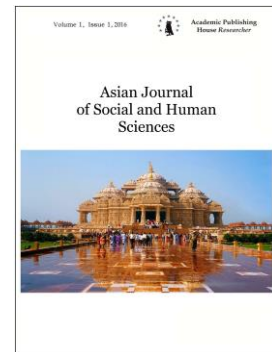


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## Evolution of mentality, politics, law, and social affairs during the past century

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### Abstract

The article compares the development of the First World nations to that of the Third World nations regarding the development of worldview, domestic and international politics, punishment law, and social affairs such as social participation, gender relations, and child care. The article shows that the whole premodern world before 1700 was characterized by an archaic worldview consisting of magic and superstition, by unfree political systems, by high rates of violence within and between nations, by a brutal punishment law, and by oppression of lower classes, women, and children. The era of Enlightenment after 1700 originated for the first time in history a complete modification of this premodern system, leading to democracy, civil society, constitutional state, to a decline of violence within and between nations, to the humane form of punishment law, to the emancipation of lower classes and women, and to improvements of child care. This process of modernization and civilization was initially confined to Western countries and Japan. However, especially after 1945 the process of globalization caused modernization processes right across the whole world, including all dimensions of culture, law, morals, and politics mentioned. The social, political, and cultural gap, opened after 1700 in favor of Japan and Western nations, has been closing after 1945 and especially after 1975. Globalization therefore implies the worldwide success of the civilization process, as described, for example, by N. Elias or S. Pinker. The article argues that it is necessary and possible to describe the psychological dimension of these processes of modernization and globalization. The usual procedure amongst social scientists to describe these phenomena by ignoring the psychological dimension in favor of institutional and materialistic factors only is insufficient. The article demonstrates that developmental and cross-cultural psychology is capable to describe the psychological modifications of people going from premodern to modern societies. Moreover, these psychological advancements are carrying the modifications of political, social, judicial, and moral culture described. On the whole, the new approach called structural-genetic theory programme intends to replace previous approaches written by N. Elias, E. E. Hagen, A. Inkeles, and others.

**Keywords:** Developmental psychology, cross-cultural psychology, advanced nations, developing countries, worldview, democracy, dictatorship, law, violence, war, slavery, feudalism, human rights, gender relations, child care.

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## 1. Introduction

The industrialization and modernization started in Europa and the U.S.A. from 1750 onwards. Before that time, the cultural and economic differences between Asia and the Western world were not as big as they became later, especially between 1750 and 1950. Before 1750, all great nations were agrarian civilizations only. The world before 1750 consisted of hunter and gatherer societies, nomadic and peasant societies, and the agrarian civilizations. Most of societies existed more or less isolated from foreign and global influences, at least in comparison to the currently high rate of exchanges of information, merchandise, and travelling. In the time 1750 to 1950 the industrialization and modernization of the West and Japan modified the world order tremendously. The advancement of economy, sciences, technology, military, and culture in the modern world widened the gap between the frontrunners and backbenchers of development, mainly between the northern and the southern hemisphere. After 1500 and especially after 1800 the Western nations conquered and occupied the biggest part of the underdeveloped world. Largely between 1850 and 1950 the southern hemisphere was colonized and ruled by some nations of the northern hemisphere. During this colonial time, modern influences such as knowledge, education, administration, technologies, factories, enterprises, etc. penetrated and changed the underdeveloped world. The Western influences caused the modernization and industrialization of the southern hemisphere already in the 19<sup>th</sup> century but with remarkable successes mainly during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, the huge gap between the developed and underdeveloped world being on its peak between 1850 and 1950 started to close especially in the time after 1950. Currently, there are many threshold countries in the south that are approaching the stages of the most advanced nations. The economic power has shifted from the Western world to the big Asian nations that are to regain their economic overweight that they had before 1700. Globalization implies the modernization and industrialization of the whole world. This process favors the most populated nations, which are the Asian ones ([Oesterdiekhoff, 2005, 2006](#)).

Globalization theories usually thematize only economic, social, political and cultural phenomena. In case they consider subjective phenomena, then only by regarding values, norms, religions, or socialpsychological phenomena. This article here intends to base the research of globalization and the rise of developing countries upon the cognitive-developmental approach respectively the structural-genetic theory programme. It follows therefore ideas J. Piaget (1974, 1959b), N. Elias (1982), J. Ziegler (1968), J. Habermas (1989), C. Hallpike (1979, 2004), etc. have put forward. Piagetian cross-cultural psychology has evidenced in the past 80 years that people of the most advanced nations of today attain more or less the formal-operational stage, while people of the developing nations, especially in their traditional, archaic or illiterate milieus, stay either on preoperational or concrete operational stages or on mixtures of both ([Dasen & Berry, 1974](#); [Hallpike, 1979](#); [Mogdil & Mogdil, 1976, vol. 8](#); [Oesterdiekhoff, 2009, 2011, 2016c, d](#)). The rise of the higher stages has been taking place in the industrialized countries over some several hundred years and even during the past century and decades, whereas people in the underdeveloped world have been behind this advancement. Nonetheless, the modernization of the developing countries over the past 100 years has implied their psychological advancement, too. Correspondingly, there are milieus with educated persons right across the whole southern hemisphere staying on the formal operational stages, sharing the same humanitarian, social, cultural, and political standards and values that characterize advanced milieus in the Western hemisphere. Probably more common are, however, psychological structures that are behind the higher stages typical for educated humans of the most advanced nations. Thus, great percentages of humans in the developing nations, not or only partially staying on the formal operational stage, manifest corresponding behavior patterns, archaic norms, superstitions, customs, etc. humans of the most advanced nations have surmounted 50, 100 or 500 years ago respectively. Some smaller percentages even exhibit still more backward stages and corresponding patterns of behavior and mind ([Hallpike, 1979](#); [Oesterdiekhoff, 2009, 2011, 2013](#)).

