

PERSPECTIVES ON MODERN CENTRAL AND EAST EUROPEAN LITERATURE: QUESTS FOR IDENTITY pdf

1: Religious Belief and National Belonging in Central and Eastern Europe | Pew Research Center

In Perspectives on Modern Central and East European Literature: Quests for Identity, scholars from around the world examine the literatures of countries only recently coming into their own as distinct political and cultural identities.

Due to the high quality of its arts, crafts, metallurgy and buildings, the accomplishments in urban planning, governance, trade and technology etc. The Indus Valley Civilisation on the other hand has only come to light by means of 20th century archaeology. Scholars, who employ several periodization models argue over whether South Asian tradition is consciously committed to the Harappan culture. The late Vedic political progress results in urbanization, strict social hierarchy, commercial and military rivalries among the settlers, that have spread all over the entire sub-continent. The Vedas constitute the oldest work of Sanskrit literature and form the basis of religious, ethic and philosophic ideas in South Asia. They are widely, but not exclusively regarded the basics and scriptural authority on worship, rituals, ceremonies, sacrifices, meditation, philosophy and spiritual knowledge for the future Hindu and Buddhist cosmology. Commentaries and discussions also focus on the development of valid political ideas and concepts of societal progress and ethic conformity. These arguably represent the furthest reaching, most profound and permanent South Asian ideas on other cultural spheres. Its two eastern regions of Punjab and Sindh share cultural links to Northwest India. Bangladesh and the Indian state of West Bengal share a common heritage and culture based on the Bengali language. The Culture of India is diverse and a complex mixture of many influences. Nepal is culturally linked to both India and Tibet and the varied ethnic groups of the country share many of the festivals and cultural traditions used and celebrated in North and East India and Tibet. Nepali , the dominant language of Nepal uses the Devanagari alphabet which is also used to write many North Indian languages. Tibetan Buddhism is the dominant religion in Bhutan and the Tibetan alphabet is used to write Dzongkha , the dominant language of Bhutan. There is a cultural and linguistic divide between North and South India. Sri Lanka is culturally tied to both India and Southeast Asia. Cultural festivals, aspects of its cuisine and Theravada Buddhism , the dominant religion in Sri Lanka, show a Southeast Asian affinity. The religions Hinduism , Buddhism and Islam gradually diffused into local cosmology. Nonetheless, the Southeast Asian nations have very diversely adapted to these cultural stimuli and evolved their distinct sophisticated expression in lifestyle, the visual arts and most notably in architectural accomplishments, such as Angkor Wat in Cambodia and Borobudur in Indonesia. In the case of Vietnam, it is also influenced much by Confucianism and the culture of China. Myanmar has also been exposed to Indian cultural influences. Before the 14th century, Hinduism and Buddhism were the dominant religions of Southeast Asia. Thereafter, Islam became dominant in Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei. Southeast Asia has also had a lot of Western influence due to the lasting legacy of colonialism. One example is the Philippines which has been heavily influenced by America and Spain, with Christianity Catholicism as the dominant religion. East Timor also demonstrates Portuguese influence through colonialism, as it is a predominantly Christian nation. A common feature found around the region are stilt houses. These houses are elevated on stilts so that water can easily pass below them in case of a flood. Another shared feature is rice paddy agriculture, which originated in Southeast Asia thousands of years ago. Dance drama is also a very important feature of the culture, utilizing movements of the hands and feet perfected over thousands of years. Furthermore, the arts and literature of Southeast Asia is very distinctive as some have been influenced by Indian , Hindu , Chinese , Buddhist , and Islamic literature. In addition, the Jewish origins of Christianity , along with the many cultural contributions from both Jews and Arabs in Europe, meant that West Asian culture had left a lasting impact on Western civilization as well. At its north-western end, Armenia and Georgia have an unmistakable Christian tradition, while Lebanon shares a large Christian and a large Muslim community. Many Middle Eastern countries encompass huge deserts where nomadic people live to this day. Kazakhstan , Kyrgyzstan , Tajikistan , Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. However, Afghanistan is sometimes included. Its strategic and historic position around the East-West axis and

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the major trading routes guaranteed a steady influx of ideas and conflicting notions of tribalism and traditionalism. However, the region was conquered and dominated by a variety of cultures, such as the Mongols , Persians , Tatars , Russians , Sarmatians. As some Central Asian areas have been inhabited by nomadic people, numerous urban centers have developed in a distinct local character. The geographic region of Siberia was the historical land of the Tatars in the Siberia Khanate. However Russian expansion essentially undermined this and thus today it is under Russian rule. There are roughly 40 million people living in North Asia and the majority is now Ethnic Russians while Indigenous Siberians have become a minority in North Asia.

