

Antagonistic Tolerance

Competitive Sharing of Religious Sites in South Asia and the Balkans¹

by Robert M. Hayden

This paper develops a concept of competitive sharing to explain how sacred sites that have long been shared by members of differing religious communities and may even exhibit syncretic mixtures of the practices of both may come to be seized or destroyed by members of one of them in order to manifest dominance over the other. This competitive sharing is compatible with the passive meaning of "tolerance" as noninterference but incompatible with the active meaning of tolerance as embrace of the Other. Confusion of this passive noninterference with the active embrace of the Other is shown to lie at the heart of a critical weakness of most current explanations of nationalist conflict in the Balkans and communal conflict in India. Several discomfiting conclusions follow. One is that positive tolerance requires social stasis and thus is akin to a Lévi-Straussian myth, a "machine for the suppression of time." Second, democracy based on the consent of the governed may often be incompatible with programs that mandate positive tolerance. Third, syncretism may be fostered by inequality and is actually endangered by equality between the groups. Rather than try to avoid these uncomfortable conclusions, the paper adopts the argument of Max Weber and Tzvetan Todorov for the superiority of an "ethics of responsibility" over an "ethics of conviction," concluding that scholarly ethics requires reporting research findings that are contrary to that which many would prefer to be true.

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1. This paper was prepared as the Agehananda Bharati Lecture, Syracuse University, November 2000; the India sections were also discussed at the University of Cologne's Institute for Folklore and the European sections at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology's conference "Actually Existing Post-Socialisms," both in October 2000. A paper ancestral to this one was prepared for the

The intrastate violence since the late 1980s that has contributed the term "ethnic cleansing" to the international lexicon and seen mass murder in Rwanda and Bosnia and pervasive violence in Croatia, Kosovo, Somalia, Sierra Leone, East Timor, Sri Lanka, Chechnya, Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh, Kashmir, Israel/Palestine, and Colombia, among other places, has increased scholarly interest in tolerance as an attitude and toleration as a set of practices. What these terms mean is a matter of some debate among philosophers (see, e.g., Mendus 1989 and 2000). However, an influential answer is the commonsense one provided by Lord Scarman in a memorial lecture in 1983: "Live and let live" (Scarman 1987). It is this negative definition, tolerance as noninterference, that would seem to lie behind Michael Walzer's (1997:2) assertion that toleration makes possible "peaceful co-existence."

There is a difference, though, reflected in dictionary definitions of "tolerate," between the negative definition of noninterference ("to allow, permit, not interfere with") and a positive one of "to recognize and respect" while disagreeing with others' beliefs or practices. This difference is reflected in philosophy, with Locke's (1990 [1689]) pragmatic justifications for tolerance as noninterference being rejected by modern liberals in favor of Mill's (1975 [1859]) and later arguments for the positive benefits of pluralism and diversity (see Mendus 1989). Thus a contemporary read on "tolerance" would seem to require the affirmative action of recognizing and respecting beliefs or actions with which one disagrees (see Rawls 1971:205–21).

It is, apparently, easy to presume that coexistence by itself indicates tolerance as a positive moral attitude rather than simply a pragmatic one. Such is clearly the presumption of writers who assert that Bosnia had a "pluralistic culture," since "mosques, synagogues, Catholic and Orthodox churches stand side by side" (Sells 1996:148), and therefore "religious rivalry and violence were not part of Bosnia's heritage" because its people "tolerated each other" (Donia and Fine 1994:11). A similar set of presumptions drives much of the literature on communalism in India. The dominant schools of scholarship have tied the "construction" (Pandey 1992) or "emergence" (Freitag 1990) of Indian communalism to the colonial context. Richard Fox (1996) and Susanne and Lloyd Rudolph (1993) have suggested that communalism

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in India, like nationalism in Europe, is linked with modernity itself. The assumption seems to be that societies such as those of India and Bosnia operated under Millian principles valuing pluralism until modernity spread pragmatic Lockean attitudes of strategic calculation of the value of tolerating others.

Such analyses have come in response to the impending or actual rise to power of political parties based on what Peter van der Veer (1994a) calls "religious nationalism," in which political movements claim that members of different religions are thereby members of different nations and therefore have the right to be sovereign in their own states but must be subordinated in a state belonging to another community. In South Asia this claim by Muslims in the 1940s led to the partitioning of the subcontinent into India and Pakistan in 1947, while in and since the 1990s the Hindu majoritarian claim has been that India should be a Hindu state, not a secular one. In the case of Bosnia, the refusal of Serbs (Orthodox Christians) and Croats (Roman Catholics) to be subordinated in a state in which Muslims could be dominant produced a war in which Serbs and Croats fought to ensure that the state whose international recognition they themselves rejected was not imposed upon them while they created their own ethnically cleansed territories and governments (see Hayden 1993 and 2000).

These majoritarian religious nationalist movements are certainly contrary to the precepts of the secular democratic state as conceived by the architects of newly independent India's democracy in 1947 (Varshney 1993) and to the concepts of secularism and democracy now prominent in the European Union and the United States. Further, majoritarian violence against minorities has been threatened and carried out in the Balkans and in India. The terrible pain and death of this violence induce the wish by outsiders to stop it, in a time in which "social suffering" (Daedalus 1996) provokes intellectual and political response.

Since leaders of majoritarian nationalist movements often argue that the groups involved have always been enemies, evidence of past coexistence seems to provide an empirical counter to nationalist politics. Accordingly, the task of scholarship is "to contribute to a critically informed view of the plurality of histories and cultures which make up European identities" (Jones and Graves-Brown 1996:19) or to "find ways to argue against the use of the past for racist, sexist, and other oppressive purposes" by emphasizing "the fluidity and changeability of all groups and identities," insisting that "all histories must be open to critique" and exposing the interests of the groups responsible for creating and championing them (Bernbeck and Pollack 1996:S141-42).

Competitive Sharing

This propluralist, antiessentialist intellectual task may have some simplistic assumptions, however, in particular the idea that coexistence is evidence of a positive valorization of pluralism. Instead, coexistence may be a

matter of competition between members of different groups manifesting the negative definition of tolerance as passive noninterference and premised on a lack of ability of either group to overcome the other. A modern example of such negative tolerance is that of Israel for Palestinians (see, e.g., Rabinowitz 1997). In such a setting, there is much sharing of physical space but also a great deal of social segregation, which may not be based on overt hostility most of the time but is still based on a principle of separation.

The point may be made more clear by looking at pre-war Bosnia. The institution of *komšilik* (from Turkish) established clear obligations of reciprocity between people of different "nations" living in close proximity but also prohibited intermarriage between members of these religiously defined groups (Bringa 1995:66-84). Xavier Bougarel (1996:81-88)² has argued that this relationship based on proximity was antithetical to one based on intimacy: marriage. While the idea of "citizen" is abstract, he says, "neighbor" (*komšija*) was always concrete. Essentially, then, the practices of *komšilik* regulated relations between individuals as representatives of groups that chanced to live in close proximity while the groups themselves remained in structural opposition, unmixable.

Intermarriage and other forms of "mixing" of members of different groups are also carefully regulated in India. That castes compete through interaction is classic in Indian anthropology: an attempt to be included in activities by members of a previously excluded group is an attempt to improve the claimant's status but not to destroy the principle of exclusion of inferiors (see, e.g., Bailey 1969:95-100) and thus manifests competition, not tolerance. With regard to shrines, claims to rights to perform ceremonies or to reap the proceeds of offerings are the stuff of legendary lawsuits between members of the same castes (see, e.g., Appadurai 1981). Such claims are bids for dominance. There is no reason to think that similar claims by members of differing communities would not be assertions of equality by those subordinated or of dominance by those who wish to attain or defend that status or that the apparently equal interaction of members of two groups represents a tradition of "tolerance" instead of a moment in a long-term competition between the groups. At the same time, the likelihood that those who interact will be influenced by each other is high.

The view of some analysts that conflict and sharing are antithetical thus seems both unwarranted and even misleading. For example, the organizers of an April 2000 conference on the sharing and contesting of sacred space in South Asia explicitly wanted to counter the idea that "pilgrimage centers [in South Asia] are mainly arenas for conflict, for the contestation of religious and political power among the many religious communities of the

2. While I cite the French original, my own reading comes from the excerpts translated into Croatian and published in *Arkzin* ca. 1997.

Indian subcontinent.”³ Their counterargument is that these centers “have been shared among India’s diverse religious communities as often as they have been contested.” In contrast to those who would apply colonial and postcolonial terms to separate the religions of South Asia, they note the possibility of an “inclusive notion of a South Asian religion, whose apparent distinctions are mainly to be found in elite doctrine and political manipulation.”

This position is attractive with regard to the politics of India as a secular state, as it refutes the basic principle of Hindu nationalism (as opposed to Indian secular nationalism) that only Hinduism is indigenous to India (see Varshney 1993); instead, the real (authentic?) South Asian religious tradition is seen as being inclusive. Yet this image ignores several well-established principles of social analysis:

1. An “inclusive notion of a South Asian religion” is at least as much of an effort at the invention of tradition as are the exclusive images of Hindu nationalism.

2. The idea that contest and sharing are antithetical is negated by the entire field of game theory, at least since Schelling (1960).

3. A basic premise of any structuralism is that the content of set items that are distinguished from each other is less important than the distinction itself, a point made by Fredrik Barth (1969) more than three decades ago in regard to ethnic groups. Thus to say that identities are “fluid” or changeable does not mean that distinctions between groups are easily removed, and that there has been sharing of a saint and his site for many years does not imply that the divisions perceived today were not perceived earlier.

A concept of competitive sharing can accommodate the second and third of these points. It does not, however, offer much support for the invention of a tradition of tolerance and inclusion. This incongruence between accurate social science analysis and the demands of what most social scientists would like, on normative grounds, to see is troublesome.

Syncretism: A Condition of Tolerance or a Manifestation of Competition?

Syncretism, the combination of practices or beliefs derived from differing religious communities,⁴ is hardly

rare. The term is problematical, however, carrying a negative charge for those concerned with analyzing or maintaining putatively “pure” or “authentic” rituals and a positive one for those who criticize concepts such as cultural purity or authenticity or favor the idea of “multiculturalism” (Shaw and Stewart 1994). For the former, syncretism is a matter of violating categories and therefore should not occur. For the latter, since supposed boundaries are inherently malleable, syncretism is universal and therefore not an isolable phenomenon (cf. Werbner 1994:214).

The problematical nature of syncretism increases with the growth of the polarizations captured by the word “communalism” in Indian discourse and the comparable “fundamentalisms” elsewhere. One writer on South India has noted a “paradox” in which “there has been a growing tendency for groups and corporations to confront each other with growing hostility” while at the same time “links of syncretic religious practices or overlapping religious beliefs have persisted or even been reinvented” (S. Bayly 1989:463). This phenomenon is paradoxical only if syncretism is presumed to require amity between the groups so linked. It is precisely this assumption that seems to underlie the view that syncretism indicates tolerance.

This assumption has been questioned. Peter van der Veer, for example, has suggested that “‘syncretism’ in India . . . is a trope in the discourse of ‘multiculturalism’” and that scholarly discussion of “syncretic” phenomena such as Hindu worship of Sufi saints usually omits consideration of conflict or of the processes of expansion and contraction of religious communities (van der Veer 1994a:200–201). The key here is in the reference to processes. What is seen as a *condition* of synthesis may be better viewed as a *temporal manifestation* of relations between social groups, which continue to differentiate themselves from each other. The first view, that syncretism represents tolerance, presumes stasis, while the second brings time into the analysis.

When time is put into the analysis, syncretism seems to be a measure at a given moment of relations between members of groups that differentiate themselves, and to see it as tolerance instead of competition is misleading. Of course, from the standpoint of secular politics, this static view of relations between groups is preferred, since

3. This quote and those in the remainder of this paragraph are from a description of the conference “Vital, Mutual, and Fatal Attractions: The Sharing and Contesting of Sacred Space in South Asia,” Department of Religious Studies, University of California at Santa Barbara, April 15–16, 2000.

4. The phrase “differing religious communities” is intentionally inexplicit. While syncretism may be most obvious when it manifests syntheses of practices belonging to widely differing traditions, the same term may apply to varying forms within a world religion (e.g., Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant Christianity or Sunni and Shia Islam), within one of those forms (e.g., the varieties of Protestant Christianity), or perhaps between them (e.g., the Uniate, “Greek Catholic,” or “Byzantine Catholic” churches, which employ Orthodox rituals and liturgies but recognize the supremacy

of the pope). John Locke’s definition is useful: “Those who have one and the same rule of faith and worship are of the same religion, and those who do not have the same rule of faith and worship are of different religions.” By this standard, he saw “Turks and Christians” as being of different religions “because these take the Holy Scriptures to be the rule of their religion, and those the Koran,” but also “papists and Lutherans,” since “though both of them profess faith in Christ, and are therefore called Christians, yet they are not of the same religion: because these acknowledge nothing but the Holy Scriptures . . . [and] those take in also traditions and decrees of popes” (Locke 1990 [1689]:74). The most important point is that members of these various communities distinguish themselves from each other. Of course, whether a particular practice is seen as being internal to a given religion may itself be the subject of debate, but the model proposed here is processual and thus anticipates such competition.

secularism presumes that competition between religiously defined groups is an impermissible basis for electoral politics. However, insofar as a politics is based on stasis, it cannot match changes in society. In this regard, the original formulations of the Constitution of India, which promised freedom not only to practice religion but also to propagate it, may have been more realistic than the 1976 emergency amendments that pronounced India a secular state as well as a socialist one (cf. Madan 1987:756–57). The original formulation envisioned changes in the composition of the society, while the later version seems to have envisioned a static social situation.

Comparisons: South Asia and the Balkans

It is not very fashionable now in cultural anthropology to turn from the specifics of a local setting to comparisons; most anthropologists seem more inclined to apply Occam's Hair Growth Tonic than to wield Occam's Razor on the ground that the latter "shaves off all the interesting particulars" (Verdery 1999:21–22).⁵ However, a comparison between South Asia and the Balkans seems particularly appropriate for looking at syncretism and (in)tolerance. In these regions, medieval military conquests installed Muslim regimes over non-Muslim peoples; in both of them the Muslim empires decayed and were replaced by European ones, especially in Bosnia (see Bakić-Hayden 1997:7–12). In both the encounter between Islam and non-Muslim indigenous populations produced syncretic saints and mystical orders the Islamic nature of which is often debated by other Muslims (see, e.g., van der Veer 1992[Sufis]; Birge 1965; Hasluck 1973 [1929]:565–71 [Bektashi Dervishes]); Eaton 1978).

