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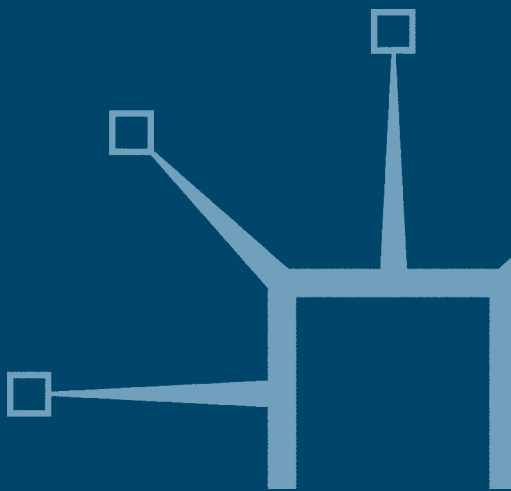
Culture and Context in World Politics

Stephanie Lawson



Culture and Context in World Politics

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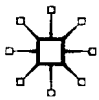

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To Baby X and the next generation

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Preface and Acknowledgements

This book is the result of many years of reflection on the role played by the culture concept in both political theory and practice. My attention was initially drawn to how the concept and cognates such as 'tradition' were used in a political context during PhD research in the early 1980s on the fate of democracy in Fiji – a small island country in the Southwest Pacific which had not attracted much interest from comparative political scientists or international relations specialists, and even less from political philosophers. Most of the existing literature came out of the disciplines of history and anthropology, and so began a long-term interest in interdisciplinary approaches to the study of politics. In the course of conducting research for the PhD project, and for a subsequent comparative study of 'tradition versus democracy' in the same general region, I also became more deeply engaged with philosophical ideas underpinning the notion of context. The intellectual and practical problems of writing about politics in these particular settings, especially with respect to democracy, raised a set of problematic dichotomies with implicit contextual themes: insider/outsider, West/non-West, indigenous/alien, traditional/non-traditional and so on. Concepts of 'culture' and 'tradition', often encapsulated in terms such as the 'Pacific Way', featured prominently in political discourses, and played a particularly important role in defending established positions of privilege against calls for democratic reforms. What I observed, however, was not a vast gulf of difference between Western and non-Western political practices and discourses, let alone between incommensurable 'worlds of meaning', but a rather more familiar contest between conservative and reformist ideas in which a range of vital interests were at stake.

Similar issues arose when, in the 1990s, I began to look at the 'Asian values' debate as well as the background to certain justifications for authoritarianism in post-colonial Africa. Comparable themes were evident with the rise of 'identity politics' in the post-Cold War period, manifest in projects as varied as indigenous rights movements and multiculturalist projects, ethnonationalist causes and the claims of religious fundamentalisms. Although I remained unpersuaded about many of the claims made in the name of culture and context, claims which were often politically self-serving, which too readily substituted 'culture' for 'race' and which tended logically towards an incoherent relativism,

I found some of the opposing universalist arguments equally untenable. And while committed – no doubt ethnocentrically – to norms of democratic governance and basic principles of human rights, I was less convinced about the integrity of certain contemporary democracy promotion projects, and still less about any notion that attempted to squeeze people everywhere into one and the same mould. Many critics of democracy promotion today are quite right when they urge 'sensitivity to context' and highlight the fact that democracy simply cannot be imposed by force. Even so, attempts to apply sensitivity to context often run the risk of simply reinforcing the power of oppressive local elites, sometimes at the expense of local pro-democracy movements. In these instances, a normative commitment to cultural contextualism (which is perhaps no less ethnocentric than a commitment to democracy, human rights and a cosmopolitan ethic) has often been adopted rather naively and without due regard to all that it entails, either philosophically or politically. Ideas of culture and context are important, but adopting a rigid methodological contextualism or culturalism is just as problematic as a rigid methodological universalism. In summary, what this study at least partly attempts to do is retrieve culture from the culturalists, context from the contextualists, pluralism from the relativists, and cosmopolitanism from the universalists, while at the same time undermining some of the most problematic dichotomies that abound in the study of world politics.

I owe many intellectual and personal debts to colleagues, friends and family for their support and encouragement. To Graham Maddox, Fred D'Agostino, Preston King and Carolyn Nordstrom not only for their friendship over many years, but for providing so much of the intellectual stimulus needed for writing this book. My colleagues at the University of East Anglia, especially Edward Acton, Mike Bowker, Richard Crockatt, Barbara Goodwin, John Greenaway, Peter Handley, Lee Marsden and John Street, have also helped to provide a very supportive and intellectually congenial environment. Of my former colleagues and friends at the Australian National University, I would especially like to thank Ron May who supported and encouraged a generation of younger scholars who passed through the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies. I'm grateful to have been one of them. I would also like to acknowledge the practical support given at various times by the Department of International Relations and the State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Project, also in the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies at the Australian National University. Similarly, the practical support of the School of Political, Social and International

Studies at the University of East Anglia has been essential. Other friends have also been enormously helpful over the past few years, John Warhurst and Joan Warhurst in Canberra in particular. Not least, my children, James, Richard, Katharine and Lizzie, always supportive, a source of constant pleasure and a reminder of the most important things in life.

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1
Introduction

The concept of culture has had a long and interesting career in the human sciences. The broad aim of this study is to examine key aspects of that career, together with allied notions of context, and to critically assess the implications for the study of world politics and the normative theorizing that accompanies it.[1] There are two related starting points for this study. First, is the 'cultural turn' in the humanities and social sciences has had a profound impact on how the notion of context in both historical and cultural terms, is conceptualized and applied. Very briefly, those who have taken the cultural turn have generally been concerned to challenge established ontologies, epistemologies and methodologies, especially those of a positivist or empiricist character which focus on material facts, presuppose fixed universalist foundations for their various projects and thereby presume to produce objective knowledge. Such challenges have focused much more attention on the cultural contexts within which people are embedded and that operate as the primary realm of intersubjective meaning and understanding. One commentator suggests that the study of culture and the modes in which knowledge is produced has precipitated a crisis of intellectual confidence while providing an opportunity to 'reconfigure the terrain of the human sciences', thus carrying with it the promise of a new social theory paradigm.[2] This is quite a claim, and one that will be subject to critical scrutiny in the course of the study.

The second starting point is located at an important defining moment in world politics – the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the bi-polar world order along with the Soviet Empire over the period 1989–91. While these developments can scarcely be said to have signalled the demise of existing approaches to the study of world politics, they have clearly inspired much more thought about alternative approaches,

including those giving greater prominence to cultural factors.[3] This is not to say that the Cold War period had been short of scholars prepared to challenge existing paradigms, or to suggest that the culture concept and related issues of context had been completely ignored. In IR, in particular, feminist scholars, critical theorists and poststructuralists or postmodernists had all been very much concerned with questioning the presuppositions of forms of knowledge within their discipline as well as the narrowness of its concerns, although not all had headed down the culturalist track. More generally, the end of the Cold War presented an opportunity not merely for re-adjusting existing approaches but for forging a new agenda in the study of world politics encompassing not only alternative theoretical and methodological approaches but also bringing the sub-disciplines of comparative politics and IR closer together as well as engaging with a broader range of issues than those which dominated during the Cold War.[4] And while culturalist and contextualist approaches in world politics have not been the only ones to gain much more attention over the last 15 years or so, they represent a major challenge to the rationalist approaches which predominated during the Cold War.[5]

The importance of incorporating perspectives on culture in the study of world politics has appeared all the more pressing since another defining moment in world politics – the events of 9/11 when landmark targets in the United States came under attack by a terrorist group purporting to act in the name of Islam. A few years before this, Walter Lacqueur had written of the threat of terrorist 'superviolence' in the post-Cold War world where terrorism is increasingly the political tactic of choice for relatively small, but intensely fanatical groups. He went on to note the high probability of failure of many attempts – out of every 100, 99 would almost certainly fail: 'But the single successful one would claim many more victims, do more material damage, and unleash far greater panic than anything the world has seen.'[6] Given the nature of the 9/11 events and their aftermath, this statement was uncannily prescient. In addition to the immediate panic caused, and subsequently manifest in numerous 'homeland' security measures as well as military retaliations abroad, a very strong element of 'moral panic' has also been evident. The United States along with its closest allies, has consistently depicted 9/11 as an act of barbarism against the 'civilized world' and the ensuing struggle as one of good against evil – of unambiguous right against wrong. Richard Crockatt notes that this has provoked the idea of a 'values gap' between certain nations and groups, and 'a reaffirmation of the need to defend "cherished ways of life" in the face of attack'.[7] From the

perspective of Al-Qaeda, of course, there is indeed a values gap but one in which images of righteousness are reversed. Scholars have pointed to the message of *salafi* writings which, in addition to seeking the pure, authentic voice of Islam, portray the United States 'as an instrument of Satan, oppressing Muslims and threatening Islamic civilization with its secular culture and power'.[8] More generally, the events of 9/11 and the subsequent 'war on terror' seemed to confirm Samuel Huntington's notion that 'culture' would provide the new battlegrounds for future political conflict.[9]

Both the cultural turn and its manifestation in the study of world politics, especially in the post-Cold War period, will be examined in more detail in Chapter 2. This introductory chapter next outlines some key themes concerning culture, identity and political community. As we shall see later, these debates map on to issues of sameness and difference reflected in the West/non-West bifurcation of world politics, the cosmopolitan/communitarian divide in international normative theory and the insider/outsider dichotomy that emerges from culturalist constructions of context. The introduction then turns to a preliminary discussion of some core ideas about culture and the cognate concept of civilization. Here, I am less concerned to offer my own definition of culture, or its cognates, than to explain its conceptualization and identify some of the problems arising from various understandings. The analysis therefore participates in an approach to the study of important concepts, including 'culture', which recognizes that they don't simply describe a phenomenon, but themselves reflect certain specific purposes.[10] The final section raises some preliminary issues concerning theory and methodology, especially in terms of the way in which competing discourses are often trapped in a dualism yielding only either/or solutions that in turn sustain the dichotomies mentioned above.

