Moral Divisions within Countries between Orthodoxy and Progressivism: India and the United States

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Recently, scholars have argued that divisions have emerged within many countries between tendencies toward orthodoxy or fundamentalism on the one hand, and progressivism or modernism on the other hand. In the present study, interviews assessing moral evaluation and reasoning were carried out with individuals in India and the United States who might be expected to tend toward orthodoxy and progressivism (N = 80, ages 35–55). In both countries, progressivists reasoned more in terms of Shweder's (1990) Ethic of Autonomy than orthodox participants, whereas orthodox participants reasoned more in terms of the Ethic of Divinity than progressivists. However, cross-cultural differences were also found. Progressivist Americans more than progressivist Indians tended toward hyperindividualism.

Key words: Culture wars, individualism, fundamentalism, moral evaluation, moral reasoning, orthodoxy, progressivism.

In recent years, scholars have argued that divisions are emerging in many countries between tendencies toward fundamentalism and modernism (Marty and Appleby, 1991, 1993a, 1993b, 1994, 1995). With respect to the United States, these divisions have also been referred to by the terms orthodoxy and progressivism (Hunter 1991, 1994). These conflicting tendencies between fundamentalism (or orthodoxy) and modernism (or progressivism) comprise a variety of moral, social, and political issues — issues which are often interlinked. Most scholars addressing this topic come from the disciplines of sociology, political science, theology, and anthropology, and most of the research employs ethnographic and social survey methodologies.

The present aim is to examine the extent of cross-cultural similarities and differences in the moral psychology of individuals who might be expected to tend toward fundamentalism/orthodoxy and modernism/progressivism. Specifically, the focus is upon the moral evaluations and reasoning of individuals in India and the United States. Thus the present study joins with other research on this topic in exploring whether different countries in an increasingly international and modernized world face similar, though not necessarily identical, moral debates. However, in contrast to other research, the present focus is specifically upon individuals' moral psychology. Also, with respect to method and analysis, the present study provides quantitative and qualitative analyses of interviews with the Indians and Americans in order to provide an in-depth account of their moral thought, and in an effort to be attentive to cultural meanings.

Before proceeding, it should be noted that the terms *fundamentalism / orthodoxy* and *modernism / progressivism* often have particular meanings in the context of particular religions, political movements, and countries.[1] Here, however the terms will be given specific definitions in accordance with specific lines of theory and research, as explained below.

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Cultural Divisions within Countries around the World

Marty (1993) maintains that hopes for "one world" following World War II and the Cold War have been shattered by recent worldwide conflicts involving fundamentalist groups. Seeking to provide insight into this largely unexpected phenomenon, Marty and Appleby in cooperation with numerous other scholars (1991, 1993a, 1993b, 1994, 1995) have compared fundamentalist groups from around the world. They argue that fundamentalists from different countries and different religious traditions have more in common with each other than with their nonfundamentalist compatriots and coreligionists.

According to Marty and Appleby, fundamentalists in different countries typically share the view that God has revealed moral truth to humans, and that these truths ought to guide human behavior. Fundamentalists usually regard the present as a time when humans live far removed from God's truth, and often they look both to a sacred past when life was superior and to a glorious future when it will be so anew (1993a).

In the present inferior world, fundamentalists regard themselves as the select upholders of God's truth. Thus they tend to follow rigorous codes of conduct. The teaching of these codes may take place in diverse settings, but frequently the family is a central locus for socialization of the young into the ways of God as well as for ritual observance. Fundamentalists imbue family life with special significance. Often the family is regarded as a model for the relationship between humans and the divine, and as a microcosm of a universal moral order. Gender roles usually follow a patriarchal pattern in fundamentalist families (Hardacre 1993).

However, viewing God's truth as absolute, fundamentalists do not regard religion only as a family matter nor as an individual matter. They reject a strict distinction between public and private spheres. In their view, religion — God's truth — has a bearing on all matters of life, and it ought to serve to unite the community (Garvey 1993a).

Viewing God's truth as absolute, fundamentalists also tend to reject a modern emphasis on the freedom of the individual to pursue diverse goals. As Garvey (1993b) points out, fundamentalists agree with a "unilateral" but not a "bilateral" conception of freedom. That is, they hold that governments ought to leave individuals unilateral freedom to choose to follow God's will. However, they reject a notion of bilateral freedom that allows individuals to pursue diverse goals.

While Marty and Appleby highlight the commonalities among fundamentalists, they also acknowledge that fundamentalist groups differ in important respects. For example, fundamentalists differ in their specific religious doctrines. Also, since different countries face different historical and political situations, fundamentalists vary in the extent to which they are concerned with such issues as nationalism, elitism, and imperialism (Tehranian 1993).

Marty, Appleby, and their colleagues studied only fundamentalist groups. Still, as should be clear, the authors repeatedly distinguish fundamentalism from modernism. The introduction to the first volume of their multivolume series succinctly summarizes the distinction: "Modern cultures include at least three dimensions uncongenial to fundamentalists: a preference for secular rationality; the adoption of religious tolerance with accompanying tendencies toward relativism; and individualism" (Marty and Appleby 1991: vii).

Cultural Divisions within the United States

The distinction described by Marty and Appleby resembles to a marked extent the distinction described by Hunter (1991, 1994) between "orthodox" and "progressivist" tendencies in the United States. On the basis of his analysis of public political alliances and discourses, Hunter argues that the old lines between religious denominations have collapsed when it

comes to moral and political issues. Instead, a new split has occurred within denominations and in American culture in general (see also Bellah 1987; Jensen 1995; Neuhaus 1990; Wuthnow 1988, 1989). Using a concept that has received much attention, Hunter refers to the current American division as a "culture war."[2]

Like the fundamentalists described by Marty and Appleby, the orthodox described by Hunter hold that a transcendent authority originated a moral code and revealed it to human beings. In the orthodox view, contemporary society is rapidly drifting away from God's truth, as individuals are allowed excessive freedoms to follow their own desires and navigate according to their own interests. This contemporary waywardness is manifest, for example, in decreased emphasis on parental authority over children, and blurring of roles and statuses for women and men.

