of Parmenides," 2-3.

⁴⁴⁴ Popper, "The World of Parmenides," 3.

Popper also goes on to propose that Aristotle projects his inductive method onto Socrates, in order to gain support for his epistemology. This is because Socratic argument is viewed as good argument, so by linking his induction with Socrates he will validate it. This manifests by suggesting that Socrates, who professed he knew nothing, was only pretending not to know. The Socratic method is '*elenchus*' or critical refutation by counterexamples aimed at undermining the believers certainty in their 'knowledge'. Aristotle uses this critical method on essences and attempts to turn the *elenchus* into *episteme* (inductive proof). His ensuing problem of justifying this reversal of the intent of Socratic method is resolved by suggesting that Socrates actually 'really knew' but he just professed or 'pretended not to know' – this, then, was the true meaning of Socratic irony.

Popper's critique is useful for a number of reasons, and while we may or may not agree with the manner in which Popper sought to redress the problems associated with Aristotle, his analysis does raise some important issues. Firstly, he gives us a sense of the place Aristotle holds within the tradition of Greek thought, that he does indeed represent a kind of break point, as well as a continuation. Moreover, that the very manner in which he seeks to go beyond his antecedents leads him towards the development of a search for truth, which, in order to stop becoming an infinite regress, he turns into what Popper understands as essentially a language game, a game of 'double-talk'. These are issues that we will pick up on again shortly and even though we agree with the main weakness, we suggest a view that gives us reason to be a little more sympathetic than Popper.

For a specific critique of the law of non-contradiction we turn to a notable recent work *Doubt Truth to be a Liar*, by Graham Priest, an exponent of dialetheism, a form of logic that holds that there are 'true' contradictions. Priest engages with Aristotle's text and demonstrates a number of the limitations he finds. Priest develops the best possible cases to articulate the full persuasive force for Aristotle's position of 'non-contradiction'. In every case however, the only argument he finds that Aristotle wins is against a trivialist's position who 'can't be argued against in any case as they hold everything to be true'. With two well-known examples, the Liars Paradox and Russell's set theory, Priest gives cases where 'non-contradiction' fails to hold and that a consistent position for 'true-contradictions' suggests itself.

[T]he principle as stated, says that it is not possible that there is an object, *a*, and property, *F*, such that $Fa \wedge \neg Fa$. This is obviously not the most general form

of the law, which would be more like: it is not possible for there to be a proposition, x , such that $x \wedge \neg x$. Aristotle appears to be ignoring those cases where x is something other than a simple subject/predicate form. [...] Aristotle is simply assuming that the general case can be reduced, in some way or other, to this one. Indeed in a later chapter he states the law in what would appear to be the more general form: opposite {i.e. contradictory} assertions are not simultaneously true (111b14).⁴⁴⁵

As such, Priest brings out the problem whereby the subtlety and dynamic relations of the real world are reduced to a simple subject/predicate form. As we indicated above, this subject/predicate form is the typical form of the premises that in turn are the foundations for deducing all demonstrable knowledge. Priest further develops his critique of Aristotle by pointing out the following:

Aristotle goes on, next, to argue that the LNC [Law of Non-Contradiction] is the 'firmest' of all principles since no one can believe anything of the form $x \wedge \neg x$ (5b22-27). This is, *prima facie*, a rather strange thing to say. After all [...] some people appear to believe things of this form [...] I certainly do. I believe for example, that the Russell set both is and is not a member of itself. Aristotle points out that what people say, they may not necessarily believe [...]. Aristotle goes on to give such a reason (5b28-33). Essentially [...] if someone believes $x \wedge \neg x$ then they believe x and they believe $\neg x$; but if they believe $\neg x$ then they don't believe x (believing x and believing $\neg x$ are contraries). Hence it follows that they both believe and do not believe x – a violation of the LNC. This is a hopeless argument. [...] it will work only if it is impossible to have violations of the LNC of a certain form – something still moot at this stage of the argument; more importantly, it begs the question against someone who claims they believe contradictions. Such a person will not accede to the claim that believing x and believing $\neg x$ are contraries. In the absence of further considerations, their beliefs simply refute this.⁴⁴⁶

Priest confirms some of our concerns about the manner in which the argument is developed. Aristotle's statement above where he pronounces that "since no one can believe" is somewhat alarming. We previously alluded to the fact that the difficulties with Aristotle's thought may be linked to his particular use of language, and along this

⁴⁴⁵ Graham Priest, *Doubt Truth to be a Liar* (Oxford: OUP, 2008), 8.

⁴⁴⁶ Graham Priest, *Doubt Truth to be a liar* (Oxford: OUP, 2008) 9

line of thought, we find that Priest's work is supportive. Indeed, he introduces a persuasive argument taken from Lear that we will examine more closely. This critique is at the heart of the issue for opening up our later engagement with Buddhist thought:

Aristotle argues that an opponent of non-contradiction must eliminate substance, that there is nothing that his statements are about. But that an opponent cannot say anything follows only if one assumes that the correct account of language-use is the one Aristotle gives: that to say anything is to affirm or deny something of a subject [...]. Why could not a [...] sophisticated opponent completely reject this world-view and theory of language? Could he not hold that [...] Aristotle's argument shows only that we must give up the picture of the world as composed of substances and properties?⁴⁴⁷

He questions Aristotle's uncritical use of language, suggesting that there are other ways in which language can be used; specifically to express a non-substance/predicate based view. Indeed Stcherbatsky, in his preface to his *Buddhist Logic* (1930), pre-empted this when he wrote,

The law of non contradiction is expressed in European logic by Aristotle; nothing can possess at the same time, in the same place and the same respect, two mutually exclusive properties. This European formula of the law of contradiction presupposes the existence of the relation of substance and quality, or of "continuants and occurrents." In India we are faced [...] by [...] systems which deny the objective reality of this relation. [...] Buddhists admit merely the occurrents.⁴⁴⁸

In trying to understand where Aristotle's predilection for a substance-based view comes from, we turn to the analysis of Paul Studtmann. He explains that in the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle makes the argument that being is not a genus (998b23, 1059b31). "For Aristotle a genus must be differentiated by something that falls outside that genus [...] being would have to be differentiated by non-being which, according to Aristotle, is a metaphysical absurdity."⁴⁴⁹ This begins to tease out that perhaps metaphysical choices are being upheld in Aristotle's work, which makes the idea of any absolute logical claims seem questionable. Indeed Studtmann identifies Aristotle as

⁴⁴⁷ Graham Priest, *Doubt Truth to be a Liar* (Oxford: OUP, 2008) 27.

⁴⁴⁸ Theodore Stcherbatsky *Buddhist Logic Part One* (Kessinger Publishing 1930), 104 .

⁴⁴⁹ Studtmann, in <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle-categories/> (accessed 2/209)

belonging to the 'realist' tradition, and that significantly for our argument "he assumes rather than defends a posture of realism with respect to the metaphysical structures in the world".⁴⁵⁰ It seems that for Aristotle, these 'necessary' assumptions are precisely the points where a wrong turn is taken in that he makes a choice without making it clear to his readers that other choices could have been made.

David Charles, further highlights Aristotle's 'shortcomings and idiosyncrasies', as he explains that his

[...] aim was to develop a logical theory for a natural language capable of describing [...] individual substances, species, processes, states, etc [...] he had no interest in artificial languages which speak of entities beyond his favoured metaphysical and epistemological theory.⁴⁵¹

In this respect Charles adds, this goal is different to those metalogicians since Frege who examine and develop and "speak of artificial and natural languages, and domains of objects unconstrained by any privileged metaphysics."⁴⁵² This challenge to Aristotle's substance is of course not unique. We find historical precedents in figures such as Hegel who, like Heraclitus, argued for a dialectical tension of opposites and we may be able to trace the sceptical position in today's anti-foundational post-modernists.

If we return briefly to the suggestion made above that Aristotle may have intended his laws as a guide to consistent and clear discourse about ontological questions rather than as immutable statements about the nature of being per se, we may add that in the struggle between grammarians, rhetoricians and dialecticians, his sympathy was most likely with the grammarians. We can plausibly suggest that he was a grammarian, who was attempting to systematise the traditional approaches to knowledge by introducing deductive logic. But, as we noted, it was only later during the Middle Ages, that what he called 'analytics' was further ossified into what we today call 'logic'. Aristotle's understanding of 'science' as well as his 'definitions' and 'demonstrations' were informed by grammatica. The logos was not a mere sign but the truth of the things that make up the real. Accordingly, Aristotle's definitions – established by nous – were not just words but identical to the very essences and predicates in reality. The syllogisms and the emphasis on deductive reasoning were then added in order to 'protect' the

⁴⁵⁰ Studtmann, in <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle-categories/> (accessed 2/2/09)

⁴⁵¹ David Charles in *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy* Ed. Ted Honderich (Oxford: OUP, 1995), 54.

⁴⁵² David Charles in *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy* Ed. Ted Honderich (Oxford: OUP, 1995), 54.

truth contained in the original axioms/definitions. In addition it reveals further new deductively based truths based upon the method of the syllogism. Nevertheless, the logic that Aristotle imposes on a reality disclosed by nous not only protects the original insights but selects and shapes them towards a substance-based ontology. The substance-based approach to reality corresponds to Aristotle's dismissal of the two logical spaces that inform the dialectical and sceptical positions. The substances/essences are identified through differentiation, and differentiation in turn requires us to distinguish between 'either and or' rather than to behold 'both' or 'neither'.

As we noted above, it is possible to simply refuse to participate in this substance discourse, and we suggest in the following (and more systematically in Chapter 6) that the Buddhist notion of Emptiness offers a meaningful approach to reality that does not hypostatize substances. Very much in contrast to Aristotle, the Buddhist tradition argues that independent essences cannot exist. The Buddha was almost silent on questions about metaphysical propositions. This is not to negate Aristotle's project or domain of enquiry, just to note that the Buddha's concern or enquiry was focussed solely on 'suffering' and is not therefore directly comparative as his concern was the soteriological aspect rather than the propositional.

Jaidev Sing explains that when Buddha was asked metaphysical questions, he explained that there were four possible logical spaces or alternatives that can be considered. This consists of making 1) a positive thesis, 2) a negative counter-thesis, 3) a conjunctive affirmation of the first two, and 4) a disjunctive denial of the first two. However, Buddha said his 'position' was none of these but 'a middle way'. Jaidev Sing's work on Nagarjuna illustrates the application of the Buddha's thought through Nagarjuna's dialectic when applied to causality and substance.⁴⁵³ We will not restate the full argument here, but to put it succinctly, Nagarjuna indicates there can only be the four possibilities about causality, 1) the view of self-becoming, 2) the view of production from another – other-becoming, 3) production from both self and other, and 4) production from neither self or other (i.e. chance). In following each through to its logical conclusion we find we end up with quite absurd consequences. The Dalai Lama has summarised these conclusions:

⁴⁵³ Jaidev Singh, *An Introduction to Madhyamaka Philosophy* (Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass 1978), 19-20.

The notion of intrinsic existence is incompatible with causation; this is because causation implies contingency and dependence, while anything that inherently existed would be immutable and self-enclosed. In the theory of emptiness, everything is argued as merely being composed of dependently related events; of continuously interacting phenomena with no fixed, immutable essence, which are themselves in dynamic and constantly changing relations. Thus, things and events are 'empty' in that they can never possess any immutable essence, intrinsic reality or absolute 'being' that affords independence.⁴⁵⁴

The criticism being made is against the notion of causality and essences accurately capturing the reality of the phenomenal world. As John Taber begins to outline,

The notion of a caused essence is a contradiction in terms [...]. If a thing were to exist by virtue of having a certain "nature" [...] then it would be eternal; for its nature being uncaused by anything else, it would be independent of anything. Therefore, no change in circumstance could possibly affect it, in particular, result in its no longer existing.⁴⁵⁵

If no 'thing' can exist as such an isolated essence then the first logical idea of self-becoming is negated. If on the other hand it relied on something else, then it cannot be self-becoming. In addition, if it were to self-become, there would be no distinction between cause and effect as the essence as cause is no different from the essence as effect. In this case the identity of cause and effect means causality becomes meaningless. If some new substance were created (presumably also with an essence) how could this new essence be created, as by definition it also has an unchanging, eternal independent aspect? How could anything have acted upon it?

In the second logical position outlined, of coming from another, how could this other exist in isolation? And if it was a pre-given and did exist uncaused, how could it in turn affect another essence that is by definition unchanging and uncaused by anything else? How can any relation between the two possibly be explained? If it were somehow to rely on a combination of factors, these would in turn rely on a further set of factors and an infinite regress beckons. The third position that it is both self-becoming and other-becoming already assumes a relation, so the question is how could the relation

⁴⁵⁴ Dalai Lama *The Universe in a Single Atom: The Convergence of Science and Spirituality* (Morgan Road Books, 2005), 47.

⁴⁵⁵ John A. Taber, "On Nagarjuna's So-called Fallacies: a Comparative Approach" in *Indo-Iranian Journal* Volume 41, Number 3, July 1998. (Springer Netherlands), 213-244 (225-6).

exist between the two. Two separate things, as essences could not influence each other. The fourth position outlined, of neither, indicates no cause from self or other which implies no causality at all or pure chance, anything could be produced from anything, which is perverse as a theory of causality. If any reason were given, then obviously it invalidates the notion of chance and takes us back to one of the first three positions.

The result of the typical dialectical analysis is the view that there can be no isolated, self-natured existence (essences) and causality. All 'things' must be empty of any such isolated independent existence. These 'things' co-arise in a process of dependent-origination or dependent becoming. Every apparent 'thing' in Buddhist thinking is a surface effect of an underlying relation of conditioned co-arising. The philosopher Richard Rorty appears to show some sympathy, although still using the term 'things' he states,

There is nothing to be known about anything except an initially large, and forever expandable, web of relations to other things. Everything that can serve as a term of relation can be dissolved into another set of relations, and so on forever. There are, so to speak, relations all the way down, all the way up, and all the way out in every direction: you never reach something which is not just one more nexus of relations.⁴⁵⁶

As we can also note, the goal of applying the dialectic argument was not to assert an alternative metaphysical system to compete with those already existing. The result or purpose of Nagarjuna's explication of the Buddha's insight was to undermine his opponent's attachment to false dualistic views produced by conceptual reason. The realization that phenomenal 'things' can have no essence in the Aristotelian sense is ultimately *an insight*, not a proposition, and that insight is the result of taking the discourse of 'reason' of existence, non existence, both and neither to their limits. The notion of is and is not only making sense in a metaphysical world of substance or being as Aristotle found out. Sunyata or Emptiness, as we will expand upon shortly, is not decrying the conventional or 'common sense' value of such systems of thought, but is pointing out its relativity and by extension its role in limiting our worldview if we become singularly attached to it.

⁴⁵⁶ Richard Rorty *Philosophy and Social Hope* (London: Penguin Press 1999), 53-54.

If, at this stage, we have sufficiently cast doubt on the ground of the absoluteness of the 'laws of thought', this casts similar doubts on the rationality that it supports (in the absolute sense). The way may therefore be open to revisit areas and thinkers who were accused of being "monstrously irrational" – thinkers such as Toynbee. Indeed, Priest suggests the following:

I think it fair to say that since Aristotle's defence of the LNC, consistency has been something of a shibboleth in Western philosophy. The thought that consistency is a *sine qua non* for central notions such as validity, truth, meaningfulness, rationality, is deeply ingrained into its psyche. One thing that has come out of the modern investigations into dialetheism appears to be how superficial such a thought is. If consistency is, indeed, a necessary condition for any of these notions it would seem to be for reasons much deeper than anyone has yet succeeded in articulating. And if it is not, then the way is open for the exploration of all kinds of avenues and questions in philosophy and the sciences that have traditionally been closed off.⁴⁵⁷

In reviewing some of the key ideas of Aristotle along with his critics, we have attempted to develop a more thorough understanding of the context within which the ground of dichotomous and dualistic language has been developed. In other words, we have refined the problem that Toynbee was trying to find a way beyond, and it is in this spirit that we now turn to 'new avenues and questions traditionally closed off'.

5.3 Beyond Debate to Dialogue: The Buddhist Response

Debate, as we have come to understand it in the Aristotelian tradition, is supported by necessarily choosing between binary opposites and/or the winning goal of finding 'contradiction'. Dialogue in contrast is the spirit to create spaces for multiple voices whilst not being attached to any 'closed' position. This need for epistemic dialogue was an active ongoing aspect of Toynbee's intellectual approach and his engagement with Buddhism will now be examined

The Mahayana tradition we are about to explore embraces the use of reason where it is valid in the conventional sense or realm, but then offers new insights into its

⁴⁵⁷ Graham Priest in Dialetheism <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/dialetheism/#5.1> (accessed 23/2/09)

possibilities and limitations. In the critical application of 'reason against itself', an example of which we looked at earlier, it leads to the shift from a purely theoretical epistemology, (when asserting ontological propositions) to a use of language that is soteric (emancipatory) in its function. It is in this final element concerning language that, we will argue, we might better understand Toynbee's later work. In order to fully understand this development we must now turn our attention to Toynbee's engagement with Buddhism. Our first task is to begin to examine and explicate Buddhist epistemology so that we can gain an insight into how to read his Buddhist engagement in the Study and his personal project.

Within the context of an IR thesis, it is somewhat difficult and complex ground to find an effective way to discuss the three epistemic paths of convention, emptiness and the middle way, and at the same time hold to the rigours expected. Firstly, all discussion about the paths, can by necessity only be written from the first level – using vocabularies established by convention – with all the limitations, in part extrapolated previously, that this entails. The second and third paths are epistemic paths to an engagement with what is understood as 'total reality' but they are not accessed through the binary logic or reason of conventional discourse. In a thesis such as this, discussing and illustrating the second and third truths means we must of course use the first level. As a result, we accept that there will be limitations on what we can represent, and we therefore ask for patience and imagination from the reader. The very fact however, that there is a tension between the language used and reality as it is understood in Buddhist thought, is already suggestive of an interesting problem that has been touched upon throughout this thesis; that western thought has a predilection for trusting more that which can be reduced to words.

In order to better comprehend the three truths, we will make use of a metaphor. To print an image of a 'mountain range' in colour (colour initially representing total reality) requires three passes- should only one pass be used the result is a monochrome image. Similarly Buddhist epistemology suggests we require a threefold pass or mapping of reality in order to correctly capture the totality. The mapping part is difficult because in the final picture we see, everything is interconnected (you do not see a monochrome 'part' of the picture). Therefore, to isolate the paths out is already to undo their sense as it is achieved in the final picture. Nevertheless, it is an image that might help us hold together the different strands of thought.

When we use or establish conventional truth, we do so by means of the established 'laws of thought' of Aristotle. These laws embed binary logic and the concepts of existence and non-existence. However, as we found out, when we try to discuss the second truth (Emptiness), applying a substance based binary logic is problematic. This is because the second truth cannot be captured by the concepts of existence or non-existence. Emptiness viewed from the either/or assertion or negation might appear as non-existence or Nihilism (a traditional reading). It may appear as Neither (existence nor non-existence) but perhaps also as 'both' as it does not negate the world (only misconceptions of it). It is elusive to grasp in these terms of is/is not. In its own domain however, Emptiness is beyond the concepts of assertion, negation, both and neither-*vis-à-vis* existence as an abstracted 'being' (because these are all conventional terms). How then are we to discuss it rationally and linguistically? The answer is to note that Emptiness is referring to an insight rather than a propositional theory that is abstracted from the dynamic open relational process of 'total reality'.

Buddhist epistemology is not in any way negating physical reality or physics, indeed it recognizes materiality as 'real' and 'theories' of it as 'conventionally true' facts. But it points out that these 'things' and 'facts' are 'conventional' because at a deeper level of perception we note they are conceived as abstractions from a 'dynamic reality' and that this total reality is not accessed singularly by science's reason. It requires other epistemic routes or paths. Buddhism 'argues' (if viewed theoretically) or 'teaches' (if viewed therapeutically) that science cannot ascertain the deepest truths through its 'substances' and especially through its binary logic. Science's domain is the 'surface' physical and measurable and is observed within the framework of time and space, which in turn Buddhist views hold as being the consequences of a relational process of dependent becoming or co-arising.

Causality in the scientific realm is sequential and cause precedes effect. It is a classical notion of causality in physics based upon the perceived mechanistic material relationship between perceived 'things'. But Emptiness/Openness as the deeper reality means that the Buddhist view of causality is of a different nature, a co-arising nature. Crucially, co-arising (that no things exist of themselves) reveals the causal process in which intra-dependent conditions interact in a subtly different way in this different domain. Buddhist insights into causality identify a process of conditions that actually *give rise to* time and space *rather than* causality as a mechanistic relationship operating *within* time and space. The second scientific causality is an abstracted conventional one. The new quantum science seems to perceive these deeper co-

arising causal conditions but is at its limits in expressing these ideas and ultimate causes in 'Conventional' terms (as Wendt discussed above). We are not resorting to the new science as support for these Buddhist positions but use them as examples of similar insights. From a Buddhist perspective, conventional theoretical science (using is/is not language) will necessarily remain epistemologically limited to its own physical domain.

In spite of the term Emptiness, Buddhism holds this second epistemic truth is 'real'. But the second truth is not accessible through binary reason. Rather, it may better be understood as a 'eureka' type 'insight' into the limitations of reason and the Empty (of independence) and Open nature (becoming) of the co-arising empirical realm. As we have already observed, it is nonetheless rigorous in a way that conventional logical investigation is perhaps not. As indicated above, in discussing this epistemology we face a dilemma. Restricted by conventional language we must subvert our conventional language and use the therapeutic logic of 'two-but-not-two' to trigger an epistemic 'insight', an insight that is unavailable or continually obscured by the habit of conventional truth. Therefore, and appropriately, there is a conflict in which emptiness is both an insight gleaned by a radical engagement with conventional truth, yet at the same time is by nature antagonistic to conventional truth.

One answer to this dilemma is to be mindful that regular conventional language (science and most philosophy) uses language propositionally. When we now use conventional language here to describe Emptiness, we do so therapeutically - we make no absolute propositional statements at this level. In this sense, Emptiness works both to negate essences and reveal reason's limits, but also more positively it provides insight into the Open creative co-arising process that is all phenomena. Co-arising indicates relation at the fundamental level. This has some positive implications for theorizing at the conventional level. This dependent co-arising principle means that all 'opposites' that appear conventionally as 'two' (mind/body, good/evil, self/other etc.) are actually not 'two' they are ultimately just our conventional abstractions. We give them two "conventional" aspects and are then forced into choosing between them through the 'necessity' of either/or. The non-Aristotelian logic of two-but-not-two, however is a heuristic or therapeutic logic that recognizes the conventional "two" but perceives the insight of "not two". Moreover, within this logic, lies, what is for Buddhists, a profound revelation about how the structure of reality is 'ethical' as well as conventionally 'ontological' and this is found in the third truth of the middle way.

Using our earlier metaphor, the third truth of the Middle Way is like finding out that the “colour image insight” gained through Emptiness is in turn actually a mere intellectual picture of an experiential reality that is multi-dimensional. Compared to the ‘picture’ this truth is experiential; the ‘Thusness’ of how it feels, smells, looks and sounds when actually flying through our mountain range. The third truth is also understood as the freedom of pure and direct experiential perception of the total reality. This experience is understood as a co-arising oneness. There is no sense of a self, or ‘I’ experiencing the environment, but of a ‘oneness’. In some respects, this clearly resonates in terms of the language we are using and the experience being depicted, as a type of ‘mystical’ experience of reality. It seems to indicate a consubstantial apperception of, participation in, and being moved by reality so that it comes to be only comprehensible in terms of the language of oneness. To come back to the three paths, each epistemic realm reveals its own truth and together they provide the total reality. This third truth has an ethical dimension we will now try to illustrate.

The Middle Way or ultimate truth is that in this experiential actuality the distinctions- all ‘dualities’ - collapse though they appear conventionally as two. Its “content” is the collapse of all dualities, so that the ‘individual’ and ‘other’ are pristinely experienced as not two but as one. As there is no distinction, this in a way presumes a kind of onto-ethical relation to the other, that is beyond external relation and is presupposed on a ‘oneness’ as indicated above. The ‘self’ is only the momentary result of a set of relational process of ‘conditions’ that are in constant dynamic change, ‘we’ are nothing but these ‘conditions’ that are fundamentally ‘relational’ by nature. ‘Things are not in relation, relationality gives rise to ‘things’.

Therefore what we conventionally call ‘Ethics’ is to Buddhist views, actually part of the ‘ontological’ structure of the cosmos. ‘We’ give rise to each other. In Buddhist terminology the process is compassion - the cosmos is compassionate in its ‘empty’ essence.⁴⁵⁸ At the same time, while the co-arising of all must obviously always be so, it requires some ‘activity’ to actualise it and experience it as ‘oneness’. This activity is action for ‘others’ as ‘they ‘r’ us’. Indeed, the Buddha taught that the difference between himself/herself and most others is only the subjective actualization of this truth. The synthesis of these three truths, that they are three aspects of one reality, is the complete and perfect truth or teaching of Buddha. Therefore, according to the Buddhist approach, the totality of the cosmos is structurally threefold. It has an

⁴⁵⁸ Arnold J. Toynbee and Daisaku Ikeda, *Choose Life: A Dialogue* (Oxford: OUP 1989), 346.

empirical aspect operating within time and space, it has a 'spiritual' or non-physical aspect operating outside of and giving rise to time and space, and it has a third ethical 'active' aspect. We access the first level through 'common sense' empiricism and conventional truth. We access the second level of Emptiness through insight into the limits of reason; and we access the third truth or Middle Way through ethical action. As such, the ultimate 'truth' is a dynamic operating law or principle that manifests in the fabric of the cosmos and 'ourselves'. The cosmos and individuals, co-arise. In this sense because the ultimate truth is dynamic/active it can only be fully accessed through engaged ethical action, as this is to 'return' or 'harmonise' with our true co-arising 'nature'.

As a proposed solution to suffering, we may immediately think that many might struggle, as we might not have great capacity for insight and intellectual understanding of this subtle logic or perception. Especially for those caught in the material struggle for survival, living in instinctive worlds of greed, anger and animality; the way out of suffering may be far from obvious. Even those who do have time to reflect and study may well have a tendency to think that they have to establish the right 'attitude' or 'mental state' first and then act upon this. As we will learn in greater detail in our examination of Buddhist thinkers in our next chapter, the Japanese Buddhist teacher Nichiren's great insight was to reveal that even if we do not see this truth yet or even understand it, this experiential insight and understanding can be gained *through* making the ethical action, even with the 'wrong mind'. We gain the Buddha's experiential life as a result of action. For Buddhists, the crucial point is action, and that one draws on the inspiration from those more spiritually developed (active). One has faith in others and oneself as Buddha (enlightened) and one takes action through which one gains the resulting wisdom and compassion. The mind and life of the Buddha is gained through action rather than needing intellect and wisdom first. This was the 'practical' aspect of Nichiren's development. An illustration of the implication of the issues we have been discussing here may be helpful, provided by Edward Conze, a Buddhist scholar and translator, who reveals the existential aspect of this other way of seeing things:

In Europe we have become accustomed to an almost complete gap between the theory of philosophers and their practice, between their views on the nature of the universe and their mode of life. Schopenhauer and Herbert Spencer, for instance, at once come to mind as particularly striking examples. If a philosopher here has proved that there is no ego, he is apt to leave it at that,

and to behave very much as if there were one. His greed, hate and attachment remain practically untouched by his philosophical arguments. He is judged by the consistency of his views, not with his life, but with themselves, by his style, his erudition- in short, by purely intellectual standards.

