

Social Science's Need for a Cultural Symbols Paradigm

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Abstract

The thesis of this paper is that human beings are remarkably distinct from other living beings (animals, birds, insects, etc.) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) machines (computers, robots, etc.) by what we would like to call cultural symbols. The latter refers to such cultural components as language, science, knowledge, religious beliefs, thought, myths, cultural norms and values.

The Concept of The Culturo-Symbolic Soul

Cultural symbols are seen in this paper as being intrinsically imbued with transcendental/metaphysical qualities whose impact and role in shaping the behavior of human individuals and societies are viewed as crucial.¹ The centrality of cultural symbols both in the making of the most human distinct identity and its social action justifies the priority which must be given to their analysis and comprehension. This epistemological outlook on the nature of human cultural symbols should be the privileged frame of analysis for the social scientist who aspires to establish a more credible intellectual paradigm, that could help disclose the nature of the latent yet powerful moving forces which trigger the behavior of individuals and the dynamics of societies.

In other words, the cultural symbols that the human species possesses must be the main source that psychologists, sociologists, anthropologists and political scientists ought to consult and refer to in any ambitious scientific endeavor which seriously aims at improving the levels of understanding and explaining the behavior of the individuals as well as that of human

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collectivities. In short, being central to the very identity-making as well as to the behavior of social actors in any society and any culture, human cultural symbols could legitimately be called the Culturo-Symbolic Soul of human social actors.²

Giving cultural symbols a prominent role in the study of the social actor's and his/her society's behavior restores the essential humanistic touch to the mainstream work of behavioral social sciences. That humanistic dimension has been lost considerably under the impact of both Behaviorism and Structuro-Functionalism. The former often studies human behavior according to S-R contingency or the rules that govern animal behavior. Modern Structuro-Functionalism, on its part, examines social action as shaped and determined by no more than the constraining social facts (*faits sociaux*) and the social structures.

The major thesis to be developed throughout the pages of this study aims essentially to accomplish two goals: to establish a theoretical framework on the nature and the role of cultural symbols as key forces to the determination of single or collective human behavior. Viewed in this way, the insights of human cultural symbols are expected to enhance the social scientist's scientific credibility. In other words, at this level, we aspire to make a social science contribution to basic research in the field of human cultural symbols, and try to apply our theoretical perspective in an empirical manner on a sample of behavior drawn from different societies, cultures, and civilizations.

The full and conclusive success in combining the theoretical and the applied levels in the behavioral social sciences remains, however, an ideal. The measure of one's theory's highest credibility is nothing more than coming closer to the realization of a genuine synthesis between the applied and the theoretical in the world of the behavioral social sciences.

To articulate our developing theory on the universe of cultural symbols, we need first to present a transparent analysis of the essence of cultural symbols' transcendental nature. Their transcendental hidden dimensions have manifested themselves in a rather tangible way as we have increasingly distanced ourselves from approaching them through positivist lenses.

Our Ever Smaller World

Alvin Toffler, the well-known American thinker, has stated that humankind has gone through two major revolutions: the Agricultural and Industrial Revolutions. Today, humanity embarks on its third and most important rev-

olution. It is the Third Wave in which the Communication/Information Revolution is a prominent feature.³ The latter is especially displayed in the formidable capacity that humans increasingly have in dealing with cultural symbols: word, thought, belief, science, cultural norms and values, voice, image, etc. The modern techniques, in Ellul's terminology, of printing and sending voice and image have reached a high degree of efficiency and precision in diffusing cultural symbols from one place to another with stunning speed. This breakthrough in the field of communication has made the world renowned Canadian communication expert, Marshal McLuhan, state that our vast world of different civilizations, people and tribes scattered here and there around the globe has become a small village whose quarters are practically separated by no frontiers.⁴

The continuing advancement in the high quality technology of information and communication since McLuhan's famous statement ought to oblige us to modify that statement to update it – though surely for a short time – to the new communication/information reality that the earth's population experiences today. It could be said at this moment of humanity's history that the entire vast planet earth is no more than a small room. This may suggest that the universe of cultural symbols appears to be of a different nature that does not pertain, more or less, to the physico-materialistic world. The successive milestones that information/communication technology has reached, and continues to reach, in the domain of the diffusion of cultural symbols defy the very basis of the traditional logic of the human five senses.

Today, any individual on this earth or in space could practically hear the voice of any event and watch its image(s) in color at the very moment of its happening. This is regardless of the formidable distances that could separate that individual from the scene where the event is taking place. It is now a common practice all over the world that newspapers and magazines publish their issues of the same content simultaneously in different cities of the same country or in cities in various continents. Likewise, it has become possible for any person to send printed letters, documents, etc., by fax to any individual, institution, or association around the globe. The addressee receives the faxed material in a matter of minutes or seconds. As for emails, they arrive, it seems, instantaneously.

Cultural Symbols' Transcendentality

As stated before, we claim in this study that the universe of cultural symbols is impregnated with transcendental/metaphysical dimensions.

Communication at once with the other person(s) through the spoken or the written word and through the image in spite of the obstacles of mountains, seas, deserts and oceans is, from the plain logic of the five senses, an event that could only belong to the world of the impossible or that of human imagination.

This type of happening is hardly acceptable by traditional human logic. From a common sense point of view, this kind of happening is usually confined to the will of supernatural beings like the gods and the spirits. Today's unbelievably speedy communication through the manipulation of cultural symbols can only endorse Toffler's statement that considers the third revolution (the Third Wave) as the most important one among the three great revolutions that humanity has experienced so far. There is scarcely any doubt that it is the greatest revolution as far as the instant diffusion of cultural symbols on a worldwide scale.

This newly acquired human potential (the third revolution) has indeed liberated humans most from the physico-materialistic constraints and has, thus, made them act with a greater freedom. This has enabled them to possess a new power which has come to resemble rather the divine power in the sense that it could do whatever it desires through time and space. What is interesting to underline here is that people of almost all social categories and classes have been primarily deeply astonished by the modern information/communication technology and, as such, they have paid little attention, if any, to the role that the intrinsic transcendental nature of cultural symbols could play in the materialization of Toffler's Third Wave.

Communication and information experts remain generally silent on what we have called the transcendental dimensions of cultural symbols.⁵ Though rigid positivism is increasingly under attack in the behavioral social sciences, communication and information specialists have hardly been able to speak aloud about the transcendental characteristics of human cultural symbols.⁶

The intangible/non-sensory qualities of the universe of human cultural symbols are remarkably manifest when we compare them with other components that are parts of the human entity. For instance, the human body and its smell are clearly part of that entity, so are the human voice and the spoken and written words. As outlined, the modern communication techniques have scored a high mark in becoming able to send off instantly the spoken/written word, the voice and the image from any place on the planet earth or in vast space to any other desired destination in both of them. With those communication breakthroughs, whose high level of quality steadily contin-

ues to improve, we can say with considerable objectivity that we are sort of entering the world of wondrous things and miracles. While our body floats in space or walks on earth, its lively image can be at once moved anywhere on earth or in space. Likewise, while the most advanced communication technology remains powerless as far as the transmission of our body's smell, so it could be smelled at fairly short distances, the earlier simple communication technology of radio and telephone was able to transmit the spoken word and the human voice to great distances around the globe.

