



UNDERSTANDING OF MULTICULTURALISM IN HISTORY

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Abstract: *This work analyses the role of history in intercultural communication and gives information about understanding history behind people from other cultures. This article also includes a significant amount of research has primarily been conducted by communication researchers or cross-cultural psychologists.*

Key words: *histories, culture, intercultural communication, communication, teaching, negotiations.*

To begin, Hall did not coin the term "intercultural." In his work on intersubjectivity and phenomenology, Edmund Husserl used intercultural for the first time as an adjective in German (1931/1974, page 234). This was one of its earliest conceptualizations. In a 1934 special issue of *The Journal of Religion* and a chapter titled "World-Religions and Intercultural Contacts" (in Haydon, 1934), Husserl's student William Ernest Hocking investigated what he referred to as "intercultural contacts" between various faiths. Archibald Baker (1927) referred to Y. P. Mei's comparative work on Zoroastrianism as "another contribution toward intercultural appreciation" and posed the following question in a subsequent article:

"How successfully do the ethics and ideals of each religion meet the requirements of that newer idealism and world conscience that is actually in the process of being formed as an inevitable result of the intercultural relationships of the modern world?" (both Baker, 1929; Elberfeld, 2008b cites both).

However, prior to the twentieth century, individuals concerned about localized thinking or narrow perspectives displayed intercultural thinking. "Humans must rise above the Earth... to the top of the atmosphere and beyond," Socrates said. "For only in this way will we comprehend the world in which we live" (Plato, *Phaedo*, 1925/1966)

We must first comprehend culture and the numerous definitions and perspectives it perpetuates before we can comprehend intercultural communication (Baldwin et al., 2006; 1952, Kroeber and Kluckhohn). We begin with a few early Enlightenment figures because, in large part, their contributions provided the ideological foundations that later philosophers, sociologists, and anthropologists needed to identify and study cultures (see Figure 3.1).



Intellectual pursuit and advancement were hallmarks of the Enlightenment. It may be prudent to begin with John Locke, despite the difficulty of identifying the entire cast of characters or the precise point of origin. Locke maintained in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690) that the human mind is a *tabula rasa* when it is born. Locke, an empiricist, argued in 1690 that all humans have the capacity to freely receive and reflect on experiences, and that ideas are not innate. Instead, they are derived from experiences—sensory or reflective—that we all have.

This significant departure from nativism, which can be traced back to Plato and Descartes, aimed to disprove the idea that some ideas are predetermined and that people are born "unequal." In addition, Locke's dismissal of universal agreement, which he argued people have different moral rules guided by hedonism, was caused by his rejection of innate ideas in 1690. This perspective shared some similarities with the earlier claims made by Jewish-Dutch philosopher Baruch Spinoza (1677) about the subjectivity of good and evil, as well as the later claims made by Scottish philosopher David Hume (1751) that morality is based on sentiment rather than reason. Moral and cultural relativism emerged from these rivers.

Many Enlightenment (*Siècle des Lumières*) thinkers in France focused on government, religion, and society criticisms of Roman Catholic dogmatism and despotism by monarchy. Judge Charles-Louis de Secondat, Baron de La Brède de Montesquieu examined societal unity through the lens of political systems in his seminal work *The Spirit of the Laws* (1748), noting the necessary "principles" and motivations of citizens within various political systems. Additionally, he proposed that geographic and climatic conditions influence people's behavior (in line with contemporary acculturation studies).¹

In a similar vein, in Volume I of his extensive encyclopedic work *Histoire naturelle* (1749–1804), naturalist Georges-Louis Leclerc (Comte de Buffon) rejected the Linnaean taxonomic system. Although anatomical structures can distinguish "species," he argued that the classification of species into categories based on those structures was artificial. Instead, individual beings are defined by how they interact with nature (a constructivist approach's foundation).