At stake here is the detachment and separation between words and life, between the insight we might glean from a sophisticated philosophical enquiry, and the manner in which we treat a neighbour and friend. Indeed, Conze goes on to state that:

It just would not do to 'refute' a philosopher by pointing out that he is insufferably rude to his wife, envies his more fortunate colleagues and gets flustered when contradicted. In Buddhism on the contrary, the entire stress lies on the mode of living, on the saintliness of life, on the removal of attachment to this world. A merely theoretical proposition such as 'there is no ego' would be regarded as utterly sterile and useless. Thought is no more than a tool and its justification lies in its products. Not content with the intellectual conviction that there is no ego, a Buddhist aims at an entire new attitude to life. Day in and day out, in all the many functions and bothers of daily life, he must learn to behave as if there were no ego [...]. The great contribution of Buddhist 'philosophy' lies in the methods it worked out to impress the truth of not-self on our reluctant minds, it lies in the discipline which the Buddhists imposed upon themselves in order to make this truth into a part of their own being.⁴⁵⁹

This is a useful and insightful example, conveying the sense in which Buddhism approaches reality as a 'oneness', and that to live the truth of this insight is to respond in every aspect of one's life in recognition of the 'oneness'. In this sense, the experience that Buddhism holds as its highest truth, requires the individual to change their life in every dimension, and it holds that there is a way in which this can be done, following the three paths. This inner change of life, or transformation, is precisely the area where we see the kind of self-mastery that Toynbee was urging as a basis for the future of any social body. Even if he was struggling with himself and even if we are to believe McNeill's biography that he failed miserably⁴⁶⁰ it does not negate the principle

⁴⁵⁹ Edward Conze, *Buddhism Its Essence and Development*, (Oxford: Bruno Cassirer 1957), 20-21.

⁴⁶⁰ "[A]s McNeill so effectively portrays him, Toynbee was monumentally selfish, irresponsible, and mean in every sense of the term." Reba N Soffer, a review of *Arnold J. Toynbee: A Life.*, by William H. McNeill *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 96, No. 3. (Jun., 1991), 821-22. "I can't help feeling that some readers will find the rise and fall of Toynbee's marriage even more fascinating than the rise and fall of civilizations that he charted." James Joll, a review of *Arnold J. Toynbee: A Life.*, by William H. McNeill *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 63, No. 2, A Special Issue on Modern France. (Jun., 1991), 362-363.

or insight he was articulating, though it would perhaps take away some of its moral force. However, at the same time, it seems that when we look at examples available to us, of those who take seriously this need to transform their lives in a radical, spiritual way, the struggle is precisely what should be expected.

Indeed, Toynbee's own struggles bring us to the important point, reiterated once again, that the words we are using to describe the Buddhist path are limited, and that the process we are talking about is usually one that is triggered or inspired by 'experiencing' one who is more enlightened (a master), entering into dialogue and, indeed, relation with that person. It is this kind of encounter that, Buddhism shows us, has the function to trigger the insight and the ethical action in the disciple. This results in the person actively moving forward on their emancipatory journey. This in turn is precisely the 'mimesis' that Toynbee advocated would be the response to transfigured individuals and we can begin to see the importance of the connection. Moreover, it is this 'active truth' that is at the heart of Buddha's teachings. His teaching of 'truth' is an active Middle Way based upon inner reform, not simply a conventional theory or intellectual insight, though it has these dimensions. In a transformed Middle Way philosopher conventional truth becomes compassionate action in this world; intellectual insight becomes the wisdom to create value anywhere and anytime. The Middle Way is the inspirational desire/ power of triggering in another heart their own innate enlightened aspect (goodness) or desire to believe in themselves and others.

From another point of view, we see that Buddhism understands those who do not activate the truth of the Middle Way as 'non-awakened' because they/we are epistemologically restricted. This restriction results in experiencing reality through dualisms, a 'self' and 'self reinforcing' expectations, 'self'-ish aims and so on. Moreover, gripped perhaps by a powerful sense of our own subjectivity, of the power inherent in our ego-individuality, we feel separate and apart from others. In a sense, this is a classic, Western expression of existence in the world but never really with others. Indeed, the lament that we can perhaps identify in the 'non-awakened' is that we have a sophisticated, logical vocabulary for this experience of reality, yet, perhaps precisely because of this, at the same time we feel somehow apart from it.

As our analysis of Aristotle showed, what lies beneath our language and our expectations of reason are the assumptions about reality and our relation within it that Buddhism seems to be trying to take us beyond. Aristotle may have been aware that his laws were to be taken as useful starting points, guidelines for debate about ontological matters. Yet his words or how they have been understood, perhaps seriously constrain us⁴⁶¹, and carry with them the burden that we find intellectually and spiritually sensitive figures such as Toynbee struggling with- indeed inhibited by. This is why we can understand his attraction to, and fascination with active Buddhism, wherein those who achieve a Buddha state experience; an epistemic oneness and the collapse of dualistic distinctions, do so through 'returning' to act for 'others'. Indeed, we are informed that the cosmos itself becomes their subjective life space⁴⁶² (infinity) and they experience each moment as timeless (eternity). It is significant that Toynbee had documented a number of 'mystic' experiences, one where he felt as one with history, with history 'flowing through him'.⁴⁶³ A further two 'spiritual' experiences⁴⁶⁴ in communion with his God as Love are also recorded.⁴⁶⁵

Nichiren revealed that this active truth is both the ultimate nature of reality and the ultimate reality of one's own life, but it must be actualized through action each day constructing one's true larger self. This oneness is no 'theory' about reality in the conventional sense, it is the active co-arising compassionate structure of the cosmos actualized as one's true 'relational' self in action. It is paradoxically an affirmation established by emptying the ego-self via action for others⁴⁶⁶, i.e. creating one's true

⁴⁶¹ In IR for example, "The door keepers are those who, knowingly or unknowingly, make sure that the discursive boundaries remains intact. Discourses, in a Foucaultian sense, are subtle mechanisms that frame our thinking process. They determine the limits of what can be thought." in Roland Bleiker "Forget IR Theory" in *The Zen of International Relations: IR Theory from East to West* eds., Stephen Chan, Peter Mandaville and Roland Bleiker (Hampshire: Palgrave 2001), 37-66, (44). We are suggesting it may go deeper, the very 'laws of thought' may be playing the same- though 'unconscious'- role.

⁴⁶² Daisaku Ikeda, *Dialogue on Life Volume 1* (Tokyo: NSIC 1973), 133.

⁴⁶³ Toynbee, "Study," 10:139, "In London, in the southern section of the Buckingham Palace Road, walking southward along the pavement skirting the west wall of Victoria Station, the writer, once, one afternoon not long after the end of the First World War ... found himself in communion, not just with this or that episode in History, but with all that had been, and was, and was to come. In that instant he was directly aware of the passage of History gently flowing through him in a mighty current, and of his own life welling like a wave in the flow of this vast tide."

⁴⁶⁴ Toynbee, "Experiences," 176. "Two experiences that were not acts of thought but felt as if they were flashes of insight or revelation. Each experience came to me at a moment of great spiritual stress. The earlier one came when I was in moral conflict between the better and the worse side of myself...[...]...the second came at a moment of death...[...]...of a fellow human being with whose life mine was intimately bound up with." This was the death of his son.

⁴⁶⁵ Toynbee, "Experiences," 146, "I believe that Love is God...My creed consists of a single article: "Deus est mortali iuvare mortalem": "For a human being, God is the act of helping another human being."

⁴⁶⁶ It should be noted that whilst carrying out action for others, one's responsibilities to oneself should not be avoided, so that one is not avoiding one's own responsibilities by 'escaping' into care for others. An example of this principle that this author heard was when Tsunesaburo Makiguchi the founder of the Soka Gakkai lay Buddhist group in Japan said to members that if one donated to charity (caring for others) but

relational self. According to this view, it is our karmic impediments that function as epistemic blinkers, or Toynbee's 'dark glasses through which we peer dimly'. Preventing us experiencing this true relational self and tricking us into attachments to 'I', and an 'individual-egocentric self' this separation can lead quickly to rejection of those 'awful/evil others' respectively. On its own, without the wider epistemic paths and insights, conventional truth can act as such an impediment, for empiricism, reason and intellect all create limits. The Buddhist approach allows us to put into context these limits, to see them as part of the 'true reality', which is reached only through the unified three paths. Indeed, we begin to understand the manner in which Buddhism can be seen to bring the key problems that Toynbee experienced in his quest to one possible conclusion. We now move to an explication of the Middle Way, the threefold epistemic philosophy, but as we do, it must be understood, this can only be from a *conventional perspective* of course, and we do this to more fully understand Toynbee's method of studying history as a life project.

hadn't paid their utility bill, (responsibility) the utility company would get the benefit! This is a humorous yet penetrating insight into the true structure of the relationship between caring for others and caring for self (taking due responsibility as the base).

Part Two

6. A historical introduction to Middle Way thinking ⁴⁶⁷

Having outlined the problems associated with Aristotle's system of logic and its underlying metaphysics of substance, it is not at all surprising that Toynbee, as a result of having come into contact with alternative ways of thinking, would be drawn to these alternatives. He was not alone in thinking that Aristotle's laws of logic, which we understand to be the foundation of Western rationality, were leading to a dead end. The late Theodore Stcherbatsky already noted in his preface to his *Buddhist Logic* (1930):

In addressing itself to the philosopher, this work claims his consideration of a system of logic which is not familiar to him. It is logic, but it is not Aristotelian. It is epistemological but not Kantian. There is a widely spread prejudice that positive philosophy is to be found only in Europe. It is also a prejudice that Aristotle's treatment of logic was final; that having had in this field no predecessor; he has also no need of a continuator. This last prejudice is on the wane [...]. There is as yet no agreed opinion on what the future logic will be [...] but there is a general dissatisfaction with what it at present is [...] we are on the eve of a reform.⁴⁶⁸

From our perspective we are particularly interested in the notion of Ku, or Emptiness, which we find missing in Western approaches and that Toynbee suggested might resolve the divide between Aristotle/Plato particulars and universals. In this chapter, we therefore wish to continue Toynbee's journey by following the intellectual history of the Lotus schools exposition of the Mahayana. We must understand in greater detail the context within which Ku assumes significance as a result of the Buddhist analysis of

⁴⁶⁷ It must be pointed out here that the following introduction provides a narrative that portrays one Lotus School's development that concludes with Nichiren. It is based upon that school's self-understanding. As Toynbee's interlocutor in his late dialogue is Ikeda, a leader and commentator on this school it is a logical reason for our choice. We are aware that there are other lines of Mahayana development and schools who would make equally reasonable claims for their lineage and self-understanding vis-à-vis the Buddhas teachings, however for the reasons outlined, and for limitations of space we do not detain ourselves with the intricacies of these 'internal' Buddhist dialogues and debates. Neither do we examine the development of the Mahayana ideas through India, China to Japan, under the lens of any 'cultural' influences. For example we do not try to analyse the possible differences in Indian, Chinese and Japanese culture on the developments of the thinkers we explore, though this may of course be implicated in their work. We use the school's 'internal' story of the Lotus as the narrative that informs the subsequent development from Gautama to Nichiren and then Ikeda's dialogue with Toynbee. In any single chapter on a huge topic, we must apologise for subtle errors of explication, hoping that our basics at least, are not too contentious.

⁴⁶⁸ Theodore Stcherbatsky, *Buddhist Logic Part One* (Kessinger Publishing, 1930), XII .

the tetralemma, of the four logical spaces referred to in the previous chapter. Aristotle, as we saw, only recognized two of these spaces. The brief intellectual history that we offer below crosses three cultures: India, China and Japan. We begin in India with the founder Gautama, followed by Nagarjuna, Asanga and Vasubandhu. Moving to China we find Chih-I (T'ien T'ai) before finally discussing Nichiren and Ikeda in Japan.

6.1. Shakyamuni Gautama

Shakyamuni Gautama, the historical Buddha (563-486BCE), was born the son of a regional King around 2500 years ago in what is now Nepal. Whilst living in his elite environment he is said to have been so concerned on seeing the four types of suffering, Birth, Sickness, Old Age and Death, that he renounced an easy life of 'hedonistic luxury' and set out to find an answer to the problem of suffering. In search for that answer he pursued an ascetic life and found enlightenment in a 'middle way' between all extremes. He was about 35 years old when he considered his 'withdrawal' completed and 'returned to the world'. He spent the next 45 years teaching others what he had discovered.

As a teacher and person of impeccable behaviour he gained many followers and, as a result, an order or community established itself around him. With his followers he traveled the country as itinerant teachers. The Buddha's teachings were often different at different times and places because he always taught according to the abilities of the people he taught. This teaching style resulted in the many teachings (Sutras), which to some readers occasionally seemed to disagree with each other. Accordingly, multiple schools were later established on the basis of these teachings. However, the fundamental agreement is that the purpose of the Buddhist teachings is to enable people to overcome their *suffering*. We must keep this very concrete purpose in mind as we examine the Buddha's teachings. When asked metaphysical questions, the Buddha generally made few comments, and when he did, he explained that within the four spaces of the tetralemma his 'position' was not in any one of the spaces but a 'middle way'. While the concepts and symbols used may appear to be highly abstract and to entail metaphysical speculation, their main purpose is to help individuals to change – its purpose, in other words, is therapeutic rather than propositional or metaphysical. The truth of these ideas and notions thus resides in the manner in which they helped individuals negotiate through life, to let their thoughts and feelings and actions be guided by them.

In order to explain the Buddha's lifetime of 'different' teaching/s from a Lotus view, Chih-I, a fifth century Buddhist master teacher, identified five different teaching periods: the Avantamsaka, the Tripitaka, the Vaipulya, the Wisdom, and the Lotus periods. He also identified eight types of teachings, four of which explain the content⁴⁶⁹, four of which explain the method.⁴⁷⁰ We have previously outlined the three 'dimensions' of reality - conventional, emptiness and the middle way. If we used a simile, and suggested these are like three spatial dimensions, the content the Buddha taught was like teaching about a one dimensional world, then moving to a two dimensional world and then to a three dimensional world, and finally to a fourth dimension (spacetime). He could teach each level from itself and/or from the other dimensions and this provided many (four dimensions would provide sixteen) perspectives. In addition we are informed that this content was also taught along with a method that had two aspects, "the classification into Sudden and Gradual teachings focuses on how the Buddha taught [...] Secret and Indeterminate, are concerned with how the people received those teachings".⁴⁷¹ We can see then that the five periods contained various contents or dimensions that were variably revealed from these various dimensions, and these were also taught in accordance with how students might receive them.

To oversimplify⁴⁷² in order to provide a useful heuristic, we can suggest that from attaining enlightenment the Buddha used a method to teach his insights. Initially he tried a direct expression (the Avatamsaka period) which failed as it was too difficult. During the 2nd period (Tripitaka) the Buddha taught about suffering and the arising and perishing of all things.⁴⁷³ The 3rd (Vaipulya) period (provisional Mahayana) generally emphasized the emptiness of things and the (arhats) need for detachment. The 4th (Wisdom) period (Mahayana) generally emphasized the (Bodhisattva) need to actually re-engage with the world of things and suffering but now with an awareness of their emptiness/openness (though the disciples were still attached to the distinction between the conventional and emptiness -dualism). Finally, the 5th (Lotus) period reveals that all three previous periods and dimensions were and are actually all facets of one non-dual

⁴⁶⁹ Common; Shared; Distinct; and Perfect. (See Kirimura (1981) below)

⁴⁷⁰ Sudden, Gradual, (how they were taught) Secret and Indeterminate (how they were received).

⁴⁷¹ Yasuji Kirimura, *Outline of Buddhism*, (Tokyo, NSIC 1981), 62.

⁴⁷² Our intent here is to provide a summary overview that allows one to perceive the basic framework of ideas. For full discussions see Kirimura footnote above.

⁴⁷³ It is commonly assumed that the Tripitaka became the focus of Theravada Buddhism, which spread across the south from India to Thailand, Vietnam, and Cambodia ('Southern Buddhism').

reality.⁴⁷⁴ The Lotus teaching is regarded to be the 'perfect' teaching because it offers a comprehensive and integrated approach to reality, which identifies each of the previous three periods as 'expedient means'. The Vaipulya together with the Wisdom and Lotus became the focus of Mahayana Buddhism, which spread north and across Tibet, China, Korea and Japan (Northern Buddhism). Of course not every school would agree with this Lotus school view, but this was no arbitrary interpretation by Chih-I. He points at Gautama's own declaration in the preparatory Sutra to the Lotus "In forty years and more, the truth has not been revealed yet."⁴⁷⁵

One of Gautama's central insights is the notion of 'dependent origination', which expresses the interdependence of all phenomena. Existence is never self-existence in isolation. Everything comes into existence in response to causes and conditions. All phenomena co-arise. Buddha explained the principle in terms of a simple metaphor: two bundles of reeds leaning against each other. Each bundle allows the other to stand; should one be removed, the other will fall.⁴⁷⁶ Within this context of a world in which isolated existence is an illusion, the twelve-linked chain of causation emphasizes the consequences of ignorance and illusion. Each link in the chain is a cause (condition) that leads to the next:

- (i) ignorance (Skt avidya);
- (ii) action (samskara) (also volition or karmic action);
- (iii) action causes consciousness (vijñāna), or the ability to discern;
- (iv) consciousness causes name and form (nama-rupa), or spiritual and material objects of discernment;
- (v) name and form cause the six sense organs (śaḍ-āyatana);
- (vi) the six sense organs cause contact (sparśha);
- (vii) contact causes sensation (vedana);
- (viii) sensation causes desire (trishna);
- (ix) desire causes attachment (upadana);
- (x) attachment causes existence (bhava);
- (xi) existence causes birth (jati);
- (xii) birth causes aging and death (jara-marana).⁴⁷⁷

⁴⁷⁴ Again this is a simplification in order to illustrate the principle. For a fuller discussion on these periods and contents see; Yasuji Kirimura, *Outline of Buddhism*, (Tokyo, NSIC 1981), 53-66.

⁴⁷⁵ Chapter 2 of the Innumerable Meanings Sutra, in *The Threefold Lotus Sutra*, translated by Bunno Kato, Yoshiro Tamura and Kojiro Miyasaka, (New York: Weatherhill/Kosei, 1975), 14.

⁴⁷⁶ http://www.sgilibrary.org/search_dict.php (accessed June 16th 2008).

⁴⁷⁷ http://www.sgilibrary.org/search_dict.php?id=2491 (accessed June 14th, 2008).

There are two ways of thinking about this chain of causation. One way was to see this transmigration as a kind of deterministic inevitability that leads from ignorance to death, involving delusion and suffering. Second, there is the way of emancipation, which emphasizes that precisely because of the causal links; just one of these links needs to be removed in order to prevent the subsequent steps from occurring. In other words, if one eliminates ignorance, which is the source of suffering, one becomes free from the cycle of delusion and suffering, or attains nirvana.⁴⁷⁸ The way of emancipation again highlights the therapeutic and soteriological function of these ideas.

How can 'emancipation' occur? How can we transcend suffering? Buddha gave the answer to these questions in his first sermon after attaining enlightenment. The question and answer is a combination of the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path. According to the Four Noble Truths,⁴⁷⁹

- (1) All existence is suffering;
- (2) Suffering is caused by selfish craving;
- (3) The eradication of selfish craving brings about the cessation of suffering and enables one to attain nirvana;
- (4) There is a path by which this eradication of selfishness can be achieved, namely, the discipline of the Eightfold Path.⁴⁸⁰

The Eightfold Path is the method or practice that will liberate one from suffering, consisting of 'right views, right thinking, right speech, right action, right way of life, right endeavour, right mindfulness, and right meditation.'⁴⁸¹ These eight elements are grouped into the three practices of Precepts, Meditation and Wisdom. The precepts are a set of ethical guidelines; meditation is to master one's own mind; and wisdom is needed to perceive the true nature of reality (dependent origination). The precepts, which were originally meant to provide guidelines as to how one could achieve happiness, became more and more ritualized within parts of the Buddhist community; the Sangha – a trend which was to become a key issue at the heart of the split in the Sangha and the development of two schools of Buddhism, the monastic Theravada and the lay form of Mahayana.

⁴⁷⁸ http://www.sgilibrary.org/search_dict.php?id=2491 (accessed June 16th 2008).

⁴⁷⁹ Buddhism was also stand against the rigid caste system of its time, the Buddha stated that one became noble through one's action not one's birth.

⁴⁸⁰ http://www.sgilibrary.org/search_dict.php (accessed June 16th 2008).

⁴⁸¹ http://www.sgilibrary.org/search_dict.php (accessed June 16th 2008).

On one's path towards – or away from – nirvana, one creates (as causes) and experience (as effects) one's own thoughts, words and actions as karma. The notion of karma predates Buddhism. It is found in Jainism and Hinduism. The word karma indicates 'action' leading to a result or effect. Thought, speech and behaviour imprint themselves as a latent force or potential in one's life. When activated by an external stimulus, this imprinted karma or latent effect produces a corresponding manifest effect. Therefore, our past actions have shaped our present reality, and our current actions will shape our future:

The law of karmic causality operates in perpetuity carrying over from one lifetime to the next, remaining with one in the latent state between death and rebirth.⁴⁸²

Karma is implied in the notion of dependent origination. As all things are conditioned and co-arising, every moment is a cause and an effect. The Buddhist view of karma and indeed suffering is not deterministic. We can take the past as an influence to create a new cause and thereby to create a new future. In fact, the notion implies that we cannot deny the responsibility we have for creating our future.

Nirvana is the endpoint of the Eightfold Path. Buddha referred to nirvana as the perfect peace in a mind free from craving, anger and other afflictions. The mind entering nirvana is at peace with the world, feels compassion for all and leaves behind previous obsessions and fixations. The term is later understood differently by different Buddhist schools depending on the extent to which they embraced the independent existence of some constituent elements of the experienced world. The Madhyamika school, which draws mainly on Nagarjuna (see below), suggests that achieving nirvana requires a change in ourselves, in our outlook, rather than a change in the objective order of reality.

As we noted above, the Buddha was reluctant to engage in metaphysical speculation and explicitly declared fourteen questions to be *avyakṛta*, which means that they had answers that were inexpressible. These questions were as follows:

- (1) whether the world is (a) eternal, (b) or not, (c) or both, (d) or neither;

⁴⁸² SGI, *Dictionary of Buddhism* (Tokyo: SGI, 2005), 331.

- (2) whether the world is (a) finite, (b) infinite, (c) or both, (d) or neither;
- (3) whether the tathagata, i.e. the state of being which is beyond all coming and going, (a) exists after death, (b) or does not exist, (c) or both, (d) or neither;
- (4) whether the soul is (a) identical with the body or (b) different from it.

Buddha called such speculations mere *ditthivada* (dogma) and refused to be drawn into them, arguing that he neither believed in [...] an absolute affirmation [...] nor in an [...] absolute negation. His position was one of *madhyama pradipada* – literally, the middle position.⁴⁸³

The four alternatives in the first three sets of questions formed the basis of the tetralemma of Nagarjuna's dialectic. In each case there is, (a) a positive thesis, opposed by (b) a negative counter thesis. These two are the basic alternatives. Then they are (c) conjunctively affirmed to form the third alternative, and (d) disjunctively denied to form the fourth.

6.2. Nagarjuna

As we have noted, following the Buddha's death, two different schools emerged, Theravada and Mahayana. In the subsequent debates between representatives of the two schools, the key questions were about how to achieve nirvana. Nagarjuna was born into a Brahman family around 150 A.D., he is counted as the thirteenth of Gautama's twenty-three successors. Nagarjuna initially studied the Theravada, but later 'converted' to the Mahayana. He traveled widely throughout India, engaged in meditation and wrote seminal works on emptiness or non-substantiality. His teaching is known as the *Madhyamaka*, the 'middle way school'. He is as important to Buddhist logical analysis as Aristotle is to the Western philosophical tradition.⁴⁸⁴

His 'philosophical' expression of Buddha's insights into the nature of reality - and how to access it- is captured in a famous four line verse of his major opus. This is verse 18 of chapter 24 of the *Mulamadhyamakakarika* (MMK) or *The Treatise on the Middle*

⁴⁸³ Jaidev Sing, *An Introduction to Madhyamaka Philosophy Delhi*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass 1978), 14-15.

⁴⁸⁴ This biographical account is taken from the SGI, "Buddhist Dictionary," 422.

Way, here explicated by Buddhist scholar Paul Swanson (utilizing a Kumarajiva Chinese translation).

“All things which arise through conditioned co-arising.

I explain as emptiness.

Again, it is a conventional designation.

Again, it is the meaning of the Middle Path.”⁴⁸⁵

Line one, indicates the conventional truth, line two indicates the truth of emptiness/openness, line three indicates the return/re-engagement with the conventional realm based upon the insight of emptiness, line four indicates the middle-way- which is not explicitly defined. In this main work (MMK) Nagarjuna develops the dialectical logical analysis known as the *catuskoti* or tetralemma.

Priest and Garfield explain that in “classical Indian logic and rhetoric, any proposition defines a logical space involving four candidate positions, or corners (*koti*), in distinction to most Western logical traditions, which consider only two: truth and falsity”. As we have seen, the Buddha suggested that a proposition “may be true (and not false), false (and not true), true and false, and neither true nor false. As a consequence, each problem-space is divided into four corners, not two, and each “prima facie logical possibility requires analysis before rejection”.⁴⁸⁶ The purpose of the analysis was not to assert a ‘winning’ propositional argument, which we may consider as the traditional goal of philosophical debate. Rather, the purpose of the analysis was to undermine someone’s attachment to the false dualistic views of either reification or annihilation, which in either case was understood as ultimately leading to suffering as in the twelve-linked chain. The two extreme views to be avoided are eternalism, which assigns permanence to phenomena, and nihilism, which views phenomena as not existing at all. Jaidev Sing explains:

The dialectic is that movement of thought which, by examining the pros and cons of a question, brings about a clear consciousness of the antinomies into which Reason gets bogged up, and hints at a way out of that impasse by rising to a plane higher than Reason.⁴⁸⁷

⁴⁸⁵ Paul Swanson, *The Foundations of T’ien-T’ai Philosophy: The Flowering of The Two Truths Theory In Chinese Buddhism* (USA: Asian Humanities Press, 1989), 4.

⁴⁸⁶ Graham Priest, *Beyond the Limits of Thought* (Oxford, OUP, 2002), 263-4.

⁴⁸⁷ Sing, “Introduction to *Madhyamaka*,” 16.

Nagarjuna argued that it was impossible for any 'thing' to exist as a result of its own inherent substantial unchanging essence (self-nature). As an alternative approach to a substance or essence-based self-nature or own-being, he suggested that things were 'empty' of self-nature. We recall Taber explained: "The notion of a caused essence is a contradiction in terms (MMK v2) [...]. If a thing were to exist by virtue of having a certain "nature" [...] then it would be eternal; for its nature being uncaused by anything else, it would be independent of anything. Therefore, no change in circumstance could possibly affect it and, in particular, result in its no longer existing."⁴⁸⁸

In order to capture a world of phenomena that were empty of self-nature, Nagarjuna developed the notion of the Two Truths. The first truth is the Conventional or Provisional Truth of everyday existence in a world marked by dependent origination. This 'conventional truth' relies on naming and categorizing. We name things by convention and in so doing we appear to give permanence to the flux of things. The use of language, therefore, entails the danger of hypostatization and attachment and, therefore, suffering. However, Conventional Truth cannot be avoided, as it is necessary for communication and practical living. Therefore, the second truth, which is the Absolute Truth of Emptiness/Openness (*sunyata*), is crucial in that it reminds us of the true nature of the phenomena in our everyday world, i.e. of their emptiness of self-nature and the openness of creative dependent becoming. Ultimately, this truth is beyond denotative language; such language belongs to conventional truth. Emptiness as negation negates the illusion of isolated existence; as an affirmation, Openness affirms as an insight⁴⁸⁹ that all phenomena are unfixed and continuously co-arise dependently and relationally.

