READING 1

Candice Goucher, Charles LeGuin, and Linda Walton, *In the Balance: Themes in World History* (Boston: Mc-Graw-Hill, 1998), selections from chapter 20, "The Crossroads of History: Culture, Identity, and Global Community."

Abstract: The material bases of human cultures (including technology, environment, and demographics) and the resulting changes in the way people understand the world provide the sources of individual as well as community, national, or even global identity. This essay focuses on how accelerated change has affected issues such as ethnicity, race, class, and gender in the lives of individuals and communities.

Population at the Crossroads: Demographic Patterns of the Twentieth Century

Issues of population, environment, and technology together provide the setting that historical "events" and cultural transformations of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries have unfolded. The most conspicuous trends in this period are the restructuring of identity in relation to place, the migration of peoples across the globe, the growth of world populations, and the concentrations of population in urban environments.

Migration

Humans have always been mobile. Prehistoric migrations over vast areas by small numbers of peoples who, mostly traveling by foot on land or boats on water, populated the globe. As people settled, pressure of increasing population was a persistent factor in specific regions (such as the Nile Valley), leading to recurrent migrations. As the millennia passed human movement became easier; increasing numbers made it necessary. But never before the present has the whole world faced the prospect of the filling up of open spaces; the crowding of ever-expanding cities; the pollution of streams, lakes, and even oceans; and the amount of material equipment, the level of education, and the complexity of organization necessary to expand the output of goods and services at a rate sufficient to maintain existing standards of living.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, population movements have been the result of a number of factors: pressure of numbers, the need for labor, the desire for land and jobs, and political and religious persecution. Vast increases in population necessitated the exodus of large numbers from their homelands; it was an important factor in the spread of European dominance around the globe, leading to the creation of European states in North and South America, Australia, and New Zealand and exerting great influence, if not permanent settlement and control, on every continent.

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European Emigration

Beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, the rapid spread of urbanization and industrialization resulted in an increased exodus from Europe. These migrations served to relieve population pressure, and they satisfied the need for labor, especially in industries. Most of these European immigrants came into areas already settled by Europeans. The United States provides a clear illustration of the pattern of nineteenth century immigration. Immigrants came in three waves: the first reached its high-water mark in 1854, when nearly 430,000 new arrivals were recorded; the second, starting in the 1870s rose to a height in 1882, when nearly 800,000 people arrived; the third brought in a average of a million people a year in the decade before World War I, after which immigration was limited by law.

Similar patterns, though lesser numbers, are found in Canada and Australia. The earliest nineteenth-century immigrants were northern European: Irish (some 2 million); German (1.5 million); and British (750,000). By the end of the century, southern and eastern Europeans had displaced northern Europeans. Without Italians and southern and eastern Slavic peoples, the great increase in numbers would not have been possible. For example, by the outbreak of World War I, 4 million Italians had left their homeland. Not all Europeans went to North America. Between 1890 and 1900 about 2 million Italians and Germans migrated to South America, many of them settling in Brazil and Argentina.

Indian Emigration

Europeans were not the only peoples caught up in the labor migration. From the mid-nineteenth century on, Indians left the subcontinent in continuing numbers to escape overcrowding and to seek jobs. They scattered even more widely around the globe than Europeans, who tended to migrate to states of prior European settlement. Significant numbers of Indians, who were not always welcomed, have settled in South America, where half the populations of Guyana and Surinam is Indian; in the Caribbean, where 40 percent of the population of Trinidad is Indian; in the South Pacific, on Fiji (50 percent Indian); and on Mauritius (70 percent Indian) in the Indian Ocean. Indians also settled in nearby Asian countries such as Malaysia (10 percent) and in lesser numbers in more distance east and south African countries.

The Chinese Diaspora

Beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, harsh economic conditions forced hundreds of thousands of Chinese to leave their homeland to seek employment abroad. Many of them went to nearby Malaysia or Singapore or islands in the Pacific, but they also settled in South America (there were nearly 100,000 Chinese in Peru by the end of the nineteenth century); the Caribbean (Cuba and the British West Indies); Canada, especially British Columbia; and the United States. By 1930, 400,000 Chinese had crossed the

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Pacific, 77 percent of them settling in California. They were invaluable in building transcontinental railroads, and when that task was completed, they engaged in agriculture and small businesses. They took part in the search for gold in California, British Columbia, and Australia, and in South Africa industrialists imported more than 50,000 Chinese indentured laborers by the end of the nineteenth century to work in mines.