In both regions as well, religion provides the major criterion distinguishing different communities among people who speak the same local dialects of the same languages: "nations" (*narod*) in the former Yugoslavia (Serbs as Orthodox Christians, Croats as Roman Catholics, Bosniaks as Muslims), "communities" in South Asia (Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis, etc.). The reference here is to religion of attribution rather than, necessarily, of adherence: one is assumed to be a Muslim, Hindu, Orthodox Christian, or Roman Catholic not on the basis of profession of faith but rather by birth into the community associated with the faith. Thus the phenomenon of "religious nationalism" is common to both regions. This paper looks at contests over religious institutions in India and in the Balkans, the better to understand each.

Both because of the provenance of my own field data and because of the existence of a well-developed body of scholarship on tolerance, secularism, and democracy in India, the most detailed study in this paper deals with contested saints in India. This phenomenon is then compared with a smaller existing literature on similar con-

testations in the Balkans in order to develop an argument that can explain patterns in each region more fully than the existing literature on either alone. While these two regional comparisons cannot be regarded as constituting a sample in the formal sense, the concepts developed here may have applicability to other encounters in other places outside of the interfaces between Muslims and non-Muslim peoples.

A Contested Saint in a Communally Mixed Region in India

In October 1990 Hindus from Bombay, organized by the Shiv Sena party, took over and transformed a shrine at the village of Madhi, Pathardi Taluka, Ahmadnagar District, Maharashtra. The shrine was and is revered by Muslims as the *dargā* of Shah Ramzan Mahi Savar and by Hindus as the *samādhi*⁶ of Sri Kanobah, or Kanifnath. The dual character of the site had been noted in the *Bombay Gazetteer of 1885* (p. 726), which also stated that a yearly fair was held in the saint's honor in "the dark fifth of *Phalgun*" and that this fair was attended annually by 20,000 to 30,000 pilgrims, Hindu and Muslim.

Despite the site's identification by Hindus as a *samādhi*, the *Gazetteer* noted that it was decorated in the manner of a *dargā*. The best description of the site was given by a sub-judge who visited it in 1927 in the course of hearing litigation over it:⁷

I would call the place a Darga rather than a Samadhi as it has every appearance of a Mahomedan tomb. There are no footprints or Shiv Ling or other Hindu signs to be found on the square round the resting place of the saint which would have been the case if the place was a Samadhi. Even the ostrich eggs and coloured glass globes that are found hanging on the saint's resting place preclude any idea of calling the place a Samadhi. Indeed a witness Ex. 114 on behalf of the [Hindu] defendants went to the length of saying that he had seen 2 Nandis or stone bulls inside the Samadhi building and had even seen carved fig-

6. A *dargā* is an elaborate complex of buildings connected with the tomb of a Sufi saint in India, a focus of veneration if not worship (Saiyed 1989). A *samādhi* is the site at which a Hindu saint is considered to have "shed his body" but still to be present; like a *dargā*, the *samādhi* is a focus of veneration as a locus of spiritual authority.

7. Decision of Shevgaon civil suit 244 of 1927, p. 6. Copies of this decision and of all other court documents and records referred to in this paper are in my possession. To the best of my knowledge, the court decisions were unreported and are not otherwise available. The file of court documents was kept by the descendants of the Muslim litigants, who made it available to me. It contains not only judicial opinions but also copies of the complaints served on defendants, briefs by the parties, transcripts of testimony (some in Marathi, some in English), and exhibits introduced at trial. While the "extended-case method" of legal anthropology has a venerable history (Van Velsen 1967), it is unusual for scholars to have available such a complete written record of a village lawsuit in an extended case that lasted for more than a century.

5. While my approach is explicitly in opposition to that of Katherine Verdery, I owe her much for our exchanges on this issue.

ure representing a symbol of the God Siva on the Samadhi square but I saw neither the Nandi nor the symbol of the God Siva. On the contrary the carved figure that I saw below the green covering over the tomb of the saint gave me the impression of a mahomedan mark.

In or about 1977, however, followers of a Hindu holy man added marble footprints, removed the green covering from the *dargā* and replaced it with a saffron-colored cover, and removed other Islamic icons, such as the ostrich eggs, glass balls, and the *basmala* inscription, thus beginning the physical transformation of the structure from resembling a *dargā* into resembling a *samādhi* (Duncan and van Skyhawk 1997:418). The 1990 Shiv Sena activists completed the transformation, planting a large trident in front of the main shrine and tearing down a roofless three-sided structure next to it that was widely thought to have been a mosque (*Sarvamat*, October 10, 1990; *Kesari*, November 10, 2000). They also tore up a sacred pomegranate associated with the Muslim identity of the saint and replaced it with *tulsi* or “holy basil” (*Ocymum sanctum* [Molesworth 1991 (1857):385], which is sacred to Hindus (see Malhotra, Shah, and Hayden 1993). A few people who tried to obstruct this transformation of the shrine were arrested and charged with offending the religious sensibilities of the Hindus, an action doubtless related to the potential for wider political ramifications of the takeover: the Shiv Sena had shut down the taluk center Pathardi and was threatening to shut down Ahmadnagar itself.

The 1990 Hinduization of the shrine was almost certainly connected with the increase in Hindu action in the Babri Masjid–Ram Janmabhumi confrontation at that time (see van der Veer 1994a, Gopal 1991), which led in 1992 to the destruction of a 16th-century mosque on the grounds that it had been built on the site of an earlier Hindu temple (Ludden 1996). It is certainly tempting to see the transformation of the Madhi shrine from an apparently Muslim complex into an apparently Hindu one as a manifestation of a specifically modern form of “communalism” as opposed to the presumed tolerance of earlier times. Duncan and van Skyhawk (1997:415) assert precisely this with regard to the shrine at Madhi and also say that scholarship should reinforce what they see as the authentic tradition of tolerance.

Yet the transformation of the Madhi shrine in 1990 is actually only the latest step in contests over the identity of the shrine and of the saint himself stretching back to its founding, the outcomes of which have depended ultimately on the ability of one side or the other to invoke the ruling power of the larger polities which have controlled the territory in which the shrine is located. At the same time, the centuries-long existence of the contest itself reveals local accommodation to the realities of life in a mixed region, even as the religious communities within it have occasionally been polarized by the larger issues of control over the shrine.

In a region in which Ahmadnagar is separated from Srirampur by only 30 miles, coexistence of Muslims and

Hindus is a way of life, even if it has never been free of tension, conflict, and occasional violence (see Gokhale 1984).⁸ Ahmadnagar was founded as a Muslim kingdom in the 15th century, supposedly by a Muslim warrior whose father was said to have been a Brahmin who had been captured and converted to Islam while a small boy (Gadre 1986:28). As this founding story itself symbolizes, one result of the long existence of Muslim kingdoms in the Ahmadnagar region was the establishment of a sizable Muslim population, along with a sizable number of clearly Muslim shrines, tombs, mosques, and other buildings of “medieval” origin. Another result of the complex political history of this mixed region is the existence of a group of saints each of whom bears both a Muslim and a Hindu identity. Many of the *nav nāth* (nine saints) of western Maharashtra seem to exhibit this form of dual identity.⁹

Of these saints, Kanifnath/Shah Ramzan Mahi Savar is perhaps the most popular. The festival that drew 20,000–30,000 pilgrims in 1885 drew 200,000–300,000 in the early 1990s. Now as then, these pilgrims are both Hindus and Muslims, and their rituals combine Hindu and Muslim practices. Flags are taken to the shrine, an element of Hindu practice, but the staffs of these flags, even the saffron-colored ones carried by Hindus, are topped with a distinctly Muslim crescent. Offerings are made to two sets of ritual specialists, Muslim *mujavari* and Hindu *pujari*, who themselves interact. Both Hindus and Muslims become possessed by the saint, and Hindus and Muslims who are possessed by other spirits are treated at Madhi. Offerings include sweets, peacock feathers, and meat (Hulbe, Vetschera, and Khomne 1976).

The syncretistic nature of the rituals at Madhi, however, fairly reflects the syncretistic identity of the saint. While the stories told about Kanifnath/Shah Ramzan Mahi Savar vary in detail, they all agree that he was born a Hindu but converted to Islam. The version collected “from the temple priests” by Hulbe, Vetschera, and Khomne (1976) in 1975 recounts that the saint was born in 1300 and was raised by his guru, Jalindernath, who taught him how to perform many miracles, including flying. Once Kanifnath flew over the town of Paithan, thereby annoying one Sadat Ali, who was widely known for his powers. Sadat Ali threw a shoe at Kanifnath, bringing him down and demonstrating Sadat Ali’s superior power. Kanifnath became the student of Sadat Ali and converted to Islam. At the same time, he is reported to have had the habit of going

8. Of course, one of the most important statements of Indian secular nationalism (see Varshney 1993), Nehru’s *Discovery of India*, was written in the fort at Ahmadnagar while Nehru was imprisoned there by the British in 1944. The book was dedicated to his “colleagues and co-prisoners” in the prison, “a cross-section of India,” with special mention given to Maulana Abul Kazam Azad, Govind Ballabh Pant, Narendra Deva, and M. Asaf Ali (Nehru 1946:iv, v), who seem to personify the syncretic secularism of the Congress party during the struggle for independence.

9. I say “seem to exhibit” such dual identities because the *nav nāth*, identified as such and as opposed to Sufi saints of the Deccan, have not been the subject of study, as far as I can tell. The view that they exhibit dual identities is based on brief fieldwork in Ahmadnagar District and adjacent districts in 1992.

to the river with a clay pot, playing a flute, and being followed by his pet cow. When other students of Sadat Ali killed the cow to make *pullao*, Kanifnath brought the cow back to life, thus emptying the *pullao* of beef. After leaving Paithan he stayed at several other places in Maharashtra before settling for his last ten years at Madhi and, depending on one's point of view, either dying or taking *samādhi* there around 1390.

This account provides a connection between saintly traditions usually treated separately, the Sufi saints of the Deccan (see Eaton 1978; Ernst 1992) and the *nāth* yogis (Briggs 1982 [1938]). Much of the pattern of worship at Madhi seems related to that reported for Sufi saints in the region. At the same time, Kanifnath is identified within the *nāth* tradition as "Kānipā, pupil of Jālandhar" (Briggs 1982 [1938]:31, 75, 77). To be sure, it has long been noted that Sufi shrines are, in van der Veer's words (1994b:205), "the centre of Hindu-Muslim syncretism in India," and he has analyzed a saint in Gujarat whose shrine is referred to by Muslims as a *dargāh* and by Hindus as a *samādhi* (van der Veer 1992 and 1994b). However, even while acknowledging that Hindus participate in worship of the saint "on their own terms" (1994b:207), van der Veer seems tacitly to accept the Muslims' view of the saint's identity as a Muslim. In contrast, the Madhi saint clearly has two competing identities, and viewing the matter in this way helps one to understand the patterns of long-term conflict over the identity of the shrine.

One need not be too great a specialist in symbolic analysis to interpret the story of Kanifnath's conversion to Shah Ramzan: Hindu knowledge succumbing to Muslim knowledge and a master of Hindu powers being brought down in a grossly insulting manner, by a Muslim's shoe. The conversion of the saint to Islam may show submission to this superiority of Muslim knowledge and power. Similar stories of "magical contests, followed by conversion, with territorial consequences" (Digby, quoted in Lawrence 1984:117) are found elsewhere in India, including even the detail of the shoe. Yet at the same time, few Muslims can ever have so closely resembled Lord Krishna, playing the flute by the river, accompanied by his pet cow. And if feeding and protecting cows is meritorious for a Hindu, surely turning the beef in a Muslim's *pullao* back into a living cow is the ultimate meritorious act.¹⁰ The

10. Tales of saintly resurrection of slaughtered cows are apparently not uncommon in the Deccan. Carl Ernst (1992:234) provides an inversion of the Shah Ramzan story in which a Hindu raja stole and butchered the cow of a Muslim woman, whose appeals for help led a Muslim saint to resurrect the cow; he also records a variant in which the offending raja was a Jain (1992:339 n. 136). Yet another variant is reported from Karwar, regarding the Sufi saint Shah Karimuddin of Sadashvigar. In this variant, one of the saint's Muslim followers killed a Nandi bull, enraging the local Lingayats, who complained to the saint. The saint then brought the bull back to life, an act which made the Lingayat leader Joting Baba become his follower (*Indian Express*, August 4, 1994; I am grateful to Carl Ernst for providing me with this account). An anthropologist is tempted to return to Lévi-Strauss's analysis of myth as the local arrangement of sets of "mythemes" and their inversions. In any event, the local political implications of the several arrangements of events and characters in these variants of what we might call the larger "Myth of the Resurrected Bovine" seem fairly obvious.

conversion of the saint takes on special significance in that the period of his life is precisely that in which Muslim rule was established over this part of India. In this regard, the depiction of the founder of Ahmadnagar itself as being the son of a converted Hindu acknowledges the importance of political hegemony for personal identity: powerful people did in fact convert to Islam.

The buildings in the shrine at Madhi were constructed over many years, by Muslims at the time when they were politically dominant and by Hindus (including a grandson of Sivaji) when they were politically dominant (*Bombay Gazetteer of 1885*, pp. 726–27). All the buildings were, however, distinctly Islamic in style. The main shrine was topped with a spire ending in what seems to be a Muslim crescent but with a small central spike that makes it resemble what the trial court judge in 1927 described as "a mixture of the crescent and the Hindu Trishul."¹¹ A Hindu explanation for the Islamic style of shrines is that the saints, being prescient, recognized that Muslims would rule the region and so decreed that their *samādhis* be constructed in a Muslim style in order to protect them. This explanation was offered to the trial court in 1927 and repeated to me and my colleagues in 1992.

Surely some part of the contest over the shrine is based on material interests: control over the offerings (including money, fruits, other foods) made by tens or hundreds of thousands of pilgrims is no small matter. But control over the shrine also means control over some of the public manifestations of the saint's identity. For this reason, attempts by state organs—Muslim emperors, British Indian courts, and the courts of independent India—to define rights in the shrine amount to grants to define many aspects of the identity of the saint himself. Thus, to a large extent, the identity of this converted Muslim saint has depended upon the configurations of power in the polity in which he lived and those that have succeeded it.