The Truth of Emptiness is often misunderstood because it gives the impression of nihilism.⁴⁹⁰ However, Emptiness does not deny reality:

⁴⁸⁸ John A. Taber "On Nagarjuna's So-called Fallacies: a Comparative Approach" in *Indo-Iranian Journal* Volume 41, Number 3, July 1998. (Springer Netherlands), 213-244, (225-6).

⁴⁸⁹ We can note here that this 'insight' maybe similar to Aristotle's need for intuitive insight for his premises, the difference is the content and how one can express it.

⁴⁹⁰ For further readings on this 'endless' argument about Nagarjuna see, David Burton (1999) *Emptiness Appraised: A Critical Study of Nagarjuna's Philosophy*. John A. Taber *On Nagarjuna's So-called Fallacies: a Comparative Approach* in *Indo-Iranian Journal* Volume 41, Number 3, (July 1998. Springer Netherlands) 213-244. See Jay Garfield (2002) *Empty Words* (OUP). See Kenneth Inada (1993) *Nagarjuna: A Translation of his Mulamadhyamakakika* (Sri-Satguru Publications). See also Nancy McCagney *Nagarjuna and the Philosophy of Openness* (Maryland: Rowen and Littlefield). See too, C.W. Huntingdon Jr., *The Emptiness of Emptiness* (Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press 1989). However for the most precise and illuminating summary of Nagarjuna's teaching the must see is Jaidev Sing *An Introduction to Madhyamaka Philosophy* (Delhi, Motilal Barnarsidas 1978). Sing's summary is also found as a preface to much later editions of Th. Stcherbatsky, *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvana* (Delhi, Motilal Barnarsidass, 2003). For a wider context on Buddhist logic see, Stephen H. Phillips *Classical Indian Metaphysics Refutations of Realism and the Emergence of "New Logic"* (Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 1997).

No-doctrine about Reality does not mean no-Reality doctrine.⁴⁹¹

Indeed Nagarjuna goes on to say that once we have grasped the emptiness of 'things', we must not reify emptiness as the new 'essence or substance' but relinquish the view lest it leads us into disaster. Thus we are warned against the wrong use of sunyata:

Just as a snake caught at the wrong end by a dull-witted fellow only kills him or a magic wrongly employed ruins the magician, so too Sunyata wrongly used by a man who does not understand its implications only ruins him.⁴⁹²

Nagarjuna emphasizes that we can talk about absolute reality only from within Conventional Truth. In other words, language is used abstractly and 'conventionally' in order to discuss the non-abstract absolute reality. We can use language about Emptiness effectively only to trigger an insight or a realization, but the realization is beyond propositional language. The truth of the 'sign' thus is an emancipatory truth, not a propositional truth. As it is impossible to make affirmative statements about the inexpressible, Nagarjuna often uses a series of negative statements in order to 'point to' the absolute by stating where it cannot be found. Still, it is important to understand that this negative way does not amount to an assertion of a propositional truth⁴⁹³. Its purpose is to reach the limits of the expressible and thereby to point towards emptiness. All statements expressed in language, whether positive or negative, ultimately remain 'signs' and their purpose is soteriological rather than propositional. Mahayana Buddhism does not devalue language; on the contrary, language and conventional truth are important because they can help awaken others to the Truth of Emptiness. Buddhism as a teaching is not aimed at theorizing or philosophizing as a propositional or theoretical exercise but rather at helping people in their daily, existential struggles. In the Study, Toynbee's remark that the Buddha's Sangha was a higher achievement than Plato's academy shows that these ideas resonated with him: the truth of ideas resides in their impact on people's actions and lives.

Nagarjuna clarified the relation between Conventional existence and Emptiness. Conventional existence is not devalued; it is relativised. The two levels of truth are not

⁴⁹¹ Murti quoted by Sing, *"Introduction to Madhyamaka,"* 42.

⁴⁹² Sing, *"Introduction to Madhyamaka,"* 42-43.

⁴⁹³ "Ku [emptiness] does not mean void, vacuum, nothingness, but it transcends a dualistic view of existence and non-existence...these negations even negate our established ideas of negatives!" Daisaku Ikeda, *"Dialogue on Life Vol. 1,"* 59/74.

separate – they can be perceived as ‘two-but-not-two’, and they therefore imply a third, Middle Way, which draws on both of them. This Middle Way incorporates both other truths. Knowledge as understood in Western thought, and scientific knowledge in particular, remains valid within its limited context, but rationality and language do not exhaust reality. The notion of emptiness reminds us of this fact. Just as quantum physics reminds us of ‘other’ dimensions and layers of reality that traditional science was unable to reach.

6.3. The Yogacara school and the tathagata-garbha literature

Asanga and Vasubandhu, the founders of the Yogacara school, were the sons of a prominent Brahmin family during the 4th or 5th Century A.D. Asanga expanded the Madhyamika teachings and developed the Yogacara or Way of Yoga, which is also called the Vijñānavāda or Doctrine of Consciousness. This teaching can be traced back to Maitreya, who lived during the 2nd Century A.D., but it was Asanga who systematized it. His brother Vasubandhu initially followed the Sarvativāda sect of the Hinayana and became the undisputed master of Hinayana teaching in the India of his time. He eventually joined Asanga as a teacher of Mahayana thinking.⁴⁹⁴ Yogacara literature is characterized by a particular understanding of Nagarjuna’s emptiness. For Asanga, Emptiness is ‘the non-existence of the self, and the existence of the no-self’. It may be thought that the designation ‘empty’ (Sunya) was only predicable of an existent thing because ‘emptiness is only logical if something exists’. Emptiness thus understood corresponds to the non-existence of duality:

The nonexistence of duality is indeed the existence of nonexistence; this is the definition of emptiness. It is neither existence, nor non-existence, neither different nor identical [...]. The ‘existence of nonexistence’ turns out to be the specific definition of sunyata found throughout the early Yogacara literature.⁴⁹⁵

In simplistic terms, the Yogacara can be understood to have ‘applied’ Nagarjuna’s abstract thinking to the concrete and subjective realm of the human mind and the

⁴⁹⁴ Daisaku Ikeda, *Buddhism the First Millennium* translated by Burton Watson (Tokyo: Kodansha International Ltd., 1978), 146-148.

⁴⁹⁵ Richard King, “Early Yogacara and its Relationship with the Madhyamaka School” *Philosophy East & West* Vol.44, No.4, October 1994, 659-683 (666)

human being.⁴⁹⁶ This concern was partly informed by the perceived need to relate the principles of Emptiness to the concrete and particular experiences of concrete and particular human beings in order to be able to teach those very principles. In other words, unless it became possible to extend Nagarjuna's logic of Emptiness to subjective consciousness, it was going to be difficult to understand how individuals should relate to it. Why was it significant? In this section, we will briefly highlight some of the developments that unfolded from these questions.

As a consequence of the Buddhist teaching that there is no independently existing individual self, it was concluded that what we experience as 'self' is the composite result of interrelated constituent elements or conditions that unite temporarily. These conditions are known as the five aggregates or *pancha-skhandas*. They are form, perception, conception, volition and consciousness. The Yogacara School holds that all phenomena are experienced ultimately through consciousness. As Ikeda explains:

In the Hinayana Buddhism of the Abhidharma treatises, six distinctive types of consciousness are recognized, corresponding to the sense of sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch, and the functioning of the conscious mind. In Mahayana however, there are two more types of consciousness, making a total of eight. These two further types are the *manas*-consciousness [...] and *alaya* consciousness [...] both of which are aspects of the sub-conscious mind.⁴⁹⁷

Thus we have eight levels of consciousness, or eight consciousnesses:

- 1-5: the Five Senses (sight, taste, touch, smell, hearing)
- 6: the conscious mind (the integration of the senses)
- 7: the subconscious mind (dreaming, the sense of self-hood)
- 8: the unconscious mind (karma)

The first six layers of consciousness deal with the external world. The seventh layer, or *manas* consciousness, discerns the inner spiritual world, where the basic awareness of self originates. The *alaya* consciousness can discern bodily, verbal and mental acts,

⁴⁹⁶ For the Synthetic view and an excellent grounding in these ideas see Gadjin M. Nagao *Madhyamika and Yogacara: A Study of Mahayana Philosophies* translator Kawamura (Albany: State University of New York Press 1991), and John P. Keenan, *The Foundational Standpoint of Madhyamika Philosophy by Nagao Gadjin* (Delhi, Sri Satguru Publications 1990). For further reading on Yogacara generally see Dan Lusthaus *Buddhist Phenomenology* (Oxon: Routledge Curzon 2003).

⁴⁹⁷ Daisaku Ikeda, *Buddhism the First Millennium* translated by Burton Watson (Tokyo: Kodansha International Ltd., 1978), 152.

which in turn are imprinted in the alaya consciousness as 'karmic seeds'. This process is nothing else than the dependent origination at the alaya consciousness. This eighth consciousness is no longer purely individual; the illusion of the autonomous self is the work of the first seven layers. The eighth level functions as a storehouse for karmic seeds. When we act, speak and think, we create 'habits' or 'seeds' which remain latent until activated by suitable stimuli. Some of these 'habits' are collective in that they reflect preferences held by our social and cultural environment. The 'seeds' stored in the eighth consciousness influence the lower levels of consciousness though not in a deterministic manner.

The Yogacara school explores the deeper levels of consciousness in relation to the wider karmic process. Where do we find Nagarjuna's Two Truths and his Middle Way in human consciousness? They reappear in this refined framework as the three natures of consciousness: 'Imagined', 'Other-dependent', and 'Absolute' (or consummate). These natures are the 'subjective' equivalents of Nagarjuna's 'objective' conditioned truths, and it thus becomes important to establish how the mind can move from one truth to the next and then on to the middle way. For the Yogacara, awakening or enlightenment is cognitive. According to Yogacara scholar Dan Lusthaus,

The issue of cognition and knowing was always quintessential for Buddhism; Awakening is, after, all a cognitive act! Without its theories of karma and cognition, Buddhism would be without a soteric dimension. Epistemology is a necessary cause of Awakening.⁴⁹⁸

This cognition is intimately linked to karma. The inner mental functions evolve and are differentiated by karma – which is a mere restatement of the principle of dependent origination as it applies to consciousness. We can therefore talk of an 'evolution of cognition'. Sthiramati, a 6th Century Indian Yogacara scholar-monk, explains that evolution occurs, as cause becomes effect:

Evolving means the acquisition of the totality of effect (karyasya atmalabhah) which takes place in the same moment with that of the extinction of its cause (karanaksana-nirodha-samakala), and is different in nature from [the status of] the cause at the moment [of change] (karana-ksana vilaksana).⁴⁹⁹

⁴⁹⁸ Dan Lusthaus, *Buddhist Phenomenology* (Oxon, Routledge Curzon, 2003), 173

⁴⁹⁹ Quoted in Gadgin M. Nagao, *Madhyamika and Yogacara: A Study of Mahayana Philosophies* translator Kawamura (Albany: State University of New York Press 1991), 126

Evolution is the simultaneity of cause (karana) and effect (karya):

The evolution of cognition does not depend on the categories of time and space. However, the reverse holds true that is, time and space are produced on the basis of evolving cognition (viz., on the basis of the evolution of the alaya-vijnana). In other words all existences appear with the limitation of time and space on the basis of that evolving cognition. [...] This means the world is established when there is the evolving and convertibility of karana and karya instantaneously. The world is born every moment and dies every moment. [...] The fact that the world is transient yet continues as an uninterrupted flow parallels the fact that all cognitions always evolve as continuity series on the basis of the simultaneity of karana and karya.⁵⁰⁰

Awakening is the movement from the imagined to the absolute nature of consciousness, via the other-dependent consciousness. The imagined nature corresponds here to the truth of dependent origination; the other-dependent nature corresponds to the truth of emptiness, while the absolute nature corresponds to the middle way. Thus, the imagined nature of consciousness represents an illusion and the absolute nature represents awakening and enlightenment, whereas the other-dependent nature represents a moment or space of conversion. When reality is viewed correctly, the other-dependent nature converts from the imagined to the absolute; in turn, when reality is viewed incorrectly, the other-dependent nature converts from the absolute to the imagined:

When mind-cognition takes the world of other dependence, the pure and genuine world, as its object, and conceives and discriminates it, the 'form' thus conceived and discriminated is of the imagined nature. [...] The conversion of the other-dependent into the consummated is properly called 'the turning around of the basis' (asraya-paravrtii). It is directly opposite to the conversion of the other-dependent to the imagined. But both conversions are based on the same idea of paryaya, the same convertibility of the other-dependent.⁵⁰¹

⁵⁰⁰ Gadjin M. Nagao, *Madhyamika and Yogacara: A Study of Mahayana Philosophies* translator Kawamura (Albany: State University of New York Press 1991), 129-130.

⁵⁰¹ Gadjin M. Nagao, *Madhyamika and Yogacara: A Study of Mahayana Philosophies* translator Kawamura (Albany: State University of New York Press 1991), 142.

The cognition – the ‘turning around of the basis’ – required for consciousness to assume its absolute nature is a process that involves the alaya consciousness, i.e. the eighth-level consciousness. How exactly this occurs became a matter of contention. The key question is whether the alaya consciousness itself is transcended as a result of this process. The Yogacara maintained that awakening is cognitive and that the cognition does not lead outside or beyond the eighth consciousness; but there were other thinkers, who argued that there was a ninth consciousness, which was ‘higher’, more fundamental than the alaya consciousness. This ninth consciousness is the focus of the tathagata-garbha or ‘Buddha nature’ literature, though not a part of the Yogacara positions, this is the ideal time to discuss and consider it.

The debate concerning the ninth consciousness is about the ‘location’ or nature of the absolute or consummate nature. According to Yogacarins, the eighth level is all that is required because the alaya consciousness can be defiled (imagined nature), and it can be ‘turned around’ (through negation of delusion concerning the true nature of reality) into the absolute nature (enlightenment). In this view, enlightenment is a form of self-purification, which raises a number of ‘logical’ questions: if all impurities of the karmic consciousness are eradicated, who is experiencing this enlightenment? If, moreover, some aspects of karmic consciousness are communal, as we suggested above, what does purification mean? The tathagata-garbha or Buddha nature (or Buddha womb or matrix) literature posits a further level of consciousness, representing the Buddha nature, which is an ‘inherent’ enlightened nature. The Buddha nature is ‘present’ as a potential ‘in’ every consciousness; enlightenment means that the Buddha nature is actualized. This actualization is no longer purely cognitive but involves an intuitive and ultimately active element. Nagao comments on the former:

The characteristic of the doctrine of tathagata-garbha lies not so much in theory as in its religious poignancy and literary beauty, which must have been products of mystical experience [...] therefore it is probably natural that Indian Buddhist philosophers were not able to fully theorize and systematize the idea of the tathagata-garbha, the substance of this religious intuition, for it was something whose nature could not apply to human logic and logical categories.⁵⁰²

⁵⁰² Gadjin M. Nagao, *Madhyamika and Yogacara: A Study of Mahayana Philosophies* translator Kawamura (Albany: State University of New York Press 1991), 118.

Achieving Buddha nature thus is not a cognitive-theoretical achievement; rather, its achievement is spiritual-intuitive. Inserting the ninth consciousness into the Yogacara conception of consciousness thus implies that enlightenment is not an intellectual concept but an experiential state of life. Chih-I, who lived in 6th Century China, systematized these debates further by drawing on what is arguably the key Mahayana text on the Buddha nature, the Lotus Sutra.

6.4. Chih-I and the Lotus Sutra

Chih-I, (538-597) also known as T'ien T'ai, ⁵⁰³ lived and taught in 6th Century China – at a time when a flood of Buddhist teachings reached China in no ordered way. There was need for systematization and synthesis. Chih-I marks a watershed in Buddhist philosophy in China and beyond because he provided such a systematization. Subsequent developments in Buddhist thought defined themselves in terms of the position they took in relation to Chih-I.⁵⁰⁴ He developed a system for categorizing the Buddha's teachings based on five periods and eight teachings. Such systems were not uncommon at the time as various authors struggled to bring order into Buddhist thought and practice. They were usually based on a presumed chronological order in which the Buddha taught his principles. They also relied on certain key teachings, which were thought to be foundational. A school's justificatory framework or p'an-chiao strategy involved privileging whatever text or idea the school considered to be most important. The more successful schools were able to offer more comprehensive perspectives on, and more 'rounder' approaches to, the Buddha's teachings.

Chih-I's categorization was based on the idea that during some of these periods the Buddha adjusted his teaching to the ability of his audience, in a pedagogical way. As Kirimura explains:

Pervading [his] entire system is an awareness that the basic purpose of Buddhism-the salvation of the people- is not accomplished by theory and philosophy alone but by the living relationship between the Buddha and his disciples, for which theory and philosophy serves as a medium [...]. To be

⁵⁰³ Buddhist Scholar David W. Chappell explains "T'ien T'ai marked a watershed in Chinese philosophy. Subsequent developments in Buddhist thought defined themselves in terms of the position they took in its regard. And this is what makes its understanding so critical for the study of Buddhist intellectual history", in Paul Swanson, *The Foundations of T'ien-T'ai Philosophy: The Flowering of The Two Truths Theory In Chinese Buddhism* (USA: Asian Humanities Press, 1989), vi.

⁵⁰⁴ Swanson, "Foundations of T'ien-T'ai Philosophy," vi.

specific, he saw that while the Buddha's enlightenment never changed, the words in which he expressed it changed in accordance with the people's capacity [...]. In short the five periods traces the process by which the Buddha cultivated the people's understanding.⁵⁰⁵

If we accept this idea of a progressive pedagogical and soteriological structure in the Buddha's teachings, his final period and his last sermons naturally assume great significance. Chih-I considered the Lotus Sutra as the highest and ultimate teaching. Accordingly, his major works are commentaries on the Lotus Sutra, which he declared the ekayana, the One Vehicle of the Prime Way. According to Chih-I's p'an-chiao, the Lotus Sutra was Buddha's penultimate sermon, given just before his final sermon, the Mahayana Nirvana Sutra, and entrance into nirvana. There were other schools such as Hua Yen, who prioritized the Avatamsaka Sutra, which is a combination of various Indian Sutras into one text, and which was taught during the first weeks after the Buddha's Awakening. Chih-I accepts the account of the timing of the Avatamsaka but stresses that it was too immediate, too subtle and thus removed from ordinary experience – it had little pedagogical value:

To bring people up to a level where they would be able to understand and utilize the teachings expressed in Avatamsaka, Buddha generated a succession of increasingly more profound teachings that culminated, in full maturity with a honed pedagogical precision, in the Lotus Sutra.⁵⁰⁶

The Lotus Sutra affirms that there is a single path to enlightenment: When teaching in accordance with the people's capacities, the Buddha had taught the 'voice-hearer (shravaka-yana), which leads to the state of arhat, the self-enlightened (pratekabuddha-yana) that leads to the state of partial enlightenment, and the Bodhisattva (Bodhisattva-yana) leading to Buddhahood after many lifetimes of practice. The Lotus Sutra second chapter explains that these three vehicles were taught as expedient means, and that there is ultimately only one Buddha vehicle, (the Lotus Sutra) which unifies the three.⁵⁰⁷

⁵⁰⁵ Yasuji Kirimura, *Outline of Buddhism*, (Tokyo, NSIC 1981), 54-55.

⁵⁰⁶ Lusthaus, "*Buddhist Phenomenology*," 253.

⁵⁰⁷ For an introduction see Yuichi Kajiyama, "*The Saddharmapundarika and Sunyata Thought*" in *Journal of Oriental Studies*, Vol.10 p72 (IOP: Tokyo, 2001); Shioiri Ryodo, "The Meaning of the Formation and Structure of the Lotus Sutra" in George J. Tanabe Jr. and Willa J. Tanabe, *The Lotus Sutra in Japanese Culture* (Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press 1989), 15-36.

Burton Watson, a foremost modern day scholar translator of Buddhist text explains;

The Lotus sutra depicts events that take place in a cosmic world of vast dimensions, a world [...] reflecting traditional Indian views of the structure of the world [...] made up of four continents ranged around a great central mountain [...] Sumeru. [...] outside of our present world there exist countless others spread out in all [ten] directions [...] all these worlds are [...] in a never ending cycle of formation, continuance, decline, and disintegration, a process that takes place over vast kalpas or eons of time. The ordinary beings living in our present world fall into six categories or occupy six realms of existence, arranged in hierarchical order in terms of their desirability. Lowest are the hell dwellers [...] in the various hells that exist beneath the earth [...] the most terrible of which is the Avichi hell of incessant suffering. On a slightly higher level are the hungry ghosts or spirits, beings tormented by endless hunger and craving. Above this is the level of the beasts or beings of animal nature, and above that the realm of Asuras, demons who are pictured [...] as constantly engaged in angry warfare. Above these is the fifth level, the realm of human beings, the sixth, that of the heavenly beings or gods. The gods, though they lead far happier lives than the beings in the other realms, are doomed in time to die. Whatever the realm, all [...] beings in these six realms repeat the never ending cycle of death and rebirth, moving up or down [...] depending upon the good or evil deeds they have committed, but never gaining release from the cycle.⁵⁰⁸

To these six transmigratory levels – or ‘worlds’ – the text adds four more, thus giving the following hierarchy of beings:

- (i) Hell Dwellers
- (ii) Hungry Spirits
- (iii) Animals and Beasts
- (iv) Angry Demons
- (v) Humanity
- (vi) Heavenly Beings
- (vii) Voice hearers (shravaka)
- (viii) Pratyekabuddha

⁵⁰⁸ Burton Watson trans., *The Lotus Sutra* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), Xiii-XV.

- (ix) Bodhisattvas
- (x) Buddhas

On the seventh level we find the voice hearers (shravakas), who are disciples who can attain enlightenment by hearing the Buddha's teaching directly. The eighth level is that of the pratyekabuddha or 'self-enlightened ones', who are able to perceive the truth through their direct perception and understanding of reality. The ninth level (or world) is that of the Bodhisattva, who vows to help all sentient beings attain enlightenment.⁵⁰⁹ The Buddha state is the final goal of the Bodhisattva, but it is a goal for both themselves and for others (who may need their help). In real terms the Buddha state is a place we come from rather than go to. Indeed the Buddha is also called the Thus Come One. (As an aside we should note that we are 'falling into' conventional distinctions by using 'we', and 'others' but this is unavoidable if we are to 'discuss'.)

After an introduction, the audience – tens of thousands of people, including kings, great sages, and deities – waits in great expectation. The Lotus Sutra continues with the Buddha declaring that no one will be able to understand what is to come, and for fear of causing the audience to suffer, he should remain silent. However, after three pleadings by the Bodhisattvas, reminding the Buddha of his purpose to help people in this world of suffering, the Buddha eventually gives in and begins with a warning, saying that "The wisdom of the Buddhas is infinitely profound and immeasurable. The door to this wisdom is difficult to understand and difficult to enter".⁵¹⁰ Proud monks on hearing this, however, take their leave as they hear how difficult it is to understand the Buddha's wisdom, while the Buddha praises those who remain: "you know that you yourselves shall become Buddhas."⁵¹¹ Remarkably, however, for some scholars, the preaching of the sermon never actually takes place:

The narrative then enters into the first of many parables for which the Lotus Sutra is famous, and thereafter concerns itself with elaborating the marvelous merits of this sutra and the responsibilities of those who embrace it: how it should be copied, revered, propagated, and explained. The status of the sutra is raised to that of an object of worship, for it is to be revered in and of itself

⁵⁰⁹ The Theravada view sometimes so understood is that the bodhisattva stands ready like the arhat to enter nirvana but returns from the brink of nirvana – to assist people. This is how Toynbee understood the Buddha even. But from the true Mahayana perspective- the bodhisattva is defined by the vow – there is no return as nirvana is not an annihilation of existence but an annihilation of self-centeredness.

⁵¹⁰ Watson, "The Lotus Sutra," 23.

⁵¹¹ Watson, "The Lotus Sutra," 23-46.

because of the merits it asserts for itself. As praises for the Lotus Sutra mount with increasing elaboration, it is easy to fall in with the sutras protagonists and, in line with them, to fail to notice that the preaching of the Lotus sermon promised in the first chapter *never takes place*. The text, so full of merit, is *about* a discourse, which is never delivered; it is a lengthy preface without a book. The Lotus Sutra is thus unique among texts. It is not merely subject to various interpretations, as all texts are, but is open or empty at its very centre. It is a surrounding text, pure context, which invites not only interpretation of what is said but filling in of what is not said [...]. The fact that the preaching remains an unfulfilled promise is never mentioned [...] because the paean about the sermon sounds like the sermon itself. The text is taken at face value: praise about the Lotus Sutra becomes the Lotus Sutra.⁵¹²

Where Nagarjuna's Two Truths pointed to a third middle path, about which ultimately little could be said, Chih-I finds an active rather than a theoretical or intellectual truth revealed in the Lotus Sutra. He uses the Lotus Sutra in order to provide an account of the Middle-Way-Buddha nature, which is dynamic, positive and immanent.⁵¹³ In his account, the Middle-Way-Buddha nature corresponds to a ninth level of consciousness. The innate Buddhahood is beautifully described in a parable in Chapter four of the Lotus Sutra, 'Belief and Understanding'.⁵¹⁴ A young man decided to run away from his wealthy father. The two are apart for fifty years. The father wishes to regain his son and leave him his inheritance but tells no one about his desire. The son works as an itinerant labourer and moves from town to town until eventually he finds himself back in his hometown. His father recognizes him but the son does not recognize the father, the father aware of the son's potential fear of his 'authority' sends two messengers, with no imposing features, so as not to spook him. They hire him according to his ability, gradually increasing his position until he is able to receive his true wealth – as the son finally recognizes the true identity of his employer, he begins

⁵¹² George J. Tanabe Jr. and Willa J. Tanabe, *The Lotus Sutra in Japanese Culture* (Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press 1989), 1-3.

⁵¹³ For a full account of Chih-I's Buddha-nature-middle-way see Yu Kwan Ng, *T'ien-t'ai Buddhism and Early Madhyamika* (Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press 1993) Ng provides a reading of Chih-I from the perspective of the Lotus based view of the middle way. He rightly points out that many western scholars have continued to read Chih-I from the wisdom sutras perspective, and therefore see the middle-way as the emptiness of emptiness, rather than a dynamic power. He believes Swanson's book below is one such account. This is not to negate this viewpoint but it is an incomplete understanding of Chih-I's final position. His 'late' period was all based upon the Lotus.

⁵¹⁴ Watson, "The Lotus Sutra," 80-87.

to understand his heritage and accepts it. In the parable, the father's (and then the son's) wealth is Buddhahood.⁵¹⁵

Chih-I also provides us with a heuristic for approaching the co-arising conditions the Buddha revealed as the structure of reality. This heuristic is known as Ichinen-Sanzen or 'three thousand realms in a single moment'. As we shall see later, Toynebee and Ikeda discuss this heuristic in their dialogue. The number 3000 is reached as follows. We already listed the ten 'worlds' referred to in the Lotus Sutra. One of the characteristics of Chih-I's teaching is that these ten worlds are not separate and distinct; they are all mutually implicated in each other, and each realm interacts with and even contains the others:

Chih-I divided the realms of existence into ten interpenetrating realms or destinies: hell, preta, beast, asura, man, gods, sravaka, pratyekabuddha, bodhisattva, and Buddha. These are not ten separate distinct worlds, but rather experiences or states of existence in one reality. It may be more accurate to refer to these ten 'destinies as states of experience: hellish, to be full of insatiable appetite, brutish, combative, human, divine, sravaka-like, pratyekabuddha-like, bodhisattva-like, and Buddha-like [...]. Chih-I's claim that these realms are 'interpenetrating' or 'mutually inclusive' means that each sentient being experiences them all in accordance with its actions.⁵¹⁶

In addition, Chih-I identified and distinguished ten 'suchnesses' or 'factors' in the 'Expedient Means' (second) chapter of the Lotus Sutra:

- (i) Appearance: the external phenomenal appearance of life
- (ii) Nature: the internal or inherent disposition or quality of a being that cannot be discerned from the outside
- (iii) Entity: the essence of life that permeates and integrates appearance and nature

⁵¹⁵ In this parable the son represents the intellectual disciples who were pursuing arhatship, the wealth represents Buddhahood, and the wealthy man the Buddha. The 'theoreticians' had failed to realise their true potential and gained a 'jewel without seeking'. Interestingly, Chih-I revealed that this chapter also revealed the 5 'periods' of Gautama's teachings. The Avatamsaka; finding the son- testing the people's capacities. The Tripitaka; inviting the son to work for him-leading in the right direction. The Vaipulya; forging bonds of trust between father and son; refuting adherence to the Tripitaka. The Wisdom period; turning management of his estate over to the son- eliminating non-essentials. The Lotus period; leaving wealth to the son- opening and unifying. These as explicated in Daisaku Ikeda, *The Wisdom of the Lotus Sutra Volume II*, (Santa Monica: World Tribune Press, 2000), 42.