Identity and political community

A central issue for scholars in various fields of political study resides in the tensions engendered by the fact that political communities are, almost by definition, entities that are conceptually bounded and distinguished from each other by the presence of certain characteristics. In the study of world politics, it is generally recognized that political communities endure at least partly because of their claims to exclusivity, and most have established their peculiar identities by accentuating the differences between their own members and aliens.[11] Anthropological historians too are 'increasingly obliged to confront the fact … that

groups tend to define themselves not by reference to their own characteristics but by exclusion, that is, by comparison to "strangers" '.[12] And for some communities, 'stranger' and 'enemy' have often meant the same thing.[13] While not all identities require a negative contradistinction, they are invariably relational, depending on the existence of other quite separate identities to achieve contrast and thereby affirm a sense of self as belonging to a distinctive entity. And although this is not all there is to the acquisition of group identity, nor is such an identity the only characteristic of political communities, the claims of identity based on uniqueness and the insider/outsider theme together with an emphasis on 'difference' is no small part of the exercise.

The concept of culture has become crucial to the formulation of distinctive identities especially, but not exclusively, in relation to the issue of who belongs and who does not belong in or to specific political communities. This is where the culture concept and the idea of 'nation' intersect, for the latter is often defined not simply as a political community characterized by a particular culture, but as a political community *by virtue of* its possession of a particular culture. Taken together, the concepts of culture and nation therefore have important implications for political legitimacy and authority in so far as the 'normative nationalist principle' holds that homogeneous cultural units not only form the 'natural' foundations for political life but that cultural unity between rulers and ruled carries a self-evident legitimacy.[14] It is further assumed that the institutions governing the political life of the community must conform to the cultural contours of the community, the 'doctrine of fit'.[15] To the extent that nations are assumed to be cultural units encompassing '*a* people' it follows that each nation is entitled, via a democratic principle of self-determination, to form itself into a sovereign political community, that is, a sovereign state that is co-equal with all other such entities in an international system of states.

In the early post-Cold War period, K.J. Holsti wrote that almost all theoretical work in the field had ignored the search for political community – not an 'abstract, global moral community' but rather the sovereign community 'based on ethnicity, religion, language and other primordial attributes'. This, he said, has been manifest in the quest for identity, justice and cultural preservation through statehood by a great many different groups ever since the French Revolution.[16] The factors outlined here as 'primordial attributes', and which are linked directly to issues of identity and justice, are precisely those usually encompassed in the concept of culture. What this implies is that justice depends largely on the recognition of cultural identity as the legitimate basis for political

identity as well as for political autonomy. It further implies that the cultural community is real and tangible, and that it has a genuine substance in contrast with any abstraction that posits a global community.

The fact that few, if any, of the world's states actually conform to the normative nationalist principle, and are therefore true to the term 'nation-state', has been so widely remarked upon that it can now only be regarded as banal. And the difficulties encountered in defining the character of highly diverse national societies and in re-thinking political theory to take account of this has been the subject of a growing body of literature on multiculturalism.[17] Nonetheless, the idea of states embodying some kind of singular national culture is evident in the common assumption that geopolitical entities such as 'France' contain within it 'French culture'. In comparative politics, a slightly different understanding of national culture assumes that China is home to something called 'Chinese political culture'. Thus the names of states are taken to name cultures as well. Of course, these are not the only units named as cultures – sub-state groups such as 'Australian Aborigines' or the 'Tiwi people' are also named as cultural groups in their own right, while some political culture studies identify the phenomenon at regional or provincial levels. Beyond the level of the state we find such generalities as 'Western culture' or 'Asian culture' or 'Islamic culture' which are often taken as constitutive of civilizational entities. All these are shorthand expressions for much more complicated collective identities that can rarely be reduced to a single common denominator or essence. Even so, the concept of a (singular) culture is often enough equated with such entities and assigned the same name and boundaries.

If culture is composed, at least in part, of beliefs, and if cultural phenomena in the form of behavioural patterns, socio-political organization, language and so on, convey *meaning* arising from those beliefs,[18] then what does culture itself mean? Implicit in many contemporary debates is an assumption that the essential meaning of 'culture' is to be found in its capacity to function as a marker of *difference* between human communities. This assumption attends virtually all the debates about culture, whether these are to do with the concepts of nationalism and/or democracy and their implications for political community, or other problems and issues to do with identity politics. It also raises some of the key questions to be addressed in this study: How has culture been conceptualized in mainstream intellectual thought? To what extent is culture taken to be constitutive of context? How do the conceptualizations of both culture and context relate to theories of nationalism and democracy? What role does the dichotomization of the West/non-West

play in relation to such issues? What are the general implications for normative theory, especially as it relates to the understanding of political community and ideas about authenticity, legitimacy, authority, the conceptualization and treatment of insiders and outsiders, and the management of difference? This also raises questions concerning political relations between communities: is 'culture', or more specifically cultural *difference*, in itself a cause of conflict between communities? A final question concerns whether the concept of culture itself needs restating as signifying a highly complex and contingent process rather than an objective, concrete 'thing' that defines the foundations for political communities.

Culture and civilization

Although the word 'culture' is generally held to have entered the vocabulary of the human sciences only in the late nineteenth century,[19] cognate ideas have a long and complex history going back at least to Herodotus who described in some detail what we would now call the 'cultural traditions' of the many different groups that he encountered throughout the ancient world. In their well-known account of the culture concept, Kroeber and Kluckhorn also draw attention to the interest in 'the distinctive life-ways of different peoples' evident in ancient works of literature ranging from the Bible to the Chinese scholars of the Han dynasties and the recurrence of such themes in the 'anthropological' thinking of later writers such as Descartes, Pascal, Montesquieu and Voltaire.[20]

Herodotus, among others, provides an account of just how important 'custom' was in the societies of his time, an account that has resonance throughout contemporary ethnographic studies, as well as in any field of enquiry concerned with the concept of culture and its role in identity construction:

> For if anyone, no matter who, were given the opportunity of choosing from amongst all the nations in the world the set of beliefs which he thought best, he would inevitably, after careful consideration of their relative merits, choose that of his own country. Everyone without exception believes his own native customs, and the religion he was brought up in, to be the best; and that being so, it is unlikely that anyone but a madman would mock at such things. There is abundant evidence that this is the universal feeling about the ancient customs of one's country.[21]

Herodotus was attuned to just how widely beliefs can vary, how strongly they are sometimes held, and of the importance of treating what we now call cultural difference with respect. There is also a strong sense of the extent to which immersion in a particular cultural community shapes a person's sense of identity and belonging, their loyalties, their understanding of moral behaviour and their general worldview – in fact, of the constitution of ethnocentrism. All these are common themes in theories of socialization, psychological development and so forth. But they represent only part of the story. Critical reflection on one's own culture, customs or traditions, especially with respect to power and who exercises it, along with the possibility of change, must also be considered.

An alternative approach is illustrated in other debates which took place in the ancient world and that revolved around the opposition between *physis* and *nomos*, terms which translate more or less as 'nature' on the one hand and 'custom + law' on the other. *Nomos* played an important role in conceptualizing a charter of freedom from the arbitrary rule of despotism because it implied that rulers were also subject to rules and norms. But it had a less attractive side as well, for it was recognized that *nomos* may impose another form of tyranny: 'a series of customs and conventions imposed upon [people] who might not always wish to conform to them'. The conception of *nomos* as a liberating force therefore fades when liberation is won, 'and that which was seen as freedom's safeguard begins to appear as its negation'. And the 'good look around', which Herodotus's work illustrated, could well result, if not in a preference for other ways, at least a weakening of conviction about the unassailable status of one's own.[22]

The discussion that follows does not deny the importance of cultural difference or the role of culture in shaping norms and values. But it does aim to show its limitations by examining the way in which the concept of culture has been constructed in social scientific theorizing and deployed in political practice. This highlights, among other things, the relationship between culture and power and, more specifically, how culture operates in the service of power. This is often either played down or missed altogether in studies of phenomena such as 'political culture' which has been part of the mainstream of comparative politics for almost half a century.[23] But the problem goes well beyond mainstream studies. Many alternative approaches to world politics adopt an explicitly culturalist line which, instead of interrogating the extent to which culture may serve power, invest in a rather uncritical conception of culture that ignores how it may be used to justify certain configurations of

power and interest. In the hands of some, culture becomes self-legitimating and almost beyond criticism.

The task of providing the culture concept itself with a serviceable definition verges on the impossible. It is, as Raymond Williams remarked, one of the most complex words in the English language.[24] Over forty years ago the anthropologists Kroeber and Kluckhorn produced an entire book devoted to the sole task of surveying the proliferation of meanings surrounding the term.[25] But it hardly settled the debate over its 'true' meaning and the conceptualization of culture has remained extraordinary in two respects: 'It has displayed the weakest analytical development of any key concept in sociology and it has played the most widely vacillating role within sociological theory.'[26] The very fact that social scientists have produced so many definitions of culture suggests that there is a need to talk about the 'problem of culture' rather than culture 'itself'.[27] Another commentator notes that the difficulties are most acute when – after all protestations to the contrary – 'culture shifts from something to be described, interpreted and perhaps explained, and is treated instead as a source of explanation in itself'.[28] While there is no settled meaning, contemporary usages – at least in English – developed on the basis of two distinctive approaches worked out in the second half of the nineteenth century by Matthew Arnold and Edward Tylor respectively. These were exceptionally important for the political career of the culture concept, and will be examined at greater length in due course. Let it suffice for now to consider a recent typology that attempts to bring the multitude of understandings that 'culture' has acquired over the last hundred years or so under some sort of conceptual control.

The following four categories of culture were drawn up by Glenn Jordan and Chris Weedon[29] as a starting point for their own analysis of the cultural politics of race, class and gender, although the categories themselves embrace a much more extensive range of issues.

1. Culture as 'a general process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development'. This denotes an understanding of culture as something that is acquired by an individual through education and schooling. In this sense, one 'cultivates' personal development.
2. Culture as a 'particular way of life, whether of a people, a period or a group' and which is therefore informed by a 'common spirit'. Here the key point is that culture cannot be reduced to an individual, but exists only as the property of particular groups. These may be named – 'Japanese culture', 'Balinese culture' and so on. This accords with the most common anthropological conceptions of the culture concept.

Jordan and Weedon say that for their own purposes, this conception is not especially relevant.