Family at the Crossroads of Identity

One of the most powerful influences that shapes individual identity is the family. At the same time differences in family values, life, and structure reflect profound cultural differences. At the beginning of the twentieth century, family forms varied widely. In Western Europe, the two-generational or nuclear family was the norm at least since the seventeenth century. The family was patriarchical and authoritarian. Complex, extended families comprising three generations in a household were common in Russia and Eastern Europe. In peasant societies families were closely linked with the land, but many rural inhabitants engaged in rural industries such as textile production formed families without taking land into consideration. In urban communities family size was not the same consideration as it was in the countryside where labor was demanded in the fields. Demographic historians believe that the French were deliberately practicing birth control from the beginning of the nineteenth century, perhaps related to the Napoleonic code that required an equal division of property. In practice, the strength of paternal authority in both rural and urban families varied. Where the heritage of slavery had left its mark, as it did in the United States and in the circum-Caribbean region, both rural and urban families often tended to be matriarchical in form, for slavery had broken up nuclear family life and laws accorded children the status of their mother while allowing their father neither authority nor responsibility.

Under the impact of urbanization and industrialization, the two-generational nuclear family tended everywhere to replace the extended rural family. The urban model, in turn, was affected by changing economic conditions, the changing status of women, changing attitudes toward children, and the progress of democratization and individualization. Urban families as a result were reduced in size, modified in function, democratized in structure, and became increasingly unstable as a social group.

Family Planning

As advances in medical technology improved life expectancy for much of the world's population (in the United States it was forty-seven years in 1900 and seventy years in 1960) and therefore contributed to population expansion, other innovations made it possible to control the birth rate, both altering

family size and changing the status of women by providing artificial means to plan births. Following the development of special material heating techniques (1839), a flexible rubber was commonly used for contraceptive devices such as the condom. Oral contraceptives were introduced in 1954, followed 25 years later by Norplant, a set of small tubes implanted under a woman's skin to release a hormone that can prevent contraception for a period of five years.

The trend in Euro-American urban society has been toward a decrease in family size. Under twentieth-century urban conditions, children became economic liabilities rather than assets, because child labor laws and compulsory education postponed their economic contribution and lengthened their period of dependency. The idea that the size of the family could be a matter of conscious planning and control emerged during the last quarter of the nineteenth century and spread rapidly in the twentieth. The work of nineteenth-century pioneers in family planning and birth control, such as the Dutch physician, Dr. Aletta Jacobs, or Mrs. Annie Besant in England, was forwarded in the twentieth century by the efforts of Dr. Marie Stopes in Britain and Margaret Sanger (1883–1966), a public health nurse who was imprisoned during her fight for birth control in the United States. The general downward spiral of the birthrate during the early twentieth century was attributed to the legalization of contraception and its widespread acceptance by the female population. According to Sanger:

> Today, however, woman is rising in fundamental revolt . . . Millions of women are asserting their right to voluntary motherhood. They are determined to decide for themselves whether they shall become mothers, under what conditions and when. This is the fundamental revolt referred to. It is for woman the key to the temple of liberty.

Family reformers wanted to limit the family to the number of children it was able to support. Some were motivated by the belief that women should have reproductive choice and should not be subject to continuous or undesired childbearing. As the twentieth century progressed, emphasis shifted from the prevention of unwanted pregnancies to comprehensive family planning. The Birth Control League (founded in 1914) was replaced by Planned Parenthood, whose objective went beyond birth control to helping families have the number of healthy children they felt they could take care of. Clinics offered help in overcoming sterility as well as in using effective means of contraception. By the second half of the century, making choices about family size had become a common practice in industrially developed countries.

A decline in family size has been most noticeable in larger cities and among the more educated and affluent elements of the population. By World War II the number of urban inhabitants had fallen below the level at which cities could maintain their populations through natural increase, and the continued urban growth around the world has occurred as a result of migration into

cities from rural areas. This trend is less marked in certain parts of the globe, such as Latin America, where the pattern of large families has persisted in urban as well as rural areas.