The Legal Division of Interests in the Shrine at Madhi

The Muslims of Madhi trace their right to the shrine to a grant from Aurangzeb, and they have produced in court a grant document, in Persian, on handmade paper bearing the seal of Shah Alam II (ruled 1759–1806) granting their ancestors the right to collect offerings at the shrine and to manage its property.¹² The Hindus, for their part, claim

11. Decision of Shevgaon civil suit no. 244 of 1927, p. 12. At another site associated with Kanifnath, Kapervadi, visited in 1992, one corner of the room contains a carved crescent, the other a *trishul*.

12. The document was viewed with great suspicion by the trial court judge, who considered it "difficult to accept it as a genuine document two centuries old when the ink spreads out with the application of water" (Decision of Shevgaon civil suit no. 244 of 1927, p. 12). The appeals court was less suspicious but ruled out consideration of the document because a translation had not been produced on time (District Court of Ahmadnagar, Appeal no. 123 of 1929, decision at 9–10). A translation of the grant was provided to the Bombay High Court (Appeal no. 310 of 1931, exhibit). I examined this document, now in the possession of a Muslim history

that their rights derive from a grant by an unspecified Hindu king. The first evidence of conflict over the shrine at Madhi appears in suit in 1887 by a Hindu claiming a share of offerings made at the shrine. While the Hindu ultimately admitted that the Muslim held the hereditary right to the offerings, an agreement to share some revenues was reached, and there is no further record of disagreement for another 36 years.¹³

In August 1923, however, the Muslims of Madhi requested a restraining order, in order to prevent a breach of the peace, against Hindus who wanted to take a procession to the shrine. The Hindus replied that if they were not permitted to make their procession a breach of the peace would ensue. On August 31 the magistrate issued the restraining order, but it was quashed by a higher magistrate on December 12, 1923.¹⁴ On August 11, 1924, the matter came back to court, and a new magistrate visited the shrine and issued a restraining order against the Hindus, again to prevent a breach of the peace.¹⁵

In 1925 the magistrate was asked by a group of Hindus to prevent the Muslims from completing a roofless building next to the main shrine. The building was identified by the Muslims as a mosque and by the Hindus as "a resting place for pilgrims at the time of the annual fair." Yet a third magistrate was assigned to the case, who again viewed the matter as a threat to public peace. This magistrate displayed a certain hostility to the Muslims and concluded that in order to construct a roof on the building they would have to establish their right to conclusive control over the building in a civil court. In the meantime, he issued a restraining order against the Muslims.¹⁶

On February 28, 1926, the magistrate, noting that a "riot" had occurred recently at Madhi, ordered that both the "mosque" and the main shrine be attached by the police in order to "stop the question of possession so as to avoid unlawful fights over it" but to permit "bona fide pilgrims and worshippers to enter the building for the only purpose of worship or presentation of offerings."¹⁷ However, another "riot" occurred at the shrine on September 6, 1926, leading to charges against four Muslims and seven Hindus. While convicting all of the accused, the magistrate focused on the Muslims, saying that the Hindu procession "was not attended by any music and . . . by the route taken it was not passing by any religious building of the mahamedens." Each defendant was then

financed Rs. 50, "in default to suffer rigorous imprisonment for one month," and also required to post a peace bond of Rs. 50 for one year.¹⁸

In January 1927 the Muslims asked that the attachment of the shrine effected in 1926 be removed. However, on March 15, 1927, the magistrate took possession of all buildings at the shrine for the duration of the annual fair and excluded 23 named Muslims and 22 named Hindus, the major actors in the dispute.¹⁹

Shortly thereafter the Muslims followed the advice of the magistrate in 1924 and filed a suit asking for a declaration that they had the exclusive right to offerings at the shrine, an injunction against the Hindus to prevent their taking any share of the offerings, and a refund of certain offerings. In a lengthy opinion, the judge explored the history of the shrine and ultimately found that the Muslim plaintiffs were entitled to *half* of the offerings made at the temple. He did not explain who had the right to the other half, since that question was not before him.²⁰ This decision was upheld by the District Court at Ahmadnagar²¹ and ultimately by the Bombay High Court.²² By these court actions the Muslims, who had set out to prove their exclusive claim to management of the shrine, instead wound up losing the right to half of the offerings.²³

The Muslims' troubles did not stop with this loss in court. A year after independence, in August 1948, a Muslim leader from Ahmadnagar wrote to the district superintendent of police complaining that the local authorities in Madhi, who were Hindus, were initiating Hindu practices at the *dargā*, saying "There is now our Rajya" and that they could therefore do as they pleased. The letter noted that "in the regime of the present Popular Government, our Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawahirlal [*sic*] Nehru, has promised to safe-guard the rights of minorities and hence the Muslims are seeking justice at his hands."²⁴ Apparently they did not get it, for in May 1951 the same man wrote to the minister for home of the Government of Bombay complaining about mistreatment by the local authorities and saying that these "lower officials still cherish communal activities which are likely to defeat the very ideals and the policy of the secular state."²⁵

Nor did their legal problems end. Apparently unknownst to the Muslims, some of the Hindus applied in

professor in Aurangabad, in 1992 but am not qualified to assess its legitimacy.

13. An English translation of the Marathi *kabalyat* formed Exhibit 74 in Bombay High Court, Appeal no. 310 of 1931.

14. Decision of the Sub-Divisional Magistrate, I Class, S.D. Ahmadnagar, Criminal Appeal no. 197 of 1923. The facts of the case and the actions of the Sub-Divisional Magistrate, II Class, are taken from this opinion.

15. "Reasons for Issuing Order under Sec. 144 Cr. P. Code at Madhi," Mag. II Class, Madhi, August 11, 1924.

16. "Reasons for Issuing Order under Sec. 144(1) Cr. P. Code," Mag. II Class, Pathardi, October 2, 1925.

17. Order in the Proceedings under Section 147 Cr. P. C. as regards the Deosthan at Madhi, February 28, 1926.

18. Register of cases tried by R.B. V. G. Mahanjani, Sub-Divisional Magistrate, I Class, Ahmadnagar.

19. Order under Section 43 of the District Police Act, Ahmadnagar, March 15, 1927, no. MAG/misc 213.

20. *Ahmed Buva Madu Buva Patil Mujawar v. Kondiram Mahadji Madhikar*, civil suit no. 244 of 1927 in the Court of the Sub-Judge at Shevgaon, decided April 15, 1929.

21. Appeal no. 123 of 1929, decided September 30, 1930.

22. Appeal no. 310 of 1931, decided June 18, 1935.

23. Their Hindu opponents were in litigation against each other from 1937 until 1967 over the division of their half of the offerings, but their case need not concern us here.

24. Letter from Khan Saheb M. M. Patel, to the District Superintendent of Police, Ahmadnagar, August 4, 1948.

25. Letter from Khan Saheb M. M. Patel to the Minister for Home Department, Government of Bombay, May 10, 1951.

1952 to have the shrine registered as a religious charitable trust, with themselves named as trustees. While no documents or guidelines were filed at that time to regulate management of the trust, the assistant charity commissioner of Nashik Region ruled in 1990 that the trust was valid and that the Hindus were its managers.²⁶ An attempt by the Muslims to obtain recognition of the rights awarded them by the Bombay High Court in 1935 was rejected by the commissioner on the ground that "since the trust is registered as a public trust, previous orders of the courts cannot apply to the trust."²⁷ Thus the Muslims of Madhi lost control over the shrine through court actions beginning in 1923 and ending in 1990.

Polities, Politics, and the Identity of the Saint

While the identity of the saint was contested almost from the start, under Muslim rule his public persona (if such may be ascribed to a saint) was that of a Muslim under the control of Muslim custodians of the shrine and its lands. During the British period, when neither Muslims nor Hindus ruled, Hindus obtained state recognition of rights in the shrine and its proceeds. In independent India, where Hindus rule locally even in the secular state, control over the saint has been granted by state organs to Hindus, and his public persona has been transformed to that of a Hindu.

Stated so bluntly, the transformation of the shrine and of the identity of the saint seems a rather sordid story in pure power and oppression. Yet I think that, instead, it supplies the raw material for reconceptualizing the role of the state in regulating religion and the development of "communalism," and thus of "intolerance," under colonial rule.

While we cannot know with certainty the reasoning of the Muslim rulers who were establishing polities in the Ahmadnagar region in the 14th century, there is little doubt that they intended to set up governmental and revenue systems that would benefit themselves. The advantages of becoming a Muslim in these circumstances were probably related to the conversions that took place, but in any event the desirability of framing requests in the ways most favored by the rulers is an old lesson of practical politics. Defining the saint, Kanifnath, as a Muslim and establishing a *dargā* for him made sense in a polity in which Islam was favored. At the same time, Hindu claims to rights in the shrine were so unlikely to be recognized that there would have been little point in attempting to seek official sanction for them.

The British rulers did not have particular interests in fostering either Islam or Hinduism, but they *did* have an interest in fostering "peace" between these communities, and it is precisely in terms of "preventing a breach of the peace" that the conflicts over control of

the shrine were phrased in the 1920s. Confronted with conflicting claims and interested in effecting "compromise" between the parties, the British courts were prepared to recognize that the Hindus had a "right" to some portion of the proceeds of the shrine. This "recognition" in effect *granted* such a right to the Hindus, since the question for dispute became the extent of the right, not whether it existed.

This shift in official attitudes changed the bargaining positions of the two sides, since the Hindus could hope to obtain state support for their efforts to gain control over the shrine and its proceeds. From this perspective, then, the syncretic nature of the shrine was always a reflection of contestation of peoples who used practices associated with the beliefs of rulers to justify appeals for intervention on their own behalf, rather than a condition of natural tolerance disrupted by the machinations of the colonial state.

Competition over Shrines in the Balkans

To test this idea it is useful to turn to another frontier between Islamic and non-Islamic peoples in a context of colonialisms differing in structure and cultural background from that of the British in India. Just before the start of World War I, F. W. Hasluck (1973 [1929]) carried out monumental studies of the transformation in the Balkans of Christian sites into Islamic ones and the reverse and of "ambiguous sanctuaries" claimed by members of both faiths.²⁸ He interpreted this competition as a long-standing practice in "the ancient world" (Hasluck 1973 [1929]:564–65):

A religion carried by a conquering race or by a missionary priesthood to alien lands superimposes itself, by force or persuasion, on an indigenous cult; the process is expressed in mythological terms under the figure of a personal combat between the rival gods or of the "reception" of the new god by the old. Eventually either one god or the other succumbs and disappears or is relegated to an inferior position; or again, the two may be more or less completely identified and fused. . . . The "ambiguous" sanctuary, claimed and frequented by both religions [Christianity and Islam], seems to represent a distinct stage of development—the period of equipoise, as it were—in the transition both from Christianity to Bektashism and, in the rare cases where political and other circumstances were favorable, from Bektashism to Christianity.

Hasluck's work concentrated on churches that were transformed into mosques, attempts to transform churches into mosques which failed because of what was considered bad luck, ill omen, or witchcraft (e.g., repeated collapse of minarets, falls by muezzins calling

26. Assistant Charity Commissioner, Nashik Region, judgment on application no. 27 of 1987.

27. Assistant Charity Commissioner, Nashik Region, judgment on application no. 193 of 1989.

28. Actually, his studies were even broader in their details, with, for example, footnote references to sites shared by Muslims and Jews (1973 [1929]:69 n. 1).

prayer from the minaret, hauntings and apparitions), the destruction of churches, the desecration and secularization of churches (turned into baths, storehouses, and the like), and the visitation by Muslims of Christian sites that remained Christian.

Sharing of ritual space continued at least until the early 1990s in Kosovo. Duijzings (1993, 2000) observed Muslim Gypsies as pilgrims at the celebration of Assumption Day at the Serbian Orthodox monastery of Gračanica in 1986, 1990, and 1991. He reports that Muslim Albanians and Serbs took part in pilgrimages to the 14th-century Zočište Monastery and Church of the Healers near Orahovac but that by 1991 increasing displays of hostile nationalism by Serbs had led Albanians to boycott the pilgrimage. In September 1999 the Zočište church was blown up, presumably by Albanians, despite the supposed protection of NATO troops (Glas Kosova i Metohije 1999). However, in an apparent echo of the failed transformation reported 80 years earlier by Hasluck, it was reported in February 2001 that the local Albanians of Zočište had decided to rebuild the monastery and church because four of the Albanian men who had participated in its destruction in 1999 had become psychologically ill shortly thereafter, manifesting a curse that had descended on the Albanian people (*Politika*, February 21, 2001).²⁹ Duijzings also reports on disturbances at the Ostrog monastery in Montenegro when Muslims have appeared to worship and the Orthodox priests of the monastery have felt threatened and mentions (2000:85 n. 17) the removal in about 1996 of a Roman Catholic altarpiece from a church in Montenegro that had been shared by Orthodox and Catholic worshippers. Finally, in 2001 a Serbian Orthodox monk reopened the Orthodox monastery in Lepavina, Croatia, which had been abandoned in 1991, and now local people visit him, regardless of religion, for help in curing various diseases (Milorad Pupovac, personal communication, August 8, 2001).

It is clear that sharing of sites, saints, and even ritual practices was common in the Balkans during the Ottoman period and even afterwards, just as it has been common in India. The question then becomes whether such sharing should be seen as indicating tolerance or as a manifestation of competition.

Shrines as Symbols of Political Dominance in South Asia and the Balkans

Since the triumph in India (but not in Pakistan) of the secular nationalism embodied in Nehru's *Discovery of India* (1946), the standard interpretations of communalism have blamed its rise on British imperial tactics of

"divide and rule." This view has been stated succinctly by Bipan Chandra (Chandra et al. 1989:408):

British rule and its policy of Divide and Rule bore special responsibility for the growth of communalism in modern India, though it is also true that it could succeed only because of internal social and political conditions. The fact was that the state, with its immense power, could promote either national integration or all kinds of divisive forces. The colonial state chose the latter course. . . . Every existing division of Indian society was encouraged to prevent the emerging unity of the Indian people.

Whatever the validity of this assertion with regard to political actions such as the establishment of reserved legislative constituencies, it seems inapplicable to a situation such as the dispute over the control of the shrine at Madhi. Courts in British India were reactive, not proactive. At Madhi and often elsewhere, the British might instead be seen as attempting to put limits on attempts by Indian actors to divide themselves, since open conflict threatened the economic well-being of the district if not the political survival of the empire. Thus from an imperial point of view the aim was not so much "divide and rule" as "compromise divisions in order to maintain peace and profits." From this perspective, the "immense power" of the state actually depended on the regime's ability to balance competing claims.

