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Religious Validity and the Pluralistic Hypothesis

By Jordan Hall

Although the term "religious pluralism" may appear to be self-explanatory, there is in fact a multiplicity of theological and philosophical methodologies among religious pluralists. In order to provide a very general characterization of pluralism, three categorizations are utilized to identify all possible soteriological perspectives: (1) exclusivism, (2) inclusivism, and (3) pluralism (Race 1982). This paper critiques the most prominent arguments used in favor of pluralism.

Religious exclusivists believe that there can be only one way to God. Religious inclusivists hold that while there is indeed only one true religion, God involves Himself in saving adherents of other faiths, thus making other religions' adherents "unknowing subjects" of the *true* religion's God. Finally, religious pluralists generally argue that the validity of one religion does not depend upon the exclusion of other religions' legitimacy, and that ultimately all of them are equal paths to the same Ultimate.

There is no question as to who is the most influential religious pluralist. The British philosopher John Hick is definitely recognized in this regard, and though perhaps in recent years there have been more intriguing forms of pluralism developed by others, his particular philosophical outlook remains dominant. Using the archaic and long since abandoned geocentric theory of the solar system as an analogy, Hick challenges the exclusive and inclusive notions that one religion is at the center of salvation and claims that his "pluralistic hypothesis" is not unlike the revolutionary Copernican model (Kärkkäinen 2003, 284-285). He argues that all of the religious traditions revolve around the same Ultimate Reality in their primary concern with transformation from self-centeredness to being centered on the Real (Hick 1995, 18).

Firsthand interfaith experience is what led Hick to draw this conclusion. He describes his experience as follows:

> In the course of this work I went frequently to Jewish synagogues, Muslim mosques, Sikh gurudwaras, Hindu temples, and, of course, a variety of churches. In these places of worship I soon realized something that is obvious enough once noticed, yet momentous in its implications. This is that although the language, concepts, liturgical actions, and cultural ethos differ widely from one another, yet from a religious point of view basically the same thing is going on in all of them, namely, human beings coming together within the framework of an ancient and highly developed tradition to open their hearts and minds to God … [and] all these communities agree that there can ultimately only be one God! (1996, 38).

This process of opening one's heart and mind to God, of being transformed from self-centeredness to Real-centeredness, is salvific in nature, according to Hick, and it serves as strong evidence that *all* religions are cognitive responses to the Real.

Hick, speaking from his interfaith experience, concludes that "visible fruits do *not* occur more abundantly among Christians than among Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, Taoists, Baha'is, and so on. And yet surely they ought to if the situation were as it is pictured in our traditional Christian theology" (1995, 16, his emphasis). Ultimately, it is not possible, he argues, to prove that any one of the great world religions is morally superior (1996, 42). Accordingly, Hick suggests that we define salvation not according to any specific fulfillment that one religious tradition has in view, but rather, "as an actual change in human beings, a change which can be identified … by its moral fruits" (1995, 17). He acknowledges the difficulty of making cross-cultural ethical judgments, but through this concreteness, Hick attempts to avoid a relativistic approach to establishing religious validity, and argues that this moral criterion— observable transformation—is suitable for discerning true religions from false ones (Heim 1995, 19-20).

If all religions are in fact revolving around the same center, as Hick claims, the question could be raised as to why most of them appear to be in completely different orbits, so to speak, with each religion revolving around a largely dissimilar referent. The gaps between Brahman, Allah, and the Tao, for example, will never be closed. Their differences eradicate all hopes of assigning any true meaningfulness to parallels that might be drawn between them.

Hick's hypothesis attempts to circumvent this cumbersome problem by drawing heavily on the philosophy of Immanuel Kant. Kant made a sharp distinction between reality in itself and reality as it is appears—*noumena* and *phenomena*, respectively. Hick amplifies Kant's distinction, stating that "perception is not a passive registering of what is there but is always an active process of selecting, grouping, relating, extrapolating, and endowing with meaning by means of our human concepts" (1995, 29). Building on this philosophical foundation, he superimposes Kant's framework on the religious context and suggests that we "[apply its] insight to our awareness of the Real, by distinguishing between the noumenal Real, the Real *an sich*, and the Real as humanly perceived" (1995, 29).

According to Hick, when the noumenal Real "impinges upon our consciousness," we formulate the experience within the confines of our human concepts (e.g., the Real as loving, just, or emptiness) and on the basis of this, he argues that the Real as seen within religious traditions should be regarded as a phenomenal manifestation, formulated by human conceptual frameworks. Thus,

for example, Adonai, Sunyata, and Vishnu are mere phenomenal manifestations of the noumenal Real (1995, 64-65).

This would, of course, necessitate the negation of religions' literal truth claims, and Hick does not dispute this. But he goes to great lengths to argue that *because* the common goal of all religions is soteriological, whether our religious beliefs are literally true is irrelevant, and cannot affect our relationship to the Real, so long as our religious beliefs effectively serve as a vehicle for salvific transformation. The phenomenal manifestation that we have constructed is not worthless simply because it is not a proper depiction of the Real in itself; on the contrary, its meaningfulness is demonstrated by its transformative power.

In Hick's view, religions that cultivate salvific transformation are "mythologically true." By this awkward description, Hick means:

> a story that is not literally true but that has the power to evoke in its hearers a practical response to the myth's referent—a true myth being of course one that evokes an *appropriate* response. The truthfulness of a myth is thus a practical truthfulness (1995, 51).

It is essential to Hick's hypothesis that religions embrace the mythic nature of their religious traditions (Heim 1995, 21). The reason for this, of course, is that this recognition is a necessity for the acceptance of Hick's religious pluralism. If we wish to be pluralistic in our religious outlook, we cannot continue to affirm the literal absolute truth of our own religion (Hick 1995, 48).

In short, we can summarize the pluralistic hypothesis as follows: The parity of moral fruits being produced among the great world religions points to a cognitive experience of the Real in each religion. This serves as evidence that exclusivist claims to superiority are untenable, and that all religions "seem, when judged by their fruits, to be more or less equally valid responses to the Real" (Hick 1995, 43). Furthermore, a Kantian approach would justify religions' irreconcilably different beliefs about the Real. And in fact, they are "not mutually conflicting beliefs, because they're beliefs about different phenomenal realities" (Hick 1995, 43).

There are a number of difficulties that arise in Hick's hypothesis, the most problematic of which is his application of Kant's philosophy in constructing the Real. The Kantian Real enables him to explain away the conflicting religious belief systems as a product of human perception and phenomenal realities. "We cannot describe it as it is in itself," he states, "but only as it is thought and experienced in human terms" (1995, 28). Any single human concept that we could use to describe the Real (e.g., loving, just, gracious) is purely mythological and not literal (Hick 1995, 63). But Hick pushes this Kantian

Real to such an extreme distance from human comprehension that he even goes so far as to claim that it is impossible for any human concept to be *analogous* to the Real.

For example, even if one of its phenomenal manifestations can be said to be loving and gracious, these attributes do not even have so much as an analogical equivalent in the noumenal Real. He argues this for the obvious reason that if a human concept could have an analogical counterpart, then every religion could no longer be true because of their contradictory concepts of the Real. For instance, the Real cannot be "analogically personal and … analogically non-personal, analogically conscious and also analogically non-conscious, analogically purposive and also analogically non-purposive …" (Hick 1995, 62). Hick states that pluralism "requires us to postulate an ultimate reality which exceeds [our] conceptual repertoire … [The ultimate reality's] nature is not thinkable in our human terms—and indeed even the concept of a nature, or an essence, belongs to the network of human concepts which the Real totally transcends" (1995, 62).

The problem that this creates for us is this: If we "cannot properly attribute intrinsic qualities to it" (Hick 1995, 28), or even so much as claim that its phenomenal manifestations have analogical counterparts in the Real (Hick 1995, 62), then we most certainly cannot use any human concepts for determining a "valid" or "appropriate" response to the Real, because such a response is not capable of being comprehended from a human vantage point. (In his critique of Hick in *Deep Religious Pluralism,* philosopher and theologian David Ray Griffin argued along similar lines, claiming that if nothing meaningful can be said about the Real, one must conclude that Hick's concept of alignment with the Real is "vacuous" [Griffin 2005, 59]). In arguing against the accuracy of all conceptual definitions of the Real while simultaneously asserting that specific concepts—namely, goodness, or "moral fruits"—serve as evidence that religions are equal responses to the Real, Hick's hypothesis becomes self-contradictory. By utilizing the specific human concept of goodness as a determinant for religious validity, he is implying that the Real is *analogously* good (and consequently, he has brought the Real back within the realm of human conceptualization, which is contrary to the Real he has postulated).

Given the fact that the hypothesis makes it impossible for human concepts to serve as criteria for determining which response to the Real is valid, Hick is no longer able to argue that, "when judged *by their fruits*, [religions seem] to be more or less equally *valid responses* to the Real" (1995, 43, emphases added); and thus, the parity of moral fruits amongst religions cannot logically lead to Hick's pluralism, because the type of Real that *facilitates* Hick's pluralism rules out the possibility that moral fruits can serve as an indicator of religious validity. (For all we know—assuming that nothing about the Real can be grasped by the

human mind—moral fruits may represent a false response to the Real.) Moral fruits become meaningless once one accepts Hick's Kantian Real, and thus the pluralistic hypothesis appears to cancel itself out.

It is worth exploring a similar problem stemming from Hick's assertion that religions are responses to the act of impinging by the Real. This plays a crucial role in holding together the pluralistic hypothesis as a fundamentally *religious* theory:

> If there is a reality beyond the range of our experience we have no reason to think that our system of experiential concepts applies to it; and *if we regard the major religious traditions as humanly conditioned responses* to such a reality we have a reason to think that these concepts do *not* apply to it … if they did it would have mutually contradictory attributes (1995, 64, first emphasis added).

There is seemingly both plausibility and inconsistency mingled together here. If Hick is going to assert that religions are *responses* to this "reality," then the claim that this reality is beyond our system of experiential concepts would seem somewhat problematic, as the former assertion is rather suggestive of a conscious and purposive Real. In continually describing the Real as actively impinging upon us in its apparent attempts to foster transformation in humans, the hypothesis is essentially putting forth a portrait of a conscious Being, which is diametrically opposed to its postulation of a Kantian Real.

Hick claims that religions are responses to the Real for the obvious reason that his pluralistic hypothesis—which attempts to be a religious theory—simply requires it if it is going to steer clear of lapsing into a naturalistic interpretation of religion (which would be atheistic in its outlook, viewing them as purely human projections with no tangible correspondence to any independent reality). With this in mind, the full implications of the objection just raised become readily apparent: Since Hick's hypothesis seems incapable of sustaining the claim that religions are responses to the Real, in actuality his theory lends itself to naturalism over against religion; and therefore, the pluralistic hypothesis does not truly espouse religious pluralism as such, but rather, it puts forth an essentially naturalistic worldview (Hick's attempts to do otherwise notwithstanding).

There is constant tension within the hypothesis caused by his ever-present attempts to avoid naturalism whilst putting forth a theory that postulates an unknowable Real—all the while inadvertently assigning specific attributes to the Real in the process. He fails to depict the type of Real that he is attempting to postulate, leaving the reader to wonder whether it is the Real as-described or the

Real as-hypothesized that forms the core of the pluralistic hypothesis. Of course, the descriptive elements of the Real are implicit by necessity, as the transparency of direct explication would be too problematic. Nevertheless, that there are characteristics implied whatsoever seems problematic enough (if indeed Hick's hypothesized Real is to withstand scrutiny).

There is yet a more subtle problem in the hypothesis. Setting aside the objections I have raised thus far, a brief summary of the logic of Hick's pluralism is as follows: A parity of moral fruits amongst the great world faiths is evidence that they are equally valid responses to the Real, and a Kantian approach would reconcile their conflicting truth claims, as none of their claims would be viewed as "literally" true; given that the parity of moral fruits is evidence of a valid response to the Real, the criterion for determining whether a religion is "true" or "valid" should be whether it is transforming its adherents toward Real-centeredness and moral fruits in tandem.

The problem that arises here is that it becomes essential to the hypothesis that religions view their beliefs as inherently mythical—and this is as problematic for the hypothesis as it is for religions themselves. For the purpose of adopting Hick's pluralism, each religion would have to replace its own self-understanding with the perspective that its ultimate referent—be it Allah, Ahura Mazda, etc.—is a mere phenomenal manifestation of the Real rather than the actual Real in itself. (While it is certainly true that religions recognize a transcendent aspect of their ultimate referents, the transcendence spoken of here is one of degree. Take, for example, religions that are based upon belief in divine revelation, such as the three pillar monotheistic faiths. Doctrinally, these religions would not be in tension with Hick's claim that God/the Real is transcendent per se; but an irreconcilable difference arises when Hick pushes this transcendence to a Kantian extreme, negating the possibility of anything such as divine revelation or meaningful communication between humans and God/the Real.)

The reason I say that it is problematic for the *hypothesis* if religions were to view their beliefs as inherently mythical is because transformation from self-centeredness to Real-centeredness in any given religious tradition appears to be largely dependent upon its adherents perceiving its ultimate referent in a literal manner (i.e., seeing the ultimate referent as the Real *in itself*), since for many religions—at the very least, monotheistic and universalistic faiths—the only way its ultimate referent could be deemed a "true" portrayal of the Real is if the portrayal were *actually/literally* true (rather than mythologically true, where there is no concrete correlation to the Real). Intrinsic to the effectual power of a given religion to inspire transformation toward Real-centeredness is its adherents taking literally its portrayal of the Real.

Therefore, let us look at the possible consequences of this for Hick's pluralism: A religion's ability to produce moral fruits serves as Hick's criterion for determining a "true" religion, with Real-centeredness apparently enabling these moral fruits to be cultivated in the lives of a religion's adherents; and, if what I have stated above is correct, centeredness on the Real is the result of adherents perceiving their religion's ultimate referent as the Real in itself; hence, if religions were to embrace the pluralistic hypothesis and consequently regard their ultimate referents as mere mythological/phenomenal manifestations of the Real, it is reasonable to conclude that many of them might no longer be capable of meeting the criterion necessary for them to qualify as a "true" religion according to Hick's own standards of religious truth/falsity. (Their power to cultivate moral fruits would be debilitated because they would no longer be capable of transforming their adherents from self-centeredness to Real-centeredness, as they would no longer be able to perceive their ultimate referent as the Real in itself.) By default, the ultimate referents/phenomenal manifestations of the Real (e.g., Adonai, Vishnu, etc.) would then become *false* manifestations according to the hypothesis, because Hick has argued that a phenomenal manifestation is a "true" manifestation if it is inspiring Real-centeredness. (In short, this likely chain reaction suggests that adoption of the pluralistic hypothesis would actually undermine the materialization of its own claims.)

It might seem that my argument presupposes a naturalistic view on religions' transformative power, since it could be viewed as insinuating that religions' ability to transform is merely the result of adherents' self-delusion (whereas the pluralistic hypothesis is meant to be a religious perspective and thus interprets the inward change in adherents as being fostered by the Real). However, my argument does not necessitate this line of thought, as it could also be used to support the idea that the Real can only transform humans if they have faith in the literal reality of its phenomenal manifestations that they are encountering in their respective religions.

If we follow this line of thought to its logical conclusion, however, it creates further doubts as to the plausibility of Hick's pluralism, demonstrated by the following: (1) If a manifestation of the Real must be taken as literally authentic in order for it to serve as an effective vehicle whereby the Real can transform people, then it would make sense that the Real, in its attempts to spur human transformation, would utilize only *literally authentic* manifestations of itself in the process; (2) various religions cling to contradictory "manifestations," and since the Real is using only literally authentic manifestations of itself, the Real cannot be behind the manifestations of these various religions, as this would create conflicting self-representations; (3) thus the Real cannot be the source of

moral transformation in all religions, and therefore either exclusivism is correct and Hick's pluralism is misguided, or both exclusivism *and* Hick's pluralism are flawed approaches and naturalists are accurate in their assessment that the source of transformation in all religions is self-delusion and human projection.

It is a necessity, in my opinion, for pluralists to recognize that religious worldviews would largely be ineffectual if their self-understanding was of the type that Hick seemingly idealizes, where the mythologizing of belief is of key importance. A perfect example is the very foundation of a religion (i.e., its portrayal of the Real/Ultimate Reality) being brought into question by its followers. An unraveling of the religion in both doctrine and practice would be the natural consequence, as its other religious claims would no longer be taken seriously.

Ironically, while the pluralistic hypothesis clearly does not share my perspective that a religious worldview is ineffectual and useless if it does not regard itself as literally true, Hick's modus operandi betrays the same principle: Tellingly, the only way his religious theory can be adopted is if people accept as *literally true* the premise that all religious ultimates are phenomenal manifestations of a noumenal Real. So surely Hick must recognize the necessity of a religious view being literally true at its core (or, more broadly, the necessity of any belief system being literally true at its core) in order for its adoption to be considered reasonable.

It might be suggested that the pluralistic hypothesis would not make religions ineffectual because the theory puts forth a literal Reality and ultimate Truth behind all religions, so it is not as if religions are left without any relation to literal truth. But this simply drives the issue back further: Is Hick's claim that there is an actual Reality behind all religions not also a religious claim *in itself* and thus subject to the same fallibility that he projects upon all other religious claims? A number of critics have leveled similar charges—namely, that his hypothesis claims a privileged vantage point (Hick 1995, 49)—and as Mark Heim points out,

> The assertion that a single, noumenal Real impinges in all religion and is the source of human transformation … must make its own way as a religious claim. It cannot borrow its credentials from the particular traditions it attempts to subsume (1995, 35).

This being the case, it seems that not only must Hick's pluralism (as a religious claim) be just as fallible as the religious claims he is challenging, but additionally it should also be subject to the same stringent requirements for religious validity that it puts forth for all other religious systems (i.e., it must be capable of cultivating Real-centeredness in order for it to be "true," with the implicit caveat

that the "truth" status is that of a pragmatic type). However, as I suggested earlier, it would appear that Hick's theory would not only be incapable of transforming people from self-centeredness to Real-centeredness (since it puts forth a wholly unknowable Real), but it seems that it would also have the effect of *reversing* the Real-centeredness that is already present amongst religions' adherents (through its dismantling of religions' own understanding of their respective ultimate referents). Thus, Hick's pluralism does not emerge as a particularly viable explanatory theory on both a factual level—based upon what appears to be internal inconsistencies—or on a purely pragmatic level either, in that its adoption by religions would undermine the materialization of its own postulated reality.

A more transparent problem is to be found in the approach Hick uses in structuring his pluralism—indeed, other critics have frequently seized upon it as well—and it is this: Since his pluralistic hypothesis requires that religious believers give up their faith in the literal truth of their own religions and adopt Hick's religious outlook, the hypothesis is operating on par with exclusivism, as it necessitates a "conversion" of sorts. While the necessity of conversion to the hypothesis is not for any soteriological purposes (as is the case with exclusivistic faiths), it *is* necessary for eradicating what Hick deems to be exclusivism itself. The problem, of course, is that the whole goal of a pluralistic framework is for people to recognize the equal validity of religious otherness. In failing to meet this standard, Hick's hypothesis is demonstrating that it is not in fact pluralistic.

Hick has commented that "religious pluralism leaves the different doctrinal systems intact within their own religious traditions" (1995, 42), but he recognizes the difficulties with this line of thinking, as just a few pages later he argues that

> One cannot seek such a comprehensive interpretation [of religion] and then disqualify any proposal that doesn't simply replicate the particular *doctrines of one's own tradition*. The options are either to affirm the absolute truth of one's own tradition, or go for some form of pluralistic view (1995, 48-49, emphasis added).

Point well taken—I agree with it wholeheartedly—but it seems that Hick could be more consistent on his elucidation. His pluralism leaves not a single doctrinal system intact because the whole point of the pluralistic hypothesis is to move religions from their geocentric-type outlook to the Copernican-type frame of reference. Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen notes that

> The challenge given to Christian theology, as well as, for example, to Hindu or Buddhist theology, is to move from the 'Ptolemaic' view in which Christianity or any other religion stands at the center and other religions are being judged by the criterion of that center (2003, 285).

When one of the core doctrines of many religions is their soteriological centricity, it is clear that the pluralistic hypothesis does not intend to leave religions' doctrinal systems intact.

Pluralists' wholesale replacement of traditional religious perspectives with sweeping reinterpretations of faith and doctrine leads one to question whether such an endeavor can indeed don the title of pluralism. At the most elemental level, the inherent tension within such an approach is its necessary avoidance of interpreting religions *on religions' own terms*, thereby defeating its stated goal: respect for the integrity of religious otherness. In superimposing their theologies and philosophies onto religions' identities, pluralists seem incapable of sustaining the individual integrity of any given religion. At what point does the pluralist's attempt at integration of religions' similarities inevitably become synonymous with the homogenization of faiths and the dismissal of religions' differences?

Hick, for example, denies the major tenets of nearly every faith in an attempt to redefine them and make them suitable for his pluralistic framework. But the extent of his alterations renders religions unrecognizable. "Redefining" is the reframing of something in a different light, not the tearing down and rebuilding of something new from the ground up. Pluralists cannot expect the majority of faiths to accept their interpretations of religion so long as they employ a deconstructionist methodology.

In conclusion, while Hick's hypothesis attempts to offer a convincing validation of contradictory religious beliefs, upon closer examination it does not seem capable of accomplishing this goal, as the fundamental structure of the pluralistic hypothesis appears to be untenable. Responding to those who have drawn similar conclusions, Hick remarks that "the right response of someone who does not like [the pluralistic hypothesis] is not to complain that it is not proved but to work out a viable alternative," stating also that "critics who don't like it should occupy themselves in trying to produce a better one" (1995, 50-51). Such a response, however, presupposes that his critics are not doubtful of pluralism as such but merely Hick's form of pluralism. This presupposition is unwarranted, because the foundation of Hick's pluralistic hypothesis—which appears rather problematic—is bound up with the justification for the general pursuit of religious pluralism.

Hick assumes that his critics share his outlook that exclusivism and inclusivism are not viable alternatives to pluralism despite the fact that he has not

yet offered a convincing rationalization for the adoption of a pluralistic stance. Rather than challenging critics to develop a model of pluralism better than his own, I feel compelled to humbly suggest that Hick must first build a stronger case as to why religious pluralism is the most intellectually satisfying solution for the problem of conflicting religious truth claims.

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The Kite Runner and Life in Afghanistan

By Rose Nerges

Although *The Kite Runner* is a novel, the afflictions that the characters face in the book are comparable to actual hardships that the people of Afghanistan have faced through decades of war, tribal conflicts, a lack of stable government, and the rule of the Taliban. These catastrophes had adverse affects on the Afghan people, especially the scapegoats of Afghanistan, the Hazaras. The author of *The Kite Runner*, Khaled Hosseini, stated in an interview that he received overwhelming responses from Afghans who felt *The Kite Runner* mirrored their lives: "The reaction from my Afghan readers has been overwhelmingly positive. I get regular letters and e-mails from fellow Afghans who have enjoyed the book, seen their own lives, experiences, and memories played out on the pages" (Azad 2004:1).

Social and Economic Status Based on Ethnicity and Religious Affiliation

The story of *The Kite Runner* begins in Kabul, Afghanistan, in 1973. The start of the story appears to be a peaceful time as the protagonist Amir and his servant Hassan play and fly kites: "I spent the first twelve years of my life playing with Hassan. Sometimes, my entire childhood seems like one hazy summer day with Hassan, chasing each other between tangles of trees in my father's yard, playing hide-and-seek, cops and robbers, cowboys and Indians, insect torture … (Hosseini 2003:25).

Hosseini uses the relationship of Amir and Hassan to portray the contrast in socioeconomic status between the Pashtuns and the Hazaras. Amir and Hassan represent two ends of the social stratification spectrum in Afghan society. Although Amir and Hassan live on the same property they live in two very different worlds. Amir and his father Baba prevail at the top of society as members of the Pashtun tribe and as Sunni Muslims, whereas Hassan and his father Ali represent the absolute bottom of Afghan society.

Hassan and Ali are disadvantaged in Afghan society because they are members of Afghan minority groups, the Hazara tribe and Shiite Muslims. The Pashtuns made up the majority of Afghan society at 49 percent of the total population and held all of the political power in Afghanistan (*Encyclopedia Britannica*: 2007). For a period of one hundred years most of the political leaders were Pashtuns. Few in number, the Hazara tribal members represented only nine percent of the total population (*Encyclopedia Britannica*: 2007). The Sunni Muslims represented an estimated 89.2 percent of the population and the Shiite Muslims, who were mostly Hazaras, were a clear minority as they made up 8.9 percent of the Afghan society (*Encyclopedia Britannica*: 2007).

Socio-economic status in Afghanistan was based on ethnicity and religion. Therefore, income, wealth accumulation, property, and assets were all determined by which tribe or denomination one belonged to. It is noteworthy that the name Amir means prince, because Amir lives like a prince in one of the nicest houses in an affluent neighborhood: "Some thought of it as the prettiest house in Kabul" (Hosseini 2003:4). On the other hand, Hassan lives in a one-room mud shack with his father Ali. The Hazaras, who include the characters Hassan and Ali, who are servants, were economically and socially oppressed, as they were only able to obtain the most menial jobs.

The class differences between the two boys are reflected in educational differences. While Amir sleeps, Hassan rises to work early to prepare Amir's breakfast and works throughout the day while Amir goes to school: "While I ate and complained about homework, Hassan made my bed, polished my shoes, ironed my outfit for the day, packed my books and pencils. ... Hassan stayed home and helped Ali with the day's chores: hand-washing dirty clothes and hanging them to dry in the yard, sweeping the floors, buying fresh *naan* from the bazaar, marinating meat for dinner, watering the lawn" (Hosseini 2003:27).

As an adolescent, Hassan should be in school like Amir, but Hazaras were limited in their education, as only a few were allowed into schools. In fact, there were no schools in the Hazarajat region. Even rulers like Hashim Khan tried to keep the Hazaras from obtaining an education. He issued a "decree which banned the children of Hazaras from attending higher educational institutions and military and police academies; they were also denied scholarship funds, employment opportunities in the foreign ministry …" (Pearson and Razaiat 2002).

Hassan is denied a proper education, and as a result he grows up illiterate. Amir once bites his tongue to keep from saying his thoughts about Hassan's lack of knowledge: "What does he know, that illiterate Hazara?" (Hosseini 2003:34). Already, at twelve years old, Amir is ahead of Hassan: "I was the one who went to school, the one who could read, write. I was the smart one. Hassan couldn't read a first-grade textbook …" (Hosseini 2003:61).

Tribal Conflict

Despite the fact that Amir loves Hassan like a brother, ethnic differences as well as social status stand in the way of their friendship. When confronted by other Pashtuns about his friendship with Hassan, Amir wants to deny it: "*He's not my friend!* I almost blurted. *He's my servant!*" (Hosseini 2003:41). Amir becomes conscious of the difference between himself and Hassan:

The curious thing was, I never thought of Hassan and me as friends either. Not in the usual sense, anyhow. Never mind that we taught each other to ride a bicycle with no hands, or to build a fully functional homemade camera out of a cardboard box. Never mind that we spent entire winters flying kites, running kites….

… In the end, I was a Pashtun and he was a Hazara, I was Sunni and he was Shi'a, and nothing was ever going to change that. Nothing (Hosseini 2003:25).

The Hazara as Scapegoats of Afghanistan

Amir finds a book that reveals a history of Hazara persecution. Amir discovers that his people, the Pashtuns discriminated against the Hazaras. The Hazaras proved to be the scapegoats of Afghanistan for more than a century:

In it, I read that my people, the Pashtuns, had persecuted and oppressed the Hazaras. It said the Hazaras had tried to rise against the Pashtuns in the nineteenth century, but the Pashtuns had 'quelled them with unspeakable violence.' The book said my people had killed the Hazaras, burned their homes, and sold their women. The book said part of the reason Pashtuns had oppressed the Hazaras was that Pashtuns were Sunni Muslims, while Hazaras were Shi'a. … It also said some things I *did* know, like that people called Hazaras *mice-eating, flat-nosed, load-carrying donkeys*. I had heard some of the kids in the neighborhood yell those names to Hassan (Hosseini 2003:9).

As Hassan walks around Kabul, he is tormented because he is a Hazara. Hassan is hit with a rock by the neighborhood bully, Assef, who yells out ethnic slurs at Hassan: "Afghanistan is the land of Pashtuns. It always has been, always will be. We are the true Afghans, the pure Afghans, not this Flat-Nose here. His people pollute our homeland, our *watan*. They dirty our blood" (Hosseini 2003:40). Hassan is later raped by Assef. Assef justifies rape to his friends: "It's just a Hazara … All I want you weaklings to do is hold him down." (Hosseini 2003:75).

One of the reasons persecution and discrimination thrived against the Hazaras was because most Afghans perceived differences in physical features between the Hazara and the Pashtuns. Even as an adolescent, Amir is aware of the ethnic differences between the Pashtuns and the Hazaras: "For years, that was all I knew about the Hazaras, that they were Mogul descendants, and that they looked a little like Chinese people" (Hosseini 2003:9). Amir describes Hassan as having "a face like a Chinese doll" and "eyes that looked, depending

on the light, gold, green, even sapphire (Hosseini 2003:3). Hassan's father, Ali, has "slanted brown eyes" (Hosseini 2003:8). A Pashtun's physical characteristics were believed to be distinguishable from a Hazara. For example, Baba, Amir's father, is "a towering Pashtun specimen with a thick beard, a wayward crop of curly brown hair as unruly as the man himself (Hosseini 2003:12). The Pashtuns' ancient roots can be traced back to Iran and the Hazaras' ancestry can be traced to the Mongolian troops of Genghis Khan (Blood: 2001).