3. Culture as 'the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity' which generally covers 'music, literature, painting and sculpture, theatre and film'. This constitutes the 'high art' or 'opera house' conception of culture although this category has expanded over the last few decades to include popular culture and the mass media. Taken together, all these cultural activities, whether regarded as 'high' or 'low', 'elite' or 'popular', comprise the dominant view of culture found in a range of key institutions such as the educational system, the media, publishing, museums and galleries. Jordan and Weedon go on to say that, precisely because it is dominant, it is this conception of culture which largely defines the space within which their own study operates.
4. Culture as the signifying system through which a social order is communicated, reproduced, experienced and explored. This indicates a concept of culture as immanent, that is, as a dimension of virtually all economic, social and political institutions, and which resides in 'a set of *material* practices which constitute meanings, values and subjectivities'. Jordan and Weedon say that this conception, which is what more or less defines the field of cultural studies, takes two main forms: 'In its weaker dialectical form, it suggests that as human beings create culture, so culture creates them.' In a stronger version, influenced by structuralist and post-structuralist theory, culture is *the* determinant of subjectivity. This leaves unanswered the rather significant question of who has the authoritative resources to create the culture that in turn creates subjectivities.

This is a useful typology, but there are some problems with it. First, the domain of cultural politics identified by Jordan and Weedon is rather limited. This is so not only in terms of the restricted, although perfectly legitimate, focus on race, class and gender. It is also confined largely to the sphere of national societies with little to indicate how the dynamics of cultural politics might work in the sphere of world politics. As we shall see, the extension of the domain of cultural politics to this sphere casts a very different light on how the above categories may be utilized. We should also note that although the idea of culture as 'a particular way of life' is dismissed by Jordan and Weedon as largely irrelevant to their own concerns, it has a different resonance in cultural studies where the '*particular* way of life concept' is a primary point of reference. Further, the joining of the anthropological perspective with the aesthetic

and humanist understandings means that the culture concept can range beyond social exclusivity and embrace popular culture as well, thereby extending its reach to a '*whole* way of life'.[30] We shall see that the broader understanding of culture as a *particular* way of life (distinct from others), and as a *whole* way of life (in an-all embracing sense), are both important for how ideas about culture play out in the sphere of world politics. For as some scholars now recognize, the anthropological conception has come to dominate.[31]

The concept of civilization, although often conflated with culture, has its own distinct resonances. In its earliest understandings, it denoted a state of civility distinguishable from barbarism. For many (but not all) ancient Greeks and Romans, the dividing line between one and the other was rigid. The distinction between a citizen of the *polis* or republic (who was by definition civilized) and the barbarian (who by definition was *not*) allowed for no transition from one state to the next on a ladder of 'progress', or of regress for that matter. Rather, the two states of existence denoted who was properly human and who was not.[32] Similarly, the 'Middle Kingdom' of China was by definition ethnocentric to the point of casting all others in the role of barbarians regardless of their technological and educational achievements. The eighteenth-century emperor Ch'ien Lung famously responded to the overtures of George III by rejecting the very possibility of British emissaries ever acquiring even the rudiments of Chinese civilization, or of transplanting Chinese manners and customs to an alien soil.[33]

In contrast, evolutionary theory as it developed in the nineteenth century allowed that all were fully human, but that different 'peoples' were at different stages of development. It therefore provided for a theory of transition from savagery and barbarism to civilization in accordance with the then dominant idea of progress. None of this implies that the concept of civilization had a uniform meaning in European social and political thought. For example, while French and English understandings were similar, the German approach was quite different – as was the approach to *Kultur*. For German speakers, *Zivilisation* was a superficial thing in contrast to *Kultur* which was generally taken to denote deeper, more important expressions of achievements and identity. This provided a basis for a *Kultur/Zivilisation* antithesis which came to play an important part in German nationalism, with '*Kultur* carrying an inclusively German meaning, and *Zivilisation* serving to exclude the non-German'.[34]

A very different approach was reflected the 'standard of civilization' idea which emerged through the formulation of international law in

Europe largely (but not exclusively) in the context of dealings with the non-European world.[35]

Another scholar notes that 'civilization' may be represented as multiple and diverse or as singular and universal, 'incorporating the whole of humanity in a project of progress and development'.[36] In the former sense, 'civilization' is also applied to large-scale socio-political entities throughout the world, both ancient and modern. These bear names reflecting geographical, cultural and/or religious markers such as Meso-American, Andean, Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Chinese, Islamic, Hindu and so on, and are sometimes associated with empires as well – Aztec, Inca, Ottoman and many others. Such names, however, usually represent over-simplifications of complex entities characterized by divisions, tensions and contradictions. Empires are, virtually by definition, composite entities displaying very diverse elements, although one element is, again by definition, bound to be dominant.[37]

In the contemporary period, the entity that looms largest is 'the West'. This entity has an enormously powerful symbolism although it is not often subject to detailed investigation in IR or comparative politics. Rather, it is a very much taken for granted category which requires almost no explanation. It is simply 'there'. Some critical studies in anthropology have noted 'the use of the West as a rhetorical counter which guarantees the anthropologist's real understanding of the non-West'.[38] Others have examined notions of cultural authenticity and purity in Islamic fundamentalism that reflect concerns about contamination by foreign ideas, especially those of a decadent and corrupt West.[39] Another recent study in IR finds that the West is often represented as a cohesive community and invoked in antithesis to a range of broadly constituted 'others' – the East, the Orient, Islam, the Third World and so on.[40] Much of my previous work on Asia-Pacific politics has identified discourses such as 'the Pacific Way' and 'Asian values' as almost entirely dependent on a grossly homogenized, over-simplified construction of the 'West' as a contrasting image.[41]

The idea of 'the West' is especially important to the study of world politics in the post-Cold War period in which so many culturalist expressions of particularistic national, regional and religious identities have been constructed in explicit opposition to selective images of the West. This phenomenon can be described as Occidentalism in the sense that it represents an inversion of the more familiar category of Orientalism constructed by Edward Said.[42] In turn, this has reinvigorated debates about whether certain norms and values, practices and institutions, said to be specific to the West, can be exported to alien

environments and successfully 'transplanted' in non-Western national societies. Proponents of the 'foreign flower' school, for example, generally argue that democracy is essentially Western in origin and that the cultural dynamics of non-Western societies are often simply unsuitable for its reception, at least in a liberal form.

The phenomenon of Occidentalism raises further issues concerning the strategy of inverting hierarchies, and this is the tendency to reproduce an equally problematic set of assumptions and simplifications. In analysing Tzvetan Todorov's study of *The Conquest of America*,[43] William Connolly points out that Todorov attempted neither to transcend the enigma of otherness by assimilating the relationships between priests, conquistadores and Aztecs within a universalist discourse, nor to enter into the 'internal perspective of the discovered peoples'.[44] This is a difficult position to sustain, and is made more so because we are easily drawn towards either/or solutions. The strategy of inversion assumes that if a pure universalism (based on a pure rationalism and a pure empiricism) uncontaminated by the particular culture in which we are located cannot be sustained, then we seem obliged to fashion instead a pure contextualism (a pure understanding and a pure interpretation) that 'draws us into the perspective of the other as it was prior to western discovery of it'.[45] While universalism more often stands accused of subjugating the particularity of the other, the method of 'internal contextualism' performs a similar move. In this case, however, the other's particularity is subjugated to a myth of universal transparency 'through intellectual sympathy emanating from bearers of a superior culture'.[46] This illustrates how contending discourses tend to become structured into a dichotomy, and brings us to some preliminary issues of theory and methodology.

A note on theory and methodology

The human sciences have been described as steeped in dualisms – individualism and collectivism, voluntarism and determinism, nature and nurture, materialism and idealism, objectivity and subjectivity, and so on.[47] The study of world politics has long been replete with its own influential dualisms: war and peace, capitalism and communism, East and West, North and South, democracy and dictatorship, globalization and fragmentation, order and disorder, sovereignty and anarchy, not to mention good and evil. In international normative theory, contending approaches have also tended to revolve around two distinctive positions – cosmopolitanism and communitarianism which reflect, in turn, a

universalist/relativist epistemological and methodological divide. In the history of anthropology, the most common oppositions are evolution and particularism, science and history, interpretation and explanation, among others.[48]

Although it seems inevitable that students of the human sciences will be drawn to one side or another of these dualisms, it has been suggested that not only is there no need to choose between, say, individualism and collectivism, there is a need *not* to, and that the way forward is through cultural theory.[49] But this depends on what form cultural theory takes. As some have observed, by declaring universalism virtually taboo and performing an inversion of hierarchies, individual nation-states have sometimes been turned into privileged sites of particularity instead.[50] This difficulty, however, has been widespread throughout the human sciences. For all their universalist tendencies, the human sciences have developed largely within national frameworks and, as we shall see, have tended to address problems and issues contained within those frameworks. This suggests a need to, first, recognize the extent to which 'methodological nationalism' is pervasive throughout the human sciences before we can see whether a 'methodological cosmopolitanism' is possible.[51]

The analysis here explains the dichotomous formulation of the principal clusters of normative theories, and provides a critique of certain aspects of both universalist and relativist approaches – especially in terms of their tendencies to absolutism. Here a further point of Connolly's is highly pertinent. In spelling out the further implications of the 'quest for purity', which is what absolutism amounts to, he points out that Todorov's critics, or at least those sitting on the particularist side of the fence, have chastised him for 'not examining the conquest of the Aztecs from the vantage point of the conquered people'. But by doing so, says Connolly, they fail to see that he already refuses the grounds on which their objections rest. He accepts neither the universalist nor the contextualist mode – although he cannot avoid making partial and provisional use of both.[52] Similarly, I take the position that each mode makes an essential contribution to normative theory and that we need to take account of both the general and the particular. This suggests the need for a pluralist synthesis attuned to the realities of human existence and co-existence, and the multiplicity of experiences, values, interests and needs that subsist not only between groups and collectivities but within them as well.

The next chapter examines, first, the intellectual movement known as the 'cultural turn', a movement which has sought to challenge the

epistemological and ontological bases of claims to objective knowledge and its universal applicability across virtually all fields within the human sciences. It is from within this movement that various forms of postpositivism have emerged. One that has been especially influential in the contemporary study of world politics is constructivist social theory which itself takes various forms. The chapter then goes on to consider the impact of the end of the Cold War on ideas in world politics, first with respect to liberal responses and then in terms of culturalist approaches to world order, or disorder, which have emerged in response to the universalist and rationalist elements of both liberalism and structural realism. Here, I specify and delineate in more detail my objections to certain aspects of 'culturalism' in the contemporary study of world politics.