⁵¹⁶ Paul Swanson, *Foundations of T'ien-T'ai Philosophy* (USA, Asian Humanities Press 1989), 11.

- (iv) Power: the ability to effect change
- (v) Influence: the actual change or impact
- (vi) Internal Cause: the cause latent in life that produces an effect of the same quality as itself (i.e. good, evil, neutral)
- (vii) Relation: the manner in which the internal cause relates to indirect causes, i.e. to the conditions (internal and external) that help the internal cause produce an effect
- (viii) Latent Effect: the effect produced on life when an internal cause is activated through a combination of (vi) and (vii)
- (ix) Manifest Effect: the tangible, visible, perceivable result of a latent effect
- (x) The Consistency from Beginning to End: the holistic unity of the whole process – all previous nine factors are ‘consistently and harmoniously interrelated’.⁵¹⁷

Finally, Chih-I distinguishes the three realms of existence – the realm of the individual, the realm of living beings, and the realm of the environment. The realm of the individuals is also known as the realm of the five aggregates or *pancha-skhandas*, which we have encountered already. What, then, characterizes ‘life’ at a particular, singular moment? Life at any moment manifests one of the Ten Worlds, and each of these worlds possesses the potential for all ten within itself as a ‘mutual possession’ or ‘mutual inclusion’. This configuration is represented as 10x10, or a hundred. Each of these hundred worlds possesses the ten ‘suchnesses’, making one thousand factors or potentials, and these operate within the three realms of existence, thus making three thousand realms. These three thousand realms represent the entire phenomenal world, and this entirety is present in every single moment of life. Chih-I taught that the Buddha’s awakening was an awakening to the fullness of this reality present in every thought or life moment.

According to Chih-I’s periodization of the Buddha’s teachings, Emptiness as the Middle Way was the ultimate truth revealed in the Wisdom period, which was the Buddha’s penultimate teaching period. The Emptiness taught during this period seemed static, negative and transcendent. The ultimate truth taught in the ultimate teaching period, which is the Lotus period, is the Buddha nature as the internal cause or potential for attaining Buddhahood, and Chih-I, as noted, reads it as having positive and dynamic contents. He held that all people were endowed with the three inherent potentials of the

⁵¹⁷ See the SGI library online at <http://www.sgilibrary.org>, (accessed April 12, 2009).

Buddha nature: the innate Buddha nature, the wisdom to perceive it, and the deeds to develop it. Therefore, everyone can attain enlightenment.

Chih-I's manner of talking about Buddha nature entails certain dangers. To say that all sentient beings 'possess' or 'are' the tathagata-garbha Buddha nature seems to imply that a certain 'thing-ness' or substance-like ontology is attached to the Buddha nature. However, this impression is mistaken. Sallie B. King reminds us of the need to conceive of the Buddha nature in terms of 'thusness':

The word for Thusness in Chinese, *ru*, means 'like', 'as' [...] 'Ju [*ru*] 'like, as much as,' comparing qualities and actions rather than things. As a noun one may take *ju* [*ru*] as 'being as (not 'what') it is'. Although it does have an ontological quality to it, Thusness refers to *how* something is, rather than *what* it is [...]. The word Thusness is not a term that has the qualities or attributes of being 'this' or 'that'; it is a word by which words are undone, a word that points at our language and indicates that it will not do. Yet the term Thusness does not have the negative connotations of *sunya* [emptiness], a term that functions in a similar way to 'undo' language. Hence to equate the Buddha Nature with Thusness is to indicate that there is something positive about it – one wants to say it is 'real', it 'exists' – but the use of the term Thusness serves to remind us that the direction in which our minds begin to move upon hearing the terms 'real' and 'exists' will not be a totally appropriate one.⁵¹⁸

King explains, "Thusness is that which is revealed by Emptiness [...]. It is the conjunction of persons correctly perceiving the world as it is, and the world presenting itself to persons as it is".⁵¹⁹ Reality as it is revealed by emptiness is freed from the illusion of self-nature, of independent, autonomous existence. As one passes through Emptiness on the way to Thusness, the negation of the illusion of separate, individual entities is maintained. Thusness is therefore "prior to a division of experience into the categories of subject and object or mind and world [...]."⁵²⁰ And precisely because Emptiness is entailed in Thusness, we can say that the language of Thusness is affirmative of phenomenal reality *as it is*. This is why the notion has to remain theoretically elusive – and why the Lotus Sutra resembles a 'preface without a book'

⁵¹⁸ Sallie B. King, *Buddha Nature* (Albany, State University of New York Press, 1991), 102 -103.

⁵¹⁹ Sallie B. King, *Buddha Nature* (Albany, State University of New York Press, 1991), 103.

⁵²⁰ Sallie B. King, *Buddha Nature* (Albany, State University of New York Press, 1991), 103.

(Tanabe and Tanabe, see above) – because it is left to reality to be what reality is. Thusness functions as a pointer to the true apprehension of what is. King comments:

The term Thusness [...] has a soteriological function and as such epitomizes the optimism of Buddha nature thought. It represents the goal of religious life as eminently desirable and real, without setting the practitioner up to be attached too soon to any specific notions of what that goal is like.⁵²¹

King's account helps us to understand that the Buddha nature is a call to action, to the realization of Buddhahood, and that call is extended to everyone. One must pass through Emptiness (as the notion of independent existence) in order to be able to reach Thusness and to apprehend reality as it is; this passing through, however, requires action. Thusness is the result of the active process leading to "the inseparable conjunction of reality presenting itself to persons "thus" and persons experiencing reality "thus".⁵²² Buddha nature means 'potential Buddha' – not as a type of being, but as practice – as actualization – that is an ongoing action or series of actions. The Buddha nature treatise, which is attributed to Vasubandhu and which was translated into Chinese by Paramartha in the 6th Century, makes it clear that

In accordance with principle, all sentient beings universally and aboriginally possess the pure Buddha nature. That there should be one who eternally failed to obtain parinirvana is not the case. (788c)⁵²³

Thusness is all-embracing because it does not divide reality into realms of inclusion and realms of exclusion. Thusness cannot exclude anyone because, if it did, it would be forced to hypostatize separate existence; it would regress to a point prior even to emptiness. Therefore, as King concludes, "[a]ll are capable of performing this act, seeing things Thus, seeing reality itself Thus."⁵²⁴

6.5. Nichiren Daishonin

Buddhist teachings include a prediction of its own history being 'partitioned' into three periods following the Buddhas death. These are marked by the different degrees of the

⁵²¹ Sallie B. King, *Buddha Nature* (Albany, State University of New York Press, 1991), 103.

⁵²² Sallie B. King, *Buddha Nature* (Albany, State University of New York Press, 1991), 104.

⁵²³ Sallie B. King, *Buddha Nature* (Albany, State University of New York Press, 1991), 105.

⁵²⁴ Sallie B. King, *Buddha Nature* (Albany, State University of New York Press, 1991), 104.

teachings' effectiveness. These periods are known as the Former Day, Middle Day, and Latter Day of the Law; or as the periods of the Correct Law, the Counterfeit Law, and the Decadent Law (or Final Law). The first period is one in which the spirit of Buddhism prevails and in which people can attain enlightenment by following its teachings and practices. The second period sees Buddhism become more firmly established in society but losing its effectiveness as a consequence of formalization. During the last period, the people and priests become distracted by greed, anger and foolishness, and Buddhism loses its effectiveness as a guide towards enlightenment. It is important to understand that Nichiren saw himself as living in the third and final period, which gave him a very strong sense of a mission as the one who needed to address the shortcoming of both society and its 'false' Buddhism.

Nichiren was born in 1222 and schooled in the T'ien T'ai tradition. He researched other traditions as well and became extremely well read in the Buddhist writings.⁵²⁵ In 1253, when giving his first sermon to his temple colleagues, Nichiren declared that all four main Buddhist schools of the day were erroneous. All schools, he explained, needed to return to the Lotus Sutra as the central inspiration and articulation of Buddhism. This direct challenge to the various Buddhism/s of his time predictably made Nichiren a very unpopular man. It is sometimes suggested that Nichiren's analysis was a 'Japanese Buddhist equivalent' of Martin Luther's Reformation. During Nichiren's time, Buddhist priests and temple chiefs were closely associated with the centres of power and political leaders. Temples received financial support from the political elites, and such dependencies made the temples serve elite interests rather than the people. The leaders reverted to earlier sutras, and even other religions in order to keep their elite patrons happy. While there was much suffering in the land, Nichiren viewed the priests were indifferent at best and responsible (for suffering) at worst and was particularly critical of priests who responded to suffering by promising happiness in the next life – an idea he considered anti-Buddhist.

Not unlike Luther, Nichiren became a targeted man. He suffered two exiles – to Izu in 1261 and to Sado in 1271 – and an execution attempt – in Tatsunokuchi in 1271. He spent his life remonstrating with temple elites and the powerful politicians, admonishing them for failing to carry out their duty to protect and serve the common people. At the end of a turbulent life he died peacefully aged 60 in 1282.

⁵²⁵ "Even those scholars who disagreed with him- and he was very unpopular- admitted Nichiren's learning. Nichiren was not a ranter but a skilled 'theologian' who could support his views with reasoned argument and, most importantly, scriptural testimony." Paul Williams, *Mahayana Buddhism The Doctrinal Foundations* (Oxon, Routledge, 2007), 160.

Nichiren's answer to the crisis of his time was to return to the Lotus Sutra and to 'apply' it radically and 'actively'. According to Nichiren, the key teaching of the Lotus Sutra is in the title – Myoho-enge-kyo. In April 1253, he declared Nam-myoho-enge-kyo to be the essence of the Lotus's teaching, and he urged chanting the phrase as a daily practice. Nam means 'to return to' or 'to devote one's life to', i.e. as a source for action. Myoho-enge-kyo means 'The Wonderful Law of the Lotus Sutra'. Nichiren inscribed the phrase Nam-myoho-enge-kyo in a mandala entitled the Gohonzon⁵²⁶, and instructed his audiences that chanting the phrase with faith in the Gohonzon was the practice that enabled people to attain Buddhahood in the period of the Decadent Law. Chih-I had noted in his *Profound Meaning of the Lotus Sutra*, that the 'cause for' and the 'effect of' the Buddha's enlightenment were to be found in Chapter 16 of the Sutra, where the Buddha declares (as cause), "Good men, originally I practiced the Bodhisattva way, and the life that I acquired then has yet to come to an end", and (as effect), "thus since I attained Buddhahood, an extremely long period of time has passed".⁵²⁷ However, Nichiren comments that the 'cause', the Bodhisattva way, is not specified in any detail. His revelation fills this crucial gap because it specifies the true cause is the Sutra's title. The title reflects the three-fold truth of Conventional truth⁵²⁸, Emptiness⁵²⁹ and the Middle Way:

The element *Myo*, or 'wonderful' represents the truth of non-substantiality; the element *ho-enge*, or 'the lotus of the law' represents the truth of temporary existence; and *kyo*, or 'sutra' represents the truth of the Middle Way.⁵³⁰

The 'single vehicle' of obtaining Buddhahood – and the unified truth of one in three and three in one – is indeed the very title of the Sutra. The practice of Nam-myoho-enge-kyo reflected the presence-ing and instantiation of Chih-I's 3000 worlds in a single moment. In other words,

It means that all beings and environments in the ten Worlds, from hell, the lowest, to Buddhahood, the highest, are without exception manifestations of Myoho-enge-kyo. [...] The entire realm of phenomena is no different than the

⁵²⁶ Go = honorific: Honzon = Object of Fundamental Respect or Devotion. A fuller title for Nichiren's mandala is the True Object of Devotion for Observing One's Mind (life).

⁵²⁷ Watson, "The Lotus Sutra," 227.

⁵²⁸ Also referred to as 'temporary existence' due to its 'constant change'.

⁵²⁹ Emptiness is sometimes referred to as 'non-substantiality' as it indicates 'no substantial essence'.

⁵³⁰ Soka Gakkai, *Record of the Orally Transmitted Teaching* translated by Burton Watson (Tokyo: Soka Gakkai 2004), 178.

five characters of Myoho-rence-kyo [...] to spread and give concrete form to [the five characters] is none other than the teaching of the actual three thousand realms in a single moment of life in the 'Life Span' chapter of the essential teaching.⁵³¹

Nichiren's vision is breathtaking. The whole of reality is a manifestation of Myoho-rence-kyo. In fact, commenting on the true nature of the Buddha, he offers his interpretation of a key section in the Lotus Sutra:

The two Buddhas, Shakyamuni and Many Treasures, are Buddhas who are functions [of Myoho-rence-kyo]. It is Myoho-rence-kyo that is the true Buddha. This is what is described in the Sutra as 'the Thus Come One's secret and his transcendental powers'.⁵³²

All historical Buddhas are manifestations of the True Buddha or Myoho-rence-kyo – and so is the whole of reality, including the as yet unenlightened 'common mortals'. The Lotus Sutra's 'self-praise', which was noted by Watanabe, is praise for the entirety of life and the nature of the cosmos that permits all people to experience it in oneness. The one-ness of the vision and the method to achieve it is the key contribution of the Lotus Sutra. In pre-Lotus teachings, the disciples believed themselves to be beings of the lower transmigratory realms. Even the Sravaka and Pratyekabuddha saw the Buddha as a being of a different order of existence; they certainly did not conceive of themselves as potential or future Buddhas. Nichiren appreciates that the transition to Buddhahood is inconceivable and in some sense unthinkable in intellectual terms. After all, Buddhahood itself is beyond intellectual conception. A disciple Abutsubo, asked Nichiren what is signified in the Lotus Sutra by, the "Thus Come One Many Treasures and his treasure tower?" In a letter replying to this question Nichiren declares, what is for the common mortal, the unthinkable:

I have read your letter with great care. I have also received your offering. [...] No treasure tower exists other than the figures of the men and women who embrace the Lotus Sutra [...] the treasure tower is Nam-myoho-rence-kyo. [...] Abutsubo is therefore the treasure tower itself, and the treasure tower is

⁵³¹ Nichiren Daishonin, "The True Aspect of All Phenomena" in *The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, editor-translator: The Goshō Translation Committee (Tokyo: Soka Gakkai, 1999), 383.

⁵³² Nichiren Daishonin, "The True Aspect of All Phenomena" in *The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, editor-translator: The Goshō Translation Committee (Tokyo: Soka Gakkai, 1999), 384. Citing Chapter 16 of the Lotus Sutra.

Abutsubo himself. No other knowledge is purposeful. [...] You may think you offered gifts to the treasure tower of the Thus Come One Many Treasures but that is not so. You offered them to yourself. You, yourself, are a Thus Come One who is originally endowed with the three bodies.⁵³³

Where the Buddha says, in the Lotus Sutra, that the wisdom of the Buddha can only be understood between Buddhas, he is implying that 'common mortals' need to be awakened to the fact that they are potential Buddhas. Once they have come to embrace that truth, they need to be taught how to achieve Buddhahood as a real possibility. Nichiren finds that teaching in the Lotus Sutra. The Sutra is indeed 'empty' in the sense that it does not offer a propositional truth; instead, its teaching is soteriological. It wants to lead the unenlightened to become aware of the possibility of their enlightenment – you will become Buddha – and it wants to help those who are close to enlightenment to finally achieve their potential and, like Shariputra in the Lotus, 'dance with joy'. The early chapters of the Lotus rouse, enrapture, inspire and raise in the audience an increasing sense of wonder and joyful anticipation – all these are aspects of the truth of Buddhahood. It even comforts those arhats -who initially depart out of disappointment that the truth is not to be found intellectually or conceptually- because they too will reach the goal of Buddhahood if they understand that the vehicle is action, not theorizing.

The method of walking towards and from Buddhahood, Nichiren instructs us, has two main, complementary components. First, there is the method of 'Never Disparaging' others – others, who are all (potential, and therefore real) Buddhas. This path is informed by chapter twenty of the Lotus, "Bodhisattva Never Disparaging" in which the essential phrase is found, "I have profound reverence for you, I would never dare treat you with disparagement or arrogance. Why? Because you are all practicing the bodhisattva way and are certain to attain Buddhahood."⁵³⁴ The second component is 'always praising' – as in the chanting of Nam-myō-hō-rengē-kyō – the true nature of reality. In some sense, therefore, teaching is the key method for taking part in the truth, for cherishing the truth, for instilling the truth in others, and thereby to let the truth unfold in the world. Teaching is the act of praising the Buddha nature in oneself and in others. The 'kyō' in Nam-myō-hō-rengē-kyō stands for 'sutra' or 'teaching' and this *is*

⁵³³ Nichiren Daishonin, "On the Treasure Tower" in *The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, editor-translator: The Goshō Translation Committee (Tokyo: Soka Gakkai, 1999), 300.

⁵³⁴ Watson, "The Lotus Sutra," 266-7. Kumārajīva's Chinese translation of this phrase consists of twenty-four characters; so important is this passage that it is often referred to as "the twenty-four-character Lotus Sutra." Or the "abbreviated" Lotus Sutra.

the Middle Way. That is the role and vow of the Bodhisattva, who needs to actively assist others attain enlightenment. It is not surprising that Nichiren was so impatient with 'intellectual' and 'elite' Buddhist priests, who, in his view, were cozying up to authority, lining their own temple coffers, and preaching theoretical platitudes, whilst *acting* against the intent of the Lotus Sutra. The contents of their sermons did not matter as long as they neglected the people, who should have been their true concern and audience. The priests' duty was to stand with the common people and to help them overcome the ignorance of the Buddhist dharma, while at the same time to remonstrate with the government and the Buddhist elites who obviously had forgotten their obligations and vows. Nichiren was relentless in his criticism because the priests were people who knew the truth, but instead of 'actualizing the truth', abused it for their own benefit and profit.

Nichiren framed his teaching in terms of the Three Great Secret Laws – 'secret', because he found them 'hidden' (implicit) in the Lotus Sutra. At the core of the Three Great Secret Laws is the "object of devotion of the essential teaching, or Nichiren's embodiment in the form of a mandala of the eternal Law of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, which he fully realized and manifested in his life".⁵³⁵ The other two Great Secret Laws derive from this first one. They are the daimoku of the essential teaching and the sanctuary of the essential teaching. 'Daimoku' generally means 'the title of a sutra', but in this concrete context refers to the invocation or chanting of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo with faith in the object of devotion. The sanctuary is the place where the object of devotion becomes 'enshrined', which corresponds to the place where one vows to observe the Buddhist precepts, i.e. the ordination platform. But it has a subjective dimension, as illustrated in his reply to Abutsubo, in that it is where faith in this law and mandala is 'enshrined' in the life of the practitioner.

As we have tracked the four noble truths across the three cultures, there is a further correspondence we might make between the original Four Noble Truths and Nichiren's Three Great Secret Laws. We recall the Four Noble Truths are,

- (1) all existence is suffering;
- (2) suffering is caused by selfish craving;
- (3) the eradication of selfish craving brings about the cessation of suffering and enables one to attain nirvana;

⁵³⁵ SGI Dictionary, 'Three Great Secret Laws', http://www.sgilibrary.org/search_dict.php (accessed April 2, 2009).

- (4) there is a path by which this eradication of selfishness can be achieved, namely, the discipline of the Eightfold Path.

The path was condensed into the three types of Buddhist learning – wisdom, meditation and precepts⁵³⁶ – and these correspond to Nichiren's Three Great Secret Laws. As their final explication in the Three Great Secret Laws, the Precepts correspond to the Sanctuary, i.e. to the vows taken during ordination and to the rules of monastic discipline. Chanting Nam-Myoho-enge-kyo with faith in the Gohonzon is the practice of 'observing one's own mind' (and attaining enlightenment) and corresponds to Meditation. Wisdom is the daimoku or title, Nam-myoho-enge-kyo, which represents the active truth of the Lotus Sutra. The Three Great Secret Laws are Nichiren's explication of the Path. We could also speculate it embraces the complete explication of the Four Noble Truths.⁵³⁷

Before we conclude our discussion of Nichiren's contribution, we must briefly refer to one of his famous key writings, the *Rissho-Ankoku* or *On Establishing the Correct Teaching for the Peace of the Land*.⁵³⁸ This will also allow us to introduce Daisaku Ikeda, one of the key and foremost interpreters of Nichiren and Toynbee's partner in the conversation that was published as *Choose Life*. Nichiren's text, written in 1260, presents a dialogue between a Visitor and Nichiren himself. The Visitor outlines in graphic terms the various afflictions of the land and the people who live on and from it; there are famines, pestilence, natural disasters, dead bodies litter the streets, and there is great confusion as the people follow diverse and obscure spiritual practices. What has caused this devastation? Nichiren replies:

You must quickly reform the tenets that you hold in your heart and embrace the one true vehicle, the single good doctrine [of the Lotus Sutra] If you do so, then the threefold world will become the Buddha land, and how could a Buddha land ever decline? The regions in the ten directions will all become treasure realms, and how could a treasure realm ever suffer harm? If you live in a country that

⁵³⁶ In the classic three types of learnings, Precepts are rules or disciplines intended to prevent error and put an end to evil in thoughts, words and deeds. Meditation is a practice designed to focus one's mind and to instill calmness. Wisdom helps us to get rid of our illusions and enables us to see and embrace relational truth.

⁵³⁷ Four Noble truths might also be encompassed within the Nam-Myoho-Renge-Kyo. The first conventional truth is ho-enge, the second emptiness truth is Myo, the third middle way truth is Kyo, and the fourth truth (path) is the unified Nam-myoho-enge-kyo. These may also correspond respectively to the four lines of verse 18, chapter 24 in Nagarjuna's MMK. For a full discussion of the relationship between the Four Noble Truths and Nagarjuna's verse see Swanson "T'ien T'ai" (1989) chapter 1.

⁵³⁸ A thesis/treatise Nichiren submitted to the political powers explaining the co-arising nature of the disasters facing the Japanese society at that time. Specifically, slander of the Lotus sutra was the cause.

knows no decline or diminution, in a land that suffers no harm or disruption, then your body will find peace and security, and your mind will be calm and untroubled. You must believe my words; heed what I say!⁵³⁹

Nichiren established a direct relationship between the 'minds of the people', their approach to reality and this very reality:

If the minds of living beings are impure, their land is also impure, but if their minds are pure, so is their land. There are not two lands, pure or impure in themselves. The difference lies solely in the good or evil of our minds.⁵⁴⁰

(We should note as an aside that mind here indicates heart and mind (life) not the intellectual theorizing mind). It would be easy to read Nichiren as promoting an exclusive 'sectarian truth', indeed Nichiren's teaching or advice has often been misunderstood as a form of sectarianism. Ikeda explains:

The principle of 'establishing the correct teaching' has been mistakenly viewed by people as promoting sectarianism. That is, it's been thought to imply the unification of the country under a single religion.⁵⁴¹ Second is that 'peace of the land' has been viewed in terms of those in power, rather than from the standpoint of the people. 'Peace of the land' in fact refers to the peace and security of the people, the happiness of the people, and the peace of the land where the people dwell. It is this fundamental aim that has been forgotten. [...] In the 9th and 10th sections making up the treatise, the Daishonin indicates that the key to actualising the principle of 'establishing the true teaching for the peace of the land' lies in reforming the 'tenets that you hold in your heart'. In other words, transforming oneself on a fundamental level is the basis for 'establishing the true teaching'.⁵⁴²

⁵³⁹ Nichiren Daishonin, "On Establishing the Correct Teaching for the Peace of the Land" in *The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, editor-translator: The Gosho Translation Committee (Tokyo: Soka Gakkai, 1999), 25.

⁵⁴⁰ Nichiren Daishonin, "On Attaining Buddhahood in this Lifetime" in *The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, editor-translator: The Gosho Translation Committee (Tokyo: Soka Gakkai, 1999), 4.

⁵⁴¹ The turn of the 19th and 20th century witnessed a number of intellectual ideologues in Japan. People such as Kitta Ikki and General Kanji Ishiwara adopted or utilized isolated commentaries from Nichiren's thought and mixed this with their own ideological preferences. Undoubtedly some of the explosive intellectual cocktails they produced helped fuel and legitimize the militaristic nationalistic expansionistic ideologies. For more on Ikki see George M. Wilson, *Radical Nationalist in Japan: Kita Ikki, 1883-1937* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1969).

⁵⁴² Daisaku Ikeda, Katsuji Saito, Masaki Morinaka, *The World of Nichiren Daishonin's Writings I* (Kuala Lumpur: Soka Gakkai Malaysia, 2005), 72-73.

This is to say, establishing the true teaching is simply a transformation in the heart, not establishing a sect⁵⁴³ or doctrine in a country, territory or land. The essence of the true teaching, Ikeda continues, lies in the practice of revering others:

The Daishonin [...] states that the essence of Buddhism lies in the practice of revering others. This is extremely significant.⁵⁴⁴

The Lotus Sutra teaches that all people can manifest the Buddha nature, and that it is the duty of those who uphold the Sutra to take action to enable others to attain Buddhahood as well. This is the wisdom and way of life of the Buddha.⁵⁴⁵

'Establishing the correct teaching' means, therefore, that the spirit of peace as expounded in the Lotus Sutra and the teaching that all people are Buddhas is allowed to unfold in society; it means that the principles of 'human dignity and the sanctity of life' (Ikeda) support and move society. As the correct teaching goes back to the Lotus Sutra and the Middle Way, we are also reminded of the notion of the dependent co-arising of reality, which in the world of politics implies that there is an inextricable relationship between the inner world of the mind and soul and the outer physical world. Nichiren explains that, like a body and its shadow, there is nowhere for an individual or a nation to hide from problems and suffering; no individual or nation can isolate themselves. In order to resolve conflict and suffering, a correct understanding of the dharma and an inner transfiguration is required. The 'reasons' are by now hopefully clear. The relationally established nature (empty of individual isolated existence) of our 'selves' means that the habit of thinking in terms of, 'I', me and my, is illusionary but very powerful. The 'I' exists only as the subjective experience of the composite components or conditions of form, perception, conception, volition and consciousness.

All of these components are in turn also relationally established (wholes within wholes); the 'truth' is the dynamic relational process of co-arising or dependent becoming. At this level we can see that our "I"s as 'wholes' are established through the effect of this deeper unified relational process of reality. Change in our-'selves' is changing the

⁵⁴³ Nichiren intriguingly stated "I, Nichiren am not the founder of any school, nor am I the latter-day follower of any other school, I am a priest without precepts, neither keeping the precepts nor breaking them." "The Blessings of the Lotus Sutra" in *The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin* (Tokyo: Soka Gakkai, 1999), 669. The Goshō Translation Committee, editor-translator.

⁵⁴⁴ Daisaku Ikeda, Katsuji Saito, Masaki Morinaka, *The World of Nichiren Daishonin's Writings I* (Kuala Lumpur: Soka Gakkai Malaysia, 2005), 6.

⁵⁴⁵ Daisaku Ikeda, Katsuji Saito, Masaki Morinaka, *The World of Nichiren Daishonin's Writings I* (Kuala Lumpur: Soka Gakkai Malaysia, 2005), 74.