A Century of Oppression and Genocide

The oppression and mistreatment of Shiite Hazaras can be traced back to the 1880's when ruler Abdur Rahman rose to power as prince of Kabul. Rahman authorized brutal attacks against the Hazara people, the ransacking of Hazaras' homes, and massacre of Hazara people. As a Sunni Muslim and a Pashtun Rahman justified his crimes by his belief that the Hazara Shi'a worshipped Allah improperly:

> "If their infidelity is due to their ignorance, they ought to grasp the true facts of a true religion. After this they will remain happy, but if they persist in their false faith, they should all be put to death, and their property confiscated in accordance with the divine doctrine and the precepts of the Prophet" (Rahman 1892).

During his rule, it is estimated that nearly 60% of the Hazaras were killed (Pearson and Razaiat 2002). The ill-treatment of Hazaras lasted more than a century, from the 1880's until 2001.

The Hazaran oppression remained more consistent than the government of Afghanistan. Rahman was succeeded by his son Habibullah, who was executed. Upon his death, his son, Amanullah Khan, rose to power. Amanullah proved to be one of the first liberal leaders of Afghanistan. He abolished slavery and drafted the 1923 Constitution. The constitution granted more equality than previous rulers. However, Afghanistan lacked the organization to enforce their laws. As Amanullah promoted equality for Hazaras, he was well liked by the Hazaras, but his rule was short-lived. After ten years of rule, Amanullah was overthrown by Habibullah Kalakani, whose rule lasted less than four years, as he was captured by Nadir Shah and executed (Pearson and Razait: 2002).

The first thing Nadir did in power was eliminate everything Amanullah did. Nadir instituted a reign of terror against the Hazaras and anyone associated with Amanullah. "Nadir Khan and his family of marauders threw innocent Hazaras down wells, put them in cages leaving them to rot … he killed male family members and kept their wives as slaves, and he tortured their children

until they cursed the name of Hazara" (Pearson and Razaiat: 2002). Nadir also poisoned drinking wells and beheaded women and children. There was no justice for Hazaras as Nadir carried out war crimes against innocent Hazaras, until one young man, Abdul Kaliq, decided to take justice into his own hands and assassinated Nadir Shah. Nadir's son, Muhammad Zahir Shah, ordered Khaliq to be tortured, killed, and then cut into pieces. Zahir's vengeance did not end with Kaliq, as he murdered all who associated with Kaliq including:

> "Mahmud Khan, his teacher; Mawladad, his father; Khodadad his uncle; Qurban Ali, the cold water seller; his mother's brother Rabbani; Mustafa and Latif, the youngsters of the Charkhi family; Ali Akbar Meshir; Mahmud, the employee of Anis Press; students Mir Masjidid, Mohammed Zaman, Mohammed Aziz, Mohammed Eshaq; Mohammed Ayub, the Vice Principal of Lycee Nejat a.k.a Amani High School; Mohammed Azmeem, a teacher. Aside from them, 21 of Abdul Khaliq's family members, friends and acquaintances including two of his uncle's little children, Abdullah, 9, and Abdul Rahman, 11, were taken as well" (Balik 2004).

Zahir Shah reigned for forty years until July of 1973, when he went on vacation and was overthrown by his cousin. Shah remained in exile for thirty years because it was not safe to return to Afghanistan during the Russian Occupation and until after the Taliban were thrown out of power in 2001.

Mohammed Daoud Khan, who seized power while Zahir was away in Italy, formed an alliance with the Marxist Leninist Party called the People's Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (Human Rights Watch: 2001). Daoud was killed on April 27, 1978 (Human Rights Watch: 2001). The People's Democratic Party executed thousands in the countryside. The targets included political figures, religious leaders, teachers, students, Islamist organizations, and the Hazaras (Human's Rights Watch: 2001).

Soviet Invasion

In December of 1979 the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, which continued the cycle of destruction and misery. Soviet troops instituted another reign of terror: "… mass arrests were made, torture, and executions of dissidents, aerial bombardments, and executions in the countryside … One million Afghans died during this war …" (Human Rights Watch: 2001).

In *The Kite Runner* the Soviet invasion is woven into the storyline as some Afghans hear gunshots for the first time: "The generation of Afghan children whose ears would know nothing but the sounds of bombs and gunfire was not

yet born. … in December 1979 … Russian tanks would roll into the very same streets where Hassan and I played, bringing the death of the Afghanistan I knew and marking the start of a still ongoing era of bloodletting" (Hosseini 2003:36).

Mass Exodus and Afghan Refugees

Baba fears for his family's safety so he arranges to leave Afghanistan with Amir by transport with a man named Karim who promises to take them into Pakistan in a "first class truck." Amir wishes that he were experiencing a nightmare that he would wake up from to find Afghanistan restored as it used to be: "This had to be a dream. … Tomorrow morning, I'd wake up, peek out the window: No grim-faced soldiers patrolling the sidewalks, no tanks rolling up and down the streets of my city … no rubble, no curfews, no Russian Army Personnel Carriers weaving through the bazaars" (Hosseini 2003:113). The Soviet occupation caused a massive exodus of Afghans who left behind their homes, possessions, and all that was familiar to them, Afghanistan. "Five million out of sixteen million fled Afghanistan" (Human Rights Watch: 2001). Surely, out of millions of refugees many Afghans shared experiences similar to Amir and Baba.

To maximize profits, Karim smuggles other Afghans out with Baba and Amir. When they come to a checkpoint one of the Russian soldiers has his eye on a woman in the vehicle. The soldier demands the woman so he can "have his way with her" in exchange for all of their passages through the checkpoint. Baba shows altruistic behavior by confronting the soldier: "Ask him where his shame is." The Russian soldier replies, "There is no shame in war" (Hosseini 2003:115). The Russian soldier is ready to shoot Baba when a different soldier stops him and apologizes for the young soldier's actions.

There are several rapes that occur in *The Kite Runner*. However, it was difficult to research how frequently rapes occurred in Afghanistan because Afghan victims were not likely to come forward. In fact, one of the dilemmas faced while making the film *Kite Runner* was that the actor that played Hassan had to be moved from Afghanistan because the rape scene would dishonor the actor's family. The actor's father, Ahmad Jaan Mahmidzada, told the Associated Press: "In Afghanistan, rape is not acceptable at all. This is against Afghan dignity. This is against Afghan culture" (Tang 2003).

The remainder of Amir and Baba's migration is met with obstacles. The "first class" truck that Karim promised "broke down" so they have to wait a few days in a secluded location. Instead, Karim arranges for the evacuees to be taken to Pakistan in a fuel tank. Baba expresses a feeling of despair and sadness for leaving his home when he takes some earth from his homeland (*watan*) for a keepsake. Baba "fished the snuff box from his pocket. He emptied the box and

picked up a handful of dirt from the middle of the unpaved road. He kissed the dirt. Poured it into the box. Stowed the box in his breast pocket, next to his heart" (Hosseini 2003:121). This action demonstrates Baba's love for his country. He does not want to leave. All that Baba had ever worked for was gone. What earthly possessions he has left are crammed into two suitcases.

The desperation that Afghan refugees may have experienced is best expressed the minute Baba and Amir climb into the back of a fuel truck in the hopes of saving their lives. In the dark of the fuel tank Amir fights for his life. Each breath proves to be difficult as his lungs burn from toxins. When they arrive in Pakistan, they find that one young boy in the truck has died from the poisonous fumes. The boy's father holds his dead son in his arms and wails. He shoots himself because he feels that he has nothing to live for without his wife, who had been shot in Afghanistan, and his son dead. Baba and Amir escape safely to reestablish themselves in an Afghan community in San Francisco. circa 1981, while the war in Afghanistan continues.

Afghans that remained in Afghanistan were left in the hands of the Soviet troops. Several Islamic organizations fought the Soviets with weapons and training provided by the Unites States. A holy war was waged called the "jihad." The fighters of the jihad were called the "mujahedin." The mujahedin fought the Soviets until 1989 when the war was ended and the Soviets left.

Post Soviet Occupation of Afghanistan

The Power Struggle

Even after the Soviet troops left Afghanistan there was no peace. The country was engaged in civil war between various tribal Islamic organizations who tried to seize power. The United Nations sponsored a new government in Afghanistan led by Barhanuddin Rabbini, called the Northern Alliance (UN Refugee Agency: 2003). To obtain power, many of these leaders tried to suppress the other tribal movements. In the North of Afghanistan rivalries existed between Hezb-e-Whadat, the Jamiat-e-Islami, and the Junbesh-e-Milli-Islami which were divided along ethnic lines, Hazara, Tajik, and Uzbeks (UN Refugee Agency: 2003). In the south, in the Hazarajat region, conflicts existed between two branches of Hezb-e-Whadat (UN Refugee 16). In 1992 Rabbini launched a military offensive against Hezb-e-Whadat's military bases and Hazara residential area resulting in the deaths of hundreds of people (Razaiat 2002:10). The tactic of "divide and conquer" was applied to gain power and to keep the Pashtuns and Hazaras fighting. This notion is expressed in a letter written by defense minister Ahmad Shah Massood: "Considering the progress of your work, you are

instructed to authorize every department of National Security to intensify the war between Hizb-e-Wahdat and Hizb-e-Harakat on the basis of ethnic cleansing between Hazaras and Pashtuns to the extent that its effects must incite hostilities among inhabitants of central and northern parts of Afghanistan either in the form of Shiite and Sunni differences or as hostilities between the Hazaras and Pashtuns which would be a sufficient ground for preoccupation for further military fronts" (Razaiat 2002:10).

Attacks were launched on Hazaras in 1994 and 1995. Amnesty International describes an attack by Rabbini's soldiers: "Nevertheless the troops opened fire on the defenseless populations … looting houses, killing and beating unarmed civilians, and raping Hazara women. Medical workers confirmed six rapes but believed the number to be higher as many most likely did not come forward. Women were also sold into prostitution" (Razaiat 2002:10). In western Kabul there was a thriving Hazara community called Ashfar. One night in February of 1993 Rabbini's soldiers stormed the city and massacred Hazaras. Nearly a thousand Hazaras "disappeared" and the area became a ghost town (Razaiat 2002:10).

Rise of the Taliban

In 1994, the Mujahedin formed the Taliban, led by Mullah Mohammed Omar. The Taliban were recruited from fundamentalist Islamic schools called "madrassas" whose mission was to enforce Islamic law called "Sharia," in Afghanistan. The Taliban was an extreme fundamentalist group of Sunni Muslims who were Pashtuns (Razajat 2002:12). Therefore, the Hazaras were instant enemies of the Taliban because they were Shiite. In 1995, the Taliban began their campaign and seized the Hazara district of Western Kabul. Many Hazaras retreated to the Hazarajat region, Bamiyan. Within a year, the Taliban had complete control over Afghanistan. The Taliban viciously ruled Afghanistan until 2001. The Taliban staged public executions by stoning and hanging. The Taliban banned kite flying, they prohibited women from attending universities, they enforced strict dress codes for women that forced them to wear full body covered burqas, and men were forced to grow their beards out (Human Rights Watch: 2001).

Life and Death Under Taliban Rule

Meanwhile, millions of Afghans refugees lived in Afghan communities outside of their homeland. Amir lives in San Francisco in a flourishing Afghan community with his father, where he marries an Afghan woman. They live in relative peace until Amir's father, Baba, dies of cancer. After the death of his

father, Amir receives an urgent phone call from Rahim Khan, his father's business partner, who urgently tells him to come to Pakistan. In June of 2001, to reunite with Rahim Khan, Amir flies to Pakistan, where millions of Afghan refugees lived during the war.

When Amir arrives, Rahim Khan describes the condition of Afghanistan after the Northern Alliance:

> "When the Taliban rolled in and kicked the Northern Alliance out of Kabul, I actually danced in the street … and I wasn't alone … people were celebrating … greeting the Taliban in the streets … climbing their tanks and posing in pictures with them. People were tired of the constant fighting, tired of rockets, the gunfire, the explosions, tired of Gulbuddin and his cohorts firing at anything that moved. They destroyed your father's orphanage … you don't want to know what it's like sifting through the rubble. There were body parts of children" (Hosseini 2003:200).

Amir asks Rahim Khan if the Taliban are as bad as he has heard. Rahim Khan replies: "Nay, it's worse. Much worse" (Hosseini 2003:198). Rahim continues to tell him about a soccer game he went to where the players were forbidden from wearing shorts. When a man next to him cheered, a bearded man came over and hit him on the forehead: "Do that again and I'll cut out your tongue, you old donkey!" Rahim apologized to the Taliban man as his head gushed with blood (Hosseini 2003:199).

Rahim updates Amir on personal events that have taken place after he and Baba left. After living alone in Baba's house, Rahim grew lonely and went to look for Hassan in Bamiyan and found him. When Rahim reunited with Hassan, Hassan inquired about Amir and Baba. Rahim told Hassan that Baba had died. Hassan mourned the loss of Baba, wept all night, and wore black for forty days. Hassan told Rahim how he married, and that his "father" Ali was killed when he stepped on a landmine.

Like Ali, 700,000 Afghans have been killed by the five to seven million landmines that the Russians left behind (Katzman: 2001). Rahim convinces Hassan to return to Kabul to live in Amir's old house. When Hassan arrives, he resumes his old status and moves into the one-room mud shack in the yard with his wife, even though Rahim has offered him one of the empty rooms. At the house, Hassan's long-lost mother, Sanabaur returns, now an old woman. Rahim describes how beautiful Sanabaur was before she abandoned Hassan and Ali: "You never saw her, Amir, but in her youth, she was a vision. She had a dimpled smile and a walk that drove men crazy. No one who passed her on the street, be

it a man or a woman, could look at her only once" (Hosseini 2003:210). In 1990 Hassan's wife gives birth to a son, Sohrab. Sanabar and Sohrab remain inseparable until she dies.

While they all try to resume a normal life, rockets and gunfire explode. Rahim recalls the fighting of the Mujadedin: "Our ears became accustomed to the whistle of falling shells, to the rumble of gunfire, our eyes familiar with the sight of men digging bodies out of the piles of rubble. Kabul in those days … was as close as you could get to proverbial hell on earth" (Hosseini 2003:212).

After Rahim celebrates the takeover of the Taliban, he comes into the kitchen and finds Hassan crying as Hassan shakes his head: "God help the Hazaras now" (Hosseini 2003:213). A few weeks later the Taliban ban kite flying. And two years later, in 1998, they massacre the Hazaras in Mazar-i-Sharif. All of the historical events mentioned in *The Kite Runner* are accurate. For example, the Mazar-i-Sharif massacre mentioned in *The Kite Runner* resulted in the deaths of 8,000 Hazaras (Pearson and Razaiat 2002:12). The Hazara people of Afghanistan were beaten, lashed, tortured, and executed by stoning carried out by the Taliban. Hassan writes to Amir about the strife of Afghanistan under the Taliban rule:

> "… the Afghanistan of our youth is long dead. Kindness is gone from the land and you cannot escape the killings. Always the killings … The savages who rule our *watan* don't care about human decency … The streets are full enough already of hungry orphans and every day I thank Allah I am alive, not because I fear death, but because my wife has a husband and my son is not an orphan.
>   "… The droughts have dried the hill and the tree hasn't borne fruit in years …" (Hosseini 2003:218).

An article written in June of 2001 mentions the things Hassan writes about, the drought, the inhumane killings, and the desperation of Afghans: "People are suffering because of war, drought and widespread poverty that is itself an outcome of a deepening crisis … Families sold their daughters to be brides at a young age … Now they are simply at the end of their rope" (Reproductive Health Matters: 2001).

The Taliban comes to Amir's house in Afghanistan to claim Hassan's life. They call Hassan a thief, and tell him that he has to vacate the premises. When Hassan protests they take him into the street, tell him to kneel, and they shoot him and his wife mercilessly. Hassan is the most honorable character in the book and yet he is tragically killed, perhaps to convey that often times in war innocent people are the casualties. Now Hassan's son, Sohrab, *is* an orphan.

Shortly after Amir finds out the devastating news that Hassan has been killed, he learns that Hassan was his brother, and that his father lied to him his whole life. Other than to Rahim Khan, Baba did not utter to anyone that Hassan was his son, because Hassan was conceived in an act of adultery with his best friend's wife, and because Hassan was a Hazara. All of these factors prevented Baba from openly loving his son. Now Amir's nephew is somewhere in an orphanage in a war zone. Since Rahim is near death he cannot rescue Sohrab, so after a moment of hesitation Amir agrees to travel into Afghanistan to find his nephew Sohrab. In Afghanistan, Amir reunites with his long-lost country:

> … for the first time since we had crossed the border, I felt like I was back. After all these years, I was home again, standing on the soil of my ancestors. This was the soil on which my great-grandfather had married his third wife a year before dying in the cholera epidemic that hit Kabul in 1915. …It was this soil that my grandfather had gone on a hunting trip with King Nadir Shah and shot a deer. My mother had died on this soil. And on this soil I had fought for my father's love.
>   … The kinship I felt suddenly for the old land … It surprised me. I'd been gone long enough to forget and be forgotten (Hosseini 2003:240).

Amir's journey into Afghanistan is heartbreaking, as he sees his country in disaster:

> I saw children dressed in rags chasing a soccer ball outside the huts. crows, on the carcass of an old burned-out Soviet tank……a woman in a brown *burqa* carried a large clay pot on her shoulder… (Hosseini 2003: 231).

Amir has to wear a fake beard so he will not attract attention from the Taliban, as laws for men to have beards and women to wear burqas are strictly enforced. Amir is taken into Afghanistan by a man named Farid. Amir joins Farid's family for dinner and Farid apologizes: "I'm sorry we can't offer you meat … Only the Taliban can afford meat now" (Hosseini 2003:238). As they drive through a battered Afghanistan, Farid tells Amir about people he knows that have been killed by the Taliban or emigrated to Pakistan: "I had a friend there once … He was a very good bicycle repairman … The Taliban killed him and burned the village" (Hosseini 2003:244).

When they arrive in Kabul, Amir hardly recognizes the place where he grew up:

Rubble and beggars. Everywhere I looked, that was what I saw. … And the beggars were mostly children now … some no older than five or six. … the wars had made fathers a rare commodity in Afghanistan" (Hosseini 2003:245).

"Returning to Kabul was like running into an old, forgotten friend and seeing that life hadn't been good to him, that he'd become homeless and destitute … (Hosseini 2003:246).

In 2004, a census was taken which reflected the orphan crisis in Afghanistan. There were overwhelming percentages of children with lower percentages of adults, 44.7 percent were under the age of fifteen years old, ages 15-29 represented 26.8 percent, ages 30-44 represented only 15.9percent. As the ages increased the population decreased (Encyclopedia Britannica: 2006).

The first time Amir sees the Taliban, Farid tells Amir to keep his eyes on his feet. This exposes the fear that Afghans associated with the Taliban. Amir walks by a restaurant and sees a dead man hanging: "I saw a dead body near the restaurant. There had been a hanging. A young man dangled from the end of a rope tied to a beam, his face puffy and blue, the clothes he'd worn on the last day of his life shredded, bloody. Hardly anyone seemed to notice him" (Hosseini 2003: 259). Were there so many executions that people became desensitized?

Amir witnesses a Taliban execution right before a soccer game; a man and woman are stoned to death in the name of God. Public executions and punishments were common during the rule of the Taliban, especially in stadiums. On May 22, 2001 a public lashing took place at Kabul Stadium in which a couple accused of having sex were given 100 lashes each (Reproductive Health Matters: 2001).

Amir continues on his mission and finds the orphanage where Sohrab is living, only to find that the director of the orphanage has been selling children to the Taliban, and he has sold Sohrab. Amir goes to the Taliban to find Sohrab and there he is reunited with the bully of his childhood, Assef. Amir has to fight Assef for Sohrab and nearly gets killed in the process. Then Sohrab hits Assef in the eye with a rock from his slingshot.

Finally Amir finds Sohrab. He wants to bring him back to America, but it was difficult to adopt Sohrab because Amir needs Hassan's death certificate. Amir tries to explain the lack of documentation in Afghanistan by giving an example of how things are done in Afghanistan: "… in Kabul we snapped a tree branch and used it as a credit card. Hassan and I would take the wooden stick to the bread maker. He'd carve notches on our stick with his knife, one notch for

each loaf of *naan* he'd pull for us from the *tandoor*'s roaring flames. At the end of the month, my father paid him for the number of notches on the stick. That was it. No questions. No ID" (Hosseini 2003:128).

Conclusion

Hosseini uses the experiences of Afghans as the basis for his characters' "fictional" experiences. In the entire world there are one million "Hassans," three thousand "Assefs," twenty-eight million "Amirs," and twelve "Babas." During an interview, Hosseini stated: "Fiction is often like a mirror, it reflects what is beautiful and noble in us, but also at the same time what is less flattering, things that make us wince and not want to look anymore. Issues like discrimination and persecution and racism" (Azad: 2004).

This fine line between truth and fiction is what gives the message its power. Real world statistics do not resonate with those that cannot relate to the topic being discussed, but these truths seen through the eyes of a fictional character bring the harsh realities of Afghan life to light.

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The Art Historical Context and Style of *Self-Portrait with Two Pupils*

By Mariana Brodsky

Adelaide Labille-Guiard's *Self-Portrait with Two Pupils, Mademoiselle Marie Gabrielle Capet and Mademoiselle Carreaux de Rosemond*, located in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, is a creation of its historical time period and the surrounding social circumstances. Attention will be given to Labille-Guiard's artistic style and technique. In addition, the Neoclassical style of the painting will be described as well as the artistic sources the painter used to create the work.

Labille-Guiard's *Self-Portrait with Two Pupils* was painted in 1785 during the period of the Enlightenment, which is also known as the Age of Reason. During this age education was considered to be of primary importance, but women were only allowed to receive education for domestic purposes (Fine, 39). Lack of opportunities forced some women to obtain low paying jobs such as in domestic service or prostitution. The French Revolution was a starting point for the women's rights movement. Feminists fought to end oppression by distributing pamphlets and petitions. Although the women played an important role in the French Revolution, the reforms achieved as a result of the Revolution only applied to men. The women, however, did not stop fighting for their rights after the Revolution. They continued to be heard, especially in the field of art, a field that was once only limited to men (Fine, 40-42).

The fascinating aspect of this painting is that it is a self-depiction of a female artist and her pupils in a period in which there were very few professional women painters. Labille-Guiard was very successful and was admitted to the Academie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture in 1783, two years before this self-portrait was painted (Fine, 45). The academy was founded in 1648 (Fine, 43) and its goal was to present artists as theorists and intellects (Chadwick, 128). As such, artists could be placed in a higher social position, making them symbols of France's prestige. The academy wanted to have complete control of not only the artists but also the styles of art, thereby forming a hierarchy of genres. At the top was history painting, followed by genres such as portraiture, still-life, and landscape. This structure determined status in the world of art. Although during the 18th century most of the women painters were located in France, the academy did not admit many women (Munsterberg, 35). To prevent women from entering, the academy limited its membership to only four women (Fine, 43). Not only were women unable to receive the same training as men but they could not compete for the prestigious award of the Prix de Rome, nor could they paint from a nude model. Since women were limited in what they could paint, many

of them turned to portraiture and still life. Adelaide Labille-Guiard was among the many women who wanted to bring about reform. She supported the French Revolution and its promise of improvements for women (Fine, 48). She also wanted to reform the Royal Academy by making it dismiss its quotas. Although Labille-Guiard was not successful in removing the quotas, she was a respected member of the Academy and excelled in the art of portraiture.

Labille-Guiard often painted members of the higher classes, including the aristocrats (Nicholson). Before she was admitted to the Academie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture, she painted portraits of the academy's judges to showcase her talent and to prove that she could paint (Fine, 46). The main reason Labille-Guiard wanted to demonstrate her abilities was because, like many women of the time, she was accused of having her works retouched by a male (Fine, 46). In addition to painting the Academy's judges, Labille-Guiard was appointed to paint portraits of the numerous aunts of King Louis XVI (Munsterberg, 40). By 1783, Labille-Guiard had her own studio and was a teacher to nine female students (Nicholson).

In the social structure of France, women from an upper class were more closely aligned with men from the same class than they were with women of the lower classes (Chadwick, 127). To be recognized in their field, women artists had to present themselves and their paintings with beauty and grace. Labille-Guiard did just that. When she painted *Self-Portrait with Two Pupils,* she portrayed full-length figures with elegant costumes (Nicholson). Her father had been a cloth merchant and Labille-Guiard was always surrounded by various fabrics, ribbons, and lace as a child (Fine, 46). In the portrait, she was able to portray these details with the beautiful gowns worn by herself and her pupils. The patterns of lace are delicately arranged along the sleeves and necklines of the dresses, as well as on one pupil's headdress. Along with the lace, Labille-Guiard added small details such as feathers and bows on the artist's hat, sleeves, and chest. Labille-Guiard emphasized the beauty of the gowns with rich textures, creating folds that make the gowns look fuller and more sophisticated, which leads me to believe the artist comes from wealth.

Along with the textures of the gowns, Labille-Guiard gave texture to the hair of the figures and added femininity to the soft curls. It seems that the way the artist has her foot on the easel may suggest that she is in control of her painting craft and of her own destiny. Her straight posture also suggests her power and control over her students, her workshop, and her world.

Although Labille-Guiard used detail to bring about sophistication in her work, these details do not overpower the sitter (Nicholson). Many of her works were half-length portraits. In these portraits, she focused on the sitter's gaze, expression, and gesture. She did not use elaborate settings, maintaining the

viewer's attention on the subject. Unlike the half-length portraits, *Self-Portrait with Two Pupils* portrays full-length figures. In this work, and in other royal commissions, Labille-Guiard depicted figures in a formal, elaborate setting. Not only did she focus on the gestures of the figures, but she was also able to depict details in the patterns and fabrics of elegant costumes, in the texture of hair, and in the surroundings.

Self-Portrait with Two Pupils is one of Labille-Guiard's major oil paintings. In 1776, when Labille-Guiard was eager to become a member of the academy, she thought she would increase her chances by learning the art of oil painting. She began to learn the new style in 1776, and had mastered the technique by 1780. From 1780 on, Labille-Guiard created oil paintings. Labille-Guiard is also associated with many pastel paintings, which characterized most of her earlier works. In this work, Labille-Guiard is able to incorporate the viewer into the painting. The painting shows the artist as she works at her easel while her two students watch her paint. One of the students looks at the canvas, while the other looks at the viewer. The student and the artist both look out of the picture and at the viewer.

Labille-Guiard preferred colors of blue, gray, and brown. These colors are apparent in her self-portrait. The color blue is used to emphasize the artist. Most of the light, which is coming from the right, is centered on her. The colors chosen also bring about femininity in the artist, giving her a softer appearance. As the viewer's eye moves away from the artist, dark colors of gray and brown reveal the setting behind the sitter. Along with these colors, the shadows used further conceal and add interest to the students, especially the one in the back. Her face is covered by the shadow of the student in front of her. The pupil in the back hugs the one in front, suggesting a supportive relationship between the two pupils. All three females are very close together, just as were the women who were fighting during the French Revolution. Their closeness suggests a strong bond. As the viewer's eye keeps moving to the back of the painting, the viewer is left with only a black background. Taking a closer look at the painting, the viewer can also see Labille-Guiard's signature and the date of the work on the left side of the easel.

Like many artists of the 18th century, Labille-Guiard worked in the Neoclassical style. Neoclassicism was a style in which artists used Greek and Roman sources and often depicted scenes from Greek and Roman history (Kleiner, 691). In the period of the French Revolution, many of the Neoclassical painters infused history paintings with themes of patriotism and sacrifice. Labille-Guiard was very patriotic during the French Revolution. She strived to gain success as a female artist and her achievements are shown in this *Self-Portrait with Two Pupils*. To follow in the Neoclassical style, Labille-Guiard included several

references to ancient types of sculptures, including a sculptural bust of her father (Fine, 48). The bust, which represents the head and the upper part of the chest and shoulders, seems to be looking down at Labille-Guiard as she works in her studio. Behind the bust, Labille-Guiard placed a statue of a Roman Vestal Virgin. Roman portrait busts and figural sculptures were also used in studios to help students learn how to draw and paint (Hicks). Students, such as the pupils behind Labille-Guiard, would copy the sculptures to draw the human figure and to study ancient works of art.

The statues in Labille-Guiard's work were not only influenced by Roman history but also by a famous French artist and teacher by the name of Jacques-Louis David (Chadwick, 22). After the French Revolution, David helped women artists attain recognition by allowing them to display their work in the Salon. David encouraged women to paint portraits and historical subjects. His influence and style can be seen in the *Self-Portrait with Two Pupils*. In his own studio, David had antique furniture and molds of Greek statues (Hicks). Following the Neoclassical style, David tried to recreate Classical ideas. In addition, David's portrait style included a well-defined dominant figure sitting against a dark background (Chadwick, 22). This type of setting of the figure can also be seen in Labille-Guiard's portrait.

During the Age of the Enlightenment artists believed that paintings should express a moral perspective and have an educational purpose. The *Self-Portrait with Two Pupils* expresses the artist's independence, her skill, her role as mentor, and her achievement as a professional woman. The painting stands for the rights of women and argues for their place in the field of art. Labille-Guiard's style of painting, her use of colors, light, and shadow show that women are capable of producing magnificent works of art. The artist believed that her identity as a woman should not stop her from achieving success, and her portrait displays all of her convictions, technical skills, knowledge of Classical sources, and artistic sophistication.