Yet perhaps the sharp disjunction posited between "colonial policy" and "internal social and political conditions" is itself misleading. Ironically, it reduces the Indians to the status of pawns in a colonial game, failing to consider the ways in which the colonized subjects themselves manipulated the overarching structures of the state to reorder their own "internal social and political conditions." Instead of seeing the colonial period as marking a complete disjunction with "indigenous" social processes, it is possible to see the colonial encounter as simply one stage in the negotiation of social relationships that continued after its demise.³⁰

This reading, of course, inverts that of secular nationalism by finding causality in internal social and political conditions rather than in colonial policy. Yet even Chandra must see causality in this way, since he acknowledges that the success of the imperial policy was dependent upon the internal divisions. With this in mind, the force of Gyanendra Pandey's analysis of the construction of secular nationalism is apparent: that secular nationalism was "rigorously conceptualized" in the 1920s in opposition to communalism rather than, as Nehru had

29. (http://www.politika.co.yu/2001/0221/01_14.htm). *Politika*, the major Serbian news daily and one of the pillars of the Milošević regime until October 5, 2000, is not necessarily the most reliable source for information on Kosovo. The *Politika* story is translated and amplified on the JUSTWATCH-L listserv, February 21, 2001 (<http://listserv.acsu.buffalo.edu/archives/justwatch-l.html>).

30. This section takes its cue from the heretical suggestion that we should not look at the period of state socialism as definitive of all that follows it but rather recognize that the development of social and economic relations before the socialist period is connected with those after socialism in ways that are obscured by an emphasis on the socialist period itself (see, e.g., Lampland 1991). A comparable heresy for India has recently been pronounced by David Lorenzen (1999), who argues that viewing the colonial period as the crucial formative setting for all of India's subsequent social institutions and politics is unfounded.

it, communalism's being the response fostered by the British to counter the "natural" tendency of Indians to unite (Pandey 1992:235–43).

If this analysis is correct, the symbolism of at least some Muslim shrines is different in the minds of many local actors from what it is to secular nationalists. To the secularist, the existence of the Muslim shrine symbolizes the syncretic nature of Indian culture, and its protection symbolizes the commitment of the state to the equality of all of its citizens. To many Hindus, however, the meaning of the shrine remains what it was when the shrine was constructed: the dominance of Muslims over Hindus. Protection of the shrine thus amounts to protecting a symbol of dominance rather than one of equality.

This interpretation of Indian colonial and postcolonial history receives support from analysis of events in the Balkans. Hasluck noted that day-to-day utilization of "ambiguous" shrines by members of two religious communities was utilitarian: "Practically any of the religions of Turkey may share the use of a sanctuary administered by another, if this sanctuary has a sufficient reputation for beneficent miracles" (Hasluck 1973 [1929]:68–69). Further, he described believers sharing such a site as being among the unlearned: "all sects meet on a common basis of secular superstition" rather than of doctrinal Muslim or Christian beliefs (p. 69). Such sharing could go on without any attempt to assert challenge to control over a site *unless* members of elites, "in the event of successful aggression, [stood] to gain both in prestige and materially" (p. 69). Duijzings (2000) has described how such elite-sponsored aggression has continued in the Balkans in the present century.

In the context of European colonialism succeeding Islamic rule, Bosnia provides some of the most interesting similarities with India. The Austro-Hungarian Empire took control over Bosnia from the Ottoman Empire in 1878 and saw its role as that of "a great Occidental Empire, charged with the mission of carrying civilization to Oriental peoples" (Austrian Administrator of Bosnia Benjamin Kallay, quoted in Donia 1981:14). While the Habsburg policy was aimed at preserving the status quo while reducing conflict between ethnic and religious groups (p. 22), Bosnian Muslims perceived their status and economic conditions as declining under colonial rule. There was intense Muslim opposition to the conversion of Muslims to Christianity, leading to the promulgation in 1891 of an ordinance regulating conversions that, in Donia's words (p. 59), "established the government as a referee between the contending religious communities in Bosnia." In 1890, Muslim leaders petitioned Vienna to rectify their situation, claiming, among other things, that mosques had been turned into churches and monasteries had been built on Muslim graveyards (p. 140). Clearly, the Muslims felt that their leading, not to say dominant, position in Bosnian society was diminished by Habsburg rule.

At the same time that Muslim dominance diminished, signs of Christian claims of higher status arose, literally, as churches. While Ottoman law did not allow for the

construction of new churches and required government permission even to repair old ones (Donia and Fine 1994: 39), the Ottoman Empire had permitted some Christian churches to be built in Ottoman cities. However, these churches were required to be much lower and smaller than the mosques in their vicinity, as can still be seen from the old Orthodox churches of Skopje and Sarajevo: similarly, houses of Muslims were by law taller than those of non-Muslims (Sugar 1977:76). The large churches whose proximity to mosques was cited in the 1990s as proof of Bosnia's "tradition" of "tolerance" were built after Ottoman rule ended, under Habsburg colonialism. The evenhandedness of the conflict-averse Habsburg Empire in Bosnia, like that of the British Empire in India, encouraged challenges by those previously subordinated.

A rather different case of long-term competition over territory through the creation of religious structures is provided by Mart Bax (1995) in his analysis of the Marian shrine of Medjugorje, which arose as a major Roman Catholic pilgrimage site following reports of visions of the Virgin Mary in 1981. Bax shows that the strategically important mountain was from the mid-19th century claimed separately by Serbs and by Croats, that this contest was effectively stalled by the communist regime after 1945, and that in the period when communism was failing the Marian visions permitted the establishment of the place as, definitively, Roman Catholic, hence Croat.

Of course, it is the abandonment of the pretense of evenhandedness that has allowed, even encouraged the destruction of religious shrines in the regions of the former Yugoslavia, while reconstruction of destroyed religious structures is still a matter of stating claims for status in the region in question. The churches destroyed in Kosovo are matched by the 600 mosques reported to have been destroyed by Serb forces in Bosnia in 1992–93 (*Balkan Conflict Report* 167 [August 2000]). The most noted of these was the 16th-century Ferhadija mosque in Banja Luka, which was not only razed but removed from the site in July 1993. Demands by the international community that the mosque be rebuilt were rejected by the government of the Republika Srpska, which is itself rebuilding a large Serbian church that had been destroyed by Croatian forces in 1943. A May 2001 attempt by the High Representative to install a cornerstone for a new Ferhadija provoked a riot by local Serbs seeking to prevent it (*Oslobodjenje*, May 7, 2001; *Reporter* [Banja Luka], May 23, 2001). Elsewhere in the Republika Srpska mosques are being reconstructed even though the Muslim population that they are to serve still lives in tents (Agence France-Press, August 27, 2000). The value of these mosques as symbols of the Muslim community's return and claim to political authority is clear from the speech of the second-highest Muslim religious figure in Bosnia on the occasion of the opening of a mosque in the town of Sanski Most in August 2000: that there was a need to build mosques because of all the churches being

built in Bosnia and Hercegovina (*Feral Tribune*, August 20, 2000).³¹

The use of shrines as symbols of dominance is not limited to South Asia and the Balkans. Meron Benvenisti (2000:270–306) has documented the intentional eradication of much of the Muslim character of the Palestinian landscape by the Israeli government after 1948. He includes pictures of a “Muslim holy tomb incorporated into an [Israeli army] war memorial” after being renamed from the Tomb of Sayadnih Huda to the Tomb of Judah (p. 21). Of about 140 mosques in Palestinian villages “abandoned” in 1948, he reports 100 were leveled at that time by Israeli forces and 20 are abandoned, while “six are being used as living quarters, sheep-pens or stables, carpentry shops or storehouses; six have been or are at present serving as museums, bars, or tourist sites of some sort; four are being used in whole or in part as synagogues; and two have been partially renovated for Muslim worship, but that use has been prohibited” (p. 289).

Of course, the contestation is still two-way, with Palestinians (re)converting or destroying Jewish shrines that come under their control. Thus in Nablus, following the capture of the town in 1967, Jews began to visit a Muslim shrine which, they claimed, was on the site of the Tomb of Joseph; increasingly frequent visits by Jewish settlers after 1975 led to a prohibition of Muslim worship there and, in 1992, the installation of Torah scrolls and the covering of the prayer niche indicating Mecca (Philps 2001). With Israeli withdrawal from Nablus in 1995, clashes between Palestinians and the Israeli soldiers who were still guarding the tomb and letting Jews but not Muslims worship there finally led to a battle that forced the military to withdraw. The Palestinians, again in control of the site, removed all sign of its use as a synagogue and uncovered the prayer niche. A clearer instance of contest is hard to find.

The Disjunctive Symbolism of Conjunctive Practice

Richard Eaton (1993:274) has noted for South Asia that the inclusion of a new set of supernatural agencies alongside of an established one is facilitated by a “pragmatic attitude towards religious phenomena” that is willing to incorporate whatever promises to work to bring about the ends for which supernatural intervention is sought; Hasluck, of course, had made the same argument from Balkans cases. Syncretism in this sense may depend on small communities of believers in the particular saint, shrine, or other focus of worship.

31. *Feral Tribune* is a long-standing critic of the nationalist parties in Croatia and elsewhere in the former Yugoslavia, and the title of this article (“Lord, Expand Croatia”) is a pun on a well-known Croatian nationalist phrase, “Lord, Protect Croatia.” The article is primarily about the speech of a Croatian Catholic priest at the dedication of a church on the Croatian-Montenegrin border, begging Christ and Mary, Mother of God, to help change the border in order to enlarge Croatia. Bax (1995) provides a study of religion and violence in this region.

This local pragmatic attitude may be contrasted, however, to that of actors on the wider social scale, particularly religious leaders who promote doctrinal consistency or political leaders who espouse communal incommensurability. The problem is that the local traditions of religions as faith, as way of life or practice, are susceptible to being overridden by the politics of religion as ideology, as “identifier of populations contesting for or protecting non-religious, usually political or socio-economic interests” (Nandy 1990:70).³²

Yet it is the simultaneous manifestation of religion as ideology that induces syncretism as faith, religion as practiced. The continued distinctions between worshippers of the saint as Hindus or Muslims make possible the identification of the dual personae of the saint himself. In this sense, syncretism, to be recognized as such, must be agonistic. The contested nature of the Ahmadnagar region has provided the context for the maintenance of these dual identities when other saints in places less contested have become more clearly Sufis or *nāths*, hence Muslim or Hindu and thus synthetic rather than syncretistic. In eastern Bengal, for example, indigenous Bengali superhuman agencies were gradually displaced by Islamic ones in the course of the gradual Islamization of the polity (Eaton 1993:chap. 10). Again, identity of religious manifestations follows that of the dominant forces in the polity, with Hindu elements in eastern Bengal declining as part of the process in which the society became more Islamic.

From this perspective, the real threat to the continued syncretistic nature of the saint of Madhi does not come not from the transformation of his public persona. To the contrary, as long as Muslims are acknowledged as a community in the region, it is likely that the practice of the believers will continue to incorporate Muslim elements in the worship of the saint. The danger to this part of the saint’s identity and to the local Muslim community comes from actions that bring the local practices of the faithful to the attention of the metropolitan practitioners of religion as ideology. It is not by chance that the Shiv Sena activists who transformed the Madhi shrine were from Bombay rather than from Madhi itself or even from Pathardi or Ahmadnagar. In the modern state, religion as faith is always vulnerable to the mobilization of religion as ideology.

Positive Tolerance as Mandating Stasis

The presumption that syncretic phenomena are noncompetitive rests on the assumption that a hybrid construction is itself a single identity. By this reading Kanifnath/Shah Ramzan Mahi Savar *must* have both faces of his shared identity or Bosnia *must* exhibit the intermingling

32. I find Ashish Nandy’s distinction between religion as faith and as ideology useful. However, his analysis employing them (1990), which calls for the rejection of “modernity” in favor of tolerance based on the “true” nature of the religious faiths of India, reifies these religions, simply imparting positive rather than negative loads to their essential qualities.

of Muslims, Croats, and Serbs. As Pamela Ballinger (n.d.) argues, however, such "authentic hybrids" acquire (invented) traditions and may be advocated as fiercely as any other essentialized identity. Paradoxically, when such hybrids are given recognition as conditions to be protected, the very processes of contestation that have created them are suddenly labeled improper. Thus even though the Muslim adherents of the saint, for example, may regard only his Muslim identity as real, this view is pronounced improper by those who insist on positive tolerance.

Tzvetan Todorov (2001) has noted the potentially oppressive nature of such a view of history, pointing out that "only dead cultures remain intact." Even more provocatively, he argues that pursuing a principle of restitution after a disruptive event would amount to "validating one moment of the past as the only authentic one," which would be "as much an abolition of history as a recognition of history." Ironically, then, a Millean assertion of positive tolerance may serve as an attempt to envision a static society: what we see now is what we must always see, since the identity of the saint, the shrine, or the group must be defended. With this timelessness in mind, Millean positive tolerance seems akin to Lévi-Straussian myth, a "machine for the suppression of time," in Leach's phrase. But to Lévi-Strauss myth only seemed to overcome contradictions that cannot, in fact, be bridged, a limitation that may also be true of Millean tolerance.

Democracy as a Lockean Project

I do not mean to reject secularism as a goal or to imply that Hindu attacks on Muslim shrines or Serbian destruction of Bosnian mosques or Kosovo Albanian destruction of Serbian churches are morally justified. The "ethnic cleansing" of areas of the Punjab in 1947, of Bosnia since 1992, and of Kosovo since 1999 alerts us to the probable consequences of voters' rejecting state structures premised on the equality of all citizens for ones premised on the sovereignty of the majority ethnic group (see Hayden 1999). However, there is a connection between democratization and nationalist conflict (Snyder 2000). Simply put, the temptation for political elites to invoke "the nation" and its putative interests in order to garner at least short-term support is very strong, because it usually succeeds. This is true even in places in which the call of nationalism is widely recognized as sirenical: in Bosnia, for example, in the spring of 1990 the population was overwhelmingly opposed to the legalization of nationalist political parties, yet by the fall of the same year almost all of these same people voted for separate nationalist parties (Goati 1992), and even after the war that resulted from this vote all of the leaders who had destroyed the republic were reelected. Not coincidentally, the countries in Eastern Europe that have been most successful in establishing multiparty democracies have been precisely those that were most homogenized earlier in the 20th century: Poland, Hungary, the

Czech Republic, and Slovenia. The point was brought home to me by a Hungarian in Belgrade in 1995 who said that, as a Hungarian patriot, he was glad that Transylvania had been awarded to Romania after World War I, because if it were still part of Hungary a relatively homogeneous Romania would be on the fast track for inclusion in NATO and the EU while Hungary would be kept back because of the problems involved in dealing with its large minority population.