Chapter 3 provides a much more detailed appraisal of contextualism. As a methodological approach relating meaning to specific contexts, the contextualist enterprise has received a great deal of attention in contemporary historiography, although many of its assumptions can be traced back to figures such as Vico, Herder, Dilthey and Gadamer. But while historical contextualism relies on a temporal understanding of context, as reflected in the notion of the past as a foreign country, cultural contextualism relies primarily on a spatial dimension. It also embraces a notion of 'cultural tradition' which requires a strong continuity between past and present rather than separation or alienation. In this respect, there appear to be contradictions between historical and cultural contextualism that have implications for both methodology and normative theory. A further issue concerns the *political* context within which certain contextualist arguments have themselves been produced. This calls preliminary attention to the fact that certain contextualist arguments need to be contextualized themselves in order to expose meanings, intentions, motives and interests. It also calls attention to the relationship between culture and ideology and the continuing relevance of the study of ideology as meaning in the service of power.

Chapters 4–7 together comprise a history of ideas which illuminates a number of central themes. First and foremost, these chapters trace the emergence and the deployment of the culture concept and related ideas in European social and political thought. This is set against the more general background of the production and organization of knowledge and the development of the human sciences, including their professionalization through specialized academic disciplines. Particular attention is paid to developments within the disciplines of anthropology, history

and politics and how ideas about culture, nationalism and democracy actually map on to disciplinary history. Notwithstanding some of the problems of methodological contextualism identified in Chapter 3 the history of ideas approach taken in subsequent chapters illustrates just how important it is to understand the circumstances within which the idea of culture as a key concept in the human sciences was actually produced and what purposes it was meant to serve. Some of the more specific themes that arise in this history of ideas concern the perception and treatment of human difference *and* sameness through notions of race and culture, and how these in turn have impacted on various strands of thought about the nature of political community. The importance of these issues becomes apparent when we come to consider constructions of state and nation in nationalist historiography as well as certain aspects of the theory and practice of democratic politics.

Another key point that emerges in re-examining aspects of the history of European (or Western) thought is that it is highly diverse, and exhibits any number of tensions, contradictions and ambiguities. These are too often treated in a grossly homogenized fashion and then deployed in a simplistic West/non-West dichotomy or Orientalist/Occidentalist configuration. I therefore take particular issue with the far too commonplace assumption that 'Europe' or 'the West' has produced a rather singular, and usually negative (and therefore self-affirming), set of reactions to 'the other'. And although I am in general agreement with much of Edward Said's critique of Orientalism, the images Said has produced of Europe/the West are highly selective. In revisiting the history of ideas, I therefore offer not so much an alternative reading as a more balanced one.

The importance of a more nuanced approach to cultural politics is further illustrated in Chapter 8 where we consider the phenomenon of Asianism together with certain constructions of cultural traditions vis-à-vis an 'Asian' or 'Confucian' model of democracy which has been posited as a culturally authentic alternative to liberal democracy for certain parts of the Asia-Pacific region. The analysis here illuminates, among other things, the importance of contextualizing the political elements of contextualist arguments themselves as well as the extent to which issues of power and ideology are implicated in culturalist arguments. Although these issues and problems are obviously not confined to any one part of the world, there is a two-fold reason for the empirical focus on the Asia-Pacific region. The first is eminently practical – it happens to be the region with which I am most familiar. It is also the region where normative debates revolving around culture and values has been most

intense in the post-Cold War period. These arguments have by no means been superseded by debates revolving around the 'war on terror' and the contrasts being drawn between constructs such as the 'Arab/Islamic Middle East' on the one hand, and 'the West' on the other. If anything, the discourses and the way in which they are structured share a great deal in common. Furthermore, there is no reason to believe that 'Asianism', especially the stream that has adopted Confucianism as its putative foundation, has run its course. With the continuing rise of China as a major economic, industrial and military power, explanations or conceptions of East Asian development will almost certainly continue to underscore many future debates about cultural exceptionalism and all its corollaries.

More generally, the issues addressed in this study are part of a set of problems revolving around the inside/outside dichotomy. This has not only separated the national from the international in relation to the world 'out there', it has also divided the disciplines whose business it has been to study world politics – comparative politics and international relations – and which are to some extent brought together in this book.

2
World Politics and the Cultural Turn

The 'cultural turn' refers to a diffuse intellectual movement within the humanities and social sciences challenging orthodoxies concerning the possibility of objective, universal knowledge, although it is scarcely the first movement to do so. Its current influence is evident in the extent to which many contemporary studies are described not merely in terms of conventional disciplines such as history, geography, sociology or politics, but *cultural* history, *cultural* geography, *cultural* sociology and *cultural* politics, along with 'cultural' studies and the closely related field of 'cultural theory'. Thus, as Peter Burke has pointed out, scholars who once thought of themselves as literary critics, art historians or historians of science are much more likely to describe themselves as cultural historians working on 'visual culture', the 'science of culture' and so on, while out on the street, 'culture' has become an everyday term used by people to indicate their community or general way of life.[1] In the world of business we find the idea of 'corporate culture' advertising agents use 'culture' to create an allure for products and tour operators to market exotic cultures. And there is scarcely any form of identity politics, from that of the Orange Order in Northern Ireland to the emergent 'deaf culture', that doesn't invoke a cultural basis to advance its claims or to defend its practices. In short, '*everyone* is into culture now'.[2]

This chapter considers the intellectual origins of the cultural turn, its manifestation in constructivist social theory and its significance for the study of world politics. It then examines competing discourses about world politics following the fall of the Berlin Wall, starting with the boost provided by the collapse of the Cold War to various neo-liberal/universalist ideas, which ranged from Francis Fukuyama's vision of the 'end of history' to the renewal of universal human rights discourses and the democracy promotion project. A second set of discourses concerns

culturalist reactions to neo-liberal thinking. Of these, Samuel Huntington's 'clash of civilizations' scenario is certainly the best known, and one from which those sympathetic to the cultural turn may well want to disassociate themselves.

The cultural turn

It is difficult to settle on a definite starting point for the cultural turn, although it is often seen as emanating from an earlier 'linguistic turn' manifest in various philosophical developments in the early twentieth century, followed by the rise of poststructuralism and its spread to history and the social sciences.[3] Hans-Georg Gadamer has been singled out as particularly influential in opening up 'one of the most impressive vistas of the linguistic turn with his modern philosophy of hermeneutics'.[4] Other commentators attribute it almost exclusively to French thinkers, especially as manifest in the work of Althusser, Derrida and Lacan, 'who together made literary scholars and critics rethink the relationship of language to the subject and object worlds'.[5] It has also been suggested that French poststructuralism tended to go its own way and, although building on the thought of Nietzsche and Heidegger, stands accused of largely ignoring parallel developments in German thought.[6]

Despite the apparent novelty of contemporary culturalist approaches, similar ideas were evident in the 1940s when a volume on *The Cultural Approach to History* was produced under the auspices of the American Historical Association.[7] Voicing what culturalist approaches now take more or less for granted, it was noted that 'each age writes and rewrites history in terms of the values, attitudes, and curiosities of that age, and … brings to the task the intellectual tools which are part of its heritage and the product of its creation'.[8] Not that this was an altogether new insight either. Cultural historicism in one form or another itself has a long history and, in the modern period, can be traced at least as far back as Vico's recommendation that scholars take a 'philological turn' in order to discern how all civil institutions are constituted through mythologies.[9]

One study that appeared in the early 1970s perceived not a turn towards culture at that time, but a turn away from it due to the rise of social history and its promise to supply firmer answers about past realities than the culturalists who, in the end, could not transcend the subjectivities within which their work was mired. In historiography, it was said, these divergent approaches seemed to represent the latest phase of the old controversy between historicism and scientific history.

On the one hand, neo-scientific history attempted to lift analytical elements above their context to enable comparisons across time and space. On the other, neo-historicists tried to place their topics in as complete a cultural and temporal context as possible.[10]

In the early 1990s, Richard Bernstein identified diverse currents emanating from both Anglo-American postempiricist philosophy of science as well as continental poststructuralism, but pointed out that there are 'family resemblances' evident in their reaction against dominant tendencies in the history of Western philosophy.

> 'Incommensurability', 'otherness', 'alterity', 'singularity', '*differance*', 'plurality.' These signifiers reverberate throughout much of twentieth-century philosophy. For all their differences, they are signs of a pervasive amorphous mood … It is a mood of deconstruction, destabilization, rupture and fracture – of resistance to all forms of abstract totality, universalism, and rationalism.[11]

Another obvious manifestation of the cultural turn is the interdisciplinary enterprise of cultural studies with its distinctive political perspective on issues of domination, subordination and resistance.[12] This is part of the more general body of thought known as cultural theory, itself a multidisciplinary enterprise with no fixed location in the human sciences. The publication of two important books in Britain in the 1950s – Richard Hoggart's *The Uses of Literacy* and Raymond Williams' *Culture and Society* – have been identified as setting the scene for the emergence of new discourses about cultural theory and laying the groundwork for the subsequent emergence of cultural studies.[13] Some forty years later, the 'culture' in cultural studies had solidified as 'the terrain on which takes place a continual struggle over meaning, in which subordinate groups attempt to resist the imposition of meanings which bear the interests of dominant groups', and it is this struggle that makes culture 'ideological'.[14]

Another interdisciplinary enterprise with a strong interest in culture, but which is attuned more explicitly to world politics and history, is postcolonial theory. Its genealogists usually identify Edward Said's impelling, controversial and highly influential study of 'Orientalism',[15] which denotes the way in which Europeans have conceptualized, exoticized and very often demonized those occupying the vast spaces adjacent to Europe's eastern borders, as providing the critical foundational point of entry into the field.[16] A basic premise is that colonial domination entails not just physical force but, most importantly, the force of ideas

which justify domination and control, and which continue to operate long after the end of formal colonial rule.[17] This is echoed in the work of postcolonial writers such as Ashis Nandy who argues that a second form of colonialism assumes a psychological form such that 'the West is now everywhere, within the West and outside; in structures and in minds'.[18] Said's work, and those of others in the genre, therefore illustrate both historic exemplars and their residues in terms of the power/knowledge nexus theorized by Foucault as a discourse.[19] And, as one commentator argues, Said very clearly expounds the 'ethnocentric, logocentric and exclusionary ontological foundations of Orientalism' which are today replicated in neo-Orientalist texts when Arabs, Islam and Islamists are discussed in relation to such issues as democracy.[20]

