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T. S. ELIOT'S AND OSWALD SPENGLER'S CONSERVATIVE CONCEPT OF CULTURE

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Abstract: *T. S. Eliot and Oswald Spengler both are world-famous conservative authors. They grasped the conception of “culture” in different ways, yet their basic premise was that modern culture is in decline. Their basic conviction stemmed from the experience of “loss” instead of “development” regarding modernity. They both condemned political totalitarianism, but also democratism, liberalism and capitalism. According to both authors: modern political and social ideas were bringing cultural standards down to an all-time low and creating a kind of modern “mass culture”: more precisely, the mass consumption of low-quality cultural products. Also, there are significant differences in the way they approached history and its impact on culture. Eliot, typical of British conservative thought, was much more concerned with perspectives of continuity and synthesis and, in contrast to Spengler, had greater hopes that modernity could be linked to past traditions. Spengler, in tune with the German conservative revolution's experience of time and being, perceived a kind of “rupture” between the past and the present. His cyclical model of cultures and civilisations suggests that cultures, regardless of their efforts to come to terms with their past, are inevitably and deterministically in decline. Despite their contrasting views on the fate and role of culture, both thinkers stressed that there is a permanence in the human spirit, for Eliot it is “religion” and for Spengler “life”: for both thinkers, culture is born from a transcendental basis. Eliot, in the course of the 20th century, revisited the idea of the intellectual elite: in The Idea Christian Society, he tried to give a new meaning to a traditional concept. Spengler's concept of the ‘Faustian man’ and ‘Faustian culture’ resonated with very important German thinkers associated with the intellectual movement of the conservative revolution. Spengler's predictions about the fate of humanity – especially the distinctions he drew between culture and civilisation – do not seem to be at all contradicted by the major ideological, political, artistic, cultural, social and economic trends of the period since then.*

Key words: *History of Philosophy; Critique of Capitalism; Elite; Mass production, Cultural decline, Cultural pessimism; Criticism of democracy; Anti-Egalitarianism*

Introduction

Culture is a difficult concept to grasp, like “civilisation” or “humanity”: not everyone understands it in the same way. In this paper, we will look specifically at conservative definitions of culture through the definitions of two writers with different approaches to ‘conservatism’, T. S. Eliot and Oswald Spengler. Although Eliot is known primarily as a writer and poet, he also wrote two important philosophical works on the definition of culture, both of which, although not very extensive in length, had a greater impact than other similar texts from Anglo-Saxon thinkers. Spengler was a unique representative of the philosophy of history in the 20th century. Although it is unlikely that their views influenced each other – although Spengler was eight years older and died much earlier than Eliot, they were contemporaries, and there are no references to each other in either of their works – their views do converge at certain points.

Eliot and Spengler grasped culture in different ways, yet their basic premise was that modern culture is in decline. As conservatives, their basic conviction stemmed from the experience of “loss” instead of “development” regarding modernity. They both condemned political totalitarianism, but also democratism, liberalism and capitalism: they believed that these are not the opposites or enemies of each other, because they are all typically modern phenomena, which stem from the metaphysical roots of modernity: which are the deep lying atheism in modernity’s “humanistic” conception of being, and subsequent materialism. Modern political and social ideas were bringing cultural standards down to an all-time low and creating a kind of modern “mass culture”: more precisely, the mass consumption of low-quality cultural products. Both thinker saw: this is, what is the enemy of all original and organic culture: before they had even formulated “what culture is” they both experienced a fundamental crisis of modern existence, described in terms of devaluation and depreciation, stiffening and disintegration. Also, there are significant differences in the way they approached history and its impact on culture.

Eliot, typical of British conservative thought, was much more concerned with perspectives of continuity and synthesis and, in contrast to Spengler, had greater hopes that modernity could be linked to past traditions. This, like Burke’s view, was based on the basic assumption that, although modernity has lowered the level of culture more than any previous state, there has not been a complete break, we are still living in the “same” cultural cycle as our ancestors. Eliot saw culture as a dynamic entity which, because it is not rigid, always retains significant aspects of previous forms. This can be a source of renewal, but only if culture can be reconnected with religion: in Christianity, Eliot found the only possibility of planting new life in the dying tree of the West.

In contrast, Spengler’s approach is much more pessimistic. Spengler, in tune with the German conservative revolution’s experience of time and being, perceived a kind of ‘rupture’ between the past and the present. His cyclical model of cultures and civilisations suggests that cultures, regardless of their efforts to come to terms with their past, are inevitably and deterministically in decline. According to Spengler, the process of ossification

and disintegration of human cultures is inevitable, so that there is no possibility of true “cultural renewal” in the paradigm. Cultures are created, grow and die like plants. However, – and it follows from the same organic view; the destruction of a culture is always accompanied by the growth of a new culture. In this sense, Spengler is also not entirely pessimistic about the fate of culture, or the fate of “humanity” in general, “only” considers contemporary Western culture to be irredeemably doomed and incapable of renew itself.

Despite their contrasting views on the fate and role of culture, both thinkers stressed that there is a permanence in the human spirit, for Eliot it is “religion” and for Spengler “life”: for both thinkers, culture is born from a transcendental basis. Both thinkers can be considered as non-materialists who – despite the different way of thinking about religion or the role of Christianity, – do not deny the motif of “permanence” and the role of metaphysics regarding the fate of humanity and the word.

Clearly, both Eliot's and Spengler's works were strongly influenced by their historical and spiritual contexts also. Both thinkers began to write in the first half of the twentieth century, and both lived through world wars (Eliot also lived through the Second World War, though he did not fight) and with the fulfilment of modernity: atomisation and secularisation of societies. Nevertheless, it would be superficial to say that the feeling of “loss” in their case stemmed primarily from the experience of the World War or the economic crisis. Just as circumstances never determine consciousness, in the case of both thinkers we must think of deeper sources if we want to determine the origin of the feeling of the “crisis experience.”

They experienced the rise of totalitarian regimes (Soviet communism and National Socialism) as aggressive form of political modernism, but those forms which can be described as liberalism and democracy, they were also not content, they experienced that kind of regimes also deplorable. It is no wonder that as deeply conservatives, they denounced what they saw around them and sought some radically different solutions to the world's problems from those already present of socialist, communist or liberal-democratic ideologies.

Eliot's concept of culture

T. S. Eliot's concept of culture is closely related to his concept of Christianity. His first major work of social theory was a series of lectures given at Corpus Christi College in March 1939, entitled (*The Idea of Christian Society*), published after the outbreak of the Second World War in October 1939.