'world'. If we establish the truth in the heart- i.e. act based upon relational reality towards 'others', this enlightened action and subjective experience of oneness contributes to purifying the 'conditions' that are in every moment the base for re-creating the world. Toynbee's letter to Columba explaining his view of the role of the individual in purifying the institutions (through the individuals suffering) can be understood to be in perfect accord with this Buddhist view of relational dependent co-arising. Toynbee saw institutions are fictional abstractions or the name for 'fields of actions' (the process) and these must always give precedence, or defer to the individuals who are the location of any transfiguration. People must come before Institutions, whether Churches or States. In Toynbee's view institutions were simply 'public utilities', a view he made clear in a dialogue with Nichiren's modern interpreter, Ikeda.⁵⁴⁶

6.6. Daisaku Ikeda

Daisaku Ikeda (1928 -) is the third president of the Soka Gakkai lay Buddhist organization and the founding president of the Soka Gakkai International (SGI), by now one of the world's largest lay Buddhist organizations. It was founded in 1930, by two educators; Tsunesaburo Makiguchi and his disciple Josei Toda.⁵⁴⁷ Makiguchi's original intent was to reform the educational system in Japan. His encounter with Nichiren's teaching however led him to see that his 'educational crisis' was part of a deeper 'epistemic crisis' facing his own country of Japan that was soon invading China in a militarist expansion phase. They converted to Nichiren's teachings and in the same founding spirit, Makiguchi and Toda resisted their government, perverse readings of Nichiren and indeed the 'Nichiren priesthood' whose non-resistance to power and authority had resulted in them supporting the military government acquiescing to orders to enshrine Shinto talismans. Makiguchi and Toda were jailed for sedition- refusing to promote State Shinto and the Emperor. Makiguchi aged 70 died in prison in 1944. Toda his disciple was released in 1945 chronically ill, but before he died in 1958, he

⁵⁴⁶ "I regard the state of which I am a citizen as a public utility [...] I do not feel that I or my fellow citizens have a religious duty to sacrifice our lives in war on behalf of our own state, and, a fortiori, I do not feel that we have an obligation or a right to kill and maim citizens of other states [...] my own paramount loyalty is to mankind [...] I would like to see states deconsecrated and non-human nature reconsecrated." Toynbee Ikeda, "Choose Life," 172-3.

⁵⁴⁷ The original name was Soka Kyoiku Gakkai. Soka =Value creation- Kyoiku= Education, Gakkai= Society: Value Creation Education Society. The 'Education' was later dropped from the title as it focussed solely on promoting Nichiren's 'epistemic' teachings. Makiguchi's writings include *The Geography of Human Life* and *The System of Value Creating Pedagogy*. Toda wrote *A Deductive Guide to Arithmetic*, and *The Human Revolution*, and a commentary on the *Lotus Sutra*.

rebuilt the organisation together with Daisaku Ikeda as his disciple; Ikeda later took Nichiren's teachings to a world audience.

As a Buddhist thinker, Ikeda is one of the key interpreters of Nichiren and accordingly gives the Lotus Sutra a central place in his thinking. In Ikeda's reading, the eternity of life, the interdependence of all life and the sanctity of all life are the central ideas of the Lotus Sutra. The notion of the fundamental equality of all people is entailed in these principles. As we noted in our discussion of Nichiren's understanding of the Sutra, the condition of Buddhahood is the universally inherent potential of all people; everyone can bring forth enlightenment from their lives. In other words, Buddhahood is not a 'final static state' but "the dynamic unfolding of the qualities of wisdom, compassion and courage amid the realities of the lives of women and men".

For Ikeda and his followers, the Lotus Sutra is the proclamation of this "infinite potential and dignity inherent in the life of each human being."⁵⁴⁸ The Middle Way leaves no room for dichotomies and binary oppositions. This non-binary view informs Ikeda's powerfully liberating view on Karma. Instead of looking backwards and regarding it simply as *an effect* and thereby regarding it as a negative burden that reinforces a sense of 'fate' he encourages seeing it as an opportunity to *make the cause*. He regards it as the very raw material with which to create one's destiny. In other words transform 'karma' into mission' using the present actuality and reality of one's 'problems' as the trigger to create a life of positive value.⁵⁴⁹ This attitude of squarely facing the here and now as the true stage of changing the world is incredibly liberating in a mass society era; where the individual might feel powerless, insignificant or worse, relinquish responsibility to others who were dealt a better 'fate', have a bigger stage, or more 'power'.

In modern terms, Ikeda's middle way approach is characterized by three key terms: Buddhist humanism, human revolution⁵⁵⁰, and 'dialogue'. Ikeda's perspective is a 'humanist'⁵⁵¹ perspective in that it assumes that human beings themselves are capable

⁵⁴⁸ <http://daisakuikeda.org/main/philos/buddhist/buddh-02.html>, (accessed April 3, 2009).

⁵⁴⁹ "When based upon the supreme state of Buddhahood one can do far more than endure suffering. Human suffering is twofold in nature. It can become either a cause of misery or a source of nourishment in one's growth as a human being. Which effect suffering produces depends on the attitude one takes towards it. By grappling with suffering, trying to use it positively for our development, we can find the meaning of life, in relieving the suffering of others...we are manifesting the state of Bodhisattva." Daisaku Ikeda, *Dialogue on Life Volume 2* (Tokyo: NSIC 1973), 34-5.

⁵⁵⁰ A concept taught by his teacher Josei Toda.

⁵⁵¹ The 'Buddhist' aspect of this 'humanism' is simply that prayer and action elevate one's life condition (– i.e., develop the inner Buddha state) as the basis for one's humanistic action in the world. It is not an intellectual humanism but a struggle to reform oneself as the core element and basis for social engagement.

of achieving the ultimate wisdom about their condition – a view that implies that the individual is indeed the crucial force of change within a reality characterized by dependent co-arising. Every change within one individual affects everything else. The interdependence and interrelatedness of all life implies, as we have seen, that this way of thinking and acting does not evoke polarizations among people or between human being and the environment. Peace and happiness require the harmonization of relationships, which are known to be interdependent.

The notion of the ‘human revolution’ derives from these co-arising ideas. The dynamic link between inner change and concrete action is at the heart of the ‘human revolution’:

Each [revolution] has its own significance and, often, necessity. But no matter what one changes, the world will never get any better as long as people themselves--the guiding force and impetus behind all endeavours--remain selfish and lacking in compassion. In that respect, human revolution is the most fundamental of all revolutions and, at the same time, the most necessary.⁵⁵²

The human revolution as a basis for peace⁵⁵³ is the change at the level of individual human beings that begins once these individuals identify and challenge those factors which prevent them from expressing their positive potential and humanity. This is a process that can take place in our daily lives as we discover factors as common as fear, laziness, arrogance and pride, which all prevent us from fully engaging with reality. For Ikeda, ‘dialogue’ is more than just talk; ‘dialogue’ has moral value in that it shows dependent co-arising at work. If, as Ikeda suggests, ‘good’ is what allows people to share their mutual respect and humanity, then ‘evil’ is that which divides and keeps them apart. ‘Dialogue’, therefore, is a ‘spiritual struggle’ against divisiveness and evil.⁵⁵⁴ As is typical of a ‘middle way thinker’, Ikeda’s views are not mere theories; they are practices. Accordingly, he has embodied the very idea of dialogue. He has conducted some 1,600 dialogues with thinkers and decision-makers across the globe; about 50 of these have been published. His dialogue with Toynbee, of course, is the one that interests us the most.

⁵⁵² <http://daisakuikeda.org/main/philos/buddhist/buddh-06.html>, (accessed April 3, 2009).

⁵⁵³ “Genuine peace is achieved essentially through individual inner transformation not through a change in government. This is a vision of peace radically different from our accustomed thinking. It is a peace forged by faith in humanity, not faith in force, it is a peace created by the awakened power of the powerless, not by the sanction and authority of the government.” Shin Yatomi, *Buddhism in a New Light*, (Santa Monica: World Tribune Press, 2006), 98.

⁵⁵⁴ <http://daisakuikeda.org/main/philos/buddhist/buddh-04.html>, (accessed April 3, 2009).

7. Toynbee's encounters with Buddhism

During the course of his work on the *Study*, Toynbee encountered Buddhism in different stages, these impacted on him according to the three different lenses he employed – empirical-analytical, psychological-dramatic, and ethical-spiritual. The following table⁵⁵⁵ lays out the central features of the Buddhist thinkers we have been exploring, it reveals the development of ideas and also illustrates the possible correspondences between Toynbee's lenses and the Buddhist counterparts we have been discussing.

This is a heuristic only for juxtaposing all thinkers. Read horizontally we find each thinker's epistemologies. Read vertically we are not suggesting exact correspondences under the 'periods' but note the thinker's views on what appears to be the same epistemic approaches. It is far more complex than any single table can capture, it is not meant as a definitive statement but shows how these people were approaching life's phenomena (for Toynbee this was through history). We should note that until Toynbee met Ikeda he understood emptiness as 'annihilationism' as we will discuss shortly.

Toynbee's multi-epistemic response to the analysis of History both parallels and includes Buddhism; it embraces it especially at the ethical-spiritual level. His analysis of Buddhism is all the more remarkable considering that the literature he used was very limited. Toynbee acknowledges three works, which were standard references at the time. First, there is Edward J. Thomas's *The History of Buddhist Thought* (1933). Thomas was a librarian who wrote several books on Buddhism. Better known is Charles Eliot, an Oxford graduate and expert in Sanskrit studies, who served as Ambassador to Japan from 1919 to 1925. His books include *Hinduism and Buddhism* (1921) and *Japanese Buddhism* (1935). The third author quoted by Toynbee was Fyodor Stcherbatsky, in his time possibly the 'foremost western authority on Buddhism'⁵⁵⁶ and author of *The Buddhist Meaning of Nirvana* (1927). Of these three authors Stcherbatsky stands out as a key figure in arguing for the 'legitimacy' of Buddhism as a philosophical system of equal import to the Western canon. As befitting Toynbee's own approach we will document his engagement using his 'lenses'.

⁵⁵⁵ As the table is easier to read on a full page we have presented it overleaf as one page.

⁵⁵⁶ Encyclopaedia Britannica 2004.

Gautama's periods (Excluding 1 st)	Tripitaka Period	Vaipulya Period	Wisdom Period	Lotus/Nirvana Period
Gautama's Four Noble Truths	Existence of Suffering	Nature of Suffering	Extinction of Suffering	The Path out of Suffering
Nagarjuna's MMK Four Line Verse 18:24 read from wisdom period	1) "All things which arise through conditioned co- arising"	2) "I call Emptiness"	3) "Again it is a Conventional designation" 4) "Again it is the Middle Way"	Nagarjuna wrote commentaries advocating the Lotus Perspective on Myo. (emptiness)
Nagarjuna's "Two Truths" + middle way read from the Wisdom view	1) Conventional Truth	2) Truth of Emptiness	3) Emptiness now Re-engaged with Conventional 4) Middle Way Left ambiguous "transcendent"	
Nagarjuna's Truths as Yogacara 3 natures.	Other Dependent experienced as "Imagined Nature"	Other Dependent Nature	Other Dependent experienced as "Absolute or Consummated"	
Yogacara 8 consciousnesses	<u>5 senses</u> 1-taste, 2-smell, 3-touch, 4-sight, 5-hearing.	6-Conscious Mind 7-Sub-conscious Mind (mano)	8-Unconscious Mind- Karma (alaya)	Tathagatagarbha "Buddha nature" literature. 9 th Consciousness Buddha nature (amala)
Lotus period reading	Transmigration	(2 vehicles)	(3 rd vehicle)	(ONE Vehicle)
Chi-I's Ten Worlds	1-Hell, 2- Hunger, 3-Animality, 4-Anger, 5-Tranquillity 6-Rapture	7-Learning 8-Realization	9-Bodhisattva (Perceives dualism until final stage of 52 stages!)	10-Buddhahood (Collapse of Dualism)
Nichiren	Ho-Renge Law of the Lotus Lotus represents simultaneous cause/effect	Myo Wonderful From Wisdom view Myo=Emptiness. From Lotus view, Myo=to open, revive,	Kyo Teaching Lotus encompasses all teachings	Unified teaching Nam-Myoho Renge-Kyo. --- Action
Toynbee's lenses A reading through his grasp of Buddhist Epistemology. In Volume X: p1-2. Spirit/Life/Space-time = Six Dimensions	Empiricism- Science – Binary limit	Mythopoetic- Plato Psychological-Jung Embraces Contradiction "Withdrawal" Philosophy- Head Stoic Detachment Hinayana "Annihilation" Nirvana as Extinction- or Non- existence	Ethical-Karma Heart "Return"- Buddha "returns" Heart rules Head Christ and the Bodhisattvas- return Loving Action Between People	Spiritual God as Cosmic Principle = Love Neo-Buddha as Cosmic Principle = Compassion
	Space-Time (4)	Life (5)	Life (5)	Spirit (6)

7.1. The empirical-analytical study of Buddhism

Early in Volume I of the *Study*, Toynbee is looking for examples of his historical units, the civilizations. We find the first references to Buddhism in a discussion of 'fossilized' fragments of the Indic Civilization: "Lamaistic Mahayana Buddhists of Tibet and Mongolia and the Hinayanian Buddhists of Ceylon."⁵⁵⁷ Whilst looking for a 'universal state' preceding the Hellenic influence in India he finds the,

Empire of the Mauryas, which was established by Chandragupta in 323-322 B.C., [...] made illustrious by the reign of Asoka in the 3rd century B.C., and [...] extinguished by the usurper Pushyamitra in 185 B.C., five years after the Hellenic intrusion upon India had been started by Demetrius's invasion.⁵⁵⁸

He notes that the later Mahayana tradition, which had come under Hellenic influence, failed to reinvigorate its original Indic society – as Hinduism was replacing Buddhism in India as a universal church of the Gupta state – but found its destiny further east in the Sinic world:⁵⁵⁹ "At the present day, the Mahayana is a mighty power in China and Korea and Japan while it is extinct in both India and Central Asia".⁵⁶⁰

Moving eastwards he enters into the Sinic society or civilization, where a Mahayana influenced by Hellenism will become the universal church of the empire established by Ts'in She Hwang in 221 B.C.,

We can now observe that the Mahayana – the church through which this Sinic society came to be 'apparented' to the Far Eastern society of today – resembles the Christian Church, and differs from Islam and Hinduism, inasmuch as the germ of life in which it originated was not indigenous to the society in which it played its part, but was derived from elsewhere [...]. The Mahayana appears to have been begotten in the Indic territories which were subject successively to the Greek Kings of Bactria [...] the Mahayana entered the Sinic World and was there adapted by the internal proletariat of the Sinic Society to its own needs.⁵⁶¹

⁵⁵⁷ Toynbee, "*Study*," I: 35.

⁵⁵⁸ Toynbee, "*Study*," I 86. Asoka was a King who originally murdered and conquered, but then converted to Buddhism, renounced war and established a multifaith peaceful society.

⁵⁵⁹ Toynbee, "*Study*," I: 91.

⁵⁶⁰ Toynbee, "*Study*," II: 373.

⁵⁶¹ Toynbee, "*Study*," I: 89-90.

Toynbee refers to the influence on art that this Hellenized Mahayana has had on the Sinic world, to “become the germ of the Far Eastern art which has superseded the pre-Helleno-Buddhist style of the ancient Sinic society.”⁵⁶² Further on he suggests that the creative adoption and adaptation by Mahayana of the ‘formulaic Hellenic art’ supports Bergson’s argument that, “formulae that are almost void of meaning have a way of evoking here and there, like veritable magic phrases, the spirit that can fulfil them.”⁵⁶³

In revisiting what he terms fossilized societies, he notes that Lamaistic or Tantric Mahayana is the “relic of a vain attempt to turn the Mahayana back from the historic path along which this originally Indic religion, now imbued with Hellenic influences, found its destiny in the Sinic World.”⁵⁶⁴ According to Toynbee, Tantric Buddhism was a forerunner to Hinduism, which established itself in the Indic society out of which Buddhism originally appeared. Both traditions were informed by the Vedas, but the Mahayana eventually became Hellenized and went east; Hinduism was also Hellenized – as was evident from its inclusion of the worshipping of iconic forms, something not found in the Vedas – but Hinduism was also influenced by Buddhism, especially by Buddhist monasticism and its philosophy. Toynbee finds it ironic that Hinduism established itself in the Indic society after borrowing from Buddhism, which was in itself the initial reaction to, and replacement of, the original Indic Vedas.

In volume two of the *Study* Toynbee explores the notion of the ‘stimulus of new ground’ and observes that the Mahayana “captures the Syriacized and Hellenized Indic province of the Panjab”, before heading off for China. Similarly, the Hinayana was successful in the Indic annex of Ceylon, confirming, “it is on the new ground of these alien worlds that the highest expression of the Indic and Syriac religious genius eventually bear their fruit.”⁵⁶⁵ The same volume also has a long footnote, in which Toynbee reiterates his view that Hinayana and Lamaistic Mahayana as fossils of Indic religion survived in ‘fastnesses’ in Ceylon, Burma, Siam and in the Tibetan Plateau; again he notes that the Hellenized Mahayana spread across into China.⁵⁶⁶ The Mongols even drew on Lamanistic and Tantric Mahayana as well as Christian Nestorianism.⁵⁶⁷

⁵⁶² Toynbee, “*Study*,” 3:131.

⁵⁶³ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 3: 246. Citing Bergson’s ‘*Deux Sources*’.

⁵⁶⁴ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 1: 91.

⁵⁶⁵ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 2:5.

⁵⁶⁶ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 2:405.

⁵⁶⁷ Toynbee, “*Study*,” 2:452.

Moving further east, as part of the history of the disintegration phase of the Far Eastern Society in Japan, Toynbee notes the 'religions of the Japanese internal proletariat', Pure Land (Jodo); True Sect of Jodo (Jodo Shinshu); Hokke (Lotus Sect); and Zen (Ch'an). All these having been alien inspired excepting the indigenous Nichiren version of the Lotus school.⁵⁶⁸ The times of troubles for this society was confirmed for Toynbee by the Mahayana theologian Genshin who declared "the fateful days had arrived; and Nichiren [...] believed himself living in the Age of Mappo ('the Destruction of the Law')." ⁵⁶⁹ Indeed Toynbee noted this awareness resulted in a strong desire for "spiritual food. "Many minds are turning to religion" is the opening phrase of a tract which Nichiren published in A.D. 1260." ⁵⁷⁰ The important principle he thought he had found in the interaction of civilizations was that the higher religion of Mahayana Buddhism emerged through the Hellenic influence on the original 'primitive' Buddhism. He described it as 'primitive', because it appeared to advocate escape from this world into 'nirvana'; whereas the Mahayana advocates 'returning' to assist those who are suffering.

7.2. The psychological-dramatic lens

After these initial empirical observations, we find the first doctrinal and philosophical engagement with Buddhism in Volume III of the *Study*, where Toynbee discusses examples of what he calls the 'withdrawal and return' of creative individuals. As we noted in our earlier chapter on the *Study*, Toynbee argued that the creative genius of these individuals impacts deeply on civilizations in their growth time. Having explored Plato's Simile of the Cave, Toynbee looks at the life of Gautama Buddha. This biographical summary on the Buddha is illuminating as it leads Toynbee beyond the 'empirical' historical data into a deeper appreciation of the Buddhist approach to reality:

Gautama was born into the Indic World in its 'Time of Troubles'. In the devastating internecine warfare between contending states, he lived to see his native city-state Kapilavastu sacked, and his Sakyan kinsmen massacred. [...] Siddhartha Gautama was born a Sakya aristocrat at a moment when the older Indic social order, in which this aristocracy had its recognized place, was being challenged by new social forces. [...] It was at the age of twenty-nine that he

⁵⁶⁸ "All four are variations on the theme of the Mahayana; three of the four (i.e. all but Nichiren's creed) had been conceived in the main body of the Far Eastern World, on the continent." Toynbee, "*Study*," 5:97.

⁵⁶⁹ Toynbee, "*Study*," 5:96-97.

⁵⁷⁰ Toynbee, "*Study*," 5:97. Referring to the Nichiren Treatise we have examined above.

abandoned his wife and son and wealth and rank and inheritance [...] in order to seek enlightenment through ascetic practice. [...] And then after he had attained the light for himself, he spent the rest of his life in imparting it to his fellow human beings. [...] In order to impart it effectively, he allowed a company of disciples to gather around him and thus became the centre and head of a fraternity. [...] The return of the ascetic Gautama to Society as the enlightened Tathagata is remarkable when we consider what the mental content of the Buddha's enlightenment was. In his philosophy, the highest aim and happiest state of the human soul was something still more remote from action than the contemplative [goal] which was the Hellenic ideal of Pythagoras and Plato and Plotinus. It was nothing short of spiritual self-annihilation. And while Plato paid lip service to the duty of return, the Buddha proclaimed the philosopher's right to escape into the freedom of Nirvana if only he could win his own way thither. Nevertheless the Buddha did return to the World more sincerely, and therefore more effectively, than Plato. The foundation of the Sangha was a greater social achievement than the foundation of the Academy; and in the record of the Buddha's relations with princes there is none of the pendency, which appears in Plato's relations with Dionysius. The subsequent histories of Buddhism and Platonism point and accentuate this contrast. We have seen already that Plato's injunction to return was repudiated, both in doctrine and in practice, by the first of the Neo-Platonists.⁵⁷¹

We will analyse the philosophical issues in more detail shortly but we note here in passing that Toynbee bases his understanding of Emptiness on the Hinayana (Tripitaka) period with Nirvana as a form of 'annihilation'. On the basis of this understanding of Buddhism, it is indeed surprising that the Buddha should return to the world in order to teach and to act. By his comments above, Toynbee clearly prefers the compassionate Sangha to the intellectual project of Plato's Academy.

For Toynbee, the Buddha stood at the brink of nirvana, but his return to the world from the abyss was unexpected. This he felt reflected the Buddha's spiritual nature (compassion for others) winning over his intellect. As we can now understand from the previous chapter, while his assessment of the Buddha's re-engagement with the world is accurate, the overall picture he presents is incorrect. Buddha taught the annihilation of things in the Tripitaka-Vaipulya period in the context of 'emptiness'. But this was

⁵⁷¹ Toynbee, "Study," 3: 270-272.

only a pedagogical stage that was later transformed by the Wisdom period teaching, whereby one re-engages with reality, and then the Lotus period, which emphasized the role of action. In these latter teachings, what is being annihilated is egocentricity, i.e. a particular, deficient approach to reality and life, not life itself. This misunderstanding was partly due to the limitations of the available sources at the time on emptiness/nirvana. Many modern scholars have not understood Nagarjuna's explanation of the Emptiness principle and we should not be surprised to see Toynbee struggling with the same problem through a limited literature. However, what is intriguing is that he intuitively realized the deeper truth of spirit or heart 'overcoming' intellect and thereby ended up with a very appropriate account of the Buddha's behaviour. He was right to criticize the intellectual escape; he did not realize the Buddha had done so too.

Drawing on the early literature, Toynbee considers Mahayana to be a 'Neo-Buddhism' that emerged from the 'Hellenic' influence on the original Indic society:

On the other hand the actual return of the Buddha – which was in logical contradiction with his doctrine, besides being against his personal inclination – became the central feature of the Neo-Buddhism which took shape in the Mahayana or Great Vehicle.⁵⁷²

Toynbee explores the relationship between Theravada, which he calls 'primitive Buddhism', and Mahayana, called 'transfigured Buddhism', by looking at the notion of 'detachment'. First quoting Candrakirti, a 7th Century Buddhist commentator, and then Stcherbatsky he arrives at the following picture of the Hinayana (Tripitaka) world view:

With his body still alive
The saint enjoys some feeling
But in Nirvana consciousness is gone
Just as a light when totally extinct.

[...] The complete stoppage of the process of phenomenal life corresponds to a Buddha [...] and the last moment in the life of a Bodhisattva before merging into

⁵⁷² Toynbee, "Study," 3:271-72.

the Absolute is also the last moment of consciousness in his continuity of many lives.⁵⁷³

Many western intellectuals, especially Schopenhauer, criticized this apparent life-negating aspect of 'early' Buddhism. Toynbee too, as we noticed, is somewhat disturbed by the moral implications of the doctrine as he understands it:

This absolute detachment has perhaps never been attained [...] at least [...] as a permanent state [...] outside [...] Gautama. As an intellectual achievement it is imposing; as a moral achievement it is overwhelming; but it has a disconcerting moral corollary; for perfect Detachment casts out pity, and therefore also Love. [...] The intellectual reasonableness of this appalling moral conclusion is most easily demonstrable in the case of the Gods for whom the human philosophy of Detachment can hardly find room except in the contemptible role of spoilt children of the Universe.⁵⁷⁴

Toynbee's preferences are clear. He found the individual's concern for enlightenment selfish and self-centred if it was not at all directed towards the enlightenment of others. This is the point where the notion of 'transfiguration' becomes important as a counterpoint. "Transfiguration, which is a spiritualization of futurism, is the action of the soul which produces the "higher religions"." ⁵⁷⁵ As explained in a previous chapter, transfiguration was the active inner reform of the soul rather than a reform (through revolution or nostalgia) of the external body social. In distinguishing between detachment and transfiguration Toynbee concludes,

In pressing its way to a conclusion which is logically inevitable and at the same time morally intolerable, the philosophy of Detachment ultimately defeats itself [...] for in consulting only the head and ignoring the heart it is arbitrarily putting asunder what God has joined together. This philosophy falls short of the truth by refusing to take account of the soul's duality in unity; and therefore the philosophy of Detachment has to be eclipsed by the mystery of Transfiguration. The Hinayana makes way for the Mahayana, Stoicism for Christianity, the arhat for the Bodhisattva, the sage for the saint.⁵⁷⁶

⁵⁷³ Toynbee, "Study," 6:142-43, footnotes 4 and 2.

⁵⁷⁴ Toynbee, "Study," 6: 143-44.

⁵⁷⁵ Toynbee, "Abridged Study" V1-6: 585.

⁵⁷⁶ Toynbee, "Study," 6:148.

Transfiguration is a spiritual notion, implying the turning around of the soul from a state that overcame suffering through 'closure' to a state where the suffering of self and others requires action – where, in other words, detachment is a mere preparation for a 'return' to the world. Toynbee's reference to the soul's 'duality in unity' reminds us of the Buddhist logic of 'two-but-not-two'. The position of the Hinayana Nirvana advocates is compared to the Hellenic Stoic philosophers. He quotes Epictetus:

You see that Caesar appears to provide us with a great peace, because there are no longer any wars or battles or any serious crimes of brigandage or piracy, so that one can travel at any season and can sail from the Levant to the Ponent. But tell me now: can Caesar also bring peace from fever and from shipwreck, or from conflagration or earthquake or thunderbolt? Yes, and from Love? Impossible. And from grief? Impossible. And from envy? A sheer impossibility in every one of these predicaments. But, unlike Caesar, the doctrine (λογος) of these philosophers does promise to bring us peace from these troubles too [...]. This is a peace not proclaimed by Caesar (how could Caesar proclaim it for us?) but by God through the voice of Philosophy. [...] For me there exists no such thing as a brigand or an earthquake [...] there is nothing anywhere but peace, nothing but imperturbability."⁵⁷⁷

Toynbee comments that "this Hellenic simile veils a metaphysical belief which is embraced in its elemental nakedness by a hardier Indic school of thought."⁵⁷⁸ It is an example of the Arhat argument for intellectual detachment.

7.3. The ethical-spiritual lens

Toynbee's ethical analysis of the Buddhist approach to reality emphasizes the difference between the Bodhisattva understanding of the compassionate desire for enlightenment for others and the Arhat learning and realisation as the desire for self-enlightenment. Love and compassion are the very essences of Christianity and the Bodhisattva:

⁵⁷⁷ Toynbee, "Study," 6:142. Citing Epictetus: Dissertationes: Book III, Chapter 13, 11-13.