It has been argued, however, that because postcolonial theory is constructed as an explicit critique of 'European' or 'Western' knowledge/power, it struggles to liberate itself from the language of 'otherness' and from the disabling oppositions of centre/margin or West/Rest without simply lapsing into the 'feeble consolations' of hybridity and syncretism.[21] But that is not the only problem, for the Orientalist framework, inverted, is readily made Occidentalist – a theme recurring throughout this study. One of postcolonialism's more acerbic critics proposes that postcolonialism, as a form of culturalism, inflates the significance of 'culture' in human affairs while marginalizing the issues that really count in the production of misery, including the unjust consequences of certain trade regimes, militarism and the like. And whereas class struggle is now 'embarrassingly *passé*', the affirmation of cultural identity remains in vogue even while it gives the illusion that the 'ethnically marginalized' occupying the lowest socio-economic strata are actually the victims of culture wars rather than capitalist economic forces.[22] In a similar vein, it has been suggested that the 'failure' of regimes in the Arab world to democratize is better understood in terms of their integration into the world economy rather than through the lens of political culture studies.[23]

Cultural and postcolonial studies are clearly not the only academic manifestation of a cultural turn. Bonnell and Hunt trace the further development of the turn to culture in other subject areas, including history, where the influence of currents emanating from philosophy and anthropology were well established by the 1980s.[24] Among the more influential contributions was Clifford Geertz's *The Interpretation of Cultures* which led the anthropological study of culture from explanation to the interpretation of meaning and 'thick description'. Geertz said that he believed, along with Max Weber, in the idea of 'man' as an 'animal

suspended in webs of significance he has spun for himself' and that culture consists in those webs, the analysis of which is therefore 'not an experimental science in search of a law but an interpretive one in search of meaning'.[25]

Published in the same year as *The Interpretation of Cultures*, Hayden White's *Metahistory* depicted all exercises in historiography as a 'poetic act' of construction by the author, regardless of research focus or methodology.[26] More than twenty-five years later, White summarized his general approach to the production of knowledge. Noting first that he is content to leave the question of whether the physical sciences are context-specific or socially determined to the social study of science to work out, White goes on to say that he has no doubt that the social sciences are contextually determined and that since they are 'involved directly in the social and political issues at play in the time and place of their practice', every perspective on society 'is shot through with ideology'. But White claims that this is how it should be, for 'any science of society should be launched in the service of some conception of social justice, equity, freedom and progress – that is to say, some idea of what a good society might be'.[27] White's reference to ideology connects his approach directly to some of the central concerns of cultural studies mentioned above. But ideology (like culture) is a slippery term and there is much ambiguity surrounding its application. We return to the issue of ideology and some of its implications for culture and contextualism in the next chapter.

Constructivist social theory

One version of the cultural turn is found in constructivism, a form of social theory which itself has different disciplinary manifestations. It has therefore been described as a metatheory with a number of distinctive strands. What these strands have in common, however, is an emphasis on 'the generative, organizational, and selective nature of human perception, understanding and memory – the theoretical "building" metaphor guiding thought and inquiries'. Thus the phenomenon of interest (meaning or knowledge) is seen as actively built instead of passively received by people as constructive agents 'whose *ways* of knowing, seeing, understanding and valuing influence what is seen, known, understood and valued'.[28] Constructivism as a form of social theory applied to the study of world politics seeks a wider focus to take account not simply of material forces, but also of ideas, values and interests and the way these shape realities. Thus one proponent of constructivism

says that it does not draw a sharp distinction between material and social realities – they in fact 'contaminate each other'. But they do so variably. Thus constructivism 'does not grant sovereignty to either the material or the social by defining the other out of existence' and it does not deny the independent 'natural' reality of individuals as 'materially situated biological beings'.[29]

Studies of constructivist theorizing in world politics show that debates in IR and in comparative politics tend to diverge, partly because of their different levels of analysis and partly because they have not been as concerned about debating methods or testing particular theoretical models. There is also a suspicion among comparativists about the influence of international ideational and normative factors on domestic politics. However, 'culture' and ideational factors generally, as manifest in particular countries and regions, have always been present in comparative politics in contrast with the dominant paradigms of IR in the 1970s and 1980s, at least as studied in the United States.[30] Constructivism in IR itself has several different strands, but they share an emphasis on the importance of ideational factors alongside material capabilities. According to a recent study, constructivism has emerged as 'a set of assumptions about how to study world politics' rather than a 'set of assumptions about how politics work'.[31] One of its major proponents proposes that constructivism gives rise to a structural theory of international politics making three core claims: first, that states are the main actors in the international system; second, that the structures in the system of states are intersubjective (or ideational) rather than material; and third, that state identities and interests are largely constructed ideationally 'rather than being determined exogenously to the system by human nature or domestic politics'.[32] This means, for example, that sovereignty has become an attribute of statehood by virtue of its discursive construction rather than through material factors – a discourse which has been highly successful in promoting the state as the sole authoritative political agent in the international sphere.[33] This can be seen as privileging the ideational (often understood as cultural) over the material elements to some extent because objects need to be invested with meaning before they assume relevance, and meanings are socially (or culturally) constructed: 'A gun in the hands of a friend is a different thing from one in the hands of an enemy, and enmity is a social, not material, relation.'[34] One could argue the case with respect to 'friendly fire', but the general point is a reasonable one.

Constructivism has recently been applied as an approach in security studies in order to discern the effects of culture and identity on national

security. Here, it is argued, definitions of identity that distinguish between self and other, and which imply definitions of threat and interest, have significant effects on national security policies.[35] It has been suggested, however, that what is heralded as new in constructivist approaches, including the 'return' of culture, has for a long time been central to the English School of IR. On methodology, for example, the British Committee's discussions evinced a marked opposition to positivism, rejecting claims to value-free enquiry and asserting the superiority of interpretive understandings of world politics which reveal the contingency of decision-making, the often irreconcilable meanings given to events by different actors, and the impact of cultural factors on diplomatic and political practice.[36] More generally, a key feature of constructivist theorizing in the study of world politics in the post-Cold War period has been the idea that states possess 'identities'. This conceptualization of state identity seems to represent a reformulation of the older concept of political culture which, for comparative political scientists, sought to identify the underlying norms of national societies which produced specific orientations to political phenomena. In turn, the idea of political culture was a successor to that of 'national character', a notion saturated with assumptions about ideational constructs and which remained prominent in the study of world politics up until at least the end of the Second World War. Some of the problems associated with this are dealt with at greater length in Chapter 7.

Culture is also a prominent theme in an eclectic body of writing in world politics inflected by post modern or post-structural influences and which draws heavily on the works of late twentieth-century French philosophy as represented by Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Jacques Lacan and Julia Kristeva, among others.[37] While the style of constructivism outlined above is not especially radical in its assumptions or implications, postmodern approaches are much more so. These express a profound dissatisfaction with the 'intellectual suppositions on which Western rationalism and positivism are based [which] turn out to be the suppositions that found modern science and its adoring foster child, the social sciences'.[38] But while postpositivism tends to reject universals and any kind of Archimedean vantage point from which to grasp invariable Truths about the state of the world and the human condition, there are nonetheless 'moments of clarity' when one may grasp important insights. It may also be possible for some to climb high enough above the action to at least secure a bird's eye, rather than a God's eye, view of a field like international history. Thus one student of world politics, drawing on Foucault, says that in surveying this field from a distant

genealogical standpoint:

> What catches the eye is motion, discontinuities, clashes, and the ceaseless play of plural forces and plural interpretations on the surface of human experience. Nothing is finally stable. There are no constants, no fixed meanings, no secure grounds, no profound secrets, no final structures or limits of history. Seen from afar there is only interpretation and interpretation itself is comprehended as a practice of domination occurring on the surface of history.[39]

But these do not exhaust the forms of constructivism in IR theory. Andrew Linklater points out that Marxian-inspired critical social theory 'invites observers to reflect upon the social construction and effects of knowledge' and to consider how claims about neutrality, especially in positivist epistemology and method, work to 'conceal the role knowledge plays in reproducing unsatisfactory social relations'. Where this form of critical theory departs from many postmodernists is its normative commitment to a project of enlightenment and emancipation, albeit one that is re-worked to avoid the pitfalls of idealism. In accordance with its normative commitments, critical theory stands opposed to empirical claims about the social world that assume that existing qualities are immutable, and it does so because these structures support inequalities of power and wealth.[40] In this way, it also stands opposed to 'immutability theses' that take as given the nature of the world as we find it – complete with its hierarchies and privileges. Rather, critical theory asserts the ability of humans to make their own history and, in principle, to make it differently from what others may believe inevitable.[41] This suggests (although it is not made explicit) that 'culture' is subject to the same dynamics. Recognition that something is changeable and not given by nature, however, does not necessarily make change easy, especially for those subject to, rather than in control of, the levers of power.

The emphasis in critical social theory on the ability of agents to make, or re-make, history is reflected in the more general constructivist contention that agents and structures are mutually constituted: 'Normative and ideational structures may well condition the identities and interests of actors, but those structures would not exist if it were not for the knowledgeable practices of those actors.'[42] This reflects the central argument of structuration theory developed by Anthony Giddens which dismisses any opposition between human agency and social structure and highlights instead their mutual dependence.[43] This has implications

for how 'culture' is viewed as a structure within which members of a cultural community are formed and from which they gain their values, beliefs and identities. As we have seen, the view of 'culture' as a signifying system through which a social order is communicated, reproduced and experienced can take either a weaker, dialectical form which suggests that as human beings create culture, so culture creates them; or a much stronger form (influenced by both structuralism and poststructuralism) where culture is *the* determinant of subjectivity.[44]

Contextualism, which incorporates elements of constructivism, represents another version of the cultural turn. This is discussed in detail in the next chapter. Here we should note that contextualism generally counsels against attempts to seek the grail of objective reality 'out there'. We are referred instead to the 'context' within which conversations and events occur or within which texts are produced. The context includes the presuppositions, expectations and intentions that actors bring to it and, more broadly, the conventions that apply to behaviour and the communication of meaning in any given situation. 'Culture' may be understood as a shorthand term for the combination of these contextual attributes, and so the term 'cultural context' is often used. More generally, the context is understood to shape epistemic standards, which suggests in turn that such standards vary from one context to another. It follows that what counts as 'knowledge' is context-dependent and formed through intersubjective understandings – that is, it is socially constructed within particular contexts. Although there is no escape from the contexts in which we are embedded into a realm of objective knowledge unsullied by interests, prejudices and values, neither contextualism nor social constructivism, properly understood, necessarily preclude a degree of intersubjectivity which permits some epistemic flexibility as well as the linking of different subjectivities beyond the immediate cultural context.

