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## Psychological development and humankind's history

### Foreword: History and Ontogeny

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#### Abstract

James Frazer in 1927 and Hermann Schneider in 1909 predicted that developmental psychology might advance in the future as to become the fundamental theory to every human discipline and to the reconstruction of the history of mankind. Several breakthroughs, especially from 1900 to 1940, and again since 1980 up to now, prove of the early prognostications. Developmental psychology is the interdisciplinary theory to all kinds of humanities and social sciences, imparting to them those breakthroughs evolutionary theory brought to biology and quantum mechanics and relativity theory to physics. It is impossible to understand mankind's history without the knowledge developmental psychology contributes.

**Keywords:** developmental psychology, psychological stages, ontogeny and history, cultural relativism, universalism of mankind, civilization theory.

At first, as editor of this special issue I have to thank to the editors of the journal to make this special issue possible. It is dedicated to an old and a new theory tradition alike. The idea that humankind during history went through the same stages as children do during their childhood traces back to the era of Enlightenment. Hegel, Feuerbach, Comte, Spencer, Bastian, Carus, Haeckel, etc. belong to their early representatives. Principal founders of the human disciplines, especially those of psychology, ethnology, sociology, history, linguistics, philology, philosophy, etc. adhered to the idea of the existence of resemblances between ontogeny and history. History shows development from more simple to more elaborated and civilized stages, right across the whole range of life, including religion, law, politics, morals, economy, manners, social affairs, and language. The best method to study these developments is the application of developmental psychology to history in case data show that premodern or archaic adult humans reveal psychological structures typical for children. Some of the first comprehensive proofs of this fact came from Romanes (1888), Schultze (1900), Chamberlain (1907) and Werner (1926/1948). With the work of Piaget, Janet, Elias, Vierkandt, Hall, Baldwin, etc., the theory became the status of a doctrine, especially between 1880-1940, or between 1820 and 1970, a doctrine that widely penetrated the human disciplines and the mind of the educated milieus right across the civilized world.

Decolonization after 1960, decrease of archaic structures right across the continents, loss of self-esteem of the Western world in consequence of the World Wars, and some kind of decadence, especially in the Western world during the Seventies, originated the two main ideologies of our time, "cultural relativism" (each culture has the same worth as any other) and "universalism of

mind” (every human being, people and culture has the same rationality and humanity as any other). These ideologies replaced the former theories of developmentalism and the related evolutionary anthropology, the theories of Piaget, Werner, Lévy-Bruhl, Tylor, Frazer, Luria, Vygotski, Vierkandt, Janet, etc. The devastation of the role of the theory of developmentalism in the sciences was highly successful. “Relativism” and “universalism” are accepted premises of contemporary thought that hardly anybody dares to doubt; ideologies that penetrate sciences, mass media, and the political elite right across continents and cultures. In the realm of psychology especially M. Cole, P. Dasen and J. Berry belonged to those that caused the turnaround during the Seventies, by misinterpreting data and conveying erroneous ideas (see Oesterdiekhoff 2009, pp. 98-129, 2016j). Scientists of every single human discipline from 1980 onwards, right across the whole world, have not anymore the knowledge scientists had before 1970, the knowledge of those to whose education the notion of the French and British schools of anthropology, of developmental psychologists such as Piaget, Werner, Luria, of sociologists such as Comte and Elias, belonged. Whole libraries of knowledge and theory building were lost, replaced by the scanty ideologies of “relativism” and “universalism”.

Theories of developmentalism accompanied the rise of civilization and modernity from 1800 to 1940 (e.g., Tylor 1871; Frazer 1932). Conversely, it appears today that the succeeding theories of “relativism” and “universalism” prepare and secure the decline of civilization. We are told that there are no differences between humans of different cultures. We are told that globalization requires not only the exchange of goods and information but also of people. We are told we should manage the demographic problems of our countries by mass immigration of people coming from Middle East countries and elsewhere. We are told that Multiculturalism will bring us a happy new and colourful world. However, the data speak differently. 30-40% of Muslim immigrants even of the second or third generation living in Scandinavia, Germany, France, Benelux nations, Italy and Spain have no school degree, the same rate no job qualification, the same rate lives from social welfare, etc. 70 % of prisoners in Spain and France are Muslims (with a share of 10% roughly to the whole population). More and more Muslims in Europe share reactionary political ambitions and tend to fanatic interpretations of Islam. Many of them support Khalifat and Djihad, Sharia and Umma, not democracy, constitutional state, civil society, and humanism (Dewinter 2010; Bawes 2006; Ye’or 2005). 46% of Turkish people in Germany want the preponderance of Islam in Germany; 25% of them regard atheists as “inferior beings”, roughly 15% of them likewise Jews, and roughly 10% of them German Christians (Info Research Group 2012). The Muslims reveal as being ticking time bombs to the existence of the European civilization. They are neither capable to carry modern, industrial nations nor civil societies with their features such as tolerance and peacefulness, humanism and social engagement.