In contrast to the orthodox, progressivists regard moral truth as subject to change and progress. In their view, moral precepts are not revealed once and for all by a transcendent authority, but may be altered as human and individual understandings unfold, and societal circumstances change. Thus progressivists are more accepting of some measure of relativism, compared to the orthodox. They are also considerably more accepting of allowing individuals to make choices free from the intervention of the state or church or other individuals. In other words, progressivists favor what Garvey (1993b) labels bilateral freedom, as described above.

It seems clear, then, that Marty and Appleby's distinction between fundamentalist and modernist conceptions on a worldwide scale is markedly similar to Hunter's distinction between orthodox and progressivist conceptions in the United States. These similarities are seen with respect to conceptions of morality, divinity, history, family, gender roles, freedom, and so forth. However, it should be added that while the two distinctions are similar, they are not synonymous. One notable difference is that Marty and Appleby to a large extent focus on fundamentalists who are actively fighting the people and institutions that represent modernist viewpoints. These fights occur with words but also often with weapons. Presumably, this focus grows out of the authors' concern with the occurrence of violent religious conflicts in many parts of the world following the end of the Cold War. While Hunter emphasizes the clash between orthodox and progressivist groups who are publicly active in the United States, he does not define orthodoxy in terms of militancy or a general proclivity to take up arms.[3] In spite of Marty and Appleby's focus on religious groups that are militaristic, the existence and spread of these groups suggest a more general worldwide orthodox reaction against modernism and progressivism. As Marty (1993) notes, "it [is] valuable to move to the edges of the category and speak of movements that have 'family resemblances' to fundamentalisms, or are 'fundamentalist-like' " (4).

The Aim and Approach of the Present Study

The present study focused on the moral evaluations and reasoning of Americans and Indians who might be expected to tend toward orthodoxy and progressivism. In order not to use multiple terms and in that none of the groups included here are known for a proclivity toward violence, I will primarily use Hunter's terminology rather than Marty and Appleby's. Also for the sake of clarity, the samples will be referred to as orthodox and progressivist even though the participants do not call themselves by these terms, and even though the present purpose is to examine the cross-cultural applicability of the concepts.

Participants' moral reasoning was analyzed in terms of Shweder's (1990) three ethics of Autonomy, Community, and Divinity. These ethics entail different conceptions of the moral agent. The *Ethic of Autonomy* defines the moral agent as an autonomous individual who is free to make choices, being restricted primarily by concerns with inflicting harm on others and encroaching on the rights of others. Moral reasoning within this ethic centers on

an individual's rights, interests, and well-being, and on equality between individuals. The *Ethic of Community* defines the moral agent in terms of her or his membership in social groups (such as family and nation), and the obligations that ensue from this membership. Moral reasoning within this ethic centers on a person's duties to others, and promoting the interests and welfare of groups to which the person belongs. The *Ethic of Divinity* defines the moral agent as a spiritual entity. Moral reasoning within this ethic centers on divine and natural law, injunctions and lessons found in sacred texts, and the striving on the part of a person to avoid spiritual degradation and come closer to moral purity.

Shweder's three ethics were used for analysis purposes because they have been developed on the basis of cross-cultural research, specifically research in India and the United States. Thus, it was expected that they would allow for attentiveness to cultural particularities. Also, the three ethics explicitly incorporate a divinity dimension. This was seen as important given the centrality of religion in the division between the tendencies toward orthodoxy and progressivism. Finally, Shweder's ethics do not differentiate individuals into higher versus lower modes of moral reasoning. This was seen as helpful in seeking a balanced account of moral divisions within and across countries.

It was hypothesized that orthodox participants would use the Ethic of Divinity more than progressivists, and that progressivists would use the Ethic of Autonomy more than orthodox participants. It was expected that this would be the case in both India and the United States. These expectations were based on the writings by Hunter (1991, 1994), and Marty and Appleby (1991, 1993a, 1993b, 1994, 1995) (described above). Since this literature suggests that both orthodox and progressivist groups are concerned with shaping communities (such as family and society) in accordance with their key values, it was not expected that orthodox and progressivist participants would differ in their use of the Ethic of Community.

Cross-cultural research has repeatedly emphasized that white, middle-class Americans tend to be more individualistic and less collectivistic compared to non–Westerners (Hui and Triandis 1986; Triandis 1995). This has also been found specifically in comparisons of Americans with Indians on research pertaining to such areas as morality (Miller 1991; Miller and Bersoff 1992; Miller and Luthar 1989; Shweder, Mahapatra, and Miller 1990; Shweder and Much 1987) and conceptions of the self (Shweder and Bourne 1991). In line with this research, it was hypothesized that progressivist Indians would use the Ethic of Community more than progressivist Americans, and that orthodox Indians would use the Ethic of Community more than orthodox Americans. It was also hypothesized that progressivist Americans would use the Ethic of Autonomy more than progressivist Indians. However, it was not expected that orthodox Americans would use the Ethic of Autonomy more than orthodox Indians. The reason was that orthodox Americans, according to Hunter (1991), tend to reject autonomy-oriented moral considerations. Finally, no cross-cultural differences were expected in the use of the Ethic of Divinity. If cross-cultural similarities exist between groups tending toward orthodoxy and progressivism, one would expect this to be particularly evident in uses of the Ethic of Divinity.

METHOD

American Participants

There were 80 participants in the study: 40 American and 40 Indian adults.[4] The American sample included 20 fundamentalist Baptists, representing the orthodox side, and 20 mainline Baptists, representing the progressivist side. The fundamentalist Baptists attended four independent Baptist churches that self-identify as "fundamentalist."[5,6] The mainline Baptists attended a mainline church that has a dual affiliation with the American

Baptist Churches/USA and the Southern Baptist Convention. The latter affiliation is regarded as historic.[7] All the churches were located in a medium-sized Midwestern city.