The concept of culture has not been ignored entirely in objectivist or materialist approaches, but it has usually been treated as ultimately determined by other, material or non-cultural factors. In addition, such approaches have, by extension, tended to project 'a homogeneous form of human subjectivity across time and place'.[45] However, I argue that critiques of objectivist approaches which substitute specific cultural contexts for universals may turn out to be simply using another method of objectification, for 'the context' can itself become objectified in this process and come to perform the task of producing and containing 'concrete realities' which, in the end, simply provide another kind of 'foundation'.

These theoretical debates sometimes seem far removed from the 'real' world of politics, but their importance for practice as well as for conceptualizing problems cannot be underestimated. Changes in assumptions, theories, ideas and frameworks are also prompted by significant historical moments, and so we examine next the impact of the end of the Cold War.

After the Cold War

Between 1989 and 1991, three defining events appeared to herald a new world order – the fall of the Berlin Wall, the unravelling of the Soviet Union and a successful exercise in collective security by the United Nations against Iraq in the first Gulf War. The collapse of bi-polarity was generally taken to be the single most important condition for the third event, that is, for securing a world order in which international cooperation against 'rogue nations' became possible. These developments underpinned the aspirations of liberal internationalism – a form of idealism developed on the basis of Kantian universalism. The 'liberal rights order' that emerged after 1989–91 has been defined as embodying: 'a concern with the beneficial effects of democracy, and a programme for encouraging its extension; a greater international interest in human rights; and a rhetorical, if not always practical, commitment to self-determination.'[46] This was accompanied by a shift in liberal thinking about the possibilities for 'community beyond the state' and the democratization of the global order.[47] Other studies of an emergent international liberal order regard it as an essentially Western phenomenon underpinned by a 'distinctive Western civic identity and community'.[48]

There were a number of variations on the liberal theme, including Francis Fukuyama's 'end of history' thesis which saw the impending disintegration of the Soviet Union as marking the end of all serious ideological challenges to the principles of capitalism and liberal democracy.[49] Fukuyama's major thesis embodied a theme of liberal triumphalism that became inextricably associated with proclamations of a US-led new world order marked by a foreign policy project of promoting democracy among people who did not as yet enjoy its benefits. One commentator suggests that virtually all US foreign policy is underpinned by a notion that 'America has a unique mission, even divine destiny, to propagate the values of "freedom and democracy" throughout the world', predisposing its political leaders to assume moral leadership in world affairs and to render foreign policy decisions in a rhetoric laden with these values – even though actual practice lacks their substance.[50]

Certain communitarian approaches have been formulated directly in response to the democracy promotion project. A major criticism is that because liberal democratic ideals and institutions enjoy almost universal support in Western societies, a phenomenon which itself must be understood in terms of a shared culture and history, it does not follow that liberal democratic forms will meet the deeper aspirations of people elsewhere whose historical and cultural experiences may be quite different.[51] Another critic sees a 'newfound mission' in the West to use a US-inspired form of liberal democracy in a kind of 'international merit test', with 'democracy hardliners' pressing for its world-wide adoption.[52] In the Middle East, there have been widely varying responses to programmes promoting democracy, but at least one powerful cohort has invoked the idea of 'foreign agents' from the West, and traitors within the region, launching a 'cultural attack' on the Arab–Islamic world.[53]

Strategic justification for democracy promotion has been provided partly by the 'democratic peace' thesis which is based on the premise that democracies do not wage war on each other, although are generally no less prone to warfare (with non-democracies) than other regime types. With the establishment of more democracies, the larger the zone of democratic peace becomes, while zones of conflict obviously contract proportionally. A leading proponent of the theory, echoing Fukuyama, argued that the end of Cold War ideological conflict represented 'a surrender to the force of western values of economic and especially political freedom'.[54] But more recently the same author has said that using the democratic peace proposition as a post-hoc justification for the invasion of Iraq, and the model of 'fight them, beat them, and make them democratic', is a perversion of the original thesis.[55]

Yet another aspect of liberal thought to receive a boost in the post-Cold War period concerns human rights, the inalienability of their character and the universality of their application. These broad principles, enshrined in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights in 1948, were re-affirmed in the early post-Cold War period by the World Human Rights Conference in Vienna in 1993 although statements by many official representatives from Africa, the Middle East and the Asia-Pacific expressed dissatisfaction with a 'Western' notion of human rights and insisted on the continuing importance of local (national) cultural factors in the application of general principles. Picking up on the culturalist theme, human rights scholars suggested that the end of the Cold War had in fact been responsible for reviving a long-dormant debate over universalism versus relativism and how culture was implicated in the interpretation of such rights. This was a departure from the dominant

Cold War models of human rights and democracy. Although opposed on left/right ideological grounds, both sides posited universalist models which were assumed to be more or less culturally neutral in the sense that any society could construct a viable political system around them. Now, however, communitarian discourses almost always portray (liberal) democracy as attached very firmly to a specific cultural base (generally labelled 'Western'), and this has provided the foundation for communitarian arguments concerning democracy and the nature of political community and identity.[56]

A further manifestation of liberal thinking that received an enormous boost after the Cold War was the globalization thesis. Much of its emphasis was on economic issues, but no area of human activity was immune from the globalist embrace: politics, society and culture – all were transcending local spaces and becoming enmeshed in a world-wide web of significance. A paramount theme was the challenge to sovereignty and the territorial state. This had considerable implications for both democracy and nationalism and the conceptualization of culture as the bedrock on which they were based.

But liberal theories did not have the field to themselves. A variety of non-liberal or anti-liberal ideas, theories and movements also attracted much support. Foremost were discourses endorsing recognition of local particularities. Thus liberal triumphalism has been matched by an equally robust anti-liberalism encompassing, among other things, the turn to culture in world politics.

Culture and the study of world politics

The best-known rejoinder to the broad liberal agenda sketched above was Samuel Huntington's 'Clash of Civilizations' essay.[57] Huntington had already responded directly to Fukuyama's thesis in an earlier essay on the 'errors of endism' which focused on the emergence of ethnonationalism in the former Soviet empire and the warning it held for the future: 'If any one trend is operative in the world today it is for societies to turn back towards their traditional culture, values, and patterns of behaviour.'[58] And if the message for Americans of Fukuyama's endism is 'we've won!', said Huntington, this only stimulated an ill-founded illusion of well-being with some potentially dangerous consequences.[59] It was erroneous to leap from the apparent end of communism's appeal as an ideology to embrace the triumph of liberalism and the disappearance of ideology in world affairs, and from there to a new global era of peace and security.[60] The principal message of the subsequent 'Clash' essay

was much more wide-ranging and dramatic in its identification of the sources of future large-scale conflict. Culture, he claimed, was the concept around which conflictual forces in world politics would form and oppose each other. His specific civilizational categories were Western, Confucian, Islamic, Japanese, Hindu, Slavic-Orthodox, Latin American and possibly African. Despite the potential for conflict to develop along any of the 'fault-lines' created by cultural/civilizational difference, two great mega categories were likely to form: the West versus the Rest, although Islam was singled as having particularly 'bloody borders'. Thus, following the attacks on landmark targets in the United States on 11 September 2001 ('9/11') the scene was set for an overarching explanation that pitted one major civilizational group against the other: 'Islamic civilization' versus 'Western civilization'. Many writers have of course pointed to the dangers of accepting the premises on which these ways of thinking are based, and urged attention to other factors: 'The causes which drive alienated forces into the arms of a terrorist such as Bin Laden are strongly political in character, and emanate from specific historical circumstances rather than from a broad "civilizational" identity.'[61] This shifts the notion of context as such from a cultural understanding to a political/historical one.

Here we should note that although the current 'Islam versus the West' scenario is a variation on the Orientalist theme, it is not simply promoted by Western politicians, academics, journalists or other commentators who have bought into this method of simplifying the world. Osama bin Laden and his supporters, bent on the prosecution of a Muslim holy war against the United States and its allies, have probably pushed hardest to frame the conflict in civilizational terms.[62] This is consistent with some strands of Islamic fundamentalism that posit an enmity between the 'world of Islam and 'the West', and speaks directly to the supposed incompatibility of rival cultural conceptions of knowledge and the moral superiority and universal applicability of Islamic knowledge.[63]

We have observed already that the flurry of culturalist discourses in the post-Cold War world may suggest that studies in world politics had little connection with the culture concept until recently. Other political scientists, however, had for a long time drawn on insights about culture supplied by anthropologists. This forms the subject matter of Chapter 7, but we may note here that there were earlier 'turns' to culture that did not always result in very nuanced analyses, as various stereotypical studies in 'national character' up until the 1940s and 1950s demonstrated. These focused on 'relatively enduring personality characteristics and patterns … modal among the adult members of society' and sought to

produce 'reliable and valid applications across national lines'.[64] 'National character' was succeeded by 'political culture' which went on to achieve prominence in comparative politics. By the mid-1970s, one comparativist suggested that if culture had previously been the poor relation of other explanations for the behaviour of states, its time had now come.[65] Some of these influences have carried over into contemporary constructivist scholarship: '… cultural environments affect not only the incentives for different kinds of state behaviour but also the basic *character* of states – what we call "state identity" '.[66] Elsewhere culture itself is understood in conventional sociological terms as referring to both evaluative and cognitive standards encompassing norms, values and rules, and as 'a broad label denoting collective models of nation-state authority or identity, represented in custom and law' while country-specific models of (and discourses about) national identity, political organization are referred to in terms of 'domestic cultures'.[67]