Even in those European countries that are both explicitly bi- or multinational and democratic (Belgium and Switzerland), this happy coincidence is predicated on the existence of territorial polities (cantons) that are themselves conceived of as mononational (see Fleiner and Fleiner 2000). This coincidence reminds us that modern democracy was conceived along Lockean lines, as a pragmatic instrument for constructing government based on the will of the people as expressed in voting. Far from celebrating differences, à la Mill, American democracy, at least, required ignoring differences ideologically while excluding others in practical terms. Thus John Jay, in *Federalist Paper no. 2*, pretended that the population of the new United States in 1787 formed "one united people—a people descended from the same ancestors, speaking the same language, professing the same religion . . . very similar in manners and customs" (Madison, Hamilton, and Jay 1987 [1787]:91). Not surprisingly, "Negroes of the African race" were excluded not only from voting but overwhelmingly from citizenship by the new constitution that Jay was promoting, a view ratified by the Supreme Court in 1857 in *Dred Scott*.³³ In this putatively homogeneous political entity, Lockean principles of pragmatic politics (divisions of power, ambition being made to counter ambition) were deemed applicable. The Millean project of inclusion seems practical only once the Lockean system is institutionalized in territorial polities that are themselves homogenized and only insofar as the inclusion does not create political configurations in which a concentration of a newly enfranchised group may lead to demands for separation.

It might be suggested that the Lockean institutions themselves should not survive if they cannot ensure the achievement of the liberty espoused by Mill. Yet can any institutions of government impose Millean toleration? There is a potential paradox built into the idea that a limited government based on the consent of the people (the ideal of Locke) can be harnessed to a project as great as imposing positive tolerance on an unwilling population. In such cases, the Millean mandate is outside of the boundaries of democracy unless the governed consent to it, especially, as Locke noted, because belief cannot be compelled. It is tempting to try to avoid this problem by proclaiming basic liberties and access to social goods as "rights," not subject to political negotiation. Yet such an approach begs the most basic issues of democracy: the source of laws, the source of judicial au-

33. *Dred Scott v. Sandford*, 55 US 393 (1856). It was to overcome this decision that the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments to the U.S. Constitution were passed after the Civil War.

thority, the selection of judges, and, ultimately, the very concept of the accountability of rulers to the ruled that Lockean democratic institutions are meant to provide.

The Moral Superiority of Pragmatism?

The analysis above of competitive sharing and antagonistic tolerance is, I submit, much more accurate than an analysis that presumes that sharing means positive tolerance and that efforts to assert control over a site hitherto shared are a violation of a tradition of positive tolerance. Yet the analysis is also disturbing, because it implies that pursuit of the morally superior position—Mill's celebration of diversity for its own sake—may sometimes require the delegitimation of institutions of representative government and the abandonment of the concept of government based on the consent of the governed. The best political environment for building the kind of physical proximity of ritual sites that is taken to indicate tolerance in the positive sense may require denial of the basic principles of democratic accountability to a public. Thus in South Asia and in the Balkans sharing of ritual space flourished under imperial rule that favored none of the contesting communities, and in both regions the introduction of electoral politics led to the demise of such sharing. In this regard it is noteworthy that the shrine at Madhi, for example, was transformed from apparently Muslim to apparently Hindu during the period of rule of secular parties in a Hindu-majority polity.

This stark contrast between the superior explanatory power of the model of competitive syncretism and the presumably superior morality of the model of noncompetitive syncretism forces consideration of the ethics of publishing the better model. If my analysis is correct, the prospects for secularism and the protection of religious minorities are not promising, at least in those parts of the world in which religion functions both as faith and as ideology. Not only is this message discouraging to those who would seek to build civil societies of equal citizens but also it seems encouraging to those who would employ appeals to chauvinism and hostility toward minorities in electoral contests. Does publishing an accurate analysis thus support chauvinism?

This problem may be addressed by reexamining the presumption of modern liberalism that Mill's principled advocacy of toleration as a positive good is superior to Locke's pragmatic advocacy of noninterference. While pragmatism is less satisfying philosophically than a program grounded in more positive principles, it does have the advantage of forcing consideration of concrete conditions rather than abstract principles (and their accompanying desires). There is an important difference in circumstances and effects between the sudden destruction of syncretic sharing in places like Punjab, Bosnia, and Kosovo and the gradual transformation of symbols of dominance at sites still both shared and contested. This difference is a reflection of radically different basic assumptions in the public politics of the polities involved.

In independent India, the secular nationalism grounding the constitutional system may not have prevented the transformation of sites like Madhi, but it did prevent their destruction; it was the rejection of that secular nationalism by the BJP and associated parties that produced the destruction of sites such as the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya. Underlying these differing results are the differing presumptions of the systems: under the all-inclusive principles of secular nationalism, adherents of minority religions are regarded as legitimate players in public social life, thus as competitors whose presence must be tolerated in the negative sense even if *symbols of their equal status* may not be. Under religious nationalism, minority religions themselves are seen as illegitimate, and therefore *symbols of their very presence* may not be tolerated.

The differing presumptions of minority legitimacy may be debated on grounds of morality, in which case Mill wins. Yet on pragmatic grounds Locke may have the stronger case. If the goal of most members of a society is the establishment and maintenance of a system based on principles of consent of the governed and accountability of rulers to the ruled, in settings in which the question is most relevant the social costs of *intolerance* are likely to be overwhelming not only for those who would be victimized but also for the victimizers. Nationalism, after all, is a totalizing ideology likely to produce a totalitarian state or at least one in which questions of democracy, accountability, and prosperity are subordinated to the pursuit of the chimera of defending the chosen from the impure. Historically, the effort to create a secular, democratic India has been more beneficial to Indians than the exclusionary policy and polity of Pakistan has been to the peoples there, while nationalist political successes in places like Croatia, Bosnia, or Sri Lanka have actually lowered standards of living in those countries and produced wars. Thus even those who do not agree with tolerance as a positive good may come to see, along with Locke, that it is better on pragmatic grounds than the alternative.

From this perspective, it is the adoption of principles that exclude minorities from legitimacy (and thus from competition over symbols of their presence in the polity) that produces the catastrophic consequences for all parties, and the sudden destruction of shared sites is only a manifestation of the larger harm. In circumstances in which such principles are being advocated, the truly moral response might be appeal not to the superior principle (diversity as a value) but rather to the pragmatic one (intolerance as a cost). Insofar as social science may have an impact by exposing the likely consequences of actions proposed by politicians, who may well be willing to sacrifice the good of the society for the sake of power (as nationalists usually are), the cautionary tale told by this paper may be seen as an exercise in morality. At the same time, the warning to minorities not to expect equality of symbolic representation may be distasteful but pragmatic: accepting an inferior status as a group may ensure the continued coexistence of individuals.

It is perhaps with such pragmatism in mind that the

Indian Muslim journalist M. K. Akbar (1993), writing in (of all places) a Pakistani newspaper after the destruction of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya, suggested that the wiser course for the Muslims would have been to have compromised in 1948, letting the mosque be replaced by a temple. As it stood, the mosque could (and did) "become a point of confrontation which would haunt India" (Akbar 1993:80). Accommodation to the realities of power in the larger polity may be the key to the maintenance of the lived syncretism of the culture of India, as, indeed, it has always been to the lived syncretism of the shrine at Madhi and as it was in the Balkans. Of course, sufficient acceptance of Millian principles would change the dominant political assumptions of a polity to the point that Lockean tolerance was unneeded, and surely religious "toleration" is easier in those parts of Europe in which churches are being closed than it is where churches are being built; but then the construction of mosques in European cities where the churches are closing could produce the kinds of reactions that have led to the destruction of mosques where churches are being built (Bosnia) or of churches where mosques are being built (Bosnia, Kosovo).³⁴

This last set of circumstances leads to a different kind of pragmatic consideration. If a multiethnic (or multinational or multireligious) polity *has* been disrupted, the analysis of this paper indicates that the morally satisfying position of mandating restoration of the status quo ante to the greatest extent possible may be detrimental to the establishment of democracy, accountability, and prosperity in the newly consolidated territories. Recall the greater stability and prosperity after 1989 of those East European states that were forcibly homogenized earlier in the 20th century.³⁵ There is no greater principled ground for insisting on the reversal of forced population movements in the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s than there would be in mandating a return to the pre-1938 borders and population distributions (to the extent possible) of the Czech lands (the Sudetenland) and Poland (see Hayden 1996).

An Ethics of Conviction or an Ethics of Responsibility?

It may be that avoidance of violent conflict over shared religious space depends not on persuading the members of differing communities to value each other's differences but on convincing them that the costs of intolerance are too high. At the same time, once conflict turns differentiation into what is perceived locally as total incompatibility, it is hard to envision the continuation of

symbols of syncretism or even of the presence of whichever group loses political control. This is not a pleasant conclusion, because it indicates that the price of syncretism may be subjugation and that the effects of conflicts that turn differentiation into enmity may not be surmountable. Yet can we avoid analysis only because we find the implications of the research undesirable?

This general ethical question was raised by Max Weber in two classic lectures (1975a,b [1919]) informed perhaps not only by his personal, existential knowledge of the falsity of the cultural images that were used by the French, British, and Americans from 1914 through 1919 to explain the supposed moral and cultural inferiority of Germans but even more by the experience of seeing the practical consequences of the pseudo-moral posturing of the victors at Versailles, where he served as an expert advising the German delegation.³⁶ Weber drew a sharp distinction between what he viewed as "irreconcilably opposed maxims" that can govern morally oriented conduct: an "ethics of ultimate ends" and an "ethics of responsibility" (1975b [1919]:120); the first maxim has more recently been rephrased by Tzvetan Todorov (1996a:11; 1996b:128) as an "ethics of conviction." The first position would justify conduct on the basis of the morality of what an actor wished to achieve, the second on the basis of what the actor knew or should have known was likely to happen. Both Weber and Todorov are firm in their assessment of the moral superiority of the ethic of responsibility, since a well-intended action that produces a foreseeable catastrophe cannot be regarded as moral. But the key here is "foreseeable," since this term may imply assumptions of what reasonable people should know as well as what specific investigations may seem to reveal.

These two considerations return us to Locke's legacy (assumptions of common knowledge) in the first case and social science (that which careful investigation may reveal) in the second. With regard to assumptions, Weber is scathing on those who rigorously follow an ethics of conviction, since they will blame failure not on their decisions but on the failures of other men, while "a man who believes in an ethics of responsibility takes account of precisely the average deficiencies of people. . . . he does not even have the right to presuppose their goodness and perfection" (Weber 1975b [1919]:121). This requirement of accepting the imperfections of humanity is, of course, echoed in Lockean systems of government, at least in their American incarnation, with concepts of limited government, divisions of powers, and ambitions being made to combat ambitions. "If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither internal nor external controls on government would be necessary. . . . A dependence on the people is, no doubt, the primary control on the government; but experience has taught mankind the neces-

34. Recent discussions of such tensions are Ewing (2001) and Wikan (2001), although both authors might well reject the analysis in this paper.

35. Pakistan would seem an unfortunate exception, but its expulsion of Hindus did not homogenize the population, which remains divided among Punjabis, Baluchis, Sindhis, and others, just as in 1971 the "Pakistani" identity did not unite East and West Pakistanis and thus resulted in the creation of Bangladesh.

36. A similar experience of Versailles from the other side inspired Keynes's (1920) brilliant and prophetic critique of the false morality and impending catastrophe of the economic sanctions imposed to punish Germany.

sity of auxiliary precautions" (Madison, Hamilton, and Jay 1987 [1787]:319–20).

But the other consideration, that of the result of research, is more relevant to social science. Weber's concept of "facts that are extremely inconvenient, for my own opinion no less than for others" (1975a [1919]:147), is important. The goal of social science is to achieve *clarity*, insofar as that is possible, for considering how actions should be shaped (p. 151), and for that goal forcing consideration of inconvenient facts is a supreme achievement, perhaps even a moral achievement (p. 151).

Whether this kind of social science can help avoid catastrophic conflict is a different question. The temptation for politicians to invoke nationalism or majoritarian positions is very strong, especially as few of them are likely to pay a personal price for any catastrophe brought upon their own peoples.³⁷ It may be, however, that international political actors could discourage the success of such politicians if, instead of saying that human rights must be honored if conflict arises (thus seeming to make conflict a safe option), they emphasized the near certainty that conflict between groups that have been living intertwined will involve massive violations of human rights as what was once competition becomes war.

Conclusion

Tolerance, as the affirmative action of recognizing and respecting the differences of others, is often seen as embodied in places in which peoples live intermingled, such as Bosnia or India. This tolerance is usually seen as especially pronounced when religious sites in these places reveal syncretism, the manifestation in one site of practices or beliefs identified with more than one religion. However, close examination of shared religious sites in India and the Balkans reveals competition between groups and "tolerance" that is a pragmatic adaptation to a situation in which repression of the other group's practices may not be possible rather than an active embrace of the Other. In both India and the Balkans, noninterference with another group's practices has been fostered by situations of colonial or imperial rule. In these regions transitions to political systems dependent on the consent of the majority have led to transformation of religious sites in ways that diminish or even destroy the practices of local minorities.

Whether tolerance is seen as an active state of recognition and respect for difference or as a passive condition of noninterference with others' practices reflects the differing philosophical positions of, respectively, John Stuart Mill and John Locke. While Mill's position is regarded by many as superior philosophically and is one of the bases of contemporary liberalism, Locke's philosophy is the one that underlies concepts of representative, elected

government. In politics in which divisions between groups of peoples as members of religious, ethnic, racial, or other communities are politicized, symbols of these groups such as religious edifices are inherently politicized as well. For this reason, the competition that has produced syncretism when popular government has been suppressed may produce the exclusion or even destruction of a minority group's symbols if electoral politics produce governments dependent on mobilizing the majority group.

This analysis is discomfiting, for it indicates that in politics in which there are politicized majority and minority groups it may not be possible to have both equality and democracy.³⁸ To the contrary, diversity seems best to thrive under conditions that deny democracy (thus preventing the imposition of the will of the majority group) or display clear subordination of one group to another. Attempts to impose diversity after a country has been partitioned may well require indefinite occupation to deny power to the nationalists for whom people would vote if given the chance to do so. This has certainly been the case in Bosnia, where the post-Dayton attempt to reverse ethnic cleansing in order to create what Bosnians call, sarcastically, "multi-multi" has often led the international civil servants running the country to disregard the expressed wish of the majority of the voters (see Hayden 2001). Clear recognition of this situation might permit decision makers to assist in reconstructions of shattered societies based on what people are willing to accept, even if that means the injustice of partition.