Only members of one religious tradition (in each country) were included in the study, in order to capture the extent to which the division between orthodox (or fundamentalist) and progressivist (or modernist) views is occurring within traditions, as described by Marty and Appleby (1991, 1993a, 1993b, 1994, 1995) and Hunter (1991, 1994). However, the focus on one religious tradition (in each country) should be kept in mind with regards to generalizability.

The American participants were recruited in two ways. In the larger churches (the mainline church and one fundamentalist church), most participants were recruited on the basis of lists of active members provided by the ministers. Of those contacted on the basis of the lists, 67% agreed to participate. This method was used for the recruitment of 50% of the participants. The remainder volunteered after the author had described the research project at a service.

The participants were between 35 and 55 years old. The mean age was 42.9 years (SD = 6.8) for the orthodox participants and 48.6 years (SD = 6.8) for the progressivists. The two groups did not differ significantly on proportions of women and men, marital status, or number of children. Women constituted 60% of the orthodox sample and 45% of the progressivist sample. The majority of the participants were married (orthodox: 85%, progressivist: 70%) and had children (orthodox: M = 2.4, SD = 1.5; progressivist: M = 2.1, SD = 1.0). The two groups differed significantly on their levels of income and education. The progressivist group had a higher level of income. However, both groups represented the middle and upper-middle classes, in that 75% or more of participants in both groups reported a yearly family income of $36,000 or more. The progressivist group overall had a higher level of education. However, a majority in both groups had obtained a college degree (orthodox: 75%, progressivist: 100%). The progressivists were exceptionally highly educated; 95% had at least some post-college education. The comparable figure was 45% for the orthodox participants. As will be explained later, demographic differences between the groups were controlled for, where appropriate.

Indian Participants

As religious life in India among Hindus typically does not involve institutional membership, the participants could not be selected on this basis. Instead, Hindu samples were chosen on the basis of ethnographic accounts of the lives and practices of residents of Bhubaneswar, Orissa (Grenell 1980; Seymour 1975, 1980a, 1993; Shweder 1987; Shweder et al. 1990; Shweder, Jensen, and Goldstein 1995; Shweder and Much 1987; Shweder et al. 1997).[8] Bhubaneswar is the site of an ancient temple complex (the old town). It is also the site of a modern administrative area (the new capital area) which has been developed since 1947 when the city was selected as the state capital of Orissa.

In the old town, many residents are responsible for the maintenance of traditional temple activities, a responsibility that has been in their families for generations. Although some old town residents now hold occupations unrelated to temple activities, "a religious-scriptural orientation to life continues to be strongly expressed in everyday interaction and practice" (Shweder et al. 1997). The orthodoxy and conservativism of the old town is reflected in the fact that foreigners (even those certified as Hindu by the Indian government) are not allowed into the temples, even though this is allowed in most other temples in India and is required by national legislation (Grenell 1980).

In the new capital area, many residents belonging to the upper castes/classes have relinquished their traditional caste occupations and hold business and administrative positions. Their observance of traditional expectations regarding occupation, child rearing, gen-

der roles, family life, and laws pertaining to purity and pollution are much less pronounced than among upper-caste residents of the old town. For example, Seymour (1980b) has observed that in these households fathers participate more in child rearing, children are encouraged to be more self-reliant, and concerns with respect and obedience are minimized.

The Indian sample included 20 Hindus living in the old town of Bhubaneswar, representing the orthodox side, and 20 Hindus living in the new capital area, representing the progressivist side. The participants were recruited on the basis of previous contacts established by anthropologists working in Bhubaneswar as well as by means of the snowballing technique. (These techniques are common and usually necessary in anthropological field work with adults. The snowballing technique is also useful for identifying participants who belong to a common community). Of those asked to participate, approximately 90% agreed to do so.

Nearly all participants were upper-caste. They were either Brahmin (traditional caste occupation as priest; orthodox: 75%, progressivist: 65%) or Karan (traditional caste occupation as scribe; orthodox: 15%, progressivist: 35%). All the participants were native Oriyas. Like the American participants, the Indians were between 35 and 55 years old. The mean age was 44.3 years (SD = 6.9) for the orthodox participants and 41.3 years (SD = 6.8) for the progressivist participants. There was an equal distribution of women and men in both groups. The majority of the participants were married (orthodox: 95%, progressivist: 80%) and had children (orthodox: M = 2.9, SD = 1.5; progressivist: M = 1.3, SD = 0.8). The educational level of the two groups differed markedly. Eighty percent of the orthodox participants had fewer than 11 years of education whereas 90% of the progressivist participants had 16 years or more of education. However, it should be noted that the educational training of the orthodox participants is more extensive than would appear on the basis of their years of formal education. These participants form part of a traditionally highly literate group. Thus, they receive extensive training in Sanskrit literature and the performance of religious rituals.

The Interview

All adults participated in an interview about five moral issues: one personal issue and four general issues. The personal issue was one that the participant had experienced and regarded as involving a moral decision. The general issues were: suicide in general, suicide in the case of terminal illness, divorce, and sati.[9, 10] The general issues were picked so as to pertain to matters of life and death, the family, and the roles of women and men. Hunter (1991) as well as Marty and Appleby (1991, 1993a, 1993b, 1994, 1995) point out that these are primary issues of contention between orthodox/fundamentalist and progressivist/modernist groups. The issues were also picked so that some would be familiar (suicide and divorce in the United States, suicide and sati in India), and some would be unfamiliar (sati in the United States, divorce in India). The participants were asked about a personal moral issue in order to find out whether they reasoned differently in response to this than to the general issues (Walker, de Vries, and Trevethan 1987).

The author either conducted or was present during all interviews, which took place in the homes of the participants. The Americans and progressivist Indians were interviewed in English, and the orthodox Indians in Oriya. Participants were first presented with the issues of suicide in general, suicide in the case of terminal illness, and divorce. The order of presentation of these issues had been randomized (with the two suicide issues presented together). Subsequently, the participants were presented with the issue of sati, and finally they were asked to discuss their personal moral issue. (All participants had been contacted approximately three days in advance of the interview and had been asked to think of a personal moral issue). For each issue, participants were asked to evaluate the extent to which

it was morally right or wrong (*moral evaluation*), and then to provide justifications for their evaluation (*moral reasoning*). The interviews lasted an average of 76 minutes (SD = 26). They were tape-recorded and later transcribed verbatim for analysis purposes. Informed consent was obtained from all participants. Americans were offered $20.00 for providing an interview. In India, gifts (e.g., clothing, make-up, boxes of candy) were often provided.