In our opinion, the ever-increasing smallness of our world should not be solely attributed to the mere improvement of modern transmission/communication techniques. The transcendental nature of the human cultural symbols should be taken into account as well. In other words, the order of cultural symbols is different from the materialistic/sensory order of things. It has its own laws and characteristics that resemble, to an extent, those of the supernatural world. This is a plain epistemological statement on the nature of human cultural symbols. Like empirical field work, epistemological questions are often needed to be raised as a research methodology that helps the social scientist, or any scientist for that matter, improve his/her understanding of the phenomenon in question.

Our emphasis on the importance of the other side (nonsensory, transcendental) of the cultural symbols is, thus, the outcome of an epistemological perception of their nature. Accordingly, cultural symbols are fundamentally different from the remaining components that make up the human identity. As stated before, human cultural symbols are impregnated by metaphysical and transcendental ingredients that set them apart, on the one hand, from the physico-material world, and make, on the other, their action resemble that of supernatural forces. Human beings' transcendental/metaphysical experiences through their cultural symbols had been known long before the modern Communication/Information Revolution. Modern scientific research has hardly denied the occurrence of the phenomenon of telepathy between distant individuals.⁷ The study of dreams by modern psychoanalysts and psychologists has provided a lot of insights about people's capacity to forecast the future through their dreams. The role of cultural symbols in enabling humans to preview the future, so to speak, should not be underestimated.⁸

Seen from our own perspective, Toffler's Third Wave could principally be traced to the following:

- (1) As stated before, the crystallization of the Third Wave must not be related only to modern refined media technology. It must be

explained as well by the non-sensory/transcendental nature that human cultural symbols themselves possess.

- (2) The Communication/Information Revolution is qualitatively the greatest of all humankind's revolutions, because it strikes at what distinguishes humans most from all other living creatures as well as from AI machines: that is, human cultural symbols.

The incredible communication closeness that the Third Wave has made accessible to modern generations is a dazzling new social reality that would surely have caused bewilderment, astonishment and maybe madness to earlier generations ... were they resurrected from their graves and returned to the scene of our world today. It is, in fact, quite unbelievable in a materialistic world to hear people speak to each other by telephone and feel as though they are face to face but without their physical bodies side by side. They are also capable of watching the image of the person's body or of hearing his/her voice with complete clarity, as though both the body and the voice are present with them. All these events occur today in people's daily life. This is in spite of the presence of multiple physical obstacles that make the materialization of such happenings fall into the category of science-fiction events.

In our opinion, an articulated scientific understanding of the extraordinary worldwide communicative events would be shortsighted if we restricted our explanation solely to the technology factor per se (as an object) and neglected, in the Weberian sense of the term, the subjective side (the transcendental dimensions) of human cultural symbols.⁹ Weber's *Verstehen* Sociology is surely required in dealing with the subtleties of the universe of human cultural symbols.¹⁰

Three Meanings of the Transcendental Dimensions

Viewed from our perspective, the modern Communication/Information Revolution and its wonders are the outcome of an interaction between the media technology factor and the transcendental component (the invisible hand) of the human cultural symbols. Three meanings of our concept of human cultural symbols' transcendentalities are outlined below.

First, with Toffler's Third Wave the universe of the cultural symbols (the word, the voice, the image ...) plunges us into a world of strange and marvelous things that give us the impression that we no longer belong to the world of the five senses, but rather to the metaphysical world. A second

meaning of transcendental refers us to the longevity or even the eternal existence of human cultural symbols throughout time and space. A third meaning which conveys the transcendental/the metaphysicality of cultural symbols is represented in their capacity to charge social actors and galvanize them with giant and defiant energies that make them resemble, in their power and omnipotence, supernatural beings.

In outlining these three different meanings of our concept of the transcendental of human cultural symbols, we have come close to providing an operational definition whose transparent clarity should enable us to analyze those phenomena that are shaped by the transcendental dimensions of human cultural symbols as described above.

Cultural Symbols and Their Transcendental Dimensions

As the thesis of this paper emphasized throughout, human cultural symbols (language, religious beliefs, science, thought, knowledge, myths, cultural norms and values ...) are intrinsically impregnated by transcendental features. As such, the know-how media/communication revolution has certainly provided the advanced techniques which have upgraded the degree of exploitation of those hidden subjective/transcendental traits that are assumed to exist in the original nature of human cultural symbols. In philosophical terms, the presence of the transcendental aspects in the human cultural symbols is a sort of *a priori* presence. That is, the metaphysical shades that human cultural symbols possess are to be considered as taken for granted ingredients. Their scientific credibility in doing social science research can be adequately demonstrated.

The remaining sections of this paper will highlight this credibility or what I refer to as the other side of the human cultural symbols. The most common definition of the latter, particularly in modern sociology and anthropology, emphasizes that those cultural symbols are primarily represented by language, religious beliefs, systems of knowledge and science, law, morality, arts, cultural norms and values, etc. As stressed before, human cultural symbols are to be ultimately considered as the decisive components that radically distinguish humans not only from all other living species but also from most advanced AI machines like computers and robots. There is a consensus especially among sociologists and anthropologists that language, in both its spoken and written forms, is the most important of all human cultural symbols. Without it, we could neither conceive of the emergence of the rest of the human cultural symbols nor of humankind's mastership on the

planet earth or space.¹¹ If language is the fundamental basis of the phenomenon of human cultural symbols, then it should be not only the most legitimate candidate to be impregnated by transcendental dimensions, but become also the main source that predisposes the other human cultural symbols to have their share from the transcendental effect.

Thus, the examination of the transcendental dimensions of language, before those of other human cultural symbols, is quite in order.

Language and its Transcendental Dimensions

Proving the identification of transcendental dimensions in linguistic systems does not need a great deal of effort. Language is the mother of all human cultural symbols, and therefore, it should be more predisposed with transcendental dimensions than the other human cultural symbols. We restrict ourselves here to the identification of four aspects that shed light on the nature of the transcendental dimensions of language as a human cultural symbol by which the human species is privileged:

(1) The important role of language in the Communication/Information Revolution that Toffler and other specialists have spoken of and written about is more than evident. Speedy and instant communication between today's individuals and societies is principally carried out through the word (the noun, the adjective, the verb, the preposition etc.) as the basic unit of linguistic systems. As we have outlined at the outset of this work, the speedy transmission of spoken and written words in today's world should not be explained only by the high technology in the field of information/communication, but also by the very intrinsic nature of language itself as a top human cultural symbol. With the help of modern communication techniques, the communication by language through its spoken and written forms has radically transformed our world and made it look like a world of wonders and science fiction.