Comments

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I am pleased here to see a careful reading of the term "tolerance" which foregrounds the potential for malignancy undergirding its apparent benevolence. I have argued that "tolerance is the benign version of the will to exclusion, and is prone—when the space of autonomous identity appears threatened by the presence of an other—to rapidly transform itself into xenophobia" (Bowman 1997:41). I have suggested that contemporary anthropology's cultural relativism shares a rationale with political tendencies to celebrate and enforce exclusive nationalisms and ethnicities. It is unfortunate that Hayden, after such a telling critique of the rhetoric of tolerance, gives credence to this suggestion by linking his analysis with an intellectual rationalization for ethnic cleansing and the separation of populations. I believe

37. In the former Yugoslavia, almost all of the leaders who were instrumental in causing the breakdown of the federal state and the subsequent war profited politically (each was reelected) and personally: they and their families became very rich.

38. Not all analysts see democracy as requiring equality (see, e.g., Smootha 1990, 1997).

that that articulation is both empirically and logically unnecessary.

Hayden refers to spaces and shrines in Israel/Palestine desired or revered by mutually antagonistic populations to illustrate his argument that syncretism is always competitive and latently exclusivist. In the instances he cites, however, the spaces are already segregated and the shrines already expropriated for the exclusive use of one of the two communities. Not only has the work of destroying coexistence already been carried out but the communities involved are already opposed and mobilized nationalist communities. Such configurations are not, however, the only ones possible. In my discussion of Mar Elyas, a Greek Orthodox-owned shrine near Bethlehem (Bowman 1993), I showed that while the miraculous power seen to be resident there served as a general pretext for the gathering of local persons of Muslim and various Christian persuasions, the specific reasons people gave for attending ranged from the need for cures through the demands of religion to the pleasures of conviviality. Expressions of hostility towards other groups present seemed similarly unfixed, with some Christians and Muslims joining together to condemn the Orthodox clergy for arrogance towards the local population and others—again both Muslim and Christian—expressing anger about the attempts of nationalist cadres protesting against occupation to halt the festivities. Interestingly, the only hostility towards the Muslims attending the shrine was expressed by the foreign clergy, who also maligned local Christians for being “like Muslims.” I saw no sectarian hostility or competitiveness amongst the crowds and, similarly, no aggressive assertions of ethnic or religious identity except when a group of Israeli soldiers attempted to disperse Muslim stall-holders selling children’s toys. At this point the diverse sets of activities loosely gathered around the shrine crystallized in people’s talk into interlinked expressions of a “Palestinian identity” which they saw the soldiers’ actions as attacking. The participants in the festivities, who previously had announced themselves variously by family name, by town or village of origin, by religion, or by craft or profession, began to refer to themselves as “Palestinian” as, in the face of a common enemy, all of those various elements of identification—including Muslim and Christian (Catholic, Orthodox, and other) affiliation—were subsumed and mobilized under that rubric.

The example of Mar Elyas suggests that identities at syncretic shrines can function with relative unfixity, being forced towards aggressive articulation, closure, and mobilization only by the perception of an other setting itself against the inchoate identity it focuses and brings to expression. That perception may be propagated by political and/or religious elites or result from antagonistic activities by another community or people. More often, however, identities are unfixed and contingent, with certain circumstances bringing one element of the field of identifications which constitute the social self to dominion and other circumstances overturning and reshaping that hierarchy (see Bowman 2001). Such an idea of the impermanence of identity underlies F. W. Has-

luck’s theses on the struggle for supremacy over “ambiguous sanctuaries.” In his study, groups like the Bektashi come to dominate shrines previously shared with Christians not by ethnically cleansing the shrines and surrounding areas of Christians but by “absorb[ing] Christianity in[to] Bektashism” (Hasluck 1929:586). Christians convert to Islam either pragmatically or by real conviction.

At the heart of Hayden’s thesis is an essentialist conception of identity whereby groups always already “are” what they “are.” If affiliations and identities cannot change or be changed, then of course it is difficult and perhaps impossible for peoples to coexist without antagonism and eventual extirpation of all but one of the groups. However, the “religious nationalism” which Hayden seems to believe is a necessary expression of primordial identity is itself a second-order phenomenon, articulated and crafted by elites and circumstances out of malleable materials and susceptible to disarticulation. This is the implication of the “unfortunate exception”—the postseparation disintegration of a religiously purified Pakistan into “Punjabis, Baluchis, Sindhis, and others” and into the two states of Pakistan and Bangladesh—mentioned in n. 39. We cannot doubt that the religious nationalisms active today are dangerous and powerful, and it may be that some of the unpalatable measures for which Hayden provides a rationale will prove to be the pragmatic means that world powers adopt to cope with them. Anthropologists, however, need not—and must not—provide legitimacy for the construction and perpetuation of a world of ethnically pure nation-states.

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The idea of “competitive sharing” is an interesting one, but the question must be raised to what extent it can be applied to both India and Bosnia. Hayden suggests interpreting syncretism in terms of “noninterference” rather than “positive tolerance” in both cases. My comments will deal with the Bosnian case:

1. Syncretism in Bosnia refers more to elements of culture other than religious symbols, such as historical traditions, customs, and language. It is questionable, therefore, whether this case is comparable to that of India, where different communities “were perceived as religious rather than ethnic.” In Bosnia it was just the opposite, because “in ex-Yugoslavia religious differences were unimportant in the composition of the state” (Iveković 2000–2001:210). What mattered in that ethnic conflict was territory, which played a great role in dividing peoples that had up to then lived in peace. Shrines served as political means for reviving myths to provoke inter-ethnic divisions by “elite-sponsored aggression” in the struggle for power rather than as a matter of “ancient hatred.” The idea of “noninterference” may be more cor-

rectly applied to the Kosovo case, where there was never any real tolerance between Albanians and Serbs. Ethnically mixed marriages were almost nonexistent there, while in Bosnia there was peaceful coexistence between the three nations over a long period.

2. If noninterference prevailed over positive tolerance in Bosnia, how are we to explain the relatively high rate of ethnically mixed marriages compared with that of the other regions and the low ethnic distance found in sociological investigations up to the 1990s? Whether the coexistence of different cultures within Bosnian society before the disintegration of Yugoslavia is to be expressed as pluralism or just as passive noninterference is a matter for discussion, but midway between the two was active intercultural communication that contributed to a degree of tolerance and stability before the war of the 1990s.

In speaking of "religious nationalism" in Bosnia, one loses sight of the fact that Muslims have been attributed the status of a nation in the former Yugoslavia and thus divisions and conflict have arisen on an ethnic/national basis. Conflicts between different religions there may be regarded as a consequence of increasing (imposed) ethnic distance and nationalism rather than as their cause, and the aggression towards religious symbols (saints, shrines, graves) can be explained in this context.

If "diversity seems best to thrive under conditions that deny democracy," a great many modern states will be denied the possibility of democratic development, given that only a few countries in the world are homogeneous (monocultural). And if homogenization is desirable for democracy, it may imply that assimilation or even "ethnic cleansing" are permissible means for achieving it.

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Hayden's article on competitive sharing of religious sites makes a significant and timely contribution to the anthropology of tolerance. His choice of the eastern and western edges of the Ottoman Empire for his comparative study seems appropriate, particularly because of the ethnic conflicts that are taking place there, but it would be erroneous to think that the people who inhabit these areas are less tolerant than people elsewhere. If the situation of the Jews in the Balkans, for instance, was bad during the Ottoman occupation, it does not necessarily mean that it was better elsewhere. When 170,000 Jews were expelled from Spain and Portugal in 1492, they were given asylum and allowed free exercise of their religion in Turkish towns in the Balkans (Nicolay 1568:149). They remained there until World War II, when the Germans "cleansed" Balkan towns under their occupation. In fact, the competitive sharing of religious sites on the edges of the Ottoman Empire is evidence of its greater tolerance in comparison with the western empires. On the edges of the Christian world, non-Christians were converted or expelled, while in the Ottoman Empire

there was no determined attempt to assimilate Christian or Jewish subjects to Islam. Although despised and humiliated, the Christians and Jews continued to enjoy a degree of autonomy. As a member of the French Academy recollected, "Mahomet did not abuse his victory. The religious tolerating spirit of the Turks was seen in his first act. He left to the Christians their churches and the liberty of public worship; he maintained the Greek patriarch in his office" (Lamartine 1847:163).

In the Ottoman Empire society was organized into ecclesiastical communities (millets), to one of which every subject had to belong. The basis for these divisions, the only one recognized by the state, was always religion; language and ethnological theories played a secondary part. A Bulgarian could become a Turk any time that he pleased by embracing Islam, just as a Greek could become a Bulgarian by joining the Exerchate and one of two brothers might enter the Romanian fold and the other the Serbian. This model was officially abolished only at the beginning of the 20th century with the extensive reforms of the political system in Turkey. Consequently, many people simply could not understand the question of nationality. As a British anthropologist described the situation in Bar, Montenegro, in 1901 (Durham 1904:67),

Every Mohammedan tells you he is a "Turk," and every one of the Orthodox that he is a Montenegrin, so does every Roman Catholic say that he is an Albanian; and three men who in feature, complexion, and build are as alike as three individuals can well be, will all swear, and really believe, that they all belong to different races. It is not improbable that they are a blend of all three.

The Ottoman policy of noninterference with subjects' manners and customs contributed much to the survival of various ethnic groups in Turkey-in-Europe. According to some writers, the Turks showed more tolerance for their Balkan subjects than they did for each other. If they had not overwhelmed them all, one or another would have ultimately predominated and absorbed or exterminated the others; under the Turkish occupation they all survived (Durham 1920:144).

Although no spirit of proselytism existed in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Albania, renegadism had been frequent among the Christian population there. However, the consequence was not segregation. People continued to live mixed together. If a family was divided between Christianity and Islam, its members recognized each other as relatives (Hulme-Beamon 1898:143; Eliot 1900:380; Abbott 1903:110; Amfiteatrov 1903:14; Tomitch 1918:118). If a Muslim man married a Christian woman, she was under no obligation to adopt the faith of her husband and was allowed, together with her daughters, to attend her own church (Hughes 1830:105, Jastrebov 1904:223, Durham 1909:208, Pears 1911:24). There are similar reports from the Middle East (Russell 1794:213). This attitude underwent substantial change only when the Turkish occupation was over and the Balkan people

were trying hard to "Europeanize" themselves. In the 1660s a multitude of mosques with minarets and numerous caravanserais and hammams dominated the capital of Hungary, but less than a century after the Turks had departed a few hammams were the only remains of their presence there. During the 19th and 20th centuries, this story of "competitive sharing" was repeated many times in most other Balkan towns (Jezernik 1998). Its price was high: the history embodied in mosques, minarets, bazaars, hans, graveyards, bridges, homes, etc., was destroyed and replaced by a new one. During this process there was an erasure of the quality that the West nowadays proudly claims as its foremost virtue: tolerance of diversity.

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Hayden suggests that Bosnia "provides interesting similarities" with India, but the only similarity I can detect is the conflict between Muslims and non-Muslims throughout history. Are we to accept such essentializing as a useful tool for comparison? Is being a Muslim in Bosnia comparable to being a Muslim in India? Is the Ottoman period in the Balkans comparable to the Muslim dynastic empires in India? Where are the cultural specificities that would counter such homogenizing principles? The Islamic faith may mean quite different things in different cultural settings (see Eickelman 1976).

Hayden's premise is that there was tolerance in the past. Tolerance, human rights, individual freedom, pluralism, and equality are all based on the modernist premises of the Enlightenment. During the Mughal regime in India, the Persian language was the medium of polite speech and of administration and law, and the 16th-century ruler Akbar managed to create his own syncretic religion, a mixture of Islam and Hinduism. During the five centuries of Islamic rule, almost a quarter of the population of South Asia took up Islam. Conversions were most numerous in Punjab and Bengal, where Brahmanism has never completely replaced Buddhism. Surely there are historical examples of fused religions juxtaposed. In Hungary, despite 150 years of coexistence, neither Catholicism nor Protestantism took elements from Islam. What syncretism really means in time and space should be carefully examined. Anthropologists will do best to analyze historical discourses and historiographic debates in their own context.

I am not convinced that we understand Hindu/Muslim or Christian/Muslim conflicts in their Indian and Bosnian settings much better by forcing Mill and Locke into the analysis. Hayden's material comes from his own expertise and field data on the Balkans and, for India, fieldwork and "a well-developed body of scholarship on tolerance, secularism, and democracy." Where are the works on Indian colonialism and nationalism (e.g., Chatterjee, Bhabha, Das, Gupta, Guha, Kumar, Obeyesekere, Prakash, Tambiah) and on Eastern Europe (Creed, Hal-

pern, Hammel, Carmichael, Kligman, Lockwood, Bringa, Young)? It seems to be a given for him that both regions are rife with religious nationalism. Perhaps he should have looked closer for a more suitable comparison.

It is hard to disagree that political transitions influence the everyday lives of individuals and reshape the political contours of religious regimes, but equating national liberation from colonial rule, as in India, with the war that followed the collapse of Yugoslavia is a rather questionable exercise. Are "'nations' in the former Yugoslavia (Serbs as Orthodox Christians, Croats as Roman Catholics, Bosniaks as Muslims)" and "'communities' in South Asia (Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis, etc)." comparable? I wonder, further, why he takes Bosnia to represent the Balkans as a whole. Gellner, Smith, and Anderson have shown that nationalisms take many forms and that state or official nationalisms are often in contradiction to popular or ethnonational forms. For Kapferer (1988), what is important is cultures of nationalism, whereas for Hayden it is religion-as-nationalism. In Kapferer's case nonreligious forces (hierarchy, for instance) drive religious nationalism and violence; for Hayden the driving force is religious fervor. Interethnic conflict is not always religious; it may be class-based, military, or political even though the actors adhere to different faiths. His work could have benefited from consideration of other models of ethnonational conflict (e.g., Karakasidou 1997, Sahlin 1989, Horowitz 1985, Wilson and Donnan 1997) and studies of the state, violence, and religious regimes (e.g., van den Berghe 1990, Moen and Gustafson 1992, Wolf 1991).