Families as Units of Cultural and Economic Identity

Developments in the twentieth century have stripped the urban family in the West of many traditional functions. Factory production under capitalist industrialism replaced the family as a unit of production with individual employment. Whereas the family has retained few of its traditional economic features as a unit of production, the urban family remains an economic unit for purposes of consumption. The educational role of the family has been diminished as the task of education was assumed by the state through public education; urban society has made it necessary for children to acquire a rapidly expanding body of scientific, technical, and literary knowledge that schools were better able to provide than families. While family connections might contribute to advancement, opportunity, or marriage, they tend to play a supplementary and diminishing role in economic, educational, and status-giving functions.

In non-European parts of the world, the joint or extended family, that two family groups and multiple generations are recognized as have been joined together through marriage and residence patterns, has been the central social institution for centuries. Twentieth-century developments have altered, and in many cases broke up that structure. Factors responsible for such modification vary from area to area, but social changes have undeniably weakened the traditional family group. European influences resulting from both economic and political imperialism played a large role. European legal systems and practices recognized individual—as opposed to family or group—ownership, individual contractual relationships, and individual obligations. Employment was on an individual basis in factories, businesses, or the civil service, and commerce and industry brought income and property to individuals, not always to family groups. These economic and legal factors did not automatically destroy the traditional joint or extended family, but they did alter it.

One factor tending to alter the family in the twentieth century was the changing position of women. In the joint family women generally had no rights of inheritance or independence of action. Movements for equal rights of women have sought to establish their equality with men before the law, to grant them their rights of inheritance as well as provide them with opportunities for education and the right to vote. Revolutionary changes occurring in the second half of the twentieth century dealt the traditional joint family direct blows. For example, the constitution and laws of modern India

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have accelerated the break up of the extended family by taxation, inheritance laws, and laws according rights to women.

The Chinese Family

In China the traditional family and its institutions came under attack during the early part of the twentieth century and became a major target following the establishment of a Communist regime in 1949. Chinese women, Mao had written in 1927, were dominated by four thick ropes: those of political, clan, religious, and male domination. In the People's Republic of China, customary family practices such as arranged marriages, concubinage, and the selling of daughters have been replaced by emphasis on marriage as a matter of personal choice and responsibility and by government efforts to regulate and control family size. Confucian emphasis on respect for elders and family as the foundation of society were initially rejected by the regime as obstacles to Communist ideals of an egalitarian society, and collective ownership of land and enterprises replaced family ownership. Mao had accurately recognized that women's participation in labor would be a devastating blow to the feudal-patriarchal ideology.

The radical collectivization of the mid-1950s emphasized suprafamily units, such as the work team, production brigade, or large-scale agricultural collectives known as communes. More recently, especially in urban areas, the policy of limiting couples to having one child has produced a new phenomenon: the "little emperor" or "little empress," a term coined to describe an only child whose parents spare no cost to feed, dress, and educate their precious single offspring. In China, as in many other Asian societies, male children are preferred and fetal scanning, abortion, and female infanticide are practices that provide testimony to the persistence of sex-based discrimination despite major social and economic gains made by women.

The Muslim Family

In Islamic countries the Muslim family became a focal point of conflict relating to social reform, especially in the second half of the twentieth century. Except in the most conservative Islamic countries, those known as Islamic republics, there has been some effort to establish monogamy, to liberate the women—one-tenth of the world's population—from restrictive practices of dress and custom, such as whether they should go covered or uncovered by veils, and to allow children increasing independence. This transformation of tradition is especially true in urban areas of countries such as Egypt or Turkey, that there has been the greatest interaction with the West. But even more conservative countries, such as Saudi Arabia or Afghanistan, have experienced some weakening of the traditional family system, at least in cities and before the rise of Islamic fundamentalist movements.

