

remote areas of India, where they are already awaited by ‘shamans,’ or to places of power and cult like Stonehenge or → Machu Picchu. Rituals can be ‘co-booked.’ Pilgrims move in groups, as they always have. Twenty million Muslims alone start out for Mecca; Saint Peter’s Basilica in → Rome sees six million tourists a year (in the Holy Year 2000, ten to twenty million pilgrims visited Rome); eleven million pilgrimage to Lourdes. All in all, around 300 million pilgrims are on the road in Europe each year. In order to channel these travel currents and skim off a yield most profitably, specialized travel agencies have been formed for pilgrim tourism. All important pilgrimage destinations are made accessible. The pilgrimage bureaus woo even those who go to Thailand, or India, to study world religions. The concept of the pilgrimage is promoted, along with exchange among those of like mind. With many trips, besides the technical tour leaders, priests are available. At the end of their journey, tourists on pilgrimage will surely return home interiorly enriched. Frequently, the sponsors of these undertakings are church institutions.

1. ENZENSBERGER 1987, 670.
2. GEHLEN, Rolf, *Welt und Ordnung*, Marburg 1995, 220.
3. MÄDER, Ueli, “Sturm auf die Alpen,” in: *Universitas* 7 (1987), 692.

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→ *Colonialism, Environmentalism, Landscape, Local Devotion, Mission, Orientalism/Exotism, Pilgrimage, Place (Sacred), Religious Contact, Road/Path/Journey, Sports*

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Tradition

The concept of ‘tradition’ plays an important role in the study of religion. It invokes the continuity that justifies historical analysis and comparison. Were there no religious tradition(s), scholars would have nothing to study, no threads with which to card and spin their own academic traditions. The fact that ‘tradition’ can serve as a synonym for both → ‘religion’ and ‘culture’—terms notoriously fraught with definitional and ideological tensions—hints at hidden depths. Tradition raises complex questions, as do all acts of transmission or → translation. Does that which is transferred

remain the same or is it changed, as it passes between different generations, social groups, → languages, and cultures? To what extent is the continuity of tradition a 'natural' effect of social and institutional structures, and to what extent is it a strategic construct of human (or superhuman) agents? What epistemological and ideological issues are implicit in attempts to characterize traditions as authentic or inauthentic, genuine or invented? Is it possible to evaluate such judgments beyond simply choosing allegiances among potentially incommensurable perspectives, e.g., orthodoxy/heterodoxy, primary/secondary source, insider/outsider, and colonized/colonizer?

Etymology and Antonyms

Tradition is the act of handing over. Early meanings (many now archaic) emerge from religious (especially Christian) conceptions of → authority: beliefs passed down, above all orally (→ Oral Tradition), from generation to generation, including the Oral Torah (→ Bible); oral instruction, including teaching the Creed to catechumens; the apostolically-legitimized teachings of the Roman Catholic Church; and the *sunna* of the Prophet → Muhammad. In the sixteenth century, 'tradition' was generalized to include both transferring the possession of objects and custom, or normative usage more generally. Insofar as the content of tradition is seen as sacrosanct, questions of authenticity are shifted to the process of transmission. This shift is indicated by a third cluster of meanings, according to which tradition is also betrayal, including delivery of oneself or others over to Satan and the surrender of Christian scriptures to persecuting authorities.

Just as 'sacred' takes on determinate meaning in contrast to 'profane,' and 'culture' in contrast to 'nature,' 'tradition(al)' becomes clearer in relational tension with other concepts. Tradition is commonly held to be static, ancient, unitary, local, continuous, received, and repetitive in contrast to that which is dynamic, modern, plural, global, discontinuous, invented, and innovative. The basic metaphor of 'handing down unchanged that which is meaningful and valued' portrays 'tradition' as the other of various forms of semantic rupture. Tradition roots continuity of meaning in (a) externalities (e.g., creeds, → texts, → rituals, institutions) that (b) function as warrants of authenticity by virtue of their perceived contiguity to the past: e.g., the authority of the *Hadiths* is a function of their repetition of historical originals. Discontinuity can result from severing the link to externalities: e.g., the Radical → Reformation was radical due to its internalization of discipline, breaking the self-consciously historical and institutional relation between *restitutio* and *traditio*. It can also result from severing perceived links to the past: e.g., → colonialism, modernization (→ Modernity/Modern Age; Post-modernity), and globalization have created social, economic, and political ruptures, undermining the long-established → identities of cultural groups around the world.