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2: BERGHAHN BOOKS : The Enemy On Display: The Second World War In Eastern European Museums

Perspectives on Modern Central and East European Literature: Quests for Identity (International Council for Central and East European Studies) 1st Edition.

Today, solid majorities of adults across much of the region say they believe in God, and most identify with a religion. Orthodox Christianity and Roman Catholicism are the most prevalent religious affiliations, much as they were more than years ago in the twilight years of the Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires. In many Central and Eastern European countries, religion and national identity are closely entwined. Relatively few Orthodox or Catholic adults in Central and Eastern Europe say they regularly attend worship services, pray often or consider religion central to their lives. Around the world, different ways of being religious. Believing. Do they believe in a higher power? Do they pray and perform rituals? Do they feel part of a congregation, spiritual community or religious group? Research suggests that many people around the world engage with religion in at least one of these ways, but not necessarily all three. Nonetheless, the comeback of religion in a region once dominated by atheist regimes is striking – particularly in some historically Orthodox countries, where levels of religious affiliation have risen substantially in recent decades. Whether the return to religion in Orthodox-majority countries began before the fall of the Berlin Wall remains an open question. In Russia, Ukraine and Bulgaria, far more people said they were religiously unaffiliated in than describe themselves that way in the new survey. In all three countries, the share of the population that identifies with Orthodox Christianity is up significantly since the collapse of the Soviet Union. In part, this may be because much of the population in countries such as Poland and Hungary retained a Catholic identity during the communist era, leaving less of a religious vacuum to be filled when the USSR fell. To the extent that there has been measurable religious change in recent decades in Central and Eastern European countries with large Catholic populations, it has been in the direction of greater secularization. The Orthodox countries in the region are further toward the east, and many were part of the Soviet Union. This political divide is seen in responses to two separate survey questions: How religious do you think your country was in the s and s when all but Greece among the surveyed countries were ruled by communist regimes , and how religious is it today? With few exceptions, in former Soviet republics the more common view is that those countries are more religious now than a few decades ago. There is more variation in the answers to these questions in countries that were beyond the borders of the former USSR. In contrast with most of the former Soviet republics, respondents in Poland, Romania and Greece say their countries have become considerably less religious in recent decades. But these perceptions do not tell the entire story. Despite declining shares in some countries, Catholics in Central and Eastern Europe generally are more religiously observant than Orthodox Christians in the region, at least by conventional measures. In addition, Catholics in Central and Eastern Europe are much more likely than Orthodox Christians to say they engage in religious practices such as taking communion and fasting during Lent. Catholics also are somewhat more likely than Orthodox Christians to say they frequently share their views on God with others, and to say they read or listen to scripture outside of religious services. These nationalist sentiments are especially common among members of the majority religious group in each country. But, in some cases, even members of religious minority groups take this position. Many of the predominantly Orthodox countries surveyed have centuries-old national churches, such as the Greek Orthodox Church, Russian Orthodox Church and Armenian Apostolic Church, and there is popular support for these institutions to play a large role in public life. The political – and sometimes religious – map of Central and Eastern Europe has been redrawn numerous times over the centuries. Russia, whether as a synonym for the czarist empire or the USSR, has played a pivotal role in defining the political and cultural boundaries of the region. Most see Russia as an important buffer against the influence of the West, and many say Russia has a special obligation to protect not only ethnic Russians, but also Orthodox Christians in other countries. In many ways, then, the return of religion since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the breakup of the Soviet Union has played out