On the whole, the globalization of the world also implies the rise of psychological stages right across the world, with frontbenchers and backbenchers. The humanization of world and society in domestic and foreign politics, gender relations, child rearing, punishment law, etc., largely depends on the future advancement of psychological structures within the developing nations.

This article here wants to analyse the psychological structures, describable in terms of developmental psychology, that cause and carry the belief systems and superstitions, the political structures, the punishment law, and the social affairs such as gender relations of the developing nations. The article evidences the necessity of the application of the cognitive-developmental approach in order to be able to explain the existing phenomena mentioned and to predict their future modification.

## 2. Discussion and results

### *Piagetian cross-cultural psychology*

According to the Swiss school of developmental psychology, human development from birth to adulthood runs through four main stages. The sensorymotor stage is followed by the preoperational stage, then by the concrete operational stage, and finally by the adolescent stage of formal operations. The first three stages characterize children's developments, while the fourth stage unfolds stepwise between the tenth and the twentieth year of life or even beyond (Piaget & Inhelder, 1969; Mogdil & Mogdil, 1976). Basically, every year between 0 and 25 can be a full developmental year, making possible the attainment of higher psychological structures. Consequently, the four main stages can be differentiated in many more stages. Research distinguishes at least between the substages A and B within the fourth stage. The main motor behind human development is the brain maturation during ontogenesis, not having accomplished before the year 25 roughly. Humans in the modern, industrial societies run through the first three stages and usually establish at least substage A within the formal operational stage. Roughly 30-50 % of modern humans attain substage B, too, usually not before the 15<sup>th</sup> year of life (Oesterdiekhoff, 2009, 2011, 2016c, d).

Piagetian cross-cultural psychology evidenced over the past 80 years that humans in premodern, archaic or traditional social milieus initially run through the same stages as modern humans do. They develop more or less the sensorymotor or preoperational stages the same way as modern humans do. However, they develop the concrete operational stage not always and when, very often limited to some areas. Usually they do not develop the formal operational stage but remain staying on the previous stages. On the whole, although there are higher percentages of people in developing countries which develop the fourth stage, those people living in remote, traditional or illiterate milieus within the developing countries stay on the lower stages. This is the apparent result of more than 1000 empirical studies conducted right across the continents, nations, and regions (Dasen, 1977; Dasen & Berry, 1974; Luria, 1982; Hallpike, 1979; Mogdil & Mogdil, 1976, vol. 8; Piaget, 1974; Oesterdiekhoff, 2009, 2011).

The main cause to this uneven development is the unequal exposure to child training, kindergarten, school education, job requirements, etc. The improvements in education and professional life in the modern nations over the past 100 or 150 years have fostered and risen the psychological stage development, making a great difference between the stage summits of the previous and the current generations within the modern nations. Likewise, the uneven availability and accessibility to modern education and professional life within the developing nations causes the divergent psychological stage developments humans of these nations run through. While highly educated people within the developing nations reach more or less the same stages as those of the developed nations, the illiterate or poorly educated people, living in premodern or underprivileged social settings, stay on preoperational or concrete operational stages or on mixtures of both. In fact, future improvements in education and economy will be able to cause further psychological developments in the developing world, thus closing the psychological gap between the south and the north (Flynn, 1980, 2007; Dasen & Berry, 1974; Hallpike, 1979; Oesterdiekhoff, 2009, 2011; Mogdil & Mogdil, 1976).

When adult humans do not develop the adolescent stage of formal operations then they share with children the same psychological stages and structures but differ from them in life experience and knowledge (that what does not depend from stages) (Hallpike, 1979; Oesterdiekhoff, 2009, 2011; 2012, Werner, 1948). People staying on different stages live in totally different psychological worlds. They experience themselves, the social and physical world, morals, politics, religion, etc. differently. Different stages concern the development of the understanding of logic, physics, social, moral, political, and religious phenomena.

**Table 1.** Human development and mankind's history

Typical age in modern societies. Likewise "psychological age"	Psychological stage	Type of society	Main features of the psychological stage
From birth to 2 years	Sensorymotor	Mammal societies	Practical intelligence in space and time without language.
2-8	Preoperational	Some premodern societies	Weak reasoning abilities and low sense for reality. Fairy tale worldview, childish understanding of physics and world, weak understanding of causality, lack of logical competences. Numbers are unknown. Animism and belief in metamorphosis of beings into each other. Belief in man-made magical power over things and beings. Belief in oracles, punishment of unintended consequences, animals, and things, and eternal rules. Nature is ruled by gods, ghosts, and magicians. Authoritarian forms of social relations and severe punishments prevail.
6-12	Concrete operations	Some premodern societies	Logical operations on the handling of objects appear. Belief in man-made magic and animistic schemes and other irrational belief systems such as immanent justice or realistic dream understandings diminish. Belief in fairy tales and superstitions dilute. Authoritarian forms of government and severe punishments persist.
10-20	Formal operations	Modern, industrial societies (after 1700)	The emergence of the adolescent stage of psyche and personality, not before the era of Enlightenment existent. It implies a breakthrough of rationality, reflectivity, foresight, morality, and social competences. The preconditions to the scientific and empirical-causal worldview emerge. Disappearance of magical and animistic schemes and other forms of mysticism. Disenchantment of the worldview. Emergence of sciences and modern, industrial society. Start of the humanitarian revolution, human rights, democracy, constitutional state, and liberty rights. Transformation in pedagogics, class relations, gender relations, and punishment law, abolishment of serfdom and feudalism. The adolescent stage causes therefore both modern personality and modern society.