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A Comparative Analysis of Commuter-Targeted Advertising in New York City

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SPE 32
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Section 1

In an age when advertising has become revolutionized with the advent of burgeoning technological developments, an examination of well-established advertising methods is still fundamental in studying the way products are marketed to consumers. Advertising is ubiquitous, verified by the prolific amount of advertisements to which all types of commuters are exposed. The purpose of this study was to observe billboard advertising compared with mass transit advertising, and derive from the results what the prevalent trends are in commuter marketing.

> **RQ**: Do advertisers market to commuters differently based on mode of transportation?
>
> **Hypothesis**: Advertisements cater specifically to the socioeconomic stereotypes of commuters who use the subway and of those who drive.

Section 1.2: Literature Review

Advertising is a marketing communication element that is persuasive, paid for by an identified sponsor, and disseminated to the masses to promote the adoption of goods, services, persons, or ideas (Bearden 401). There are three main purposes of advertising: immediate action, awareness, and creation or change of an image. Immediate action advertising is intended to induce urgency in targeted consumers. Awareness is designed to promote the cognizance of products on the part of the consumer. Creation or change of an image is meant to alter consumer perceptions regarding products or ideas (Eldridge 247).

Though there are several forms of advertising, the scope of this study is limited to outdoor and transit advertising. Outdoor advertising consists mainly of billboards, which reach large numbers of consumers effectively and inexpensively. The average American now spends more time driving than eating meals, and two-thirds of that time is spent driving alone. U.S. outdoor advertising includes more than 400,000 billboards, the costs of which are based upon traffic volume (Bearden 415). Billboards have been used as an advertising medium for several decades, yet they remain contemporary due to their updated content.

As Bearden states, "Transit advertisements—signs and messages on or in public buses and trains—are billboards on wheels. These ads inside vehicles are low in cost and provide frequent and lengthy exposure to riders." This is a

lucrative industry, and the subways of New York City display innumerable amounts of these moving billboards. According to the Transportation Research Board, "Sales of advertising in public transit facilities and vehicles is a nearly $1 billion industry generating approximately $500 million annually to transit agencies"(trb.org).

Why are billboards (outdoor and transit-associated) so successful? Bang explains that part of the attraction of billboards is their simplicity, or ability to cut through clutter. Citing Erwin Ephron, he adds, "... outdoor advertising is a unique case in which the 'medium is the message.' When driving by a billboard, a motorist is not bombarded with other media options, so selective perception is not as much of an obstacle as in some other media" (Bang 23). The term selective perception refers to the need to filter advertisements according to relevance, a necessary mechanism as the average consumer is exposed to approximately one million ads annually (Bang 22).   Levy adds, "When consumers encounter advertising, their reaction to it depends on its meaning to them; and its meaning depends on the characteristics of both the advertising and the people" (Levy 252). These principles are expressed in the marketing techniques behind advertising, specifically in creating demographics. Social class variations are variations in lifestyle, and different lifestyles require different products, presumably (Levy 298).

The difference between straphangers and drivers is proprietary; drivers own a personal vehicle while subway riders own a Metrocard, which permits them to ride the public transit system for a flat rate fare. This difference implies socio-economic variations between these two populations, and marketers advertise to them based on implicit stereotypes accordingly. When populations are segmented, their respective groups can be studied. "Demographics is a system of categories by which a population is subdivided according to characteristics of the people who comprise it" (Fletcher 445). Subdivision based on socio-economic characteristics creates social classes, the traits of which are effective in predicting buying behavior (Morton 45).

With these concepts providing a guide for this study, the main focus in analyzing data was to determine the manifestation of marketing demographics based on the measurable frequency of types of advertisements.

Section 2: Method

Subway advertisements and billboards were photographed, and then coded by the researchers. The length of highway photographed began at exit 20 on I-278 in Brooklyn, culminating at exit 5 on I-87 in the Bronx, approximately 21 miles. This route was selected because the two highways flow through a diverse conglomeration of neighborhoods, ranging from Red Hook's dilapidated

industrial park, the skyline view Brownstones of Brooklyn Heights, and finally the public housing ghettos of the South Bronx. Eighty-three billboards were photographed indiscriminately and are analyzed in this study. It is worth noting, however, that this is merely a small reflection of the amount of billboards in New York City.

Forty-one subway ads were photographed on the Q train, from 59th Street in Manhattan to Brighton Beach, Brooklyn. These advertisements were also photographed impartially.

The photographed advertisements—the data—were categorized into sixteen groups:

1   **Entertainment**: television, radio, or film
2   **Health Insurance:** including private agencies and government-subsidized
3   **Automobiles:** new cars
4   **Home Improvement/Housewares:** furniture and household products
5   **Apparel/Accessories:** clothing, sneakers, and other wearable merchandise
6   **Cosmetic/Self-improvement:** surgical enhancement
7   **Electronics:** cellular phones and websites
8   **Government:** non-commercial advertisements sponsored by local municipalities
9   **Local Services/Small Business:** advertisements sponsored by companies with locations limited to New York City
10   **Alcohol:** beer and hard liquor
11   **Travel:** tourism campaigns and airlines
12   **Education:** technical schools and higher education
13   **Public Awareness/Nonprofit:** non-commercial advertisements sponsored by private organizations
14   **Financial/Business:** bank accounts, loans, and financial consultants
15   **Food/Beverages:** restaurants, non-alcoholic beverages, and packaged food products
16   **Housing:** high-rises under construction

Section 2.2: Procedure

This study was conducted through data collection and content analysis. The data were viewed and coded by the researchers independently, then collaboratively. From these results, sixteen categories were established. After the final categories were confirmed, the data were coded again within the set

parameters. After the data were definitively coded, the results were analyzed in relation to the numbers, which measured the frequency of types of advertisements.

Section 2.3: Analysis
Advertisements were characterized by the types of products they were promoting, and then grouped into their respective categories accordingly. Superfluous and redundant categories were eliminated, and potentially ambiguous advertisements were grouped into categories that described the nature and content of these ads.
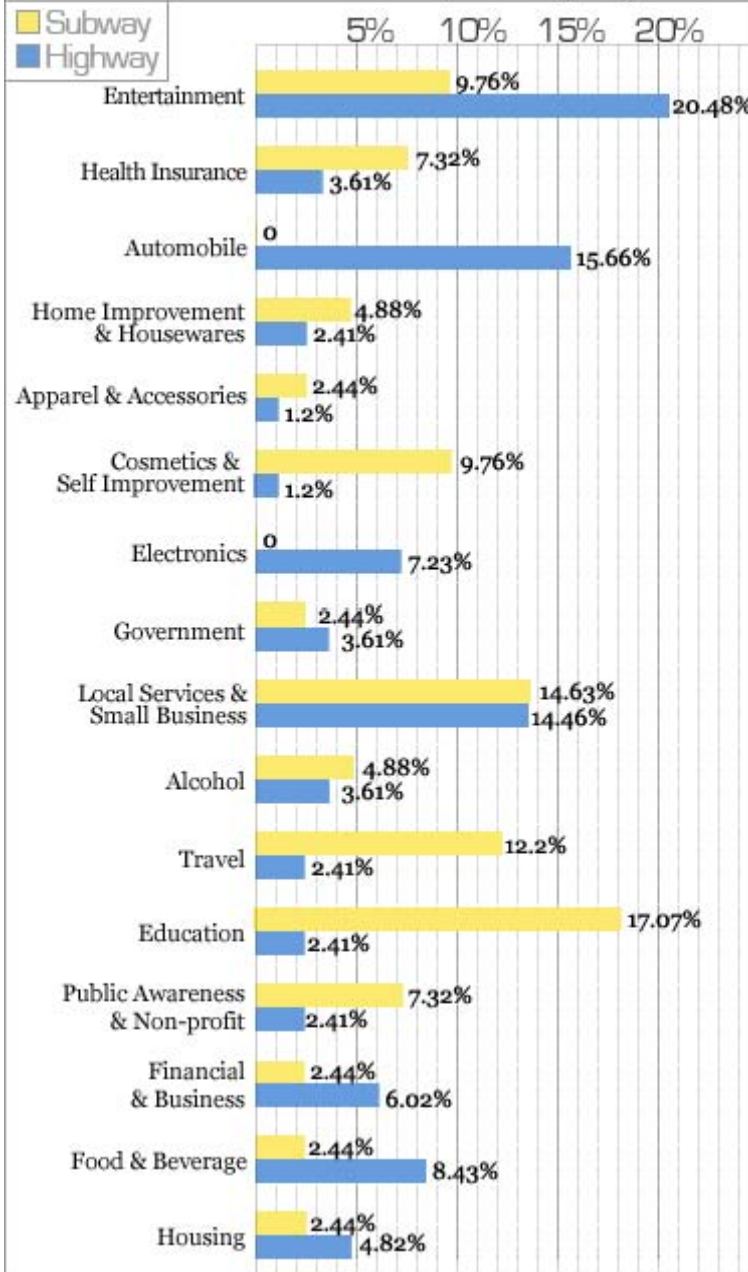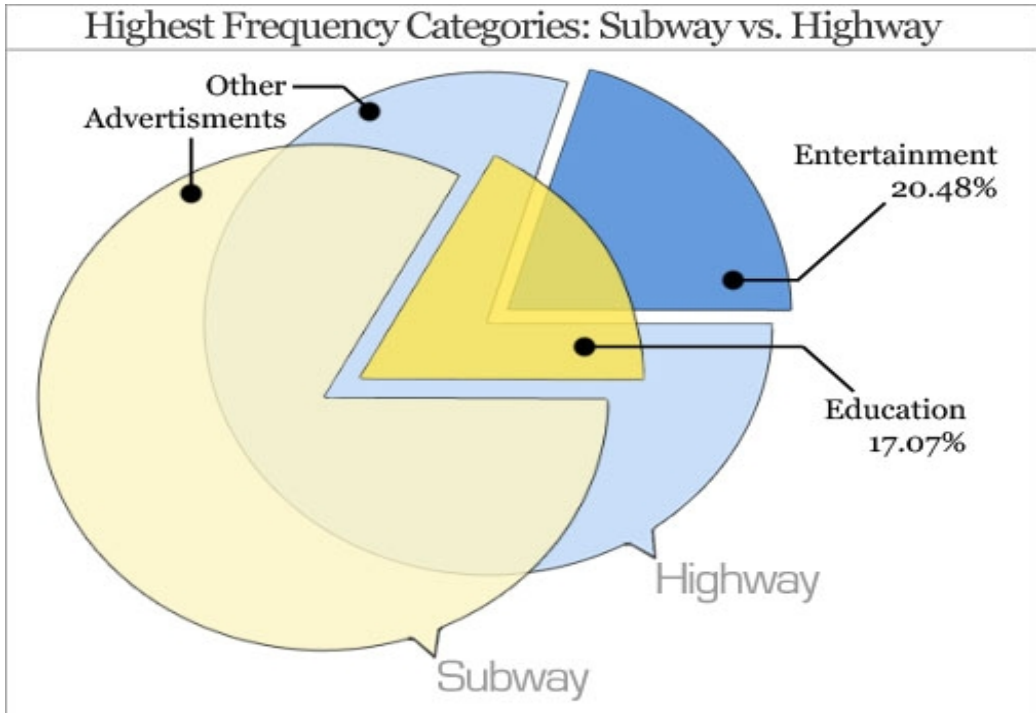
Section 3.1 – 3.2: Results
This study revealed that advertisers are in fact targeting commuters differently based on their mode of transportation in association with socio-economic stereotypes. Based on the content of these ads, marketers presumed that car drivers on highways were of higher economic and social status, and that lower income commuters rode the subway. Billboard content was based on luxury products such as home improvement and automobiles. Of the 83 photographed billboards, 13 were for automobiles. There were also a disproportionate number of advertisements for entertainment and local services/small business. 17 billboards promoted entertainment, while 12 were for local services and small businesses. These amounts far exceeded those of the same respective categories on the subway. Other ad categories that occurred proportionally more frequently on highways than in subways: Food/Drink (8%), Electronics (7%), Financial/Business (6%), and Housing (5%).

Obvious differences were apparent in the types of products marketed to subway riders. 17% of these ads promoted education, 10% sold cosmetic and self-improvements, and 7% advocated public awareness and nonprofit organizations. A glaring deviation in marketing was the presence of automobile advertisements. 15% of billboards advertised new cars, while there were no similar subway ads. Additionally, there were no subway advertisements for consumer electronics, such as cellular phones. Of the billboards drivers were exposed to, however, 7% promoted electronics-related products.

Some of the categories were equally represented to both subway commuters and highway commuters. Alcohol was evenly promoted on the subway and in billboards, approximately 4%. Apparel/Accessories were also represented equally, as well as health insurance, and government-sponsored advertisements.

Advertisements By Category

Legend: Subway, Highway

Category	Subway	Highway
Entertainment	9.76%	20.48%
Health Insurance	7.32%	3.61%
Automobile	0	15.66%
Home Improvement & Housewares	4.88%	2.41%
Apparel & Accessories	2.44%	1.2%
Cosmetics & Self Improvement	9.76%	1.2%
Electronics	0	7.23%
Government	2.44%	3.61%
Local Services & Small Business	14.63%	14.46%
Alcohol	4.88%	3.61%
Travel	12.2%	2.41%
Education	17.07%	2.41%
Public Awareness & Non-profit	7.32%	2.41%
Financial & Business	2.44%	6.02%
Food & Beverage	2.44%	8.43%
Housing	2.44%	4.82%

Highest Frequency Categories: Subway vs. Highway

At the beginning of this study, the hypothesis was: advertisements cater specifically to socioeconomic classifications of commuters who use the subway and of those who drive. Based on data analysis, this hypothesis is correct. Advertisements on the subway were directed at commuters with less money, less time, less education and less professional skills than those directed at drivers.

In nearly every category the data illustrated that marketers presumed drivers had greater economic resources. Findings from the entertainment category provide exemplary evidence of this. Twenty percent of ads drivers were exposed to promoted entertainment, including films, television, and radio. Contrastingly, only 9% of subway ads were for entertainment products. By analyzing these numbers, it is clear that the driving demographic is characterized as having more time and money to spend in pursuit of entertainment.

The education category produced similarly corroborating results. Seventeen percent of subway ads promoted education, including technical

schools and institutes of higher learning. Only 2% of billboards were devoted to education, however. From this, it can be inferred that the straphanger demographic is defined by marketers as being less educated than drivers, and in pursuit of upward mobility. Drivers are marketed as living more actualized lifestyles.

One notable exception was observed in the travel category, which contained ads that sell airlines and destinations. Typically, travel is a costly activity. While prevailing trends would suggest travel would be more heavily marketed to drivers than straphangers, the data is contradictory. Twelve of subway ads pertained to travel, compared with only 2% of billboards. This was a surprising result, and provokes the questions that inspire future research.

Section 4.3 – 4.4

After collecting the data, it became apparent that this study could have been improved if a second code had been created that analyzed the methods of advertising (i.e. bandwagon, glittering generalities, etc.). If this second code had actually been included, greater differences and similarities between the two sects of commuter marketing could have been illustrated. This study was small in its scope because only one subway line was observed and merely 21 miles of highway were documented. Perhaps using many lines and highways would have yielded a greater diversity among the advertisements and demographics in general.

Given the results of this study, the future studies could include more varied demographics, and focus on a particular type of advertising. Other studies that could be done in the future can include suburban commuters, commuters who use waterways, commuters living in bilingual cities, and perhaps, advertisements in other countries compared to the United States. Additional future studies should include comparative analysis on subway and highway advertising in contrast to advertisements of the new generation, such as internet pop-up ads and text messages. Countless studies can be done to expand upon this research. There are many facets to advertising and population demographics. Moreover, within the ever-changing world of technology there are always new and revolutionary marketing techniques to be studied.

Section 4.5: Rita

My experience in doing this study was very positive. I feel that I have gained an exceptional amount of knowledge and know that this project will be of much help to me in my future. I would like to become a social worker and plan on receiving my master's degree. I know that within the realm of

social work, there are numerous opportunities for research. I believe that in doing this paper, I now have a good feel for the work I will being doing in the future.

Working on this paper with a partner at times was somewhat frustrating. We have very different schedules and it was hard to find the time to work together. A lot of the communication was done online and on the phone. When we did get together, it was a pleasant experience. I believe that the fact that we are friends was helpful. We did not disagree on very much and things went smoothly. I wish that we could have had more time. We are alike in that we both are procrastinators, so we both knew it would be a valiant "day before it's due" effort. We worked well together and I value the work that we accomplished.

Section 4.5: Joy

This was the first project for which I have conducted original research, and it has proven to be a very rewarding experience. It was liberating to create a research question and actually create answers based on data analysis. As a future history professor, I will spend the next several years of my life writing, and this new experience has helped me become better prepared for the next stages of my education.

Working with a partner was an effective method of approaching research. We delegated specific tasks, and then collaborated on the assembly of our final project. Making time to meet was particularly challenging, and we relied heavily on e-mail to share information. Since we are friends, and thus generally like-minded, there were very few disagreements. Additionally, Rita's willingness to adapt and gracious attitude balanced my micro-managing and controlling tendencies. Despite occasional obstacles, working with a partner inspired many ideas, which resulted in a better paper than if I had written it alone.

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Fanny's Restaurant Business Plan

By Fanny Rodriguez

ACC 11
Fall 2007
Mentor: Professor Ira Hochman

Executive Summary

This business plan explains the opening of a fast food restaurant. It also includes the financial plan, which requires $140,000 to start up the business. The restaurant will be owned and operated by Fanny Rodriguez, who has over ten years' experience in restaurant management, and her sister Clarivel Rodriguez, who has over eight years' experience in accounting. We will provide $60,000 of our personal savings as capital, and we will receive a loan from family and friends for $80,000 to complete our start up financing requirements. The money will be utilized to pay rent; purchase supplies, inventory and labor; create advertising; and pay for administrative costs for the first six months. We expect that the restaurant is going to produce a positive net income in the first six months of the business.

The restaurant is going to be located on 1644 Coney Island Ave. in Brooklyn, NY. This location will be important because there are a small number of competing restaurants in the same area. There is also a growing family neighborhood with high household incomes. A large business center is located within three blocks of the restaurant. The restaurant will serve businesses, families and singles who want fast service but do not want to sacrifice nutrition or quality. I will use statistics based on The National Restaurant Association to make comparisons in the average business. In order to reduce expenses, I will rent a restaurant space instead of buying it and I will purchase used equipment whenever possible.

With initial start-up capital of $140,000 the restaurant is expecting $491,500 in gross sales in the first year of operation, increasing to $650,380 in the second year, and $704,256 in the third year. Net profits are expected at $128,274 in the first year, $201,525 in the second year and $229,340 in the third year. Net profit from sales is projected at 26.10% in the first year, 30.99% in the second year and 32.56% in the third year. The restaurant is expected to see an annual increase in sales of 4.9%.

Objectives

Our objective is to project the start-up financing for a long-term fast food restaurant that will serve a residential and business community To do well

in the long-term and create enough profits to provide service and to pay the loan, we have recognized the following goals, which are explained in detail in this business plan:

➢ Keep a cost of products of 32% for a Gross Margin of 68%

To be successful we have recognized the following main points:

➢ We will have strict financial supervision for every month to keep everything under control.

➢ We have recognized the location of the restaurant as lacking in similar fast food restaurants. Business and other people living around this area do not have many choices of high quality take-out/eat-in restaurants. This advantage is one of the most important reasons for the restaurant's success.

➢ The restaurant is going to be different from the competition because it is going to offer a high quality take-out/eat-in menu that will be priced for value. The restaurant menu will offer high quality products that are prepared with fresh ingredients and served for eat-in or take-out.

➢ The restaurant staff will provide excellent customer service. The restaurant will create a reputation as a fast, convenient, healthy and good quality option for lunch and dinner dining.

Mission

Our mission is to create a legal and excellent fast food restaurant that will offer healthy take-out/eat-in menu for busy business people, singles and families.

Service

The restaurant will provide good service to create and keep a reputation as an excellent dining facility. The restaurant will offer a menu of healthy fast food products, ordered from either an order counter or drive through window. The customer may order the meals to go or may eat-in at eight interior dining tables. We believe that the three most important factors in the restaurant's value are: food, service and price.

The restaurant will have a nice and modern interior design that is both comfortable for customers and easy to maintain. In the open area location the

restaurant will provide parking for 20 cars with a convenient drive-through window.

Menu Offerings

We are going to offer a menu of four different chicken-based central dishes each with three-option selections. In addition, we will offer eight side dishes and four dessert options. Beverages are going to be served by the customers themselves with take-out cups and lids, because we expect that the profit margin will be higher than selling packaged beverages.

Market Analysis Summary

The restaurant business in New York State employs more than 470,000 people. According to the National Restaurant Association statistics, sales are projected to be more than $476 billion in 900,000 restaurant locations by 2008. The projected sales would show a 4.9% of increase over last year.

Based on graphs from the U.S. Census Bureau, the area in which our restaurant is going to be located has 81,398 limited-service businesses, employing over 953,900 people. The National Restaurant Association says that the customers are most concerned with food quality, service, choice of portion sizes, freshness of ingredients, cleanliness and overall experience. Some restaurant owners also said that their biggest challenge was in hiring and keeping employees.

Market Study

The possible customers for the restaurant are: residential customers (families and singles) and business customers. The restaurant is going to be located in an area that has a large housing neighborhood. Based on U.S. Census statistics for the area, the neighborhood has an overall population of 770,723 with 329,700 households. Each family has an average of 2.3 people, with an income of $55,221 per person, and they eat out about 2.5 times per week. The community is increasing at a speed of 1.5% per year. About 15,000 people are located around the restaurant, and represent our market for residential customers.

A big business center is located within two miles of the restaurant. The area has many large companies. There are about 10,000 employees working in these businesses, which represent our market for business customers. The business population is growing at a rate of 2.3% per year.

The following table shows a market study for the region's whole population and the projected growth. The table shows that the Compounded Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) for both residential and business people is 2.06%. In the beginning, our market represents a total of 25,000 customers, which will increase to 27,125 by 2011.

Table: **Market Study**

Possible Customers	Growth	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	CRGR
Residential Customers	1.9%	15,000	15,285	15,575	15,871	16,173	1.90%
Business Customers	2.3%	10,000	10,230	10,465	10,706	10,952	2.30%
Total	**2.06%**	**25,000**	**25,515**	**26,040**	**26,577**	**27,125**	**2.06%**

Customer Estimation

We are expecting 40% of the total market of 25,000 as actual customers. This is equal to 10,000 customers per year:

25,000 x 40% = 10,000

Supposing that 10,000 customers are going to go to our restaurant 8 times per year will result in 80,000 meals sold annually:

10,000 x 8 = 80,000

This is equal to 225 meals per day (the restaurant will be open 355 days per year):

80,000 / 355 = 225 meals per day

Strategy Summary

We have identified a location with a small number of competitors and an increasing amount of population. We can include our good restaurant management experience into a secure, long-term business.

The restaurant menu will be a healthy option to regular fast-food items. The customers will receive high value products for reasonable prices.

After obtaining the start-up capital, we will start marketing to introduce the restaurant in the community. At the same time, we will prepare everything to obtain the lease of the location, and we will start buying all the equipment and furniture necessary. We are also going to have interviews based upon recommendations and referrals. Once everything is ready, approximately in the second month, the restaurant will open for business.

Competitive Advantage

The restaurant's competitive advantage is its location in a large residential and business population. The restaurant will provide the elements that these customers are looking for, such as excellent customer service, high food quality, healthy menu items with fresh ingredients, reasonable prices, cleanliness, and convenience.

We know that the customers' experience will result in word-of-mouth advertising, which is very important for the success of the restaurant.

Main Competitors

Our restaurant's main competition is represented by all the current restaurants. There are 12 restaurants available to our customers within this area, but none of these restaurants offer the same variety of healthy options as our restaurant. The following is a review of the three main competitors.

a.   *McDonald's Restaurant*: It has a limited sandwich-based menu. The restaurant has established customers, and is located five miles from our restaurant. We think that our healthy menu will offer a different dinning experience than this competitor. For this reason, and their distance from our restaurant, we feel that they are not a competitive risk.

b.   *Mexican Food Restaurant*: This restaurant is catching the attention of customers that do not require healthy food. This restaurant is located within one block from our restaurant. Again, we feel that this restaurant is not a risk due to the different needs of the customers.

c. ***New York Deli***: This restaurant offers a lower quality menu with higher prices. The menu items are very difficult to find in this area, such as vegetable-based sandwiches and kosher items. The restaurant has loyal customers thanks to the hard to find menu items. Even though this restaurant is next door to us, we feel it is not a competitive risk because of its menu offerings.

Marketing Plan

We have recognized that the most important marketing plan is word-of-mouth advertising by satisfied customers. We will demonstrate the credibility of this belief by maintaining the value of all our products and services.

One percent of the sales per year will be used for marketing. The marketing plan will include advertising in local print publications, distributing flyers to residences and business within the area, advertising on local radio and television channels, and maintaining the restaurant's website.

Print ads are going to appear in local newspapers and business magazines about six weeks before the first opening day of the restaurant. We are going to send direct mail advertisements to residences and business two weeks before the restaurant's first opening day.

Radio and television promotional spots will be created and showed on local channels during the restaurant's grand opening week. We are going to have a broadcast media campaign.

Sales Plan

The restaurant's value plan is going to be focused on high quality with reasonable prices. Because we found out that there is a limited amount of competitors offering this kind of service, the prices will be a little high.

Pricing Plan

MENU PRICING:

As we mentioned before, we are planning to maintain a gross margin of 68%, which is going to give us a cost of food of 32% (100 – 68 = 32). The next formula will calculate the price of the menu:

Price = cost of food / 32%.

For example:

$7.5(price) = $2.4(cost of food) / 32% (food cost %)

We expect to have 65,533 customers in our first year, 83,000 in the second and 88,000 in the third, and we also expect that they are going to spend $7.50 per person per visit. Based upon this assumption, we project that the annual sales of the first year are going to be $491,497.

Sales: 65,533 (customers) x $7.50 (price) = $491,497

TABLE ESTIMATION:

The restaurant is going to be open 355 days per year, and in the third year we expect to have 88,000 customers. This will result in 247 customers per day (88,000/355=247). If we divide the customers between lunch (11:30 to 1:30) and dinner (6:00 to 8:00), we expect about 123 customers for lunch and 123 for dinner. Supposing that half of these customers are going to 'eat in', we will have 60 customers for lunch (30 per hour), and 60 for dinner (30 per hour).

We calculate that eight tables are going to be enough if each table is used by two customers per hour:

30 customers / 2 customers per table = 15 pairs of customers

15 pairs of customers / 2 hours = 7.5 or 8 tables

Projected Sales

We will start preparing the restaurant to open in January, and we expect no revenue in this month because this is a start-up business. We expect that the sales are going to be at 33% in February, 50% in March and 100% from April to ahead of what we already project about customers' estimation. For example:

80,000 (customers per year) / 12 (months in a year) =

6,667 *(customers per month). February orders: 6,667 x 33% =* **2,200**

We expect $491,497 in sales from the first year, supposing that we are going to have 65,533 orders per year at $7.50 each. The cost of sales is going to be $157,280 which is based on 32% of sales (491,497 x 32% = 157,280).

For the second year, we project $650,380 in sales, expecting that the number of customers is going to increase by 4.9%, which means that we are going to have 3,920 customers more than the first year.

80,000 (first year customers) x 4.9% = 3,920.

In the third year, we expect that the sales are going to be $704,256, and the cost of sales $225,362.

The next table shows three-year projections for sales and cost of sales. In the appendix of this plan I also provide a 12-month table.

Table: **Projected Sales**

Projected Sales	2007	2008	2009
Customers	65,533	83,920	88,032
Price per order	$7.50	$7.75	$8.00
Total sales	**$491,497**	**$650,380**	**$704,256**
Cost per order	$2.40	$2.48	$2.56
Total cost of sales	**$157,280**	**$208,122**	**$225,362**

Projected sales per year
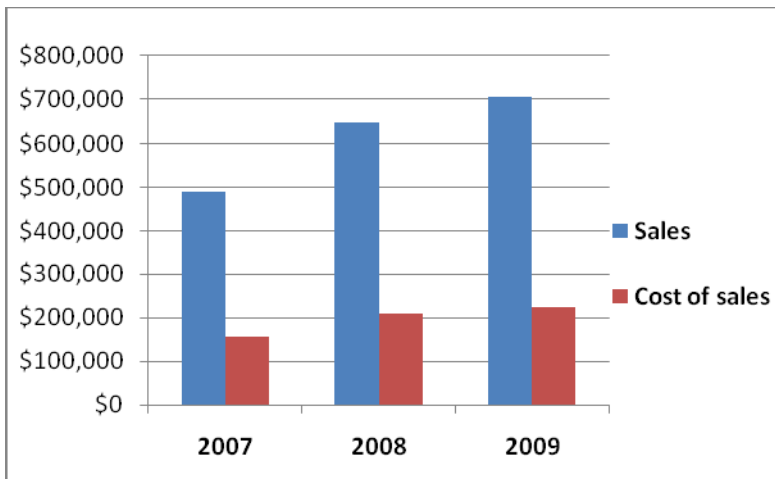
Management Summary

I, Fanny Rodriguez, and my sister, Clarivel Rodriguez, are the owners of the restaurant. We have over eight years of successful limited-service restaurant management and business accounting experience.

My sister, Clarivel Rodriguez, has an Associate Arts degree from Baruch College. She has worked as a CPA for the last eight years, and based on her experience, Clarivel will manage the finances and advertising for the restaurant

I, Fanny Rodriguez, graduated from Brooklyn College with a B.A. in Business Management. I have managed many fast food restaurants, such as McDonald's, for five years before I took on the management of a successful limited-service restaurant. Under my management this restaurant reached a net profit of 25% annually for five years. I am going to manage our restaurant every day, and I will also supervise the kitchen and the employees.

