

Civilizing Emotions
Concepts in Nineteenth-Century Asia and Europe

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This work is a contribution to the growing Oxford University Press series, *Emotions in History*. Emotions are clearly involved in how civility and civilization are constructed in late nineteenth- to early twentieth-century world cultures during the age of high imperialism in the investigations produced by these authors. However, the scholarship that informs these essays in the main stems not from the history of emotions so much as the history of concepts, a form of intellectual history particularly strong in the German academic tradition. This takes concepts – in this case civility and civilization – as the subject of investigation, explored through language and semantic fields in texts that, here, primarily concern the genres of dictionaries, encyclopedias, media debates and literature. As Jan Ifversen emphasizes in his Afterword, a key contribution of this collaborative project is its interest in going beyond national-level investigations to the transnational and its global entanglements. This is a particular challenge in a field that is grounded in linguistic specificities but which is handled here through attention to transfers, transmissions and translations of concepts between cultures.

As Margrit Pernau and Helge Jordheim present the work's aims in their Introduction, the kind of emotions of interest here are 'habitualized emotions' rather than 'spontaneous and short-lived affects' (p. 8). They are generally abstract ideas and ideals explored by intellectuals in debate, which could enhance or hinder the development of civilization, not studies of social realities, historical experiences or lived practices of emotions. Authors investigate in precise contexts ideas and vocabularies of emotions that look quite different to each other, and often not immediately much like emotion. This is evident in the work's Concept Index (pp. 340–2) in which varied concepts are labelled within different linguistic categories that range from Urdu and Korean to French and Persian (but, interestingly, not English). This include concepts that range from barbaric, conduct, culture and humanity to learning, moral substance, national essence, vital energy, and willpower. It is part of the considerable challenge for this work to offer a kind of implicit comparative study of

civilizing emotions when feeling expressions familiar to one culture, and even the word 'emotion,' do not exist in a straightforward manner in others.

Another key aim of the work is to de-centre Europe in the interplay and entanglements of civilizing concepts. The range of the studies reflects these global comparative interests in concepts that are explored through a wide range of linguistic and cultural contexts. This produces a number of fascinating connections between societies and influences. From its success in the 1905 Russo-Japanese War, for instance, Japanese society emerges as an exemplar for many authors across the globe of resistance and alternative to Western concepts of civilization. However, despite the orientation of the title and cover art, Europe is hard to ignore for these societies and the authors of these essays. Europe is the implicit geographic and cultural structure for the book, which is divided into four parts that begin with Europe and spiral outwards to the Middle East and South Asia to East Asia. In the findings of the essays, the work of European authors, especially Herbert Spencer, appears almost universally influential, even where it is critiqued and rejected for alternatives, and the intellectuals whose works are discussed in each society all had some experience of colonial contact with their own cultures. Pernau and Jordheim rightly point out that European thought on civilization was not without significant divergences itself, but as it appears in the studies of other cultures, it is hard to ignore that European models of civilization are, in most cases, the pre-eminent standpoint from which to propose local variations, adaptation or indeed, to reject altogether. The work's title prioritizes Asia and Europe, and accordingly the work does not provide case studies of either colonial settler societies of Europeans such as the US, Canada, New Zealand, Australia and in Africa, or of the peoples whose lands were invaded by them.

In Part 1, examining Europe, Helge Jordheim investigates the development of national cultures in Scandinavia. Here, national feeling was tied particularly to land and landscape in a strong pedagogical project from the 1870s. Drawing upon songs, encyclopedias, anthropological and biological writings, Jordheim shows both the influence of Spencer's thought as well as challenges to it. Focusing particularly on Spencer's reception in Norway, he explores how concepts of evolution and race were prioritized over cultural forms such as music and poetry as conduits to feeling and ideas of civilization, creating powerful divisions between Scandinavian peoples with long-lasting consequences. In the following chapter, Margrit Pernau explores the creation of the British imperial global order. She emphasizes the importance of Scottish Enlightenment thinkers in shifting civilization away from a courtly and individual (male) endeavour to a middle-class, and eventually whole of society, undertaking. She uses encyclopedias, advice books and keyword-searched newspapers from different political perspectives to explore how these largely masculine concepts of achievement of civility through emotions play out within different genres. She finds that encyclopedias show a shift from moral philosophy to models based in psychology

and biology, while religion remains a key influence in advice literature. Most dynamic were newspapers in terms of the variety of viewpoints expressed and conceptual flexibility in discussions about civilization that were as relevant to Irish policy as the Pacific Islands.