In the post-Cold War period, some constructivists, along with critical and postmodern scholars, have often given the impression that IR (if not comparative politics) seriously neglected the role of culture and ideas, especially in the Cold War period. While this may be true of mainstream US approaches in the later Cold War period, and especially neo- or structural realism – it is not true of all schools of thought in IR. As we have seen, the English School devoted considerable attention to the concept.[68] Others made it the key focus of special projects,[69] while some international histories dealt explicitly with the interconnections of culture and politics.[70] And classical realism readily incorporated non-material factors too. Hans J. Morgenthau had focused not simply on cold calculations of national interest, the projection of power and the threat of force, but also attended to intangibles such as 'national character'.[71] In the same period, T.S. Eliot noted the emphasis placed on the importance of culture in world political affairs: 'We not only hear, from high political quarters, that "cultural relations" between nations are of great importance, but that bureaux are founded, and officials appointed, for the express purpose of attending to these relations, which are presumed to foster international amity.'[72] And there were disciplinary and interdisciplinary overlaps, as reflected in Daniel Lerner and Harold Lasswell's *The Policy Sciences* which included contributions from all fields in political studies as well as from psychology, sociology and anthropology – the latter field represented by some of the most prominent names in the profession at the time, Margaret Mead and Clyde Kluckhorn.[73]

The most significant swing away from anything to do with cultural factors in the study of IR came with the rise of structural realism which

dominated the last 20 years or so of the Cold War era.[74] Kenneth Waltz's 'three images' of politics – the individual, sovereign states and the international system – translated directly into three levels of political analysis, neatly bracketing off a range of concerns for the student of IR. The first image explained warfare in terms of human nature and behaviour – selfishness, greed, stupidity and misdirected aggression, while in the second, attention is directed to the internal organization of states. Only the third image, external to individual states and their domestic concerns, and in which the condition of anarchy defined the structure of the international system of states and its dynamics, was considered relevant to IR conceived as a refined, streamlined discipline.[75]

Richard Falk argues that (neo-)realism could only assimilate cultural influences in a limited way. Different cultural legacies, for example, were seen as relevant only to the efficacy of political actors, or as influencing the contours of government and leadership.[76] R.B.J. Walker argues that realist theory effectively translated questions about culture into questions about state sovereignty. Culture then 'becomes nothing more than an affirmation of the fundamental assumptions of the theory of international relations as these have emerged since the early modern period'.[77] Others saw rationalism more generally as deficient in the treatment of culture. Peter Katzenstein, for example, has said that while realists have normally seen culture and identity as derivative of the distribution of capabilities with no independent explanatory power, rationalists see actors as deploying culture and identity strategically, like any other resource, as a means of promoting their own self-interest.[78] Beate Jahn takes a different approach to the critique of mainstream IR, arguing that implicit in all varieties of realism and liberalism is an approach to culture – or more especially cultural diversity – which sees it as a problem while 'nature', on the other hand, is a universal through which solutions may be found.[79]

Another explanation for the neglect of culture is that the predominance of positivism in IR scholarship favoured the study of observable, measurable data rather than the messier, subjective and therefore difficult to quantify issues involved in culture and identity.[80] But what kept 'culture' out of the realm of the international in the highly influential school of structural realism was the construction of the discipline of international relations itself in the 'third image'. By confining it to the domestic sphere, the role of culture was left for comparative political scientists to work out, and not for the students of international anarchy operating with the 'third image'.

The turn to culture in IR picked up momentum in the early post-Cold War period partly because the dominant Cold War theories appeared to

have been neither adequate in anticipating the sea-changes in world politics, nor up to the task of elucidating the contours of the emerging world order. A common argument was that structural realism had typically allowed no space for the influence of ideas themselves, especially ideological beliefs or what are now more commonly called 'ideational factors'. One commentator suggests that the essential structure of world politics should be seen as determined not so much by the distribution of military and other formal capabilities but by ideas. Accordingly, the Cold War was structured around certain expansionary notions entertained by communist leaders 'that worldwide capitalism ought to be overthrown'. When Communist leaders changed their minds, the structure of world politics also changed in a very profound way – something which structural realism could not have anticipated.[81]

The end of the Cold War also saw a call for more interdisciplinary work and a weakening of the division between international relations and comparative politics. Such calls had previously been made by scholars such as James Rosenau who has consistently deplored the entrenched habits of thought sustaining the rigidity of the national–international distinction.[82] Katzenstein further suggests that the collapse of bi-polarity has seen the world forming into regions, bringing with it a new kind of area studies connecting the research agendas of comparative politics and IR more closely.[83] The trend in embracing issues of both culture and identity cut across familiar disciplinary divisions and included 'both mainstream orthodoxies and newly established critical voices'.[84] Insights from other disciplines were also harnessed to new approaches to foreign policy studies which seemed in need of interfacing with studies of culture if issues like nationalism and identity politics in the post-Cold War period were to be understood.[85] More than a decade on from the events of 1989–91, intellectual developments have 'poked great holes' in the boundary dividing the subfields of comparative politics and international relations leading to exchanges of ideas and away from 'excessive parsimony in both views'.[86]

The most extensive catalogue of issues in world politics considered susceptible to cultural analysis, and which emphasized the extent to which the new post-Cold War agenda reached out to other disciplines and sub-disciplines, was set out as follows:[87]

1. At a meta-theoretical level, cultural analyses may be made of existing Euro-centric IR theories and their implicit assumptions and biases and can assist in refining – or redefining – viable methodological approaches to the study of IR.

2. At the level of theory lie questions of identity and self/other distinctions. Although these clearly underscore the 'nation-states' that constitute the international system of states, they have rarely been raised in IR. Nor has adequate attention been paid to self/other ideological images.[88]
3. At the level of practice, cultural sensitivities are of prime importance in international negotiations over issues including economic, security and environmental concerns, as well as the efficacy of the United Nations in carrying out peacekeeping operations.[89]
4. Cultural approaches can help bridge the gap between IR and comparative politics (thereby enriching both) by illuminating the effect of cultural attributes at the national level on the conduct of world politics.
5. Finally, a clearer focus on culture can alert us to the influence of non-Western systems of thought on the international system, as exemplified in the Asia-Pacific region. The growing political, economic, and military power of countries such as China, Japan and the newly industrializing countries (NICs) has led to a much stronger voicing of their perspectives. For countries like the United States, this has had an important impact on foreign policy stances in relation to aid, trade, human rights diplomacy and security regimes.

The main message was that the 'lens of culture', properly focused, promised to foster more nuanced approaches to important issues previously distorted by narrow ethnocentric perspectives. Similarly, it was argued that the reflexive turning of the cultural lens onto one's own intellectual milieu would show the inherent subjectivity of the most basic assumptions of realism or neo-realism insofar as they were 'limited to a specific historical and cultural realm'.[90] The period following the end of the Cold War has seen a burgeoning of studies heeding these calls, thereby contributing to a genuine opening up of studies in world politics to a range of new insights revolving around issues of community and identity.[91] And it has not been an entirely one-way flow. A number of anthropologists have taken the 'international turn', producing analyses that push the traditional concerns of their discipline well beyond the sphere of the highly localized community.[92]

But others took a more sceptical attitude. One critic argued that 'culture' was a fad sweeping the literature on IR, security studies and international economics, and that although most could grasp the rather mundane point that culture is certainly a factor, the idea that it is the principle engine driving world affairs does not stand up to scrutiny. Rather, the major challenges facing the world community were rooted in the

vast disparities in wealth and resources.[93] Similar concerns were raised in relation to 'strategic culture', a notion developed to critique the 'ahistorical, non-culturalist neorealist framework for analyzing strategic choices'.[94] But as one commentator warns, it is not always clear what strategic culture can explain and how it is supposed to explain it. There are also dangers in poorly conceptualized strategic culture approaches which can simply reinforce stereotypes about the strategic predispositions of states.[95]

There is always a danger of falling victim to the power of our own constructions, and of turning our own subjective images into stereotypes about others. But this is something that people do not just in relation to 'others'; they just as readily create stereotypes about themselves and members of their 'own' communities. And although at least some endorsing the cultural turn would argue that the whole point of drawing attention to cultural factors is to avoid such errors, I suggest that the culture concept in fact lends itself only too readily to stereotypical imaginings, making it all the more important that it be invoked with great care. I further suggest that the concept of culture with which many scholars of world politics have been working has been adopted directly, and often rather uncritically, from anthropological modes of thought. Jahn argues, for example, that since there is no satisfactory definition of culture in IR it makes sense to look to the discipline which concerns itself professionally with culture, namely cultural anthropology, and she finds in Clifford Geertz's symbolic anthropology a satisfactory account of the concept to underpin her own study.[96] Geertz's conception may seem far removed from the nascent evolutionary conceptions of culture produced by nineteenth-century anthropologists in the course of empire building and excoriated by authors such as Hardt and Negri from the vantage point of more than a century later,[97] but contemporary anthropological conceptualizations of culture, including Geertz's, are scarcely free of their own problems, a subject we revisit in due course.

Conclusion

Ideas about culture in the study of world politics, evident in a range of constructivist, critical, postcolonial and postmodern accounts, serve as important correctives to theories assuming the timeless character of any given political community, the particular form that it takes, and the norms and values that underpin it. Cultural approaches have also drawn attention to serious blind spots in mainstream theories in their search for constants which hold across both time and space. Constructivism

has been especially useful in focusing attention on contingent factors and the role of ideational forces which are at least as crucial in the 'real' world of politics as material ones. My concern, however, is that the culture concept itself is often used too uncritically and simplistically. Furthermore, critiques of objectivist approaches which substitute specific cultural contexts in place of universals may turn out to be simply using another method of objectification, for 'the context', whether understood in historical and/or cultural terms, can itself become objectified in this process and come to perform the task of producing and containing concrete realities. This means that like 'culture', the concept of context itself can scarcely be taken for granted, as the next chapter shows.