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Reformist Islamic scholars as early as the turn of the century began to debate the issues of women and family in the modern urban world. The Indian Muslim scholar Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanawi (1864–1943) argued that women should be expected to have all the Islamic knowledge that would enable them to establish Islamic rule inside their households. The struggle between secular state power and religious authority has made Muslim women's destinies the object of conflict. Although seen by some as the symbol of oppression, the veil also has become for other women the symbol of cultural authenticity that has permitted a new generation's movement into the changing public space of modernity, institutions of higher education, for example.

The African Family

The disruption of the African family as a result of European contact and urban industrial development brought about perhaps the most drastic change in traditional family structures in the twentieth century. Family and kinship systems, which provided the essential structure of individual and social relationships, have been radically undermined where European influences have been strongest. Traditional family structures varied with different ethnic groups, but each form was strongly sanctioned by custom. In most communities the family or kinship group was a self-contained economic unit that all shared for purposes of production and consumption. It was also a unit for childrearing. The authority of elders extended to all, so that immediate parents did not have full or unsupported responsibility for the young.

Whatever its form, the African family largely determined the status of the individuals in it. Each member had a defined role while ultimate responsibility for individual members was generally borne by the head of household. Families contributed to social and political structures through a system of chieftancies, councils, or other institutions of authority based on lineage and kinship. The family also played a religious role, and the responsibilities of heads of families were no less spiritual than material.

In the course of the twentieth century, family structures in many parts of Africa have been altered and reduced as a source of identity in cities and weakened in many parts of the countryside. Rural areas have been especially affected by Christian missionary teaching and activity that, for example, attacked such practices as polygamy. Muslim influence has been less disruptive in that sense, since the Qur'an permits polygamy and religious leaders have not sought to stop it. Colonial administrators generally left customary family institutions intact unless they affected measures designed to deal with commerce and administration. Such measures did, however, contribute to undermining the family forms that held communities together.

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The principal disruption of African family structures came from industrialization and urbanization. Men who went away to work left the family group impaired. A major breakdown occurred when women accompanied men to urban areas and established urban family units in African cities such as Johannesburg, Nairobi, Dakar, Lagos, Accra, Mombasa, and Kinshasa. From one end of Africa to the other, the ever growing number of urban African families represents a break with virtually every element of traditional African family structure, even though close ties are maintained with rural relatives.

Traditional familial economic self-sufficiency based on the contribution and shared consumption by all has virtually disappeared. The structure of authority has been undermined: elders no longer are able to reinforce parental authority over children, having been undermined by the forces of the state and Western education, yet parents are often inexperienced in carrying out their responsibilities alone. Urban African families have been forced to reconstruct themselves almost from the ground up; and coming from a society that family structures ensured that no one should experience uncertainty as to who they are or what was expected of them, many urban Africans have found themselves in a society that these certainties have been swept away.

Gender at the Crossroads of Identity

Gender as a category of identity is a cultural construct: the meaning of being female or male is shaped and transformed according to cultural and historical context, not simply biological destiny. Gender played a key role in the anticolonialist, nationalist struggles for independence in Asia and Africa, where women's emancipation was often connected to the liberation of the nations from imperialism and colonialism. Nearly everywhere, though, beginning as early as the American and French revolutions, women's rights became subordinated to the patriarchal authority of the new nation state.

Nationalisms, for example, were always gendered, even in the obvious, if superficial, claims of loyalty to the "fatherland" or "motherland." Gandhi, more than other nationalist leaders, elevated the feminine through his strategy of passive resistance, known as satyagraha ("truth force"). Satyagraha embraced the female strengths of passive resistance honed by necessity as a way of life for women who were constantly subjected to oppression within the household as well as in society. Gandhi himself engaged in spinning, identifying himself with this humble domestic female occupation, both to demonstrate the power of the feminine and to mobilize women and men for his strategy of nonviolent resistance to the Raj.

Gandhi idealized the female role in the household and in society, as well as in history and religious myth, holding up the images of female Hindu deities as

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representations of the power of women. Gandhi's legacy to the emancipation of women was a contradictory one: he confirmed the patriarchal authority structures of the Indian family and society, while exhorting men to adopt feminine ways of being and acting in order to carry out the nationalist struggle through passive resistance.