Great and Little Traditions

Robert Redfield (1956), drawing on anthropological studies of Mayan culture(s), drew an influential distinction between 'great tradition' and 'little tradition.' The former tends to be elite, urban, universal, textual, 'religious,' orthodox, scholarly, refined, central, and, above all, "consciously cultivated and handed down" (p. 70); whereas the latter tends to be popular, peasant-based, local, oral, 'superstitious,' heterodox, folk, unrefined, peripheral, and unreflective. Redfield stressed the need to study mutual interactions between the two: "Great and little tradition can be thought of as two currents of thought and action, distinguishable, yet ever flowing into and out

of each other” (p. 72). McKim Marriott (1955) suggested that processes of ‘universalization’ and ‘parochialization’ were responsible for the slow two-way movement between village and more global levels. Milton Singer (1972) emphasized the strategic use of public ritual to manage portrayals of India’s great tradition, arguing, contra Redfield, that great/little does not correspond to modern/traditional, because much that is ‘modern’ is old and many ‘traditions’ are recent inventions. The great/little distinction has been criticized as over-generalized, under-theorized, colonialist or orientalist (reflecting biased outsider discourses; → Orientalism/Exotism), and elitist or fundamentalist (reflecting biased insider discourses; → Fundamentalism). Even granted its potential value, the distinction has suffered from two main problems: it hides normative assumptions behind a descriptive tool; and it has too often justified an exclusive focus on one or the other extreme (e.g., on village-level micro-analyses or global generalizations based on normative texts), ignoring the question of mutual influences and the ideological dimensions of the distinction itself.

Seeing tradition as ‘the given’ ignores agency, i.e., the strategic value of claiming the high ground of ‘tradition’ in struggles for power. Malinowski emphasized that myth is “a hard-working active force” (1992 [1926], 101); recent scholarship goes further in seeing tradition as a tool. Eric Hobsbawm distinguished genuine from invented traditions: “insofar as there is [. . .] reference to a historic past, the peculiarity of ‘invented’ traditions is that the continuity with it is largely fictitious. In short, they are responses to novel situations which take the form of reference to old situations, or which establish their own past by quasi-obligatory repetition [. . .]” (Hobsbawm/Ranger 1983, 1). Hobsbawm suggested that the invention of tradition (and the ‘(re)-invention’ of ‘extinct’ traditions) has become more frequent in modernity, as ‘the old ways’ of genuine traditions have been threatened by rapid social transformation (pp. 4-8). Terence Ranger, in the same volume, argued that Western scholars and administrators invented African ‘tradition’ as the other of modernity: where African societies had, as a matter of historical fact, been characterized by “multiple identities” and “overlapping networks of association and exchange,” this “pre-colonial movement of men and ideas was replaced by the colonial custom-bounded, microcosmic local society,” whereas “there rarely existed in fact the closed corporate consensual system which came to be accepted as characteristic of ‘traditional’ Africa” (pp. 247-248; 254).

The agency of invention is not limited to the colonizers: (re)invention of tradition can be an important indigenous strategy in resisting or rejecting colonization, modernization, and globalization (see, e.g., → North America [Traditional Religions]). In this light, the authenticity of tradition can be framed in terms of autonomy—not historical truth—as characterized by a wider or narrower scope of agency: tradition is “volitional temporal action,” with its contrary being “not change but oppression” (Glassie 1995, 409 and 396). Is the Melanesian re-invention of tradition through the discourse of *kastom* inauthentic because it self-consciously appropriates and inverts colonial discourse, or is it authentic because it is a product of indigenous agency (cf. Babadzan 1988)? The latter alternative is closed if we insist that post-colonial invented traditions are necessarily oppositional and counter-hegemonic: i.e., that “the discourse of the dominant shapes and structures the discourse of the dominated” (Keesing 1994, 41; → Discourse). Less deterministically, “Just because what is done is culturally logical does not

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mean the logic determined that it be done [. . .]. [T]raditions are invented in the specific terms of the people who construct them [. . .]" (Sahlins 1999, 409).