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differently in the predominantly Orthodox countries of Eastern Europe than it has among the heavily Catholic or mixed-religious populations further to the West. In the Orthodox countries, there has been an upsurge of religious identity, but levels of religious practice are comparatively low. And Orthodox identity is tightly bound up with national identity, feelings of pride and cultural superiority, support for linkages between national churches and governments, and views of Russia as a bulwark against the West. Meanwhile, in such historically Catholic countries as Poland, Hungary, Lithuania and the Czech Republic, there has not been a marked rise in religious identification since the fall of the USSR; on the contrary, the share of adults in these countries who identify as Catholic has declined. The link between religious identity and national identity is present across the region but somewhat weaker in the Catholic-majority countries. And politically, the Catholic countries tend to look West rather than East: What is a median? On some questions throughout this report, median percentages are reported to help readers see overall patterns. The median is the middle number in a list of figures sorted in ascending or descending order. In a survey of 18 countries, the median result is the average of the ninth and 10th on a list of country-level findings ranked in order. For example, in 13 countries, the number of Orthodox Christians surveyed is large enough to be analyzed and broken out separately. The regional median for Orthodox Christians is the seventh-highest result when the findings solely among Orthodox respondents in those 13 countries are listed from highest to lowest. These are among the key findings of the Pew Research Center survey, which was conducted from June to July through face-to-face interviews in 17 languages with more than 25, adults ages 18 and older in 18 countries. The study, funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts and the John Templeton Foundation, is part of a larger effort by Pew Research Center to understand religious change and its impact on societies around the world. While there is no consensus over the exact boundaries of Central and Eastern Europe, the new survey spans a vast area running eastward from the Czech Republic and Poland to Russia, Georgia and Armenia, and southward from the Baltic States to the Balkans and Greece. Over the centuries, nationhood, politics and religion have converged and diverged in the region as empires have risen and crumbled and independence has been lost and regained. Most of the countries surveyed were once ruled by communist regimes, either aligned or not aligned with Moscow. In this respect, Greece offers a useful point of comparison with other Orthodox-majority countries in the region. It is both of the West and of the East. For example, Greeks report relatively low levels of religious practice, while expressing strong feelings of cultural superiority and national pride — similar to respondents in other Orthodox-majority countries surveyed. But Greeks also differ: For instance, they are more supportive of democracy and less socially conservative than neighbors in majority-Orthodox countries. Central and Eastern Europe includes a few Muslim-majority countries. Pew Research Center previously surveyed them as part of a study of Muslims around the world. For more on these countries, see the related sidebar. The survey does not include several Christian-majority countries in Central and Eastern Europe: Macedonia, Montenegro and Cyprus, which have Orthodox majorities, and Slovakia and Slovenia, which are predominantly Catholic. Protestants are a smaller presence in the region, though in some countries they are sizable minorities. In Estonia and Latvia, for example, roughly one-in-five adults identify as Lutheran. Some of these polls also have asked about belief in God and frequency of church attendance. While most of these surveys cover Russia, data showing trends over time in other Orthodox countries since the s are scarce. And because of major differences in question wording, as well as widely differing methodological approaches to sampling minority populations, the surveys arrive at varying estimates of the size of different religious groups, including Orthodox Christians, Catholics, Muslims and people with no religious affiliation. Some of the more recent surveys suggest that this Orthodox revival has slowed or leveled off in the last decade or so. At the same time, surveys indicate that the shares of adults engaging in religious practices have remained largely stable since the fall of the Soviet Union. In Catholic-majority countries, church attendance rates may even have declined, according to some surveys. Overall, people in Central and Eastern Europe are somewhat less likely to say they believe in God than adults previously surveyed in Africa and Latin America, among whom belief is almost universal. Still, across this region — with its unique history of state-supported atheism and separation of