⁵⁷⁸ Toynbee, "Study," 6:142.

Love has also become the axle-tree of the vehicle of the Mahayana; and its conquest of Buddhism is more surprising than its outburst in Christianity; for the Christian religion of Love is in conscious and deliberate revolt against the Stoic philosophy of Detachment.⁵⁷⁹

It seemed counterintuitive that the Mahayana could insert compassion into ideas that emphasized Nirvana or annihilation:

Whereas the Mahayana religion of love purports to be fulfilling the Hinayana law and not destroying it [...] in Hinayanian eyes, the Mahayanian Bodhisattva is a Hinayanian arhat who, at the moment when his age-long efforts to attain Detachment have brought him at last to the brink of Nirvana refrains from immediately entering into his rest through taking the final step.⁵⁸⁰

Toynbee is not entirely correct in his analysis of the Bodhisattva attitude. There is, in fact, no refraining from the chance to fulfil self-interests; rather, the Bodhisattva's own desire as a desire for ego-self has already been transformed into a desire or vow to work for others. However, apart from this minor but significant difference, Toynbee places this successful transformation of desire at the very heart of his 'third lens':

One of the new and distinguishing features of the Mahayana is a code of altruistic ethics which teaches that everyone must do good in the interest of the whole World and make over to others any merit he may acquire by his virtues. The aim of the religious life is to become a Bodhisattva, not to become an Arhat.⁵⁸¹

According to Toynbee, "[t]he aim of Transfiguration is to give light to them that sit in darkness [...] the goal of transfiguration is thus the Kingdom of God."⁵⁸² Furthermore, "the road that leads to the goal of the movement of Transfiguration makes its crucial reversal of direction from 'withdrawal' towards 'return'."⁵⁸³ Toynbee marvelled at the equivalence of the paths in Christianity and Buddhism:

⁵⁷⁹ Toynbee, "Study," 6:164, footnote 3.

⁵⁸⁰ Toynbee, "Study," 6:164, footnote 3.

⁵⁸¹ Toynbee, "Study," 6:164, footnote 3

⁵⁸² Toynbee, "Study," 6:171.

⁵⁸³ Toynbee, "Study," 6:171-2.

A follower of Christ will agree with the follower of the Mahayana that the Bodhisattva [...] is overcoming the Self in a far more profounder sense than the arhat who exercises his duly earned right to consummate his own self-annihilation [...]. The labour of Love to which the Bodhisattva dedicates himself is not unworthy to be compared with the self-sacrifice of Christ.⁵⁸⁴

Though we should note that as he viewed the Bodhisattva as still on the brink of escape into nirvana (as the deferred goal) he saw something more relevant in transfiguration and palingenesia (as the Civitas Dei). This illustrates his 'wisdom period' type understanding of the goal in Buddhist practice. Because the Bodhisattva ends up in the same place as the transfigured state, (by deferring from nirvana) he equates the Christ and the Bodhisattva. Toynbee considers the possibility of Buddhist influences on Christianity, by comparing key passages in the relevant scriptures. There are obvious similarities not only in the,

[...] song of the Heavenly Host (Luke 2:8-14) but also the song of the seer Simeon, which comes in the same chapter of Luke (2:25-35) has a counterpart in one of the Pali scriptures of the Hinayana Buddhist school of philosophy (Suttanipata III, ii, 679-700) in the vision and the song of the seer Asita [...]. The similarity between the respective passages of the Suttanipata and the Gospel according to Saint Luke [...] are cumulatively too close to be dismissed as fortuitous.⁵⁸⁵

Similarly, Toynbee sees parallels between the two miracles of the 'walking on water' and the 'feeding of the multitudes', which also occur in the Mahayanian Buddhist scriptures – the *Jataka* and the still younger *Vimalakirtinirdesasutra*.⁵⁸⁶

Toynbee's understanding of the role of compassion and love as central principles is very close to Ikeda's view of compassion as an essential feature of the cosmos, as an active, dynamic truth:

It would seem that the impulse to consummate a movement of withdrawal by a counter movement of return must be deeply grounded in the nature of the human soul, *and perhaps in the nature of the Universe itself*, if it has asserted

⁵⁸⁴ Toynbee, "Study," 6:164, footnote 3.

⁵⁸⁵ Toynbee, "Study," 6:448-49.

⁵⁸⁶ See Matt 14:22-33; Mark 6:45-51; John 6:15-21 and Matt 14:15-21; Mark 6:35-44; Luke 9:12-17; John 6:5-13, and Matt 15:32-8; Mark 8:1-9. Toynbee, "Study," 6: 452-53.

itself so insistently in Buddhist practice, in despite of Buddhist teaching and Buddhist belief.⁵⁸⁷

In his comparative reflections, however, Toynbee still finds something unique in Christianity:

While Islam, Hinduism, and the Mahayana shared with Christianity the vision of God as Man's lord, and the Mahayana shared with her the vision of Him as man's saviour Christianity was unique (so the Christian might contend) in revealing God to Man as Man's father and brother.⁵⁸⁸

We may add to this analysis that Buddhism, as defined by the Lotus teaching, actually equates 'God' with the 'law' and considers the 'law' as the potential saviour, but the individual has to actualise it, following the Buddha's example. The law is also the true or universal self of the human being, which (following Nichiren) means that the true Buddha is the common mortal, who when actualising the law actualizes the Buddha in this world. Toynbee could have explored the parallels with Christianity a little further, as the issue of 'actualization' (and of realising the Kingdom of God on earth) is at least implicit e.g. in Matt 25:31-40, where Jesus explains that those will inherit 'the kingdom' who have looked after 'the least of these my brethren' – it is by caring for the 'least' of the brethren, that one can care for and emulate Jesus. And when this happens, the 'kingdom' is instantiated here on earth.

As we noted above, when faced with the prospect of breakdown and disintegration, a society can look for inspiration in three different directions. People can look backwards and copy past institutions in a quest for a nostalgic past or Archaism (City of Cecrops); they can also look forwards and yearn for an idealist future (City of the Sun), but only the inner transfiguration (Civitas Dei) reflects a true change. As we have seen, societies can only re-invent themselves through creative individuals who return from detachment through transfiguration. For this to be possible, Toynbee has to develop an argument against determinism. We summarised Toynbee's argument already in 2.3.4. but it is worthwhile stressing that he refers to the Buddha himself as an example who overcame the 'dominating and paralyzing idea' by escaping from the Wheel of Existence into Nirvana – 'one of the surest marks of his greatness'.⁵⁸⁹ Toynbee

⁵⁸⁷ Toynbee, "Study," 3: 270-272. Our emphasis.

⁵⁸⁸ Toynbee, "Study," 7:427.

⁵⁸⁹ Toynbee, "Study," 4:28, footnote 3.

concludes that 'we are not condemned to believe in the cyclic version of predestinarianism as the supreme law of our human history:'

This is a message of encouragement for us children of the Western Civilization [...] manifestly the door of death is not closed.⁵⁹⁰

7.4. The personal

We have looked at how Toynbee 'observed' and understood Buddhism through his *Study*, and we have emphasized that this encounter with Buddhism took place at several levels from the empirical to the ethical. We will now look at how these encounters affected Toynbee personally – how, in other words, he 'applied' these ideas in his own life. We will discuss two important examples of such 'applications': one private, one public. The Mahayana Bodhisattva and the ethical accounting of Karma are the two motifs that he had clearly internalised by 1938. We are not suggesting, of course, that Toynbee 'was' a Buddhist. He remained uncommitted to any one 'religion' or philosophical system. At some point he stated that Hinduism best represented his non-exclusive position because it excluded none and embraced many.⁵⁹¹ Still, it is clear that among those positions he embraced was the Mahayana, and we will indeed argue that he understood himself and the *Study* within the Bodhisattva framework.

In August of 1938, Toynbee received a letter from his friend Father Columba Cary-Elwes, a Catholic priest at Ampleforth Monastery in the UK. Cary-Elwes was in awe of Toynbee and was hopeful Toynbee would commit to the Catholic Church anticipating Toynbee as a modern day Augustine. Simultaneously however, he was frustrated by Toynbee's reluctance to join the Catholic Church. In a correspondence of August he asks Toynbee to,

Write me a letter telling me the salient intellectual difficulties as you see them; it would be most instructive for me and perhaps not a bad thing for you. [...] I am

⁵⁹⁰ Toynbee, "*Study*," 4:38, citing Lucretious.

⁵⁹¹ Ved Mehta *Fly and the Fly Bottle: Encounters with British Intellectuals* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1962), 145. Toynbee states, "Since I do not believe in a personal God...I don't have a vested interest in any one religion...temperamentally I am a Hindu. As a Hindu I don't have any difficulty believing in many Gods simultaneously...to Hindus...all roads lead to heaven."

extremely anxious to understand you and your 'modern pagan' outlook in order to help, if not you, then others.⁵⁹²

Toynbee obliges and explains his philosophical/religious position in a three-page statement to Columba. It contains a detailed explication that enables us to understand the subtleties and reasoning behind his intellectual and spiritual sympathies. Toynbee begins by distinguishing "different degrees of pagan remoteness from the position of Catholic Christianity":

- (a) A disbelief in the existence of any transcendental reality, life or personality;
- (b) A belief in the existence of some kind of transcendental reality, without the belief in the existence of God;
- (c) A belief in the existence of a transcendental reality and life, and in the existence of God – but this without being convinced of the unique or absolute truth of the formulations of these beliefs in the doctrines of either the Christian churches in general or of the Roman Church in particular.⁵⁹³

Toynbee proceeds to explain that he left Anglican Christianity and eventually settled into position (a) about the time when he went to Oxford as an undergraduate student in 1907. He moved to position (c) during the early 1930s but finds himself unable to move from there closer to Catholic Christianity for a number of reasons. The study of history has taught him that "the propagation and the survival of Religion in general, and of Catholicism in particular, have been – and are – contingent upon mundane historical causes: some trivial, some un-edifying, all natural". Moreover, as someone influenced by the new sciences of complexity, holism and relativity, he observes that "the mode of operation of nature – spiritual as well as physical – is prodigality and manifoldness, not uniqueness or economy". He again emphasizes that he considers the difference between Christianity and the Mahayana Buddhism to be "one of degree and not one of kind", thus demonstrating the existence of various styles and manners of revelation, all revealing truth in their own way. What is most interesting from our point of view, however, is that Toynbee feels he cannot move on from position (c) because (referring to himself in the third person):

⁵⁹² Peper, C.B. (ed.) *An Historian's Conscience: The Correspondence of Arnold J. Toynbee and Columba Cary-Elwes, Monk of Ampleforth* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986), 18.

⁵⁹³ C.B. Peper, ed., *An Historian's Conscience: The Correspondence of Arnold J. Toynbee and Columba Cary-Elwes, Monk of Ampleforth* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986), 19.

In so far as he is conscious of having any religious or pastoral mission, this mission is to help his fellow pagan 'intellectuals' to position (c) from position (a). He thinks he knows the road, because he has travelled over it himself, and to map out this road has been, for some time past, one of *the deliberate aims of his research and writing*.⁵⁹⁴

Toynbee then suggests that if he were to embrace Catholicism, his "mission to the heathens" (quotation marks in the original) would come to an end, "because the pagan intellectuals would then at once write him off as a fellow who had "gone soft headed" and was no longer to be taken seriously". Therefore (!) Toynbee waits in position (c) because he wants to help his fellow pagan intellectuals to act -spiritually. He wants to be a Bodhisattva, not an Arhat:

At that point, if he ever came to it, A.J.T. would therefore have to make the choice between being (in Buddhist terms) a 'Bodhisattva' or an 'Arhat'. The Arhat is a practitioner of Buddhism who, having arrived at the threshold of Nirvana, goes on to take the next and final step into a state of being, or of not-being, which is the goal of existence both for himself and his fellow creatures, but which, in the very act of its being attained, will preclude him from ever doing anything more to help his fellows to make progress on their journey towards the same goal. The Bodhisattva is a potential Arhat who, upon arriving, on the threshold of Nirvana, refrains – for the reason just given – from stepping over, and deliberately prolongs his own period of servitude to 'the Wheel of Existence' for the sake of remaining in a situation in which it will continue to be possible for him to help his fellows forward. [...] At present, A.J.T. would make the Bodhisattva choice if he had to choose between these two courses.⁵⁹⁵

This is a remarkable statement, which allows us to interpret the *Study* in a different light: the work had a soteriological function; it is a record of a spiritual journey, taken by mankind, and re-taken by Toynbee, and written and recorded for others to see and follow. We will return to this interpretation of the *Study* in our Conclusions. Already at this point, however, it is clear that Toynbee's engagement with Buddhism not only greatly influenced the approach taken in the *Study* but also shaped the work's self-

⁵⁹⁴ Letter Toynbee to Columba 5 August 1938 in C.B. Peper, ed., *An Historian's Conscience: The Correspondence of Arnold J. Toynbee and Columba Cary-Elwes, Monk of Ampleforth* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986), 21. (Our emphasis).

⁵⁹⁵ Letter Toynbee to Columba 5 August 1938 in C.B. Peper, ed., *An Historian's Conscience: The Correspondence of Arnold J. Toynbee and Columba Cary-Elwes, Monk of Ampleforth* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986), 21.

understanding as an 'action' rather than a theoretical treatise. The work was meant to have an effect in that it guided its readers to the threshold of transfiguration.

If the letter to Columba was a private expression of Buddhist influence, three months later in November of 1938 Toynbee went public, again in a remarkable way. In a lecture on international relations given at Nottingham University, Toynbee analyses the relations between Japan and the USA and between China and Britain through the lens of Karma. This is interestingly a lecture given at the same time the Nichiren followers and educators, Makiguchi and Toda (who were Ikeda's teachers) were fighting their own battle remonstrating with their government's militarist expansion in Japan:

You know that the majority of the people in China and Japan are Buddhist – or anyway partially Buddhist, because in China and Japan you may have more than one religion at once. Some of you may also be familiar with the Buddhist doctrine of Karma. The word simply means action, but in the Buddhist philosophy it signifies the accumulated weight of past actions extending over many incarnations. For good or for evil, the sum total of our Karma enters into all our actions and gives them an impetus for weal or for woe. It may be a terrible conception, but it may hit the path, for all that. Let us look and see how this law of Karma has worked in China during the last century. Let us cast our minds back to the autumn of the year 1838. In 1838 Shanghai did not exist and British trade with China practically did not exist either. In 1838 both China and Japan were in a state of profound peace; they had not much to do with each other and they had not much to do with the outer world. [...] What broke the Chinese peace and the Japanese peace? The Chinese peace was broken by British guns, and the Japanese peace was broken by American guns. In 1838 the British were already pushing very hard to extend their trade in China. Places like Nottingham were then springing up and we were thirsty for new markets. So we went to war with China in 1840-42 took Canton, forced a treaty upon China and compelled her to open her ports and allow our merchants to settle there, and this was how the trade in Hong Kong and Shanghai was started. How was Japan opened to foreign trade? In 1853 America decided to send a naval expedition to Japan and Commodore Perry's guns opened Japan to the rest of the world without firing a shot. [...] The Japanese went to school in the West to learn the Western methods of warfare. Japan has adopted the devilish weapons which Americans and Europeans have invented; and, worse than physical weapons, they have also adopted the spirit of which those weapons

are outward visible sign. The militarism that is now rampant in Eastern Asia is of British, American and French, not of Russian, German or Italian, origin.

Now, in conclusion, and looking ahead, let us ask ourselves whether it is possible for the English people to do something to get rid of this load of Karma and to bring peace to the Far East? [...] Yet if I am right in suggesting that our chief interest in China is not a material interest, then our truest interest may lie in making a very great material sacrifice for the sake of doing our part-if we can still do it- to bring back to Eastern Asia the peace which she lost through our arrival on the scene a hundred years ago.⁵⁹⁶

For those unfamiliar with Toynbee's thinking it may have appeared bizarre that we had the 'Christian' Toynbee lecturing on the international relations situation in the Far East, to a British audience, utilizing the Buddhist doctrine of Karma. But the earlier, personal statement made in his letter to Father Columba puts his Nottingham lecture – its contents and its purpose – into context. Within the overall context of his ideas – of the inner world manifesting itself in the external body social, or transfiguration, of the tragedy of missing the mark through failure to master the 'small-self' – applying Karmic thinking seems very appropriate. It also illustrates a considerable level of ethical reflexivity and understanding, which was challenging typical hegemonic and political attitudes in his time. Toynbee was not simply moralizing but offered an insight into the collapse of dualities between society and the inner realm of the individuals constituting it. Perhaps it is no coincidence that the westerner Toynbee (the Bodhisattva) was taking a self-reflexive view on Britain's 'causal' role in Japan's behaviour, whilst Makiguchi and Toda (also Bodhisattva's) were applying the same reflexivity within their society, in their case resisting their government for its 'slandorous nature', 'evil nationalism' and policy of 'national disaster'.⁵⁹⁷ Toynbee's last direct encounter with Buddhism was with Makiguchi and Toda's follower and disciple when he wrote to Ikeda in 1969.

⁵⁹⁶ Bodleian Library, Toynbee Papers, *University College Nottingham Cust Foundation Lecture* 1938.

"British Interests in the Far East" Nov 28th 1938, (Nottingham: Nottingham Citizen Press Ltd.).

⁵⁹⁷ Under interrogation in prison Makiguchi cited Nichiren's teachings saying, "the war being prosecuted by Japan at the time was not a 'holy war' but a 'national disaster' [...] whether we consider the Japan-China incidents or the Great East Asian War, the cause of both lies in the fact that Japan is a slanderous nation." Makiguchi's view of nationalism resonated strongly (with Toynbee), he described the times as "the age of the evil of nationalism, the evil of the Latter Day of the Law." Daisaku Ikeda, Katsuji Saito, Masaki Morinaka, *The World of Nichiren Daishonin's Writings I* (Kuala Lumpur: Soka Gakkai Malaysia, 2005), 103. Makiguchi's view of imitation and creativity were also remarkably similar to Toynbee's mimesis and creative individuals, "After mastering imitation we move on to creativity, that is how one learns to live". Makiguchi in Ikeda, *"Wisdom of the Lotus,"* 45.

7.5. The Toynbee-Ikeda dialogue

In September 1969, the eighty-year-old Toynbee wrote to Ikeda inviting him to meet in London.⁵⁹⁸ Ikeda agreed but due to other commitments he was unable to find his way to London until 1972. However a dialogue correspondence ensued in writing initially until personal meetings were held in May 1972 at Toynbee's home in London. The various contributions from both Toynbee and Ikeda were later edited – with their permission – by Richard L. Gage and published as the book *Choose Life*. The authors were finalizing the preface and other minor details in August 1974, when Toynbee suffered a stroke, which brought their direct communication to an end. The preface that was eventually published is slightly misleading in that it suggests that it was Ikeda who initiated the dialogue, but it was, as we have shown, Toynbee who was reaching out to Ikeda.

The book *Choose Life* is structured into three parts: personal and social life, political and international life, and philosophical and religious life. The role of human action is central to the exchanges, which reveal many points of agreement and some disagreements. The points of agreement include key issues such as the role of Christ and the Bodhisattvas, the nature of suffering, the need for self-mastery, the idea of a spiritual structural principle of Love rather than an anthropomorphic God, the need for a multiple epistemology, the problematic use of language, etc. They discussed the role of reason and intuition- arriving at the need of both: "Intuitive rationalism". Toynbee's principle of self-mastery especially resonates for both authors with Ikeda's emphasis on the 'human revolution', as both argue that an inner change – transfiguration – is the cause for lasting peaceful social change. The dialogue also includes a lengthy discussion of Chih-I's analysis of life and its co-arising conditions known as the three thousand conditions in a single moment. This interests us as its here that Toynbee recognizes the 'Ku' (emptiness/openness) idea as one dynamic resolution of the Aristotle/Plato static positions and divide.

⁵⁹⁸ Toynbee wrote to Ikeda, "When I was last in Japan in 1967, people talked to me about the Sokagakkai and about yourself. I have heard a great deal about you from Professor Kei Wakaisumi, a good friend of mine, and now I am very much interested in your thoughts and works. I am going to read some of your books and speeches translated into English. It is my pleasure, therefore, to extend to you my personal invitation to visit me in Britain in order to have with you a fruitful exchange of views on a number of fundamental problems of our time, which deeply concern us all. I also feel that we can share our thoughts on religion, science, religion and philosophy, and history, and I hope this might be of some benefit not only for our two nations but also for the future of mankind as a whole. I feel rather shy in suggesting that someone who is as busy as you are should spend time in making a long journey to meet me. I venture to propose this simply because I am now old and am not able to be so active physically as I used to be. I would like to welcome you warmly whenever you could come to London...sincerely Arnold Toynbee." Bodleian Library, Toynbee papers, Letter Toynbee to Ikeda, September 23rd, 1969.

As we saw in the previous chapter, the foundation of Chih-I's framework is the epistemic distinction between the ten worlds. These are states of life we experience from moment to moment. These are hell, hunger, animality, anger, tranquility, rapture, learning, realization, bodhisattva, and Buddhahood. Hell is the agony of powerless suffering. Hunger is the state of desire, whether material, sexual, spiritual etc. Animality is the condition in which we accept that the strong will dominate the weak simply because they can dominate them. In animality, we experience fear (of the stronger) and lust for domination (of the weaker). Anger is the competitive drive that makes us want to 'outdo' others. Tranquility is the state of humanity at rest and untroubled. Rapture is the joyful state of fulfilling a desire. It is a form of happiness but it remains transient and temporary. These first six states of life were originally conceived as separate realms of existence, and thus there are Hell dwellers, hungry spirits, beasts, angry demons, humanity, and the realm of gods. But they are ultimately revealed as multiple aspects of any single life. In human life, Ikeda explains, "the six states from... [Hell to Rapture]... are collectively called the Six Paths. Because natural man's activities usually remain within these, Buddhism calls ordinary human life transmigration within the Six Paths."⁵⁹⁹ Toynbee then asks whether it was one "of the practical aims of Buddhist teaching [...] to halt this transmigration within the Six Paths?" Ikeda gives an affirmative answer but clarifies:

But since the Six Paths are inherent in life, there is neither a need nor an intention to eliminate them. Instead, Buddhism strives to find the way to permanent happiness by reforming human life.⁶⁰⁰

In response, Toynbee comments on the importance of acting in the real world in order to achieve this 'reform' of human life.

The final four worlds or states of life are learning, which is the activity of studying; realization, which is the 'direct' perception of a truth – a 'eureka' moment, which comes from one's own efforts rather than from the guidance provided by others. The bodhisattva state, as mentioned, is the joy of helping others, which both Ikeda and Toynbee find in Christian love and Buddhist compassion. Within the Buddhist discourse that framed these ten worlds, learning (literally 'voice hearers', *shravaka*) referred to the Buddha's disciples who were able to hear his teachings. Realization

⁵⁹⁹ Arnold J. Toynbee and Daisaku Ikeda *Choose Life: A Dialogue* (Oxford: OUP 1989), 301.

⁶⁰⁰ Arnold J. Toynbee and Daisaku Ikeda *Choose Life: A Dialogue* (Oxford: OUP 1989), 301.

(literally partial-enlightenment, pratyekabuddha) described those who realized certain truths through their own efforts. Both learning and realization have 'self' centered goals. Learning aims at arhatship, i.e. the cessation of birth and death through one's own spiritual efforts. Realization aims at self-enlightenment. The bodhisattva state was the path of the Mahayana disciple, who vows to help all others achieve enlightenment as his/her goal.

The ten worlds are ultimately life states that we experience from moment to moment. The framework also posits that each of the ten worlds contains the ten worlds within it as a potential and this is how we move between them. It is important to appreciate that the ten worlds are not a simple linear ladder leading to happiness. All the nine worlds from Hell through to Bodhisattva have both a positive and a negative aspect. For example, the positive aspect of the experience of Hell is that it allows us to feel empathy with others. Desire can be positive or negative. Animality can be used to protect the weak against the stronger. Anger can be a positive force for change. Even bodhisattva, a state that seems pure, can have a negative aspect in that it can lead to martyrdom, which in Buddhism is not surrounded with a spiritual halo. Bodhisattvas are not meant to lose themselves in the assistance they provide for others. The Buddha state is sometimes described as the power to bring out the positive aspect of any of the nine worlds. Ikeda explains that we cannot avoid these worlds but we can transform our current situation by developing the ability to manifest the positive aspects whilst steadily establishing the Buddha state as a more permanent base. Toynbee comments on this framework as follows:

Buddhism has made a subtler psychological analysis than any that has been made, so far, in the West. Shomon [Learning] and Engaku [Partial enlightenment, sometimes translated as Realization] seem to me to be the goals of Southern Buddhism [Hinayana]. These are grand and difficult goals, but Bosatsu [Bodhisattva] goes beyond them. The Southern Buddhist goals are perhaps the highest attainable by the individual self, but in Bosatsu [Bodhisattva] the individual self opens its heart to expand itself spiritually into the universal self. When I look for Christian equivalents of Northern Buddhism conceptions and ideals, I see an affinity between the bodhisattva who voluntarily postpones his exit into Nirvana, and the second member of the Christian trinity, who emptied himself temporarily of his divinity in order to redeem his fellow human beings (the bodhisattvas redeem nonhuman sentient beings too). Like a bodhisattva, Christ incarnate suffered (according to the

Christian story) by exposing himself to the painfulness of life, and his compelling motive was the same as a bodhisattva's compassion.⁶⁰¹

Ikeda affirms that he regarded Christ as a bodhisattva state but that the transcendent aspect of God as removed from this world was irreconcilable with Buddhist thinking in that the Buddha state was not removed from this world but resided always within human individual lives and in universal life.

If the ten worlds explain what individuals can feel from moment to moment, the next part of the framework, the ten factors, explains how we move between these states. The ten factors therefore capture the Buddhist understanding of causality. As we saw in the previous chapter, the Lotus Sutra defines ten such factors: Appearance, Nature, Entity, Power, Influence, Internal Cause, Relation, Latent Effect, Manifest Effect, The Consistency from Beginning to End. The first three factors correspond to the three truths we discussed in the previous chapter: Appearance is what we called conventional truth; Nature corresponds to emptiness, and Entity refers to the Middle Way.

The ten worlds describe the states of life all people experience at one moment or another; the ten factors elucidate the causal conditionality. The framework is not, however, deterministic. There may be occasions when individuals may consciously overcome or ignore their internal causes, but Ikeda points out that in the majority of situations – 'statistically', if you will – the effect will reflect the internal cause. The following excerpt of the exchange show the depth with which Ikeda and Toynbee explore these notions; it also shows how Toynbee relates these ideas to his own scholarly work:

IKEDA: Buddhism recognizes a cause-and-effect law working in the depths of life that differs from similar laws of physics and chemistry in that it cannot be understood in terms of time and space. It exists in the ultimate reality of life and falls into the category of Ku. It transcends determinism bound by time and space. In the broad sense, the Buddhist causal law covers the cause and effect underlying your concept of ethical karma-account.⁶⁰²

TOYNBEE: I think the law of life is Karma. Actions produce consequences, and these consequences are inescapable. They are not, however, unalterable, they

⁶⁰¹ Arnold J. Toynbee and Daisaku Ikeda *Choose Life: A Dialogue* (Oxford: OUP 1989), 302.

⁶⁰² Arnold J. Toynbee and Daisaku Ikeda *Choose Life: A Dialogue* (Oxford: OUP 1989), 306.

can be altered, for better or for worse, by further action. Every living being runs up a karma-account; and, if I understand the doctrine of the Lotus school of Northern Buddhism rightly, a karma-account is never closed because the series of rebirths is endless. I note that, in this realm, the relationships are conceived of as not being causal in the sense in which the concept of cause and effect is applicable to physical relationships.