Women in the Modern Chinese Nation

Women's rights and the emancipation of women from the traditional patriarchal authority structures of family and society were a prominent feature of the revolutionary ideas of the May 4th Movement in early twentieth-century China. Though women's issues—liberation from family authority, freedom to marry, the right to be educated and to exercise political rights—were part of the May 4th Movement, they quickly were subordinated to the dual struggle to win control of China from warlords and to expel foreign dominance as the basis for consolidating the new nation. Neither the Nationalists nor the Communists maintained as a priority the emancipation of women, though particularly the Communists continued to pay lip service to it and many Chinese women struggled to achieve it.

Japan: Good Wives, Wise Mothers

The position of women in the construction of the modern Japanese nation state shows how the roles of women were redefined to serve the goals of the patriarchal authority of the new nation state. In the nineteenth century Meiji leaders created the doctrine of the "good wife, wise mother" as the paradigm for women's service to the nation. Women were exhorted to be frugal in household management (thus to serve the financial needs of the industrializing state by savings that could be invested in development) and to educate their children so that they could be recruited to the service of the nation.

Sons would go to schools where they would be instructed in such subjects as history, mathematics, science, and economics, and daughters would learn at home from their mothers how to become "good wives, wise mothers." Schools for girls were largely for the privileged daughters of the new political aristocracy, such as Baroness Ishimoto, whose memoirs reveal much about the social changes of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Education and Gender in Latin America

Latin America is an example of a world region that comprises many complex, multiracial and multicultural societies under numerous umbrellas of national identity. In turn, the forces of capitalism and social changes have produced powerful, if sometimes competing, identities crosscut by complex class and gender issues.

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The Brazilian educator Paolo Friere (1921–1997) warned about the need for a society to remain open to change. Respect for diversity of cultures and opinions allows for full participation by all. According to Friere:

> In the revolutionary process, the leaders cannot use the banking method [of education—i.e., that the teacher makes a "deposit" and tells people what they should know, followed by the student "account" returning the same, perhaps with interest] as an interim measure, justified on grounds of expediency, with the intention of *later* behaving in a genuinely revolutionary fashion. They must be revolutionary—that is to say, dialogical [engaging in dialogue]—from the outset.

Education has served as a major catalyst for change, and since colonial times educated women were important agents of this change. For example, in Peru, where universities were closed to women until 1908, public cultural events called *veladas literarias* (literary evenings) were alternative venues for the generation of women, who had been educated at home. In 1888 Mercedes Cabello de Carbonera wrote about her colleague Manuela Villaran de Plascencia, another woman writer, and expressed the frustration of many modern intellectuals:

> If you could only see me writing, my friend, you would feel sorry for me: I write surrounded by four or six children—while one takes away my pen, the other takes my eraser, this one screams at me because he thinks I haven't heard what he's asking for, and in the middle of all that racket and confusion, I finish off my composition and go on with my other occupations.

While the confusing and competing interests of modernity were not unique to late-nineteenth-century Latin America, they were confounded there by the deep divisions and contradictions of racial, cultural, and class interests.

Women, Islam, and the Turkish Nation

The emancipation of women was part of the building of the new Turkish nation under Ataturk and was tied to the secular nature of the new nation he declared (see Chapter 18). Ataturk's policy of emancipation was part of his attempts to completely eradicate tradition, to sever the ties between past and present in the creation of a modern secular nation state, on the model of European nation states. But Islamic influences persisted in Turkish society, and Islamic ideals of women's role in the family and society continued to shape the lives of women in modern Turkey. Islamic traditionalists strongly resist all forms of secularization, including the liberation of women, as the case of Turkey's first woman prime minister Tansu Ciller makes clear. Ciller's regime, elected in 1993, became the first secular Turkish government to lose power to an Islamic fundamentalist party, the Islamic Welfare Party, in 1996.

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The Cultural Crossroads of Feminism

The 1949 publication of the feminist manifesto *The Second Sex* by the French intellectual Simone de Beauvoir marks the formal beginning of postwar feminism, the awareness of women that they belong to a subordinate group that is culturally and societally determined. Emerging in the context of changing women's roles, feminism questioned the biologically determined construction of gender. The successful political struggle for female suffrage in European and American societies, largely between 1900 and 1920, had increased women's dissatisfaction with their subservient status and economic dependency. The reproductive freedoms afforded by technological and medical research in the postwar era also contributed to feminist demands for a woman's identity to be perceived independent of her reproductive role.