In the work, Eliot approaches the concept of culture first and foremost through a social critique: according to him, the culture of the present (i.e. “liberal culture”) is “negative” (i.e. nihilistic) above all because it determines the behaviour of people solely by worldly goals. Eliot had not yet made a sharp distinction between ‘society’ and ‘culture’ in this work, and the concept of culture was not as sharply defined in this work as it would be later in *Notes towards the Definition of Culture*, but it is this earlier work that we must first consider when examining Eliot's concept of culture.

Eliot saw no link between modernity and Christianity. Above all, he described the “mechanism” of the modern age as something that is not Christian, but anti-Christian.¹ If it depended solely on modernity, there would be no such thing as Christianity:

“I confine myself therefore to the assertion, which I think few will dispute, that a great deal of the machinery of modern life is merely a sanction for un-Christian aims, that it is not only hostile to the conscious pursuit of the Christian life in the world by the few, but to the maintenance of any Christian society of the world.”²

Since, according to Eliot, a society ceases to be Christian only when it becomes something else, it can still be formally Christian, but its existence can be not for a long time, since no negative culture, devoid of positive affirmations, can be sustained permanently.³ The demands of efficiency, economic and spiritual factors alike, force a culture to become positive. Thus, according to him, the choice is between a new, positive Christian culture (i.e.) and a positive (i.e. assertive not merely denialist) pagan culture (and society).⁴

Culture is thus defined, above all, for Eliot, by the formulation of “positive propositions”, but, according to him, the main socio-political ideas of his own time, which the “Euro-Atlantic” civilization considers to be “sacred”, are ideas born of denials. The two concepts put on a pedestal are liberalism and democracy.⁵

Democracy is extended to everything, everything that is “positive” is also “democratic.” In this connection, Eliot wryly observed that

“When a term has become so universally sanctified as “democracy” now is, I begin to wonder whether it means anything, in meaning too many things: it has arrived perhaps at the position of a Merovingian Emperor, and wherever it is invoked, one begins to look for the Major of the Palace.”⁶

In addition to the fact that democracy “means too many things”, Eliot argues that it can also be said to mean almost nothing. Totalitarian states contemporary to him, such as the Soviet Union, Fascist Italy or National Socialist Germany rightly claim to represent “true democracy” i.e. a leadership elected by the people, “acting for the people”,

1 As Attila Károly Molnár puts it: “Modernism, as Eliot understands it, blurs the human-divine boundary, emphasizes intuition, makes humanity a god unto itself, and places too much faith in man’s unlimited moral capacities.” (Attila Károly M. A reakciós törekvés: a pokolból a purbatóriumba, in: Eliot, T. S. (2021) *Egy keresztény társadalom eszméje*, Budapest: Századvég, pp. 101-135.

2 Eliot, T. S (1960) *Christianity and Culture. The Idea of a Christian Society and Notes towards the Definition of Culture*. Boston: Mariner Books, p. 27.

3 Ibid, pp. 6-7.

4 By “pagan” Eliot does not actually mean the classical concept of paganism, i.e. man of a different religion from Christianity, but modern atheistic-materialistic man.

5 “What the Western world has stood for-and by that I mean the terms to which it has attributed sanctity-is “Liberalism” and “Democracy”; Eliot, T. S. (1960), op. cit, p. 11.

6 Ibid.

while in the Anglo-Saxon countries a plutocratic oligarchy actually rules under the guise of democracy.⁷

Liberalism is also a negative ideal, in his reading it is a dismantling of the status quo, and its only value is that it acts against the threat of “petrification” to conservatives, but it is certainly not an ideal on which to build a culture, since it does not in itself contain any real positive claims. Moreover, liberalism is also self-limiting: what is created at the end of its incessant denial becomes, in fact, the very condition against which liberalism was originally created.

“That Liberalism may be a tendency towards something very different from itself, is a possibility in its nature. For it is something which tends to release energy rather than accumulate it, to relax, rather than to fortify. It is a movement not so much defined by its end, as by its starting point; away from, rather than towards, something definite. Our point of departure is more real to us than our destination; and the destination is likely to present a very different picture when arrived at, from the vaguer image formed in imagination. By destroying traditional social habits of the people, by dissolving their natural collective consciousness into individual constituents, by licensing the opinions of the most foolish, by substituting instruction for education, by encouraging cleverness rather than wisdom, the upstart rather than the qualified, by fostering a notion of *getting on to* which the alternative is a hopeless apathy, Liberalism can prepare the way for that which is its own negation: the artificial, mechanised or brutalised control which is a desperate remedy for its chaos.”⁸

If we do not wish to live in a world based on mechanically enforced conformity and uniformity that ignores the needs of the individual soul, according to Eliot, we have no choice but to accept that control and balance can only be religious control and balance. It is also the only way to create a genuine culture - a culture of positive affirmations.

The Christian community (defined in various ways throughout the work) is intended by Eliot to be an alternative to the modern capitalist mass society created by liberalism and democracy, in fact an alternative to the materialist philosophy that lurks behind both democracy and liberalism as a kind of “negative foundation.” Eliot considered (unbridled) industrialisation, which dismantles the traditional social structure, as one of the most culture-destroying factors.

“The more highly industrialised the country, the more easily a materialistic philosophy will flourish in it, and the more deadly that philosophy will be. Britain has been

7 “Certainly there is a sense in which Britain and America are more democratic than Germany; but on the other hand, defenders of the totalitarian system can make out a plausible case for maintaining that what we have is not democracy, but financial oligarchy”; Eliot, T. S. (1960), op. cit, p. 11.

8 Ibid, pp. 11-12.

highly industrialised longer than any other country. And the tendency of unlimited industrialism is to create bodies of men and women-of all classes-detached from tradition, alienated from religion and susceptible to mass suggestion: in other words, a mob. And a mob will be no less a mob if it is well fed, well clothed, well housed, and well disciplined.”⁹

Eliot did not expect the ideal Christian community to contain more good Christians than in the world before capitalism and industrialization, nor did he expect everyone to become a Christian. His conservative conviction was that people’s lives were governed by social convention rather than by conscious conviction: that this was all right and that no external constraint was needed to enforce the norms that governed behaviour. The Christian church has to provide the basis for the habits that develop along with religion and, at the same time, for social cohesion: not the general “Christianisation” of society (which would be utopian) but the creation of an elite Christian community that can imbue the whole of society (to some extent) with the positive claims of the Christian ideal by creating a positive culture.