#### *Cognition and worldview*

The cognitive-developmental approach explains the divergent minds and worldviews of premodern and modern people. While people on the formal-operational stage have surmounted the magical-animistic worldview and corresponding practices and beliefs, people on the prior stages still share archaic beliefs similar to children who believe in ghosts and monsters. People

living in hunter and gatherer societies, nomadic and peasant societies, the great agrarian civilizations and archaic regions of developing countries have often problems with logical conclusions such as syllogisms or simple arithmetic operations, believe in myths and fairy tales, in magic, sorcery, and witchcraft, in magical mastering of weather, storms, illness, and social affairs, in the magical causation of every single death, even those originating in old age or accident, accompanied by revenge afflicted to those who are identified to be the magical murderers, believe in the magical power of dead ancestors, dead parents and grandparents, capable to steer the lives of their descendants by sending incidents, feed divinities with food and drink, believe animals would think like humans do, therefore adoring them as gods or magicians or bringing them before courtyard, assuming in their full legal responsibility and commitment to human society, with all consequences human delinquents would envisage, too, etc. (Evans-Pritchard, 1937; Evans, 1906; Lévy-Bruhl, 1923, 1931, 1985; Hallpike, 1979; Ibarra, 2007; Oesterdiekhoff, 2009, 2011, 2015b; Wuttke, 1860; Frazer, 1994).

I want to show the differences in more detail here with regard to a few examples only. Children up to their 10<sup>th</sup> year roughly do not understand hypothetical-deductive and syllogistic conclusions. They are capable to “empirical deductions” but not to “theoretical deductions” because they do not combine the sentences logically, do not understand quantifiers such as “all” or “some” and do not accept contra-intuitive premises (Piaget, 1959a). Cross-cultural psychology showed the same phenomenon regarding premodern adults right across the continents and cultures over the past 100 years. High percentages of adults living in developing regions answer the same way as children do. The test psychologists explain the deficiencies the same way as child psychologists do (Luria, 1982; Tulviste, 1979; Cole & Scribner, 1974; Hallpike, 1979; Oesterdiekhoff, 2009, 2011, 2016c, d). This phenomenon implies that the treatment of abstract problem solutions and logical discussions are severely hampered and often impossible.

The lower psychological stages respectively the child’s psyche account to the forms of magic and superstition prevalent in premodern societies. A great wave of decline in magical beliefs in Europe started after 1200, the next one in the era of Enlightenment and later on, penetrating the whole society during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Nonetheless, many of the magical beliefs, that nowadays are totally vanished in Europe, typical for hunter and gatherer societies such as Black Australians or Papua, still existed around 1850 or 1900 in Europe. Smaller or greater percentages of Europeans still believed at that time in witches, sorcerers, ghosts, in magical powers of priests to make storm and good weather, in the power of the evil eye, in the magical causation of death caused by malevolent neighbors, in magical protection against bullets, etc. (Wuttke, 1860; Frazer, 1994). The measurable increase of stage development and intelligence after 1950 practically eradicated these last forms of magical beliefs in the industrialized nations.

The great ethnological books described the prevalence of these forms of magic and superstition in the southern hemisphere in societies that have been vanished mostly during the past 100 – 200 years. The modernization of societies and the psychological development of peoples caused the steady decrease of magical beliefs and superstition in the developing nations over the past generations. Higher or smaller percentages of people in developing countries have surmounted these beliefs the same way as the people living in the most advanced nations. However, it is quite obvious that the decline of these childish beliefs runs differently depending of nations, ethnicities, regions, and social milieus. Belief in witchcraft and sorcery is to find by now right across the developing continents. It is still custom to accuse persons for having caused epidemics such as HIV or Ebola, starvation or storms, accidents or turmoil. Even death penalty for witches and sorcerers is being practiced in many more or less backward regions of the world. Some reports document even the ordeal practice to discover witches and sorcerers with dozens or hundreds of practically innocent victims expecting death penalty. Magical practices to make weather, rain, crop fertility, love success, etc. are yet common in many regions of the world. Often enough, people in developmental regions still today prefer shamans or magicians in case of medical treatments instead of visiting hospitals or medical doctors. They understand illness as mystical phenomena treatable only by appropriate measures basing on magic. They frequently trust more on their shamans than on medical doctors and scientific medicine. The belief in ghosts living in forests and rivers, scaring at night and bringing misfortune, is still prevalent in many milieus within the developing nations. Often enough, belief in the power of ghosts influences the daily activities tremendously. Especially the belief in the magical power of the dead parents and



grandparents still takes a great place in people's everyday activities (Signer, 2004; Schoormann, 2005; Oesterdiekhoff, 2009, 2011, 2015b; Oesterdiekhoff & Rindermann, 2007).

Many observers will believe in the future persistence of these practices and beliefs as they are assumed as being ingredient parts of local cultures and ethnic identities. However, not only the northern examples but also the observable decline of these beliefs in the current developing nations will reveal a future decline of these childish belief systems and practices in favor of those forms of disenchantment that are common in the most advanced nations of today.

#### *Evolution of domestic politics*

Usually, social scientists assume that struggle for power or class constellations be the main or the only reasons for the development of political institutions such as democracy or dictatorship. Mostly they have no idea that the cognitive-developmental approach offers an alternative theory to these political phenomena. The aim of this chapter is to show that different psychological stages even in the current global situation cause the distribution of the divergent political systems and the continuously ongoing overweight of democracy and civil state.

Developmental psychology has clearly shown that initially children do not understand the structure of democracy, tolerance with dissident opinions, the principles of liberal rights, and rather are in favor of strong leadership and strict authority. Children originally believe that there is a leader who rules alone the country, making decisions and issuing magical influence that alone shape the country's future. They regard the president or prime minister as some kind of god or father who masters the country the same way as the father of their families (Adelson & Bell, 1970; Damon, 1977; Easton & Hess, 1962; Selman, 1980).