Personnel Plan

The New York State minimum wage is $7.15 per hour. We are going to pay $7.75 to attract and keep employees. Each employee will work 40 hours per week, or 160 hours per month, which is going to give us a monthly payroll of $1,240 per person (160x$7.75).

To operate from 10 A.M. to 10 P.M. six days a week, the restaurant will need four employees (two cashiers and two cooks). To rotate the schedules we are going to need six employees for the first year, expecting that the hours worked will increase as sales increase.

The wages expense per month is estimated at $7,440 = (6 x $1,240), paying a tax of 10%. We, the owners, are not included in the payroll because we are going to take dividends, depending upon review by the restaurant's accountant, as salaries:

➢ The payroll for the first year is expected at $82,840.
➢ The payrolls for the second and third year are expected at $89,280.

The following table shows the payroll expenses for the first three years. A 12-month table is included in the Appendix of the plan.

Table: **Personnel Plan**

Personnel Plan	2007	2008	2009
Monthly Wages Expense	$7,440	$7,440	$7,440
Months of Operations	11	12	12
January Expense	$1,000	0	0
Total Payroll	**$82,840**	**$89,280**	**$89,280**

Financial Plan

We are planning to start the restaurant with $140,000, where $60,000 is from our savings and $80,000 from a loan to be paid in five years. The loan includes 7% interest. To reduce costs, we plan to rent the location of the restaurant instead of buying it, and we also plan to buy used equipment whenever possible.

Start-up Requirements

The following table illustrates the start-up costs and investments, which reflect a cash balance of $88,050 after start-up expenses. This cash balance is expected to pay all the expenses until the restaurant begins to create revenue. We, the owners, will not take any money from the restaurant until it makes good revenue. We have kept personal savings for living expenses until that point, but after that, we are going to take an amount of dividends based on the restaurant's cash balance at the end of each month. We will never let the cash balance to be less than $3,000 for each month.

Table: **Start-up Requirements**

Start-up Expenses	
Rent & Security deposit	$6,000
Phone & Gas deposit	200
Cleaning Expense	500
Legal Expense	500
Insurance Expense	500
Total Expenses	**$7,700**

Start-up Assets Needed	
Cash Balance on Beginning Date	$88,050
Other Current Assets	44,250
Total Assets	**$132,300**

Total of Requirements	*$140,000*

Start-up Investments	
Owners' Equity	$60,000
Total Investment	**$60,000**

Start-up Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	$80,000
Total Liabilities	**$80,000**

Loss at the Beginning (Expenses)	$7,700
Total Capital	$52,300
Total Capital + Liabilities	**$132,300**

Other Current Assets

The line that says "Other Current Assets" with the total of $44,250 in the Start-up table is included in the balance sheet to be used for depreciation.

The following table shows the assets included in "Other Current Assets," which are necessary for the start-up and are going to be bought in the first month of operation.

Table: **Other Current Assets**

Office Supplies	$1,250
Location's Improvements	$5,000
Sign's design (name of restaurant)	$1,500
Registers	$10,000
Furniture and Supplies	$5,000
Food and Beverage Inventory	$10,000
Kitchen Supplies	$10,000
Advertising	$1,500
Total Other Current Assets	**$44,250**

Break-even Point

We expect to reach a break-even point at 3,053 orders per month with break-even revenue of $22,898. These predictions are based upon the selling price of $7.50 and the cost price of $2.40. The restaurant's fixed costs per month are expected to be $15,571.

Table: **Break-even Analysis**

Monthly Orders	3,053
Monthly Revenue	$22,898
Projections:	
Selling Price	$7.50
Cost Price	$2.40
Monthly Fixed Cost	$15,571

Projected Income Statement

The first year of sales are projected at $491,500, with the cost of products at $157,500 for a gross margin of 68%. In the second year, the revenue is supposed to increase at $650,380, and $704,256 in the third year, with the same gross margin.

After start-up expenses, we project a total expenses of $186,847 in the first year, $214,156 in the second year, and $220,890 in the third.

The next Income Statement table also shows the interest payment of the start-up loan, which decreases from year to year as we pay the loan. The net income is expected at $128,274 in the first year, $201,527 in the second year, and $229,340 in the third year.

Table: **Income Statement**

Income Statement	2007	2008	2009
Sales	$491,500	$650,380	$704,256
Cost of Products	$157,280	$208,122	$225,362
Gross Profit	**$334,220**	**$442,258**	**$478,894**
Gross margin %	68%	68%	68%
Expenses:			
Wages Expense	$82,840	$89,280	$89,280
Selling Expenses	$65,960	$75,938	$80,080
Administrative Expenses	$38,047	$48,938	$51,530
Total Operating Expenses	**$186,847**	**$214,156**	**$220,890**
Interest Expense	$4,215	$4,183	$3,182
Taxes Expense	$14,884	$22,392	$25,482
Net Income	**$128,274**	**$201,527**	**$229,340**

Projected Cash Flow

We project a net cash flow of $99,373 in the first year, $67,696 in the second year, and $34,604 in the third year.

Cash balance is projected at $187,423 in the first year, $255,118 in the second year, and $289,723 in the third year. The following table shows a three-year projection of cash flow.

Table: **Cash Flow**

Cash Received:	2007	2008	2009
Cash from Sales	$491,500	$650,380	$704,256
Cash from Sales Tax	$29,490	$39,023	$42,255
Sub total cash received	**$520,990**	**$689,403**	**$746,511**
Cash Spent			
Payment of Accounts Payable	$348,516	$427,925	$458,592
Cash spent on Tax payments	$0	$29,490	$39,023
Cash withdrew by owners	$13,101	$14,292	$14,292
Dividends	$60,000	$150,000	$200,000
Sub Total Cash Spent	**$421,617**	**$621,707**	**$711,907**
Net Cash Flow	**$99,373**	**$67,696**	**$34,604**

Projected Balance Sheet

We project the assets at $221,843 in the first year, $276,530 in the second year and $297,050 in the third year.

The Net Capital (assets-liabilities) is projected at $120,574 in the first year, $172,102 in the second year, and $201,442 in the third year. The following table shows a three-year projection of the balance sheet.

Table: **Balance Sheet**

Balance Sheet	2007	2008	2009
Assets			
Current Assets			
Cash	$187,423	$255,118	$289,723
Other Current Assets	$44,250	$44,250	$44,250
Total Current Assets	$231,673	$299,368	$333,973
Long-term Assets			
Accumulated Depreciation	$9,830	$22,838	$36,923
Total Assets	**$221,843**	**$276,530**	**$297,050**
Liabilities and Owners' Equity			
Current Liabilities			
Accounts Payable	$4,880	$12,799	$15,037
Money Borrowed	$66,899	$52,607	$38,315
Other Current Liabilities	$29,490	$39,023	$42,255
Long-term Liabilities	$0	$0	$0
Total Liabilities	**$101,269**	**$104,429**	**$95,607**
Total Capital	**$120,574**	**$172,101**	**$201,443**
Total Liabilities + Owners' Equity	**$221,843**	**$276,530**	**$297,050**

Exit Strategy and Risk

We have integrated our ten years of experience in accounting and business management in creating this detailed business plan to support our idea of creating this restaurant. Based on our studies, we really believe that the financial projections are going to support our $60,000 investment from our personal savings together with the loan of $80,000. We also project the development of a successful, long-term restaurant that will give us good revenues, and will also provide jobs for the community. If the restaurant is successful, we are planning to open a second restaurant in a location with similar advantages.

We recognize the high risk involved in opening a new business. In case that the restaurant cannot reach revenues, we will try to sell it to pay any debts even if we are unable to recover our $60,000 of personal investments. We also know that competitors can copy our idea and open similar restaurants in the same area, but that may take some years. By the time they do it, we will have created loyal customers, based upon our excellent service and food quality.

Cleopatra's Hair
and
Beauty Salon

By Svetlana Cozmit

Executive Summary

Cleopatra's Salon is going to be a salon dedicated to providing high customer satisfaction through excellent service, quality products and an enjoyable atmosphere at an affordable price. We will also maintain a friendly and creative work environment.

Our **mission** is to run a profitable business by providing all kinds of beautification services in a pleasant environment. We are planning to fulfill this mission by giving extra effort to customer satisfaction.

Our **goal** is to make our salon become one of the leading beauty salons in Brooklyn, NY. We will accomplish this goal by offering excellent service that meets client needs better than any other competitor. We will carefully hire our employees and train them to provide services that meet the needs of each client.

After six months of searching for a location for my salon, I finally found it. I was looking for a pleasant place where there are lots of shops, and a space for parking. My salon will be located in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn. It is a lovely place where people like to shop. Our salon will be open Monday to Saturday from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., and on Sundays from 12 noon to 6 p.m..

There are no beauty salons currently on the street where we are planning to open our salon, but there are a lot of beauty salons in Brooklyn. This is why we have to provide outstanding service, and make our salon look different from others. Our salon will provide a variety of services such as: haircuts and styles, manicure/pedicure, skin care, body waxing, and massage. Also we will sell professional beauty products.

KEYS TO SUCCESS:

Location:
We are going to provide an easily accessible location for customers.

Environment:
We will provide a friendly, professional and relaxing environment. Cleanliness is very important also; that will make our customers come repeatedly. The customers have to trust us and the products we are using.

Convenience:
We will offer clients a wide range of services in one place and extended business hours.

Reputation:

A good reputation totally depends on superior service providers. We have to hire professional personnel who are willing to provide quality services. They have to be friendly and eager to provide excellent service. This will build the perfect reputation for my salon.

I am going to open the salon together with my brother. I am majoring in accounting, so I will be an accountant in my company. My brother has experience in management. He will work as a receptionist and the person who will supervise the employees' work.

I will need to hire two stylists (adding more in the second and third years); two manicure/pedicure specialists, one skin care specialist, and one massage specialist. My brother, as receptionist, can take care of product sales as well.

The main cost of running a beauty salon will include: rent, leasehold improvements and equipment. We will need $60,000 to start our business, plus some cash on hand and money for a deposit for the first month's rent.

Our main marketing tool is going to be the word of mouth. We will reward our customers with discounts or free services. Will leave our business cards everywhere possible. We will follow up with our customers and send postcards with our offers. We expect our sales to be increasing for the next three years. We are expecting to reach $223,200 in sales by the end of third year. My brother and I will be the owners. We are going to hire our personnel very carefully, because we want to make sure our employees will be contributing to our business. We want our employees to work in a warm and friendly environment, and to provide excellent service to our customers. We project that our company will be profitable within three years. We intend to be very customer-focused, committed to solving our customers' needs and doing everything possible to keep them satisfied.

Company Summary

Cleopatra Salon will sell a wide range of beauty services and products. We will provide quality hair, nail and skin services together with the best beauty products. Our commitment to provide excellent services in one convenient location will set us on a higher level than the competitors.

Start-up summary

After spending six months of searching for a salon space, we finally found one. The start-up capital will be used for rent of the salon, leasehold improvements and equipment purchase.

The rent will cost us approximately $20,000, decorations, $1,000, equipment, about $30,000. We will also invest $500 for cash on hand, and money for rent deposit. My salon space will utilize 1500 sq. ft. The equipment I need to buy: washing basin, styling chairs, hair driers, hair care instruments manicure/pedicure sets, aprons, other body/skin care instruments, two massage tables.

Other start-up expenses:

- Cash register
- Business license and other required documents
- Utilities
- Advertising expenses

The total I will need: $60,000 to start my business, plus $500 in cash, and $1,900 for rent deposit. Together with my brother we have $30,000 in savings. We will borrow another $33,000 from our parents ($22,000) and our uncle ($11,000). We are going to start repaying them as soon as we are making a profit from our business.

Start-up Requirements			
Start-up Expenses			
Rent deposit			*$1,900*
Other			*$ 0*
Total Start-up Expenses			*$1,900*
Start-up Assets			
Cash Required			*$500*
Long-term Assets			*$60,000*
Total Assets			*$60,500*
Total Requirements			**$62,400**

Company Locations and Facilities

The salon will be located in Bay Ridge, on 4th Avenue. This area was chosen because it is a good shopping location, where relatively wealthy people live, with a median income of $50,000. Most of the population in this area is people 25-45 years old. This location is accessible from any location in Brooklyn. It has enough space for parking.

Products and Services

Success in our business depends on the ability to provide a consistently high customer satisfaction: excellent service, use of quality products in a warm and friendly atmosphere. Our Hair and Beauty salon will provide the following services:

Hair: Haircut and style; highlights and perms; colors, shampoo and conditioning; curling and straightening.

Nails: Manicures, pedicures, polish, nail repair.

Skin care: Facials, body waxing, massage.

Sale of professional hair/beauty products: We will sell professional shampoos and conditioners, gels, mousses and make up.

Competitive Comparison

Cleopatra Salon wants to be different and better than other salons, our competitors. That is why we are going to provide different services in one place. Customers do not feel comfortable going to one place to have their hair cut and another place for a manicure or waxing. We want to provide our customers with convenience; therefore, they will be happy with our services, thus becoming our loyal customers. There are number of salons like ours, but they are expensive, only for people with a high income. We wish to offer our services for middle-class customers who cannot afford high-priced salons. We will use the top quality products, because we care about our clients, and we don't want to damage their health by using products of low quality. Our business atmosphere will be relaxing and caring. Soft drinks will be offered to our customers as they enter our salon. Clients will be able to read a magazine while waiting for service. Beauty magazines will be on the table as well, so our clients could choose something interesting from the magazines, and our specialists could fulfill the customers' wishes. A television will be located in the waiting area.

MARKETING AND SALES PLANS

Target Marketing

WHO ARE MY CUSTOMERS?

Economic level: middle to upper class.

Age: 25 to 45

Income level: $25,000 and above

Our marketing strategy is a simple one: satisfied customers are our best marketing tool. When a client receives good service and leaves our salon with a new look, he or she will represent our name to the public. Our satisfied customers will recommend our salon to their families and friends. The first thing we are going to do is to organize a Grand Opening. Everyone will be invited. People will get the services for a discounted price. Coupons will be distributed. Soft drinks and snacks will be offered.

Advertising

PAST AND NEW CLIENTS REWARDS

We will run specials throughout the week. We will ask our clients for referrals, and reward them with discounted or free services. We will e-mail our past clients with "hot" deals monthly. We will offer discounts for our new clients who have been referred.

DIRECT MAIL

We will use direct mail advertising to reach our potential clients. We will get our lists of names from phone directories, our own customers' list. We will send out direct mail postcards with our offers weekly. Postcards are effective direct mail pieces, because they are cheaper than letters and can catch the customers' attention immediately.

FLYERS AND BUSINESS CARDS DISTRIBUTION

We will distribute special flyers, which will include: our salon name, salon address and telephone, and specials. We will leave our business card everywhere we go: in restaurants, stores, libraries, laundromats. This doesn't cost too much and has a repeated use.

ONLINE WEBSITE

Our salon's website will be created. It will have a full menu of services and will enable the people to schedule appointments online.

Magazines allow us to reach a more targeted audience. We will advertise in *Glamour* magazine and other beauty magazines. Our potential clients can find an interesting haircut or make-up in the beauty magazine. When they will see our salon's advertising, they are more likely to come to our salon and ask us to make them look like that woman in the magazine.

COUPONS

We will widely distribute coupons to promote our salon. Coupons will offer discounts and free gifts (free shampoo, gel, etc.) with a haircut or other service. We will distribute coupons by handing them out on the street, and delivering them door to door.

Sales Projections

The following table and charts show our projected sales. We expect income to increase steadily over the next three years, because of the good reputation of the salon which will be due to our excellent service. In the second year revenues are expected to increase when we add one more stylist.

	2008	**2009**	**2010**
Sales			
Stylist#1	$61,000	$64,000	$70,000
Stylist#2	$49,000	$54,000	$58,000
Stylist#3	$0	$20,000	$25,000
Nails specialists	$15,000	$16,000	$18,000
Skin care specialists	$12,000	$13,000	$15,000
Body wax	$10,000	$11,000	$12,200
Massage	$8,000	$10,000	$12,000
Product sales	$10,000	$11,000	$12,200
Total Sales	$165,000	$200,000	$223,200
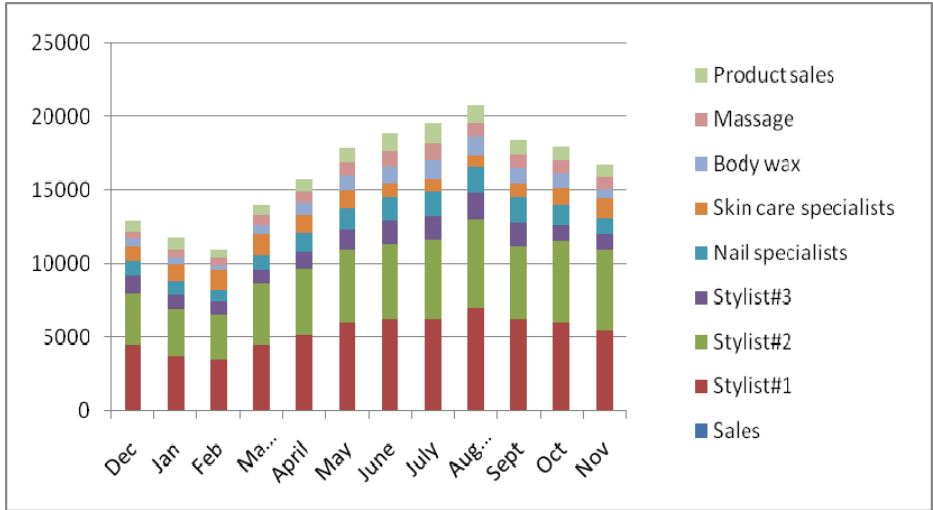
Sales Monthly

Sales by Year
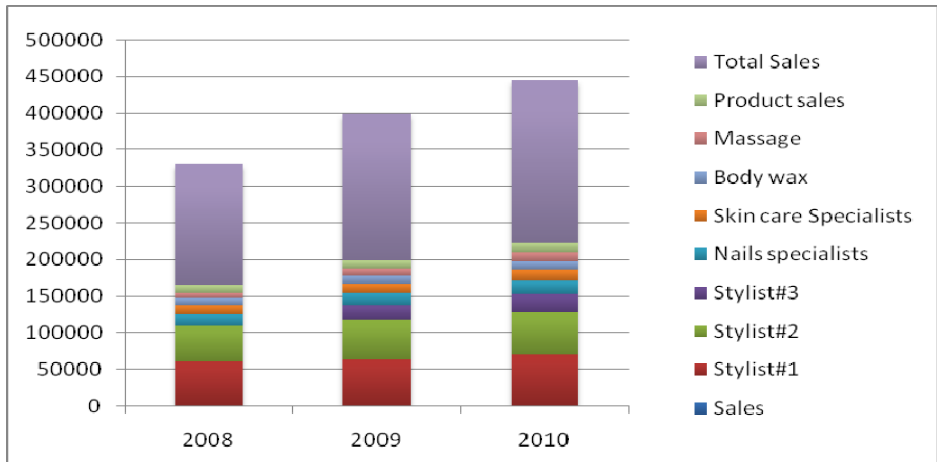
Management Summary

Cleopatra Salon will be organized and managed in a creative manner to generate a high level of customer satisfaction and to create a good working atmosphere. We will need to hire two hair stylists, two manicure/pedicure specialists, one skin care specialist, one wax specialist and one massage therapist.

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In order to hire the employees, we will place ads in local papers, post a job opportunity on our own website, which my brother will create, and on other websites like Yahoo! Careers, HotJobs.com among others. Also we will ask our friends if they know someone who may be eligible for a job in our salon.

Management Team

SVETLANA COZMIT: Owner. I am graduating this year with an accounting degree. I will handle all the financial operations in our business.

ALEX COZMIT: Owner. He graduated from Brooklyn College, majoring in Business Administration. He has two years' experience in management. Alex will supervise all the employees and work as a receptionist.

Personnel Plan

The total number of employees to be hired initially will be seven. One more hairstylist will be hired in the second year and more employees when our salon, having earned a good reputation, will have more customers.

EMPLOYEE PROFILE
1. Personable, outgoing, reliable
2. College background
3. At least one year experience
4. Able to take on responsibilities
5. Willing to provide excellent service

EMPLOYEES' SALARIES
1. Hairstylist: full time, $13 per hour
2. Manicure/Pedicure Specialist: full time, $10 per hour
3. Wax Specialist-full time: $11 per hour
4. Skin care specialist-full time: $13 per hour
5. Massage therapist-full time: $20 per hour

FINANCIAL PLAN

Break-Even Analysis

Fixed Costs=$7,773
Variable Costs=$6,666
Estimated Revenues=$12,900
S (sales at a Break-Even Point) =$7,773+ ($6,666/$12,900) xS
S=$7,773+1/2xS
S-1/2S=$7,773
S=$15,546

This business estimates that it will break even at the time sales volume reaches $15,546.

Projected Income Statement

	2008	2009	2010
Income			
Sales	$165,000	$200,000	$227,200
Cost of Goods Sold	$3,500	$3,900	$4,200
Gross Profit	**$161,500**	**$196,100**	**$223,200**
Operating Expenses			
Salaries and wages	$55,000	$60,000	$70,000
Payroll taxes	$6,000	$7,200	$8,000
Rent	$22,800	$22,800	$22,800
Depreciation	$8,000	$8,200	$8,200
Utilities	$3,000	$4,000	$4,500
Marketing/Promotion	$20,000	$21,200	$23,000
Supplies	$6,000	$6,000	$6,000
Total Operating Expenses	**$112,800**	**$129,400**	**$142,500**
Net Income Before Taxes	**$48,700**	**$66,700**	**$80,700**
Taxes on Income	7,305	10,005	13,995
Net Income After Taxes	**$41,395**	**$56,695**	**$66,705**

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Cash Receipts					
Income from Sales					
Cash sales	$11,750	$11,000	$14,000	$15,750	$18,000
Investments	$500	$0	$0	$0	$0
Total Cash Receipts	**$12,250**	**$11,000**	**$14,000**	**$15,750**	**$18,000**
Cash payments					
Operating Expenses	$9,000	$7,000	$9,000	$9,800	$11,000
Equipment purchase	$30,000	$0	$0	$0	$0
Total Cash Payments	**$39,000**	**$7,000**	**$9,000**	**$9,800**	**$11,000**
Net Cash Flow	-$26,750	$4,000	$5,000	$5,950	$7,000
Opening Cash Balance	**$500**	**($26,250)**	**($22,250)**	**($17,250)**	**($11,300)**
Cash Receipts	$12,250	$11,000	$14,000	$15,750	$18,000
Cash payments	$39,000	$7,000	$9,000	$9,800	$11,000
Ending Cash Balance	**($26,250)**	**($22,250)**	**($17,250)**	**($11,300)**	**($4,300)**

June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
$18,900	$19,600	$20,800	$17,700	$18,000	$16,800	$12,900	$195,200
$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$500
$18,900	**$19,600**	**$20,800**	**$17,700**	**$18,000**	**$16,800**	**$12,900**	**$195,700**
$10,000	$8,000	$12,000	$13,000	$11,000	$12,000	$10,000	$112,800
$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$30,000
$10,000	**$8,000**	**$12,000**	**$13,000**	**$11,000**	**$12,000**	**$10,000**	**$142,800**
$8,900	$11,600	$20,800	$4,700	$7,000	$4,800	$2,900	$52,900
($4,300)	**$4,600**	**$16,200**	**$25,000**	**$29,700**	**$36,700**	**$41,500**	**$8,500**
$18,900	$19,600	$20,800	$17,700	$18,000	$16,800	$12,900	$195,700
$10,000	$8,000	$12,000	$13,000	$11,000	$12,000	$10,000	$151,800
$4,600	**$16,200**	**$25,000**	**$29,700**	**$36,700**	**$41,500**	**$44,400**	

Projected Balance Sheet

	2008	2009	2010
	$8,000	$15,000	$32,000
	$2,000	$4,000	$8,000
	$10,000	**$19,000**	**$40,000**
	$60,000	$60,000	$60,000
	$5,000	$7,000	$10,000
	$55,000	$53,000	$50,000
	$65,000	**$72,000**	**$90,000**
	$9,000	$11,000	$12,500
	$0	$0	$0
	$9,000	**$11,000**	**$12,500**
	$0	$0	$0
	$9,000	**$11,000**	**$12,500**
	$28,000	$30,500	$38,750
	$28,000	$30,500	$38,750
	$56,000	$61,000	$77,500
	$65,000	**$72,000**	**$90,000**

Financial Analysis

Our goal is to be a profitable business. We are expecting our sales to increase by 20% every year within three years, mostly increasing from May to August. We will have more customers in this period of time, probably because of the season; people are more likely to have their haircuts and styles and pedicures or waxing in the warm seasons, like spring and summer. As we become known by our customers, the sales will increase, and we will need more equipment and supplies to serve them better.

We are not going to borrow money from the bank, so will we not have any long-term liabilities. We will only have current liabilities (we will owe money for our purchases). As I am going to run the business with my brother, and he will be the vice-president of the company, we will have shared equity. In the first five months we may have a net loss, because we will purchase equipment and will have a lot of operating expenses. In the beginning we are not going to have a lot of customers. This is a normal situation for beginners. After six months the sales are expected to steadily increase, and the profit margin is expected to grow by 25%. Overall, our salon is going to develop gradually. At first we will have difficulties, but then our sales will increase, as we get more customers. We are projecting a net profit after six months and within the next two and a half years.

The Path Leading to the Coexistence of Christianity, Pagan Rituals, and Shamanism

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Mentor: Professor Barbara Walters

Overwhelmingly Catholic and largely Spanish-speaking South America seems homogenous at first sight. To judge it thus would be an error, because without understanding the challenges of native and Latino identity, it is not possible to comprehend what is brewing below the most obvious layer of linguistic and religious homogeneity. The periodization of Latin America's history reflects the impact of the arrival of Christopher Columbus and it is commonly divided into two eras: the pre- and the post-Columbian. While the "discovery" is a doubtful, exploitative, and wrong concept (Americans knew where they were), it is difficult not to notice the changes that were forced upon the continent. These resulted from the European idea of indigenous inferiority and the necessity of bringing the Christian faith to the Americas (Keen and Haynes 2004:57,102).

The European Conquest occurred in several realms simultaneously: political, economic and spiritual. The institution of the church played an enormous role in the Conquest, the exploitation, and the Christianization process, since most of the expeditions to the New World were accompanied by clergy. While there were some reformist clergymen among them who made attempts to embrace the indigenous population, both the Spanish Crown and the *encomienda* owners were against reform because it stood in the way of unlimited exploitation of both natural and human resources through slavery; reform could presumably slow the conversion process. The first missionaries also believed that for the conversion to be effective, the *Indigenas* "must survive the shock of Conquest, multiply, and live better under the new religion than the old one" (Keen and Haynes 2004:103).

The blending of Spanish Catholicism and nationalism had grave consequences for the native lands of the Americas: the Conquest terminated the independent development of the magnificent Aztec and Inca empires which then exhausted their power for future advances and continuation in general. The Inca Empire had its center in what constitutes modern-day Peru and it was the largest indigenous empire of the Americas. It was embattled by 1533 when Pizarro captured the capital Cuzco. Later, the empire became incorporated into a colonial district known as viceroyalty of Peru and the administrative center was relocated to the city of Lima. The last Inca heir, Tupac Amaru I, was executed in 1572 (Provost-Smith 2007: 908-910).

The process of conversion was less than successful at first, and in the case of Peru, it was noted with amazement that the new Christian faith was not replacing the Inca beliefs and practices. Peru's uniqueness lies in the fact that up until today it seems to maintain some forms of its tribal identity which manifest themselves not only in the continuous use of the tribal Quechua and Aymara

languages (Keen and Haynes 2004:34), but also in the practice of the Indian rituals and the continued respect for the person who could bridge the world of humans with the world of the dead and divine, or at least heal: the shaman (Drury 2003:16).

Some of these old beliefs, and certainly the institution of the shaman, are still being observed in modern-day Peru, which contradicts some of the assumed ideas about the longevity of the indigenous (religious and other) practices (Underberg 2006:210). This paper explores the factors which have influenced the persistence of these practices, such as participation in shamanic rituals which are contrary to the Christian doctrine in a country that is 96.45% Christian (ARDA 2007:1). Perhaps the presence and survival of these beliefs stem from the historical and/or current emphasis on the return to the pre-Columbian roots and the fact that Christianity was introduced in such a brutal and exploitative manner. However, no one particular reason is solely responsible for the "stubborn" beliefs shared by this Andean culture, but rather there are a complex set of interrelated reasons.

In order to comprehend which factors influenced the preservation of these practices up to this modern era, it is necessary to acquire an understanding of the pre-Columbian religion as well as the nature of later interactions between the missionaries, the colonizers and the natives. An understanding of the social role of the shaman in this particular social and cultural context is indispensable as well. Therefore, the analysis of existing historical and religious data will be used as a method and as a means of comparison.

RELIGION AND MAGIC IN THE AMERICAS

The historical literature pertaining to the fate of religion and shamanism is quite large. The general literature regarding the beginnings of religion shows that researchers agree that "there are no peoples however primitive without religion and magic," as Bronislaw Malinowski put it (1954:17), and the concept of soul lies at the center of all religions. It was the absence of the breath that was the noticeable difference between the living and the dead person and it was then universally assumed that with the last breath, the soul of the person escapes the now useless body and goes on to live in the other world. The Greek etymology of the word soul, *anima,* was used by the anthropologist Edward Tylor to name the earliest phase of religious and magical thinking *animism*, because he thought that the soul was a universal phenomenon (Drury 2003:12-13); this also gave rise to the animistic theory of the origins of religion. What is interesting is the fact that in early stages many traditions show the existence of the belief that not only humans but also plants and animals have souls. The sentient power of breath was

also a key religious concept in Andean religions and the male shamans breathed air onto stones to see if they were "living" (Whitten 2005:284).