Scoring

Each moral justification that participants provided was coded into *one* of Shweder's (1990) three ethics (described in the introduction). The justifications were coded on the basis of a manual constructed by the author in cooperation with Shweder (Jensen 1996).[11] From the transcribed interviews, the coding of moral justifications took place as follows. The three ethics each consist of subcategories. For example, the Ethic of Autonomy includes subcategories pertaining to an individual's rights, the psychological well-being of an individual, the physical well-being of an individual, and fairness. When a participant made a statement that could be classified into a subcategory, it was considered to constitute a moral justification and was coded accordingly. (In the present study, subcategories were used only for establishing codable statements. Analyses pertained only to the use of the main categories of Autonomy, Community, and Divinity). All interviews were coded by the author. A stratified random sample consisting of 20% of the interviews was coded by an independent rater. Reliability using Cohen's kappa was 0.90.[12,13]

QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

Analysis Guidelines

Analyses of variance were used for all comparisons.[14] Covariates were entered into analyses where demographic sample differences were likely to be due to sampling error (Stevens 1992). There is little or no reason to expect the following populations to differ in level of education: progressivist Americans, orthodox Americans, and progressivist Indians. Also, one would not expect the two American populations to differ on level of income. While fundamentalist Baptists in the United States have less education and income than mainline Baptists at the national level, this is due to a higher proportion of fundamentalists residing in the South. Within local regions the two groups do not differ on levels of education and income (Ammerman 1987; Hunter 1983). In the present study, the differences between the two samples on education and income were thus regarded as being due to sampling error. In particular, the mainline Baptist sample had an unusually high level of education. This sampling error hypothesis is also supported by the fact that in another study (Jensen 1996) two different samples from the same fundamentalist and mainline Baptist churches as in the present study did not differ on levels of education and income.

Also, there would seem to be little reason to expect the Indian and American progressivist populations to differ on level of education. The new capital area Indians represent a population of Indians who often receive an education modeled after the British system and who also often receive higher education in Western countries. They occupy positions that require skill and knowledge comparable to positions typical of the American middle to upper-middle classes, such as middle-manager, banker, college professor, and physician. Again the difference between the progressivist Indian and American samples are likely to reflect a sampling error, with the level of education of the American sample being unusually high.

Education was not entered as a covariate in the analyses comparing orthodox to progressivist Indians, and orthodox Indians to orthodox Americans, even though the orthodox

Indians had a significantly lower level of education compared to the other two groups. The reason is that this difference in level of formal education is unlikely to be due to a sampling error, but instead is likely to reflect a difference present between the populations that the samples represent. As explained earlier, the orthodox Indians receive extensive education within their own religious tradition which is not reflected in their years of formal education. This means that the educational attainment of the orthodox Indians is not easily comparable to that of the other groups. Therefore entering education as a covariate in order to adjust for the difference between the orthodox sample and the other samples on education was not regarded as appropriate (Stevens 1992).

The number of moral justifications provided in response to a particular issue was entered as a covariate in all analyses where groups differed. The tables specify the analyses where this was the case.

Moral Evaluation

As shown in Table 1, more orthodox than progressivist Americans regarded all of the general moral practices as wrong. In fact, the orthodox Americans were unanimous in regarding all the general practices as morally wrong whereas there was more variability among the American progressivists. In India, more orthodox than progressivist participants regarded divorce and suicide in the case of terminal illness as morally wrong, both groups were unanimous in regarding suicide in general as morally wrong, and more progressivist than orthodox Indians regarded sati as morally wrong.

Cross-national comparisons of progressivists showed that Indian progressivists generally were more likely than American progressivists to regard a practice as being morally wrong (see Table 1). This was the case for the issues of sati, suicide in general, and suicide in the case of terminal illness. Cross-national comparisons of orthodox adults showed that either all or a vast majority of orthodox adults in both the United States and India regarded the practices as morally wrong. The exception was for the practice of sati, which more orthodox Americans than orthodox Indians regarded as morally wrong.

Moral Reasoning

As seen in Table 2, progressivists in both countries reasoned more in terms of the Ethic of Autonomy for almost all of the moral issues than did orthodox participants. Orthodox participants in both countries reasoned more in terms of the Ethic of Divinity for all of the issues than did progressivists. In neither country did orthodox and progressivist participants differ in their use of the Ethic of Community for any of the issues.

Cross-national comparisons showed that virtually no differences occurred between orthodox Indians and orthodox Americans in their use of the three ethics (see Table 2). Likewise, the progressivist Indians and progressivist Americans rarely differed in their use of the three ethics. The exception was that more progressivist Americans than progressivist Indians used the Ethic of Autonomy in response to the issues of sati and suicide in the case of terminal illness.[15]

QUALITATIVE RESULTS

In this section, the quantitative results will be elaborated upon using qualitative excerpts from the interviews. The moral views and justifications voiced by the participants will be used to detail the nature of the divide between the orthodox and progressivist outlooks — a divide that was seen in both India and the United States. Also, interviewees' moral discourse will be used to discuss the differences in moral outlooks that exist between

the orthodox Indians and Americans, as well as between the progressivist Indians and Americans. The focus will be first upon the participants' conceptions of autonomy and divinity, and subsequently upon their conceptions of community.