Thereby the chief follows rules that are unchangeable, holy, or eternal. Children initially do not distinguish rules, customs, laws, and physical regularities. They regard physical laws as norms imposed by gods, and conversely, moral laws as unchangeable like physical regularities. In fact, children break or modify rules but they have no idea of doing so; they understand their modifications or ignorance as some kind of their maintenance. They combine a holy understanding with a scanty praxis (Piaget, 1932; Tapp & Kohlberg, 1971). Piagetian cross-cultural psychology proved that high percentages of premodern people preserve the childlike understanding of law, government, legislation, and authority, too. Premodern adults usually give the same test answers as local children (or modern children). These test results match to the ethnographic descriptions regarding customary laws right across the continents. As children, premodern adults regard laws as unchangeable, as not susceptible to democratic modifications and as not exposed to the will of people. Presidents, kings, or dictators alone, on behalf of god and cosmos, announce "the" law (Hallpike, 2004; Kern, 1952; Radding, 1985; Oesterdiekhoff, 2014a, b, c, 2015a; Post, 1891).

Modern children after their tenth year of life, with the growing formal operations, start to change their ideas on politics. They continuously discover the principles of democracy, liberal rights, tolerance with dissidents, democratic legislation, etc. Rules can be changed but only by democratic procedures and not by decisions of autocrats, as modern adolescents recognize and emphasize. Rules are neither holy nor eternal but modifiable against the wishes of democratic majorities, they say. Modern adolescents do not accept any more dictators but only rulers elected by democratic procedures and governing basing on democratic norms. On the whole, only when people have established the formal operational stage they are capable to replace the authoritarian forms of government and legislation by the democratic forms (Adelson & Bell, 1970; Damon, 1977; Piaget, 1932; Rosenberg, 1988).

Basically, the cognitive-developmental approach explains the universality of authoritarian forms of government right across the whole premodern world. The premodern forms of government consisted of monarchy, aristocracy, tyranny, dictatorship, feudalism, and patriarchalism. There was never any form of a premodern state with guaranteed liberty rights and civil state structures. Apart from the ancient Greece exception, ideas and practices of democracy appeared for the first time in history during the era of enlightenment. Locke, Rousseau and Montesquieu were the first authors in history who formulated the basic principles of democratic legislation and constitutional state. They were the first to establish the formal operational stage regarding politics, legislation and government. The adolescents in the most advanced nations of today run through the same stages of enlightenment and growing political consciousness the

scholars of enlightenment experienced roughly 300 years ago. The modern adolescents surpass the stages of political thought we find among ancient or medieval philosophers writing on politics. The political ideas of Plato, Aristotle, Confucius, Thomas Aquinas, Hobbes, etc. did not correspond to democratic principles but manifest ideas typical to the prior stages of political thought (Oesterdiekhoff, 2015a, 2016d).

Correspondingly, the ideas and theories of democracy were elaborated before their practical realization. This backs the theory that not institutional changes and class constellations but intellectual advancements caused the rise of democracy and constitutional state (Oesterdiekhoff, 2014b, c). The breakthrough of formal operational stage in political thought was limited to some intellectual circles only 300 years ago, conquered then wider circles during the era of enlightenment, the protagonists of the French and American revolutions and their followers. Nevertheless, it needed hundreds of years until the Western societies erected civil society, constitutional state and democracy to higher levels and standards. This stepwise evolution of policy corresponds to the slowly going evolution of formal operational stage in Western people from 1750 to 1950 or beyond. Only in the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the first European nations transformed their political systems to democracy, being already more or less constitutional states for some decades priorly. The fascist movements, the broad support for monarchy and authoritarian government, and the denial of democracy by the churches show that the democratic ideas had no overweight in Europe before 1945. Only with view on the past two generations it is possible to state that the support of democracy has gained an overweight right across the most advanced nations of today.

After decolonization the African nations transformed their political systems to dictatorships, often enough hidden in democratic facades, with elected parliaments, allegedly independent press and judicial courts. Dictatorships and military-based governments were the common forms of governments in Latin America and Asia, too, at least by the eighties of the past century. Japan, India, and some other countries belonged to the few exceptions of existing democratic states in the non-Western world. In the past 30 or 40 years, however, the number of democracies and constitutional states has risen and the number of dictatorships has fallen. Many nations especially in Latin America and Asia have replaced their authoritarian systems by democratic ones (Oesterdiekhoff, 2006, 2014c).

Again it is possible to demonstrate the causal role of psychological development and progress of political consciousness to this transformation. The transformation does not reflect simply institutional modifications but rather the rise of psychological stage development respectively the rise of the formal operational stage. Empirical surveys have shown that many peoples or nations in the Third World prefer authoritarian forms of government and a divine understanding of legislation, and strictly deny democracy (Tibi, 2000). For example, a recent survey among 9.000 people living in 8 Muslim nations showed that more than 80% held the Islamic law as superior to any national law and legislation (Sarrazin, 2015). Current peoples elect parties and politicians that aim to abolish democracy, for example Hamas in Palestine, Hisbollah in Libanon or the Muslim brotherhood in Egypt 2012. The Arabian spring from 2011 was first seen as the first democratic revolution in the Arabian world ever but soon developed otherwise. The elected Muslim brotherhood, for example, immediately started to abolish the principles of democracy and constitutional state, and to oppress minorities. Similar cases have been reported from Black Africa where people elected politicians who were dictators, although knowing about their goals and practices, and supporting their tyranny (Ansprenger, 1997). More recent examples in other regions show that people prefer and elect presidents who manifest authoritarian and anti-democratic patterns of power, abolish principles of constitutional state such as free press and independent courtyards, etc. However, the electorate supports this policy because they prefer “strong” and “strict” forms of government to “weak” (democratic) ones. In fact, the non-democratic structures of these policies do not originate in “institutional power mechanisms” but rather in the political preferences respectively in the political consciousness of the peoples themselves, that is, in their psychological stage development.