In contrast, in his 1755 book *Discourse on Inequality*, philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau presented a more dystopic viewpoint. Rousseau suggests that humans are born in a natural state—free, perfectible, savage—but become chained and restricted through contact with civil society and competition. This is similar to

¹ Moore, C., and P. Woodrow, 1998, page 1.



the Earl of Shaftesbury's earlier concept of "noble savage" (1699). In addition, Rousseau was of the opinion that citizens ought to be able to select the kinds of laws that they adhere to (1762) and that laws ought to be established by the "general will" of the people (cf. 1789, Sieyès, Lafayette, and Jefferson).

In his essay "Essay on the Manners and Spirit of Nations" (1756), the French philosopher Voltaire used the term "esprit des nations" to describe the characteristic quality of nations. He praised aspects of Chinese and Indian cultures in the same work, particularly Confucianism and Hinduism (while criticizing Buddhism) and branded Judaism and later Christianity for their intolerance of heresy as barbaric.

Immanuel Kant's (1781) attempt to reconcile transcendental idealism (knowledge through the senses) with rationalism (knowledge through reason) would revolutionize philosophy during the German Enlightenment (Aufklärung). Even though many people, including his student Johann Gottfried von Herder, "criticized" transcendental idealism, it was the impetus for German idealism, which influenced social science research, epistemology, and metaphysics. Since Kantian ethics presupposes that certain tenets are applicable to everyone, they run counter to the growing idea of moral relativism (see the section in "From Stereotypes and Prejudice to Intergroup Contact Theory" that discusses the Columbia University scholars).

Overall, this chapter has responded to criticisms of our field that call for clearer and more nuanced thinking about the dialectics and complex issues of culture (e.g., Croucher et al., 2015; 1999, Martin and Nakayama;

Moon, 2010; Edelman and Ogay, 2016). Although some of these streams of thought and practice have been tried to be selective, highlighted, and linked to later expressions, the material covered is admittedly extensive, but some issues have not been adequately addressed. This chapter is a limited first attempt to expand our understanding of the rich roots, diverse dimensions, and broad applications of study and practice branches that have contributed to the development of a robust family of cross- and intercultural fields and approaches to intercultural interaction. We have sought to "think ourselves away" from the familiar history of our field to reexamine it with critical eyes and fresh perspectives, just as C. Wright Mills did in *Sociological Imagination* (1959) by reviewing the historical legacies of particular thinkers at particular times to consider how they affected the relationships of people in their social-cultural contexts. This chapter expands, revises, and adds to existing narratives in an effort to identify historical precedents or sources of inspiration for contemporary challenges in the field.



Since the 1970s, a significant amount of research has primarily been conducted by communication researchers or crosscultural psychologists on empirical or binary-dimension cultural comparisons at the national level. This has left others working on different cultural levels or in other complex domains with the perception that established theories are either incompatible with their context or irrelevant to their scholarship. In addition, Barbara Szkudlarek (2009) and Kathryn Sorrells (2012) complain that there aren't any training methods that are specifically made to be used in crucial contexts, like dealing with relations between the majority and minority and social justice issues. Realizing that some of the early work in social psychology and intercultural education was already attempting to address related issues can be both inspiring and sobering.

Since the IC field is made up of many different paradigms, histories, goals, focuses, theories, etc., some of which are contested, As a result, it might be easier to understand, define, and use in a way that is both fair and flexible. Context, domain, or particular group can and should have a significant impact on the selection and application of the most relevant theories or structures, as well as on the development of new ones.

Models that incorporate these levels and provide conceptual maps of what kinds of training might address the kinds of inter-, culture-, communication-, and intersubjective representations at hand may be required after reviewing the variety of perspectives, approaches, and cultural levels involved when groups interact (Wan, 2015; or proposals for various levels, modalities, or practices, see

Kulich and Wang, 2015). Approaches that are dynamic, dialectic, or dialogic (Doron, 2009; 2011 by Ganesh and Holmes; 2014 Holmes; Martin & Nakayama, 1999) not only broaden our understanding of IC history and previous applications of intercultural training, but they also aid in the creation of context-specific models, techniques, and strategies for dealing with new circumstances and gaps in emerging categories.

All of the above points have been proven by scientists and research have been carried out.

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