TABLE 1

MORAL EVALUATION ACROSS WORLDVIEWS AND ACROSS COUNTRIES

| | INDIAN | | US | | WORLDVIEWS | | COUNTRIES | |
	PROG.	ORTH.	PROG.	ORTH.	IN:PvsO	US:PvsO	P:INvsUS	O:INvsUS
SUICIDE, GENERAL								
Not Wrong	0	0	50	0				
Depends	0	0	0	0	0	13.68***	16.45***	0
Wrong	100	100	45	100				
SUICIDE, TERMINAL								
Not Wrong	60	15	90	0				
Depends	0	0	0	0	10.47**	120.03***	6.86*	3.35
Wrong	40	85	10	100				
DIVORCE								
Not Wrong	45	0	65	0				
Depends	10	5	15	0	18.10***	44.46***	3.78	1.00
Wrong	45	95	20	100				
SATI								
Not Wrong	0	35	40	0				
Depends	0	5	5	0	12.04**	12.44***	15.16***	12.04**
Wrong	100	60	50	100				
PERSONAL								
Not Wrong	75	80	85	90				
Depends	10	5	5	0	0.04	0.36	1.26	0.48
Wrong	15	15	10	10				

NOTE: The numbers in the first four columns indicate percentages of participants providing a certain moral evaluation. The numbers in the last four columns indicate F values based on analyses of variance; $* p < .05 ** p < .01 *** p < .001$ d.f. = 1.

For each issue the percentages may not add up to 100, if a participant declined to judge an issue in moral terms.

Cross-Cultural Similarities: Orthodox versus Progressivist
Conceptions of Autonomy and Divinity

In both India and the United States, the orthodox and progressivist groups consistently differed in their use of the ethics of Autonomy and Divinity. As hypothesized, orthodox participants used the Ethic of Divinity more than progressivists, and progressivists used the Ethic of Autonomy more than orthodox participants.

The difference in moral outlooks between the orthodox and progressivist groups was seen, for example, in their responses to the issue of suicide in the case of terminal illness. Orthodox Indians and Americans often stressed the Ethic of Divinity view that decisions about life and death should be made by God, not humans. When asked whether a person might be justified in taking their life when terminally ill, an orthodox Indian exclaimed:

> Who are you to do it? You are sent here by some great power. God has created us, given us life. One day He will take it back. So why should we interfere in God's plans and destroy our souls at our will? . . . In our Hindu religion, it is written that man, in this case, will have no reincarnation.

TABLE 2

MORAL REASONING ACROSS WORLDVIEWS AND ACROSS COUNTRIES

	INDIAN		US		WORLDVIEWS		COUNTRIES	
	PROG.	ORTH.	PROG.	ORTH.	IN:PvsO	US:PvsO	P:INvsUS	O:INvsUS
AUTONOMY								
Suic-Gen	0.75	0.15	0.84	0.15	15.67***	12.87***	1.12	0.00
	(0.55)	(0.37)	(0.51)	(0.37)				
Suic-Ter	0.65	0.21	1.30	0.05	10.50**	30.98***	8.20**	0.72
	(0.67)	(0.42)	(0.80)	(0.22)				
Divorce	1.20	0.90	1.35	0.55	7.85**	6.63*	2.15	1.88
	(0.95)	(0.85)	(0.88)	(0.76)				
Sati	0.65	0.55	0.89	0.30	0.28	3.41	6.52*	2.13
	(0.59)	(0.60)	(0.74)	(0.47)				
Personal	1.10	0.65	1.60	0.55	3.44	10.64**	2.82	0.18
	(0.72)	(0.81)	(1.05)	(0.69)				
COMMUNITY								
Suic-Gen	0.90	1.05	0.95	0.90	2.00	0.00	0.02	0.35
	(0.85)	(0.89)	(1.03)	(0.72)				
Suic-Ter	0.65	0.58	0.60	0.40	3.58	0.10	0.12	1.52
	(0.75)	(0.61)	(0.88)	(0.60)				
Divorce	1.35	2.00	0.80	1.75	0.09	0.19	3.56	0.32
	(1.04)	(1.52)	(0.89)	(1.25)				
Sati	1.20	0.85	0.63	0.85	1.81	2.15	1.10	0.00
	(0.77)	(0.88)	(0.83)	(0.81)				
Personal	1.45	1.40	1.15	1.10	0.02	0.10	0.16	0.99
	(1.15)	(0.99)	(1.04)	(0.91)				
DIVINITY								
Suic-Gen	0.60	1.90	0.26	1.50	13.26***	36.43***	4.05	2.11
	(0.68)	(0.97)	(0.45)	(0.76)				
Suic-Ter	0.35	1.53	0.15	1.10	16.97***	60.97***	2.28	0.27
	(0.59)	(0.84)	(0.37)	(0.31)				
Divorce	0.15	1.10	0.30	1.60	6.69*	18.47***	0.26	2.34
	(0.37)	(1.25)	(0.57)	(0.75)				
Sati	0.65	1.55	0.26	1.40	13.10***	24.66***	2.75	0.27
	(0.67)	(0.89)	(0.45)	(0.94)				
Personal	0.20	0.70	0.30	1.30	4.44*	20.10***	0.01	4.50*
	(0.41)	(0.98)	(0.47)	(0.80)				

NOTE: The numbers in the first four columns indicate mean number of justifications stated by participants and in parenthesis standard deviations. The numbers in the last four columns indicate F values based on analyses of variance. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$ d.f. = 1.

In comparisons of progressivist and orthodox Indians, number of justifications was entered as covariate for the issues of suicide in general, suicide in the case of terminal illness and divorce. In comparisons of progressivist and orthodox Americans, number of justifications was entered as covariate for the issue of divorce. Incomparison of Indian and American progressivists, number of justifications was entered as covariate for the issue of sati. In comparison of Indian and American orthodox participants, number of justifications was entered as covariate for the issue of suicide in the case of terminal illness.

Similarly an orthodox American responded in terms of the Ethic of Divinity.

> I leave that in God's hands. . . . He gave us life, He can take the life when he wants to, and He can give us grace to go through difficulties in life while we're here. . . . It does have an effect on [a person's] eternal state in the sense that he does not have the reward that he could have had [if] he had continued [living].