In a Christian society, the basic organ of culture, i.e. the education system, should be based on Christian principles, but the professionals involved in it should not be Christians in all cases and necessarily.¹⁰ Eliot, in contrast to Coleridge’s “national clerisy”, which in the Romantic era was somewhat similar in principle, does not wish to create a particular caste of clergy, separate from society, but an indefinite outline, clerics as a group of both lay and clerical people, whose members are enabled by their Christian ideals to lay the foundations of a positive culture, as opposed to the totally negative, hedonistic and materialistic “values” of the present.

Notes towards the Definition of Culture

The emphasis on religion’s dominant role and the search for the “task of the elite” permeated one of Eliot’s major theoretical works, *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture*, published after the Second World War. Eliot’s ambition, in his own words, is to define a word, namely “the word culture.”¹¹ In this work Eliot creates a much fuller and more complex concept of culture than in *the Idea of Christian Society*, but nevertheless the basic idea of the two works is similar, that of “positive” (i.e. value-posing) and “negative” (i.e. denying) societies. Religion is also a central theme in this work, and the general decline of culture, according to Eliot has not stopped in the nearly ten years between the two works. In fact, Eliot explicitly states that culture has entered a precipitous decline: its standards are lower than they were fifty years ago, and that the evidences of this decline

⁹ Ibid, p. 17.

¹⁰ “In a Christian Society education must be religious, not in the sense that it will be administered by ecclesiastics, still less in the sense that it will exercise pressure, or attempt to instruct everyone in theology, but in the sense that its aims will be directed by a Christian philosophy of life”; Eliot T. S (1960), op. cit, p. 30.

¹¹ Ibid, p. 85.

are visible in every department of human activity.¹²

Eliot's approach to culture is strongly conservative, but by no means "traditionalist" in the sense that he seeks to solve the problem of culture simply by clinging to or re-creating tradition. Nor can culture be simply identified with the concept of tradition in Eliot, although the two are closely related. In *After Strange Gods* (as elsewhere), he is highly critical of "conservatives" who do nothing more than try to preserve a past state of affairs, as well as of those who believe that it is possible to revive the cultural (and other) traditions of the past. This is no way to breathe life into a dying tree of culture.¹³ Tradition is not something that is immovable or unmovable, and it is not the forms of the past that are worth clinging to, but the spirit that animated those forms.¹⁴

For Eliot, there can still be no doubt that religion and culture are closely linked too, and he also states that culture and religion can in fact only exist together. For him, the important thing is not whether culture flows from religion or vice versa - this is not even possible to decide, since before modernity we could not speak of separate "secular" and "sacred" spheres - but that culture and religion, at least as they stand before us today [1948], appear to be two different sides of the same coin. Nor, of course, can religion and culture be identified with each other - at least, if we are tracing the roots of European culture - since, in essence, the complete identification of religion and culture is characteristic of societies that predate Christianity (or other universal religions), where religion may have been distinctively national in character.

"[I]t means in actual societies both an inferior culture and an inferior religion. A universal religion is at least potentially higher than one which any race or nation claims exclusively for itself; and a culture realising a religion also realised in other cultures is at least potentially a higher culture than one which has a religion exclusively to itself."¹⁵

¹² Ibid, p. 91.

¹³ "Energy may be wasted at that point in a frantic endeavour to gather the leaves as they fall and gum them onto the branches: but the sound tree will put forth new leaves, and the dry tree should be put to the axe." (Eliot, T. S. *After Strange Gods. A primer of Heresy*. 2025. 01. 31., <https://www.gornahoor.net/library/AfterStrangeGods.pdf>, p. 5. "Tradition by itself is not enough; it must be perpetually criticised and brought up to date under the supervision of what I call orthodoxy; and for the lack of this supervision it is now the sentimental tenuity that we find it. Most 'defenders of tradition' are mere conservatives, unable to distinguish between the permanent and the temporary, the essential and the accidental"; *After Strange Gods*, op. cit, pp. 24-25.

¹⁴ "We are always in danger, in clinging to an old tradition, or attempting to re-establish one, of confusing the vital and the unessential, the real and the sentimental. Our second danger is to associate tradition with the immovable; to think of it as something hostile to all change; to aim to return to some previous condition which we imagine as having been capable of preservation in perpetuity, instead of aiming to stimulate the life which produced that condition in its time"; *After Strange Gods*, p. 5.

¹⁵ Eliot, T. S. 1960, op, cit, p. 103.

Without culture, Eliot argues, there is no point at all - or indeed no point at all - in being human, and it is culture that justifies the content of our existence on Earth for the generations that follow us.

“Culture may even be described simply as that which makes life worth living. And it is what justifies other peoples and other generations in saying, when they contemplate the remains and the influence of an extinct civilisation, that it was *worth while* for that civilisation to have existed.”¹⁶

Eliot, however, argues that culture is the result of activities - more or less interrelated - that are pursued for their own sake, rather than something that is deliberately created. There is a strong sense of spontaneity in the notion of culture, which can never be planned.¹⁷ Culture therefore includes, in fact, all habitual activities that are related to the activities of society. The author, not surprisingly, draws his examples from British culture, which includes as its most typical contents, for example, the following:

“[...]Derby Day, Henley Regatta, Cowes, the twelfth of August, a cup final, the dog races, the pin table, the dart board, Wensleydale cheese, boiled cabbage cut into sections, beetroot in vinegar, nineteenth century Gothic churches and the music of Elgar. The reader can make his own list. And then we have to face the strange idea that what is part of our culture is also a part of our lived religion.”¹⁸

At the same time, a culture is always self-identical - for this very reason we cannot speak of liberalism's notion of a “world culture” in Eliot: culture is always a boundary, a demarcation, there is no one universally understood culture, only different ones: similar or very different cultures.

Culture provides identity and thus socially integrates, even if culture breaks up, society also breaks up. Eliot, looking at the most typical processes of modernity, is very critical of the fact that if, within a given national culture, different social strata develop cultures that are quite different from one another, the integrating role of a society is also jeopardised. This is precisely what is happening, not only in British society, but in other societies: in modernity, the different social strata can become so divergent (different subcultures emerge) that the slow disintegration of the fabric of the whole society may become inevitable.

Since, according to Eliot, culture is always linked to particular social strata, he also believes that we need to talk about different “levels” of culture: individual, group and

¹⁶ Ibid, p. 100.