Hayden has called attention to a few religious sites as both sources and targets of nationalist violence, but sites of this nature are abundant, and anthropologists have reported their contestation by various groups. It is interesting that he shies away from fully exploring the particularities of the Balkan conflict; perhaps he will answer that he has already done this and is now ready to move on. Problems in history become problems with history when he writes: "It is clear from these works that sharing of sites, saints, and even ritual practices was common in the Balkans during the Ottoman period and even afterwards just as it has been common in India." What works? What sites? There is one reference to Hasluck but no analyses of any shared Ottoman sites. The 14th-century pilgrimage of Duijzings's study was not exactly in the Ottoman period; Sofia fell to the Ottoman army only in 1385, and it was by the battle of Nicopolis in 1396 that the fate of the Balkans was sealed.

The lack of historical analysis on religion and the cursory treatment of nationalism are the main problems with this study. The data for the Balkans are meager and do not reflect Hayden's earlier scholarship. I am ready to accept the thesis that political and regime transitions bring ideological change but not the point based on a one-sided comparison. He does not examine the roles of religious or secular Bosnian elites in political activism under Austrian colonial rule (see Donia 1981) or examine religious nationalism as a social movement (Gill 2001). Religious nationalism forces us to "rethink the duality

of social and cultural, to move away from the group as the elemental constituent of social organization, to recognize the heterology of institutions as the basis of politics and collective agency, and through the institutions to make the cultural content of power part of our understanding of the politics of culture" (Friedland 2001: 149). Anthropological work on nationalism and the contestation of identities is much richer and more exciting than Hayden would have it. He seems bent on a modernist project—arguing that democratic governance should be secular, based on tolerance and respect for others, with no place in it for religious fundamentalism. As I have argued elsewhere (Kürti 2001), today's religious movements are quite unlike earlier ones. While secularism may seem to be gaining ground in some societies, the cultic milieu seem to progress at its own pace. Religion and nationalism are here to stay as major players in local and international politics. Indeed, today's cathedrals are often built of old bricks.

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The issue that is absent in historical analysis of "tolerance" and correspondingly the subject of Hayden's thought-provoking article is the centrality of competition in sustaining a culture of religious coexistence. I agree with many of the individual points that he makes, among them his critique of the largely untheorized assumption that religious sharing reflects a positive moral attitude and his suggestion that "tolerance" exists in situations where one religious group is unable to overcome the claims of the other.

Hayden demonstrates his concept of competitive sharing by examining religious sites in South Asia and the Balkans, where medieval military conquests created interfaces between Muslims and non-Muslim peoples. Such competition can also, however, form part of the character of shrines shared by different denominations of one faith. Although he acknowledges variation within the same religion, he does not push his argument in a direction which would encompass sacred sites of this order. An example that readily comes to mind concerns the Bawangaza temple of Barwani (central India), which was visited by Hindu Vaishnava pilgrims and Jaina pilgrims of both Digambara and Svetambara sects. Worship by all three sects of the *charan padukas* or footprints on the Bawangaza hill proceeded without rancour in a situation where no sect enjoyed "superior" rights to them. However, from 1866 onward, special privileges were granted to the Digambaras for construction of temples and a road leading to the old temple complex. A Digambara banker then tried to use the occasion of the consecration of the temples in 1883 to construct an exclusive Digambara identity over the footprints (Bhopawar Political Agency Records, 1892, National Archives of India, New Delhi, File 84). He did this by constructing

around them, and this resulted in a bitter dispute with the Svetambara Jains.

Competitive tolerance in sacred landscapes is not limited to situations where religions as monolithic edifices interact within the same religious space or where Islam has confronted older forms of religious worship. Various sects within a religion also "share" spaces along with all the inherent tensions that arise from such coexistence. Of course, frequently in such situations it is competition of the sort that Hayden discusses which sustains "tolerance." Such tolerance in the case of Jaina worship at Bawangaza was threatened at the point when one group was granted greater representation in relation to the others.

An exclusive emphasis, however, on the existence of such competitive sharing resonates with the implication that there are no sites at all where different religious communities can *positively* share worship. My disagreement with Hayden has to do primarily with this emphasis, especially since in his argument populations are viewed only in terms of their religious identities. Sacred landscapes are made up of various other strands. They include, for instance, sacred sites within villages in many parts of India where social and economic ties rather than their religious identities form the basis of cooperation.

In my own field area of Faridabad (North India), village folk shrines—from open-air platforms to miniature sanctuaries and natural elements such as trees and rocks imbued with religious meaning—were "shared" in the sense that people of various religions and castes worshipped there (Lahiri 1996). For example, *grama sthanas* (village spots) were dedicated to *bhumihars* and *khera deotas/dadis*, entities venerated as the founders of settlements or deities of homesteads. Most such shrines were unpretentious—small, plain platforms with a collection of stones or miniature houselike structures for burning lamps and placing offerings. In such worship—of domesticated land and the first "domesticators" of it—villagers collaborated not as "Hindus" or "Muslims" or "Sikhs" but as peasants and cultivators whose lives were integrally connected with each other and with the prosperity of their land. As peasants, they had reason to be anxious about the disruptions in the rhythm of rural life; neither economic nor biological production and reproduction could be taken for granted. Harvests would fail, fatal diseases were common, and temperamental rivers washed away villages or, equally disastrously, moved away from them. Such uncertainties enable us to locate the centrality of village worship meant to promote the prosperity of the village and its land.

Certainly, there must have been points where the religious identities of the users created points of dispute. Rose's (1990 [1919]:193) account of a village where a section of the community had become Muslim exemplifies this rather well. In this village "the shrine of the common ancestor needed rebuilding, and there was much dispute as to its shape and aspect. They solved the difficulty by building a Musalman grave facing south, and over it a Hindu shrine facing east." However, disputes such as this were about the form in which the ancestor

was to be worshipped. The centrality of these shrines in rural worship had much more to do with the manner in which the village functioned as a social interacting unit than with the boundaries of religion and caste that divided them.

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Hayden seems to believe that in India in the colonial period communal conflicts did not arise because an outside political power was at the helm and treated all groups and communities alike. It is only after independence, in his view, that religious nationalism began to raise its head and under the cloak of democracy the majority community began to adopt a bulldozer-like attitude towards minority groups and even try to appropriate their cultural and religious heritage. I doubt that many people in India will share these opinions.

India is a living museum of ethnic groups, languages, and religious faiths. Its plurality has deep historical roots because of its size and the porous nature of its boundaries. It has witnessed the influx of ideas and peoples many times and from many sources, and this, coupled with the growth of heterodox indigenous traditions, has given rise to different-looking ways of life, faiths, and languages. Given this wide and long-standing diversity, one is not surprised that since the beginning of historical times there have been cases of conflict along ethnic, linguistic, and religious lines. One does not need much background in Indian history to cite examples. Some 2,200 years ago the emperor Ashoka was asking people to respect and honour each other's faith; surely there is no smoke without fire.

It was to a great extent the writings and sayings of saints and saintly persons that enabled people to allow space for other points of view. It is therefore no surprise that the ordinary Indian, irrespective of his faith or ethnic background and whether he is literate or illiterate, has a balanced view of himself and his position in the world. It is this attitude that has saved the country from many crises. It is unfortunate that in more recent times certain persons or groups, pursuing their vested interests, are driving people into conflict and confrontation. Educating people about their heritage and the beauty of its multiplicity, not abandoning democracy and certainly not asking for international political control of local problems as Hayden seems to imply, will be the surest and most enduring way of coming to grips with sectarian problems.

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Hayden's concept of "competitive sharing" is very helpful in understanding syncretism as a social process. I am

in general agreement with his findings and interpretations but want to add a few considerations. While competition between religious groups for control over shared shrines is a common feature of syncretism, so are notions of hierarchy and hierarchical encompassment. In discussions of tolerance in premodern empires—for instance, the millet system of the Ottoman Empire—it is sometimes not sufficiently emphasized that in such societies religious communities are seen not as equal but as fundamentally different in nature. Communities have different rights and duties according to their nature, and they are protected by the state when they keep their place. Communities that do not adhere to the religion of the ruler may therefore be in an inferior position in the societal order. In the case of Hinduism, Indologists such as Paul Hacker have called this "inclusivism" or hierarchical relativism. There is certainly an element of tension and competition in it but also an element of established order. Different communities differ also in the interpretation of what is going on at a shrine. For example, special powers of healing or otherwise can be attributed to communities that occupy positions of ascribed inferiority and marginality. As Louis Dumont (1980) has argued, these hierarchical notions are transformed by notions of equality in the modern period. In the colonial period in India the masses were mobilized on the basis of a politics of numbers. Religion came to play a dominant role in this, and, to some extent, what we see today in the appropriation of shrines of minority communities is the outcome of this process. It continues to be important, however, to analyze why under the rule of Nehru in India and that of Tito in Yugoslavia the secular state was able to control this and why this period was succeeded by a period in which the state came to be used for the suppression of minorities.

It is perhaps also useful to contextualize the place of religious difference in the thinking of Locke and Mill a bit further. Religious differences between Protestants and Catholics and between different Protestant sects in 17th-century England led to widespread violence. For Locke it is important not to deny the importance of these differences but to make peaceful coexistence possible. The state should be able to function without immediately putting into question the political loyalty of a community whose religious allegiance is different from the ruler's. For Mill the situation is completely different. He sees religions as fundamentally intolerant and argues, basically, that only a secular state can protect minorities from majority oppression. He writes in the period of the rise of the nation-state, in which individual citizens are equal and allegiance to religion has to be replaced by allegiance to the nation. For Mill, I would argue, the decline of importance of religious difference and the emergence of a secular society are crucial to his views on tolerance (van der Veer 2001).

Finally, I argue fully with Hayden's ethic of responsibility. Nevertheless, it remains important to reflect on one's position as a foreign or foreign-based academic outside of the arena of direct conflict. It is difficult not only to assess the outcome of a political intervention but also

to assess the uses of an academic contribution. I do not think that there is a general solution for this problem, however responsible one may want to be.

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Original and provocative, Hayden's article brings together political anthropology, anthropology of religion, regional ethnography, legal history, and political science and a critical understanding of contemporary realpolitik in India and the Balkans. The scientific realism of the text is soundly based on situational analysis which aims at determining a set of objective conditions that affect relations between religious groups within a polity. Supported by empirical research, the comparative analytical model offered here is general enough to avoid the trap of "singular" anthropological interpretations of contested situations such as identifying deeply rooted patriarchal traditions and autocratic rulers as solely responsible for the segregation of minority religious groups and the destruction of their sacred sites.

Methodologically well-set-up, this analysis compares two (three) distant regions that shared Islamic rule for much of their originally non-Muslim history. However, the comparative assessment of colonial religious politics points to an important difference between British rule in India and Austrian Habsburg rule in the Balkans. While the British acted in the context of the double other, not sharing a religion with either of the dominant religious groups, Austria and Venice shared religious beliefs and institutions with the local Catholics. Therefore, in the case of India, the colonial rulers may have employed the politics of "compromise divisions in order to maintain peace and profits" (as Hayden would have it), while in the case of the Balkans the Catholics were favored a priori, and official attitudes toward Orthodox Christians and Muslims varied with their strategic and political roles within the empire. For example, during Habsburg rule in what is now Croatia, the Serbian Orthodox population serving at the Military Border fought for and attained a certain religious autonomy as a compensation for its crucial role in protecting the frontier from Ottoman attacks. Upon receiving the mandate to govern Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1878, however, Austria-Hungary stimulated Muslim "nation-building" as a counterbalance to the separatist tendencies of the Orthodox population, which looked eagerly across the eastern border to the newly founded Serbian national state.

Historical and contemporary evidence in the Balkans reveals many examples of competitive tolerance with dynamics similar to those described in Hayden's text. During the long Turkish rule (1521–1842) Belgrade was taken three times by the Austrian Habsburgs. The documents on the takeover period (1717–39) reveal that what was left of the Turkish mosques after a long and disastrous siege was assigned to different Catholic orders

or used as hospitals, military storage, and even a comedy theatre (Popović 1935:10). After the Turks won the city back, the process was reversed. In the Bay of Kotor area of what is now Montenegro, along with Venetian and Austrian state pressure to convert the Orthodox, major Orthodox churches had to accommodate Catholic altars (Belan 1997:203; Milić 1999). Most of these altars were removed during another short-term imperial rule, that of the French (1807–13), when the Napoleonic Code annulled the religious privileges of the Catholics and allowed free profession of all faiths (Milić 1999). Even today, ritual and spatial competition between Catholics and Orthodox persists (Vučinić Nešković 2001).

Hayden notes that syncretic amalgams were created on the basis of popular religions and their utilitarian practices rather than doctrinal Muslim or Christian beliefs. In doing so he treats the opposing religious groups as completely separate entities. However, much of the Muslim population in the Balkans consists of Islamized Christians who have gradually combined Christian and Muslim beliefs and celebrations. The so-called crypto-Christians maintained parallel practices either secretly or through public celebration of Christian saints and other holidays (Skendi 1967). Muslims observed the Christmas Eve burning of Yule logs, Easter-egg coloring, and family guardian-saint celebrations (Djordjević 1932, Filipović 1938) and respected other Christian saints' days by avoiding unnecessary physical labor and performing auspicious magic. In addition, they worshipped saints that had Christian counterparts, such as Jurijev or el-Hizr (St. George), Sari Saltuk (St. Nicholas), and Alidjun (St. Elias), and participated in the public celebrations organized by one or the other neighboring Christian community (Bringa 1995, Zirojević 2002). They made pilgrimages to sacred places shared by Orthodox Serbs, Muslim Turks and Albanians, Gypsies of both faiths, and nomadic Vlachs of Orthodox faith (Filipović 1937) and to sites devoted exclusively to Orthodox saints (Ćorović 1934). Seeking to save the lives of newborns, Muslim parents sometimes resorted to having them christened by Catholic or Orthodox priests, while Christians delayed christening on the assumption that their children would be as healthy as their Muslim neighbors' (Filipović 1951). To protect against evil, Christians wore Muslim symbols and sacred scriptures as amulets and vice versa, and they all believed in and went to the same healers (Djordjević 1937, Bringa 1995).

Hayden's research suggests that antagonistic tolerance between different religious groups exists in all mixed regions at all times but, depending on the constitutional principles of a polity, reveals itself either as passive tolerance or as violent confrontation. Peaceful coexistence should be promoted by convincing people that the cost of intolerance is too high, but the abundant syncretistic practices recorded by ethnographers may point to another, more positive argument for active tolerance. It may be that mutual religious understanding and respect can be established in a domain in which interaction has tangible advantages, whether in solving the existential

problems of securing health, fertility, and prosperity or in satisfying the desire to enjoy and share in festivities.