Shamanism was analyzed by many researchers worldwide, of whom Mircea Eliade is the most famous. Alice Kehoe and Peter Furst argue that shamanism is fundamental to the human condition and South American shamanism is probably linked to Siberian shamanism: the main differences lie in the use of rattle in South America instead of the drum utilized in the East, American identification with the feline like a jaguar or puma, the heavy use of psychedelic plants, and also the presence of the shaman's alter ego – an eagle or other winged creature (Furst 2005:8290-8293, Kehoe 2000:51-55). Drury calls shamanism "a form of applied animism, or animism in practice" (2003:16). Those who analyze shamanism from a psychological perspective tend to focus on the state of consciousness achieved through trance; functionalists on the other hand are inclined to concentrate on the role the shaman plays in his society "by interpreting tribal customs and taboos, reinforcing the beliefs underpinning the social structure and providing guidelines for the tribe" (Drury 2003:15).

The meeting of the European and the Incan religions formed an interesting juxtaposition: Kenneth Mills claims that already in his 1928 study Jose Carlos Mariategui had argued that "the *Catholic conquest* of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had failed to impose Christianity on the peoples who had formerly lived under the Inka. What endured of the Spanish efforts (…) was only *the liturgy*, *the cult,* and the *spiritual and abstract religiosity*, while indigenous religion survived beneath the Catholic veneer" (1997:243). According to Wachtel, the meeting of the two cultures had three stages: the clash of the views, the following adaptation process and then nearly parallel coexistence with "acculturation elements [only masking] a division between the European and Indian worlds" (qtd. in Mills 1997:243).

The syncretism concept has often been used to explain such religious changes since it refers to combinations of elements from more than one religion to form a new "sacred canopy" (Kurtz 2007:102-103). Kurtz also points out that Christianity was a syncretistic religion from its beginning and both the indigenous beliefs and Christianity itself were altered by encounters with seemingly opposite traditions. And while core beliefs remain unchanged, they are being interpreted differently and that is "expressed in rituals and ideas that reflect the indigenous religions which Christianity replaced or with which it coexists" (2007:102-103).

As a monotheistic religion, Christianity mandates the belief in a Supreme Being that is omnipresent, omnipotent and *demands* complete exclusion of other gods (Radin 1975:220). It is also a literate tradition, with a single book to which believers point as a written record of their history, ethical system, and core

beliefs. People who call themselves Christian often look upon as inferior non-Christian peoples who are polytheistic or animist, such as some Native Americans. The evolution of religion also suggests the tendency to a total integration of gods and deities into one god and that carries an implication of progress (Radin 1975:221). The view that assumes the absence of animism or polytheism in the presence of monotheism could be an illusion, nevertheless. Hayden points out that "the basic distinction in the panoply of religions (…) is between *book* (…) and *traditional* religions" and that "traditional religious experiences are so alien to most Industrial denizens that we must cross a fairly forbidding experiential and intellectual abyss to achieve even a modicum of understanding" (Hayden 2003:19).

What fuels the perception of a great divide between the two is a common outlook that perceives such traditional practices as examples of cultural primitivism, which due to their nature, is destined to be "upgraded" to a higher rank of spiritual and religious existence by natural occurrence or by beneficent force. The lack of understanding that stems from the absence of common references is mutual, but the practitioners of the traditional religions manage to continue their religious behaviors, which have been solidified and passed from generation to generation. Diversity is not what most religions favor and the meeting of religions with different traditions has multiple consequences that range from adaptation and acceptance to simultaneous resentment.

EUROPEAN MINDSET VERSUS SOUTH AMERICAN WAY OF LIFE

In 2002 at Cerillios, Peru, a mummy of a woman was found by explorers. The burial method indicated she was a person of high status but with an obvious lack of wealth. This led them to believe that she may have been indeed a *shamana:* a woman healer (Lange 2003:49). She was not wealthy but seemed important, and what was more interesting, the *fardo* (mummy bundle) was covered in a feathered textile forming an image of a large bird with its wings spread. The burial site was dated A.D. 675 and it was located at the ancestral religious site which predates the Inca Empire by some 1,400 years. This unique find gives evidence of ancient origins of Peruvian shamanism that survived thanks to oral traditions and the documentation of the process in art, textile and pottery.

Similarly, religious concepts before the arrival of the Spaniards were passed from one generation to another by word of mouth: there were no written words, no codices. Moreover, the function of a written language was to some extent filled by the use of *quipus,* which were knotted strings that coded massive amounts of information using their sequential knots, colors, shapes, and relative placement and by using a positional decimal system. They reveal the Andean

system that was used for memorization. The content of gathered information was not limited to economic and demographic data and some researchers suggested that history and poems were also recorded (Pasztory 1998:21). The Spaniards realized after their failed attempts to Christianize this population that they must study the Incan beliefs and practices in order to understand how to convert them in the absence of written language. The unwanted result of the Spanish writings relating to indigenous life was later demystification of the previously isolated world of indigenous populations.

The Spaniards wrongly assumed that there was no religion on the continent at the time of the Conquest. On the contrary, in the Andean cultures of various periods (Chavin c.900-200BC, Nazca c.200BC-600AD, Moche c.100-800, or Inca c.1200-1572) religion permeated all aspects of life. These religions included the cult of the dead, the cult of the ancestors (who were considered oracles of past and future events) and the cult of the founding culture hero and of divine king (Duviols 2005:4410). Some of the gods included *Pachamama* (Mother Earth) and *Pachacamac* (Earth-Maker), who commanded earthquakes (frequent on Peruvian soil). The mountains were personified and viewed as objects of the cult as well. The closeness with nature, the attempts to understand it, or at least make it amicable and to manage it through what we can call magic, are clearly evident in Andean mind, and nothing could be further from their thinking than the European attitudes at the time of the Conquest.

In "Impact of Western Man" (qtd. in Sale 1991:91) William Woodruff says that "no civilization prior to the European (…) was so passion-charged to replace what is with what could be." That clearly became evident in the fate of the indigenous population of the Americas, including its religion. The Europeans put "special emphasis on material acquisitiveness and resource accumulation, usually obtained at the sacrifice of the natural world" (Sale 1991:90). Nature in the European mind was in direct opposition to human nature and it was something that humans should have a command of and rule over. Keith Thomas claims that the mountains, for example, were regarded as physically unattractive and distasteful (qtd. in Sale 1991:78). They were the places of dread and that is apparently visible in European paintings that look scary and diabolic. Even worse were the forests--the homes of the uncivilized people: the outcasts, outlaws, criminals and savages. Sale (1991:78) cleverly points out that the word *savage* comes from the Latin word *silva* meaning "woods". This separation from the natural did not permit Europeans to fully comprehend the nature of Andean civilization and, therefore, to fully eradicate the very many pagan cults. In 1995, researchers who were in the area of the summit of Ampato (named after a sacred Incan god who brought good harvest) participated in a regional festival. A local villager said to them: "We make offerings to Pachamama [Earth Mother] and the

mountain gods, including Ampato, for water and good crops" (Reinhard 1996:70). It was September 1995.

The religious intolerance that manifested itself in the attempted eradication of such practices bears the name extirpation. The methods used by the Spaniards were brutal: interrogations, torture, punishment, and exile. These took place primarily in the viceroyalty of Peru, where Francisco de Avila became the most famous for his goal of suppression of indigenous religions (Becker 2005:772). A document called the *Huarochiri Manuscript* was drafted under his supervision. Although it was a bible of the persecutors, it was written in Quechua, which helped to preserve indigenous beliefs. One of the mentioned forbidden religious practices surrounded so-called *huacas,* which is a generic name for many different gods, idols and spirits and also applied to shrines (Duviols 2005:4411). Becker notes that those sacred relics included "markers such as a tree, stone or cave from which inhabitants believed their ancestors emerged" and "even humans that were assigned supernatural attributes" (such as the mummified bodies) (2005:773).

It is hard to imagine what it felt like to have one's sacred relics destroyed. In 1621 Pablo Jose Arriaga wrote a book for other missionaries where he affirmed that burning and breaking huacas was not sufficient to discontinue their worship (Cummins 1996: 161). Even when the shattered pieces were thrown into the river, four decades later Indians were still coming to the bank of the river to worship. The beliefs in huacas were, as Mills put it (1997:72), means of comprehending and dealing with human defenselessness in the face of common disasters ranging from nature's lack of compliance to the body's and soul's painful alignments. Since they were also considered dangerous, there was fear of the huaca's wrath. Mills points out that they remained sacred because of "the permanence of their meaning and religious power in the lives of generation after generation" (1997: 72). All in all, they served a function that Christianity was not fulfilling; moreover, idolatry could not be fought with growing lack of funds assigned to local churches that were not up for the task in spite of obvious willingness to do so.

The colonial laws addressed all aspects of Indians' lives, including the way of dress since native outfits were seen as tools of social identity. Fortunately, the colonizers did not have a full understanding of their meaning. Elena Phipps observes that "the Spanish attempted to rid the Indians of the objects of their culture without destroying the process by which they were made. Thus, an arena of cultural identity was preserved" (1996:154). Since the styles varied from region to region and the Indians relied solely on the memory helped by mnemonic

techniques to pass the designs to other weavers, the finished product served as a cultural and not only utilitarian element (Phipps 1996:144). The strict adaptation of patterns (like Inca insignia) allowed for continuous maintenance of the expression through the weaving process. Moreover, the Spaniards themselves noticed the beauty of the textiles and promoted their making.

The most obvious sites proving that the times had changed were the temples, which now were hosts to Christian religious celebrations. The temples of Cuzco are a good example because the newcomers not only overtook these places but also built over them. Cuzco was the most holy city in the Andean mountains, and now it belonged to conquerors that replaced some elements and redefined other ones. What the Spaniards did not know was that the aura of the sacred was not lost by the destruction of its visual form for the Andean people (Cummins 1996:161). And even the painting of Spain's patron saint, St. James, was misinterpreted by Indians as god Viracocha (Cummins 1996:162). Despite Spanish attempts to make the religious images solidify the one and only religion the few images were interpreted for local understanding by adapting Andean histories that justified their presence (Cummins 1996:167). One of them was a crucifix of Jesus, who became known there as the Christ of the Earthquakes. The legend unveils that this object of worship calmed the seas when the Spanish crew prayed in front of it, but the sculpture of Christ became celebrated in Peru only after the year 1650 and entered the Peruvian religious framework. Cummins notices that "the generic Christian images (…) become specific within an Andean cultural framework" (1996: 168). This so-called Christ of Earthquakes gained validity when in 1650 an earthquake struck Cuzco. At that moment in which the presence of the image of the Christ of Earthquakes coincided with the cease in seismic activity a new legend was born.

A similar fate met the saints that Spaniards introduced in Peru–most were adapted to local mythology and are subject to local interpretation. For example, a statue of Madonna became known here as Our Lady of Pomata (Dean 1996:174). She lost some of her European aura and gained the Peruvian identity and even her portrayal had elements that were uniquely South American, such as costume feathers. The images allowed both Europeans and Andeans to worship and apply different meanings to them.

Among the many aspects of the indigenous society, the shamanism and traditional healing were some of the hardest hit and today are also under the microscope of missionaries in Latin America. In the modern missionary assessment of Peruvian religious climate one finds that there are many problems with Christianity that one sees here. Many people can be classified as Christo-pagans since they integrate Catholicism into their native religious beliefs and practices. Such a fusion, and in particular the presence of shamans who attempt

to mediate between this and the otherworld is an obvious challenge for any institutionalized Christian denomination. While the roles shamans play have an independent origin in each society, under colonial conditions they included the appropriation of new religious sources from the Christian mission (Chidester 2004:43).

The extirpation of idolatry included both physical and spiritual warfare against shamans, since they were considered the worshipers of the devil and were an obstacle to the spread of the new faith (Chidester 2004:45). The various methods of deception (shamanism is secretive in nature, so that was not difficult) allowed for the continuation of the practices and continuous initiations of new practitioners. Let us also remember that the shamans of the highland assumed social responsibility for maintaining social order while the shamans of the forest specialized in ecstasy techniques. These "wild" lowland shamans were also the spiritual bases of religiously motivated rebellions against colonizers' apparatus. Some of them identified themselves as shamans-prophets and led messianic movements in opposition to the conqueror's domination (Chidester 2004:47). Both fascination and fear surrounded the shamans, but even the colonizers were known to consult shamans and use them for healing, which undoubtedly helped to solidify their position in the community.

THE FUTURE OF COEXISTENCE OF CHRISTIANITY AND PAGANISM

Arzhanukhin asked once whether the interaction with paganism is an inevitable loss for authentic Christianity (2000: para.1). While criticizing pagan culture becomes church dogma, he believes that some Christian ideas can exist within the pagan context without challenging its integrity. The stage where Christianity is dominant does not mean that there cannot be an element of paganism in it. Arzhanukhin's studies regarding shamanism are very useful for understanding the mutual coexistence of "regular religion" and such practices. He argues that "such syncretism is justified by the fact that both paganism and Christianity belong to the same class: cultural phenomena" (2000: para. 17). This so called Dual–Belief, in the case of Peru, may be a result of the fact that the Christianization was a foreign goal imposed upon the people who at the critical moment searched solutions and practices known to them. Christianization was a long process and did not create an immediate need to abandon the previous deities on the command of the conquerors. One can say that it is both a defense mechanism and a psychologically adaptive response. The Andean religious beliefs survived because they changed or adapted Christian terms and the religious framework was modified to fit the needs of the population. Some say this underscores the failure of the extirpation campaign: Becker affirms that the "conversion to European religious practices was superficial at best. Often the

two religions coexisted in syncretic mixture" (2005:773-774). The reasons for the survival of these practices range from the Spanish lack of understanding, and therefore inadequate attempts to eradicate them, to the Peruvian ability to incorporate the new faith into the previous system where they did not exclude but completed each other.

Those who dismiss the indigenous cultures from playing a role in formatting Peruvian religious identity are wrong, and there are many of them. Peruvianness is debated in press and literature and some think that being *native* carries a stigma. The elites come, unfortunately, from the white population, and they do not represent the 45% Amerindian citizens. The fact that the Spanish language overtook South America does not make the area homogenous as much as it is universally assumed. Many people maintain their old traditions that are interwoven with religious practices–and these vary from one country to another. What is universal though is the sense of a common tragic past whose consequences are far-reaching and ever-present. So, while the official common language creates an outer homogenous layer that spans over many countries, the tribal languages, as we call them these days, are still out there being utilized. For as long as there are people who are interested in the preservation of their true cultural identity the old traditions will be preserved and, as a consequence, the mutual coexistence of Christianity and pagan rituals will go on. One thing is sure, for the Roman Catholic Church, South America is a target area and many forms of spiritual beliefs are truly unwelcome. Even the shamans who serve only as healers, "medicine men," are being scrutinized. Let us also remember that in a country with limited resources they still play a role that modern medicine does not offer: cheap and immediate. It is not then unusual to find people who are being treated by both Western-style medics and *curanderors* (healers). Even the Amazonian flora itself has long been an object of foreign research and many companies tried to get into the circle of knowledge regarding the healing qualities of the plants. In these instances herbs heal the body and that brings relief to the soul. Ralph Peters rightly observes that "in developed societies, civil, commercial, and social institutions fill the gap; elsewhere, magic must. (…) [because] When Global Man goes home, the shaman returns" (2006:5).

The Peruvians are proud people who adore their traditional festivals, traditional music and culture in general. While paganism is prevalent in some areas only, others who do not share such views seem to respect its presence. What is unique in this setting is the duality that does not call for the removal of the inward layers of the identity or arrogant attempts of imposing one's will on others. Peru's religious composition is one of the finest examples of the syncretism concept. The most important function of incorporating old beliefs and practices into the mainstream religion lies in the fact that it fulfills the roles

that the other religion, for some reason, does not yet fulfill. Overall, both streams travel parallel, sometimes they converge, sometimes they drift apart, but still both answer to the human need of the understanding of the meaning of god and man's place in the universe.

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Explaining Ethnic Conflict in Afghanistan

By China Tenacé Moore

It is difficult to find a place in the world where there are not various ethnicities. Unfortunately, it is also becoming increasingly more difficult to find places that do not have tensions and conflict in relation to ethnicity. In the United States there have been conflicts between peoples including Native Americans, Black/African Americans, Irish immigrants, Japanese descendents and resurfacing tensions with reference to Mexican people and immigration (Giddens 2007: 343-354). But ethnic tensions are in no way limited to the United States. Today, in the year 2007, much of the world is ever more aware of the various ethnic conflicts existing within Central Asian and Middle Eastern countries, whether those conflicts began centuries, decades, years or weeks ago. One of the countries, perhaps in the most notably tumultuous state, is Afghanistan. In this paper I will be analyzing the country ethnically through the lens of sociology. Through texts, articles, data and other recorded trends, I will examine and analyze the reasons behind their vulnerability to ethnic conflict, specifically between Pashtuns, who are Sunni Muslims, and Hazaras, who are Shi'a Muslims.

Before delving into the religious differences between the groups, let us take a look at ethnicity. Many people in the world are affected by the use of this term. But what exactly is ethnicity? Many would answer that it is almost like the cultural representation of race, an inherent state of being which must be accepted as a way to view people, due to its lack of malleability. But there are those who would disagree by stating, "… ethnicity is learned. Different characteristics may serve to distinguish ethnic groups from one another, but the most common are some combination of language, history, religious faith, and ancestry—real or imagined—and styles of dress or adornment" (Giddens 2007: 329-330). This appears to be quite true, because when you look at these facets they are indeed learned: Languages are learned over a lifetime by example; history is conveyed through listening and reading repetitively; religious faiths are taught to children from as early as infancy; knowledge of ancestries can range from written records to oral traditions and in the latter case are similar to "the telephone game," parts of the message being lost or replaced over time; and styles of dress and adornment are as transitory as many climates. How then can so much depend on something that people could change when they like?

A novel by Khaled Hosseini, *The Kite Runner,* conveys some of the problems posed by ethnic differences but especially ethnic inequality and the many issues that arise from this. He recounts the story about a boy named Amir who grows up to be a man, and in the novel we follow through some ordeals common to the growth of many people. But this boy grows up in Afghanistan in a time where the ethnic group of which he is part, the Pashtuns, is the majority

and the dominant group in the population. As such, he is (to a large degree) better off socio-economically than his childhood counterpart, Hassan, who is a Hazara. The Hazaras are an ethnic minority viewed by most as being "impure" and barbaric due to Mongoloid ancestry and are lower in the social stratification hierarchy of Afghanistan, even to the point of being outcasts. According to the CIA World Fact book, Afghanistan is 42% Pashtun and only 9% Hazara.

This concept of dominant ethnic majorities and minorities can be a vague topic but is integral to the understanding of ethnic conflicts in Afghanistan and elsewhere. But does this primarily have to do with the number of people of a given societal category, or something else? What it really refers to is political power and the range of disparity between those groups in the fundamental realms of economic wealth, influential power, and prestige. When viewed in that realm, it is easier to see how conflicts can arise from a group of people that may have less abilities and rights in the society in which they live than another group that lives amongst them. That point is illustrated very well in *The Kite Runner* as Hosseini refers to "the servants' home, a modest little mud hut where Hassan lived with his father" (2003: 6), and then Amir's home, "the most beautiful house in the Wazir Akbar Khan district" with a "broad entryway flanked by rosebushes" and "Intricate mosaic tiles … covered the floors of the four bathrooms" (2003: 4).

When justification for disparities in rights and abilities is based upon ethnicity, conflicts between ethnic groups in society are likely to occur. What makes the issue difficult is that ethnic groups tend to have similar physical characteristics. This is not always true, as human beings are richly diverse and unpredictably distinct in how they appear to others at times. But physical characteristics are perceived by others as ethnic tags and human facial physical characteristics are consistently used to construct and reinforce "racial" categories.

An apt description of perceived visible differences can be drawn from *The Kite Runner*:

> … his almost perfectly round face, a face like a Chinese doll chiseled from hardwood: his flat, broad nose and slanting, narrow eyes like bamboo leaves, eyes that looked, depending on the light, gold, green, even sapphire. I can still see his tiny low-set ears and that pointed stub of a chin, a meaty appendage that looked like it was added as a mere afterthought (Hosseini 2003:3).

There are some typical Pashtun features that can be recognized internationally, specifically from Sharbat Gula, an Afghani Pashtun who appeared on the cover of *National Geographic Magazine* in 1985 (Denker, Debra, June 1985: 772-797). Of

course, she only represents a small facet of the various physical characteristics of the Pashtuns. In the photograph titled "Young Hazara," a girl stands in front of the empty spot that once sheltered a Buddha statue in Bamyan, Afghanistan. Around her neck is a traditional Hazara necklace, probably the most noticeable ethnic trigger of difference beyond her facial features, which convey the perceived Mongolian ancestry. The photograph was taken in July 2004 by Afghani, M. Ali Omid. In another photo titled *"Sweet Hazarah"* (Aghaznawi, June 27, 2007), a more clearly visual idea of typical facial characteristics of Hazaras is present here. Ultimately the three photos show a tendency of the Hazaras and Pashtuns to look different to some degree or another. But as is true with any ethnically rooted conflicts, it is in no way limited to these characteristics.

What makes the ethnic perception of differences in Afghanistan all the more strong to the people is their religiosity. Hazaras and Pashtuns are typically very religious, their strong religious faith permeating every aspect of their daily lives. Like Catholicism and Protestantism, Muslims have religious denominations as well. Sunni and Shi'a are the main denominations of the Islamic religion in Afghanistan, and between those factions is where much of their conflict lies. Amir, in *The Kite Runner,* comments on a widely accepted viewpoint of the differences: "… history isn't easy to overcome. Neither is religion. In the end, I was a Pashtun and he was a Hazara, I was Sunni and he was Shi'a, and nothing was ever going to change that. Nothing" (Hosseini 2003:25).

According to the Association of Religion Data Archives (ARDA) and the CIA World Fact Book, Afghanistan is 97.88% Muslim, and of that number, 80% are Sunni Muslim, while only 18% are Shi'a Muslims. This very wide margin reflects the fact that there is an obvious dominant and minority relationship between the two ethnic groups.

Largest Religious Groups in Afghanistan

Muslim (97.88%)
Zoroastrian (1.65%)
Hindu (0.35%)
Bahai (0.05%)
Other (0.07%)
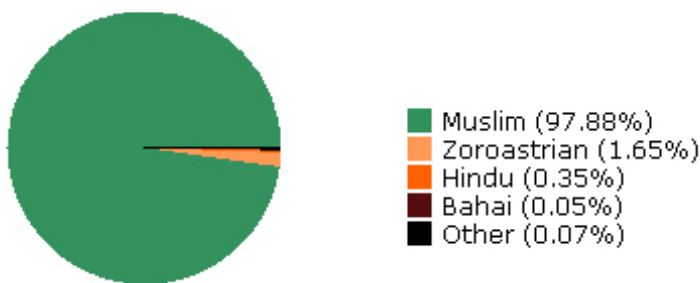
So what is it about these religious differences and ethnic characteristics that can cause conflict? First, it is important to understand some of what the Sunni and Shi'a believe. "The historical divide of Islam into Sunni, or so-called orthodox Islam, and Shia, was caused more by political dispute over successors than doctrinal differences, although differences gradually assumed theological and metaphysical overtones" (U.S. Library of Congress: N.d.). According to a publication on

BBC.co.uk (www.bbc.co.uk: 2006), the ways in which Sunni and Shi'a are different are far less than how they are the same. All Muslims follow the Five Pillars of Islam:

1) *Shahada*, the procession of faith;
2) *Salat*, the ritual prayers as part of communal and individual life cycles;
3) *Zakat*, the sharing or giving of alms (charity) from one's wealth;
4) *Ramadan*, the month of fasting from daybreak to sundown, used to cultivate spiritual, physical and moral discipline;
5) *Hajj*, a pilgrimage to the sacred places in and around Mecca (Kurtz 2007: 108).

Muslims believe there is only one god, *Allah* (also named " 'r-Rahmani 'r-Rahim" or the "All-Merciful, the Mercy-Giving") and that Allah sent prophets, of which Muhammad is the last, to mankind to teach them how to live according to his law. Their holy texts-- the Qur'an and Sunnah-- have primary influence on how they live their daily lives, which include ritual prayer and various acts of devotion pervading their daily lives, which Kurtz notes as being difficult to maintain in a multicultural society (2007).

The similarities would seem enough to bond people together within their religion, yet often this is not the case. Remember that both Christianity and Judaism have disagreements as to how to interpret their religions as well, resulting in the various sects and denominations present for people to adhere to today. The ways in which the Shi'a and Sunni Muslims differ is paraphrased by www.bbc.co.uk from Albert Hourani's *A History of the Arab Peoples* (1991). Theologically, it was the way in which they each interpreted the Hadith, the oral traditions relating to the words and deeds of Prophet Muhammad. Those who supported Ali, Muhammad's cousin--thought to be the true successor to Muhammad--became the Shi'a, who gave preference to the Hadith as narrated by Ali and Fatima, the latter being the youngest daughter of the prophet Muhammad. Fatima is considered to be the true example of a Muslim woman in her sinlessness and compassion.

The Sunnis considered the Hadith to be narrated by any of twelve thousand companions equally, which caused many factions of thought to develop, based on the scholars' interpretations of the practice of the prophet. These Sunni factions eventually split within themselves, notably fitting to the scholars Shafi'i, Maliki, Hanbali and Hanafi. Within the Sunni faction, however, there was a recognition and respect for the differing characteristics of worship, which retained a level of tolerance and autonomy not largely extended to the Shi'a (Kurtz 2007: 114)

On a practical level, the Sunnis' and Shi'as' daily lives of practice are defined by the number of daily prayers, the Sunnis' being five times a day, while the Shi'as' can be combined into three, which are most often on a tablet of clay from a holy place used to place their forehead during prayer. Another difference in practice is in marriage. For Sunnis it is required to have two male witnesses for a marriage to be considered legal, while for the Shi'a they need no witnesses for marriage or *Nikah Mut'ah,* temporary marriage. However, the Shi'a need witnesses for *Talaq,* or divorce, for which the Sunni do not. Also, there is an interesting inclination for the Shi'a to be more inclined toward martyrdom, and there has been a paradigm for martyrdom throughout the Shia Islam's history (bbc.co.uk: 2004). These differences in interpretation of the religion may not seem serious enough to fuel tensions between the groups, but for many religions, worshipping in the "right" way is a fundamental facet of the religion itself. Reflecting that fact is a chart from the ARDA showing the degree of restriction placed upon religious expression in Afghanistan.

Religious Freedom[1]

Is there a constitution?	No
Does the constitution provide for freedom of religion?	No
Does the government generally respect the right to freedom of religion in practice?	No
Are the relationships among religions in society generally amicable?	No
Is freedom of religion protected?	Limited protection

GFI: Government Favoritism of religion Index, 0-10, low is less favoritism	7.8
SRI: Social Regulation of religion Index, 0-10, low is less regulation	9.3
Religious Persecution, 0-5, low is less persecution	3.0

Even at the micro level of interaction between individuals, we can see a range of behaviors in reaction to socializing with different ethnicities. In *Kite Runner*, where the social interactions take place from the 1970s through the 1990s, the theological and practical differences between Sunni Pashtuns and Shi'a Hazaras in Afghanistan are referenced throughout, showing a range between the most accepting to the most intolerant. From the youthful perspective of the Pashtun boy, Amir, "all [he] knew about the Hazaras [was] that they were Mogul

descendents, and that they looked a little like Chinese people. Schoolbooks barely mentioned them and referred to their ancestry only in passing" (Hosseini 2007: 9). Later he was astonished to find in an old history book

> … an entire chapter on Hazara history. An entire chapter dedicated to Hassan's people! In it, I read that my people, the Pashtuns, had persecuted and oppressed the Hazaras … [who had] tried to rise against the Pashtuns in the nineteenth century, but the Pashtuns had 'quelled them with unspeakable violence.' … my people had killed the Hazaras, driven them from their lands, burned their homes, and sold their women. … part of the reason Pashtuns had oppressed the Hazaras was that Pashtuns were Sunni Muslims, while Hazaras were Shi'a (Hosseini 2007: 9).

This mentality was and still is present in the people of Afghanistan, and for Amir, in many instances he thought to himself, "Hassan is just a Hazara, isn't he?" (Hosseini 2007).

One reflection of the common Pashtun and Hazara relationship is that of Master and Servant. The character of Baba (the father of Amir) is a wealthy Pashtun, largely secular in mentality, and thus not very religious. He was raised with a Hazara boy named Ali, who had been orphaned and adopted by his family as a child. The servants were told to "tutor him, but … be kind to him" (Hosseini 2007: 25). They grew up together "as childhood playmates," but "in none of his stories did Baba ever refer to Ali as his friend" (2007: 25). They had grown into adults and continued to live amongst each other, maintaining their respective roles. For people to grow up together and never be able to call the other a friend implies strong stratification reinforced by their society, whether in Afghanistan or elsewhere.

A more amiable example of the relationship between Hazaras and Pashtuns is found in the character Rahim Khan, also a Pashtun. He explains to Amir that he had almost been married once.

> "… Her name was Homaira. She was a Hazara, the daughter of our neighbor's servants … she had this laugh … I can still hear it sometimes … We used to meet secretly in my father's apple orchards, always after midnight when everyone had gone to sleep. We'd walk under the trees and I'd hold her hand …" (Hosseini 2007: 98).