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religion from public life – it is striking that the vast majority of adults express belief in God. Across the countries surveyed, Catholics tend to express higher levels of belief in heaven and hell than do Orthodox Christians. Belief in fate is. Even among people who do not identify with a religion, substantial shares say they believe in fate and the soul. Given that other countries in Central and Eastern Europe emerged from communist rule with much higher levels of religious affiliation, this raises the question: For clues, scholars have looked to the past, identifying a pattern of Czech distaste for the pressures emanating from religious and secular authorities. This goes back as far as , when followers of Jan Hus, a priest in Bohemia now part of the Czech Republic , separated from the Roman Catholic Church after Hus was burned at the stake for heresy. While the region would become overwhelmingly Catholic, historians argue that the repression of this period reverberates to the present day in the collective Czech memory, casting the Catholic Church as an overly privileged partner of foreign occupiers. Openness to religion briefly spiked after the fall of communism, though evidence suggests this may have been mostly a political statement against the communist regime, and since the early s, the share of Czechs who say they have a religious affiliation has declined. By comparison, more than half of U. People in the region are much more likely to take part in other religious practices, such as having icons or other holy figures in their homes or wearing religious symbols such as a cross. And very high shares of both Catholics and Orthodox Christians in virtually every country surveyed say they have been baptized. For more on religious practices, see Chapter 2. Conservative views on sexuality and gender Opposition to homosexuality throughout the region In the U. While this pattern is also seen within individual countries in Central and Eastern Europe, the most religious countries in the region by conventional measures such as overall rates of church attendance are not necessarily the most socially conservative. This pattern, in which Orthodox countries are more socially conservative even though they may be less religious, is seen throughout the region. Young adults somewhat more liberal on homosexuality, same-sex marriage Across the region, younger people that is, adults under 35 are less opposed to homosexuality and more inclined than their elders to favor legal gay marriage. But even among younger people, the prevailing view is that homosexuality is morally wrong, and relatively few young adults except in the Czech Republic favor gay marriage. In some countries, there is little or no difference between the views of younger and older adults on these issues. Many in Orthodox countries associate women with traditional roles People in Orthodox-majority countries are more likely than those elsewhere in the region to hold traditional views of gender roles – such as women having a social responsibility to bear children and wives being obligated to obey their husbands. Along these same lines, roughly four-in-ten or more adults in most Orthodox-majority countries say that when unemployment is high, men should have more rights to a job. Substantial shares of Orthodox Christians – even outside Russia – see the patriarch of Moscow currently Kirill as the highest authority in the Orthodox Church, including roughly half or more not only in Estonia and Latvia, where about three-in-four Orthodox Christians identify as ethnic Russians, but also in Belarus and Moldova, where the vast majority of Orthodox Christians are not ethnic Russians. In countries such as Armenia, Serbia and Ukraine, many people regard the national patriarchs as the main religious authorities. But even in these three nations, roughly one-in-six or more Orthodox Christians say the patriarch of Moscow is the highest authority in Orthodoxy – despite the fact that the overwhelming majority of Orthodox Christians in these countries do not self-identify as ethnic Russians or with the Russian Orthodox Church. Should Russia protect Orthodox Christians outside its borders? In addition to having the largest Orthodox Christian population in the world more than million , Russia plays central cultural and geopolitical roles in the region. In all but one Orthodox-majority country surveyed, most adults agree with the notion that Russia has an obligation to protect Orthodox Christians outside its borders. The lone exception is Ukraine, which lost effective control over Crimea to Russia in and is still engaged in a conflict with pro-Russian separatists in the eastern part of the country. For a more detailed explanation of ethnic and religious divides in Ukraine, see the sidebar later in this chapter. Ethnic Russians say Russia has an obligation to protect them The survey also asked respondents whether Russia has an obligation to protect ethnic Russians living outside its borders. And in all three of these countries, clear majorities of ethnic Russians agree that

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Russia has a responsibility to protect them. Ukraine divided between east and west The survey results highlight an east-west divide within Ukraine.

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3: Eastern world - Wikipedia

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Postcolonial theory thus establishes intellectual spaces for subaltern peoples to speak for themselves, in their own voices, and thus produce cultural discourses of philosophy, language, society and economy, balancing the imbalanced us-and-them binary power-relationship between the colonist and the colonial subjects. Colonialism was presented as "the extension of civilization", which ideologically justified the self-ascribed racial and cultural superiority of the Western world over the non-Western world. That such a divinely established, natural harmony among the human races of the world would be possible, because everyone has an assigned cultural identity, a social place, and an economic role within an imperial colony. The regeneration of the inferior or degenerate races, by the superior races is part of the providential order of things for humanity. *Regere imperio populos* is our vocation. Pour forth this all-consuming activity onto countries, which, like China, are crying aloud for foreign conquest. Turn the adventurers who disturb European society into a *ver sacrum*, a horde like those of the Franks, the Lombards, or the Normans, and every man will be in his right role. Nature has made a race of workers, the Chinese race, who have wonderful manual dexterity, and almost no sense of honour; govern them with justice, levying from them, in return for the blessing of such a government, an ample allowance for the conquering race, and they will be satisfied; a race of tillers of the soil, the Negro; treat him with kindness and humanity, and all will be as it should; a race of masters and soldiers, the European race. Let each do what he is made for, and all will be well. Especially in the colonization of the Far East and in the late-nineteenth century Scramble for Africa, the representation of a homogeneous European identity justified colonization. Hence, Belgium and Britain, and France and Germany proffered theories of national superiority that justified colonialism as delivering the light of civilization to unenlightened peoples. In postcolonial literature, the anti-conquest narrative analyzes the identity politics that are the social and cultural perspectives of the subaltern colonial subjects—their creative resistance to the culture of the colonizer; how such cultural resistance complicated the establishment of a colonial society; how the colonizers developed their postcolonial identity; and how neocolonialism actively employs the Us-and-Them binary social relation to view the non-Western world as inhabited by The Other. The neocolonial discourse of geopolitical homogeneity relegating the decolonized peoples, their cultures, and their countries, to an imaginary place, such as "the Third World", an over-inclusive term that usually comprises continents and seas, i. Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Oceania. As such, the terms postcolonial and postcolonialism denote aspects of the subject matter, which indicate that the decolonized world is an intellectual space "of contradictions, of half-finished processes, of confusions, of hybridity, and of liminalities". Theory, Practice, Politics, Helen Gilbert and Joanne Tompkins clarified the denotational functions, among which: The term post-colonialism—"according to a too-rigid etymology"—is frequently misunderstood as a temporal concept, meaning the time after colonialism has ceased, or the time following the politically determined Independence Day on which a country breaks away from its governance by another state. A theory of post-colonialism must, then, respond to more than the merely chronological construction of post-independence, and to more than just the discursive experience of imperialism. Its societal effects—the imposition of a subjugating colonial identity—are harmful to the mental health of the native peoples who were subjugated into colonies. Fanon wrote the ideological essence of colonialism is the systematic denial of "all attributes of humanity" of the colonized people. Such dehumanization is achieved with physical and mental violence, by which the colonist means to inculcate a servile mentality upon the natives. For Fanon the natives must violently resist colonial subjugation. Orientalism thus conflated and reduced the non-Western world into the homogeneous cultural entity known as "the East". Therefore, in service to the colonial type of imperialism, the us-and-them Orientalist paradigm allowed European scholars to represent the Oriental World as inferior and backward,