¹⁷ “The artist must concentrate upon his canvas, the poet upon his typewriter, the civil servant upon the just settlement of particular problems as they present themselves upon his desk, each according to the situation in which he finds himself”; Eliot T. S. (1960), op. cit, p. 92.

¹⁸ Ibid, p. 104.

macro-societal. The most important is the culture of society, because, according to Eliot, the cultural level of the individual derives from the class of which he is a member, and the culture of the class derives from that of society.¹⁹

Above all, Eliot takes issue with liberalism: because it takes into account only the individual level in the atomistic conception of society, it is unable to take into account that individuals in society will not be “perfectly cultured” subjects and that even the most cultured of them will not possess “complete culture.”²⁰ According to Eliot, the individual level cannot be isolated from that of the group, and its culture will be closely related to the culture of the society in which it lives. The three levels distinguished by Eliot are interdependent, interrelated, and organically interrelated; the concept of culture simply becomes indefinable if they are ignored.

Culture, therefore, cannot be planned or artificial, it is always organic, inherited from our ancestors, and for this to happen, continuity in terms of social classes is necessary. Inextricably linked to the problem of social class is the problem of elites. In contrast to the leftist concept of “free-floating intellectuals”²¹, according to Eliot, social status cannot derive solely from the principle of individual achievement (or talent)²²: this leads in the long run to social disintegration and a break in the line of tradition, which, by breaking up society, has a destructive effect on the chains of continuity between generations. The custodian of culture, according to Eliot, has always been the elite, but in such a way that the elite has always been closely linked to the dominant social class:

“I think that in the past the repository of this culture has been the elite, the major part of which was drawn from the dominant class of the time, constituting the primary consumers of the work of thought and art produced by the minority members, who will have originated from various classes, including that class itself.”²³

In the “classless society” desired by left-wing theories, however in fact, the “elite” would be made up of people united by anything other than professional interests, and with the loss of social cohesion, social continuity would also be lost.²⁴

In the same way, culture cannot simply be identified with the concept of tradition. Eliot in *After Strange Gods* (as elsewhere) is highly critical of those ‘conservatives’ who

19 Eliot, T. S. (1960), pp. 93-104.

20 Eliot highlights Matthew Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy*, famous in the period, to illustrate the failures of liberal social theory.

21 Here, Eliot is mainly arguing with the elite theory of Karl Mannheim, a member of the Moot circle

22 As Attila Károly Molnár writes in his *After Strange Gods*, a critique of Eliot's cult of the modern individual: “True talent can show itself only in tradition, and not in spite of it.” According to Molnár, Eliot, like Chesterton, “gave tradition a new meaning”; Molnár, A. K. (2021), op. cit, pp. 101-135.

23 Eliot T. S. (1960), op. cit, p. 114.

24 Ibid, p. 120.

do nothing more than try to preserve a past state of affairs, as he is of those who believe that it is possible to revive the cultural (and other) traditions of the past. This is no way to breathe life into a dying tree of culture.

According to Eliot, every “vital society” must include both classes and elites, between which there is a certain overlapping interaction²⁵, a precondition for the survival of culture: Eliot accepts that levels of culture can be conceived as levels of power, in the sense that a narrower group of a higher level has greater power as a more extensive group of the first level. Each class has its own culture, and even the higher levels should not be conceived of as having more culture than the lower, but as representing culture in a more conscious and richer articulation.²⁶

The high culture created by the elite enriches the lower levels, so we should imagine the movement of culture as “circular”, where each class is inspired by the other. Different regions, like classes, promote the dynamism of culture.

Without the diversity of human communities, there would be no ‘inspiration’ for the human spirit to develop its movement²⁷ and so friction, and where appropriate, productive and creative tension, between the different parts is vital.²⁸

According to Eliot, every national culture is made up of local and particular cultures. “Ideally, each village and of course more visibly the larger towns, should have each its peculiar character.”²⁹ He writes. Without taking into account the specificities of each region, each old town, we cannot really talk about national culture: it would be a realm of total abstraction, born at the drawing board. For Eliot, national identity is just as important as regional identity: to use the British example, if England (or, more correctly, Britain) did not retain the separate identities of its constituent nationalities (English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish), then British culture would in fact cease to exist: what would replace it would not represent what the idea of Britain once stood for.

His respect for the local roots and particularities of culture is closely related to Eliot’s conservative definition of culture: if the “world culture” desired by Marxists and liberals were to emerge, it would not be worthy of the name culture at all:

“For it must follow from what I have already pleaded about the value of local cultures, that a world culture which was simply a *uniform* culture would be no culture at all. We should have a humanity de-humanised. It would be a nightmare.”³⁰

The third factor in the existence of culture for Eliot can be grasped in terms of religious unity and diversity. As an Anglo-Catholic, Eliot naturally proceeded from the “uni-

25 Ibid, p. 118.

26 Ibid, p. 121.

27 In the quote from Whithead, chosen by Eliot as an introduction to one of the chapters, the philosopher speaks directly of “the Odyssey of the human spirit”; Eliot, T. S. (1960), op. cit, p. 123.

28 “ [...] I now suggest that both class and region, by dividing the inhabitants of a country into two different kinds of groups, lead to a conflict favourable to creativeness and progress”; T. S. Eliot (1960), p. 132.

29 Ibid, p. 143.

30 Ibid, p. 136.

versality of doctrine", which, however, must be combined with the diversity of forms of worship. Nor is uniformity desirable in the case of Christianity; particular and local factors in religion must be taken into account in such a way that the "spiritual unity of Christianity" is not compromised. Again, the ideal reunification of Christianity, which Eliot nevertheless considered a desirable spiritual goal, must not involve uniformity:[...] it implies simply a "Christian culture" of which all local cultures should be variants-and they would and should vary very widely indeed.³¹

A kind of "productive tension" is necessary in the relationship of religion, as in the case of classes and regions subordinated to national units. "For without the struggle no balance can be maintained; and if either force won the result would be deplorable [...]"³²Of course, the basic forms of religious organisation, neither the centrally governed international church nor the national church or the isolated sect, offer any guarantee against the decline of culture. The danger of the former is strict order, the danger of the latter is "ossification", the danger of excessive freedom is "melting away".

Unless there is a common force to unite the nations of Europe - which, of course, Eliot argues, can be none other than Christianity - the individual European nations will never even come close to each other. Not only is the utopian dream of a world culture unattainable, but the total fragmentation of Europe is foreseeable.