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Because Hayden's case studies refer to ethnographic terrains that are either beyond (in the case of India) or on the fringes of (in the case of Bosnia) my expertise, I would like to highlight what seems to me the disciplinary approach he adopts and then very briefly suggest another way of framing these issues.

We might start with audience. Although there was no doubt a literal audience gathered for the Agehananda Bharati Lecture, it seems to me that the imagined audience is the political scientists and policy makers thought to manage the fractious polities of India and Bosnia. The article describes the situations that confront these imagined actors as follows: Tragic processes are under way in India and in Bosnia because of the particular conditions of coexistence of religious groups within a national polity. Both politicians and their advisers might seek to understand these processes with the help of Western political thought and, in particular, reference to those thinkers who are conventionally considered the most insightful contributors to democratic theory. Thus they might look to Locke and Mill and their views of tolerance in order to make some headway in sorting through the complex cultural problem on the ground. The problem is that these thinkers diverge on crucial points. Here the anthropologist perceives an opening and develops a concept of competitive sharing. With his ethnographic sensitivity to the local and specific and his dedication to the practical utility of social scientific truth produced through careful comparison, the anthropologist can dispel the political scientists' confusion. This is, sadly, a difficult and thankless task, for the anthropologist's truth, translated back into the disciplinary language of political science, is this: As long as these societies are democracies, we must accept the fact that groups espousing religious ideologies will be forever at each other's throats. Violence can be avoided only by creating ethnically homogeneous states or by "occupying" these states and imposing Lockean negative tolerance on fractious groups. This is a hard truth because it goes against the grain of what we commonly consider the morally superior stance of a democratic celebration of diversity.

Looked at as a particular genre of social scientific knowledge, the article moves in a circle from political science through anthropology to a better and clearer political science. This movement is a product of one vision of the contemporary mission of anthropology: to produce social scientific truth that can contribute important insights concerning the major issues of the day. And yet it is important to point out that the critique of anthropology of recent decades has produced another way of

examining the relationship between politics and culture; instead of moving from political science through anthropology back to political science, one can imagine centering the discussion on the problematization of the framework of political science.

I can only touch on a couple of issues here. There is first the discomfort to be felt with the framing of a choice between Locke and Mill. We could point out that a certain cultural practice of reading renders tolerance in the late 17th century and tolerance in the middle of the 19th century as commensurate concepts. But phrasing these two arguments as choices in the present sidesteps the immense power of the specifically neoliberal discourses within which political blueprints and frameworks are constructed today throughout the world. It is not an abstract and academic political theory of classical liberalism that is used by politicians and policy makers to decide how religious groups should relate to each other but a situated and powerful neoliberal discourse that is already present and active in the constitution of both problems and solutions.

Secondly, we are now aware that there is a political dimension to the discursive strategy of comparison—that the construction of a comparison requires a great deal of pruning to make the comparison meaningful. Thus to assume that the contexts of governance in Bosnia and India are at all commensurate—that the two places are faced with comparable situations regarding religious minorities—is to obscure the role of history not so much in the evolution of particular contests over shrines and saints, which Hayden describes in a detailed and convincing way, as in the constitution of a discursive field that made these conflicts possible. As many observers of the discipline have suggested in recent years, anthropology's most fruitful contribution to understanding these tragic processes can emerge from its ability to show the connections between an ethnographic terrain and the complex transnational discourses and practices that make that terrain comprehensible to both actors and observers. This inter- or antidisciplinary project works uneasily and suspiciously with the terms of political science and philosophy. We might recall Dipesh Chakrabarty's concern for this encounter of categories in *Provincializing Europe* (2000), where he writes, "The task, as I see it, will be to wrestle with ideas that legitimize the modern state and its attendant institutions, in order to return to political philosophy—in the same way as suspect coins are returned to their owners in an Indian bazaar—its categories whose global currency can no longer be taken for granted" (p. 45).

These comments hardly do justice to the richness of the article, but they may suggest a standpoint from which to examine in a more systematic fashion the arguments presented and the strategy pursued.

Reply

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I am grateful to the discussants for their contributions, some of which serve to advance the general theoretical implications of my article while others permit clarification of certain points of the argument.

Van der Veer's reference to the work of Louis Dumont is important, because Dumont's analysis of "Homo hierarchicus" (1980) was succeeded by studies of "Homo equalis" (Dumont 1977 and 1986), the social implications of the ideology of equality and its corollary (at least to Tocqueville and through him to Dumont [see Dumont 1980:17–19]) of individualism. Stolcke (1995:9), with reference to France, supposedly the home of liberty, equality, fraternity, and tolerance, has pointed out that formal legal equality among citizens presupposes cultural homogeneity. Individualism and equality thus apply only when the polity is seen from within as relatively homogeneous. Otherwise, as van der Veer notes, hierarchy ensures order provided that the communities involved accept each other's position.

The differences in the political environments in which Locke and Mill wrote, also mentioned by van der Veer, are crucial here. Locke's focus in the *Letter Concerning Toleration* on reasons for accepting coexistence with other communities rather than trying to eliminate them is matched by the American federal structure's emphasis on creating institutions for the control of political conflict, not its elimination. I would agree with van der Veer's comments on the difference of Mill's contextual position from that of Locke but rephrase the matter slightly: it was the decreasing political importance of religious difference that permitted Mill to be intolerant of religion in politics. Put another way, the need for Lockean pragmatism having passed, Mill could afford to appeal to more positive principles. But can invocation of such principles suffice in settings in which, as in Locke's day, widespread violence between self-identifying religious communities is occurring, or even threatened?

The question may arise, of course, whether anyone is likely to consider such philosophical questions outside of the boundaries of academic debates such as those in CURRENT ANTHROPOLOGY. Wolfe's references to audience and to possible genres of anthropology (and political science and philosophy) seem to address this question but do not, I think, actually do so. Possibly because I have been rather too close to conflict these past ten years (by being a participant-observer in Serbian society and affinal kin there as well, following ten years of working, living, and being an affine in what was then still Yugoslavia), I am indeed interested in limitation of conflict and in building stable societies thereafter. But is an "antidisciplinary project" of trying to delegitimize the modern state really likely to be anthropology's most fruitful contribution to understanding the very practical problems

of governance and tragedies of its breakdown in places like Bosnia? I am not willing to cede control over these questions to political science or philosophy, and at least some others are also working on what one review article calls the anthropology of democracy (Paley n.d.).

The question of democracy is also raised by Golubović, who wonders, if my argument be correct, about the possibility of democracy in polities that are not homogeneous. This is much more than a rhetorical question, and serious attention needs to be paid to what kinds of conditions favor the development of, if not perfect democracies, at least states grounded on the consent of most of the governed under systems in which the legitimacy of the government may be tested by relatively free and fair elections. In this regard, Nehru's India and Tito's Yugoslavia are actually not very comparable. The "brotherhood and unity" of Yugoslavia were achieved in large part by suppressing attempts to articulate nationalist programs for any of its constituent peoples—ironically enough, some of the most important figures in spurring the "ethnic cleansing" of the 1990s were only following the logic of the positions that the Yugoslav government in the 1980s had repressed, to strong criticism at the time by human rights organizations (Hayden 1992). India has had a different experience, perhaps because the religious nationalism that some politicians try to invoke is still cross-cut by caste, class, and language distinctions to a much greater extent than in most other places.

Golubović's assertion that religious differences were unimportant in the composition of the Bosnian state, however, seems unfounded. To the contrary: after the termination of Ottoman rule in 1878, religious identity of the voters was the only really relevant factor in every relatively free, relatively fair election in Bosnia—in 1910, 1923, 1925, 1927, 1935, 1938, 1990, and 1996—since in all cases separate Muslim, Serb, and Croat political parties took the overwhelming majorities of the votes from their respective communities (Arnautović 1996:25–38). The 1990 electoral law provided for representation in government organs of Muslims, Serbs, and Croats in their relative proportions of the population. Further, beginning with the demise of Ottoman rule in the 1870s, every time that the larger entity of which Bosnia was a part collapsed (Austro-Hungary in 1918, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in 1941, socialist Yugoslavia in 1992), the result was communal conflict between Muslims, Serbs, and Croats. As for ethnically mixed marriages, Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1989 actually had *lower* percentages of such unions than Yugoslavia as a whole or, indeed, any of its constituent units other than Macedonia, Serbia proper, and Kosovo (Botev 1994:469).

I am grateful to Lahiri for showing how my model may accommodate shrines shared by different denominations of one faith and giving an Indian example. At present in the Balkans, there are increasing concerns that in reconstructing Bosnian mosques according to the stringent tenets of Wahhabism, Saudis are destroying Bosnia's own Muslim heritage (Sells 2001, Lovrenović 2001). Vučinić notes the combination of Christian and Muslim practices among the "Islamicized Christians" of the Balkans

to counter what she sees as my tendency to treat opposing religious groups as completely separate entities. I agree with her about the interpenetration of these groups' practices but would note that they still distinguish themselves from each other, which is the key point. Both Lahiri and Vučinić stress that there are situations in which sharing is genuine and seems truly syncretic. I agree; my question goes to the circumstances under which such syncretism prospers and when it breaks down. Van der Veer's important reference to hierarchy, discussed above, is useful: clear subordination of one group to another permits syncretism, while claims of equality by the group previously subordinated promote conflict, appropriation, and even destruction of the site that was once shared. In this regard, Paddayya's assertion that I believe that conflicts did not arise in India's period as a British colony because the British treated all communities alike is a complete inversion of my argument.

The "relative unfixity" of identities described by Bowman at a syncretic shrine in Palestine at a time when both Muslims and Christians were threatened by Israeli pressure is not reflected in his own earlier article (Bowman 1993:449): "religious difference is not elided. . . . Difference is maintained, and while persons of different affiliations will take part in each other's celebrations, they will not participate in other sects' liturgies or rituals when those conflict with the articles of faith of their own sectarian communities." In this case, identities as distinctions seem relatively fixed but not necessarily hostile. My question goes to when such sharing is likely to break down, and Bowman's (2001) own most recent study of Mar Elyas shows how the different religious groups there became much more opposed as common subjugation to Israeli oppression was replaced by the more selective, pro-Muslim control of the Palestinian authority. Thus Bowman's most recent work provides data in support of my argument, not contrary to it. Lahiri's account of differentiation and competition among peoples of the same religion is also relevant here.

Bowman's supposition that the specter of essentialism is haunting my work is also misplaced. Essentialists believe that there are essential qualities that define groups, a position that finds no support anywhere in my work. On the other hand, the structuralist proposition that a distinction once made is often reproduced, as a distinction, despite the changing contents of the members of the set is rather well established in anthropology.

Jezernik's assertion that the Ottoman Empire was "tolerant" of diversity even though, in his words, Christians and Jews were "despised and humiliated" by the Ottomans seems questionable, even assuming that he means negative tolerance in this assessment. I am less impressed by the numbers of mosques and minarets in places like Budapest or Osijek when the Ottomans ruled there (see Jezernik 1998) than I am by the destruction of churches and monasteries in those same places by the supposedly tolerant Turks. For example, while Vučinić notes in her comment that the Austrians destroyed or converted mosques whenever they took control of Bel-

grade from the Turks and the Turks destroyed or converted churches whenever they took control of the place from the Ottomans, such destruction goes back to the first Ottoman conquests. Thus when Belgrade was first taken by the Turks in 1521, all churches (which included one Catholic church as well as Orthodox ones) were either destroyed or converted into mosques (Nikić 1958). Similar conversions of churches into mosques by the Turks and reconversions after they left were seen in Bulgaria (Lory 1985:106-15). Indeed, after the Turks left Belgrade in 1867, the Slavic Muslim population of the town was able to obtain the use of the smallest mosque left standing and even to have the new Serbian state pay for its renovation and for the maintenance of its two officials (Hadžić 1957). Yet few would argue that this Serbian state was "tolerant" in the positive sense, and the Muslims were as clearly subordinated to Orthodox Christians as the Orthodox had been to Muslims under Ottoman rule.

The comments of other discussants show the inaccuracy of Kürti's reading. That my model is not limited to conflicts between Muslims and non-Muslims is seen by Lahiri's use of it to discuss competition between Hindu sects and Vučinić's illustration of competition between Orthodox Christians and Roman Catholics in the Kotor region. Since Kürti has himself done fieldwork in Transylvania, a region in which Orthodox Christians, Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Calvinists, Unitarians, and Greek Catholics have competed and taken over each other's religious structures up through very recent times (Verdery 1999:60-65), he might have used the opportunity to discuss the model presented in my article in the context of this religiously contested region, and I am sorry that he did not do so. Careless errors mar Kürti's comment, such as the statement that Duijzings's study was of a pre-Ottoman "14th-century pilgrimage" when the text clearly states that Duijzings observed the event as late as 1991. Kürti's criticism of my article for being based on my own field data and expertise rather than on a secondary literature of unspecified relevance certainly takes the postmodern critique of fieldwork to its ultimate extreme.

Finally, a word about Bowman's charges that my article provides an "intellectual rationalization for ethnic cleansing" and provides "legitimacy for the construction and perpetuation of a world of ethnically pure nation-states." My article explains how processes of competition between groups that distinguish themselves from each other may be manifested as syncretism yet still result, ultimately, in the exclusion of the symbols of one group or another from a religious shrine. It does not provide "legitimacy" for the construction of ethnically pure states but does help explain how places which were supposedly syncretic, "tolerant," and multicultural can produce ethnic cleansing. I don't like this phenomenon any more than Bowman does—given my preferences, I would support the inclusive India invoked by Paddayya or the active intercultural communication in Bosnia invoked by Golubović. At the same time, if the peoples inhabiting places like Bosnia, Cyprus, Sri Lanka, and Palestine/Is-

rael (to give just a few examples) do come to see each other as Others, is it possible to force them into a multiculturalism that they themselves reject? This is precisely the effort of the international administration in Bosnia since the Dayton Agreement of 1995 (see Hayden 2001), and the low degree of its success may be seen in the refusal by most of either Bosnia's Serbs or Herzegovina's Croats (two of the three "constituent peoples" of Bosnia, with about half of the population between them) even to recognize the 2001 Bosnia-Herzegovina "Statehood Day" that was celebrated by foreign governments and by Bosnian Muslims.¹ It is for this reason that I raised the question of democracy at the end of my article. Is it desirable for foreigners to rule places like Bosnia or Kosovo without the consent of the governed? Is it even possible for them to do so for long? Some may see the imposition of involuntary multiculturalism as a worthy project, but a dictatorship of virtue is still a dictatorship, and the virtue of dictatorships is always dubious.

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