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irrational and wild, as opposed to a Western Europe that was superior and progressive, rational and civilized—the opposite of the Oriental Other. That the applied power of such cultural knowledge allowed Europeans to rename, re-define, and thereby control Oriental peoples, places, and things, into imperial colonies. Said replied that the European West applied Orientalism as a homogeneous form of The Other, in order to facilitate the formation of the cohesive, collective European cultural identity denoted by the term "The West". Therefore, descriptions of the Orient by the Occident lack material attributes, grounded within land. It should be understood that this process draws creativity, amounting an entire domain and discourse. In Orientalism, Said mentions the production of "philology [the study of the history of languages], lexicography [dictionary making], history, biology, political and economic theory, novel-writing and lyric poetry" p. Therefore, there is an entire industry that exploits the Orient for its own subjective purposes that lack a native and intimate understanding. Such industries become institutionalized and eventually become a resource for manifest Orientalism, or a compilation of misinformation about the Orient. The ideology of Empire was hardly ever a brute jingoism; rather, it made subtle use of reason, and recruited science and history to serve its ends. Orientalism is self-perpetuating to the extent that it becomes normalized within common discourse, making people say things that are latent, impulsive, or not fully conscious of its own self. The working class is oppressed. They are the least interesting and the most dangerous. They should not call themselves subaltern. Spivak also introduced the terms essentialism and strategic essentialism to describe the social functions of postcolonialism. The term essentialism denotes the perceptual dangers inherent to reviving subaltern voices in ways that might over simplify the cultural identity of heterogeneous social groups and, thereby, create stereotyped representations of the different identities of the people who compose a given social group. The term strategic essentialism denotes a temporary, essential group-identity used in the praxis of discourse among peoples. The important distinction, between the terms, is that strategic essentialism does not ignore the diversity of identities cultural and ethnic in a social group, but that, in its practical function, strategic essentialism temporarily minimizes inter-group diversity to pragmatically support the essential group-identity. As a subaltern woman, Francisca repressed her native African language, and spoke her request in Peninsular Spanish, the official language of Colonial Latin America. As a subaltern woman, she applied to her voice the Spanish cultural filters of sexism, Christian monotheism, and servile language, in addressing her colonial master: I, Francisca de Figueroa, mulatta in colour, declare that I have, in the city of Cartagena, a daughter named Juana de Figueroa; and she has written, to call for me, in order to help me. Once given, I attest to this. I beg your Lordship to approve, and order it done. I ask for justice in this. Bhabha argued that viewing the human world as composed of separate and unequal cultures, rather than as an integral human world, perpetuates the belief in the existence of imaginary peoples and places—"Christendom" and "The Islamic World", "The First World", "The Second World", and "The Third World". To counter such linguistic and sociologic reductionism, postcolonial praxis establishes the philosophic value of hybrid intellectual spaces, wherein ambiguity abrogates truth and authenticity; thereby, hybridity is the philosophic condition that most substantively challenges the ideological validity of colonialism. Siva Kumar [edit] In his catalogue essay, R. Siva Kumar introduced the term Contextual Modernism, which later emerged as a postcolonial critical tool in the understanding of Indian art, specifically the works of Nandalal Bose, Rabindranath Tagore, Ramkinkar Baij and Benode Behari Mukherjee. Modernism was to them neither a style nor a form of internationalism. The brief survey of the individual works of the core Santiniketan artists and the thought perspectives they open up makes clear that though there were various contact points in the work they were not bound by a continuity of style but by a community of ideas. Which they not only shared but also interpreted and carried forward. Thus they do not represent a school but a movement. Those European modernities, projected through a triumphant British colonial power, provoked nationalist responses, equally problematic when they incorporated similar essentialisms. In *The Colonial Present*, Gregory traces connections between the geopolitics of events happening in modern-day Afghanistan, Palestine, and Iraq and links it back to the us-and-them binary relation between the Western and Eastern world. Emphasizing ideas of discussing ideas