Communication between people and the reception of the news instantly, despite the odds of incredible distances, have come to mean what we may call the materialization of the metaphysical dimension of the human beings' existence. As a result, dualism of the human entity takes a new shape. On the one hand, the traditional perception of human nature is that the latter is made up of body and soul. On the other, the new perception of the human entity that has been crystallized by the Communication Information/Revolution is represented in the fact that the human being is a body standing here on earth, or floating there in space, but he/she continues

to exist through the use of language regardless of distance. This new dualism of the human entity puts forth the old metaphysical dimension (the soul) of the human identity in a new fabric. In spite of its novelty, the new fabric remains heavily impregnated by the transcendental effect which humans have not been able, throughout their long history, to completely eliminate from their awareness, intuition, rational and scientific thinking in the past as well as in the present.¹²

(2) As far as the language's capacity to perpetuate the culturo-symbolic heritage of human individuals, groups and societies, there is plenty of evidence that attests to that. On the collective level, the written language enables human groups to record their collective memory and to preserve it and eternalize it in spite of their disappearance as bio-organic entities. The Arabic language's full maintenance of the Qur'anic text of the seventh century is a classical example of language's capacity to preserve for good the collective heritage and memory from the inevitability of destruction and annihilation that strikes the organico-physical materialistic existence of those human collectivities.

Likewise, language enables individuals to survive culturo-symbolically their relatively short bio-organic lifespan. Well-known thinkers and writers of all human civilizations and of all ages could not have diffused and propagated in full their ideas, their theories, their paradigms, etc., had they not had at their disposal a well evolved language in their own culture.¹³ The ideas, theories, laws – of Plato, Aristotle, Ibn Khaldun, Ibn Rushd (Averroes), Rousseau, Marx, etc. – could not have resisted the odds of time and lived for centuries or potentially forever without the help of the written language. In short, linguistic systems permit the cultural heritage of people's memories as well as distinct thinkers' ideas to enjoy longevity or even eternity.

(3) The new breakthroughs in the area of modern electronic techniques have particularly greatly improved, quantitatively and qualitatively, the humans' chance of perpetuating themselves in a kind of metaphysical sense. The recording of the human voice and of the image in full color through the codification process is a vivid example of cultural symbols' ability to eternalize the word, the voice and the natural living image of living creatures and inanimate phenomena. The video is by far the most perfect invention that fully enables humans to eternalize themselves culture-symbolically. With it, it has become possible today to record in a perfect and spontaneous manner the word, the voice's tonalities and the movement of the individual's body. The late famous Egyptian singer, Oum Kalsoum,

is no longer with us today. But she is still with us with the multiple and various poems she had sung with her melodious voice, with her well-known *ahat* (sad meditative loud voice). She is still, as she really was, with us with her white handkerchief standing before her passionate audience each first Thursday of the year's twelve months.

(4) On the oral level, language use is also associated with transcendental meanings. Don't humans of all beliefs and religions resort to the spoken word in their prayers to their gods or any supernatural being in whose sacredness and eternity they believe? Being skillful in language, the human being becomes capable, on the one hand, of liberating himself/herself from this world's materialistic constraints and obstacles and, on the other, of establishing full-blown relationships with the metaphysical world. With their linguistic talent, humans can dislocate the siege of immediate worldly preoccupations. Thus, their encounter with the transcendental dimension in its various manifestations becomes inevitable. They see it in their dreams, experience it through their imagination and closely encounter it in their religious experiences.

Transcendental Dimensions of Freedom, Justice and Democracy

The cultural values of freedom, justice and democracy constitute a second example illustrative of yet another type of the transcendental of the human cultural symbol. What we are precisely interested in here is how the impact of these cultural values on human behavior could galvanize it and transform it into a supernatural-like action.

Field observations of both the human species and the rest of the other living beings show, on the one hand, that the behavior of the latter is profoundly influenced by genetic and instinctive forces. And, on the other, that human behavior is primarily determined by the impact of cultural symbols. The power of the influence of genes and instincts on the behavior of animals, birds, insects, etc., explains well the persistent uniformity of their behavior which continues to prevail among successive generations throughout time and space.

As far as the human species is concerned, there is a great variety in the patterns of major or minor behavior that differentiate one civilization from another, one society from another and one generation from another. There is a strong consensus among modern sociologists and anthropologists that those differences in the patterns of behavior are basically due to the impact

of human cultural symbols like religions, traditions, cultural values and norms, systems of knowledge, myths, etc., that exist in those human social gatherings.¹⁴ In other words, cultural symbols allow humans to have access to freedom of action, choice and difference from the other(s). On this basis, human behavior enjoys a great deal of flexibility. That is, it is governed by a docile determinism and not by a rigid determinism as is the case with the behavior of the rest of the living species.

It is no surprise, from this point of view, to see the predictions of human behavior specialists fail in many cases. Modern psychologists and sociologists often tend to ground their expected predictions of human behavior on a rigid deterministic basis whose laws hardly recognize the principles of human freedom, will and choice in the equation of potential influences on human behavior.¹⁵ It is of great importance here to draw attention to the fact that the cultural values of freedom, justice and other human universal values, that humans have sought throughout their very long history, have hardly been examined with any serious scientific interest on the part of Positivist social scientists.

The positivists appear to have considered such cultural values to be philosophical in nature. Thus, they ought to be rejected outright; they don't deserve a profound exploration as to their impact in the shaping of human behavior. They are seen as metaphysical notions that interest philosophers and not positivist social scientists. This is another demonstration, among many, that shows the epistemological handicap from which the modern Positivist social scientist continues to suffer when he/she deals with human behavior which is scarcely free from the effect of subjective, transcendental and symbolic factors.¹⁶

The humans' remarkable identification with the traits of freedom, the sense of justice, and the ability to choose, brings them closer to the metaphysical world. In most religions and faiths, gods are seen to be privileged with those characteristics. As such, it is only the human being who relatively shares those qualities with gods. The Qur'anic text makes a direct allusion to that human transcendental link which is the basis, according to the Qur'an, of freedom, will, the ability to choose on the part of humans. The origin of all that comes from the Divine Breath into human nature: "... So, when I have made him and breathed into him of My Spirit, do ye (angels) fall down, prostrating yourselves unto him."¹⁷ With that generous Divine gift, the human being becomes the most qualified being on earth to take up the full responsibility of its management. "We offered Our trust to the heavens, to the earth, and to the mountains, but they refused the burden

and were afraid to receive it. Man undertook to bear it, but he has proved a sinner and a fool.²¹⁸

Neither the world of the living species nor that of AI machines has the quantity or the quality of human cultural symbols. It is utterly unrealistic to speak of the meanings of freedom, equality, and justice among other living species in the same way they have been debated by the human species throughout the centuries. The decisive and crucial factor that radically separates humans from both the world of AI machines and the non-human living creatures is the set of cultural symbols. It is on the basis of the latter, that the legitimacy of the transcendentalization of human identity is derived. Without taking into account the impact of the world of human cultural symbols on humans, we hardly can expect to formulate an articulate understanding of their nature and their relationships with what surrounds them here on earth or what stimulates their imagination over there in the sky.