In considering sociability in the French Imperial Republic, Emmanuelle Saada argues that while the word civility was rarely discursively present over the nineteenth century, the idea underpinned the emerging discipline of social science and the political debates of high republicanism. In the social sciences, emotions were understood to be significant to the formation of cohesive social bonds in all societies as learned, rather than instinctive, behaviours. Republican pedagogy mirrored these ideas in its advocacy of civility as a way to develop social (and civic) attachment. Civilization, by contrast, was far more visible in a linear notion of progress that required re-education of the poor and peasantry as much as those in colonies. However, by the early twentieth century, a racialized emotionology emerged and rights to French citizenship for native peoples were founded, and foundered, on the relationship made between civility and citizenship. The consequences of these ideas informed the mid-twentieth-century literature of *négritude* in which emotionality distinguished African experience from European rationality. Christian Bailey explores a concept of *Kultur* in Germany as one of shared feelings contrasting the rather monumental *Zivilisationen* of France and Britain, in the context of Germany's late-comer political and colonizing status. These German conceptualizations cut across European supremacy within the civilization hierarchy, especially in examinations of the Islamic world. Bailey, analysing journals, combined with ethnographic research, and histories of migration, sees a blurring of the boundaries of civilization, ideas which German readers then encountered through explorations of non-European cultures in popular novels. Civility was not much used as a word but is traced here through a dense semantic field made up of terms that expressed the habits and emotions of other peoples, from civilization and education to barbarity, wildness, savage, and violence. Over time, however, a mapping of distinct Aryan and Semitic cultures on separate evolutionary trajectories emerged and increasingly the literature understood civilization through racialized differences that became not points for engagement but ones of entrenched difference.

Einar Wigen commences Part 2, focused on the Middle East, with his study of ideas of orderliness in the Ottoman Empire as it sought to understand itself and its position in international interactions, and as it was perceived by others. Wigen studies civilization's path as a concept through canonical texts, noting that it had to be translated through semantic field equivalents. It came into use as Ottomans sought to join the Concert of Europe at end of the Crimean War with documents using civilization to present emotions concepts through individual morality and state order. This was important in creating a sense of belonging to a group of allies, which implicitly defined others as less civilized. Increasing distinctions were made between

the orderliness of settled life as present and future, compared to nomadic existence as obsolete. However, Wigen also highlights a concomitant, emerging critique of European immorality and decline compared to the morality of Ottoman (then Turkish) culture. In Chapter 6, Orit Bashkin traces debates of civility and civilization in Arab print literature in which intellectuals connected these concepts to perceptions of emotionality, political choices, ideas about community and reforms. Although it was borrowed as a system of knowledge from Europe, Bashkin argues that civilization became a way for Arab authors to assess their own societies and to argue for adaptations to emotions and behaviours better suited to the times. Some feeling characteristics were perceived to be holding back the Arab world. Apathy was identified as a problem and forgiveness potentially too yielding and weak, while mercy and compassion were useful emotions to counter apathy as long as they did not become excessive generosity. Some emotional attributes of Bedouin culture were praiseworthy, such as courage and bravery, but nomadism was considered of a past age. Peasants and women were also among topics of debate that reflected ideas about Arab emotional identity as Muslims, Egyptians, “the East” and as embedded in the geography of the landscapes in which peoples in the Middle East had emerged. In the next chapter, Mana Kia considers the assessment of Persian intellectuals regarding Iran’s perceived decline over the nineteenth century. Shame about the moral degradation of the nation as individuals and its loss of political sovereignty was central to these discussions. Older ideas about masculine moral refinement were linked to a restoration of civility that foregrounded honour and zeal in an individual practice of virtue as part of a national civil project. State-level political reform and individual (male) moral behaviour were thus deeply intertwined.