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around colonialism in the present tense, Gregory utilizes modern events such as the September 11 attacks to tell spatial stories around the colonial behavior happening due to the War on Terror. This discourse is complex and multi-faceted. It was elaborated in the 19th century by colonial ideologues such as Joseph-Ernest Renan and Arthur de Gobineau, but its roots reach far back in history. In *The Politics*, he established a racial classification and ranked the Greeks superior to the rest. In France, Voltaire was one of the most fervent admirers of Rome. He regarded highly the Roman republican values of rationality, democracy, order and justice. In early-eighteenth century Britain, it was poets and politicians like Joseph Addison and Richard Glover who were vocal advocates of these ancient republican values. It was in the mid-eighteenth century that ancient Greece became a source of admiration among the French and British. This enthusiasm gained prominence in the late-eighteenth century. It was spurred by German Hellenist scholars and English romantic poets: These scholars and poets regarded ancient Greece as the matrix of Western civilization and a model of beauty and democracy. At this period, many French and British imperial ideologues identified strongly with the ancient empires and invoked ancient Greece and Rome to justify the colonial civilizing project. He advised the French colonists in Algeria to follow the ancient imperial example. In , he stated: The Romans established in almost all parts of the globe known to them municipalities which were no more than miniature Romes. Among modern colonizers, the English did the same. Who can prevent us from emulating these European peoples? Britain, France, and Spain; and the literatures of the decolonized countries engaged in contemporary, postcolonial arrangements e. Organisation internationale de la Francophonie and the Commonwealth of Nations with their former mother countries. In Dutch literature, the Indies Literature includes the colonial and postcolonial genres, which examine and analyze the formation of a postcolonial identity, and the postcolonial culture produced by the diaspora of the Indo-European peoples, the Eurasian folk who originated from Indonesia; the peoples who were the colony of the Dutch East Indies; in the literature, the notable author is Tjalie Robinson. Yet, after decolonization, their bicultural educations originated postcolonial criticism of empire and colonialism, and of the representations of the colonist and the colonized. In the late twentieth century, after the dissolution of the USSR, the constituent soviet socialist republics became the literary subjects of postcolonial criticism, wherein the writers dealt with the legacies cultural, social, economic of the Russification of their peoples, countries, and cultures in service to Greater Russia. The first category of literature presents and analyzes the internal challenges inherent to determining an ethnic identity in a decolonized nation. The second category of literature presents and analyzes the degeneration of civic and nationalist unities consequent to ethnic parochialism, usually manifested as the demagoguery of "protecting the nation", a variant of the Us-and-Them binary social relation. As such, the fragmented national identity remains a characteristic of such societies, consequence of the imperially convenient, but arbitrary, colonial boundaries geographic and cultural demarcated by the Europeans, with which they ignored the tribal and clan relations that determined the geographic borders of the Middle East countries, before the arrival of European imperialists. Most countries of the Middle East, suffered from the fundamental problems over their national identities. More than three-quarters of a century after the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, from which most of them emerged, these states have been unable to define, project, and maintain a national identity that is both inclusive and representative. Discourses and Counter-Discourses, Larbi Sadiki said that the problems of national identity in the Middle East are a consequence of the Orientalist indifference of the European empires when they demarcated the political borders of their colonies, which ignored the local history and the geographic and tribal boundaries observed by the natives, in the course of establishing the Western version of the Middle East. In the event, "in places like Iraq and Jordan, leaders of the new sovereign states were brought in from the outside, [and] tailored to suit colonial interests and commitments. Likewise, most states in the Persian Gulf were handed over to those [Europeanised colonial subjects] who could protect and safeguard imperial interests in the post-withdrawal phase. Click image for key In the late 19th century, the Scramble for Africa" proved to be the tail end of mercantilist colonialism of the European imperial powers, yet, for the Africans, the consequences were greater than elsewhere in the colonized non-Western world. To facilitate