"And without a common faith, all efforts towards drawing nations closer together in culture can produce only an illusion of unity."³³

Spengler's concept of culture – Critique of progressivism

Oswald Spengler could rightly be called a conservative philosopher of history who was one of the most important and successful 20th-century critics of the progress paradigm derived from the Renaissance and the Enlightenment. The second volume of his most important work, *The Twilight of the West*, hit the shelves of German bookshops in 1922 and was followed by the English edition of the complete work in 1926. Spengler outlined a philosophy of history in which, as a philosopher of culture, he radically and at a high level opposed the various ideas of historical progressivism.

The most important feature of the political, social-philosophical message was completely at odds with the optimistic progressive spirit that pervaded the philosophy of history of the 18th century (Voltaire and Condorcet in France; Herder and Kant in Germany; and the "Whig narrative" of the British) and the 19th century (the "social physics" of Hegel, Marx, Comte, and Spencer, or the so-called Ranke school). It was Spengler also, who, after certain antecedents (Vico, Nietzsche, and Goethe)³⁴ gave a powerful new formulation to the doctrine of historical cycles.

31 Ibid, p. 153.

32 Ibid, p. 156.

33 Ibid, p. 157.

34 "Already in the preface to his main work, Spengler stresses that the greatest influence on the development of his whole approach was exerted by two men: Goethe and Nietzsche"; Csejtei, D. and Juhász, A. (2009) *Oswald Spengler élete és filozófiája*, Máriabesnyő-Gödöllő: Attraktor, p. 91.

His huge undertaking was a general critique of progressivism with extremely ambitious secondary aims. One of these was the exploration of the possible future of human societies, which he attempted to ground with a particular construction, the so-called 'analogy doctrine', much criticised by the professional historians. The definition of culture was also a very important aim of Spengler, and a central theme of his major work.

Spengler did not conceive of the process of history as the mere passage of time on a linear time scale, but rather as the 'simultaneity' of certain cultural phenomena - phenomena which could be political-historical facts, art-historical events or socio-economic processes, all of which, according to the theory, had the same *significance*.

The German thinker set himself a huge and essentially unfinished - because unfinishable - task when he divided the culture of humanity, which was considered unified by the various narratives of progress, into eight different cultural circles (Babylonian, Egyptian, Indian, Chinese, Mexican, ancient, Arab and Western) and at the same time set out to describe the 'intellectual biography' of these cultural circles, which were considered essentially independent of each other but were nevertheless connected in the sense of the 'analogy doctrine.'

Above all, Spengler stressed that history is itself a phenomenon of life, and that its processes cannot be defined by abstract criteria and preferences, since they are not shaped and formed by postulates of mathematical rationality. Spengler argues that history, like the general character of simple human coexistence, is determined as much by *what is felt* or *thought* as by *what is known* (or thought to be known.) There is no real indication that with the emergence of rationalism and the transformation of society according to the criteria of modern natural science the human race is actually 'progressing', but alongside and often in *place of the* rational factor there is also a strong irrational character which cannot be excluded either from the deeper processes of history or from the life-world of man.

According to Spengler's thesis, the very existence of a culture has little to do with the level of technology attained or the form and amount of "violence" or "oppression" - a notion that was already popular with the advocates of progress in the 18th century. Spengler considered their use as sentimental and banal as one of his intellectual forerunners, Nietzsche.³⁵ The birth of a culture, according to Spengler, can no more be traced back to purely material processes than the birth of human beings, animals and plants requires an act of conception that presupposes a spiritual starting point and can be linked to a constitutive act of self-consciousness that cannot be derived simply from material processes.

"A Culture is born in the moment when a great soul awakens out of the protospirituality (dem urseelenhaften Zustande) of ever-childish humanity, and detaches itself, a

35 "My brother, are war and battle evil? Necessary, however, is the evil; necessary are the envy and the distrust and the back biting among the virtues." - wrote the German thinker in his Zarathustra. Nietzsche. (1935), F: *Thus Spake Zarathustra*. Trans: Thomas Common. New York: Random House, p. 36.

form from the formless, a bounded and mortal thing from the boundless and enduring. It blooms on the soil of an exactly-definable landscape, to which plant-wise it remains bound.”³⁶

By making the emergence of cultures dependent on the notion of the soul, on a spiritual and non-material impulse of creation, Spengler completely contradicts all the ideas that explain the emergence of culture or civilization by some kind of mechanical, at best practicalistic, causes - such as Marx from work, the contemporary Harari from “agricultural revolution”³⁷ or even Kant’s essentially “refinement of habits.”³⁸ Spengler’s notion of soul would undoubtedly be ‘irrational’ in the eyes of rationalists, nor is ‘the primordial state of humanity’ a formulation that could be used as a clear definition of what is actually the starting point of culture. However, Spengler’s expression does better capture the *specificity* of a culture, religious forms, architecture and fine arts, which are indeed seen in the sense of *a* development in the case of Greek, Roman, Egyptian, Indian or even European medieval cultures, for example, which can only with difficulty be explained by the actual arrangement of ‘relations of production’. Thus, for Spengler, culture is indeed a kind of living being, an organism, which, like physical organisms, has a kind of spirituality, essence and individuality, while at the same time, because of its similarity to other cultures, it has a number of properties from which one can infer a universal concept of culture.³⁹

The very essence of Spengler’s theory of culture and his interpretation of the concept of culture is the idea of the *organicity* of culture, that is, *its living nature* - in his interpretation, culture is like a living organism - not an artificial, rational objectivity modelled on a machine, but an extension of the generally characteristic structure of life, understood as the subject’s constant self-creation, into physical and spiritual space. Cultures are for him “superlative human organisms”⁴⁰ that is, organisms that have cycles of fertilization, growth, expansion, exhaustion and decay similar to those of physical living beings.

But for him, the series of different cultures is not linked together in a chain similar to the interlocking chain of human and even animal generations. “These cultures, sublima-

36 Spengler, O. (1926) *The decline of the West*. Transl. Charles Frances Atkinson. Alfred A. Knopf, New York: A. Knopf, inc. p. 106.