According to freedom house, in 2015 44% of all nations worldwide have the status “free”, 30% “not free”, and 26% “partly free”. In 1985, the corresponding numbers had been 34%, 34%, and 33%. From 195 countries, assessed by freedom house in 2016, 86 are free, 59 partly free, and 50 are not free. That is, that 2.9 billion people, covering 40% of the global population, live in free

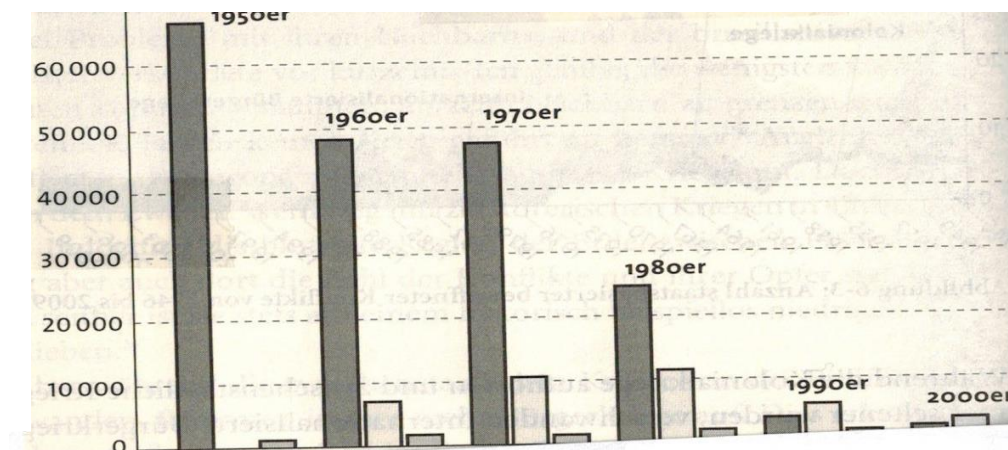
countries (Puddington & Roylance, 2016). Obviously, the Third World cannot quickly establish a political culture for whose development the Western world needed centuries.

#### *Evolution of international policy*

A third of all humans from the stone ages over the era of peasant societies to agrarian civilizations, that is, in the whole premodern era, died from homicide. Both intertribal and intratribal conflicts contributed to this high extent of death rates, often enough to the same extent. Wars, duels, family conflicts, human sacrifices, cannibalism, assassinations caused by magical fears, etc. had their share to this bloody history of humankind. The first states with their police and military forces caused a first decline of conflicts; later on the empires and territorial states enhanced this decline. The death rates declined dramatically after 1600 and especially after 1800 in Europe. Declining numbers of assassinations among civilians and declining numbers of casualties in war conflicts contributed to this trend of pacification (Oesterdiekhoff, 2016a, b; Pinker, 2012; Elias, 1982).

Despite the two world wars and some other conflicts, only 1% of people in North America and Europe (without Russia) died from violence during the past century, after 1945 only 1 per 1000. That implies that, despite of the two terrible world wars, in the most advanced nations between 1900 and 2000, the death rates caused by homicide were 33 times lower in comparison to the rates of the whole premodern period. After 1945, the rates decreased further to only 1/330 (Oesterdiekhoff, 2012). Collecting the numbers globally, the 20<sup>th</sup> century experienced 81 millions of victims in genocides, 40 millions caused by politically imposed starvations (mainly by Mao and Stalin), and 82 millions in wars (Pinker, 2012: 478). It would be necessary to add the global numbers made by “common” crimes. However, even these numbers, originating mainly in Third World nations, reveal death numbers that are far below the numbers of the premodern era, far below the numbers of medieval China, Europe, and India, far below the ancient Mediterranean, and far below tribal societies.

**Table 2.** Graphic: The global decline of homicides during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century



Graphic: Big column: The number of death casualties caused by war per year during decade. The middle column: The same regarding international civil wars. The small column: The same regarding civil wars.

Source: (Pinker, 2012: 454)

The worldwide trend of pacification, having started already in antiquity, enhanced after 1500, continued during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. This process of civilization reached a new peak after 1945, a development never seen before in world history. Wars became a rare form of conflict or vanished in both Americas, in Europe and greater parts of Asia. Even Africa has experienced a process of pacification during the past decade. Wars for conquest reasons practically disappeared from the globe's scenery, with only a few exceptions left (Czempiel, 2002).

Of course, there are many reasons to this pacification trend. Strong states, improvements of diplomacy and communication, the enormous effects of devastation facable, especially due to the



atomic bomb, the globalization of economy, trade, and traffic, etc. contribute to this pacification trend. Pinker himself, however, maintains that the most contributing cause be the psychological development respectively the civilization process. He supports Elias' theory of civilization, according to it the psychogenetic development of humankind from childish to mature states is the main motor behind the decline of violence. I strongly share this view (Oesterdiekhoff, 2016a, b, e; Elias 1982; Pinker, 2012). Moreover, I am quite sure that the continuation of the psychological development in the past 50 or 100 years disconnects the people of the today's most advanced nations from the psyche, morals, and behavior of their grand-parents, that is, from the psychology of wars 1914-1945. We can hardly understand today the motives of the political leaders of that period (Pinker, 2012: 290-440; Oesterdiekhoff, 2016a).

In search for conquest of territory European nations were ready to war 100 years ago. They colonized and occupied the world. Nowadays, it would be strange when England made war on Scotland regarding her's independence movement or the EU on Great Britain regarding her's referendum concerning her's EU membership in 2016. In case the province Niedersachsen would join the Netherlands nobody in Germany would demand war on Niedersachsen. Of course, this recently evolved mentality has been more or less conquering the whole world's political consciousness. However, patriotism, nationalistic compassion, egocentrism, and conquest mentality did not decrease to the same amount worldwide. I remind the conflicts in Yugoslavia, Ukraine, Iraq, Kuwait, etc. originating in old-fashioned mentalities. I remind the growing conflicts in the Far East regarding the dominance over the Chinese Sea, conflicts that must appear to humanitarian politicians as ridiculous or strange. A survey conducted among Chinese students about 15 years ago revealed that they almost all would demand from their government to lead war on Taiwan in case she declares her independence from China. This form of patriotism, violating principles of self-determination and humanism, resembles forms of political consciousness we know from Europe of 1914. The world of today therefore necessitates a further increase of humanistic standards far beyond that what we encounter in many areas of the planet.