What has taken place on the political and social fronts in recent years in Eastern Europe and in the former Soviet Union constitutes a genuine illustration of the transcendental nature of human cultural values as cultural symbols. The changes in the political systems in the second half of the year 1989 and in the summer 1990, in both the socialist Eastern European societies and the former Soviet Union, could not be easily understood without reference to the mobilizing effect of cultural symbols on the behavior of social actors. The call by various groups for the democratization of those totalitarian political regimes was meant to signal the desire for ending the state of siege surrounding the exercise of freedom as a cultural symbolic value. It could be said that the politico-social practices of those dictatorial regimes went against the principle that stipulates that humans are by nature culturo-symbolic beings. That is, people hardly could accept in the long run the death of their culturo-symbolic instinct. As argued before, cultural symbols are the main sources that generate diversity and differences among human individuals and groups. By their nature, they are hostile to any repressive homogenization which attempts to make individuals and societies identical to each other. Modern socialist and communist countries' policies are at odds with this.

The prohibition to strike in the factory, to travel outside the national frontiers, to establish political parties, to speak freely, to criticize, to express opposite views, to protest etc., – all these practices are in conflict with what the cultural symbols are intrinsically predisposed to promote. The exclusion of humans from practicing their freedom in the largest sense

of the term will ultimately lead to their being very similar to both the world of non-human living creatures and that of the AI machines. Our concept of social actors as culturo-symbolic beings first is in clear contradiction with the assumptions of historical materialism.¹⁹ The ideology of the political regimes of the socialist and communist societies advocates that humans are first of all materialistically/economically oriented in nature. Everything else in human nature is either secondary in importance or of false basis. This materialistic perception of humans has led to the marginalization, or worse, to the annihilation of the role of cultural symbols in the shaping of human behavior. This is true especially among extreme and rigid materialist Marxist thinkers.

For us, the human being is a culturo-symbolic being by nature.²⁰ That is, in their overall capacity in orienting and shaping human behavior, cultural symbols hardly have an equivalent. Internal or external stimuli to human behavior are scarcely translated into action before they are screened and checked by one's cultural symbolic system. This should permit us to explain the logic of individual human behavior and collective social events that have proven able to defy even the most irresistible materialistic power.

The colonial imprisonment of many of the Third World's national leaders in modern times did not prevent them from resisting and fighting the gigantic armed forces of occupation. Their final victory could not be accounted for without making reference to their high morale, whose basis is profoundly inspired and consolidated by the action of cultural symbols. Popular revolts in ancient as well as in modern times against dictators are proof of the tremendous energy that cultural symbols could provide the human species, so that they could practically overcome any invincible military power the dictator or the occupier may mount.

The power of cultural symbols on social action is enormous indeed. There is hardly any materialistic power that could defeat in the long run the culturo-symbolically based high morale of human resistance. Its vigor and force appears to be inspired and galvanized by a sort of supernatural spirit. Once the latent forces of cultural symbols are perceived in this manner, the transcendental dimension of such cultural values like freedom, justice, equality, etc., ... would be easily grasped. The cultural symbols charge human individuals and groups with practically unlimited defiant energies that resemble, to a great extent, the unopposable power of supernatural beings. The famous verses of the Arab poet Abu El Kassim El-Shabbi²¹ vividly illustrate that:

Once the people desire dignified existence
The Divine is bound to comply.

That is, when people become firmly committed to their symbolic ideals, they will eventually leave no choice to the Divine but to meet them.

The source of people's will resides, therefore, in their cultural symbolic structure. When people are determined to defend freedom, equality, justice, their independence and their self-respect, their action becomes like that of the Divine power. That is, undefeatable.²²

Such happenings have often led people to speak of miracles in order to explain single or collective human behavior which plain objective causes are too narrow to account for. The speed of events in the Romanian society at the end of 1989 was considered by many to be incredible. The political regime of the former Romanian president, Nicolae Ceausescu, had a firm grip on the army, the Special Security Police (the Securitate) and the Romanian Communist party. But once the popular unrest and the revolt began to materialize in the city of Timisoara, it did not take a long time before it moved to the Capital, Bucharest. The President had tried to extinguish the flame of popular Romanian uprising by delivering a speech in Bucharest's Central Square on December 22nd. The army and the Securitate's attempts to stop the defiant popular rebellion ultimately failed. The army's shifting alliance with the people had helped consolidate the people's determination for the restoration of the cultural values of freedom, democracy and equality among Romanians.

The end of a whole era of Romania's modern history took place with unbelievable speed on Christmas day that year. The Romanian people's power was armed with the ammunition of cultural symbols: democracy, justice, freedom, equality, etc. With those galvanizing cultural forces, the strong power of the revolting, defiant Romanian people had become superior to the military and Intelligence power of Ceausescu's regime. In other words, it had become like a supernatural power that could crush any obstacle that came in its way.

The Impact of Cultural Symbols Tested in Three Case Studies

In order to deepen the concept of the *transcendentality* of cultural symbols, we would like to use it in the analysis of three case studies. So far, we have confined ourselves to a theory building exercise. We may be able to

claim at this point that we have established some ground in the field of basic research on the nature of cultural symbols. That is, we have raised questions and made observations about their very essential and profound nature. In a nutshell, we have deployed intense efforts to make an inside epistemological reading of the maze of human cultural symbols.

In order to enrich what we have accomplished on the level of concepts and theorization, we certainly need to go to the field of social life in order to test the credibility of our exploratory findings concerning the use of the cultural symbols in the comprehension and the explanation of micro and macro human behavior. We confine our analysis to three issues: (1) the meaning of the Arab nation's cultural unity, (2) Canada's *Two Solitudes* and (3) modern cultural imperialism.

Case Study I: The Arab World as the Outcome of Cultural Symbols

The history of the geographic region called today the Arab world, or the Arab nation,²³ is seen here as the result of the decisive role that cultural symbols have played in the homogenization of language, religious thought, tradition, cultural values and norms in the geographic space of the Arabian Gulf and the Atlantic Ocean.²⁴ The spread of those cultural symbols in this vast area came to be realized by the Arab conquests of that region in the seventh century and after.

The Arab Muslims had basically followed two steps to achieve this task. First, they spread their new faith: Islam. In other words, they propagated their religious culture symbols in the newly conquered societies. Second, in a later phase, they had made efforts and adopted policies that had favored the diffusion of the Arabic language among the non-Arabic speaking population they had invaded. This had led in the long run to the assimilation by the newly conquered populations of the Arab Muslim civilization's cultural symbols. A global cultural convergence was taking place between, on the one hand, the people of the Arabian Peninsula and, on the other, the populations of those countries which had adopted, for the most part, Islam as their new faith and Arabic as the working, cultural and intellectual language of their daily life. In modern social science terms, the integration of the Islamic religious symbols and the Arabic language and its culture into the basic personality of the large majority of individuals residing between Morocco and the Arabian Gulf created a crucial similarity or a full blown homogeneity between the Arab Muslim mother society of Arabia and the newly Islamized and Arabized people.²⁵

Our concept of the Culturo-Symbolic Soul helps a great deal in shedding light on the mechanisms and the processes which had enabled the conquered people to experience genuine integration and assimilation into the main stream of the Arab Muslim civilization's cultural symbols. As pointed out, the cultural symbols have a central role in the shaping of the individual's character and personality. An attack on those cultural symbols constitutes the most profound aggression on one's cultural identity. Cultural symbols are the individual's soul, as stressed.