37 See: Yuval Noah Harari: *Sapiens*

38 See: Kant’s *Idea For A Universal History With A Cosmopolitan Purpose*.

39 Note that, despite the philosophical-metaphysical concept of the soul, Spengler’s observation is more scientific - if the criteria of scientificity are to be made dependent on empiricism - than the claims made by materialists about the origin of cultures, since nowhere in nature is the transformation of quantitative changes into qualitative processes observable, nor is the “spontaneous generation” of consciousness from matter observable, even under laboratory conditions. On the contrary, the “laboratory experiences” (although all of them failed up to present time) demonstrate that the creation of anything requires some act of a pre-existing consciousness - or, of a “soul.”

40 Spengler, O. (1926), op. cit, p. 101.

ted life-essences, grow with the same superb aimlessness as the flowers of the field...”⁴¹ Yet certain cultural phenomena do repeat themselves, just as the cycles of human life repeat themselves between birth and inevitable death.

In the background of a culture, however, Spengler finds a specific archetypal symbol - a transcendental form conceived in the manner of Goethe's *The Phenomenon* or Plato's Forms - which he assumes to be the initial fertilizing impulse. The different cultures, in his view, have different archetypal symbols in which the most characteristic aspirations of a given culture are expressed: for example, in the case of our Western culture - Spengler calls it, with reference to Goethe, a “Faustian” culture - the “desire to conquer infinite space”, to which, in his view, the Gothic can be traced back just as much as the increased assertion and use of technology.

Culture and civilisation

The concept of culture was first sharply distinguished from civilization by Kant. Kant used the concept of culture in a Ciceronian sense, in which culture is how a man becomes man: civilization, however, means a kind of social civility, “elaborateness”, “refinement of habits” and with it all that makes life in the material sense comfortable and pleasant. The creation of true culture, for Kant, thus implies a kind of deeper morality, a goal to be pursued, not necessarily associated with civilization: for Kant, the goal of the Enlightenment would be precisely to raise the level of civilization achieved to that of true culture.⁴²

Spengler has completely reinterpreted Kant's distinction: for him, it is culture that in all respects—in time, in ideas, in importance—is far ahead of civilization—something that can only be compared to Goethe's transcendental ‘primordial phenomenon’ of natural science (*Urphänomen*). “Culture is the prime phenomenon of all past and future world-history”⁴³ he writes, culture is thus the ultimate unity of history behind which there is no going back.

Spengler sharply distinguished the concept, idea and phenomenon of civilisation from culture. While culture is primarily an archetypal phenomenon, for him civilisation is primarily a “mechanism.”

The distinction between culture and civilization was, also of course, made long before Kant and Spengler. The concept of civilization was introduced into German and English through French mediation from the Latin words *civitas* (city) and *civilis* (citizen) but it was only in the second half of the 18th century that it began to be used in connection with a state of progress and development.⁴⁴ Civilization was thus understood first and foremost as a distinction from barbarism—similar to the Greco-Roman authors who con-

41 Ibid, p. 21.

42 See: Immanuel Kant: *Idea For A Universal History With A Cosmopolitan Purpose*.

43 Spengler, O. (1926), op. cit, p. 105.

44 For example, a prominent figure of the Scottish Enlightenment, Adam Ferguson, wrote: is not only the individual who progresses from childhood to adulthood, but the race itself which passes from barbarism to civilization; See: Ferguson, A., *An Essay of the History of Civil Society*.

sidered as 'barbarians' those peoples and tribes who were outside their borders-which for the Greeks coincided with Hellas, the later colonial empire and the borders of the Hellenistic states, and for the Romans ended in the Limes. Most of the Enlightenment writers, like the Greeks and Romans, believed that peoples who had no civilization (that is, no cities proper) had no 'culture' either. Thus, neither Greco-Roman antiquity nor the Enlightenment distinguished between the two concepts-it is another matter, of course, that the Greco-Roman view did not attach any particular importance to temporality and development in the process of civilization. In 'suitable' peoples, civilization appears in an organic way, as it were, just as a flower sprouts from a seed. The concept of 'culture' (Latin: cultivation) is also of ancient origin-it is attributed to Marcus Tullius Cicero, who used it in his *Tusculan Disputations* in the sense of 'cultivation of the soul' and in relation to philosophy. ("*Cultura animi philosophia est.*")⁴⁵

According to Spengler, human history consists of the emergence, contact, and struggle of cultures independent of each other, so that there is no single world history, but only the coexistence of many cultures: their unfolding, flourishing, existence, and decline. Spengler lists eight cultures (Babylonian, Egyptian, Indian, Chinese, Mexican, antique, Arab, and Western), but only three are discussed in detail. He has also given these three a separate name, referring to the archetypal symbol of the culture in question: 'Apollonian' for the Greco-Roman antiquity; "magical" for the Arabic culture; and "Faustian" for the Christian-Western culture following the break-up of the Roman Empire. The latter is essentially the culture or cultural sphere⁴⁶ whose fate is of real interest-with the others merely playing the role of illustration, counterpoint, and analogy. The archetypal symbol of Faustian culture is "infinite space" and the "Faustian man" who lives under the spell of conquering this infinity: the desire to conquer space was the inspiration for the crusades as well, just as for the colonization of the world and the expansion of technology throughout the globe from the Age of Discoveries onwards. This has ultimately created a globalized world which, however, belongs to the declining, or civilizing, phase of the culture-cultural sphere.

On the one hand, cultures, according to Spengler, have no teleological endpoint as living beings of the highest order, they are growing in a "sublime mass," but at the same time, as we can see concerning individual human beings, all cultures express something of the whole of existence.

Perhaps Spengler's most controversial thesis concerns the "simultaneity of cultures": he calls simultaneous certain historical facts that appear "relatively precisely" in the same place in the lives of two different cultures and have the same 'significance'-thus proving that the "internal structure" of cultures is essentially correlative. For example, this is how he sees Ionic art in the antique, "Apollonian" culture and Baroque art in the "Faustian"

45 Cicero: *Tusculanae Disputationes*, II. 5. 13., Kinkel, E. A. (ed.), (1997) Stuttgart: Reclam, p. 162.

46 It is worth clarifying the use of the term, as Spengler essentially means by 'culture' both the cultural sphere itself and the first, or 'cultural' phase of the cultural sphere-the second phase being 'civilisation' itself.

culture that followed the dissolution of the antique culture, but, in a rather puzzling idea, Spengler also sees the Dionysian movement of ancient Hellas and the Protestant movements of Faustian culture as having the same “meaning.”⁴⁷

As Spengler puts it:

“Culture and Civilization - the living body of a soul and the mummy of it. For Western existence the distinction lies at about the year 1800 - on the one side of that frontier life in fullness and sureness of itself, formed by growth from within, in one great uninterrupted evolution from Gothic childhood to Goethe and Napoleon, and on the other the autumnal, artificial, rootless life of our great cities, under forms fashioned by the intellect. Culture and Civilization - the organism born of Mother Earth, and the mechanism proceeding from hardened fabric. Culture-man lives inwards, Civilization-man outwards in space and amongst bodies and “facts.” That which the one feels as Destiny the other understands as a linkage of causes and effects, and thenceforward he is a materialist[...].”⁴⁸

This cyclical approach of civilisation and culture is one of the oldest European reflections on time and history: it was a dominant approach to thinking about history already before Christianity, but also in the Christian Middle Ages. In the Jewish and Christian tradition, cyclical thinking also appears in the Book of Daniel (Daniel 2:1-49) concerning the prophetic destruction of the world empires.