In comparison to the orthodox participants, the progressivist Indians and Americans responded more in terms of Ethic of Autonomy considerations. For example, progressivists in both India and the United States spoke of the terminally ill as losing the capacity to fulfill their own needs and being able to function independently. A progressivist Indian likened

the terminally ill person to a vegetable. He explained that for such persons to end their life is not morally wrong,

> Even if he is able to live in a hospital bed, . . . he is no longer a man, he becomes a vegetable. . . . He cannot do anything, he cannot communicate with anything, he cannot see, he cannot hear. He is as good as dead.

A progressivist American similarly referred to the "vegetable" state of a terminally ill person:

> I tend to be very sympathetic to one who commits suicide, . . . particularly when . . . they know they're going to end up just a vegetable kind of thing. Wanting to die before they've lost all humanity is something I can understand.

Another progressivist American elaborated further upon the loss of vital individual abilities experienced by terminally ill persons. Speaking in terms of an Ethic of Autonomy, she rhetorically asked:

> Who wants to lay in bed for even one extra day of their life just to be alive, if they can't communicate, they can't eat by themselves?

According to these Indian and American progressivists, persons who lose the ability to be functional have little to live for in this world. They have lost the autonomy to fulfill their own needs.

Thus in both India and the United States, the orthodox and progressivist participants differed in their conceptions of human authority. The orthodox in both countries regard human beings as God's subjects. In this view, God is responsible for our existence, has a plan for our lives, determines our death, and impacts what happens to us after death. In life, we ought to adhere to God's purpose for us — a purpose that God in part has revealed to us in the scriptures (the ancient texts, according to the orthodox Indians, and the Bible, according to the orthodox Americans). If we follow God's revealed truth and plan for our lives, we will be rewarded (according to orthodox Indians by being reborn to better conditions in this world or by obtaining salvation and being reunified with the Supreme Spirit; according to orthodox Americans by obtaining salvation and being reunified with God). However, if we fail to follow God we will be punished. Thus in the view of orthodox Indians and Americans, the life of every person is circumscribed by a divine order, and every person is accountable to this divine order.

In comparison to the orthodox groups, the progressivist Indians and Americans spoke of human authority in quite different terms. Thus, the progressivists seldom spoke of God's authority or God's agency in people's lives. Instead, the progressivists focused upon this world. They often spoke of honoring the needs, feelings, and goals that persons have when living in this world. Progressivists in both countries invested the individual with greater authority to self-determination and self-expression than did their orthodox coreligionists and compatriots.

Cross-Cultural Differences in Orthodox Conceptions of Divinity

As hypothesized, the orthodox Indians and Americans hardly differed in the extent to which they used the Ethic of Divinity. Also, as seen above, they often spoke of the relation between humans and the divine in similar terms. Yet, there were notable cross-cultural differences in the orthodox conceptions of the moral guidelines rendered by God. One such difference occurred in response to the issue of sati.

The orthodox Americans applied their moral dictum that humans are forbidden from taking human life (including one's own) to the practice of sati. For example, an orthodox American woman said:

There's no Biblical teaching concerning [sati] being [an allowable] way to die. Life is something that God takes. God puts the breath of life into us, and God takes that out of us. To me [sati] is suicide.

In contrast, a sizable proportion of orthodox Indians (35%) viewed sati as a virtuous action that is different from suicide. In their view, it does not entail the killing of one's soul. Instead, it is a scripturally sanctioned act of courageous spousal devotion that, in fact, secures the salvation of a woman's soul. For example, an orthodox Indian woman explained,

[Sati] is morally right. . . . It is [described] in our Holy Books and Puranas. . . . The wife dies with her husband in order to [preserve] her chastity and [show] her devotion to her husband.

Thus, in response to sati, both Indian and American orthodox participants made reference to a divine order, but here they differed in their understandings of this divine order. This illustrates that while Old Town Indian Hindus and American fundamentalist Baptists share orthodox understandings of divinity, there are also important differences in their conceptions of the moral guidelines rendered by the divine order.

In comparing orthodox Indians and Americans, it is also important to keep in mind more general differences between their religious traditions. As scholars have pointed out, there are notable ways in which Asian religions differ from Abrahamic religions (Marty and Appleby 1993c). For example, in comparison to Asian religions, Abrahamic religions place more emphasis upon conceptions of God as a judge. They attribute more of a normative status to sacred texts, and place more emphasis upon notions of heresy. Abrahamic religions also focus more upon faith in comparison to Asian religions which focus more upon practice.

Cross-Cultural Differences in Progressivist Conceptions of Autonomy

As discussed above, the progressivist Indians and Americans were distinguished from their orthodox compatriots by their more frequent use of the Ethic of Autonomy. However, in some ways, the progressivist Indians and Americans differed from one another in their use and conceptions of autonomy. As hypothesized, the progressivist Americans placed a more pronounced emphasis upon autonomy compared to the progressivist Indians. This was seen in their more frequent use of the Ethic of Autonomy in response to the issues of sati and suicide in the case of terminal illness.

Furthermore, the American progressivists were more willing than the Indian progressivists to extend the human right to self-determination to the taking of one's own life under any circumstance. About half of the American progressivists argued that a person is justified in committing suicide in general and engaging in sati, but none of the progressivist Indians regarded these actions as morally defensible. Typically, the progressivist Americans who regarded these practices as justifiable spoke in terms of an individual's "right" to self-determination. The idea that individuals have the right to make choices with few limitations has been termed "radical individualism" and "hyperindividualism" by some observers of American society (Arnett 1996; Bellah et al. 1985; Berger and Berger 1984). This form of individualism was voiced by a progressivist American in response to the issue of sati:

To me it's not morally wrong. I don't like it, . . . but if that's what she chooses to do, that's what she chooses to do. . . . If that person wants to commit suicide, they can commit suicide.

Ironically, not a single progressivist Indian thought that a woman has a right to do sati. In fact, the progressivist Indians generally did not think that individuals have the right to engage in a certain act simply because they choose to do so. On occasion, the progressivist Indians spoke of human and individual rights, but they did not conceive of such rights as the only or ultimate consideration. They invoked individual rights when these harmonized with a person's needs and interests, or with social interests. In other words, a person's choice by itself was often an insufficient moral consideration. To them, the decision to do sati did not constitute a right, but rather a misguided decision. For example, a progressivist Indian spoke of how sati runs counter to a woman's own interests:

> Why should a woman give up her life? [The woman's] life is not gone. She can get married again, and lead a [new] and better life. Why should she perform sati?