The conflicts in Syria, Iraq, and Palestine, where Islamic groups kill others for their different religion, even for small deviations of their own understanding of the Islam, for their denial to subordinate to Islam, for their belonging to different ethnicities, resemble mentalities we know only from medieval Europe, where Catholic rulers annihilated complete sects in South France, where Europeans killed peoples who didn't want to become Christians, and where Protestants led wars on Catholics. The inability for different ethnicities to live in one state, as in Israel, Iraq, Syria, or Turkey, reminds to minority problems of Europe before 1945, where minorities often were oppressed by rulers representing majorities, problems that led to the big wars, and to the Yugoslavian wars of the nineties. Nowadays, due to the progress of psyche and humanism, it is practically unthinkable that in the most advanced nations of today, Protestants would lead war on Catholics, or South Italians on North Italians, or people of the left wing on people representing the right wing. On the whole, the ultimate cause to the problems of the current Minor Asia lies in their psychological stage development, and not in artificial border lines drawn by colonial treaties.

#### *The evolution of punishment law*

The whole premodern humankind right across the five continents, from the stone ages over the peasant societies to the agrarian civilizations, practised a very brutal punishment law. There was no difference between hunter and gatherer societies on the one hand and the empires and territorial states on the other hand regarding the punishment practices used and their extent of cruelty. Throwing into fire, decapitation, crucifixion, spearing to death, torturing or stoning to death, drowning into water, boiling in hot oil or water, tearing the bodies into pieces, etc. belonged to the capital punishments practically every society applied to delinquents over millennia since prehistory. Humiliation punishments such as cutting off hands, legs, ears, or noses, removing eyes, breaking the bones within the body, whipping bloody for hours until the skin dissolves, etc. belonged likewise to the practices to find in all types of premodern societies across the continents since prehistory (Post, 1891, 1895; Seagle, 1946; Wrede, 2004).

Often enough, these punishments were applied to culprits or defendants who were convicted of having committed theft, insult, forgery, betrayal, lying, etc., crimes today's world would not see as crimes or only as smaller delicts. People who committed small delicts often had to face death

penalty. Deed and punishment stood in no relation or balance against modern views. However, against the law consciousness of the premodern humans these hard punishments were necessary to guarantee justice, to satisfy their needs of revenge and retaliation, and to hold the stability of society. They believed that the abolishment of these brutal punishments would seduce people to commit more crimes and would endanger the society's existence (Schild, 2004; Oesterdiekhoff, 2014a, 2011, 2009, 2016a, d).

The first societies in world history who abolished these punishments were the European societies after 1700. During the era of Enlightenment, these forms of punishment were criticised and then abolished. Nearly every European nation between 1700 and 1820 replaced the brutal punishment law by the more moderate one, mainly consisting of imprisonment and payments. Death penalty, when still executed, then without previous humiliation and torture. Of course, this process of humanisation of punishment law has continued during the whole 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Further, most advanced nations of today have abolished death penalty during the past generations. The Westernization and modernization of the world caused the worldwide abolishment of the sadistic punishment law and its replacement by the moderate and humane punishment law, sometimes in the southern hemisphere already in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. There is no nation nowadays that would punish delinquents in the public by boiling them in hot oil, by tearing them into pieces executed by horses, by filling their mouths with glowing lead, as it was custom in ancient times. Most nations have abolished the brutal death penalties and humiliation punishments not only for small delicts but also for severe crimes. However, there is still a gap between the most advanced nations on the one side and developing countries on the other side.

Developmental psychology is able to explain both the universality of the brutal punishment law right across the whole premodern world and its replacement by the humane punishment law since the era of Enlightenment. Developmental psychology has shown that younger children support hard and extreme punishments even for smaller mistakes. It is their cognitive immaturity, their inability to balance deeds and punishments, intentions and consequences, further, their emotional commitment, and their egocentrism, that cause their adherence to severe punishments. With growing intellectual maturity, older children and adolescents change their ideas regarding punishment, and replace their support of severe punishments by more moderate ideas. This evolution from retaliation punishment law to the humane punishment law takes place in every child, irrespective of the social milieu where the child grows up. Even in liberal middle class milieus children initially emphasize a law and order mentality. The psychological stage development accounts to that evolution of ideas, not socialisation practices or forms of education (Piaget, 1932; Tapp & Kohlberg, 1971; Oesterdiekhoff, 2014a).

Of course, children aged six or seven would not apply the cruel punishment practices of the ancient times. Whatever they think for right in their verbal reasoning or in their fantasies they do not necessarily exhibit in practice. However, adults staying on psychological stages of children do this. Premodern adults have more experience and are more psychologically stabile and hard than children are – and therefore they are ready to be so cruel und sadistic. Psychological primitivity roots in lower stages. On the whole, the universality of the sadistic punishment law in the premodern world reflects the universality of the lower psychological stages of premodern people, while the recent humanisation of the punishment law does not only evidence the recent psychological advancement of the humankind but also its moral maturation.

Of course, there are many traces of the premodern sadistic punishment law in the Third World. In some nations in the Andes, indigenouos tribal laws have regained the status of a parallel law next to the Spanish or modern law ruling the nations for long. Nowadays, it is possible that people who steal on the market some fruit are being sentenced to death by burning. Likewise in Islamic nations, where the ancient Shari'a delivers the foundations to their jurisprudence, humiliation practices and cruel death penalties are still prevalent. Stoning to death for adultery, amputation of arm or hand for theft, crucifixion for robbery, or whipping for alcohol consum may happen in many nations of the region. Capital punishment may also happen for religious delicts such as atheism or agnosticism (Sarrazin, 2015; Tibi, 2000; Oesterdiekhoff, 2014b; Schirrmacher, 2003).