Part 3 provides three studies concerning South Asia, beginning with Pernau’s chapter using bilingual dictionaries, seen as part of the colonial project, to map out concepts of civility in Urdu. Here, barbarity was linked to a lack of knowledge and also to emotions or, more precisely, to a lack of the ‘right,’ virtuous and compassionate ones that would bring people together and inspire enthusiasm and ardour for the nation. Pernau highlights the strong influence of Persian traditions and writings for Urdu concepts of civility and virtue. In this context, there was a rejection of civilization as a linear concept, for one with ebbs and flows that meant no society was always at the forefront of progress. In Chapter 9, Mohinder Singh considers the transformation in concepts of civilization and progress in India, long part of the vocabulary of the colonial mission there in which the West loomed as the comparative other for Indian civilization. Authors were not uncritical of the West or those who followed its modes too slavishly, reminding readers of the great, ancient Indian civilizations that were on par with European antiquity. Here, bodily health as well as a robust emotional core were critical to the governance of nation and self in ideologies that principally targeted the upper castes. Muslims and lower castes were less visible in these discussions, while

women were inculcated in new pedagogical programs that would make them better domestic partners and family carers for the men who would lead the nation's future. Rochona Majumdar concludes this section with her chapter exploring Bengali civility as seen by intellectuals who recommended cultivation of political emotions, especially devotion, in the people for the nation. Founded initially in self-development, via restraint and professionalization stemming from Western ideals, civilization was only available to a small minority of the Bengali populace. However, erudite and archaeological studies provided models of glorious Bengali civilization in the past that served as motivating foundations, while writers offered pathways to a new national self. In these texts, a secular politicized form of devotion emerged as the feeling that attached individuals, rich and poor, to the greater good, although this community was one that implicitly did not include Muslims, making a demarcation in Hindi-Muslim relations at least as important as those between East and West.

In the final Part, concentrating on East Asia, Angelika C. Messner demonstrates the importance placed in early Republican China on new interpretations of the relationship between the body politic and emotions. As in Singh's study, a focus on hygiene and bodily reforms (such as foot and breast binding, and the queue) were key mechanisms in civilizing process proposed by Chinese intellectuals. Coinciding with a strong medical missionary movement, much was viewed through the lens of medicine, with words for civility, knowledge and nourishing life taking on new meanings in a civilizing discourse. In Chapter 12, Oleg Benesch provides an important chapter on the confrontation of civilities and civilizations in Japan, a country that served as a key model for many societies beyond Europe after 1905. Benesch emphasizes the significant, pre-existing concepts of social hierarchy and emotional behaviours in traditional Japanese society that were negotiated through Japanese interactions with Western societies and also in its increasingly aggressive positioning with both China and Korea over this period. Japanese society had a strong, and strengthening, sense of martial values than were present in the Chinese orientations from which its terms and concepts of civilization were drawn. Likewise, the Japanese rejected Western sensibilities regarding male homosexual relationships, that had a long acceptance in local culture. These and other assertions of a specifically Japanese set of feelings of civility were oriented towards a national patriotism as Japan progressively encountered the world during this period. Myoung-kyu Park's study of Korea provides a counterpart to the Japanese perspective, as a nation that found itself increasingly colonized by its neighbour at this time. Park identifies how shame and embarrassment characterized the first response of intellectuals to Korea's rapid phase of modernization in the 1880s as it emerged from the isolation of the Joseon dynasty hermit kingdom. These feelings were mobilized to motivate both individual and collective political action, just as traditional Confucian emotionality of righteous anger enabled peasant resistance to change. In the emerging literature composed under

Japanese occupation, emotions became drivers for the formation of a concept of the Korean nation as one founded in grief, suffering, and, importantly, endurance.

These are fascinating and insightful studies, which bring new work from across the globe to bear on historical frameworks for civility and conceptualizations of civilization. Although framed as a collaboratively-authored monograph, all the chapters except the introduction are nonetheless written by individual specialists of their particular geographical and cultural domain. While the authors share the aim to examine concepts of civility and civilization, how these play out in specific cultural contexts differs substantially. While a monograph generally has a sense of building an argument and depth of analysis for the reader across the chapters, the essays here function rather as unique sites of investigation. These dense essays, deeply embedded in their disciplinary and historiographical scholarship, could have assisted a meta-level analysis by consistently having clear conclusions to their findings. Additional, brief summative analyses of each of the book's four parts would also have aided comprehension of the text's global contribution to the field. Without these features or a Conclusion to the work as a whole, the Introduction and Afterword are left to carry significant intellectual weight in pulling together these findings into a coherent argument, a role that they cannot quite fulfil.