IKEDA: In figurative terms, the law of cause and effect deep within life itself emerges into the world of phenomena by operating through physical and spiritual aspects of life activity. In terms of concepts of time and space, this manifestation of the law of cause and effect may be compared with what physics calls the statistical law of causation. Long term observations make it possible to grasp life phenomena in terms of statistical laws of cause and effect that are inevitably accompanied by uncertainties. The degree of latitude of uncertainty is incomparably greater when one is dealing with human life than when one is concerned with inanimate beings or other forms of life. Nevertheless, life, maintaining its own directions of development, gradually emerges in clear phenomenal forms. I must say here, however, that though I have used scientific terms in a figurative sense, the Buddhist law of cause and effect governing the very depths of life is in no way either spatial or temporal. The cause in Buddhist terms, then, is called the Nyoze-in; it is evoked by a stimulus from the outside world called the Nyoze-en. Though the cause (Nyoze-in) may be latent in life itself, it requires the relation or stimulus (Nyoze-en) to activate it. Once the cause has been activated by the stimulus, however, it gives birth to the effect (Nyoze-ka); the effect is inherent in life itself. Nyoze-ho is the requital of causality manifested on the level of actual life activities. The only possible way to glimpse the Buddhist law of causation in terms of space-time bound phenomena is to examine these requitals in detail.⁶⁰³

As we explained in the previous chapter, Chih-I's framework of the '3000 conditions in a single moment' refers – in addition to the ten worlds and the ten factors – also to the three realms: 1) the realm of the individual, 2) the social realm and 3) the natural environment realm. The three realms are the fields or stages on and in which human life and action express themselves. The first realm is the inner world of relations constituting a human being; the second is the realm of relations between living beings, and the third is the realm of relations between the individual and the natural

⁶⁰³ Arnold J. Toynbee and Daisaku Ikeda *Choose Life: A Dialogue* (Oxford: OUP 1989), 306-7.

environmental. All three 'realms' themselves are *relations*, i.e. they co-arise. There is no autonomous individual that parachutes into a pre-existing realm – social, environmental or individual.

In response to Ikeda's exposition, Toynbee notes that the notion of 'Ku' was missing in Western discourses; 'Ku', as we noted in Chapter 5, is 'beyond' Aristotle's laws of thought. Toynbee saw it as making more intelligible Plato's universals and Aristotle's particulars. Toynbee's view was that Ku was the dynamic aspect missing in the static views. Lacking more clarification from Toynbee, the hypothesis we offer here is that if Plato's Forms and Aristotle's unmoved mover or 'being' was the source of the static aspect that Toynbee perceived and is describing, then 'co-arising' or the 'emptiness of substance' and its concomitant continuous 'opening or becoming' might provide the 'dynamic' aspect Toynbee refers to. Toynbee also does not fail to notice the similarity between the Buddhist law of causation and his own scheme of 'challenge and response':

The Buddhist analysis of the dynamics of life, as you explain them, is more detailed and subtle than any modern Western analysis that I know of. If I have interpreted you right, the Buddhist concept of Ju-Nyoze [ten factors] is not unlike my own personal notion of challenge and response.⁶⁰⁴

Toynbee clearly found in Chih-I's notion of the '3000 conditions in a single moment' a framework that appeared to give contents and detail to his own attempt⁶⁰⁵ at exploring 'laws of causation' that show how the state of the inner, spiritual world of individuals unfolds in terms of the growth and breakdown of civilizations. Toynbee's interest in meeting with Ikeda and the contents of their dialogue give ample evidence that Toynbee did consider the Mahayana as a possible articulation of his own thinking on matters concerning human action and its consequences. There he found a framework that was holistic and that was able to avoid polarization and dichotomies.

⁶⁰⁴ Arnold J. Toynbee and Daisaku Ikeda *Choose Life: A Dialogue* (Oxford: OUP 1989), 307.

⁶⁰⁵ We also recall some of Toynbee's heuristic motifs of Sin and Drift, Style and Unity, Archaism and Futurism, Detachment and Transfiguration, under the anthropological terms of Life, Feeling and Behaviour, (see Chapter 2, above) these were his attempts to capture the emotions and motives of the inner realm of life as they pertained to the outer world..

8. Conclusions.

We are now in a position to understand how Toynbee's exploration of Mahayana Buddhism was not a mere aberration of a historian who had lost his way, as some of his critics would have it, but the continuation of a life-long quest that led him to question the fundamentals of Western rational thought. This quest was for Toynbee a learning process – a dynamic engagement with historical reality. What he discovered in this process affected the perspectives he employed while continuing the process – in this sense, his work was 'empirical' in that he let empirical reality, as it appeared to him, affect the fundamentals of his thinking. The scholarly encounters with civilizations other than the one in which he was raised and lived sparked a desire to broaden his mind and his thinking as he came to appreciate the limitations of the traditions of thought that in some ways defined his own civilizational background. Even in light of harsh and personal attacks from his academic peers, Toynbee continued to pursue his quest with considerable courage.

Toynbee was attracted to Mahayana Buddhism for a number of reasons. Caught between the polarizations and dichotomies that seem to structure Western rationality – a point later developed by thinkers such as Derrida – he was looking for a manner of approaching reality that would preserve the very wholeness of that reality. As a historian, Toynbee was not a specialist, who would focus on every detail of some well-defined section of historical reality. Instead, Toynbee was attempting to behold the mystery and entirety of the human drama that unfolds in history as its primary manifestation as there was no apriori reason why any particular phenomenon should be excluded from his gaze. Preconceptions were there, of course, and he was the first to acknowledge this – after all, he asked, how could one approach reality without preconceptions? However, he was prepared to let that reality as it appeared to him affect those preconceptions, and indeed he was inspired to push the boundaries of his own understanding and thinking in order to broaden the horizon of intelligibility. He ended up undermining what seemed to be the very cornerstone of his scholarly enterprise – i.e. the very notion of 'civilization' as the intelligible unit of world history. Voegelin had a point when he noted that, precisely because Toynbee's quest was existential, perhaps he should have started anew as his thinking shifted instead of adding more volumes to a series, the fundamentals of which did not seem to carry it all the way through. At the same time, however, it is from Toynbee's quest that we can learn the most.

Toynbee found in the Mahayana a holistic perspective that brought together a sophisticated understanding of human action and its consequences as they unfold in a reality that offers us different levels of truth. Yet it is only the highest level of truth that provides us with an understanding of reality as a process of dependent co-arising. This vision of reality as co-arising is essential for Toynbee because it implies that we can never escape from the consequences of our actions. In fact, 'action' is not just a moment in time, but the result of a process that extends indefinitely into the past and that will continue indefinitely into the future. Through action, we participate in and contribute to the process of karmic reality. We always 'suffer' and 'enjoy' the consequences of our actions. The Mahayana perspective seemed so important to Toynbee because it does not allow us to 'externalise self-reference' and to scapegoat others for the reality that we, too, have created. The question that imposes itself on our conscience is not, therefore, how we can blame others for the miseries that we suffer but, rather, how we have contributed to our own suffering and the sufferings of others. There is no suffering, therefore, that we can simply detach ourselves from. Every suffering is part of our own suffering – not just in the sense of us being responsible for offering relief but also in the stronger sense of us being responsible for having contributed to suffering becoming a reality. Just like all other phenomena, suffering co-arises with our actions, our inaction, our ignorance, our knowledge, our concern, our indifference. We remain responsible, always. Thus, 'we' are always a part of 'them'.

If it were one of Toynbee's major concerns to counter the parochialisms of his time, he would have found much encouragement in the scientific advances of his time, including advances in the new sciences of complexity and relativity. Still, it was not at all obvious how one would get from the perspectives suggested e.g. by Jan Smuts to an understanding of human action and its intended and unintended consequences in history. Inevitably, Toynbee had to find his own language in order to articulate the complex relationships between social and cultural formations, individual beliefs and actions, challenge and response, and mimesis and transfiguration. In the course of his work, Toynbee came to progressively adopt a triad of perspectives or, as we called them, 'lenses'. If we look at his development from his very latest perspective, we understand that the term 'lens' may be slightly misleading in that it refers primarily to the 'first' or conventional truth. The principle of dependent co-arising implies that we *are* the perspectives that we 'adopt'. In other words, the true nature of reality is not such that we can observe it from a distance, through 'lenses' or 'spectacles' that we can choose like fashion items. The perspectives we use are the immediate effect of us always already being implicated in the dependent co-arising that is reality. There is, in

fact, no subject or object in Middle Way thinking. The *Study* is therefore a record of Toynbee's own attempted transfiguration; it is more and something else than a piece of 'information' about reality. As his letter to Father Columba clearly shows, Toynbee fully accepted this reading of the *Study*.

The *Study* is a record of a journey travelled by Toynbee, and as such it has a soteriological dimension and therapeutic function. It is the story of a 'formation' that is shaped by the encounter with historical reality as it appeared to Toynbee. Publishing this record was a 'pastoral mission' with the explicit purpose of helping "his fellow pagan intellectuals" to understand the "existence of a transcendental reality and life."

⁶⁰⁶ The concern with transcendence would initially seem to separate Toynbee from Buddhist traditions, but it is important not to over-interpret what Toynbee means by 'transcendence'. When Toynbee speaks of transcendence, he speaks the language of conventional truth in order to refer to the 'beyond' of transfiguration. Toynbee explained:

My creed consists of a single article: 'Deus est mortali iuvare mortalem': 'For a human being, God is the act of helping another human being'. I believe that the true end of Man is self-sacrificing love; that love is divine; that is the only god that we know from experience; and that man should devote himself to this god without any reservations, whatever the consequences may be.⁶⁰⁷

As we saw in the previous chapter, Toynbee suggested that compassion was a feature of human reality itself:

It would seem that the impulse to consummate a movement of withdrawal by a counter movement of return must be deeply grounded in the nature of the human soul, *and perhaps in the nature of the Universe itself*, [...].⁶⁰⁸

The *Study* thereby becomes an act of "self-offering"⁶⁰⁹ in the style of a Bodhisattva; it is not a 'theory' about reality. In this act of 'offering' he attempted to include his academic colleagues. Toynbee absorbed much suffering as a result of the vitriolic attacks that aimed directly at his academic and personal reputation.

⁶⁰⁶ All quotes taken from Toynbee's letter to Father Columba, quoted in the previous chapter.

⁶⁰⁷ Arnold Toynbee, *Experiences* (Oxford: OUP, 1970), 146.

⁶⁰⁸ Toynbee, "*Study*" 3: 270-272. Our emphasis.

⁶⁰⁹ We could also say 'self-emptying' and encouraging 'relational opening'.

For Toynbee, the 'tragedy of reason' was a personal experience. By outlining its limitations, and by pointing beyond those limitations, he incurred the wrath of those whose identities, careers and egos depended on their self-understanding as the defenders of scientific rationality and reason. The term 'tragedy' occurs in the title of our thesis, therefore, for a number of interrelated reasons. 'Tragedy' was Toynbee's initial approach to the unfolding of civilizations, which he interpreted as 'tragedies with a plot'. 'Tragic' also are the consequences of upholding Western reason – here understood as embodied in Aristotle's laws of thought – in an exclusive manner because it restricts our ability to access the fullness of reality and therefore also our ability to interact with the 'thoughtful others within international relations' (Chan). And finally, the fate of Toynbee's own efforts to expose these limitations and to travel beyond them can only be termed 'tragic' as it is difficult to see how his efforts could not have been misunderstood. What is remarkable under the circumstances is the commercial success of the *Study*, showing perhaps that outside the academic world there is a potential (and even a mythological recognition) for the kind of work he suggested and performed.

This reading of Toynbee seems to give some credence to those who dismissed Toynbee as a moralizer and 'prophet'. Are we not saying exactly the same? A bodhisattva is not a prophet, of course, but there are obvious links. As we noted above, the project of the *Study* progressively developed a soteriological dimension, which eventually became central to the entire project, certainly with the last four volumes. But this dimension, as we have shown in our thesis, unfolded quite 'naturally' from the *Study*. The holistic analysis of the drama of human history tends to relativize the importance of the present in that the present becomes a mere 'variation' of a theme. The present thereby becomes susceptible to comparisons and assessments. A 'prophet' is a critic; someone who appeals to his fellow citizens to 'turn around' – to take the path of transfiguration – and to change their ways in order to avoid impending disaster. Typically, a prophet and mythological poet is a member of the society s/he criticizes and the critique therefore entails a self-reference. That Toynbee was a critic of his times in this sense is beyond doubt, and indeed 'disaster' was not a future possibility but a very present reality. But, as is well known, 'a prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house' (Matt 13:57).⁶¹⁰

⁶¹⁰ He might have also taken comfort from one of Nichiren's writings, "It is the nature of beasts to threaten the weak and fear the strong. Our contemporary scholars of the various schools are just like them. They despise a wise man without power, but fear evil rulers. They are no more than fawning retainers [...]. Iron, when heated in the flames and pounded, becomes a fine sword. Worthies and sages are tested by abuse."

The failure of Toynbee's academic peers to properly read his work is indicative of a wider problem of academic debate, where specialists are keen to assert themselves and where mimetic rivalry and competitiveness is one of the key motivations. The 'tragedy of reason' is often played out most visibly in academic debates, the whole purpose of which is to discern that which 'is' from that which 'is not'. There is little room for the subtleties that inevitably emerge when we leave Aristotle's two logical possibilities of assertion and denial. On the contrary, self-contradiction and paradox are commonly used as criteria for dismissing accounts of reality as 'false'. Toynbee struggled with this problem as he felt he needed to express contradictoriness and eventually found the language of myth as the traditional repository for insights relating to the truth of contradictions and paradoxes. This language, however, was outside the remit of the academic historian.

Toynbee's example shows that what is at stake here is not just the contents of academic work but indeed the very meaning and status of 'work' as action. Toynbee's *Study* is most instructive not as a theory about reality in the conventional sense but, as explained, as the record of an individual's journey and struggle with transfiguration. And this record, as Toynbee explained, was a 'map', which could be used by others. In Buddhist terms, we can see in these 'therapeutic' texts the co-arising compassionate active structure of reality actualized in an individual's true self in action –in other words, we can see the bodhisattva ideal at work. The typical academic manner of reading texts is very limited as it emphasizes the text's propositional (conventional) contents. As we noted in the introduction, Bleiker and others have suggested that IR especially needs to develop other ways of reading texts – there may be aesthetic or poetic ways of reading texts that not only do more justice to the texts but also are of greater benefit to the readers. What Bleiker alluded to in his paper is what we now understand as emptiness, i.e. the notion that phenomena are empty of self-nature. The gap between phenomenon and representation reflects precisely this emptiness, and it is there where politics takes place as phenomena compete against each other with their claims that they are what they pretend to be. Academic politics is no exception. But if the truth of emptiness/openness is lost – if the representation removes all traces to emptiness –or attempts closure, the result can only be exclusion: all that which is not 'real', is not. Toynbee's academic reception shows on a small scale the very true and very real political consequences of the issues we have been addressing in this thesis.

Nichiren Daishonin, "Letter from Sado" in *The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, editor-translator: The Goshō Translation Committee (Tokyo: Soka Gakkai, 1999), 302-3.

The 'tragedy of reason' unfolds on a larger scale when a limited approach to reality comes into contact with approaches that do not share the same limitations, the same blind spots. We noted that Aristotle's laws of thought may have been ultimately motivated by an ontology of substance. As a result, the four logical spaces of the tetralemma were reduced to two, thus simplifying the complexity and partly removing the mystery of a dynamic reality. Each problem space has four logical spaces, and – logically! – each of these spaces require analysis before rejection. Aristotle's laws of thought ask us to reject without analysis. In turn, if we do analyse all possibilities in relation to the problem of substance, we find (as Nagarjuna did) that it was impossible for any thing to exist as a result of its own inherent substantial unchanging essence (self-nature). It appears as if 'Aristotle's' laws of thought 'protect' a substance-based approach to reality, but the substance-based approach is not grounded on an argument or evidence; it just happened to be Aristotle's preference. From outside Aristotle's perspective, its restricted access to reality must appear arbitrary. Why should I possibly deny to myself other ways of accessing the fullness of reality?

Toynbee experienced the limitations of the 'exclusive' Western approach to reality as he encountered otherness in his *Study*. Yet, as we noted in our Introduction, the very real background to the *Study* was precisely the battlefield of Western parochialisms. There was never any doubt in Toynbee's mind, therefore, regarding the real and concrete political and social significance of these issues, which at first sight seem abstract and remote. Solutions to the problem of social and political order have always been embedded in solution to the problem of knowledge and vice versa. This is especially obvious today as Toynbee's intellectual problem of having to come to terms with the historical developments and encounters between civilizations have been transformed into political problems in a world marked by the dynamics of globalization. If these encounters are approached from within a problem space that has been artificially reduced to only half of its possibilities, it is extremely likely that differences are perceived and constructed as incommensurabilities – with all the concomitant violence and the destruction that wants to protect (or challenge) such blind spots. And once the dichotomies have become a force in world politics, they inevitably result in a mimetic game of self-assertion and mutual exclusion. From the Middle Way perspective, incommensurability is a notion that only exists at the level of conventional truth because for things or ideas to be incommensurable, they need to have self-nature. The notion of dependent co-arising in contrast underlines the holistic one-ness of reality.

What are we to learn, then, from our reconstruction of Toynbee's quest? It is striking to see how Toynbee's trajectory anticipated many of the issues that were central to the succession of 'great debates' in IR. He was implicated, of course, in the 'first debate' as one of the 'utopians' targeted by Carr. The second debate was 'acted out' between Toynbee and those among his reviewers who questioned his method and who accused him of being 'unscientific'. In the third debate, neo-Marxists and critical theorists emphasized the significance of language – following what Richard Rorty called the 'linguistic turn' – and thereby prepared the way for the fundamental questions raised by 'anti-foundationalists' in the fourth debate. As we noted, Toynbee was very well aware of Bleiker's gap between reality and representation, and any Middle Way thinker would be familiar with the problem of 'foundations'. But does Toynbee stop there or does he lead us beyond the 'fourth debate'?

If our reading of Toynbee is correct, and if his trajectory continues to cross lines with IR theory debates, where would this place IR theory in the future? It seems obvious that 'great debates' in IR in the future, if they are to lead us beyond what we have seen in the past, ought not to be 'debates' at all but 'dialogues' in the sense advocated by Ikeda. For Ikeda, as we noted, 'dialogue' has moral value in that it shows dependent co-arising at work. It presupposes the openness that Toynbee exemplified in his encounters with Buddhism. 'Dialogue' presupposes that those engaged in the conversation allow their souls to be ordered by the dynamics of the encounters. Dialogue is not about propositional thinking; it is not about asserting or hypostatizing theories about reality. As Ikeda explained, if 'good' is what allows people to share their mutual respect and humanity, then 'evil' is that which keeps them apart. This turns 'dialogue' into a 'spiritual struggle' against divisiveness and evil.⁶¹¹

Ikeda's 'dialogue' is very close to the classic understanding of 'theoria'. In the classic use of the term, *theoria* is a form of contemplation based on the 'perception of beauty regarded as a moral faculty'.⁶¹² *Theoria* entails the articulation of that perception for the explicit purpose of sharing the insight gained with others. The purpose of that sharing, however, is not to persuade others but to invite them, with the guidance provided by *theoria*, to re-enact its underlying experience and perception. Toynbee's *Study* as we have read it in this thesis is an excellent example of *theoria*. The *Study* is a 'map' of a

⁶¹¹ <http://daisakuikeda.org/main/philos/buddhist/buddh-04.html>, accessed April 3, 2009, and quoted above.

⁶¹² Taken from the Oxford English Dictionary.

path that Toynbee has travelled; it is the record of a journey and struggle with transfiguration which Toynbee invites others to follow. The purpose of the journey is to invite others to be more aware of the manner in which they take part and contribute to the dependent co-arising of a compassionate, dynamic reality. The Study therefore comes much closer to the original idea of *theoria* than the many 'theories' that crowd our academic libraries.

Bibliography

Alexander, Ian W., Bergson: Philosopher of Reflection (Bowes and Bowes, 1957).

Alexander, R. D., Darwinism and Human Affairs. (Seattle: University Washington Press, 1979).

Aristotle, Categories and De Interpretatione translated by J.L Ackrill (Oxford: Clarendon at the Clarendon Press, 1979).

Aristotle, Categories, On Interpretation, and On Sophistical Refutations, translated by E.M Edghill and W.A. Pickard-Cambridge (Digi-Reads.com Classics, 2006).

Aristotle, Metaphysics, in *Aristotle in 23 Volumes*, Vols.17, 18, translated by Hugh Tredennick. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press; London, William Heinemann Ltd. 1933, 1989. Electronic version at <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu>

Aristotle, Poetics, Translated and edited by Malcolm Heath (London: Penguin1996).

Aristotle, Posterior Analytics, translation by G.R. Mure (Kessinger Publishing: 2004).

Aristotle, Prior Analytics translated by Robin Smith (Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company 1989).

Ashley Montague, M.F., ed., Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews. (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1956).

Baldwin, D, Neorealism and Neoliberalism: the contemporary debate. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

Baylis, John. Smith, Steve, Owens, Patricia, The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

Bellah, Robert N., Imagining Japan: The Japanese Tradition and Its Modern Interpretation. (University of California Press, 2003).

Berg, Maxine, A Woman in History. Eileen Power 1889-1940. (Cambridge: Cambridge

University Press. 1996).

Bergson, Henry, The Two Sources of Morality and Religion translated by Audra, R. Ashley, and Brereton, Cloudesley, (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1935)

Bergson, Henry, Creative Evolution translated by Mitchell, Arthur. (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1926).

Bergson, Henry, Time and Free Will translated by Pogson, F.L. (New York: Harper & Row, 1960)

Bohm, David, Wholeness and the Implicate Order, (Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, Boston, 1980).

Booth, Ken and Smith, Steve, International Relations Theory Today (Cambridge: Polity Press 1997).

Brown, Brian, Edward, The Buddha Nature (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2004)

Brown, Colin, Christianity and Western Thought (Downers Grove: Inter Varsity Press, 1990).

Brown, Chris, International Relations Theory: New Normative Approaches (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992).

Brown, Chris with Ainley, Kirsten, Understanding International Relations (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005).

Burton, David, Emptiness Appraised. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2001).

Cannadine, David, G.M. Trevelyan: A Life in History. (Penguin, 1992).

Carr, E. H., The Twenty Years Crisis (Hampshire: MacMillan Press, 1981).

Carr, E. H., What is History? (Palgrave 2001).

Chan, Stephen, Out of Evil: New international Politics and Old Doctrines of War

(London: I. B. Taurus, 2005).

Chan, Stephen, Mandaville, Peter, and Bleiker, Roland, editors, The Zen of International Relations: IR Theory from East to West Eds. (Hampshire: Palgrave 2001).

Chan Wing-Tsit., A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy (New Jersey, Princeton University Press 1963).

Charles, David, Aristotle on Meaning and Essence (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2005).

Checkland, Olive, Britain's Encounter with Meiji Japan, 1868-1912. (Macmillan 1989)
Clark, Gordon H. Thales to Dewey: A History of Philosophy (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Riverside Press, 1957).

Clarke, J. J., Oriental Enlightenment (London, Routledge, 1997).

Clogg, Richard, Politics and the Academy: Arnold Toynbee and the Koraes Chair (London: Frank Cass, 1986).

Conze Edward, Buddhism Its Essence and Development (Oxford: Bruno Cassirer, 1957).

Cox, C. B. and Dyson, A. E., The Twentieth Century Mind. (Oxford Paperbacks, 1972).

Dalai Lama, The Universe in a Single Atom: The Convergence of Science and Spirituality (Morgan Road Books, 2005).

Dawson, Christopher, Religion and the Rise of Western Culture (New York: Doubleday, 1991).

Durant, Will, The Story of Philosophy (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1926).

Evans, Richard J., In Defence of History. (London: Granta Books, 2000).

Fenner, Peter, The Ontology of the Middle Way (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic

Publishers, 1990).

Formigari, Lia, A History of Language Philosophies, translated by Gabriel Poole
(Amsterdam: John Benjamin Adams Publishing 2004).

Freeman, F.A., Historical Essays. (Macmillan & Co. 1896).

Fuller, Steve, Kuhn v Popper (Icon Books, 2003).

Garfield, Jay L., Empty Words (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2002).

Garfield, Jay L., The Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way: Nāgārjuna's
Mūlamadhyamakakārikā. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

Gasset, Ortega Y., An Interpretation of Universal History. Translated by Mildred
Adams.(W.W. Norton and Co, 2002).

Geyl, Peter, Debates with Historians. (Meridian Books, 1957).

Geyser, O, Jan Smuts and his International Contemporaries. (Covos Day, 2001).

Goldstein, Erik, Wars and Peace Treaties 1816-1991. (New York: Routledge 1992).

The Gosho Translation Committee. Editor-Translator: The Writings of Nichiren
Daishonin. (Tokyo: Soka Gakkai, 1999).

The Gosho Translation Committee. Editor-Translator: The Writings of Nichiren
Daishonin II. (Tokyo: Soka Gakkai, 2006).

Graham, Gordon, The Shape of the Past; A Philosophical Approach to History.
(Oxford University Press, 1997).

Gregory, Peter N., Traditions of Meditation in Chinese Buddhism (Honolulu, University
of Hawaii Press, 1986).

Grene, Marjorie, A Portrait of Aristotle (Chicago: University Press, 1963).

- Griffiths, Martin, Fifty Key Thinkers in International Relations (London: Routledge, 1999).
- Groner, Paul, Saicho The Establishment of the Japanese Tendai School (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000).
- Guizot, Francois, The History of Civilization in Europe. (Sisleys Ltd. 1908).
- Haas, E, The Uniting of Europe (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1969).
- Haas, E, Tangle of Hopes: American Commitments and World Order. (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall. 1969).
- Haynes, Jeffery, An Introduction to International Relations and Religion (London: Pearson Education Ltd. 2007).
- Henderson, Hazel and Ikeda, Daisaku, Planetary Citizenship. (Middleway Press. 2004).
- Hempel, Carl G., Aspects of Scientific Explanation and other Essays in the Philosophy of Science. (New York: The Free Press, 1965).
- Honderich Ted, ed., The Oxford Companion to Philosophy (Oxford: OUP, 1995).
- Huntingdon Jr., C.W., The Emptiness of Emptiness (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989).
- Huntingdon, Samuel, P., The Clash of Civilizations: And the Remaking of World Order (London: Simon & Schuster 1996).
- Hurvitz, Leon, trans., Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976).
- Ikeda, Daisaku, Buddhism the First Millennium (New York: Kodansha Int. 1978).
- Ikeda, Daisaku, Conversations and lectures on the Lotus Sutra Volumes 1,2 3. (Taplow: SGI-UK Publishers, 1998).

Ikeda, Daisaku, Dialogue on Life Volume 1 (Tokyo: NSIC 1973).

Ikeda, Daisaku, Dialogue on Life Volume 2 (Tokyo: NSIC 1973).

Ikeda, Daisaku, The Flower of Chinese Buddhism (New York, Weatherhill, 1986).

Ikeda, Daisaku, The Living Buddha (New York, Weatherhill, 1976).

Ikeda: Simard: Bourgeault, On Being Human: Where Ethics Medicine and Spirituality Converge. (Middleway Press, 2003).

Ikeda, Daisaku, Selected Lectures on the Goshō (Tokyo, NSIC 1979).

Ikeda, Daisaku, The Wisdom of the Lotus Sutra Volume II, (Santa Monica: World Tribune Press, 2000)..

Ikeda, Daisaku, Wonderful Encounters. (Malaysia: Penerbit Universiti Kebangsaan 2003).

Ikeda, Daisaku, Katsuji Saito, Masaki Morinaka, The World of Nichiren Daishonin's Writings I (Kuala Lumpur: Soka Gakkai Malaysia, 2005).