To a great extent, this was what had happened at the hands of the Arab and non-Arab Muslim conquerors. The adoption of Islam by a sweeping majority of the people of today's Middle East and North Africa meant, on the one hand, their adherence to the cultural symbols of the Islamic faith and, on the other, their abandonment of their earlier religious beliefs. The Arabization of the tongues of the majority of the population meant also the marginalization or the disappearance of other dialects and languages that had existed before the sweeping advancement of the Qur'an's Arabic language. In sociological terms, the authority of the Arabic and Islamic culture had become a social fact whose defense was no longer confined only to the Arab Muslims, but was fought for as well by many non-Arab Muslims throughout the centuries.²⁶

Familiarity with the dynamics of cultural symbols and the rules that govern their action may allow the social scientist to assert that once the religion, language, culture, tradition, etc., of given human groups and collectivities have been replaced by a new religion, language, culture, tradition, etc., the solidarity and the similarity between the conquerors and the conquered have been strongly consolidated. In a modern sociologico-anthropological sense, the Arab Muslim culture has been a significant melting pot for the different people living in this enormous geographic zone stretching from the Arabian Gulf to the Atlantic Ocean.²⁷

Christianity, as a religious faith, has spread its religious symbols in many societies around the globe. Its adherents are today possibly more numerous than those of any other faith on the planet. The solidarity between Christians resides mainly in the common Christian religious symbols they share. Today's European countries, for instance, are Christian in their majority. But their linguistic and cultural solidarity is weaker than the one that exists between the Arab countries. Culturo-symbolically speaking, the reason behind this is not difficult to grasp. While Islam spread in both the Middle East and North Africa as both religious and linguistic (Arabic) symbols, Christianity spread only through its religious symbols.

This is because it did not have a revealed language like Islam's Qur'anic Arabic.

In modern social science terminology, Islam's diffusion of the Arabic language beyond Arabia is a crucial variable that must help account for the differences that exist on the cultural solidarity level between today's Arab countries and their European counterparts. We can speak here of two cultural states that prevail within these two blocks of countries. On the one hand, there is a global cultural homogeneity among the people of the Arab world. This is due, as pointed out, to the presence of common Islamic and Arabic linguistico-cultural symbols among the majority of the populations of the Mashreq and the Maghreb.²⁸ The Islamic and the linguistico-cultural symbols are two crucial variables, not only for the Arab countries' cultural homogeneity, but basic as well for successful cultural integration and assimilation of Islamized and Arabized peoples into the cultural symbols of the mother society (the Arabian peninsula). On the other hand, today's European countries are culturally similar and not homogenous. Their cultural similarity stems basically from the common Christian symbols they share. They eventually lost a great deal of their cultural homogeneity with the loss of Latin and the emergence of local/national languages.

To further illustrate the capital role cultural symbols play in the cultural homogeneity/similarity and cultural assimilation/integration that take place between interacting people of different cultures and civilizations, we look at the impact of western colonial experiences.

In the contemporary period, western colonization has struck most societies of today's Third World. Among other things, colonization aimed to exploit their natural resources as well as impoverish (underdevelop) their cultural symbols,²⁹ so dependency could be established for the benefit of the dominant party (the West). Most Arab countries fell victim to the wave of western colonization. The Algerian society suffered terribly from French cultural imperialism. Nonetheless, the French cultural colonization of Algeria failed to conquer the Islamic religious symbols to which the Algerian people have adhered since the coming of Islam. It succeeded only partially, as well, in the uprooting of the Arabic language and its culture from Algerian society. The net result of the French cultural colonization of Algeria does not permit one to speak with objectivity and precision of total or quasi-total cultural homogeneity between the French and the Algerian people, as some have claimed.³⁰ To be more fair and objective, one should say that the French language and its culture was widely spread, yet still within limitations, among Algerians of different social categories. But it

was cultural colonization that fell short of claiming that the Algerian society had come near to a complete or semi-complete assimilation into the French cultural melting pot. Full cultural assimilation would have occurred, as stressed before, with complete religious and the linguistico-cultural interaction between the dominated Algeria and the dominating France.

The circumstance within which the Algerians had learned French and were exposed to the French culture had also probably aggravated the rapprochement between the two parties.³¹ The Algerians had learned French and its culture in a climate of violent colonization and domination. Such tense and hostile conditions may have played a significant role in independent Algeria's attempt to liberate itself from French linguistico-cultural dependency. This was especially true under the leadership of former president Houari Boumedienne in the 1960s and 1970s.³²

The spread of Christian symbols in European soil many centuries ago and France's ruthless contemporary attempt to linguistically and culturally colonize the Algerian society have proven to be of limited cultural impact on the targeted people. On the one hand, Europe's adoption of Christianity could not be more than the adoption of its religious symbols, as explained before. On the other, contemporary French colonization of Algeria has caused a lot of damage to the status of the Arabic language and culture. But it was a damage that fell short of their full annihilation from the Algerian society. Islam's religio-linguistic cultural conquest of other people makes its integration/assimilation experiences in other societies more successful than that of Christianity in Europe and French colonization in Algeria. Using both the religious and the linguistico-cultural fronts, the Arab Muslims had struck the best strategy for the integration and assimilation of others in their fold for a long time to come and perhaps forever. With their Islamization and Arabization, the people of the Mashreq and the Maghreb have been led to sign a sort of an eternal cultural and spiritual bond.

In the past as well as in the present, Arab rulers have come into conflict with each other mainly for economic, political and territorial reasons. There is no doubt that there will be more bloody confrontations between them in the near as well as in the far distant future. The confrontation between the caliph (the central ruler of the Islamic empire) Ali and his rival, Muawiyya, took place not so long after the death of the Prophet. The dispute was a rivalry over who was more legitimate to run the political institution of the *khilafah* (central government) of the Muslim world. Other conflicts followed suit between the Umayyads and the Abbasids in early Islam. In modern times, the frontiers between the Arab countries have frequently been closed

because of political and ideological differences between the political regimes. At times, things got even worse. Arab armies have fought each other on Arab land. Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and the military confrontation between Iraq, on the one hand and the U.S. led alliance, including the participation of several Arab armies, on the other, is considered to be the bloodiest confrontation between the armies of modern Arab states.