Yet even as feminist scholarship began to be applied to many disciplines, it became apparent to many that women were different. Carol Gilligan's controversial study *In a Different Voice* (1982) developed the thesis that women both viewed and experienced the world in ways that were different from those previously described in the literature of psychology and human development. Gilligan's research suggested that women and men assigned essentially different meanings to their experiences. For example, women were more likely to make moral judgments based on the concept of relationships, rather than solely on external concepts of justice. Furthermore, at each stage of development they put a high value on human connectedness, consequences, cohesiveness, and cooperation. The continuing debate about difference reflects the deep divisions based on gender and its intersection with other categories of class, race, and culture.

Recent research on the brain has confirmed that male and female brains are wired differently: although men and women have the capacity to reach the same conclusions, the human female brain processes sensory information in a more comprehensive way than by human male brains. This study, of course, presents an apparent contradiction, since feminists have repeatedly pointed out that gender is a social and cultural construct, rather than a biological given.

International Feminism

Whereas feminism began in the context of Euro-American cultural and political change, it has not remained culturally limited in its application to Euro-American experience. Probably the most visible twentieth-century expressions of an international feminist movement have been the three United Nations Conferences on Women, the first in Mexico City, in 1969, the second in Nairobi, Kenya, in 1984, and the third in Beijing, a decade later, at which women from nations around the world demanded in solidarity global recognition for their struggle to make women's causes tantamount to human rights issues. An organization founded in 1984, Sisterhood is Global, grew out

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of the international women's movement and is dedicated to recognizing cultural difference as a factor in achieving women's rights around the globe.

The movement for Islamic women's rights is one of the most interesting results from the 1995 Beijing conference. In recent years Muslim women from throughout the Islamic world have begun to organize to advocate for their rights to education, both secular and religious, economic freedoms, and reform in family laws. These women are laying claim to their right as Muslims to retain their religious beliefs but also to exercise their rights as human beings equal to men. They want to argue for these rights from within Islam as well as from a secular and international viewpoint. This difficult and complicated undertaking reflects the complexities of international feminism crossing cultural boundaries, breaking down barriers, but also validating cultural difference.

Feminism and Pacifism

The historical link between feminism and pacifism (Chapter 18) can be seen in the movement called "Peace People" organized by two women, Mairead Corrigan and Betty Williams, in Northern Ireland to oppose the violence of the struggle to free Northern Ireland from British rule. These two women were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1976. Women also organize to protest political oppression. A group of mothers in Argentina demonstrated for *los desaparecidos* (the ones who disappeared) in the Plaza de Mayo at the center of Buenos Aires against the brutality and terror of the military government's assault on all political opposition and activism.

Race, Ethnicity, and Identity

Since the 1850s race has been a powerful historical construct built on erroneous claims about human identity and difference. Scientific research eventually demonstrated that biologically distinct "races" do not exist. The human species is singular and no significant features, physical typologies (head size or skin color), or biological difference (such as blood type) can be demonstrated as being linked with identifying human groups as racial groups. Simply speaking, there is no such thing as biological race. Nonetheless, the erroneous concept has been used and is still widely used in the construction of identity. The consciousness of difference can be a powerful ingredient in individual and group identity whether or not it rests on supportable scientific facts. In the words of the African American scholar Cornel West, "race matters."

Racial consciousness and racism have been key determinants in an individual's sense of belonging to a group and in a person's and group's exclusion from social and economic opportunities. Yet when peoples compete as individuals, racial boundaries dissolve. This was apparent in the history of

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South Africa, perhaps the most blatant example of a racially divided nation state of the twentieth century. After the initial discovery of diamonds and gold (1867, 1884), individual whites found themselves ill-equipped to compete with Africans in a rapidly industrialized economy. Racial boundaries between groups were constructed to protect whites from competition from African workers. The racialized society intensified after the apartheid election of 1948. Yet by the 1980s the economic success of some of the African majority was beginning to blur, if not dissolve, the distinctiveness of the artificially constructed racial boundaries. The 1994 South African constitution was drafted to guarantee the rights of all—including the white minority oppressors—in a multiracial society.