He continued to describe his fantasy of how he would marry her, the way their lives would be:

> "You should have seen the look on my father's face when I told him. My mother actually fainted. My sisters splashed her face with water. They fanned her and looked at me as if I had slit her throat. My brother Jalal actually went to fetch his hunting rifle before my father stopped him … It was Homaira and me against the world.… In the end, the world always wins. That's just the way of things" (Hosseini 2007: 99).

Here we can see how there are times when people transcend socially constructed barriers and are willing to look at another person as a human being and not as some scoffable, untouchable enemy of sorts. On the other hand, though there are times such as these, sometimes the status quo wins instead. For Rahim Khan, the lady Homaira was sent away and he never saw her again. "She would have suffered. My family would have never accepted her as an equal. You don't order someone to polish you shoes one day and call them 'sister' the next."

Reflective of the information Amir found in a book about the Hazaras, there were also people who showed extremely intolerant and aggressive behaviors (e.g., taunting and harassing based merely on ethnicity) revealing true ethnic discrimination. The exemplification of this behavior comes from another character in *The Kite Runner* named Assef, a Pashtun bully who relishes the act of discriminating against the Hazaras quite openly. He would say things to Ali or Hassan like, "Hey, you flat-nose!", "you slant-eyed donkey!" (Hosseini 2007: 38-39). He also often boasts of beliefs that mirror that of the later arising Taliban, stating that

> "Afghanistan is the land of Pashtuns. It always has been, always will be. We are the true Afghans, the pure Afghans, not this Flat-Nose [Hassan] here. His people pollute our homeland, our *watan*. They dirty our blood.… Afghanistan for Pashtuns, I say. That's my vision" (Hosseini 2007:40).

He finishes his statement with his wish "To rid Afghanistan of all the dirty, *kasseef* Hazaras" (Hosseini 2007: 40). This mentality is what has reinforced the perspectives on Hazaras, from the heinous acts of the Taliban towards them to the view of their inferiority by many moderate Sunnis.

Ultimately, the conflict between the Shi'as and Sunnis is that which occurs between people with power and those without, as well as the justification of that distribution of power through projected superiority or inferiority of ethnic groups. Dr. Reza Fakhari, Kingsborough Community College's Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, once said, "The Taliban are like the United States' Ku Klux Klan of Afghanistan and the Middle East." The Ku Klux Klan believes in the segregation of the "races" and the dominance and purity of Aryans in the view of God. This is definitely not far from the view of the Taliban in various Middle Eastern and Central Asian countries.

From the split between Sunnis and Shi'as around 632 A.D. to the 1970s through today in 2007, the relationship between these religious and ethnic factions has had various degrees of tension and conflict ranging from the most benign and coexisting, to the most violent acts of oppression and intolerance. With the continued presence of the United States affecting the relationships between the Sunnis and the Shi'a, it is hard to determine when, if ever, the ethnically fueled altercations in Afghanistan will come to an end. That may come to pass as Afghanistan and surrounding countries progress technologically, socially, civilly, politically, and ethically, gradually ascending to modernity. Brian S. Turner believes that "each society must find its own enlightenment in terms of its own cultural tradition" (Turner 2007: 131).

When asked whether he was an optimist or pessimist regarding Afghanistan's future, Khaled Hosseini stated:

> Maybe it is too early--a handful of years after 9/11--to ask such a question about a country that is still recovering from nearly 30 years of war, famine, drought, extremism, lawlessness and massive displacement. Or maybe I, and even legitimate experts on Afghanistan, are the wrong ones to ask. Maybe someone should ask the Afghans … nearly 80 percent of Afghans polled said that they felt optimistic about the future. Nearly 80 percent. I find this to be an extraordinary statistic (Hosseini 2007).

He also stated, "I suspect far fewer of us here in America would say the same about our own future" (Hosseini 2007).

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Buddhism: Evolution Along the Church-Sect Continuum in Ancient India

By HoTeck Kan

Introduction

Originating in the Indian subcontinent twenty five hundred years ago, Buddhism has spread to cover much of East Asia, where it has become a powerful cultural force. This paper aims to examine Buddhism from a sociological perspective, chiefly in regards to its organizational form at different historical periods using the church-sect continuum. The latter framework was initially developed by Weber and Troeltsch to analyze the emergence of sectarian movements in Western Europe during the late medieval period immediately preceding and during the Protestant Reformation (See Johnstone 2007: 86-113). I here apply the distinctive features of the sociological "ideal types" and assess their appropriateness for analysis of Buddhism's early development, specifically its organizational transformation from sect, to denomination, and then to a church-like structure.

I state my case in three parts: First, I describe the distinctive features of a sect, denomination, and church as these are used by sociologists of religion. Second, I provide a brief synopsis of the foundational history of Buddhism, the cultural context, and its core teachings and beliefs. Finally, I map the organizational characteristics of Buddhism at various historical stages onto the respective distinctive features for sect, denomination and church to assess their appropriateness for organizational analysis of this religion. Similarities and differences are summarized.

Church-Sect Typography

An important distinction among religious groups – one that shapes the backbone of sociological analysis – pertains to how believers or practitioners are organized. The church-sect dichotomy represents the end points of a continuum with other organizational forms such as the denomination typically falling between these two bookends (Johnstone 2007: 86). The dichotomy was first used by Troeltsch and Weber in their analysis of sectarian movements within Christianity. Some of these sectarian movements, such as the early Lutherans and Presbyterians, were successful in breaking away from the Roman Catholic Church during the late medieval period and established themselves within specific geographic territories as simply another form of the Christian religion. In the process, the religious fervor of the sectarian movement typically "cooled off" as the organization took on the shape of the large-scale bureaucracy characteristic of mainstream religions in America today.

The Sect

"Sect", as a construct applied to religious phenomena in the West, is used to refer to small tight groups usually initiated by a schismatic event and headed by charismatic leadership. Sects are typically small highly charged religious groups and are often short-lived. Successful sectarian movements may establish themselves to become denominations or institutionalized sects – organizations which are beyond the purview of this examination. Buddhism originally began its development as a sectarian movement.

Johnstone (2007), relying upon the work of several generations of sociologists, summarizes twelve characteristic traits that describe the ideal type sect. These are listed below:

1. "A sect sees itself as a fellowship of the elite-- that is, an embodiment of true believers.
2. Sects encourage spontaneity of religious expression, involving extensive group participation.
3. Sects de-emphasize organization and strive to main maximum democratic participation of members within an explicitly non bureaucratic-structure.
4. A sect is usually small and deliberately so.
5. Sects utilize lay people as leaders. Frequently part-time, such leaders most likely have little or no formal theological training. Commitment to the principles avowed by the group is seen as more important than 'book learning.' The element of charisma is a common feature of leaders.
6. A sect emphasizes purity of doctrine and usually demands a return to the original religious teachings. This involves a renunciation of the doctrinal perversions and aberrations that it accuses the established denominational religious groups of having allowed to intrude into true religion.
7. A sect emphasizes traditional ethical principles and strives to influence its members along a broad spectrum of behavior.
8. Sects tend to concentrate on other-worldly issues (salvation, deliverance, heaven, and hell) and discount or deprecate this world's concerns. Even their emphasis on ethics (point 7) is focused more in its relevance to ultimate other-worldly concerns and less on the relationship of person to person.
9. A sect gains new members primarily through conversion. It is initially a fellowship of adults, although eventually it must turn its attention to the religious socialization of children.

10. A sect draws disproportionately from the lower social classes in the society.
11. Protest against established traditional religious forms and groups that sect members feel have strayed too far from pristine religion
12. Protest against the surrounding secular society, which is viewed as embodying all kinds of evil" (Johnstone 2007: 62).

Denominations

The fruit of a successful sectarian movement (unsuccessful ones simply die out), denominations are born the moment a sect takes on a bureaucratic organizational form and is no longer actively opposed by the prevailing church-like organization of a dominant religious group. Acceptance of break-off groups within the Christian religion in Western Europe, however grudging, signaled the cessation of the monolithic church-type, demoting the latter religious organization to one of several competing denominations within a pluralist society (Johnstone 2007). Broadly speaking, Buddhism usually assumes this form of religious organization in the sense of being segmented into several large religious groups; however, its structure is not typically bureaucratic. Bureaucratic form is a hallmark feature of Christian denominations. We will be utilizing eight distinguishing features of as summarized by Johnstone (2007) to describe ideal-type denominations:

1. "It is similar to the church, but unlike the sect, in being on relatively good terms with the state and secular powers.
2. A denomination maintains at least tolerant and usually fairly friendly relationships with other denominations in a context of religious pluralism.
3. It relies primarily on birth for membership increase, though it will also accept converts; some groups even actively pursue evangelistic programs, although it is directed primarily to the unconverted, unchurched citizens, not persons who are presently members of other denominations.
4. A denomination accepts the principle of at least moderately changing doctrine and practices and tolerates some theological diversity and dispute-- something a true sect will not do.
5. It follows a fairly routinized ritual and worship service that often explicitly discourages spontaneous emotional expression.
6. It trains and employs a professional clergy who must meet certain formal normative requirements before certification.
7. It recognizes competing demands from other affiliations upon its members' commitment and involvement; thus it accepts less

extensive involvement from members than a sect does but often expects more than the church (where by virtue of citizen-church member equation, it is recognized that many persons will be minimally or uninvolved members).

8. A denomination draws disproportionately from the middle and upper classes of society" (Johnstone 2007: 64).

Church

Churches are large inclusive organizations that permit an internal diversity within limits, siphoning off religious fervor and sectarian movements into "safe harbors," such as monastic or cloistered orders, which are removed from extensive contact with the general population. Churches have considerable overlap with economic and political organizations within a geographic territory and hold strong monopolies in the religious domain. Membership in a church is often synonymous with citizenship. The medieval Roman Catholic "ecclesia" provides an example of what sociologists typically understand as "church." Six characteristics of the ideal type (universal) church as summarized by Johnstone (2007) are listed below:

1. "The church claims universality and includes all members of the society within its ranks and has a strong tendency to equate 'citizenship' with 'membership'.
2. The church exercises religious monopoly and tries to eliminate religious competition.
3. The church is closely allied with state and secular powers-- frequently there is overlapping of responsibilities and much mutual reinforcement.
4. The church is extensively organized as a hierarchical bureaucratic institution with a complex division of labor.
5. The church employs professional, full-time clergy who possess the appropriate credentials of education and formal ordination.
6. Almost by definition, the church gains new members through natural reproduction and the socialization of children into the ranks" (Johnstone 2000: 63).

Buddhism

State of India during the Foundation

Buddhism is generally thought to have originated sometime between the 6th and 4th centuries BC. At the time, India was a restless land, undergoing a

period of social upheaval and political instability. The development of iron radically altered the nature of warfare and agriculture, precipitating a steady process of urbanization and consolidation of power. Jungles were cleared, palaces and city walls erected, and farming productivity increased. This new economic wherewithal appeared in conjunction with a heightened concentration of resources and was coupled with the capacity to support equally aggressive political ambitions (Gomez 2005).

As the older tribal order crumbled, the Indo-Aryan Brahmins claimed privileges that others were not always willing to surrender. Further heightening tensions, widespread discontent was raised at the Aryan caste system and the Brahmins' practices of ritual and sacrifice. In northern India where it was less influenced by the Aryan Vedic Hindu faith, ascetic practices developed among practitioners seeking a more personal and spiritual religious experience. This movement, dubbed the "sramanas" or "sameness" was dominated by three major sects: the Ajiivikas, the Jains and the Buddhists (Tucci, Kitagawa, Reynolds 2007; Gomez 2005).

Despite the great diversity of religious movements, many of them shared common spiritual referents, such as *Nirvana* (becoming cool, released), *atman* (soul), *karma* (action), *samsara* (steam of existence, cycle of rebirth), *buddha* (enlightened one), *dharma* (cosmic order/right conduct), and *Tathagata* (one who has succeeded). These overlapping beliefs persist to this day. For the purposes of this examination, our definitions will be limited to the Buddhist interpretation (Tucci, Kitagawa, Reynolds 2007).

Buddhist Beliefs

The Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path
All forms of Buddhism share a basic doctrinal element: they recognize the Four Noble Truths as a fundamental cornerstone of Buddhist teaching. In the Theravada tradition, or the strict doctrine of the elders, the Four Truths are given in the first sermon of the Buddha, the Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta (Carter. 2005)*:*

> This, monks, is the noble truth of dukkha ["suffering"]: birth is dukkha, old age is dukkha, disease is dukkha, dying is dukkha, association with what is not dear is dukkha, separation from what is dear is dukkha, not getting that which is wished for is dukkha; in brief, the five groups of grasping are dukkha. And this, monks, is the noble truth of the uprising [samudaya] of dukkha: this craving, which is characterized by repeated existence, accompanied by passion for joys, delighting in this and that;

that is to say, craving for sensual desires, craving for existence, craving for cessation of existence. And this, monks, is the noble truth of the cessation [nirodha] of dukkha: complete dispassion and cessation of craving, abandonment, rejection, release of it, without attachment to it. And this, monks, is the noble truth of the path [magga] leading to the cessation of dukkha; just this **Noble Eightfold Way**; that is to say, proper view, proper intention, proper speech, proper action, proper livelihood, proper effort, proper mindfulness, proper concentration. (Samyutta Nikāya 5.420ff.)

In simpler terms, the truths may be thought of as an illustration of the nature of suffering (existence is viewed as individual, thus limited, ultimately giving rise to dissatisfaction, desire and suffering); the origin of suffering (carvings and attachments that cause karma); and the possibility of cessation from suffering (nirvana) and the path to nirvana (Lopez Jr. 2007).

Karma and Samsara

"The belief in rebirth, or samsara, as a potentially endless series of worldly existences in which every being is caught up was already associated with the doctrine of karma in pre-Buddhist India, and it was accepted by virtually all Buddhist traditions" (Tucci, Nakamura, Reynolds 2007). To reduce karma to its most elementary forms, good acts would bring a happy result and a tendency toward future good actions, while bad acts would do the inverse. Karmic actions might bear fruit in this lifetime, in the next or successive future lifetimes (Tucci, Nakamura, Reynolds 2007).

Anatta

Buddhism departs from its Hindu/Brahamanic and Jain forerunners in stating that, ultimately there is no permanent underlying substance that could be called a soul ("atman" in Hinduism). Rather, the Buddha claims that the human existence is a composition of five constituents: (1) corporeality, (2) feelings or sensations, (3) ideations, (4) mental formations or dispositions, and (5) consciousness. Because all of these constituents are in constant flux and change, there is no fixed underlying entity, thus there is no soul (Tucci, Nakamura, Reynolds 2007).

Nirvana

The end point of Buddhist practice, Nirvana is the state of salvation and release from the cyclical births and rebirths of samsara, achieved by discarding the delusion of ego (Tucci, Nakamura, Reynolds 2007).

Buddhist Development in India: Sectarian

In India, Buddhism underwent significant changes in possible religious classifications. Beginning as one of several sectarian movements, it broke from mainstream Brahmanism/Hinduism, ultimately gaining denominational and even church-like status before it was finally pushed out.

Early Buddhism was heavily dominated by the monastics, known as the sangha. To illustrate the sectarian nature or this group, I will itemize the ideal type sect traits and describe the degree to which the early sangha conformed to the type.

- Trait 1: Fellowship of the Elite:
  - Being a new religion in of itself with a fairly radical departure from the already extant Jain and Brahmanic beliefs, early Buddhism would have consisted only of those true believers willing to renounce their previous religious affiliations.
- Trait 2: Spontaneity of Religious Expression
  - Buddhism was at least partly founded on dissatisfaction with the Hindu caste system. The caste system placed the priestly class, the Brahmins, firmly at the top and monopolized the religious experience.
  - Brahmanism was a very different religion from modern Hinduism, emphasizing dogmatic ritualistic practices that left many unsatisfied. It was only after the development of the sramana movement that Hinduism would assume the traits of heterodoxy that defines it today.
- Trait 3: De-Emphasize Organization
  - Linking back to Trait 2, the Buddhists sought to create a religious experience that could be had by all without intercession.
- Trait 4: Deliberately Small
  - The sangha complies less with this trait than the others. Although the Buddhist movement began small, it quickly grew in size and the Buddha was frequently engaged in evangelical activities.
- Trait 5: Charismatic, Lay Leadership
  - Although later Buddhist leadership was drawn from the ranks of rigorously trained monks, the original sangha were very much lay converts who undertook a monastic lifestyle following conversion.

- The Buddha, himself, was one of the laity in the beginning, most likely a member of the kshatriya-caste (warrior). Tradition records that after he left home in search of enlightenment, he studied under at least three teachers before his solitary meditation.

◆ Trait 6: Purity of Doctrine
  - It was not the intention of Buddhists to simply refine or modify existing Jain or Brahmanic beliefs; they wanted to develop something entirely new.

◆ Trait 7: Traditional Ethics and Influenced Behavior
  - The Buddhist system of ethical morality, rooted in karma, shares many principles with Jainism and Brahmanism in regards to the preservation of life. We could thus consider Buddhist morality to have an atavistic element, reaching back and agreeing with prior religious traditions.
  - Buddhist converts were principally sangha, who are expected to conform to various monastic rules of behavior.

◆ Trait 8: Focus on Other-Worldly Issues
  - Buddhism was intended to strike a careful balance; the Middle Way of the sangha was imagined as a path of moderation from the self-mortification of the ascetics and the sensual pleasures of the laity.
  - Nevertheless, the sangha have strong ascetic tendencies, surrendering their worldly possessions upon entering the order --behavior that emphasizes their search for nirvana.

◆ Trait 9: Reproduction through Conversion
  - In the beginning, Buddhism was taught and preached by the Buddha, winning converts through charismatic leadership. After his death, conversion most likely continued to be the primary method of gaining new adherents, as the sangha were forbidden from sexual conduct and thus would have had no children to socialize into the order.

◆ Trait 10: Sects Recruit from the Lower Social Classes
  - Doubtless Buddhism's inclination toward universalism, equality, and egalitarian world views held considerable appeal to the lower castes chafing under Brahamanism. However there are few mentions of such individuals in the traditional, legendary accounts of his life; instead we

encounter numerous successive accounts of upper class individuals converting or paying patronage to the Buddhist movement. Whether this was a form of legitimizing propaganda may never be known.

◆ Trait 11: Protest against Established Religion
  • Buddhism quickly established a position for itself as one of the leading sramana sects developed in opposition to Indo-Aryan Brahmanism.
◆ Trait 12: Protest against Secular Society
  • In Buddhist thought, the sangha was and is seen as an instrument of social control. By entering the order, the individual is more easily able to confront and dispel the grasping, craving nature for external things, allowing them time and support to focus on their internal enlightenment and release. Through their exemplar they teach the dhamma to others.
  • Thus, in Buddhism the external world is viewed as a sensual, dangerous arena where individuals might be easily lead astray with hollow worldly pleasures (Netupski 2005); (Gomez 2005); (Tucci, Nakamura, Reynolds. 2007).

The early sangha may be classified as a sectarian, similar to the original classification of Western monastics; however, the overlap in characteristics to is less clear than their relationship to Christian virtuosi. What is clear is that the sangha were originally a small, tightly knit organization anchored by a charismatic leader who preached another-worldly doctrine in protest to both conventional religion and the secular society of the time.

Buddhist Development in India: Denominational and Church

In the first century of its existence, Buddhism began to expand from its place of origin (a few kingdoms in the Indian northwest) to larger geographic territories of north and western India. At the same time, the Buddhist laity had come to include important members of the political and economic elite (Tucci, Nakamura, Reynolds 2007).

Buddhism's position in India reached its zenith under the reign of Asoka whose rule lasted from 268 to 232 BC. The last major emperor of the Mauryan dynasty, Asoka's empire was vast, encompassing modern Iran, Afghanistan, India and the lower Himalayas. Only the southern tip of the India peninsula was

beyond his control. Eight years into his reign, Asoka conducted a successful but bloody annexation of the Kalinga country (modern Orissa state), but the slaughter so moved him that he thereafter renounced armed conquest, converted to Buddhism and put his considerable resources into enthusiastic displays of faith. As a result of his patronage, Buddhism achieved preeminent status throughout India and spread beyond its borders (Encyclopedia of World Biography).

Under Asoka's reign, India Buddhism developed some characteristics analogous to both the denomination and the church ideal type. These are described below:

Denominational Characteristics:
◆ Trait 1: Good Terms with State and Secular powers
   • Even prior to Asoka's patronage, the Buddha had received several gifts of property from local kings and princes. The traditional life stories of the Buddha record at least one monarch who abdicated in order to join the Buddha's order.
   • Underneath Asoka's protection and patronage, the Buddhists had the staunch ally of the absolute monarch of one of the most powerful empires of its time. (This is actually more in keeping with the definition of "church.")
◆ Trait 2: Friendly Relationships with Other Denominations
   • Despite his zealous conversion, Asoka did not publicly speak of any particular religious creed or philosophical doctrine. In fact, he gave lavishly to all religions.
   • In particular, the Hindu religion that originally spawned Buddhism was still widely practiced and never suppressed.
◆ Trait 3: Reliance on Birth for Membership Reproduction
   • This is not applicable. Under Asoka, vigorous and far reaching Buddhist evangelical operations were undertaken, thousands of temples and stupas (reliquaries) were raised, and Buddhism expanded beyond the confines of India.
◆ Trait 4: Theological Diversity and Dispute
   • Not all of Asoka's stupas were intended to celebrate the Buddha Sakyamuni; at least some of them were

associated with former Buddhas-- individuals who had achieved Buddha millions of lifetimes before Sakyamuni. This practice and belief indicates a popular expansion of the original Buddha's teachings.

- ◆ Trait 5: Routine Ritual and Worship
  - By the time of Asoka, evidence can be found of a cult of relics, typically accompanied by the practice of pilgrimage to sacred sites in the life of Sakyamuni. Monasteries near such sites assumed the role of caretakers, and before long, most monasteries were associated with stupas.
- ◆ Trait 6: Professional Clergy
  - The monastic orders of Asoka's time had transitioned away from their mendicant practice and now were fixed in location, playing a priestlier role with regards to the stupas.
- ◆ Trait 7: Reduced Involvement from Members
  - As Buddhism spread, so did the monastic orders, but nevertheless a large and significant portion of the converts were laity and are thus assumed to have had less involved positions within the Buddhist hierarchy .
- ◆ Trait 8: Draws from the Middle and Upper Class of Society
  - Lacking census numbers, this is difficult to validate; however Asoka was certainly a committed Buddhist, as were his son and daughter, whom he sent on evangelical journeys abroad.
    (Gomez 2005); (Sen 2007); (Nietupski 2005).

Church Characteristics (Emphasis on Asoka's reign):
- ◆ Trait 1: Claims Universality
  - This is inapplicable, although Asoka stated, "All men are my children. As for my own children I desire that they may be provided with all the welfare and happiness of this world and of the next, so do I desire for all men as well" (Sen 2007). He erected a significant number of social services, and it seemed he never appeared to discriminate on the basis of religious creed.
- ◆ Trait 2: Exercises Religious Monopoly and Eliminates Competition
  - Although Asoka did not persecute any of the other

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religions operating in his empire, Asoka did make some efforts of internal policing within the Buddhist communities. He was attempting to maintain unity and prevent schisms, at least one of which had already occurred by this time.

- ◆ Trait 3: The Church is Closely Allied with Secular Powers
  - • Asoka was a firm and enthusiastic convert to Buddhism and as the ruler of the major land power; it is difficult to imagine a more advantageous position for a Buddhist to be in.
- ◆ Trait 4: Hierarchical Bureaucratic Institution
  - • This is not applicable. Despite Asoka's patronage, the sangha remained a flat and non-hierarchical organization. Internal organizational levels persisted, however, with lesser ranked monks and nuns performing the menial duties.
  - • Asoka made some efforts in this direction with the creation "dharma ministers", appointed to foster dharma (or "teachings" according to Buddhists) by the public; relieve suffering wherever found; and to look after the needs of women, of neighboring peoples, and of various religious communities. Still, it is unclear (and seems unlikely) that their ultimate goal propagating the Buddhist religion.
- ◆ Trait 5: Employs Professional Full Time Clergy
  - • As Buddhism for the most part lacks a traditional priestly position, such duties were undertaken by the rigorously trained monks of the sangha.
- ◆ Trait 6: Gains New Members through Reproduction and Socialization of Children
  - • This is difficult to ascertain, as there is a lack of clear census data for the time period

(Gomez 2005); (Sen 2007); (Nietupski 2005).

Clearly some aspects of the Asoka-era Buddhism are denominational, conforming to at least six of the eight markers for denomination. Less clear is its conformance to a church-like structure, meeting only two of the six guidelines for churchly behavior. It fits only slightly better with the ecclesia-church subtype, which conforms to only six markers of the universal church, although it is less successful in its incorporation of theological diversity and support from all levels

of society. Especially problematic is the bureaucratic and hierarchical character of both the church-like organization as found within Christian denominations and the medieval "church."

Conclusion

To conclude, I have successfully charted the development of Indian Buddhist religious organization from its humble origins as a sectarian group to its grandest position at the apex of a pan-Indian empire. It would be a patronage short-lived, however. Following Asoka's death, his kingdom fell to his two grandsons and within fifty years time, the Mauryan dynasty was overthrown. There is limited evidence of persecution during the Shunga-Kanva period (185-28 BC). Following the end of the Mauryan dynasty was the emergence of the Gupta dynasty, the next pan-Indian government. Buddhism never again gained the patronage of so powerful and enthusiastic a leader as Asoka, but it continued to grow and develop under the Guptas (Tucci, Nakamura, Reynolds 2007).

In the first century A.D., distinctively Mahayana tendencies were beginning to develop in Buddhism. In the second and third centuries, the first Mahayana schools were established and they would go on to become the most dynamic and creative strain of Buddhism in India during the Gupta era. (Gomez 2005)

Buddhism in India was finally extinguished around 12th century AD, with the destruction of the great Buddhist universities of Nalanda and Vikramasila during the Turkish invasion. Unable to recover, Buddhism was left to continue in the other countries it had taken root (Tucci, Nakamura, Reynolds 2007); (Gomez. 2005).

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Islamic and Jewish Women

By Fadima Ba

I grew up knowing only one religion, which is Islam. I grew up in Senegal, where Islam was the dominant and only religion practiced. When I came to the United States eight years ago, I realized that there was a range of other religions with followers who are extremely faithful and committed to their religion. One time I was at the gym and I encountered a woman who always worked out wearing a long black skirt, a long-sleeved shirt, and a scarf covering her head. I approached her and asked her if she was a Muslim. I made that assumption because of her appearance, but to my surprise she said that she was an Orthodox Jew. I was stunned, because I never knew there were Jews who dressed in this manner and were so committed to their religion. This woman did not even wear pants to exercise in the gym, even though the gym is a women's gym. This aroused my curiosity about different religions, especially the role of women. This curiosity led me to do my research paper on a comparison and contrast of Jewish women and Muslim women.

This paper will discuss how Jewish woman live their lives according to biblical (Torah) laws and rabbinic (Talmud) laws. The biblical law is stricter than the rabbinic law, which improved women's status in Judaism. In Islam, I will focus on the Qur'an law, some of which dates back to the prophet, but all of which dates back to the Qur'an. The Qur'an law is called farilla and the prophet's version is called Sunnah. Farilla is obligatory because it is believed by Muslims to come straight from god, while some Sunnah may or may not be obligatory.

According to the biblical terms, women were created to serve as a "fitting helpmate for man" and her main function was to bear children (Greenberg 1981: 58): "An ideal woman was a wife and mother" (Priesand 1975: 7). In the Qur'an "the wife's main obligation involves maintaining a home, caring for her children, and obeying her husband" (Esposito, Delong-Bas 2001: 22).

In the Torah, before marriage, a woman was property owned by her father, who transferred that property to her husband after marriage. The biblical law referred to husbands as ba'al, the Hebrew term for "husband" and "master" (Greenberg 1981: 58). Husbands regarded themselves as their wives' masters. In terms of marriage in Judaism, women had no say about whom they wanted to spend the rest of their lives with. Their fathers made the arrangements and negotiations for them; the females in some cases were consulted but only after the negotiations were made (Priesand 1975: 7). However, the Talmud improved

some laws in marriage. For example, the Talmud allowed women to have a say in who they want to marry.

"Marriage represented ownership, and the husband owned his wife just as he owned his slaves" (Priesand 1975: 7). A Jewish family would give their daughter part of their property, which was used as dowry in a marriage. That property was meant to attract suitors" (Azeem 1985: 6). The groom's family purchased the wife, and this payment, also known as "*mohar,*" reimbursed the bride's father for the property that he gave to his daughter for the marriage. A marriage contract (*ketubah*) was necessary in Judaism. The contract is a "legal document embodying the essential points agreed upon by the parties and sanctioned by the law as to the manner of their living together as husband and wife" (Priesand 1971: 14). These contracts obligated the husband to honor, support, and maintain his wife in appropriate style, which involves "paying her medical bills, ransom her if she were taken captive, and provide her with proper burial" (Greenburg 1981: 61).