In spite of that, religio-linguistic cultural solidarity tends to exist in some sort of immunity. This type of solidarity seems to have its own logic and rules. It appears to be only temporarily affected by such conflicts and confrontations. Religio-linguistic and cultural solidarity tends to dispose of considerable strength and power like a supernatural force. It is capable of minimizing the immediate costs of tragic worldly events and of outliving them.

The common Islamic and linguistico-cultural symbols have enabled the Arab Muslims to preserve their religio-linguistic and cultural solidarity for over fourteen centuries. As stressed throughout this paper, the religio-linguistic and cultural ties are imbued by transcendental/metaphysical dimensions. Due to that nature, they are in a position to secure lasting bonds and alliances between social actors. The military, political and economic alliances between nations and people hardly ever achieve such continuous and lasting solidarity.³³

Case Study II: Canada's Syndrome of the Two Solitudes

In Canada, Quebec's desire for separation or for some sort of autonomy continues to create tension and conflict within the Canadian Federation. The numerous constitutional conferences which the federal government has held with the provincial ones have not yet succeeded in integrating Quebec as a distinct society in the larger Canadian society.³⁴ The concept of "distinctiveness" which Quebec seeks to legislate into the Canadian constitution pertains essentially to Quebec's cultural dimensions that distinguish it from the rest of the Canadian provinces. The majority of Quebec's population speaks French and belongs to a rather French culture. In the vast North American Anglophone linguistico-cultural space, Quebec remains and perceives itself as a Francophone identity.

Quebec's call for sovereignty is no longer the strict slogan only of the Separatist Party Quebecois. Recently, to a certain degree, it also has become the theme of discussion of Quebec's Liberal Party which was in power.³⁵ And this was in spite of its well-known federalist sympathy and alliance.

The malaise which Quebec-Canada has suffered in coexistence is obviously due, to a great extent, to culturo-linguistic differences. The larger Canadian society comprises two cultural identities which tend to experience exclusiveness according to the Canadian sociologist, John Porter: "The country (Canada) is broken into two major linguistic and cultural blocs that maintain a high degree of exclusiveness from each other."³⁶

Article after article in the Canadian written media shows convincingly that the Francophone and the Anglophone communities in Montreal suffer from the syndrome of the *Two Solitudes*. In their majority, these two groups read neither the same newspapers nor the same magazines. Also, they don't listen to the same radio stations or watch the same television channels. Furthermore, there is evidence that the Anglophone and the Francophone businessmen in this city lunch and dine in different restaurants. The two communities in question belong to two different poles of reference and two different cognitive maps. In our own terms, they don't have the same Culturo-Symbolic Soul. As such, the phenomenon of the *Two Solitudes* in Canada is quasi-inevitable. It is far from being a social fact (*un fait social*) which is restricted only to Montreal. The exclusiveness between the two major Canadian Communities is manifest throughout the country at various levels. The well-known Quebecer sociologist, Guy Rocher, speaks of the *Two Solitudes* among Canadian sociologists:

The Congresses of the Canadian Association of Sociology and Anthropology offer the same scene of a more discrete presence of Francophone sociologists, or to be more precise, of a more than remarkable absence. In reading the Congresses' programs, one could conclude that Quebecer sociology has been on decline since 1965, while in reality it has been in full explosion. In fact, Francophone Quebecer Sociologists' under-representation is an index of a profound rupture. The gap has been widened between Francophone sociologists, particularly Quebecers, and Anglophone Canadian sociologists. A wall of silence has risen between us. It seems stronger and more lasting than Berlin's wall. There has been no separatism, but there has been instead an effective separation, a moving away and a distancing. And this, without referendum!³⁷

The observations made by professor Rocher and other researchers on the phenomenon of the *Two Solitudes* are fieldwork observations. They are, thus, of an empirical nature. However, these observations remain rather descriptive, like those made on Cultural Lag and exclusiveness by Ogburn and Porter respectively. Each concept describes its phenomenon, but it says little, if any, about its *raison d'être*. In sociological terms, the *Two Solitudes*

in Canada and especially in Quebec constitute, for both Rocher and Porter, social facts. But neither of them has attempted to explain the profound reason behind the *Two Solitudes* in Canadian society. Rocher appears even surprised and angry concerning the deep rupture which continues to prevail between Quebecer sociologists and their Canadian Anglophone counterparts. For him, the explanation of the persistence of the *Two Solitudes* seems to defy the logic of things. "A wall of silence has risen between us. It seems stronger and more lasting (my emphasis) than Berlin's Wall."³⁸

The use of our concept of the Culturo-Symbolic Soul allows us to go beyond the descriptive phase of the phenomenon of the *Two Solitudes* in Canadian society. We have insisted before that cultural symbols do constitute all that is most central and profound in social actors' identity. In other words, cultural symbols are those elements most crucial to the collective identity of communities and people. Thus, it is no surprise to see the emergence as well as the crystallization of two culturo-symbolic souls in a society of two major languages and cultures like Canada's. Geographically and physically French and English Canadians may live in the same province, the same neighborhood, the same building, yet they still experience the syndrome of *Two Solitudes* toward each other. They have difficulty in communicating, in understanding each other, in putting themselves in the other's shoes. In our own terms we are witnessing here a state of rupture between two culturo-symbolic souls. The phenomenon of the *Two Solitudes* in Canadian society strongly confirms the assumptions, the hypothesis and the thesis of symbolic interaction perspective.³⁹

As such, the importance of cultural symbols remains central both for the collective identity of the individual and the community. Their input/effects on the behavior of social actors seems to have a transcendental nature. On the one hand, they appear to exercise their influence in a rather mysterious fashion, like a type of "invisible hand": "There has been no separatism, but there has been instead an effective separation, a moving away and distancing. And this, without referendum!"⁴⁰

On the other hand, the weight of the influence that cultural symbols exercise on human behavior is enormous. So, it is difficult indeed to resist their power, which reminds us of that of supernatural beings.

Put in modern social science terminology, cultural symbols play a decisive role in explaining both Canada's *Two Solitudes* and Arab Muslim countries' lasting cohesive and cultural solidarity. As emphasized, the religious and linguistico-cultural symbols that human collectivities may share stand as the best builder of a strong cultural solidarity between them. The case of the

Arab Muslim individual could be a special illustration. Wherever he/she happens to be in the Arab world, and regardless of the conflicts that may exist between the political regime of his/her own country and those of the other Arab countries, he/she is more likely to find himself/herself in a close bond with the Arab Muslim individual with whom he/she shares the religious and linguistic-cultural symbols of the Arab Muslim civilization.

For instance the recitation of the Holy Qur'an⁴¹ by the well-known Egyptian reciter Abdul Basit Abdel Samad, or that of the Saudi reciter Ali al-Jabr, is received reverently and humbly both in the Mashreq and the Maghreb. Furthermore, the songs of the late famous Egyptian singer Oum Kalsoum in classical Arabic or in the Egyptian Arabic dialect are perhaps the most important modern Arab cultural heritage that democratically unifies contemporary Arab generations. Finally, who among the Arab educated population could stay indifferent, when he/she hears the Arabic verse, widely recited throughout the entire Arab world, of the Tunisian poet Abul Kassim El Shabbi:

Once the people desire dignified existence
The Divine is bound to comply

Such popular spontaneous reactions to those religious and cultural symbols across the Arab world can hardly be comprehended without the use of our concept of the Culturo-Symbolic Soul elaborated earlier.