Hidden in this history of hegemony is another history, that of miscegenation, or mixing of peoples and their identities. Under the impact of imperialism and colonialism in particular, societies increasingly experienced racial mixing through forced sexual and cultural encounters (rape is a frequent allegory for imperialism) and through intermarriage, whether by choice or expediency. How societies deal with the fact of miscegenation has varied across time and space. Between 1913 and 1949, 80 percent of the Asian Indian (Punjabi) men in California married Hispanic women, despite state laws prohibiting interracial marriage. In fact, three-quarters of African Americans, virtually all Latino Americans, a large majority of American Indians, and millions of whites today are multiracial or have multiracial roots. Other ethnically complex societies are also in the making in South Africa, in Britain, in the Caribbean, in Australia, in France, in Hong Kong, and elsewhere. Historical forces propelling the mixing of peoples in the twentieth century are likely to undermine the notion of race as a source of identity.

The pseudoscientific foundations of racism in the nineteenth century, however, were linked to the primacy of scientific method and to the notion that the world could be understood with certainty through the rational application of scientific principles. In the twentieth century the underpinnings of this view of the world have come under increasing attack, and a new paradigm has emerged that irrationality, uncertainty, and chaos play the key roles, in contrast to reason, certainty, and order.

Religion and the Construction of Identity

Since ancient times human societies have used language and art to describe and understand their world. While many living in post-1800 societies used the tools and language of science for these purposes, the role of faith and belief in a supernatural dimension did not disappear. For the first time in world history, many late nineteenth-century people began to identify themselves with no connection to world religions: as atheists (nonbelievers in a god or supernatural power) or agnostics (doubting the existence of god).

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For most people of the world, however, religious convictions have provided both ipersonal solace in the age of uncertainty and a source of community in a world of rapid social, economic, and political change.

Religious Diversity

Of the twentieth-century's religions, about 70 percent are rooted in belief systems that have roots extending across 1000 or more years. According to the World Development Forum statistics, if our world today were a village of 1000 people, there would be 300 Christians (183 Catholics, 84 Protestants, 33 Orthodox), 175 Muslims, 128 Hindus, 55 Buddhists, 47 Animists, 85 from other religious groups, and 201 atheists. Not surprisingly, these religious ideologies have shaped individual and community identities and directed the course of social and political change at many historical crossroads.

Islam and Christianity

In a world of constant change, belief systems offer many people a stability and certainty that is both universal and individual. Sometimes, however, religious movements have disguised or hidden change by appealing to a return to ancient basic religious tenets. Both Islam and Christianity have used such appeals around the globe to support political and social agendas identified with religious ideas that would drastically change modern secular society.

An early spokesperson for Muslims was the British-educated lawyer and founder of the Muslim League, Mohammed Ali Jinnah (1876–1948). He led the Muslim community in demanding a separate identity in the wake of the movement for Indian national independence. He believed that the differences between Hindu and Muslim religious philosophies were too great to sustain the national identity of a single state. In a 1940 speech, Jinnah urged the division of India into two separate, autonomous states. The Egyptian leader Hasan al-Banna (1906–1949) rejected Western culture and secular law altogether. Seeking to create a society based on the traditional tenets of Islam, he established the Muslim Brotherhood, a worldwide organization that still works for the creation of states based on Islamic law and principles.

Secular Nationalism

In many parts of the world, the secular nationalism of the nineteenth century was followed in the twentieth century by a desire to establish the moral grounds of political life, by the rise of religious leadership, or both. In the 1990s Michael Lerner, a Jewish rabbi with doctoral degrees in both philosophy and psychology and editor of the Jewish journal Tikkun, wrote a tract entitled "The Politics of Meaning," which addressed what Lerner perceived to be a crisis of meaning in the lives of many Americans. Lerner's political and social activism in the 1960s in the interest of liberal causes was transformed by the 1990s into a "politics of meaning," which argued for

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reasserting values into political discussion and attacked ideologues of both the left and the right, arguing that people cannot rest on old assumptions about either conservative or liberal politics. Although its earliest settlers sought religious freedom and tolerance, the United States is a secular nation with Judaeo-Christian tradition and beliefs deeply ingrained therein. During the administration of President Dwight Eisenhower (in office 1953–1961), the phrase "under God" was added to the words "one nation, indivisible" that formed part of the Pledge of Allegiance phrase commonly recited by American schoolchildren in the first half of the century, "one nation, under God, indivisible". The tensions between church and state, and the protection of individual rights within an ideological climate shaped in part by Christian fundamentalist tenets about marriage, family, sexual practices, abortion, and so on have been at the heart of an ongoing debate within the United States.