However, even in those developing nations, which do not any more perform such cruel punishments, the punishment system may lack those humanist standards typical for the more advanced nations. The best example is the treatment in prisons and the small chance to lead a

protected life there. Another good example is the spread of lynch justice in many regions of the Third World. Often enough, crowds gather quickly around a traffic accident or around an allegation of theft to hang or strangle an accused person without any judicial procedure, even without any indication or evidence. Blood revenge between clans or families are by today widespread in Northern Albania, India, Afghanistan, and other parts of the world.

An example of an archaic mentality delivers the recently elected president of the Philippines, Duterte, who announced to kill millions of drugusers by some kind of Holocaust. Shortly after his election, officials and non-official murderers started to kill thousands of drugusers. The rate of drugusers in the population is not higher as it is in other Asian nations. Such procedure appears to be an astonishing survival of a cruel mentality some observers of the country wouldn't have expected as possible.

Blood revenge mentality and a childish mentality are still widespread in Third World countries. Relotius (2016) tells a good story with this respect, happened in the end of 2015 in Kirgistan. Michael McFeat, a Scottish engineer working for a Canadian gold mining company in Kirgistan, made a joke about a Kirgisian sausage on Facebook. The day after the company's managers told him to leave the country because hundreds of miners had read his joke, being completely outraged. The company's security forces led him through tunnels, drove him nine hours to Bishek's airport, prosecuted by cars with armed persons, which repeatedly rammed the car. After arrival at the airport, numerous posters already showed his face as if he were a criminal. Agents of the national security arrested him. The judge accused him of having afflicted the national honor, demanding he should beg for public apology, otherwise being threatened by five years of imprisonment. The end of the incident was that he begged for apology in the state television before the whole nation, waited then another six days, until the jury banned him for leaving the country for his whole lifetime. Imagine how dangerous such a mentality could become to the world in case Kirgistan would have the power of China or Japan.

#### *Evolution of social affairs*

Violence against, oppression and exploitation of lower classes was the common procedure in most of the premodern societies. Feudalism and slavery were widespread phenomena in agrarian societies right across the five continents. While feudalism is connected to agrarian societies, slavery is a prior phenomenon, existing already in stone age societies of hunters and gatherers such as the Indians of both America. Slaves could be purchased, sold or caught, could be used sexually or killed, whatever the master wanted to do. The life of the slaves was in the hands of their possessors, finding no shelter by state officials or any institutions. Basically, the whole premodern world did not guarantee liberty rights and the right of self-determination to high percentages of people (Oesterdiekhoff, 2005, 2009; Elias, 1982). Slavery and feudalism can only exist when greater percentages of people have no critical consciousness of these institutions' illegitimacy and of the moral crime behind these practices. Correspondingly, ancient religion and philosophy unanimously support these practices instead. Again, without psychological primitivity slavery and feudalism cannot function. Only when higher percentages of people have no compunction to abuse people these institutions can exist. Civilized people staying on higher moral stages would deny to buy slaves and to abuse them the way reported by historical documents. That is the reason why the era of Enlightenment earmarked the criticism of these institutions. This era was the first one in history where some people stood on formal operational stages and where these institutions were radically criticised. The European nations after 1789 were the first in world history who radically abolished these institutions, not for economic but for moral reasons (Porter, 2000; Oesterdiekhoff, 2016a, c, d). From this kernel the worldwide abolishment of slavery and feudalism started.

Of course, the bad treatment of lower classes did not stop immediately but diminished continuously. During the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries they received low wages, had no rights to participate in elections, and had to suffer from many disadvantages in social and political affairs. However, the continuous improvement of their living conditions and political participation evidence that liberty rights and self-determination have been given to every adult member within the most advanced nations during the past generations. The emancipation of the lower classes during the past 200 years has abolished the crude forms of serfdom and illiberty that governed human's history since prehistory. Democracy does not only consist of political participation but

also of social self-determination and judicial protection. Democracy and slavery are not truly combineable as Athens, however, tried to.

This process of emancipation has been taking place on a worldwide scale. The struggle for social and political rights of workers, for the abolishment of serfdom, slavery, and feudalism is a worldwide phenomenon with considerable successes right across the continents. Political parties, labor unions, and non-governmental organizations fight against violations of human rights in most countries of the world.

However, there are many forms of slavery and feudalism still existing in the world. In India, the greatest democracy in the world, live millions of people in the countryside in more or less feudal dependencies, where landlords rule over their peasants as unfree persons, including labor services, economic exploitation, land theft, sexual abuse, etc., frequently set force by private armed forces. In some Arabian nations people have to suffer from similar disadvantages. For example, roughly 90% of people living in the United Arab Emirates are foreigners. While the 10% of original inhabitants mostly live in luxury or wealth, the other 90% mentioned live in poverty and dependency. They can mostly only stay in the country by entering a personal dependency on a local inhabitant, mostly the employer, who takes the passport and controls the foreigner, a system called Kafala. The foreign workers, mostly coming from poor Asian nations, frequently work 10 or more hours per day, with low security standards, on low wages, and without having any rights. Worse is the situation of the 146.000 housemaids working in middle or upper class families of this country. They usually come from the Philippines, Indonesia, Sri Lanka or Ethiopia. The host families take away their passports and mobile phones, let them work 7 days a week, 12, 14 or more hours per day, and pay them 100 € per month, often not handed over. The human rights organization (HRW) conducted a survey amongst them, reporting that a quarter of them are being beaten, many of them are being raped. In case they try to escape, the police arrest them instead of helping them or sending them to their home country. In prisons, it may happen that they are being raped by officials, with HIV as a possible outcome, as it is reported. The host families justify their actions sometimes by saying "we bought her". Although this situation is known to UN institutions and to international media, nothing has changed in the meantime ([Spiegel, 2016](#)).