As to the syndrome of the *Two Solitudes* between Quebecers and the English Canadians, there is no doubt that the lack of common religious and linguistico-cultural symbols between the two groups has played a significant role. While the religion of Quebec's majority is Catholicism, Protestantism is the prevailing religious faith in the other English Canadian provinces. More important, the Canadian society is a bilingual and bicultural society as pointed out. In our times, politically confederated Canadians don't share, as do the citizens of the Arab world, the same Culturo-Symbolic Soul. Canada's *Two Solitudes* and the Arab world's strong cultural solidarity are genuine illustrations of cultural symbols' impact on cultural solidarity between people

The dilemma of Canada's *Two Solitudes* has a long history in the Canadian Federation. It constitutes today a major threat to the collapse of the Canadian Federal System itself.⁴² In contrast, Arab cultural commonality has been probably the strongest spring-board that has launched the restoration process of global Arab solidarity after the Arab world's shattering division during and immediately after the Gulf War.

In both cases, the cultural symbols' dividing or unifying impact on relations between human groups and collectivities is indeed of a long lasting, if not permanent, nature. As articulated in this paper, our theoretical perspective permits us to assert that Quebec's once-for-all successful integration within Canada is hardly achievable. The roots of Quebec's thorny problem within Canada are obviously strongly related to Canada's dual cultural symbols. As such, a Canadian Federation where Quebec is still a member could not be conceived without a great deal of long-lasting tensions between the two parties in question.

In comparison to the Quebec-Canada case, the materialization since the seventh century of a genuine Arab Muslim identity for the different religious, linguistic and ethnic collectivities that were residing between the Arabian Gulf and the Atlantic Ocean is a good proof of the *long-lasting effect* of the impact of cultural symbols on people's behavior. In our opinion, this is one reason that should explain the slow pace of cultural change that has been analyzed by the American sociologist William Ogburn.⁴³ The great longevity of cultural symbols, as elaborated in this study, means implicitly that they possess certain qualities (transcendental traits) that enable them to be in a position to put more resistance to change than society's materialistic structure, which lacks the transcendental qualities.

Case Study III: Cultural Dependency is Most Dangerous

The widely quoted saying, "The cultural conquest of people is more dangerous than the military one," is an almost uncontested, highly credible assertion. One must, however, admit that there is a great deal of fuzziness and lack of precision in the use of such terms as "cultural alienation," "cultural imperialism," "cultural dependency," etc., in the contemporary worldwide context of dominant/dominated societies.

All these various terms don't offer more than a general observation of the presence of imperial foreign cultural symbols in today's dominated countries. The scientific analysis of the dangers of the phenomenon of cultural conquests can absolutely not be satisfied with the mere proliferation of such general labels. A mature scientific endeavor would require no less than the identification of the principal foundations of the phenomenon in question. Our extended reference to the notion of cultural symbols in this study falls within our attempt to go beyond the philosophical and ideological levels of "cultural imperialism," "cultural dependency" etc., to a more

scientifically grounded analysis which could ultimately help deal with the cultural symbols universe of the human species.

Accordingly, the ever-increasing critical complaints against so-called “American cultural imperialism,” as claimed both by developed and developing societies,⁴⁴ have to be understood through a credible scientific framework and not through a narrow demagogical ideologically-oriented perspective. The fear of those societies from “the American cultural invasion” could only be adequately legitimate when viewed through the perspective of the thesis we have developed in this study about the human cultural symbols.

The propagation of foreign cultural symbols in human societies means, as we have stressed, that the impact of those cultural symbols will be of lasting effect once the cultural symbols are deeply implanted into the culture of the dominated societies. Thus, the task of liberating themselves from them in the future will be a difficult one indeed. Past and present evidence shows that the diffusion of language, cultural values, religious beliefs, etc., in other societies and civilizations is the best clever strategy that a society could resort to in order to secure the establishment of more permanent relations with other countries. At this level, there is no doubt that the cultural factor is far superior to the military, geographic, and economic strategies.

Contemporary researchers do concur that the French colonization gave more importance than its English counterpart to the cultural colonization of the occupied people in Africa and Asia.⁴⁵ Consequently, it could be said that today’s Maghrebian societies (Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, and Mauritania) suffer more than their Mashreiquian counterpart societies from colonial cultural dependency.⁴⁶ In our own terms, the cultural dependency means the dependency of one’s Culturo-Symbolic Soul to the outsider, who may be one’s enemy.

As we have repeatedly pointed out throughout the pages of this study, the dependency of one’s Culturo-Symbolic Soul constitutes a direct assault on the basic foundations of the cultural identity of the individual and the collectivity. In light of this line of ideas and analysis, one should have no great difficulty in seeing the degree of the credibility of the statement: “The cultural conquest of people is more dangerous than the military one.” Based on this broad analysis, Third World countries’ condemnation of modern western “cultural imperialism” be it American, English, French, etc., is hardly unfounded. Today’s widespread official and non-official use of English (American) and French in many African and Asian societies does not only contribute to the impoverishment (the underdevelopment) of those

societies' native languages and dialects, but it also shows that the struggle to win their linguistico-cultural independence will not be an easy task.

As stated before, the intrinsic longevity of cultural dependency means it takes a very long time to get rid of, and this is, provided that all positive appropriate conditions are present in the given society/collectivity. "Cultural imperialism," whatever its origin, would be perceived negatively when it triggers and amplifies the processes of the disintegration of the native cultural-symbolic systems of developing and developed societies. Third World countries that suffer from the symptoms of national (or local) cultural alienation, disintegration and loss are countries which are bound to be most profoundly hit in the basic foundations of their cultural collective identity.⁴⁷

The Need for Verstehen Sociology for Cultural Symbols

It is against this broad background of analysis that one can come to grips with the kind of difficulty that positivist social scientists have to face as far as perceiving and understanding the larger implications which cultural symbols could put in place for the dynamics of human groups, communities, and societies. In general, the discipline of modern sociology has rejected the idea of alliance with subjective methodology which allows the sociologist to get much closer to the human dimension of the social actor than to the social structure surrounding him. The modest effort in this paper has shown that through the use of the Culturo-Symbolic Soul concept, it is time for sociology to fully reintegrate the subjectivo-transcendental components in every study whose aim is to achieve more credibility with regard to the comprehension as well as the explanation of individual or collective behavior.

The study of the cultural symbols by anthropologists and sociologists cannot be done adequately without internal comprehension and assessment of them. The need is urgent, indeed, for the invention and establishment of some sort of Verstehen sociology able to deal with the complex maze that comprehending human cultural symbols entails.