The idea of cyclicity was also highlighted in the Greek mythological-historical tradition (Hesiod), which was later joined by Plato as well (*Timaeus*). This is one of the political equivalences of mythological thinking, which Spengler also drew on in *The Decline of the West* as well as in his explicitly socially oriented works. It is the so-called “anacyclosis doctrine”, the idea of alternation of government and state forms derived from Plato and Aristotle, which was developed in its most complete form by Polybius. According to this view, the history of the various forms of government can be depicted as a process of decline and change, from the emergence of the “just king” from the indeterminate and chaotic primordial state of society to the power of the debauched demagogue. This ultimately creates a state from which a leader capable of restarting the cycle can emerge again. In this perspective, there is no linear progression, but only periods of decline or development; a leader or elite can ensure the flourishing of society, but there is no guarantee that humanity has a universal historical purpose or direction; and the present does not have a self-evident surplus of value over the past. At any moment it is conceivable that an achieved state will be destroyed, degenerate, or fall back into nothingness since in infinite historical space and time everything will once be undone, as history has neither direction nor purpose: there is only creation and destruction, just as nature is constantly created and destroyed, and it is only the forms of the transcendental world, or

47 Spengler, O. (1926), op. cit, p. 112.

48 Ibid, p. 353.

“patterns”, that are eternal. These primordial patterns, standing above the world process, are repeated and leave a kind of imprint on time manifested as different cultures.

In Dezső Csejtej's interpretation, Spengler's aim with his great work was above all 'to overturn the dominant Western Christian conception of history. "The most important elements of this conception-which largely remain to this day-are *linearity*, the *principle of development*, and the *teleological* character of meaning."⁴⁹

According to Spengler's description, civilization follows culture in time, and culture itself becomes civilization - in the sense of a fateful inevitability - when, in the process of organic cyclicity, it is clearly

“The aim once attained - the idea, the entire content of inner possibilities, fulfilled and made externally actual - the Culture suddenly hardens, it mortifies, its blood congeals, its force breaks down, and it becomes Civilisation[...]"⁵⁰

Just as Spengler considered the drying up and atrophy of Greek culture, as the “civilization” phase of Greco-Roman antiquity (the so-called “Apollonian cycle”), i.e. the period of the completion of the Roman Empire, he seen the contrast between medieval Christian culture and the new age of the Enlightenment, industrialization and the dominance of scientific rationality in a similar manner.

However superficial this statement may seem in relation to the cultural context of antiquity, it is all the more thought-provoking, why Spengler understood the unfolding of actual modernity as a civilising, i.e., a solidifying, fading, externalising phase of the Faustian cultural sphere. In many respects, Spengler links the emergence of modern civilisation from medieval culture to the beginning of the phenomenon of large-scale technicisation (the first industrial revolution) and the associated urbanisation. As we have seen, it is noteworthy that the original use of the concept of civilisation - that is, the one that originated in antiquity and spread during the Renaissance and the Enlightenment - was also linked to the city, to urbanity.

In Spengler's view, civilisation can be associated with the disappearance of the higher, richer, more organic ordering principle which, in his understanding, still pervaded the period of culture. The symbol of civilisation is, above all, the metropolis, or even the *gigapolis*, where man

“Looking down from one of the old towers upon the sea of houses, we perceive in this petrification of a historic being the exact epoch that marks the end of organic growth and the beginning of an inorganic and therefore unrestrained process of massing without limit. And now, too, appears that artificial, mathematical, utterly land-alien product of a pure intellectual satisfaction in the appropriate, the city of the city-architect. In all Civilizations alike, these cities aim at the chessboard form, which is the symbol of

49 Csejtej, D. Juhász, A. (2009), op. cit, pp. 98-99.

50 Spengler, O. (1926), op. cit, p. 106.

soullessness. Regular rectangle-blocks astounded Herodotus in Babylon and Cortez in Tenochtitlan.”⁵¹

This artificial, mathematical, constructedly rational “soullessness”, a rigid functionalism directed towards economic, industrial and technical ends, characterises a modern civilisation whose humanist veneer, according to Spengler, is little more than a set of banal platitudes. For him, this is also evidenced by the fact that he sees a deeper mentality expressed in the environment that man creates as a secondary creator. This mentality is, in the case of modernity, something that is directed above all towards external, material productivity and the mechanism of the capitalist “factory”, thus eliminating forever the living, organic and agrarian society which, in his view, is “[...] the enduring and inward union of eternal land and eternal blood.”⁵²

On the one hand, there is the characteristic type of the modern intellectual or “intellectual worker”, the “intelligent and unproductive man of facts”, on the other hand, its complement and counterpoint, the characteristic, standardized and collectivized type of the metropolitan mass, the welfare consumer, which is related to the mass man of Ortega and Le Bon. It is undoubtedly a civilised but increasingly uncivilised being, whose gradual barbarisation is inevitable.

Conclusion

As for Eliot’s most important insight: the Western cultural sphere is in fact inseparable from Christianity. Its heyday is the medieval Christian-Germanic-Antique synthesis, made spiritually fertile by Catholic Christianity in the West and Orthodox Christianity in the East. As an important contemporary of Eliot, Chesterton, writes: The arch could be a symbol of a flourishing medieval culture, an architectural solution which demonstrates by its very existence that it is the many forces, balancing each other and running in the same direction, which can hold the arch up to the sky. In other words, to ultimately overcome the ‘gravity’ of human nature and thus create the magnificent space of the Gothic cathedral, one of the most beautiful symbols of European culture, which rises vertically and creates a link between Heaven and Earth.⁵³ Just as in the Middle Ages the cathedral was the centre of cities and everything was organised around this building – just as today everything is organised around the factory, the bank and the shopping centre. It was mainly in the clerical order – but especially in the monasticism – that an idea of what we might understand as ‘spiritual authority’ was still alive in the West. Was it this elite of authority from which the broader concept of culture itself derived? It represented an activity set up for purely intellectual activity which inspired the secular power which was responsible for the narrow domain of state and politics.