Similar to Judaism, in Islam a woman is first owned by her father and then again after marriage by her husband. A Muslim girl may not marry any man she desires since her husband must be a Muslim. Her father, not mother, decides whom she should marry. If a man marries a woman without their consent, she is not his wife. A marriage contract is also necessary in Islam. Without a marriage contract, the union is not valid. "If a man takes a wife, but did not draw up her contract, that woman is no wife" (Hekmat 1997: 106-107). Such a woman is committing fornication and "will receive penalty of no less than one hundred lashes" (Brooks 1995: 58). The marriage is only legal once the groom and the father's bride sign the wedding contract. The purpose of the wedding contract, or *aqd*, "is to document how much the groom pays the bride on marriage, and how much more he will have to pay if he later decides to divorce her" (Brooks 1995: 56). In Islam, marriage between an old man and a young girl is accepted. Muhammad married his wife Aisha at the age of six, but did not take her to bed until she was nine because in order to take her to bed she had to come of age first. The coming of an age for a woman is when her menstrual cycle starts. During the times of Muhammad, many men married young girls. In modern times, the need for maturity in marriage was emphasized (Brooks 1995: 55). Until she married, a Muslim girl was not expected to look at a strange man. If the couple was too young, their fathers entered the terms of marriage even without their approval. A bride price or *mohr* was usually paid to the girl's parents. It was "obligatory for a man to pay his wife before or after marriage" (Hekmat 1997: 115). The purpose of the bride price was to "safeguard her economic position after marriage and as a means for controlling the husband's power of divorce"

(Esposito, Delong-Bas 2001: 23). If a man does not pay the bride price, the woman can refuse to have sexual intercourse until he does.

Under the biblical law, a Jewish woman ending her marriage is almost non-existent. Divorce under Jewish law is considered a tragedy. Divorce was only an option in cases of adultery, violence, or abandonment of any Torah observance (Bayis: 1). She could only ask the court to force her husband to grant her a divorce bill. The husband writes the bill saying that he releases her, she has authority over herself, and is free to marry any man she pleases. The wife picks up the bill from her husband with three male witnesses, who tear up the document signifying the end of the marriage (Greenburg 1981: 128). However, the ketubah provides the woman security for the divorce. The biblical law allowed a husband to divorce his wife if he "found her displeasing," but the ketubah obligated him to pay his wife for the *mohar* (purchase price paid by the groom to the bride's father), the *mattan* (voluntary gift given to bride by groom) and return of the dowry. These conditions discouraged men from divorcing their wives. If a husband refused to divorce his wife the Talmud gave specific conditions under which a woman could seek a divorce by saying that "her husband did not support her in proper style or did not satisfy her sexually" (Greenburg 1985: 61). The Talmud did not require the woman to write a letter of divorce to the court.

If a man refused to divorce his wife just because he did not want to pay the price, he could desert her or marry another since polygyny was accepted. On the other hand, the woman could not leave him or marry another, and so stayed in his house. "A woman who cannot obtain a bill of divorce from her absent husband because she could not find him and has no proof that he is dead" (Priesand 1975: 23) is called an *agunah* (chained woman). "Women's groups and lawyers estimate the number of these *agunoth* in Israel to be between 8,000 and 10,000" (Kung 1991: 477) and in the United States approximately 1,000 to 1,500 (Azeem 1985: 16).

For Muslims, divorce is the most hated thing by god. "A Muslim woman has no natural rights to divorce and in some Islamic countries no legal way to secure one" (Brooks 1995: 60). A woman may ask for a divorce only if her husband is impotent, does not provide for her, has an incurable contagious disease, or is guilty of life-threatening abuse. Polygyny is also accepted in Islam. A man can marry up to four wives and this keeps them from divorcing. Upon divorce, he is required to pay the total amount of the bride price, but in cases of divorce before consummation of the marriage, the wife only gets one-half of the bride price. Both couples in marriage may inherit from the other. The terms for divorce was for the woman to stay in her husband's estate for three menstrual

periods to see whether she is pregnant or not or whether the couple changes their minds about the divorce.

Widows were very vulnerable under Jewish law in biblical times. A widow was referred to as *zikah,* a rabbinic term for being chained. Since a woman was her husband's property during marriage, after he died she was considered part of his property that her in-laws collected. All property that he left behind was to be used, including her. This led to levirate marriage, where a member of her husband's family was to marry her, especially if she bore her husband no children, to preserve her late husband's name and an heir. "This did not require marriage, mainly intercourse between them" (Priesand 1975: 10). The child that was born under this situation was considered the late husband's child. This law was supposed to protect the widow from being homeless, because her in-laws cared for her and gave her shelter. The levirate marriage kept her from being referred to as a *zikah*.

Inheritance of her husband's property was denied to a Jewish wife because even she herself was his property. Daughters could inherit from their deceased father, only if there were no male heirs (Greenburg 1985: 58). However, under Talmudic law a wife could inherit from her husband's estate, because "the widow was also made heir by will" (Greenburg 1985: 65).

In Islam, a widow had to mourn her husband's death. The mourning process involved the wife wearing only white clothes for four months in her husband's estate. If he was married to more than one wife, they all stayed at the same house to mourn him. In case of property, it was divided equally among the wives if he had more than one, but the wife with the most children gained more property. If he had only one wife with children they all gained the property, but the female's inheritance was a bit different. Daughters inheriting from their fathers were called "agnatic heirs," meaning once the male heirs received their share, the remainder was given to the daughters (Esposito, Delong-Bas 2001: 41). The man always gained more property from the father, but if he had no male heirs, the daughter inherited most of his property. If the couple had no children, the property was divided among her and her husband's family. A widow was not obligated to marry her husband's family member, but she could if she wanted to. After the mourning process, she was free to go wherever she wanted.

Jewish women were discouraged from pursuing higher education or religious pursuits, mainly because women who engaged in such matters neglected their primary role as wives and mothers. "Rabbis were not concerned that women are not spiritual enough; rather, they were concerned that women might become too spiritually devoted" (Rich 1995-2002: 3). Women were exempt, but not prohibited, from some commandments such as reciting the *shema* (affirmation faith) and putting on *tefillin* (phylacteries), reading the Torah or

attending the synagogue, in order to have more time to raise their children and care for the house. Women were prohibited from being rabbis.

Muslim women by contrast were required to read the Qur'an to be able to know their rights. "She is under no obligation to consider her husband the one and only reference in matters of law and religion" (Azeem 1985: 8). Muslim women are told to seek knowledge and education wherever they can and to use it to help fellow human beings (Aboulnasr: 2). Muslim women however are not obligated to attended religious prayer in the mosque and women cannot become Imams or lead a prayer.

A Jewish woman was considered *unclean and impure* during her menstrual cycle. "Her impurity infects others as well" (Azeem 1985: 9), meaning whomever she touches becomes unclean also. She is also not allowed to engage in any sexual intercourse during her cycle until seven days after. At the end of her menstruation, she goes to the *mikvah* (a ritual purification and cleansing bath). After her ritual bath, she is once again considered clean and can resume sexual intimacy.

During menstruation, a Muslim woman is exempt from most religious activities, such as praying, fasting, reading or even touching the Qur'an, attending the mosque and any sexual intercourse, because she is unclean at that time. After her cycle she is obligated to take a ritual bath anywhere she is at that moment, and from then on she can do everything she was exempt from before.

The veil is one of the most important pieces of clothing of a married Jewish woman. After marriage a woman covers her hair because "hair is the only part of a woman's body, which seems to have no other function other than add to her beauty" (Bayis: 1). Her husband is the only man who gets to see her inner beauty. "She covers her hair as a sign of added dignity accorded to her, and it is a transition from single to married" (Bayis: 1).

The veil was very important for a Muslim woman when she came of age, which is around nine years old. The reason behind the veil "is to safeguard women from the biased looks of men … the veil is defined as the dress that covers the whole body of the woman including face, head, hands and feet" (Abdullah 1999: 30). The dress code "was basic black—layers of it" (Brooks 1995: 18).

To enhance my comparison I interviewed an orthodox Jewish woman and a Muslim woman. Below are the results of the two interviews.

1) How does property change hands in your family/community? Can it be passed to widows or daughters?
JW: It is usually equally divided among children when the second parent dies.
MW: Yes. The property is usually divided in terms of equality.

2) Can men divorce and re-marry? Can woman divorce and re-marry? Are the religious laws the same as civil laws?

JW: Yes. There are rabbinic laws and customs. For example, you cannot remarry your first spouse if you have been married to someone else in between.

MW: Yes, both can divorce under good reason, and can re-marry. There are laws from the Qur'an, and traditions, which may sometimes contradict, but in most cases, they are very similar. In such terms the Qur'an laws should be followed, but most people follow what they think is better.

3) Do women retain rights to their property and their earnings after marriage? What happens in case of divorce or death?

JW: Yes, if the husband dies the wife inherits, but in divorce they negotiate amongst themselves.

MW: Yes, they do. If the husband dies, his property is divided between his wife and kids. If there are no children it is divided between his wife and family members. In case of divorce, they negotiate with family members.

4) Is a widow obligated to marry her husband's brother or other family member? What are a widow's rights?

JW: No. If the married couple did not have children, in a ceremony the widow can opt not to marry another family member. This rarely happens in modern times.

MW: No, she is not obligated to marry her husband's family member if she does not want to. Widows' rights include property and rights to her children, but in divorce the husband keeps the children.

5) What is the role of dowry in marriage?

JW: It may have existed years ago, because I do not remember either me or my husband giving each other dowry. It has not been practiced in the U.S. I don't think dowry has been practiced in the last 200 years.

MW: Men are obligated to give woman dowry such as money property, jewelry. The woman can either keep the dowry or sell it.

6) Are there restrictions on women's activities/participation in family and synagogue or mosque during menstruation? Is there a customary ritual bath?

JW: Women can attend the synagogue. Menstruating women cannot engage in sexual activities, and the ritual bath where they go to the mikva is still practiced.

MW: The only restriction is that a woman cannot become an imam. During menstruation, she is exempt from fasting, praying, sexual intercourse,

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attending the mosques, touching the Qur'an, but she can recite the surah's. There is a ritual bath done after the cycle.

7) How are woman educated in their religion?

JW: Orthodox Jews send their daughters to parochial school through high school. Some go to universities with both secular and Jewish studies. They read the Torah. They go to school and tons of wives are working, and have college degrees.

MW: By reading the Qur'an, attending religious classes, listening to experienced knowledgeable people talking about how to be good Muslims. Women go to school and receive degrees. In Islam, education outside of Islam for a woman is not necessary.

8) How do you see the role of woman in your religion? Is there anything you would change?

JW: Yes. I would want some laws and customs modified.

MW: Religious woman are much respected, but there are some laws and traditions that I would change, such as a woman not being able to give her daughter away in marriage.

10) What kind of dress rules apply to women in your religion? At what age?

JW: Married woman should cover their hair, thighs, upper arms. Some dress rules also apply to girls at the age of 12.

MW: Dress rules start right after a girl becomes a woman, mostly nine. These rules are wearing a long dress that does not reveal your shape, covering your head. Some scholars say your face, hands and feet should also be covered but it is not in the Qur'an, although some women do it. Covering our body is to restrict men's gaze.

Looking at these two women from research and from the interview, I found many similarities. In my research, I found that women in both traditions may not be free to choose to lead any kind of life they want and that women must subsume their desires to their husbands' desires or to the decision of the family. I agree with Priesand who claims that these women are like slaves because someone always owns them. It is as if they never get freedom: first they are owned by their father, then again by their husbands. The Bible and the Qur'an both have a specific role for women, to stay home and care for their family.

I also found out that tradition and religion differ in some contexts. There are some things that the religion does not permit but the tradition does, and vice versa. I read in a book that in the pre-Islamic days women had fewer restrictions and bigger roles in society, like going to war and taking care of the wounded. However, these roles changed and women became more limited to being

housewives. In some cases in modern times things changed for the better, for example, there are not minor marriages anymore, and women can became educated and have careers. Sometimes laws are followed but in modern times now, many laws are amended, changed or ignored. Judaism and Islam are in some ways similar.

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Legs to Stand On

By Jacob Fleischmann

1.   MEETING HARRY

An elderly man with a walker is struggling to get through the turnstile at the Sheepshead Bay train station. Countless people rush past to catch a train that is pulling into track 4, not one pausing to lend a hand. He gets through and then begins on the stairs; he is favoring his right leg and cursing at his walker. I approach him and offer some help: "Excuse me, can I lend you a hand getting up to the platform?" He looks at me with a chipper smile, not at all what I was expecting, and says, "Why yes, I'd love one." He clutches the railing with his right hand, hands me his walker and says, "Throw this horrible beast down there," gesturing down the stairs. I don't throw it but instead hold it off to the side and let him lean on my right arm. As we slowly climb he tells me about how much he hates his walker: "This monstrosity never helped anyone! I wish I had my cane." He goes on about his cane for a moment,that it was black with a silver handle and made "a satisfying clack every time it hit the floor." By now we are at the top of the stairs, and I put the walker back in front of him and the look on his face went from longing to disdain as he says, "Not like this awful thing with its creaking and squeaking." This is when I realized that he was a person with a

disability and just maybe I could interview him. I explained about my project (that we were to study a disability and interview and observe someone with that disability) and asked if he would be willing to participate. He was, and I asked him about his obviously impaired leg. "Bullet from a kraut," he responded.

He's not a big man, not too small either, but certainly not big. Harry is wearing a thick pair of horn-rimmed glasses, and a beat-up fedora hiding a completely bald head. A healthy mustache accents his mouth and pretty well rounds out his face. And he wears a tattoo of a snake wrapped around a sword on his left forearm like a badge of honor. These are the characteristics of an 89-year-old man who was once a paratrooper with a small division in the 82nd Airborne, the 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment. He was born in Columbus, Ohio, in 1918 and grew up on a farm nearby with his family. He had five brothers all within four years of each other and two sisters a few years younger. He and all his brothers joined the Army, but only two came back, though he hasn't spoken to his youngest brother since he returned from Germany with a wife and a baby on the way. Harry never married and never said anything about wanting to.

When I first met Harry he was very nice and extremely outgoing. It really felt like he was waiting for someone to ask so he could start talking, and when I did he seemed almost relieved. When we got on the train together he told me about his family and how close they were up until the war and that his parents died while their sons were all off in foreign lands. But even through this sad story his smile never faded; he told me about growing up on a farm and some of the various dangers one could encounter. Between threshing machines, ornery horses and a mother who beat him with her shoes it sounded like a pretty rough place to be raised. My stop approaching, we exchanged information and set a time to meet for a real interview, but that night he called me to cancel that time and reschedule.

When I did come for the interview, he was watching TV and was not prepared for me to be there. I couldn't tell whether he had forgotten or was just out of it but he was definitely flustered. We talked for a while, mostly about his family, then about the war. He went off on a story about his youngest brother, and showed me a picture of his nephew as a baby whom he never met. Then without warning he got up and left. He didn't say anything and didn't return. At this point his aide came out and said, "He's in a state." I didn't know he had an aide; she kind of emerged from the background. She told me, "He gets like this sometimes. You should probably leave and try calling tomorrow."

I did but to no avail. I called and spoke with his answering machine three days in a row, then finally got his aide again who told me he was no longer interested in participating. I asked to hear it from him and she hung up. A few

days passed and I began calling again, but now I got nothing–no Harry, no aide, no answering machine, and I haven't heard from him since.

I don't know Harry well at all. In fact he was just a guy who needed some help. After I opened the door and asked if I could help he opened up to me and told me a good deal about who he was and where he was from, but I still wouldn't say I know him. All told I probably spent about an hour and a half with Harry, and right up to the time he walked away from the table I found him to be clever and forthcoming and willing to share. But once he got out I couldn't get him back in. At first I thought it was the aide trying to prevent us meeting, but after a few more calls and still not reaching him I figured that he was not a man to be denied, and that the direction to terminate was coming from him. The fact that he just stopped really threw me for a loop. Everything seemed to be going swimmingly, then all of a sudden he was nowhere to be found.

2. NANCY

Nancy has been a friend of mine for a few years now; she moved to New York from Illinois after she finished college in Boston. She writes music for commercials and movies and is working mainly on requiems for a number of elderly people at the moment. She says she really enjoys composing the requiems; she gets to know the person a little and writes something that fits their personality and conveys a message about them to their loved ones.

At the age of 11 she was diagnosed with cancer, which she beat relatively easily. But then at 16 she got it again and this time it was a little worse. She had a grapefruit-sized tumor in the back of her left leg. Luckily for her the doctors were confident that they could remove the tumor without too much trouble. They were right and the tumor came out very easily. However this is when the trouble began. After removing the tumor the doctors implanted a number of radioactive catheters, but due to a doctor's error they shifted, causing the radioactive seeds inside to magnify their power, thereby exposing her inner leg to more than ten times the amount of radiation needed to kill the leftover cancerous cells. These extra RADS caused a bad infection that spread through the healthy tissue of her thigh. To get the infection under control the surgical team had perform seven operations over the course of a few months and remove a good deal of her thigh including her whole hamstring. As a result she has one leg that is severely weaker than the other, which makes everything difficult. Since she was young when it happened she was able to modify her walking stride in such a way that she wouldn't need a cane to balance, though she does use one in the winter when she's less confident about her footing.

She constantly disobeys medical advice. Since the time she was 17, as far as doctor's orders are concerned, she hasn't been allowed to sit, wear high heels, ride a bike or horse (one of her previous favorite pastimes). She carefully picks and chooses which parts of the rules to follow. She's been told that sitting in a chair could tear the skin graft that covers the wound site clear off and that doctors would have to amputate her whole leg, so instead of sitting she should either stand or lie down, neither of which are acceptable in many circumstances. So she sits, carefully as it may be, she sits. She rarely leaves the house when it's cold out, because even the smallest bit of ice on the ground changes the dynamics of walking so much that her body can't change fast enough to keep her from falling.

3.   THE INTERVIEW

Did this change your life plans much?
I had no life plans … I was told I wouldn't live past 18, so no.
What was it like waking up and not having half of your thigh?
Well, I was really upset at first, but there's no use being mad about something you can't change … so I got over it. The first year I couldn't walk at all, for the first three months I was on total bed rest, and I mean total, I couldn't even get up to shit! After that, though, the doctors said I'd probably be dead in a year so my family and I pushed really hard to get me back mobile so I could do all the things the Make a Wish Foundation wouldn't help me do.
Were you a candidate?
Maybe. I don't know what they call it, but I wrote in and asked to go on a hot air balloon ride over Mt. Rushmore. I don't know why I asked for that, but I did — and they quickly wrote back saying that I wasn't in any shape to be traveling and that I'd need to improve exponentially in order to be considered for my wish to come true. That made me really mad, I remember screaming, "That's what this foundation is for! I can't get better so give me what I want!" But them turning me down lit a fire under my ass and within five months of getting rejected I was hobbling around the world with my mom.
Where did you go?
India, China, France, Poland, Hungary, Mongolia, Brazil, Chile, Galapagos, Hawaii, South Africa and Haiti. Not in that order. And I'm planning another trip for a few months from now.
So you were able to get around the world without a hamstring? Did that make the trip any harder?
Yeah, a lot. But mostly it was doctors making demands that we call in every night and describe everything that was going on at the scar site. Flying took a real toll

on the tissue and it's because of the pressurizing of the cabin and the altitude changes that I have as big a scar as I do. All the stitching and grafting was done by "the best guy out there," or so they all tell me, but I've still got a big old scar that stares me in the face every time I take off my pants. Some of the airports were really hard to get around, too. Like in Haiti there are, or were, about a hundred stairs going up to the check-in desks, then 100 more down to the gates … a ridiculous design if you ask me.

What are your feelings about it now? Having seen the end and fought your way back, do you have a different outlook on things or are you the same person you used to be?

I was always a rather apathetic person. "Shit happens, then you die" was my fifth grade yearbook quote, and as you know I'm still very much like that, but then I felt like I had a new lease on life, however cliché that sounds, just having my life together is enough for me now. The fact that I'm 25 and have arthritic hips doesn't really bother me so much, ya know?

Your hips?

Yeah, when I relearned how to walk the posture I chose did something stupid to my hips and ever since then I've been wearing away at my cartilage in such a way that my x-rays have been mistaken for those of a 50-year-old woman. My doctor actually told me, "This can't be yours, the angle of the femur looks like my wife's, the lab must have switched your films." He came back a few minutes later, apologized, and told me I had arthritis.

What's the hardest part of not having a hamstring?

The hardest part … I guess it's be not being able to do all the things everyone else can. I have a really hard time telling people all the nuances of my invalid status. Not that I'm shy, but telling them, "NO, I CAN'T JUST HIKE UP THAT MOUNTAIN even though I would love to go, I physically can't do it" is very hard. Convincing new friends that I can't go running without telling them I'm a cancer survivor never gets easier. I usually shy away from the confrontation, I'll throw in a little joke like "Maybe in my younger years I'd go," but no one can see that I don't have half of my thigh muscle unless I show off the scar, which I used to do a lot, but that's not really me anymore.

What changed in you that you don't show it off any more?

I'm not sure, but there came a time when it just didn't seem appropriate anymore.

4.   THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

I liked talking to Harry, he was interesting, but I wasn't prepared to interview someone. I didn't know what I was doing. I was skeptical of the project as a whole and wasn't really prepared to get at the information I would need. I didn't know where I was going with it, what I was really getting at. It was a lot more difficult than I had anticipated. I was not confident in what I was doing because I didn't know what I was doing. I got a good amount of information from our first talk, but not on his feelings or the impact his injury has on his day-to-day life, though I saw how hard it was for him just to get up the stairs at the train station, let alone getting there in the first place. And unfortunately I couldn't get that later since he reconsidered cooperating in the middle of my interview and I haven't been able to reach him since. I found that interviewing him turned into having a great conversation and that I was lax in taking notes. After a little while I had to scramble back and try to jot down what I could remember. Another thing that made the initial interview hard was that I had no strategies to keep him, or me for that matter, on the subject. When I asked a question he would begin to answer, get sidetracked and go deep into something else. He would go off on a tangent about some kid from down the road and I'd sit and listen because he made the simplest story so interesting. It was hard for me to steer him back because other stories were interesting, and I didn't spend enough time with him to really get back at it.

I spoke to Nancy because I realized that I just didn't have enough information from Harry to round out my paper and that she suffered from a similar ailment. Both of them are missing their hamstrings and thigh muscle tissue. I thought she might be able to shed light on how it is living with this sort of deficiency.

We met for lunch and at times during the meal she would get up and stand for a moment and sit back down. Later I found out it was to not put too much pressure on one part of her graft for too long. When she does break the rules and sits, this is something she must do every 20-30 minutes. I don't feel like I really interviewed her, it was much more a conversation. I took some notes, but mainly we just talked. When I got back home, I wrote out what I remembered. Later I found I needed to call her and ask different questions. I felt like what I got at lunch was too much of a rehearsed story, much like I have for my car accident, and that I needed to delve deeper. It was hard re-interviewing her – harder than I expected--because I know her and felt a little uncomfortable pressing her about things that I thought I should know about her.

5. THE INJURY

The details of when and where Harry was injured are a little off. He was shot in the leg during World War II. He first told me back on the train platform that he "took a bullet from a Kraut," which I don't doubt. He said, "Getting shot by a Nazi isn't something you forget," but apparently the circumstances are. But during my interview he told me that he had jumped into Paris and it had happened in 1943, which I could find no official record of ever happening in the history of the American Airborne Division.

He said he took a bullet behind his knee while squatting somewhere in France. Even though the round missed the joint it ripped off most of his calf and his entire hamstring. He said if he had been with his medic he would have lost his entire leg, but because he had moved up with another unit he was near a doctor with more experience and supplies. He said he'd never been able to thank the man for saving his leg because he was killed a day or two later on another mission. Telling me this brought a tear to his eye, and he quickly changed the subject to some of the art he had on his walls.

According to a survey conducted on evacuees from the battle for Cassino, Italy, a majority of the injured could identify the type of weapon that inflicted the wound and more importantly that one was far less likely to receive multiple wounds while crouching, lying or behind cover than standing upright (Palmer 1962, 540). This lends itself to Harry still being here as he was crouching and took just the one bullet. Most were wounded while advancing.

Another study on what's called a wound tract or wound cavity cites the typical bullet speeds of 2000-2500 feet per second and that a bullet traveling at those speeds striking the thigh will expend between 1000 and 1,330 foot pound of energy into the subject. This much energy will cause a relatively giant impact on the surrounding tissue, leaving a much larger wound inside the leg than the entry or exit wounds would show. "For every foot pound doing work in producing the wound there will be 30.105×10^{-3} cubic inches of hemorrhagic tissue" (French 1962, 134). The actual wound proceeds too fast for human to appreciate what goes on, but doesn't make a bullet-sized hole straight through you; a shock wave goes through that creates a cavity more than the size of the bullet (French 1962, 134). The results are disrupted nerves and damaged blood vessels. The most prominent feature will be the permanent cavity or wound track.

Harry has some serious mobility issues resulting from his injury; he can't drive a car because he doesn't have the muscle mass to push the pedals. Today he could get a modified hand-operated accelerator, but he can barely see, so driving at this stage in his life might not be a great idea. So he is bound to public transportation. At the nearest train station he must climb a set of five, then another set of 16 stairs to reach the platform. To divert to a station with an

elevator he would have to take two different busses and add more than an hour to his trip. There are only four handicapped accessible train stations in all of Brooklyn according to the MTA website, with no new ones planned. On the other hand Nancy can do stairs just fine and she drives a car, but during the winter months she stays inside and practically hibernates. In the cold weather her leg tightens up and with the limited range of motion she's even more prone to falling. Couple that with a little of New York's patented wintry mix and Nancy can barely stand. There is very little to be done about this. For one winter she had a wheelchair but swore shed never touch one of those again after the looks she got that seemed to her to say: "A young sexy girl in a wheelchair … she must be dying. Their lips may not have said it but their eyes sure did."

The Eastern Paralyzed Veterans Association fought for years to increase handicapped access to the public transportation system. Lobbying began after Vietnam, but today there are still only roughly two dozen accessible stations in all of New York City, only four of which are in Brooklyn. Nancy said it was hard to get around–airports, hotels—as the rest of the world has little handicapped access. On an individual level many people say that they would help disabled people, but it would seem that few actually do. On the other hand there are a good number of people with disabilities who don't want help or special consideration.

After Harry was wounded he was evacuated to a hospital in London where he had two surgeries and stayed for a month; then he was sent back to New York and underwent another surgery and stayed for three months of physical therapy, at the end of which he could stand but not walk. Since then he's had therapy on and off to help him walk and he can that much now, with the help of a cane for added balance or a walker on days when his leg isn't feeling its normal sixty percent. Treatment options for a similar wound today would be more or less the same, reconstruction or amputation. Though they were a little more inclined to amputate back then, the U.S. Army's *Manual of Therapy 1944* had strict guidelines for when to amputate; it advised that "amputations should not be done unless the limb was almost completely detached."

6. CONCLUSION

If I wanted to go deeper into these questions, where would I go for more information? On the subject of injured veterans I would start at the library. There are thousands if not hundreds of thousands of books about various aspects of veterans' lives, both wounded and not. Also I would visit the local Veterans Administration Hospital where I would hope to find another person to speak with about their experiences, along with a doctor, nurse or caregiver who

could shed some light on the subject from a professional point of view. There are also veterans in my family whom I could speak with, although I'm not sure how forthcoming any of them would be. Another place I could go would be any good video store where I might find any number of documentaries about the nature of war and life thereafter. Similarly for more information about cancer I would start at the library and move to a hospital that specializes in cancer research like Memorial Sloan Kettering Hospital and speak to sufferers, survivors and medical professionals.

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A Study of Some Properties of High-Order Planar Curves

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A study of some properties of high-order planar curves

Raluca Toscano

A mechanical multibody model is behind many modern engineering structures. Its dynamic analysis is a complex modern problem of analytical mechanics. The problem on the stability of permanent rotations of a mechanical system consisting of two heavy gyroscopes is one of the classical problems in modern multibody dynamics that has both theoretical and practical importance. In this paper we make an attempt to contribute to its solution by solving the system of inequalities (1) that arises from the problem. We refer the reader who is interested in details on how this system can be drawn from the problem and how its solution can be used there to our future publication [1].

1 Description of the Problem

We consider the following system of inequalities :

$$f_i(x, y) > 0, \qquad i = 1, 2, 3, 4, \tag{1}$$

where

$$f_1(x, y) = (\alpha - 3)(\alpha - 1)x^2 - 2\alpha(\alpha - 2)xy + \alpha^2 y^2 + 32\alpha(\alpha - 1)x - 16\alpha^2 y - 64\alpha^3 + 64\alpha^2,$$
$$f_2(x, y) = (3 - 2\alpha)x + 2\alpha y - 16\alpha,$$
$$f_3(x, y) = x,$$
$$f_4(x, y) = y,$$

and α is a parameter with $0 < \alpha < 1$.

We want to solve this system, i.e. we want to find all pairs of real numbers x and y that satisfy the system (1). Since each pair (x, y) can be interpreted as a point on a cartesian plane Oxy, our goal is to find the locus $G = \{(x, y) | f_i(x, y) > 0, i = 1, 2, 3, 4\}$ of the points whose coordinates provide the solution to (1). For this purpose, we consider four curves:

$$C_i : \quad f_i(x, y) = 0, \qquad i = 1, 2, 3, 4. \tag{2}$$

It is known that each two-dimensional curve $g(x, y) = 0$ divides the plane Oxy into regions so that $g(x, y)$ has a constant sign for each of them. We use this fact to locate regions $G_i = \{(x, y) | f_i(x, y) > 0\}$ ($i = 1, 2, 3, 4$) on the plane. Then, clearly, $G = \bigcap_{i=1}^{4} G_i$.

2 Some Properties of Curve C_1

In this section we mostly follow the procedure described in [2] to study some properties of the second-order curve C_1.