Thus while both progressivist Indians and Americans made frequent use of the Ethic of Autonomy, they also differed in their use and conceptions of autonomy in some respects.

Cross-Cultural Similarities: Orthodox versus Progressivist Conceptions of Community

In neither India nor the United States did orthodox and progressivist groups differ in their use of the Ethic of Community for any of the moral issues. This finding conformed to expectations. However, the interviews suggested that the orthodox and progressivist groups in both countries differed on some specific conceptions of family and community life. For example, different views of the origin of marriage and the status of spouses were evident. The participants' discourse on divorce (and marriage) provides insight into these conceptions of community. The focus in the next section, then, is not primarily upon use of the Ethic of Community, but upon conceptions of the nature of the ideal community.

In both countries, orthodox participants spoke of marriage as a sacred institution that once entered can only be exited in the rarest of circumstances. Elaborating upon her view that divorce is morally wrong, an orthodox Indian explained, "In Hinduism, you can never have a complete divorce. The [marriage] vows are taken in front of God, and so the [man and woman] become one. It is not humanly possible to dissolve marriage." An orthodox American put it in similar terms: "I just believe that when you get married you're really making your vow to God that you will stay together." In the orthodox view, marriage is sacred because it is sanctioned by God. Marriage has a sacred origin and thus a marriage agreement is permanently binding.

Orthodox Indians and Americans also regarded marriage as a sacred reenactment of humans' relation to the divine. Specifically, they viewed the hierarchical relationship between God and humans as being mirrored in the relationship between husband and wife. Orthodox Indian men and women repeatedly stated, as did this woman, that: "In our Hinduism, [the] husband is like a god to his [wife], . . . she will show respect for him." The orthodox Americans did not use the word "god" to describe the husband. However, orthodox Americans likened the husband to Christ and the wife to Christ's church. Thus, according to both Indian and American orthodox participants, the husband is the leader and the wife is a respectful follower.

Both orthodox Indians and Americans further differentiated the ideal roles of husbands and wives. One of many Indian participants explained, "[The husband] will earn money. [The wife] will take care of the house and the children." This ideal role division was also endorsed by almost all orthodox Americans. An American woman put it in the following way: "God created man to be the leader of the family, the one who provides, and He created the women to be the nurturer, the one who is there to nurture her family." Thus, both Indian and American orthodox participants regarded husbands and wives as differentiated

in status and role, and viewed these statuses and roles as sacred and quite independent of individual inclinations.

In comparison, the progressivist Indians and Americans spoke of the origin of marriage and the statuses of spouses in different terms. They spoke of marriage more as a social than sacred institution. For example, a progressivist Indian explained,

> Just because you are married [that] doesn't mean you will . . . stay together till your death. Marriage, as I feel it, is a social custom — [a] tradition. We are married just to fulfill certain obligations and duties towards our parents. . . . [But] if you are not doing well with your partner . . . , then you are suffering mentally every day. Then, it is better to die once than to die every day.

Echoing this progressivist Indian's emphasis upon the contractual nature of marriage, a progressivist American said:

> I don't believe that divorce is the unforgivable sin, that it is not possible for persons to admit a mistake in their original choice. [After] having taken an act of separation, it is possible for them to find a new mate for a more happy and fulfilling life.

In the progressivist view, then, social bonds are forged and broken in accordance with individual and communal considerations.[16]

In India and the United States, the progressivists also differed from their orthodox compatriots in their conception of the statuses and roles of spouses. Not a single progressivist, in either India or the United States, spoke of spouses as differing in their statuses. Instead, progressivist Americans spoke of spouses as equal partners who feel mutual respect for one another, and who contribute fairly to marriage tasks. For example, a progressivist American explained that "commitment has to be built on mutual respect." Progressivist Indians also frequently conceived of spousal relations in terms of these ideals. For instance, a progressivist Indian stated,

> Marriage should [occur because] both decide [they feel] love and affection and respect for each other. If that is not there, what is the use of getting married?[17]

In both countries, then, progressivists spoke of marriage as a social arrangement uniting partners who are equal and feel mutual respect for one another.

The different orthodox and progressivist conceptions of the origin of marriage and the status of spouses point to different conceptions of community, in general. Orthodox Indians and Americans often regard the source of community as divine. In their view, communities consist of human beings who differ in their statuses and roles. Just as God's status is higher than humans', husbands and wives hold different statuses, as do parents and children. Also, humans who are closer to God hold a different status from those who are farther away from adhering to the divine order. (According to orthodox Indians, this is reflected in the caste hierarchy where those who are "twice-born" are closer to God. According to the orthodox Americans, those who are "born-again" are closer to God than those who are not). In contrast, progressivist Indians and Americans typically describe communities as social arrangements, and they conceive of the relation between women and men in terms of equality.

These different conceptions of community entail that progressivists favor more individual expression within communities compared to the orthodox. Progressivists favor relatively "loose-bounded" communities (Merelman 1984) that allow individuals more choices in their social relationships and social roles. In contrast, the orthodox participants in both India and the United States favor relatively "tight-bounded" communities. They expressed concern that too much individual choice and "loose" communal boundaries lead to an unraveling of the social fabric.

Thus, orthodox Americans and Indians regarded the present society as headed toward disintegration. In the view of orthodox Americans, society has deteriorated when compared to a more virtuous past as well as when compared to a glorious future to come (Christ's Second Coming). Orthodox Indians similarly regarded the present society as having reached a nadir. In their view, history cycles through four ages. In each age humans are progressively farther away from understanding and living in accordance with divine truth. Presently we are living in the fourth and worst age called "Kali Yuga." It is a degenerate and chaotic time, especially when compared to the first and superior age of "Satya Yuga," or the age of truth. The orthodox frequently referred to this superior past of Satya Yuga and anticipated its coming again in the future. Thus, the orthodox Indian and American conceptions of history differed, with the former being cyclical and the later being linear, but orthodox Indians and Americans were united in seeing the present as a time when people are inclined to follow their own wants rather than adhering to God's truth. In the orthodox view, this approach to life entails the unraveling of the community whereupon loose-bounded communities fall apart.