This colonial system of exploitation and oppression can only exist through a far reaching lack of consciousness regarding human rights amongst the inhabitants. The country's people seem to have no idea of civil and human rights, liberty rights and democratic principles. If they have the opportunity to exploit and to oppress people they do it to the utmost extent. They have no moral compunctions, moral consciousness, and empathy. They still have the consciousness of the slave masters of the premodern era because they did not go through the era of enlightenment and civilization process many or most other nations have experienced. They took from the West technology and consumory patterns but not the political, social, and moral consciousness. Of course, only developmental psychology can explain this phenomenon. Imagine they would have the power of China or Japan. Their colonial mentality then would be very disturbing.

The development of gender relations and child upbringing are a part of this development from hegemony to autonomy. Neither in hunter and gatherer nor in agrarian societies, women usually had a right of self-determination. Their families decided over their lives and marriages. Arrangement of marriages was the usual custom in hunter and gatherer societies, peasant societies and agrarian civilizations as well. Usually, women could not live their lives on their own but had to subordinate to husbands, fathers or patrons. Especially in patrilinear lineage systems with patrilocality their role was not far from being slaves only. But also in systems that necessitated consents of both sides to marriages such as ancient Egypt or medieval Europe women had not the rights as in the most advanced nations of today. The father's choice or approval of marriage was common even in these systems. Basically, women were only dependent parts of their families without having own rights to self-determination right across the whole premodern era ([Oesterdiekhoff, 2008](#)).

The emancipation of women started in the era of Enlightenment ([Pinker, 2012: 591](#)). The same movement that fought for the rights of civilians generally fought for the rights of women specifically. In this era laws were abandoned that forbade divorces for both sexes. However, it needed generations till the women were allowed to participate in elections. In Germany, women needed the husband's permission in case they wanted to start work by the year 1977. To beat



women was in the husband's rights for millennia. In 1987, only half of the US-Americans believed it would be wrong to beat women with a stick or a belt. In 1997, 86 % voted it would be wrong to act this way (Pinker, 2012: 606). 1 % of people in New Zealand and 4 % of people in Singapore say a man have the right to beat his wife in case of her disobedience or criticism. The corresponding numbers in Egypt are 78 %, in Uttar Pradesh 50 %, and in Palestine 57 % (Pinker, 2012: 612). Violence at home is legally forbidden in 84 % of nations in Western Europe, in 57 % of nations in Eastern Europe, in 51 % of nations in Asia and Pacific, in 94 % of nations in Latin America, in 35 % of nations in Africa south of Sahara, and in 25 % of Arabian nations (Pinker, 2012: 612). Arrangement of marriages and violence against women is frequent even in some migrant milieus in Western Europe (Sarrazin, 2015).

The development of child care has run similar ways in history. According to a survey, 100% of children in the USA during the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century were beaten by their parents with stick, whip or another weapon. In the English-speaking countries 90% of people supported the beating of children by the beginning of the eighties of the past century. During the fifties of the past century, 95 % of Swedish people beat their children, 33 % on a daily basis. In 1995, the numbers declined there to 33 % (generally) and 4 % (daily basis). In Germany 1992, 81 % of parents beat the face of their children and 41 % used a stick. In 2002, that is, only 10 years later, the corresponding numbers decreased to 14 % and 5 % (Pinker, 2012: 645-647).

On the whole, the emancipation of lower classes, women, and children, and their better treatment by establishment, men, and parents, respectively, having started during the era of enlightenment, due to the rise of the fourth stage of human development within the educated classes, has led to considerable improvements of living conditions. This process of civilization has run through the whole world in the meantime. However, it will need some more generations to civilize those nations and milieus that try to maintain their archaic mentalities and systems.

### 3. Conclusions

The whole premodern world was characterized by an archaic worldview full of magic and superstition, by patriarchal political systems such as tyranny, monarchy, aristocracy or dictatorship, by frequent warfare and oppression of minorities, by a very brutal punishment law, by oppression and exploitation of lower classes, and finally, by maltreatment of women and children. During the era of Enlightenment, this system was strongly criticised and abolished due to the rise of consciousness in intellectual circles and higher classes. For the first time in history, belief in magic and superstition, witchcraft and sorcery started to vanish in educated milieus. The ideas of democracy, liberty rights, civil society, and human rights were born. The French and American revolutions originated the modifications of political culture with functioning democracies as results some generations later right across the whole Western world. Further, the decline of violence both on a national and international level has gained a tremendous acceleration in the past generations. The ideas of freedom and dignity granted to lower classes, women, and children, born in the era of Enlightenment, conquered the society, with remarkable successes during the past generations.

The Third World has started to participate in this process of civilization and modernization already in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but with remarkable successes only after 1945 or even after 1975. Their current situation evidences that the developing and threshold countries will continue this way to the same extent as the Western nations did. Moreover, smaller or bigger percentages of people in the Third World do not psychologically differ anymore from educated people of the First World. Some other percentages there sway between smaller or greater amounts of backwardness, respectively. While some of them stay on stages typical for Europeans or Japanese in 1970 or 1950, others have forms of political, social, and moral consciousness matching to previous centuries including medieval ones, when one thinks about the still existing extent of religious fundamentalism, brutal punishment law, or archaic gender relations still to find in many regions. However, it is possible to predict that the gap between frontrunners and backbenchers, having opened after 1700 in favor of the West, has been closing for decades and will be closed in future times.

The article has shown that the processes of modernization and globalization cannot be described by ignoring the psychological dimension, by purely economic, political, and social

descriptions, descriptions of institutions, production and merchandise, as it is custom among most sociologists, economists, and other social scientists. Conversely, the psychology has to play a much more important role in the description of the recent development of world society as usually assumed. Developmental psychology is necessary to understand the psychological modifications of humans participating in the processes of modernization and globalization, to understand the psychological mechanisms carrying the evolution of modern society.

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