Notes

1. Our focus on the transcendental/metaphysical dimensions of cultural symbols intends to revitalize the concept of culture as used by modern social sciences. Our approach is, however, quite different from that of Richard Peterson in his article "Revitalizing the Culture Concept," *Annual Review of Sociology*, 5

- (1979): 137-66. Contemporary anthropologists and sociologists have enough emphasized the role of culture in determining human behavior. To our knowledge, they have not dealt with the transcendental aspect of culture as we are attempting to do here. For us, understanding culture's transcendentality is essential to the understanding of the dynamics of cultural symbols and their impact on human behavior.
2. We are well aware that the use of the term soul will be generally negatively received, particularly by positivist social scientists. The conflicts between scientists and the Church in the West since the Renaissance explain the negative connotations that are still associated with the term soul, or worse, with its French equivalent (*l'ame*), both of which are widely used by the Christian religion, theology and the Church's authority. We define it as the compelling influential forces that cultural symbols exercise in the shaping of human behavior. Cultural symbols are seen as the soul of the social actor, because they are what distinguish humans most from other living species as well as from modern AI machines. Our definition of the term Soul does not, however, put an end to the presence of transcendental/metaphysical traits in cultural symbols. It confirms rather their presence and their weight in a manner quite different from the religio-theological version. Transcendental/metaphysical dimensions of cultural symbols are dug out (carved out), so to speak, following a closer exploration of the very substance of the cultural symbols.
 3. A. Toffler, *The Third Wave* (New York: Marrow, 1980).
 4. M. McLuhan and Q. Fiore, *The Medium is the Message* (New York: Bantam, 1967).
 5. Ibid.
 6. B. Brody, *Readings in the Philosophy of Sciences* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970).
 7. *Encyclopedia of Psychology* (Guilford, CT: The Dushkim Publishing Group, Inc., 1973), 273.
 8. E. Fromm, *The Forgotten Language* (New York: Bantam, 1965).
 9. P. Ansart, *Les Sociologies Contemporaines* (Paris: le Seuil, 1990), 13-14.
 10. Ibid.
 11. L. White, *The Evolution of Culture* (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1959).
 12. M. Hunt, *The Universe Within* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982), 315-53.
 13. T. Parsons, *Societies: Evolutionary and Comparative Perspectives* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1966).
 14. N. Smelser and W. Smelser, *Personality and Social Systems* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1967), 80-87.
 15. D.C. Phillips, *Philosophy, Science and Social Inquiry* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1985).
 16. The French social determinist sociologist Emile Durkheim and the Behavioral American psychologist B.F. Skinner are leading figures in modern behavioral

social sciences in their opposition to non-objectivized factors as determinants of human behavior.

17. The Qur'an, 15:28-29.
18. The Qur'an, 33:72.
19. E. Balibar, *Cinq Etudes du Materialisme Historique* (Paris: Maspero, 1979).
20. Th. Roszak, *The Cult of Information* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986).
21. He was a Tunisian poet hardly matched by any Arab modern poet of his age (1909-34).
22. All literary commentaries concur that these verses of the 1930s constitute a clear call to the colonized Tunisian people to revolt against the French colonizers and secure independence and self-respect.
23. This is used mainly by nationalist political parties in the Arab countries. The Ba`th Party in both Syria and Iraq is the best example representing modern Arab nationalism.
24. It is very common in the Arabic language to refer to the Arab world as the region between the Arabian Gulf and the Atlantic Ocean (Morocco).
25. S. Yasin, *The Arab Personality* (in Arabic) (Beirut: Dar al-Tanwir Publisher, 1983) and A. Abdurahman, *The Islamic Personality* (Beirut: Dar al-'Ilm li al-Malayin, 1986).
26. L. Gardet, *Les Hommes de l'Islam* (Paris: Editions Complexe, 1980) and M. al-Jabri, *The Arab Political Mind* (in Arabic) (Beirut: The Arab Cultural Center, 1991). See my review of this book in the issue of *Contemporary Sociology* 23, no. 2 (Mar. 1994): 260-61.
27. Ibid.
28. While the term "Maghreb" refers in Arabic to Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Libya and Mauritania, the term "Mashreq" refers to the Arab Middle East countries.
29. M. Dhaouadi, "An Operational Analysis of the Phenomenon of the Other Underdevelopment in the Arab World and in the Third World," *International Sociology* 3, no. 3 (Sept. 1988): 219-34.
30. This argument may have been used by the French colonial authority to justify considering Algeria as UN Department Francais.
31. M. Dhaouadi, "In the Sociology of Language Nationalization in the Algerian, Tunisian and Quebecker Societies," *Al-Mustaqbal al-'Arabi* no. 142 (Dec. 1990): 40-56.
32. Ibid.
33. Arab contemporary nationalist calls for Arab Unity by Nasser, the Ba`th parties, and Gaddafi are basically more inspired by religio-cultural linguistic bonds than by economic, political and military factors.
34. The Canadian federal government's failure to win on 26 Oct. 1992 the referendum on Charletown constitutional accord (Aug. 1992) will certainly not help Quebec's integration into the Canadian federal system. Quebec's chance of separation has been removed.

35. The so-called Allaire's report of Quebec Liberal Party has seriously considered sovereignty or separation as an option for Quebec, if the federal government does not meet Quebec's major demands.
36. J. Porter, "Canadian Character in the Twentieth Century", in *Annals* (Mar. 1967), 49 and "La nation pour Inclure ou Exclure" in *le Monde*, 29 Mar. 1992, 20-21.
37. G. Rocher, "Les Deux Solitudes Chez les Sociologies Canadiens," a lecture given at the University of British Columbia (27 May 1990) at the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the founding of the Canadian Sociological and Anthropological Association. The translation of the French text is mine.
38. Ibid.
39. J.G. Nanis et al. (eds.), *Symbolic Interaction* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1968).
40. Rocher, "Les Deux Solitudes."
41. There are basically two factors in Qur'anic recitation: *Tajwid* (reading the Qur'an while chanting it with correct pronunciation and spacing, and *tartil* (a slow, measured reading of the Qur'an. Reciters have to be trained with a teacher or in special schools and universities.
42. See footnote 34 above.
43. W.F. Ogburn, *On Culture and Social Change*, ed. O.D. Durcan (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), 86-95.
44. The prestigious French medical journal *Annals* has adopted English as the language of its published scientific articles. This has raised a lot of protest in France. See interview with its editor in *le Monde*, 14 Apr. 1989, 12. See also "l'influence Culturelle Americaine en France," *le Monde: Dossiers et documents*, May 1981.
45. L.J. Calvet, *Linguistique et colonialisme* (Paris: Payot, 1977), 84-84. See also: Y. Eudes, *Le Conquete des Esprits* (Paris: Maspero, 1982).
46. W.K. Ruf, "Dependence et Alienation Culturelle," *Independence et Interdependences au Maghreb* (Paris: CNRS, 1974), 233-78.
47. G. Kisber, *The Disorganized Personality* (London: McGraw-Hill, 1982).