Religion and Violence

The U.S. Constitution guarantees freedom from religious persecution; American lawmakers, however, continuously legislate morality from the historical basis of religious tradition. In contrast, the North African nation of Tunisia is 98.5 percent Muslim yet has banned religion from any political role. This stance was a clear response to the historical experience of religious persecution during the French colonial period and the contemporary experience of being surrounded by Islamic extremists.

"Extremism of belief" is, of course, a highly subjective term; it suggests an ideological stance not held by the majority of believers. In the twentieth century the "extremist" label has been given to many proponents of religions whose political stance is in opposition to the powers that be. Some Jews, Palestinians, and Arabs, for example, have been labeled extremist because their actions were grounded in religious conviction.

Religious divisions have been consistent factors in the political conflicts of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The violence that has characterized South Asia since the partitioning of India and Pakistan in 1948 included setting on fire or dowsing with vitriol or sulphuric acid unsuspecting Hindu, Sikh, and Muslim families. Religious identification motivated and inspired the conflict between parties, and religious and political tensions have continued in India and elsewhere to the end of the century. In Northern Ireland divisions and conflict are similarly described in religious terms: Protestant Unionists wishing to remain part of Protestant Great Britain, against Catholic Republicans, who want to be part of a separate Republic of Ireland.

The containment of religious difference has challenged imperialist and nationalist goals throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In the Ottoman Empire the "millet" system made religious leaders of minority communities responsible for their groups. A similar system survives in

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modern Israel. The disintegration of many national identities in independent Africa (for example, Rwanda) or postwar Europe (Bosnia) has occurred in the context of the politics of cultural subnationalism. Cultural (including religious) differences that had been submerged under the artificial and often alien construct of the nation state have emerged as powerful, competing organizing principles in the face of failing state systems.

The global migrations of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries contributed to the movement of ideas from the homeplace of their original expression to quite different social, cultural, and economic settings. The search for freedom from religious persecution not only led to movements of refugees but also contributed to religious change, as peoples and ideas were transformed by new cultural and physical environments. Both the Jewish diaspora and its counterpart, a Palestinian liberation movement, represent struggling political identities based on ethnicity and religion that emerged from the displacement of territorial control over a homeland. The persecution of European Jews by Nazi Germany also led to a mass exodus of intellectuals to the territory that would become the nation state of Israel and also to Britain and the United States during the 1920s through the 1940s.

Borrowed Religious Identity

Although religion can divide people and cause conflict, it can also bring about the integration of cultural differences. Western interest in Asian religion began to rise in the 1960s and shows little sign of abating. Many Americans and Europeans sought new kinds of spiritual understanding from such sources as Zen Buddhism from East Asia, or from India, as represented by the Beatles' adoption of the Indian spiritual leader Mahareshi Mahesh Yogi as their spiritual mentor. In turn, Christianity made inroads in parts of Asia, such as South Korea where an estimated 40 percent of the population are Christians. Though Christianity has still not had great impact in Japan, "new religions" have proliferated there since the mid-nineteenth century, in a context of social dislocation. These new religions are drawn from Buddhism, Shinto, and sometimes other beliefs, creating syncretic doctrines and practices that mirror the social anxieties of the adherents.

Summary

In the late twentieth century, with its comfortable and rapid means of transportation, the movement of peoples (even in virtual space) continues unabated. New kinds of human interaction are taking place on the Internet. Forces propelling contemporary migrations are political (flight from war or oppression), economic, and environmental. Each of these forces profoundly affect the development of human identities, whether those are family, ethnic, racial, national, religious, or international.

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