Inada, Kenneth K., Nagarjuna A Translation of his Mulamadhyamakakarika (Delhi, Sri Satguru Publications 1993).

Inoue, Yasushi: Ikeda, Daisaku., Richard L. Gage (Translator) Letters of Four Seasons (Tokyo: Kodansha Europe, 1995).

Inwagen, Peter van., Metaphysics (Boulder: Westview Press, 2009).

Jackson, Robert and Sorenson, George, Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches 3rd Ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2007),

Jones, R.J. Barry. Jones, Peter M Dark Ken and Peters, Joel, Introduction to International Relations (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001),

Kato, Bunno, Tamura, Yoshiro., and Miyasaka, Kojiro translators, The Threefold Lotus Sutra; Innumerable Meanings, The Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Law, and Meditation on the Bodhisattva Universal Virtue. With revisions by W.E Soothill, Wilhelm Schiffer, and Pier P. Del Campana. (New York/Tokyo: Weatherhill Kosei, 1975).

Keating, Peter, The Victorian Prophets: A Reader from Carlyle to Wells Edited and with an Introduction by Peter Keating. (Fontana, 1981).

Keenan, John P., The Foundational Standpoint of Madhyamika Philosophy by Nagao Gadjin (Delhi, Sri Satguru Publications 1990).

Keenan, John, P., The Summary of the Great Vehicle by Asanga (Berkeley, Numata Centre for Buddhist translation and Research).

Keohane, R., and Nye, J., Power and Interdependence (Boston: Little Brown, 1977).

Keown, Damien, Dictionary of Buddhism (Oxford, Oxford University Press 2003).

Kern, H., trans. Saddharma–Pundarika, or the Lotus of the True Law. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1884).

King, Richard, Orientalism and Religion: Postcolonial Theory, India and 'The Mystic East' (Oxford, Routledge 1999).

King, Sallie, B., Buddha Nature (Albany, State University of New York Press, 1991).

Kirimura Yasuji, Fundamentals of Buddhism (Tokyo, NSIC 1984).

Kirimura, Yasuji, Outline of Buddhism (Tokyo, NSIC 1981).

Kolakowski, Leszek, Bergson (Indiana, St. Augustine's Press, 2001).

Kosco, Bart, Fuzzy Thinking. (Hyperion, 1993).

Lebow, Richard, Ned, The Tragic Vision of Politics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2006)

- Lessnoff M, The Structure of Social Science (George Allen & Unwin. 1974).
- Liddell, George Henry, and Scott, Robert, A Greek-English Lexicon. 9th ed. (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1968).
- Liu, Jee, Loo, An Introduction to Chinese Philosophy (Oxford, Blackwell 2006).
- Long, Christopher, The Ethics of Ontology: Rethinking an Aristotelian Legacy (New York: State University of New York Press, 2005)
- Long, David. and Wilson, Peter, eds., Thinkers of the Twenty Years Crisis (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995).
- Lloyd, G. E. R., Aristotle: The Growth and Structure of His Thought (London: Cambridge University Press, 1968).
- Loy, David, Nonduality A Study in Comparative Philosophy (New York: Humanity Books, 1998).
- Lucas, F.L., Tragedy: Serious drama in relation to Aristotle's Poetics (London: Hogarth Press, 1966).
- Lusthaus, Dan, Buddhist Phenomenology (Oxon, Routledge: Curzon, 2003).
- Mann, M., Sources of Social Power Vol. I, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1986).
- Marias, Julian, Reason and Life The Introduction to Philosophy (New Haven, Yale University Press 1956).
- Marvin, F.S., The Evolution of World Peace: Essays arranged and edited by F.S. Marvin. (Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, 1933).
- Mason, Henry, Toynbee's Approach to World Politics. (Tulane University, 1958).
- Matsunaga, Daigan, and Matsunaga, Alicia, Foundation of Japanese Buddhism Vol. II

- (Tokyo: Buddhist Books International, 1976).
- Maturana, R. and Varela, F. J., The Tree of Knowledge. (Shambala 1987).
- McCagney, Nancy, Nagarjuna and the Philosophy of Openness (Maryland, Rowman & Littlefield 1997).
- McGlinn, Marguerite., ed., The Trivium: The Liberal Arts of Logic, Grammar, and Rhetoric. Sister Miriam Joseph (Philadelphia: Paul Dry Books, 2002).
- McLeod, Alan L., ed., Walt Whitman: A Study in the Evolution of Personality by Jan Christian Smuts (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1973).
- McLuhan, Marshall, The Classical Trivium: The Place of Thomas Nash In The Learning of His Time, ed., W. Terrence Gordon (California: Ginko Press, 2006).
- McDougall, W., Body and Mind: A History and Defense of Animalism. (London: Methuen 1928).
- McIntire, C.T. and Perry, Marvin, eds., Toynbee: Reappraisals (University of Toronto Press, 1989).
- McNeil, W.H., Arnold J. Toynbee, A Life (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).
- Mehta, Ved, Fly and the Fly Bottle: Encounters with British Intellectuals (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1962).
- Melko, Matthew, The Nature of Civilizations (Boston: Porter Sargent 1969).
- Montagu, A., The Nature of Human Aggression. (New York: OUP 1976).
- Moore, Charles A., The Japanese Mind, (Honolulu University of Hawaii Press 1967).
- Moore, Charles A., The Chinese Mind, (Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press 1967).
- Morgenthau, Hans, Politics Among Nations. (McGraw Hill, 1993).

- Morton S. Fiona, A Bibliography of Arnold J. Toynbee (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980).
- Nagao, G.M., Madhyamika and Yogacara : A Study of Mahayana Philosophies translator Kawamura (Albany, State University of New York Press, 1991).
- Natrass, Gail and Spies ,S.B., eds., Memoirs of the Boer War Jan Christian Smuts (Johannesburg: J.Ball, 1994)
- Nichol, Lee, ed., On Dialogue: David Bohm (London: Routledge, 1992)
- Nicolson Harold, Peacemaking 1919 (Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1984)
- Nicholson, Michael, Formal Theories in International Relations (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
- Ng, Yu-Kwan, T'ien-t'ai Buddhism and Early Madhyamika (Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press 1993).
- Oakshott, Michael, Experience and Its Modes. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
- Oakshott, Michael, Rationalism in Politics and other Essays (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1991).
- Odysseos, Louiza, The Subject of Coexistence: Otherness in International Relations (London: Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007).
- Olsen, R., and Groom, A.J.R., International Relations Then and Now. (1990).
- Peper, C.B., ed., An Historian's Conscience: The Correspondence of Arnold J. Toynbee and Columba Cary-Elwes, Monk of Ampleforth, (Beacon Press. 1986).
- Perry, Marvin, Arnold Toynbee and the Western Tradition (New York: Peter Lang 1996).

Philips, Stephen H., Classical Indian Metaphysics Refutations of Realism and the Emergence of "New Logic" (Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass 1997).

Piovesana, Gino K., Recent Japanese Philosophical Thought 1862-1962. (Enderle Bookstore, 1963).

Popper, Karl, The World of Parmenides ed., Arne F. Petersen assisted by Jorgen Mejer (New York: Routledge 1998).

Priest, Graham, Beyond the Limits of Thought (Oxford, OUP 2002).

Priest, Graham, Doubt Truth to be a Liar (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 2008).

Priest, Graham, In Contradiction (Oxford, OUP, 2006).

Prigogine, Ilya, The End of Certainty: Time, Chaos, and the New Laws of Nature. (London: The Free Press, 1997).

Puchala, Donald J., Theory and History in International Relations (New York: Routledge, 2003).

Puchala, Donald J., ed., Visions of International Relations: Assessing an Academic Field (Columbia SC: South Carolina Press, 2002).

Puligandla, Ramakrishna & Miller, David, Lee, Buddhism and the Emerging World Civilization (Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Press, 1996).

Reynolds, Suzanne, Medieval Reading: Grammar, Rhetoric and the Classical Text (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

Robin, Leon, Greek Thought and the Origins of the Scientific Spirit (London, Kegan Paul, 1928).

Rorty, Richard, Philosophy and Social Hope (London: Penguin Press 1999).

Russell, Bertrand, History of Western Philosophy and its connection with Political and

Social Circumstances from the Earliest Times to the Present Day. (London: George Allen and Unwin 1946).

Saleh, Zaki, Trevor-Roper's Critique of Arnold Toynbee: A Symptom of Intellectual Chaos (Baghdad: Al-ma'aref Press 1958).

Sandys, John Edwin., A History of Classical Scholarship (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1903).

Samuel, Maurice, The Professor and the Fossil. (Alfred A. Knopf, 1956).

Satow, Ernest, A Diplomat in Japan (ICG Muse Inc. 2001).

Saunders, Dale, E., Buddhism in Japan (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press 1971).

Sen, Amartya, Identity and violence: The illusion of destiny (London: Penguin 2006).

SGL, Dictionary of Buddhism (Tokyo: SGI, 2005).

Singh, Jaidev, An Introduction to Madhyamaka Philosophy (Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 1978).

Slochower, Harry, Literature and Philosophy between Two World Wars: The problem of Alienation in a War Culture, (New York: The Citadel Press, 1964).

Slochower, Harry, Mythopoesis: Mythic Patterns in the Literary Classics (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1970)

Slochower, Harry, No Voice is Wholly Lost: Writers and Thinkers in War and Peace (New York: Creative Age Press, 1945).

Smith, Jean and Toynbee, Arnold, Gilbert Murray: An Unfinished Autobiography (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1960).

Smuts, Jan Christian, Holism and Evolution. Edited by Sanford Holst. (Sierra Sunrise

Books,1996).

Soka Gakkai, The Soka Gakkai Dictionary of Buddhism (Tokyo, Soka Gakkai 2002).

Soothill, W.E., The Lotus of the Wonderful Law (Richmond, Curzon Press 1994).

Staten, Henry, Wittgenstein and Derrida (University of Nebraska Press; 1986).

Stcherbatsky, Theodore, Madhyanta-Vibhanga Discourse on Discrimination between Middle and Extremes. (Delhi, Munshiram Manharial 1978).

Stcherbatsky, Theodore., Buddhist Logic Part One (Kessinger Publishing 1930).

Stcherbatsky, Th., and Singh, Jaideva., The Conception of Buddhist Nirvana (Delhi, Motilal Barnarsidass, 2003).

Steuart, R.H.J., The Inward Vision (London: Longmans; 1930).

Stone, Jacqueline, Original Enlightenment and the Transformation of Medieval Japanese Buddhism (Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press,1999).

Stromberg, Roland N., Arnold J. Toynbee, Historian for an Age of Crisis. (Southern Illinois Press. 1972).

Stromberg, Roland, N., European Intellectual History Since 1789 (New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc., 1986).

Swabey, Mary Collins, The Judgment of History. (Philosophical Library, 1954).

Swanson, Paul, The Foundations of T'ien-T'ai Philosophy: The Flowering of The Two Truths Theory In Chinese Buddhism (USA: Asian Humanities Press, 1989).

Taber, John, A., Transformative Philosophy A Study of Sankara, Fichte and Heidegger (Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press, 1983).

Tanabe Jr. George, J. and Tanabe, Willa J., The Lotus Sutra in Japanese Culture

(Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press, 1989).

Thomas, Edward J., The History of Buddhist Thought (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971).

Thompson, Kenneth, Toynbee's Philosophy of World History and Politics (Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1985).

Thompson, K., Schools of thought in international relations: interpreters, issues, and morality. (Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1996).

Thompson, Kenneth W., Masters of International Thought. (Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press. 1990).

Thomas, Scott, M., The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005).

Thurmann, Robert, A.F., The Holy Teaching of Vimalakirti A Mahayana Scripture (Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass 1991).

Toynbee, Arnold, J., Acquaintances. (Oxford University Press, London. 1967).

Toynbee, Arnold, J., Change and Habit: The Challenge of Our Time (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 1992).

Toynbee, Arnold, J. and Ikeda, Daisaku, Choose Life: A Dialogue (Oxford: OUP 1989).

Toynbee, Arnold, J., Christianity and Civilization. Burge Memorial Lecture (London, Student Christian Movement Press, 1940).

Toynbee Arnold J., Civilization on Trial (Oxford University Press, London and New York: 1948).

Toynbee, Arnold, J., The Conduct of British Empire Relations Since The Peace Settlement (London: Oxford University Press, 1928).

Toynbee, Arnold, J., Experiences (London: Oxford University Press 1969).

Toynbee, Arnold, J., Greek Civilization and Character: The Self-Revelation of Ancient Greek Society. Introduction & Translation by Arnold J. Toynbee (New York: Mentor Books 1953).

Toynbee, Arnold, J., Greek Historical Thought: From Homer To The Age Of Heraclitus. Introduction & Translation by Arnold J. Toynbee, with two pieces newly translated by Gilbert Murray (J.M.Dent & Sons Ltd. MCMXXIV).

Toynbee, Arnold, J., The League in the East. (British Periodicals Ltd. London. 1920).

Toynbee, Arnold, J., Mankind and Mother Earth (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1976).

Toynbee, Arnold, J., The Murderous Tyranny of the Turks (Hodder and Stoughton 1917).

Toynbee, Arnold, J., Nationality and the War. (Dent, London 1915).

Toynbee, Arnold, J., The New Europe: Some Essays in Reconstruction (London: Dent, 1916).

Toynbee, Arnold, J., The Prospects of Western Civilization (New York: Columbia University Press, 1949).

Toynbee, Arnold, J., A Study of History Vol. I-VI Abridgment of Volumes I-VI by Somervell D.C (Oxford University Press, 1974).

Toynbee, Arnold, J., A Study of History Vol. VII-X Abridgment of Volumes I-VI By Somervell D.C. Oxford University Press, 1974.

Toynbee, Arnold, J., A Study of History Vols. I-X (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1934-54).

Toynbee, Arnold, J., A Study of History Vol. XII, Reconsiderations (London; Oxford

University Press, 1961).

Toynbee, Arnold, J., Surviving the Future. (London: Oxford University Press 1971).

Toynbee, Arnold, J., Survey of International Affairs 1920-23 (London: Oxford University Press, 1925).

Toynbee, Arnold, J., Survey of International Affairs 1926 (London: Oxford University Press, 1928).

Toynbee, Arnold, J., Survey of International Affairs 1927 (London: Oxford University Press, 1929).

Toynbee, Arnold, J., and Ikeda, Daisaku, The Toynbee- Ikeda Dialogue: Man Himself Must Choose. (Tokyo: Kodansha International Ltd. 1982).

Toynbee, Arnold, J., and Urban, G.R., Toynbee on Toynbee (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974).

Toynbee, Arnold, J., The Tragedy of Greece (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1921).

Toynbee, Arnold, J., War and Civilization (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1951).

Toynbee, Arnold, J., The Western Question in Greece and Turkey: A Study in the Contact of Civilizations (London: Milford, 1922)

Verdu, Alfonso, Early Buddhist Philosophy (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass 1985).

Waltz, Kenneth, Theory of International Politics (Reading: Addison-Wesley 1979).

Waltz, Kenneth, Man, the State and War: A theoretical analysis. (Columbia University Press 1959).

Wang, Gungwu, Bind us in Time. Nation and Civilization in Asia. (Eastern Universities Press. 2003).

Wang, Gungwu, Anglo-Chinese Encounters since 1800. (Cambridge University Press.

2003).

Watson, Burton, trans. The Lotus Sutra. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

Watson, Burton, The Record of the Orally Transmitted Teachings, (Tokyo, Soka Gakkai, 2004).

Watson, Burton, The Vimalakirti Sutra, (New York, Columbia University Press 1997).

Watson, J.B., Behaviourism. (New York: W.W.Norton 1924).

Webb, Keith, An Introduction to Problems in the Philosophy of Social Sciences. (Pinter. 1995).

Weber, Alfred, History of Philosophy, translated by Frank Thilly (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925),

Weber, Alfred, Farewell to European History: or The Conquest of Nihilism. (Greenwood Press, Connecticut, 1977).

White, Hayden, Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe. (John Hopkins University Press. 1983).

Whitehead, Alfred North, Science and the Modern World (New York: The Free Press, 1967).

Williams, Paul, Mahayana Buddhism The Doctrinal Foundations (Oxon, Routledge, 2007).

Willis, Janice Dean, On Knowing Reality (Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass 2002).

Wilson, Duncan, Gilbert Murray OM. (Clarendon Press, Oxford 1987).

Wilson, George M., Radical Nationalist in Japan: Kita Ikki, 1883-1937 (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1969).

Windschuttle, Keith, The Killing of History (Encounter Books, San Francisco, 1996).

Winetrout, Kenneth, Arnold Toynbee (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1975).

Winetrout, Kenneth, After One is Dead: Essays in Honour of Toynbee's Centennial.
(Hillside Press, 1989).

Yatomi, Shin, Buddhism in a New Light, (Santa Monica: World Tribune Press, 2006).

Yoshinori, Takeuchi, Buddhist Spirituality (Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass 1995).

Articles from Journals and/or Books.

Altree, Wayne, "Toynbee and Chinese History" in Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews Ed. M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 243-272.

Arthur Bestor, review of Toynbee's last four volumes in the Progressive, December 1954, 32.

Ashley Montagu, M.F., "Editors foreword" in Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), vii-x.

Bagby, Philip, (Times Literary Supplement) "A Personal View of History" in Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 103-110.

Barker, Sir Ernest, "Dr Toynbee's Study of History" in Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 89-102.

Baumer, Micheal, "Chasing Aristotle's Categories Down the Tree of Grammar."
Journal of Philosophical Research XVIII: (1993), 341-449.

Biersteker, Thomas, J., "Reflections on Post-Positivism in International Relations" in

International Studies Quarterly, Vol. 33., No. 3 (Sept., 1989), 263-267.

Bleiker, Roland, "Forget IR Theory" in The Zen of International Relations: IR Theory from East to West Eds. Stephen Chan, Peter Mandaville and Roland Bleiker (Hampshire:Palgrave 2001), 37-66, (44).

Bleiker, Roland, "The Aesthetic Turn in International Political Theory," Millennium: Journal of International Studies Vol. 30, No. 3 (2001), 509-533.

Bock Kenneth, E. Review of A Study of History, Volume XII: Reconsiderations. By Arnold J.Toynbee, in History and Theory, Vol. 2, No. 3. (1963), 301-307.

Brewin, Christopher, "Arnold Toynbee, Chatham House, and Research in a Global Context," in Thinkers of the Twenty Years Crisis, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 277-301.

Brown, Chris, "'Tragic Choices' and Contemporary International Political Theory" in International Relations Vol. 21, No.5, (2007) 5-13.

Catlin, George, "Toynbee's Study of History", in Montagu Toynbee and History: Critical Essays ad Reviews ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher,1956), 167-171.

Chan, Stephen, "Culture and Absent Epistemologies in the International Relations Discipline', Theoria, Vols. 81/82, (1993).

Chan, Stephen, "Encountering the Philosophy of Gadamer" *Contemporary Review*, Spring 2008 v290 i1688. 1-13.

Chan, Stephen, "Reliving the Boxer uprising: or, the restricted meaning of civilization" in Meaning and international relations Eds. Peter Mandaville and Andrew Williams (London: Routledge 2003), 153-159.

Chan, Stephen, and Mandaville, Peter, "Introduction: Within International Relations Itself, a new culture Rises Up" in The Zen of International Relations: IR Theory from East to West, Eds. Chan Stephen, Mandaville Peter and Bleiker Roland (Hampshire: Palgrave 2001), 1-14.

Charles, David, The Oxford Companion to Philosophy Ed. Ted Honderich (Oxford: OUP, 1995), 54.

Coulborn, Rushton, "Fact and Fiction in Toynbee's Study of History", Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 148-66.

Daishonin, Nichiren, "The True Aspect of All Phenomena" in The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin, Editor-Translator: The Goshō Translation Committee (Tokyo: Soka Gakkai, 1999), 383-88.

Dawson Christopher, "The Place of Civilizations in History", in Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 129-39.

Eban Abba, "The Toynbee Heresy" in Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 320-37.

Frost, Mervyn, "Tragedy, Ethics and International Relations", International Relations Vol.17 No.4 (2003) 477-495.

Gargan, Edward, T., "Introduction" in The Intent of Toynbee's History edited by Edward T. Gargan, (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1961), 1-25.

George, Jim, "International Relations and the Search for Thinking Space: Another View of the Third Debate" in International Studies Quarterly, Vol. 33, No. 3 (Sept., 1989), 269-279.

Guzzini, Stefano, and Leander, Anna, "Wendt's constructivism: a relentless quest for synthesis" in Stefano Guzzini and Anna Leander, eds., Constructivism and International Relations: Alexander Wendt and his Critics, (New York, Routledge, 2005), 73-92.

Hall, Ian, "Sir Herbert Butterfield, Arnold J. Toynbee and Martin Wight and the crisis of

international politics: a study in international thought" Unpublished PhD Thesis, (University of St Andrews June 2003).

Harvey, Frank, and Cobb, Joel, "Multiple Dialogues, Layered Syntheses, and the Limits of Expansive Cumulation" in International Studies Review No.5 , (2003), 144-147)

Hellman, Gunther, "Are dialogue and Synthesis Possible in International Relations?" in International Studies Review No.5 , (2003), 123-153.

Hellman, Gunther, "Conclusion: Dialogue and Synthesis in Individual Scholarship and Collective Inquiry" in International Studies Review No.5 , (2003), 149-153.

Holsti, K. J., "Mirror on the Wall, Which are the Fairest Theories of All?" in International Studies Quarterly, Vol. 33, No. 3 (Sept., 1989), 255-261.

Joll, James, a review of *Arnold J. Toynbee: A Life.*, by William H. McNeill
The Journal of Modern History, Vol. 63, No. 2, A Special Issue on Modern France. (Jun., 1991), 362-363.

Kajiyama Yuichi, The Saddharmapundarika and Sunyata Thought in Journal of Oriental Studies, Vol.10 (IOP: Tokyo, 2000), 72-96.

King, Richard, "Early Yogacara and its Relationship with the Madhyamaka School"
Philosophy East & West Vol.44, No.4, October 1994, 659-683.

Kratchochwil, Friedrich, "The Monologue of "Science" in International Studies Review No.5 , (2003), 124-128.

Lapid, Yosef, "On the Prospects of International Theory in a Post-Positivist Era" in International Studies Quarterly, Vol. 33, No. 3 (Sep., 1989), 235-254.

Lapid, Yosef, "Through Dialogue to Engaged Pluralism: The Unfinished Business of the Third Debate" in International Studies Review No.5 , (2003), 128-131.

Lean, Tangean, "A Study of Toynbee," in M.F. Ashley Montagu, ed., Toynbee and

- History: Critical Essays and Reviews (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1956), 12-38.
- Mayall, James, "Tragedy, Progress and the International Order: A Response to Frost" International Relations Vol.17. No.4 (2003), 497-503.
- McIntire, C.T., review of Kenneth W. Thompson, *Toynbee's Philosophy of World History and Politics* (Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1985) in, The American Historical Review, Vol. 92, No. 4 (Oct, 1987), 924-925.
- McNeil, H. William, "Arnold Joseph Toynbee 1899-1975, Obituary in *Proceedings of the British Academy* Volume LXIII 1977, (Oxford: OUP, 1977), 441-469.
- McNeill, William, H., "Some basic assumptions of Toynbee's *A Study of History*" in Edward T. Gargan, ed., The Intent of Toynbee's History (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1961), 41.
- Moravcsik, Andrew, "Theory Synthesis in International relations: Real not Metaphysical" in International Studies Review No.5 , (2003), 131-136.
- Morgenthau Hans, "Toynbee and the Historical Imagination" in M.F. Ashley Montague, ed., Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews (Porter Sargent: Boston, 1956), 191-99.
- Mumford, Lewis, "The Napoleon of Notting Hill" in M.F. Ashley Montagu ed., Toynbee and History: Critical Essay and Reviews (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1956), 140-47.
- Navari, Cornelia, "Arnold Toynbee: Prophecy and Civilization," Review of International Studies, Vol.26 (2000), 289-301.
- Ned Lebow, Richard, "Tragedy, Politics and Political Science" International Relations Vol.19. No. 3. (2005), 329-336.
- Nuemann, Iver, B., "International Relations as Emergent Bakhtinian Dialogue" in International Studies Review No.5 , (2003), 137-140.
- Rengger, Nicholas, "Tragedy or Scepticism? Defending the Anti-Pelagian Mind in

World Politics" International Relations Vol.19. No.3. (2005), 321-328.

Reynier, G.J., "Toynbee's Study of History" in Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 73-76.

Ryodo, Shioiri, The Meaning of the Formation and Structure of the Lotus Sutra in Tanabe Jr. George, J. and Tanabe, Willa J. The Lotus Sutra in Japanese Culture (Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press, 1989), 15-36.

Said Edward, The Clash of Ignorance (The Nation 2001, October 22).

Smith, Steve, "Dialogue and the Reinforcement of Orthodoxy in International Relations" in International Studies Review No.5 , (2003), 141-143.

Soffer, Reba N., a review of *Arnold J. Toynbee: A Life.*, by William H. McNeill The American Historical Review, Vol. 96, No. 3. (Jun., 1991), 821-22.

Somerville, J., "The Nature of Reality: Dialectical Materialism" The Philosophy of Marxism: An Exposition. (Minneapolis: Marxist Educational Press. 1967), 3-39.

Somerville, J., "The Nature of Thought: Logic and Dialectics" In The Philosophy of Marxism: An Exposition. (Minneapolis: Marxist Educational Press, 1983), 41-77.

Sorokim, Pitikrim, "Toynbee's Philosophy of History", in Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 172-90.

Stone, Lawrence, "Historical Consequences and Happy Families" Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 112-14.

Taber, John, A., "On Nagarjuna's So-called Fallacies: a Comparative Approach" in Indo-Iranian Journal Volume 41, Number 3, July 1998. Springer Netherlands, 213-44.

Taylor, A.J.P., "Much Learning" in Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews

ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 115-17.

Thompson, Kenneth, W., "Toynbee's Approach to History" in Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 200-20.

Toynbee, Arnold., "Interview by Norman MacKenzie" in Playboy April 1967, 57-76, 166-69.

Toynbee, Arnold., "I Owe my Thanks" in Saturday Review, October 2, 1954. 13-16, 52-55.

Toynbee Arnold J. The Virtue of the Middle Way, with a reply by Professor Carr. Listener, XXXVI (36), (14 November, 1946) No. 931, 661+679.

Toynbee, Arnold, J., "A Study of History: What I am Trying to Do" in M.F. Ashley Montague ed., Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews (Porter Sargent, Boston, 1956), 3-7.

Trevor-Roper, Hugh, "Arnold Toynbee's Millennium" in Encounter Vol. 8 No.6 (London: June, 1957), 14-28.

Trevor-Roper, Hugh, "Testing the Toynbee System" in Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 122-24.

Voegelin, Eric, "Toynbee's History as a search for truth" in Edward T. Gargan, ed., The Intent of Toynbee's History (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1961), 183-98.

Walker Linus, "Toynbee and Religion A Catholic View" in Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 338-46.

Walsh, W.H., "The End of a Great Work" in Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews ed., M.F. Ashley Montagu (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1956), 125-128.

Wendt, Alexander, "Anarchy is What States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics," International Organization 46, No. 2, Spring 1992, 391-425.

Wendt, Alexander, "Social Theory As Cartesian Science: An Auto-Critique From A Quantum Perspective," in Stefano Guzzini and Anna Leander Ed., Constructivism and International Relations: Alexander Wendt and his Critics, (New York, Routledge, 2005), 181-219.

Wight, Martin, review of *Toynbee und das Problem der Geschichte: eine Auseinandersetzung mit dem Evolutionismus* by Ernst F. J. Zahn The British Journal of Sociology, Vol. 6, No. 4. (Dec., 1955), 389-390.

Wuthnow, Robert, "Understanding Religion and Politics" in Daedalus: Summer 1991; 120,3. 1-20.