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the colonization the European empires laid railroads where the rivers and the land proved impassable. The Imperial British railroad effort proved overambitious in the effort of traversing continental Africa, yet succeeded only in connecting colonial North Africa Cairo with the colonial south of Africa Cape Town. Upon arriving to Africa, the Europeans encountered the native African civilizations of the Ashanti Empire , the Benin Empire , the Kingdom of Dahomey , the Buganda Kingdom Uganda , and the Kingdom of Kongo , all of which were annexed by imperial powers under the belief that they required European stewardship, as proposed and justified in the essay "The African Character" , by G. Hegel , in keeping with his philosophic opinion that cultures were stages in the course of the historical unfolding of The Absolute. Things Fall Apart , The Politics of Language in African Literature In postcolonial countries of Africa, the Africans and the non-Africans live in a world of genders, ethnicities, classes and languages, of ages, families, professions, religions and nations. There is a suggestion that individualism and postcolonialism are essentially discontinuous and divergent cultural phenomena. Tonkin, Annam, Cochinchina, Cambodia and Laos. Click image for key French Indochina was divided into five subdivisions: Tonkin , Annam , Cochinchina , Cambodia and Laos. Cochinchina southern Vietnam was the first territory under French Control.

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4: Russian & East European Institute: About REEI

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The same perspectives have also influenced the perceptions of the ruling elites and political groups in 20th-century Iran. Since the 19th century the construction of the modern concepts of Iran and Iranian identity have been particularly influenced by the romantic, nationalist perspective. The writings of both Western and Iranian scholars played an important part in the emergence of this perspective in the field of Iranian studies and served as an ideological springboard for Iranian nationalist groups see iv, below. Gherardo Gnoli , p. However, the historicizing position of Yarshater and Gnoli, as will be discussed further in the following entries, shows that a type of pre-modern ethno-national identity was present in Iran long before the invention of modern version of the concept in the 18th and 19th centuries see ii, below. Under the influence of the increasingly popular modernist approach, Bert Fragner also posits a radical disjuncture between modern Iranian national identity and its historical past. Hegemony is realized when governing classes maintain their dominance, not simply through the use of force, but also through consensus. They achieve this goal by exerting moral and intellectual leadership through a network of institutions, social relations, and ideas Gramsci , pp. His useful paradigm, however, seems to conflate the role of Persian hegemony in the identity formation of non-Iranian Islamic regions with its role on the Iranian plateau. It was in the lands of Iran where Persian language was deeply rooted, where the New Persian developed, where Persian culture prevailed, where Persian literati, as a dominant ethnic core with historical consciousness, were present, and where they laid the foundation for recurrent construction of pre-modern Iranian identity until modern times. These modernist concepts of national identity are based on the ideal types of modern, civic-territorial experiences of nationhood of European societies. Pre-modern, non-Western nations do not fit seamlessly into this model. The idea of national identity in societies of Asia is often derived from fictive genealogical and territorial origins and vernacular culture and religion Smith , pp. Rejecting the essentialist tenet of the romantic, primordial conception of national identity as well as the modernist and postmodernist contention of a radical historical disjuncture in the origins of nations, the historicizing perspective emphasizes the role of historical forces in the formation of modern nations. It focuses on the historical origins of ethno-cultural communities and postulates that modern nations and nationalisms are products of long-term, historical processes. The combined impact of these two processes provided the Iranian people with a distinct identity in the Islamic world Yarshater , , , ; see also iii, below. According to Lambton, this identity, defined historically and geographically, was formed by a common historical experience and the sharing of a common cultural and literary medium. He contends that basic elements of modern nationalism, such as the idea of Iranian lands and peoples, a common language and culture, and above all national pride and common historical consciousness, were all present in Iran even before the emergence of nationalism in modern Europe. Yet he recognizes that a reaction to increasing Western domination in 19th-century Iran, new discoveries of the ancient history of the country by Western scholars, and the spread of emerging European nationalism in Asia following the French Revolution, all helped initiate the development of a modern national consciousness and a nationalistic ethos in Iran beginning in the latter half of the 19th century. Conceptions of Iranian identity in terms of an Irano-Islamic cultural heritage have also found advocates among scholars and religious intellectuals. In the concluding chapter of his book *I Persiani* Florence, and its revised version Wiesbaden, , Bausani contended that the foundation of Iranian culture should be relocated from a pre-Islamic Achaemenid image to the medieval Iranian Islamic culture Bausani, , p. The main development of Iranian identity, from its literary foundation during the Sasanid era to the present time, may be divided into the following phases: These phases will be discussed in the following three sub-entries. The current debates on Iranian identity since the revolution will be discussed in a supplementary entry online. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and*