Academic Traditions

Western academic traditions on 'tradition' manifest the usual spectrum of views, from realist through constructionist to relativist. For example, the distinction between genuine and invented traditions—between historical facts and orientalist/colonialist constructions—presupposes the modernist distinction between real and represented (Friedman 1992, 849). This raises the possibility that any search for genuine religious tradition(s) reflects an invented aspect of Western political/academic traditions: "how do we defend the 'real past' [. . .] and 'genuine' traditions [. . .] if we accept that all cultural representations—even scholarly ones—are contingent and embedded in a particular social and political context?" (Linnekin 1992, 250). 'Tradition' quickly unfolds into issues of truth, authenticity, authority, autonomy, and power; and distinct academic traditions inform varying answers to questions such as the following: Can we make sense of the alleged unity of → 'Hinduism' as an ancient tradition founded on the Vedas without giving a central role to both (a) the Western academic tradition on this 'tradition' and (b) the traditions invented by nineteenth-century Hindu Reform movements as they reacted to colonial portrayals of Indian history (cf. Fitzgerald 2000, 134ff.; Sontheimer/Kulke 1989)? Richard King suggests that the secular and reductionistic tendencies of the academic study of religion are rooted in a post-Enlightenment valuation of modernity vs. tradition, a constructed rupture often linked to another: progressive West vs. timeless East (1999, 46; → Progress; History). Extending this view, religious studies can never escape the situated and limited perspective of its own invented tradition(s) re 'tradition(s).'

However, it may be possible to chart a less radically relativistic course—losing a few colleagues to Scylla rather than the whole boat to Charybdis—by analyzing 'tradition' in relational tension with other concepts. Likely the most significant analytical appeal to 'tradition' in the study of religion has been the Weberian distinction between traditional, charismatic and rational-legal forms of authority, especially as embodied in the tension between → priest and → prophet (1978; → Weber; Charisma). Here, 'tradition' is defined in terms of its conservative function, and it is analyzed from the point of view of specific social and institutional structures (Bourdieu 1987 [1971]). As such, tradition—whether it is believed to be invented from whole cloth or guaranteed authentic by divine authority—is both 'traditional' and radical, depending on one's analytical frame.

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→ *Academic Study of Religion, Colonialism, Demise of a Religion, Discourse, History, Memory, New Religions, Oral Tradition, Reception, Translation, Text/Textual Criticism, Writing*

Steven Engler

Trance

1. The word 'trance' derives from the Latin prefix *trans-* ('over,' 'beyond'), and occurs for the first time at the end of the eighteenth century, in connection with Mesmerism. It means a condition of consciousness 'beyond' normal waking consciousness. It denotes a sleep-like condition in which those involved seem no longer to be themselves. Anthropologists of the twentieth century have observed that trance plays an important role in the rites and cults of all cultures. Here it is described as a condition of dissolution, accompanied by a deficiency in controlled movements, as well as by hallucinations and visions, which are then often forgotten. Trance appears in two principal forms: *possession* and *ecstasy*. In the condition of possession, or → 'enthusiasm' (from Gk., *én-theos*, having a 'god within'—being god-enthused or in-spired), a god, a spirit, or a demon takes possession of the believer and penetrates the believer's body. With the trance-form of ecstasy, just the other way around, the psyche leaves the body, which—as frequently in → shamanism—may fall into a stupor-like rigidity.

2. Under usual circumstances, human perception takes place consciously. This condition is generally experienced as normal. There are, however, numerous other states of consciousness that are not perceived as normal, such as sleep and → dream, → intoxication and → ecstasy. These altered states of consciousness include trance, which occurs in a religious context as well as in a secular. Trance is a congenital behavioral pattern that can be activated through certain corporeal techniques (dancing, running, swaying with the upper body). Trance instills those affected with a feeling of dissociation: they feel themselves to consist of two observers, one part of their consciousness being directed within, while the other part has a sense of leaving the body, and observing itself and its surroundings from without.

Trance allows subjects to be released from everything learned hitherto, and renders them capable of accomplishments of soul and body that they would not otherwise attempt. Considered from a psychological viewpoint, the trance stage makes possible a grasp of psychic processes that are hidden

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