In sum, orthodox and progressivist groups in India and the United States did not differ in their use of the Ethic of Community. However, their specific understandings of the origin, the structure, and the present condition of family and social life were far apart.

Cross-Cultural Differences in Conceptions of Community

As discussed in the introduction, research has shown a difference in the way that Americans and Indians conceive of interpersonal relationships and the relationship of the individual to the community. Miller (1991; Miller and Bersoff 1992; Miller and Luthar 1989) has noted that Indians are more likely than Americans to evaluate interpersonal conflicts in moral terms. Thus Indians were found to be more likely than Americans to emphasize the duties and role-related obligations governing interpersonal relationships. However, in the present study, cross-cultural differences were not found in the use of the Ethic of Community. Orthodox Indians and Americans did not differ in their use of this ethic, nor did progressivist Indians and Americans. This was contrary to expectations, and may merit future exploration.

CONCLUSION

The comparison of the moral discourse of the Indian and American participants indicates a division between orthodox and progressivist moral conceptions and worldviews. The orthodox participants in India and the United States often spoke in similar terms about divine authority, the necessity of curbing individual inclinations, communal and familial hierarchy, and the disintegration of the present society. The discourse of the orthodox participants often set them apart from their progressivist compatriots and coreligionists.

Many of the issues separating the orthodox and progressivist groups in India and the United States are issues that are described by Marty and Appleby (1991, 1993a, 1993b, 1994, 1995). Given the international scope of the series, this suggests that many countries are facing similar divisions between tendencies toward orthodoxy/fundamentalism and progressivism/modernism. It suggests that many countries might be experiencing tugs-of-war over the extent to which to frame the moral life and the communal life in terms of ethics of Autonomy as opposed to ethics of Divinity.

While countries in an increasingly international and modernized world confront similar moral debates, the diversity of peoples and countries must also be kept in mind. As Hunter (1991) notes, there are differences among the people inclined toward orthodoxy in the United States, as there are differences among those inclined toward progressivism.

Likewise, Marty and Appleby and their colleagues point to the diverse religious doctrines of fundamentalist groups and the diverse political situations of the countries in which fundamentalists are active. The present interviews also highlighted important differences in the moral discourses of orthodox Indians and Americans, as well as important differences in the moral discourses of progressivist Indians and Americans. This cross-cultural diversity must be kept in mind, while simultaneously recognizing the division between orthodoxy and progressivism occurring in diverse countries.

NOTES

[1] Progressivism, for instance, is often associated with ultra-leftist political views in India. In the United States, progressivism is often associated with a particular political movement that arose at the beginning of this century.

[2] It should be emphasized that Hunter distinguishes between opposing poles of orthodoxy and progressivism, but he does not claim that Americans can be neatly divided into two groups. A complex continuum exists between the two poles.

[3] Another difference is that Hunter describes a particular political phenomenon in the United States where diverse groups cooperate on the orthodox and progressivist sides. Such international cooperation or ecumenism is not described by Marty and Appleby and their colleagues.

[4] The sample sizes were kept relatively small in order to be able to carry out in-depth interviews.

[5] The term fundamentalist derives from a series of booklets edited by A. C. Dixon between 1910 and 1915. They were entitled *The Fundamentals*, and defended a literal reading of the Bible, the Second Coming, and conservative doctrine. The booklets were symptomatic of a more general reaction against the liberalism and ecumenism endorsed by mainline Protestant denominations. The fundamentalist reaction began in the later part of the nineteenth century.

[6] While American Protestant fundamentalists have given name to the cross-national groups described in the series edited by Marty and Appleby, it is important to note that American Protestant fundamentalists generally strongly object to the use of violence.

[7] Since the late 1970s, Southern Baptists have engaged in contentious battles among themselves, with many Southern Baptists calling for orthodoxy but some moving toward progressivism (Ammerman 1990; Hunter 1991).

[8] Of course, ethnographic accounts and survey data also show differences between mainline and fundamentalist American Baptists in terms of their lives and practices (e.g., Ammerman 1987; Roof and McKinney 1987). Thus, it is not the case that different selection criteria were used in India and the United States, but different criteria were used in localizing groups in the two countries.

[9] Sati is the Hindu practice where a widow immolates herself on her husband's funeral pyre.

[10] American participants also discussed the issue of abortion. Results for this issue will not be presented here, but can be found in Jensen (in press). Also, age differences in moral reasoning among American orthodox and progressivist participants are presented in Jensen (1997a), and implications of the present research for psychological theories of moral reasoning are discussed in Jensen (1997b).

[11] The manual is available from the author upon request.

[12] It should be emphasized that a participant may speak in terms of one or more of Shweder's three ethics. A participant is not classified within one of the ethics, rather each justification provided by a participant is coded within one of the ethics.

[13] On the one hand, error may have been introduced because the author coded all the interviews. On the other hand, the interrater reliability was high, and only some, but not all, research hypotheses were supported.

[14] Logistic regression analyses were not used in order to avoid dichotomizing variables, and two factor analyses of variance were not used in order to be able to enter covariates selectively where appropriate.

[15] With respect to Type I errors, it may be a concern that a substantial number of analyses were carried out. However, it is also important to note that there were many significant outcomes, and that these outcomes did not seem to occur randomly but rather in highly patterned ways.

[16] It is important to note that for many Indian couples, their marriage is arranged by their parents. Thus some Indian progressivists described the social arrangement of marriage as involving the parents, while to the American progressivists it involved only the spouses.

[17] The vast majority of marriages in India are arranged. Spouses do not marry on the basis of love, but rather on the basis of their family recommendations and decisions. Yet, for the progressivist Indian sample, 45% of the personal moral issues pertained to the importance of marrying out of love and having self-determination in choosing a spouse

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