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Spread of Nationalism, London, ; 2nd ed. Alessandro Bausani, *I Persiani*, Florence, Henry Corbin, *Les motifs zoroastriens dans la philosophie de Sohrawardi*, Tehran, Idem, *Histoire de la philosophie islamique*, 2 vols. *A Reader*, New York, , pp. Gherardo Gnoli, *The Idea of Iran: An Essay on Its Origin*, Rome, Nowell Smith, New York, Afshin Matin Askari, review of M. Smith, *National Identity*, London, Idem, *The Antiquity of Nations*, Cambridge, Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi, *Refashioning Iran: Orientalism, Occidentalism and Historiography*, New York, Ahmad Ashraf Originally Published: December 15, Last Updated: March 30, This article is available in print.

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Stylistically, although writers are critical of colonialism and seek to break with the European canon and establish autonomous forms, their works reflect the dual legacy of European cultures and precolonial African modes of expression. Many reasons are adduced for the continued proliferation of writing in colonial languages decades after independence in Africa. With underdeveloped publishing networks, a limited audience for writing in indigenous languages, and harsher censorship at home than abroad, most influential works are published in Western metropolises or by subsidiaries of metropolitan publishing houses in European languages. Although it is natural for Western scholars to categorize the literature according to the European languages in which they were written e. The linguistic, temporal, and spatial boundaries cannot be delineated with absolute precision, as some authors and texts occupy different categories at once. In some instances, some works are created in one European language but published in another, as is the case with the works of Chika Unigwe Nigeria , who writes in English and is published in Dutch and some of whose works have yet to appear in the original language in which they were composed. Sidi Seck Senegal writes in French but publishes in Spanish. This bibliography includes a variety of topics such as guides for students and teachers, works on theory and criticism, and writing on book history and censorship. Further, it presents materials discussing early writing by Europeans because they are essential in helping us understand the preoccupations of modern African writing. This bibliography proceeds to survey work on major themes and techniques and to offer an outline of literatures by periods in which they were written late 18th century to mids, s, and present and by region East, Central, West, South, North, and northeastern Africa. It also considers literature by Asian Africans, an important category in eastern and southern Africa. General Overviews Several books give an overview of African literatures in European languages. The two volumes of essays discuss texts by both African and European writers and give overviews of the preoccupation of individual authors and specific national literatures. Cook is an early overview of Anglophone literature that considers poetry, drama, fiction, and nonfiction by a wide range of writers. Gakwandi is an early overview of realist works published in the s, while Gurnah is an edited volume that discusses emerging themes in African writing. Gikandi offers an excellent model for reading African novels using modern literary theory in the sense that it emphasizes the consideration of formal techniques in the analysis of themes and ideology of specific texts. Booker reads the African novel in English but considers its dialogue with Francophone literature and works in African languages. Mpalive-Hangson and Hyland is a multidisciplinary volume giving an overview of the literature from regional and national perspectives. Brancato is one of the few surveys of African writers in various European countries writing in different languages, such as Italian and Spanish. The African Novel in English. The book discusses the rise to prominence of African literature, using various novels to illustrate its arguments. A New Discursive Category? This essay draws on a wide corpus of writing by European-based African writers to show their different perspectives. The Novel and the Contemporary Experience in Africa. Limited to works published in the s, the book maintains that realism is the most prominent mode of writing at the time. Through comparative analyses, contributors try to account for differences in texts from different linguistic and national territories. The book includes overviews of national literatures e. Reading the African Novel. Essays on African Writing: Heinemann, , addresses new critical approaches and challenges of readership in contemporary writing. Mpalive-Hangson, Msiska, and Paul Hyland. Some of the authors highlighted include Chinua Achebe, H. Users without a subscription are not able to see the full content on this page. Please subscribe or login. How to Subscribe Oxford Bibliographies Online is available by subscription and perpetual access to institutions. For more information or to contact an Oxford Sales Representative click here.

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