First, we determine the type of C_1. It is known (see [2]) that the quantities

$$I_1 = a_{11} + a_{22}, \qquad I_2 = \begin{vmatrix} a_{11} & a_{12} \\ a_{12} & a_{22} \end{vmatrix}, \qquad I_3 = \begin{vmatrix} a_{11} & a_{12} & a_{13} \\ a_{12} & a_{22} & a_{23} \\ a_{13} & a_{23} & a_{33} \end{vmatrix}$$

define a second-order algebraic curve

$$a_{11}x^2 + 2a_{12}xy + a_{22}y^2 + 2a_{13}x + 2a_{33}y + a_{33} = 0$$

with respect to transformations of the Cartesian system of coordinates. These quantities can be also used to determine the type of the curve.

In our case, the invariants of C_1 can be written as follows:

$$I_1 = (\alpha - 3)(\alpha - 1) + \alpha^2 = 2\alpha^2 - 4\alpha + 3,$$

$$I_2 = \begin{vmatrix} (\alpha - 3)(\alpha - 1) & -\alpha(\alpha - 2) \\ -\alpha(\alpha - 2) & \alpha^2 \end{vmatrix} = \alpha^2(\alpha - 3)(\alpha - 1) - \alpha^2(\alpha - 2)^2 = -\alpha^2,$$

$$\begin{aligned}
I_3 &= \begin{vmatrix} (\alpha - 3)(\alpha - 1) & -\alpha(\alpha - 2) & 16\alpha(\alpha - 1) \\ -\alpha(\alpha - 2) & \alpha^2 & -8\alpha^2 \\ 16\alpha(\alpha - 1) & -8\alpha^2 & -64\alpha^2(\alpha - 1) \end{vmatrix} \\
&= -64\alpha^4(\alpha - 1)^2(\alpha - 3) + 128\alpha^4(\alpha - 2)(\alpha - 1) + 128\alpha^4(\alpha - 1)(\alpha - 2) \\
&\quad - 16\alpha^4(\alpha - 1)^2 - 64\alpha^4(\alpha - 3)(\alpha - 1) + 64\alpha^4(\alpha - 2)^2(\alpha - 1) \\
&= -64\alpha^5(\alpha - 1).
\end{aligned}$$

It is clear that $I_2 < 0$ for all $0 < \alpha < 1$. Therefore, the curve C_1 is of a hyperbolic type. Moreover, since $I_3 \neq 0$, we conclude that C_1 is a hyperbola.

Next, we find a Cartesian system of coordinates $O'x'y'$ in which equation $f_1(x, y) = 0$ for the curve C_1 would not contain linear terms. This system can be found by translating the system Oxy. The origin O' of the required system is called the center of the hyperbola. Its coordinates x_0 and y_0 are solutions of the following system of linear equations:

$$\begin{cases} (\alpha - 3)(\alpha - 1)x_0 - \alpha(\alpha - 2)y_0 + 16\alpha(\alpha - 1) = 0 \\ -\alpha(\alpha - 2)x_0 + \alpha^2 y_0 - 8\alpha^2 = 0. \end{cases} \tag{3}$$

Solving (3) for (x_0, y_0), we obtain

$$x_0 = \frac{\begin{vmatrix} -16\alpha(\alpha - 1) & -\alpha(\alpha - 2) \\ 8\alpha^2 & \alpha^2 \end{vmatrix}}{\begin{vmatrix} (\alpha - 3)(\alpha - 1) & -\alpha(\alpha - 2) \\ -\alpha(\alpha - 2) & \alpha^2 \end{vmatrix}} = 8\alpha^2,$$

$$y_0 = \frac{\begin{vmatrix} (\alpha - 3)(\alpha - 1) & -16\alpha(\alpha - 1) \\ -\alpha(\alpha - 2) & 8\alpha^2 \end{vmatrix}}{\begin{vmatrix} (\alpha - 3)(\alpha - 1) & -\alpha(\alpha - 2) \\ -\alpha(\alpha - 2) & \alpha^2 \end{vmatrix}} = 8(\alpha - 1)^2.$$

Note that both x_0 and y_0 are positive for all $0 < \alpha < 1$. It means that the point O' is always located in the first quadrant of the Oxy plane.

Knowing x_0 and y_0, we transfer the origin O to the center O' of the hyperbola C_1. Then, the old coordinates (x, y) and the new coordinates (x', y') of a point are related as

$$x = x' + x_0, \qquad y = y' + y_0. \tag{4}$$

Substituting (4) into $f_1(x, y) = 0$, we get the equation for C_1 in the system $O'x'y'$:

$$(\alpha - 3)(\alpha - 1)x'^2 - 2\alpha(\alpha - 2)x'y' + \alpha^2 y'^2 + 64\alpha^3(\alpha - 1) = 0. \tag{5}$$

Now we determine the points of intersection of C_1 with the coordinate axes of the new coordinate system. Letting $y' = 0$ in (5), we obtain

$$(\alpha - 3)(\alpha - 1)x'^2 + 64\alpha^3(\alpha - 1) = 0 \qquad \Longrightarrow \qquad x'^2 = \frac{64\alpha^3}{3 - \alpha}.$$

The right hand side of the last equation is positive for every $0 < \alpha < 1$. Therefore, the equation has two real solutions and, consequently, the hyperbola has two x'-intercepts: $x'_{1,2} = \pm 8\alpha\sqrt{\frac{\alpha}{3-\alpha}}$. Note that one of the intercepts is positive for all possible values of α, while the second one is negative.

Similarly, we can find the y'-intercepts of C_1. If $x' = 0$, then the equation (5) becomes

$$\alpha^2 y'^2 + 64\alpha^3(\alpha - 1) = 0 \qquad \Longrightarrow \qquad y'^2 = 64\alpha(1 - \alpha) \qquad \Longrightarrow \qquad y'_{1,2} = \pm 8\sqrt{\alpha(1 - \alpha)}.$$

Hence, the hyperbola C_1 has also two y'-intercepts y'_1 and y'_2. One of them is positive and the another is negative for $0 < \alpha < 1$.

It is known that a hyperbola has two asymptotes. In what follows, we denote them by L_1 and L_2. Since O' is the center of C_1, its both asymptotes are supposed to pass through this point and, therefore, in the new coordinate system, they can be written as $L_i : y' = k_i x' (i = 1, 2)$. To find the unknown slopes, we replace y' by kx' in (5)

$$\left((\alpha - 3)(\alpha - 1) - 2\alpha(\alpha - 2)k + \alpha^2 k^2\right) x'^2 + 64\alpha^3(\alpha - 1) = 0 \tag{6}$$

and equate the coefficient under x'^2 in (6) to zero:

$$(\alpha - 3)(\alpha - 1) - 2\alpha(\alpha - 2)k + \alpha^2 k^2 = 0. \tag{7}$$

Solving quadratic equation (7) for k yields $k_1 = \dfrac{\alpha - 1}{\alpha}$ and $k_2 = \dfrac{\alpha - 3}{\alpha}$. Clearly, $k_1 < 0$ and $k_2 < 0$ for all possible values of α. Hence, both asymptotes are located in the second and fourth quadrants of the $O'x'y'$ plane. Moreover, since

$$\frac{\alpha - 1}{\alpha} > \frac{\alpha - 3}{\alpha} \qquad \Longleftrightarrow \qquad \frac{2}{\alpha} > 0$$

is true for $0 < \alpha < 1$, we have $k_1 > k_2$.

Taking into account all facts we derived in this section, we can sketch the hyperbola C_1. Figure 1 shows C_1 for $\alpha = 0.5$. (In the figure, the hyperbola's branches are denoted by C_1^1 and C_1^2, respectively.) Note, however, that, based on the properties of C_1 discussed above, we can conclude that we will get the same kind of graph for the other possible values of parameter α.

At the end of this section, we observe that the change of variables (4) transforms the inequality $f_1(x, y) > 0$ into

$$f_1'(x', y') = (\alpha - 3)(\alpha - 1)x'^2 - 2\alpha(\alpha - 2)x'y' + \alpha^2 y'^2 + 64\alpha^3(\alpha - 1) > 0. \tag{8}$$

As can be seen from Fig. 1, the hyperbola C_1 divides the $O'x'y'$ plane into 3 regions where $f_1'(x', y')$ has a constant sign. We denote these regions by G_1^1, G_1^2, and G_1^3, respectively. Since $f_1'(0, 0) = 64\alpha^3(\alpha - 1) < 0$ for $0 < \alpha < 1$, then $f_1'(x', y') < 0$ for all $(x', y') \in G_1^2$ and $f_1'(x', y') > 0$ for all $(x', y') \in G_1^1 \cup G_1^3$. Thus, all points in $G_1^1 \cup G_1^3$ provide solution to (8).
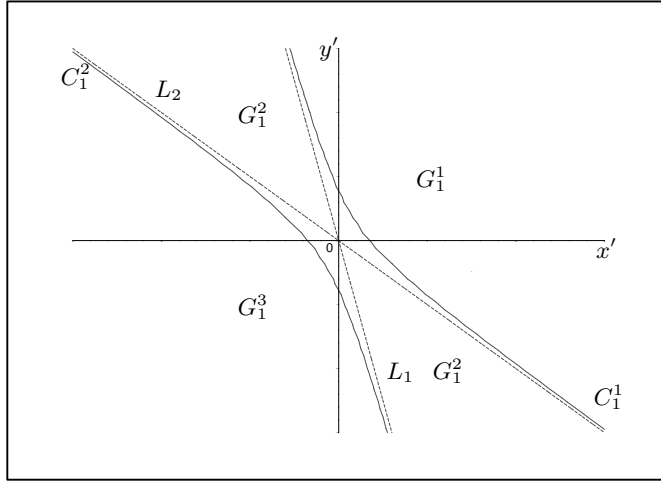
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Figure 1:

3 Finding Solution of System (1)

In the previous section, we have introduced the new coordinate system with the origin at the center of the curve C_1. It is known that any curve, looked upon as a geometric object, does not vary when we pass from one rectangular Cartesian system of coordinates to some other one. Hence, each $C_i(i = 1, 2, 3, 4)$ is represented by the same geometric object in both (old and new) coordinate systems. Note that, in the new coordinate system $O'x'y'$, the system (1) becomes

$$f_i'(x', y') > 0, \qquad i = 1, 2, 3, 4, \tag{9}$$

and the equations (2) defining curves C_i can be written as follows

$$C_i : \quad f_i'(x', y') = 0, \qquad i = 1, 2, 3, 4, \tag{10}$$

where

$$f_1'(x', y') = (\alpha - 3)(\alpha - 1)x'^2 - 2\alpha(\alpha - 2)x'y' + \alpha^2 y'^2 + 64\alpha^3(\alpha - 1),$$
$$f_2'(x', y') = (3 - 2\alpha)x' + 2\alpha y' - 8\alpha^2,$$
$$f_3'(x', y') = x' + 8\alpha^2,$$
$$f_4'(x', y') = y' + 8(\alpha - 1)^2.$$

In this section we study the relative location of curves C_i in the system $O'x'y'$ and use it to find the regions $G_i' = \{(x', y') | f_i'(x', y') > 0\}$ $(i = 1, 2, 3, 4)$ which, in turn, are used to find the solutions to system (9).

The properties of C_1 and its location on the $O'x'y'$ plane have been discussed in the previous section. Three other curves are evidently straight lines: C_3 is a vertical line, C_4 is a horizontal line, and C_2 is an oblique line whose equation, in the slope-intercept form, is

$$y' = \frac{2\alpha - 3}{2\alpha} x' + 4\alpha. \tag{11}$$

We can easily extract C_2's slope s and its y'-intercept b from (11):

$$s = \frac{2\alpha - 3}{2\alpha} \qquad \text{and} \qquad b = 4\alpha.$$

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We observe that $s < 0$ and $b > 0$ for all possible values of α. (The first inequality holds, because $-3 < 2\alpha - 3 < -1$ for all $0 < \alpha < 1$). Moreover, since

$$\frac{\alpha - 3}{\alpha} < \frac{2\alpha - 3}{2\alpha} < \frac{\alpha - 1}{\alpha} \qquad \Longleftrightarrow \qquad 2(\alpha - 3) < 2\alpha - 3 < 2(\alpha - 1) \qquad \Longleftrightarrow \qquad -6 < -3 < -2$$

is true for all $0 < \alpha < 1$, we derive that $k_2 < s < k_1$, i.e. the line $y' = sx'$ is located in the second and fourth quadrants between the asymptotes of C_1 (see Fig. 2). Shifting this line b units up gives the line C_2. Hence, C_2 intersects asymptotes L_1 and L_2 in the second and the fourth quadrants of the $O'x'y'$ plane, respectively, as shown in Fig. 2. It follows from the figure that C_2 cannot intersect the branch C_1^2 of the hyperbola C_1. It is easy to check that G_2' is the half-plane located above C_1 (see Fig. 2). Then, clearly, $G_2' \cap G_1^3 = \emptyset$, i.e. no point of G_1^3 is a solution to (9). Therefore, we eliminate region G_1^3 from further consideration. Also, we have $G_1' \cap G_2' = G_1^1 \cap G_2'$.
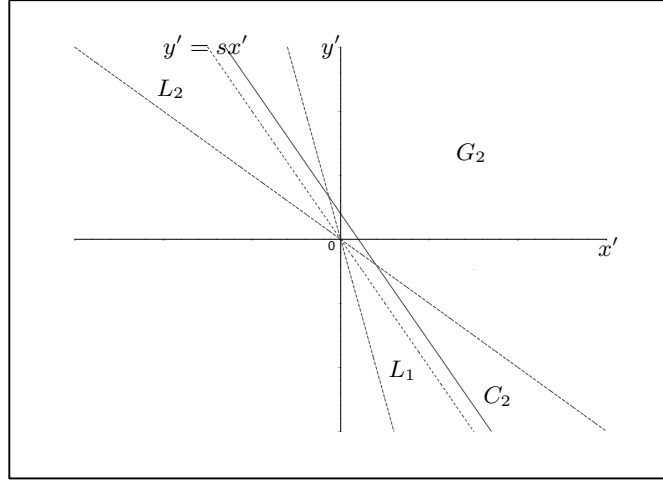

Figure 2:

To find the points of intersection of the line C_2 with the hyperbola C_1, we substitute y' given by (11) into the equation defining C_1. This yields the quadratic equation with respect to x'

$$3x'^2 - 16\alpha^2 x' - 320\alpha^4 + 256\alpha^3 = 0 \tag{12}$$

whose discriminant D is

$$D = (-16\alpha^2)^2 - 4(3)(256\alpha^3 - 320\alpha^4) = 1024\alpha^3(4\alpha - 3).$$

Now we consider three cases:

1. If $\dfrac{3}{4} < \alpha < 1$, then D is positive and the equation has two distinct real solutions: $\widetilde{x}'_{1,2} = \dfrac{8\alpha}{3}\left(\alpha \pm 2\sqrt{\alpha(4\alpha - 3)}\right)$. This implies that the line C_2 and the curve C_1^1 have two common points: $P^1\left(P_x^1, P_y^1\right)$ and $P^2\left(P_x^2, P_y^2\right)$, where $P_x^1 = \dfrac{8\alpha}{3}\left(\alpha - 2\sqrt{\alpha(4\alpha - 3)}\right), P_x^2 = \dfrac{8\alpha}{3}\left(\alpha + 2\sqrt{\alpha(4\alpha - 3)}\right)$, $P_y^1 = \dfrac{8}{3}\left(\alpha^2 - (2\alpha - 3)\sqrt{\alpha(4\alpha - 3)}\right)$, and $P_y^2 = \dfrac{8}{3}\left(\alpha^2 + (2\alpha - 3)\sqrt{\alpha(4\alpha - 3)}\right)$. Figure 3 illustrates the relative location of C_1 and C_2 and shows the region $G_1' \cap G_2'$ in this case.

2. If $\alpha = \dfrac{3}{4}$, then $D = 0$ and equation (12) has the only solution: $\widetilde{x}' = \dfrac{8}{3}\alpha^2$, i.e. C_2 touches C_1^1 at the point $\left(\dfrac{8}{3}\alpha^2, \dfrac{8}{3}\alpha^2\right)$ (see Fig. 4).
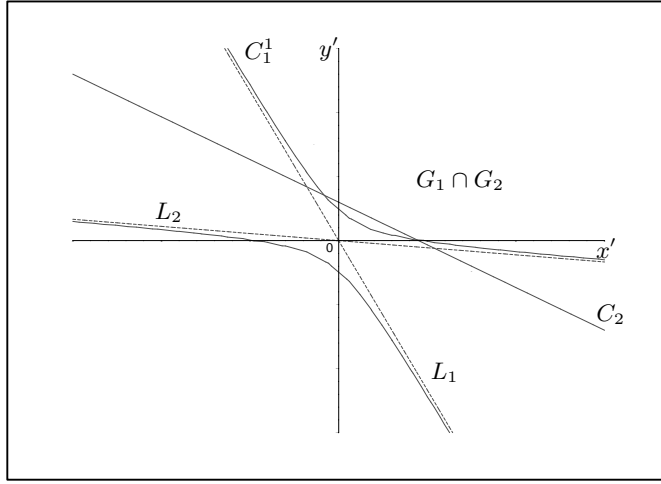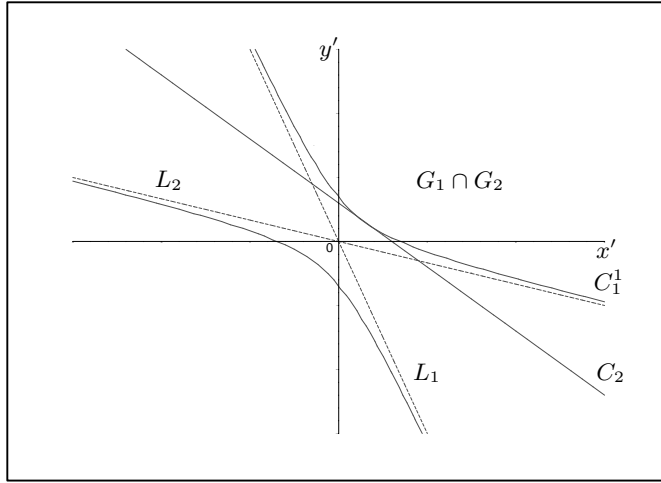
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Figure 3:

Figure 4:

3. If $0 < \alpha < \dfrac{3}{4}$, then $D < 0$ and equation (12) has no real solutions. This means that the curves C_2 and C_1^1 have no common points as shown in Fig. 5. It follows from Fig. 4 and 5 that, for $0 < \alpha \le \dfrac{3}{4}$, $G_1' \cap G_2' = G_1^1$.

Next, we find the points of intersection of each of the curves C_3 and C_4 with C_1^1. Replacing x' by $-8\alpha^2$ in (5), we obtain the equation

$$y'^2 - 16\alpha(2 - \alpha)y' + 64\alpha(\alpha - 1)(\alpha^2 - 3\alpha + 1) = 0$$

that has two real solutions for $0 < \alpha < 1$:

$$y_1^* = 8\alpha(2 - \alpha) + 8\sqrt{\alpha} \qquad \text{and} \qquad y_2^* = 8\alpha(2 - \alpha) - 8\sqrt{\alpha}.$$

Since $y_1^* > y_2^*$, the point of intersection of C_3 and C_1^1 is $Q^1\left(Q_x^1, Q_y^1\right)$, where $Q_x^1 = -8\alpha^2$ and $Q_y^1 = 8\alpha(2 - \alpha) + 8\sqrt{\alpha}$.

Similarly, replacing y' by $-8(\alpha - 1)^2$ in (5), we get

$$(\alpha - 3)x'^2 - 16\alpha(2 - \alpha)(\alpha - 1)x' + 64\alpha^2(\alpha + (\alpha - 1)^3) = 0.$$
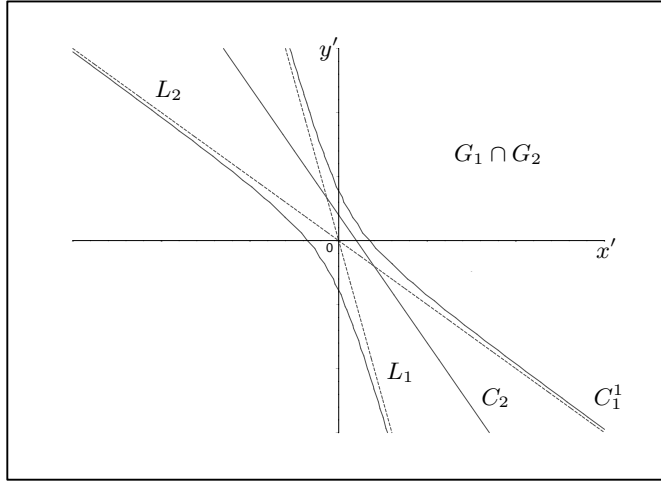
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Figure 5:

This equation also has two real solutions for $0 < \alpha < 1$:

$$x_1^* = \frac{8\alpha}{\alpha - 3}\left[(2 - \alpha)(\alpha - 1) - \sqrt{\alpha + 1}\right] \qquad \text{and} \qquad x_2^* = \frac{8\alpha}{\alpha - 3}\left[(2 - \alpha)(\alpha - 1) + \sqrt{\alpha + 1}\right].$$

Since $x_1^* > x_2^*$, the point of intersection of C_4 and C_1^1 is $Q^2\left(Q_x^2, Q_y^2\right)$, where
$Q_x^2 = \frac{8\alpha}{\alpha - 3}\left[(2 - \alpha)(\alpha - 1) - \sqrt{\alpha + 1}\right]$ and $Q_y^2 = -8(\alpha - 1)^2$.
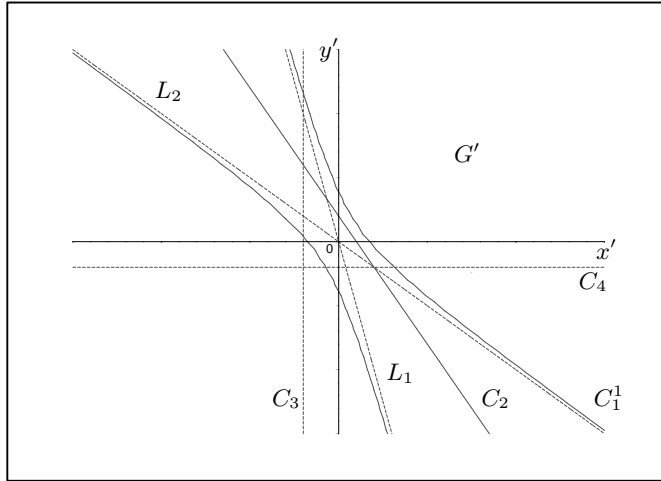

Figure 6:

Finally, we use the information about the relative location of lines $C_i (i = 1, 2, 3, 4)$ to determine the structure of the region G' for different values of α. For $0 < \alpha \leq \frac{3}{4}$, we conclude that the region G' is bounded by the piecewise planar curve AQ^1Q^2B as shown in Fig. 6. Here Q^1A represents a half-line $\{(x', y')|x' = -8\alpha^2, y' \geq Q_y^1\}$, Q^1Q^2 is a piece of C_1^1: $\{(x', y')|f_1'(x', y') = 0, Q_x^1 \leq x' \leq Q_x^2\}$, and Q^2B is another half-line $\{(x', y')|y' = -8(\alpha - 1)^2, x' \geq Q_x^2\}$. Thus,

$$G' = \left\{(x', y')|\ f_1'(x', y') > 0 \text{ and } -8\alpha^2 < x' < Q_x^2\right\} \cup \left\{(x', y')|\ x' \geq Q_x^2 \text{ and } y' > -8(\alpha - 1)^2\right\}. \quad (13)$$

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In the case, when $\frac{3}{4} < \alpha < 1$, the analysis becomes more complex, since this time we have to take into account possible relative locations of points Q^1, Q^2, P^1, and P^2. We observe that both Q^1 and P^1 are located in the second quarter of the $O'x'y'$-plane, while both Q^2 and P^2 belong to the right half-plane of the plane. Moreover, all four points lie on the same curve, namely, C_1^1. Therefore, in order to determine the relative location of these points, it is sufficient, for example, to study the relationships between the x-coordinates of Q^1 and P^1 and the y-coordinates of Q^2 and P^2.

First, we show that $Q_x^1 < P_x^1$. Indeed, this inequality follows from the fact that

$$-8\alpha^2 < \frac{8\alpha}{3}\left(\alpha - 2\sqrt{\alpha(4\alpha-3)}\right) \qquad \Longleftrightarrow \qquad 2\alpha > \sqrt{\alpha(4\alpha-3)} \qquad \Longleftrightarrow \qquad -3\alpha < 0$$

is true for all $\frac{3}{4} < \alpha < 1$.

Now we compare Q_y^2 and P_y^2. Since

$$-8(\alpha-1)^2 < \frac{8}{3}\left(\alpha^2 + (2\alpha-3)\sqrt{\alpha(4\alpha-3)}\right) \qquad \Longleftrightarrow \qquad 4\alpha^2 - 6\alpha + 3 > (3-2\alpha)\sqrt{\alpha(4\alpha-3)}$$

$$\Longleftrightarrow \qquad 4\alpha^3 - 4\alpha^2 - 3\alpha + 3 > 0 \qquad \Longleftrightarrow \qquad (\alpha-1)\left(\alpha - \frac{\sqrt{3}}{2}\right)\left(\alpha + \frac{\sqrt{3}}{2}\right) > 0$$

$$\Longleftrightarrow \qquad \alpha \in \left(-\frac{\sqrt{3}}{2}, \frac{\sqrt{3}}{2}\right) \cup (1, \infty),$$

we conclude that $Q_y^2 < P_y^2$, if $\frac{3}{4} < \alpha < \frac{\sqrt{3}}{2}$, and $Q_y^2 > P_y^2$, if $\frac{\sqrt{3}}{2} < \alpha < 1$. For $\alpha = \frac{\sqrt{3}}{2}$, the points Q^2 and P^2 coincide (it means that, in this case, $Q^2 = P^2$ is the point of intersection of the lines C_1^1, C_2, and C_4).

Summarizing the above results, we obtain that the region G' is bounded by the curve $AQ^1P^1Q^2B$, for $\frac{\sqrt{3}}{2} \le \alpha < 1$, and by the curve $AQ^1P^1P^2Q^2B$, for $\frac{3}{4} < \alpha < \frac{\sqrt{3}}{2}$. In both cases, pieces AQ^1 and Q^2B are half-lines defined as for $0 < \alpha \le \frac{3}{4}$, and Q^1P^1 is a part of C_1^1: $\{(x', y')|f_1'(x', y') = 0, Q_x^1 \le x' \le P_x^1\}$. For $\frac{\sqrt{3}}{2} \le \alpha < 1$, P^1Q^2 denotes the segment $\{(x', y')|f_2'(x', y') = 0, P_x^1 \le x' \le Q_x^2\}$ of C^2, while, for $\frac{3}{4} < \alpha < \frac{\sqrt{3}}{2}$, P^1P^2 is also a segment of this line: $\{(x', y')|f_2'(x', y') = 0, P_x^1 \le x' \le P_x^2\}$. Finally, P^2Q^2 is a part of C_1^1: $\{(x', y')|f_1'(x', y') = 0, P_x^2 \le x' \le Q_x^2\}$. We can also describe the locus G' as follows:

for $\frac{\sqrt{3}}{2} \le \alpha < 1$,

$$G' = \left\{(x', y')|\ f_1'(x', y') > 0 \text{ and } -8\alpha^2 < x' < P_x^1\right\}$$
$$\cup \left\{(x', y')|\ y' > \frac{2\alpha - 3}{2\alpha}x' + 4\alpha \text{ and } P_x^1 \le x' \le Q_x^2\right\} \cup \left\{(x', y')|\ x' \ge Q_x^2 \text{ and } y' > -8(\alpha-1)^2\right\}.$$

$$(14)$$

and, for $\dfrac{3}{4} < \alpha < \dfrac{\sqrt{3}}{2}$ (see Fig. 7),

$$G' = \left\{(x',y')|\ f_1'(x',y') > 0 \text{ and } -8\alpha^2 < x' < P_x^1\right\}$$
$$\cup \left\{(x',y')|\ y' > \frac{2\alpha-3}{2\alpha}x' + 4\alpha \text{ and } P_x^1 \le x' \le P_x^2\right\}$$
$$\cup \left\{(x',y')|\ f_1'(x',y') > 0 \text{ and } P_x^2 \le x' \le Q_x^2\right\} \cup \left\{(x',y')|\ x' \ge Q_x^2 \text{ and } y' > -8(\alpha-1)^2\right\}. \quad (15)$$

Thus, we have found the locus G' of the points whose coordinates satisfy system (9) for different values of α between 0 and 1. It is defined by formulas (13)-(15). Using (4), one can now easily find all pairs (x,y) that solve system (1). This completes the solution of the problem stated in Section 1.
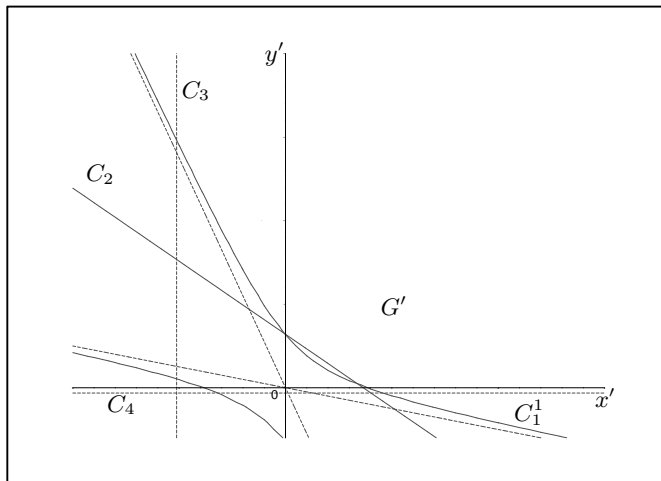

Figure 7:

References

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