“Relativism” and “universalism” have seduced social scientists and politicians to ignore and to downplay the problems of which experts say they could turn Europe into a desert regarding culture and economy. Not the relativistic sociologists of the West but politicians of Eastern Europe such as the Czech president Vaclav Klaus, the Hungarian prime minister Viktor Orban, the governments of the Baltic states and Poland urgently warn Western politicians to recognize the deadly threat just in time. However, they don’t get a chance to deliver their relevant message to the people of Western Europe. Their ideas aren’t discussed in Western mass media because they don’t fit the ideology of multiculturalism. However, even those Eastern politicians do not know the psychological theory necessary to understand the phenomena mentioned. Only the theory discussed in this volume has the means required to address the problem.

Therefore, the new theory of developmentalism is not only necessary to rebuild the human disciplines and to end the intellectual desert that the human disciplines have been for more than 40 years now, at least regarding their foundations, it is also necessary to help rescue civilization in Europe. Only against the background of a theory of developmentalism can we understand the problems we are facing. Humans of underdeveloped nations did not experience those processes of acculturation and assimilation humans of civilized nations did. They stay on lower psychological stages that are accountable to their failure regarding their education, professional life, delinquency rates, gender relations, fanatic religiousness, intolerance, imperialistic attitudes, violence culture, and warfare mentality. Only with this knowledge is it possible to establish a policy that helps Europe to recover from its sickness of “Dhimmitude” (servile readiness to surrender to the demands of the Muslims) and from its tendency to commit collective suicide. A total stop of

Muslim immigration to Europe, a strict containment of the percentage of Muslims to the total population, or even its reduction, and a strict policy of assimilation, accompanied by a zero tolerance policy against any forms of misbehavior, are absolutely necessary when we do not want to see a transformation of Europe into the Middle East, which only contains disastrous nations, except Israel, never having been anything else in their 1500 (or 10.000) years' history.

Obviously, developmentalism is necessary to understand both developing and developed nations, to understand ancient and medieval history on the one side and the rise of modern, industrialized nations on the other side. People living in premodern societies stay on preoperational or concrete operational psychological stages, while people living in modern, industrialized nations stay on the higher formal operational stages. The backwardness of the developing nations regarding economy, society, culture, politics, gender relations, social affairs, religion, etc., roots in the lower psychological stages of people, while the advancement of the more developed nations originates in the risen psychological stages of their residents. Thus, the theory of developmentalism is fundamental to the understanding of world history, of social evolution, of the rise of civilization and modern world, and of the current process of globalization.

It will be shown that the new theory born in the ash of "relativism" and "universalism" delivers all the means necessary to rebuild the human disciplines on new grounds. It will be shown that only this way is it possible to explain the world history of population, economy, society, culture, politics, law, sciences, philosophy, religion, morals, worldview, manners, etc. Therefore, the new theory delivers the key to understand the evolution of the phenomena mentioned. Without the developmental approach, misleading and wrong interpretations of the history of the phenomena are inevitable. That is what the history of the historical disciplines really evidences.

Despite the preponderance of "relativism" and "universalism" from 1970 / 1980 up to now there were some researchers that followed the great tradition of developmentalism. Habermas (1976), Ziegler (1968), Le Pan (1989), Radding (1985), and Gablik (1976) belong to those that contributed to the link of ontogeny and history, that is, to the link of developmental psychology and history. It was C. Hallpike, a contributor to this issue, who delivered in 1979 the first great interpretation of decades of Piagetian cross-cultural psychology, thus following the true research interests and ideas of Piaget himself, and of those authors, who shared theories of developmentalism. He linked ethnology with developmental psychology, thus deepening insights already won by Werner, Vierkandt, Jaensch, Hall, Schultze, etc. Hallpike (1979, 2004) wrote two books to the subject, one dedicated to the worldview of nature peoples, the other to the history of morals in terms of developmental psychology. Two of his many articles to the subject he contributes to this volume. Laura Ibarra Garcia, a Mexican historian, wrote a lot on the history of pre-Columbian cultures in America using developmental psychology as theoretical basis. Her article on pre-Columbian religion, she contributes to this issue, is one of her many articles on the link between developmental psychology and history. Ibarra Garcia is one of the American historians and social scientists decided to renew social sciences and human disciplines upon the new pillars. I work since the early Eighties on the subject, having accomplished my first study related in 1987, a book that showed that the whole premodern humankind stood on childlike psychological stages, covering the whole range of psyche and world understanding including logic, physics, social affairs, religion, law, and politics (Oesterdiekhoff 2009). Since that time I published meanwhile 13 books and some 100 articles on the subject, always finding new evidence that the new theory programme means to the human disciplines that what evolutionary theory meant to biology and quantum mechanics and relativity theory to physics.

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