⁵¹ Ibid, p. 100.

⁵² Ibid, p. 104.

⁵³ See: Chesterton, G. K. *The Outline of Sanity*.

Eliot, in the course of the 20th century, revisited the idea of the intellectual elite: *in the Idea Christian Society*, he tried to give a new meaning to a concept which, in modernity, had become the opposite: elites were understood not as intellectual but increasingly as financial and economic 'elites', something whose exclusive domination was responsible, in fact, for the destruction of culture.

Eliot's initiatives to renew Europe's culture on the basis of a "Christian elite" were barely heard. The author may have felt obliged to write his lines "to save the salvageable", being himself a representative of this purely intellectual elite, but in reality he apparently no longer had much hope that such an elite, if it could be created, could seriously influence the destiny of European culture in the 20th century. What he has added to the description of a "Christian society" is very revealing of the chances he saw for the realisation of these ideals:

"But what is more insidious than any censorship, is the steady influence which operates silently in any mass society organised for profit, for the depression of standards of art and culture. The increasing organisation of advertisement and propaganda-or the influencing of masses of men by any means except through their intelligence-is all against them. The economic system is against them; the chaos of ideals and confusion of thought in our large scale mass education is against them; and against them also is the disappearance of any class of people who recognise public and private responsibility of patronage of the best that is made and written. At a period in which each nation has less and less "culture" for its own consumption, all are making furious efforts to export their culture, to impress upon each other their achievements in arts which they are ceasing to cultivate or understand.⁵⁴

The idealistic resurrection of the Middle Ages – a Middle Ages in an ideological and intellectual sense of course, – against the most diverse modern tendencies of cultural decline was Eliot's fine idea, yet a utopian aspiration, even in his own time. The medieval Christian *oikumené* is indeed the last unit in the history of the West in which one can still speak of genuine intellectuality; Eliot was addressing rather those whose consciousness, however, despite the incredible headwinds, even in the modern environment of the "knowledge industry" (Tamás Molnár), has not been fully put at the service of the system through practicalist ideas. The renewal of culture – if we are as optimistic as Eliot – will always depend on those who, even if still tentatively, can stand up to the drift of alleged "progress."

In his own time, Spengler had a much greater influence than Eliot. His concept of the 'Faustian man' and 'Faustian culture' resonated with very important German thinkers associated with the intellectual movement of the conservative revolution, such as Ernst Jünger.

⁵⁴ Eliot, T. S (1960), op. cit, p. 32.

At the same time, many of Spengler's predictions about the fate of humanity – especially the distinctions Spengler drew between culture and civilisation – do not seem to be at all contradicted by the major ideological, political, artistic, cultural, social and economic trends of the period since then.

Spengler's other ideas, however, such as those concerning the supposed simultaneity of cultures and civilisations and the doctrine of analogy that can be drawn from them, are much more questionable and have stood the test of time and criticism less well. Spengler's unquestioning fatalism, his emphasis on the idea of fate as applied to the fate of cultures in general, may also be questionable – for here, it is not clear whether the fate of a culture, considered as a “spiritual organism”, is identical or merely *analogous* to the fate of physical organisms. However, this does little to detract from the significance and value of Spengler's work as a whole. It continues to inspire people working in the philosophy of history today: historians, sociologists and philosophers alike, the strict separation of “culture” and “civilisation”: if understood specifically for the cycle of modernity, it can have interpretations that can help to understand the concept of culture from a conservative point of view.

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КОНЗЕРВАТИВНИ КОНЦЕПТИ КУЛТУРЕ КОД Т.С. ЕЛИОТА И ОСВАЛДА ШПЕНЛГЕРА

Сажетак: Т. С. Елиот и Освалд Шпенглер су обојица светски познати конзервативни аутори. Доживљавали су концепт културе на различите начине, али су обојица полазили од основне премисе да је савремена култура у опадању. У погледу модерног доба, њихова базична уверења проистекла су из искуства „губитка” уместо „развоја”. Обојица су осуђивали политички тоталитаријанизам, али исто тако и демократизам, либерализам и капитализам. Према ставовима оба аутора, модерне политичке и друштвене идеје срозале су културне стандарде до најнижих нивоа икада, доведши до неке врсте савремене „мас-културе”, или прецизније, до масовног конзумирања културних производа ниског квалитета. Међутим, постоје и значајне разлике у начину на који су схватили историју и њен утицај на културу. Елиот, као типичан представник британске конзервативне мисли, много се више бринуо за перспективе континуитета и синтезе, и за разлику од Шпенглера, гајио је веће наде да би савремено доба могло очувати своју везу са традицијама из прошлости. Шпенглер, у складу са поимањем времена и бића у духу конзервативне немачке револуције, уочавао је „прекид” између прошлости и садашњости. Његови циклични модели култура и цивилизација сугеришу да културе, упркос својим настојањима да се помире с прошлошћу, неминовно и детерминистички пропадају. Упркос њиховим супротним схватањима судбине и улоге културе, оба мислиоца наглашавала су да постоји нека одлика постојаности људског духа: за Елиота је то „религија”, а за Шпенглера „живот”. По схватању оба мислиоца, култура се рађа из трансценденталне базе. Елиот се, током 20. века, поново позабавио идејом интелектуалне елите: у свом делу *The Idea of Christian Society* (*Идеја хришћанског друштва*), покушао је да да ново значење једном традиционалном концепту. Шпенглеров појам „фаустовског човека” и „фаустовске културе” нашао је одјека код врло значајних немачких мислилаца повезаних са интелектуалним покретом конзервативне револуције. Изгледа да се Шпенглерова предвиђања о будућности човечанства – а нарочито разлика које је повлачио између културе и цивилизације – ни на који начин нису показала супротнима у односу на главне идеолошке, политичке, уметничке, културне, друштвене и економске трендове у временима која су уследила.

Кључне речи: историја филозофије, кријтика капитализма, елите, масовна производња, културни пад, културни несимизам, кријтика демократије, анти-егалитаријанизам