3
Context and Contextualism

The language of contextualism, emphasizing specificity, particularity and contingency, abounds in the language of non-traditional approaches to world politics, from postmodernism to constructivism.[1] Yet rarely are contextualist notions examined critically or systematically for all their implications. This chapter provides an account of contextualist ideas, initially with reference to issues of methodology and normative theory, and identifies certain tensions between historicist and culturalist versions. The discussion raises the problem of identifying exactly what it is that ought to be contextualized in any given exercise, as well as how one context is delineated from others. These issues are illustrated further by reference to communitarianism, multiculturalism and the politics of recognition and/or difference on the one hand, and cosmopolitan responses on the other. The critique of various contextualist ideas set out here by no means implies that considerations of context are unimportant. What is important is how they are used, especially in relation to the culture concept. A further purpose of this chapter is to draw attention to ideology and the way in which meaning, understood as allied to specific cultural contexts, serves relations of domination. I shall argue that far from providing an antidote to domination, certain key aspects of the turn to culture actually reinforce it. The culprit here is a version of contextualism where 'culture' is taken as synonymous with 'context'. This is especially important for how we think about the politics *of* culture and its implications for some of the other themes of this study.

The idea of contextualism

In one of the few studies devoted specifically to the topic, 'context' is defined simply as 'that which environs the object of our interest and

helps by its relevance to explain it'. The 'environing' itself may take various forms: temporal, geographical, cognitive, emotional and so on. There are also various synonyms for context: environment, milieu, setting and background, each of which carries its own connotations and associations.[2] Contextualism is therefore 'the study of the way in which contexts explain, or is the view that explanation is impossible or seriously incomplete unless context is taken into account'. It follows that the meaning of contextualism is at least partly subsumed under the broader meaning of relativism. The latter is broader by virtue of the fact that the notion of an environment is not necessary to it, because objects, ideas, beliefs and so on can simply be relative to each other independently of any particular environment. Both relativism and the more specific notion of contextualism also differ from scepticism, for whereas the former ideas hold to the existence of relative truths, the latter denies the possibility of any certain knowledge.[3] Although awareness of context is manifest in many practical ways, there is no actual theory of context – 'no rules for it, and no clear idea of what limits it may have'.[4]

Notions of context have been influential in certain areas of study since at least the 1960s, especially philosophy and theology. Gadamer's study of hermeneutics (including analysis of other important contributors to the field – Hegel, Fichte, Kant, Schleiermacher and Dilthey among others) pinpointed certain issues concerning context and interpretation. Gadamer notes Dilthey's contribution to reforming the older interpretive principle of understanding the parts of a text – which in earlier periods meant the Bible – in terms of the whole text, and extending 'the whole' to the 'totality of the historical reality to which the individual historical document belonged'. This leads us to grasp the 'historical context in which the individual objects … of historical research appear in their true relative meaning is itself a whole, in terms of which every individual thing is to be understood in its full significance, and which in turn is to be fully understood in terms of these individual things'.[5]

Contextualism has also had close associations with anthropology since at least the early twentieth century: 'Ever since Malinowski, anthropologists have chanted the mantra of "placing social and cultural phenomena in context", an analytical strategy adopted to throw light on, and indeed make some sort of authentic sense of, ethnographic material.'[6] Another commentator identifies Franz Boas and his students as most deeply engaged in anthropological contextualism and relativism.[7] More recently, contextualism has been prominent in symbolical modes of anthropology, especially in the interpretive anthropology of Clifford Geertz who drew explicitly on hermeneutic ideas as well as on the

Parsonian formulation of culture as a system of meanings to be understood in its own terms. But although the hermeneutics of Dilthey proposed a framework for dealing with history, symbolic anthropology tended towards rarefied abstractions which became increasingly distanced from considerations of history as well as the possibilities of change, problems only partially overcome in the work of Pierre Bourdieu.[8]

Few studies have applied specific ideas about context to the study of world politics. One exception is Gary Goertz's which starts by noting the general contextualist argument that 'human action is not understandable ripped out of its sociological, cultural and historical nexus of reference', and contrasts this with the behavioural and positivist modes of social science enquiry that have 'sought laws of behaviour and generalizations independent of cultural and historical accident'. The concern to locate human action 'in context' is almost identical to that of communitarian theorists. Goertz goes on to suggest that just as a theory of pragmatics is required to understand the meaning of words, so a theory of context is required for the understanding of international relations.[9] Three 'modes' of context are set out: context as cause, context as barrier, and context as changing meaning, and three substantive contexts that actually influence state behaviour are posited: the structure of the international system, the historical context of behaviour in world politics, and the normative environment in which states exist. Despite the implied critique of behaviouralism and positivism, however, this study is very much caught up in their language and methods, including the deployment of regression analysis and the construction of mechanistic models, typologies and algebraic formulae. Most importantly, Goertz fails to consider the issue of culture *as* context. Indeed, the culture concept is notable for its absence. He does, however, highlight the central problem of behavioural social science, and that is the need to produce indicators that satisfy two often contradictory conditions: local validity and universal relevance,[10] a problem that extends to virtually all methodological approaches in the human sciences.

Another recent study of culture and international relations by Julie Reeves also considers the idea of context, but principally in terms of its methodological application in locating – or relocating – texts in the settings in which they were originally produced. This refers to the idea that the contemporary use of the term 'culture' to refer to specific groups of people and their different ways of life, would not necessarily be comprehensible to our predecessors in the early twentieth century.[11] This follows an influential school of thought in methodological contextualism which, although producing some worthwhile insights, also

raises a number of problems, as discussed below. A recent study of cultural theory by Alan Swingewood takes culture as a realm of meaning, values and symbols located within 'specific structural contexts', although we are warned that 'as culture is produced within contexts it must never be reduced to context'.[12] This begs the question as to what constitutes 'specific structural contexts'. A partial answer resides in the claim that 'all societies are structured in hierarchical relations and unequal access to different forms of culture and power'. But this leads to such questions as 'who produces culture', and 'what kind of culture'?[13] Swingewood's study also articulates a common assumption, that is, that the culture of the present is 'fashioned through historical processes'.[14] This raises the issue of historic continuity, the relationship between past and present, and how this relates to culture-as-context.

Historical and cultural contextualism

Contextualism as a method for the practice of historiography requires the researcher to place the ideas under investigation in the context of their own particular temporal setting, and to proceed without assuming any conceptual continuities over time.[15] The method therefore requires the 'recovery' of the context within which past events occurred and/or historical documents or texts were produced. A number of prominent historians and political theorists have been associated with this approach. J.G.A. Pocock, in an early piece, adopted a moderate contextualism, but warned against the assumption that once we have found 'the intention with which a particular piece of thought was constructed, we have adequately explained it'.[16] Pocock notes that societies possess concepts with which to discuss their political affairs, and that vocabularies develop in the context of particular social and political processes. But these may become used outside of their original contexts and new ideas and theories may be devised to defend their use in new settings. As the process continues, a society's political thought is built up through the adoption and adaptation 'of technical vocabularies from different aspects of its social and cultural traditions'.[17] If any given society's cultural practices are treated as an undifferentiated whole, however, then the notion of context may be spread far too thinly. The same applies to 'civilizations'. Pocock does do this at times, writing for instance that: 'Western political thought has been conducted largely in the vocabulary of law, Confucian Chinese in that of ritual.'[18] This is reminiscent of Montesquieu's remark that the Chinese were inculcated from the start with a set of precepts concerning religion, laws, manners and customs

such that their rites became engraved on their hearts and minds.[19] Such claims tend to stereotype and dichotomize 'Western' and 'Confucian' thought as diametrically opposed categories.

Another important figure among contextualist historical methodologists is Quentin Skinner who has condemned the failure of many historians to pay serious attention to the context within which the historical texts they studied were actually written. Not only did the neglect of context allow the creation of simplistic caricatures of past thinkers, it also permitted those writing about them in the present to adopt certain moralistic postures towards such thinkers, and their alleged shortcomings, based on contemporary standards rather than those of the period in which the texts were actually produced. By seeking to recover the context within which historical texts were written, Skinner argued that one could locate the key to the meaning and intentions of the author without clouding the picture with one's own prejudices.[20]

Criticisms of historical contextualism have touched on many difficulties with the method. One is that the idea that we place things in context in order to understand them is a simple truism – everything has a context and no text or event is ever apprehended in total isolation from some kind of context, historical or otherwise. Another is that methodological contextualism, taken to its logical conclusion, is impossible as a procedure since there exists an infinite regress of contexts which can never be fully identified let alone recovered: 'Contexts, once formulated, become subject to the same process, that is they themselves become texts and will in turn be placed "in context." '[21] A hard and fast methodological contextualism may also end up privileging the context over the text itself.[22]

Although methodological contextualists may not want to be called relativists, the relativist label has nonetheless been attached to their enterprise. Skinner has responded by arguing that although he has relativized the notion of 'holding true a given belief', he has never claimed that there was nothing more to truth than acceptability and that unlike a conceptual relativist, he is not trying to offer a definition of truth at all.[23] But if meaning is relative to context, which is what contextualism establishes as a methodological rule, it is hard to escape the inference that contextualism is relativism by another name. The relationship of contextualism to historicism is certainly a close one. If one endorses the uniqueness of historical moments, a move which clearly implies the impossibility of judging past thoughts and deeds from the normative standpoint of the present, the relativist implications are clear.[24] In many anthropological analyses, contextualism is certainly treated as a synonym

for relativism and contrasted with the opposing conceptual pole of universalism. Indeed, it has been suggested that contextualism *qua* relativism and its conceptual target, universalism, are in some ways mutually necessary and dependent.[25] This illustrates the almost inescapable tendency in the human sciences, observed earlier, to analyse the world through dichotomies, polarities, oppositions or dualisms.

At least one purpose of a contextualist approach in the history of ideas is to provide an antidote to the crimes of anachronism. In summary these are: falsely assuming a continuity with the past; projecting one's own values back into the past in order to pass moral judgement on historical figures, movements, ideas or beliefs; or interpreting the past inappropriately for the purpose of legitimating something in the present. Contextualism is also concerned to denounce universalism in historiography, especially the belief that there are eternal debates over perennial issues or that there are timeless truths. As with the subjectivist approach characterizing the broader cultural turn, a contextualist approach emphasizes, rightly, that what is actually at issue in the writing of history at any given time are *specific current concerns*. Historians, therefore, should be reflexively aware of the particularity and specificity of these concerns and the limited applicability of the answers that one's interpretation of history offers. Reflexivity as an attitude characterizing good practice in historiography, or political theorizing, anthropologizing etc., is one thing. Taken too far, however, contextualism may bring the historian to the point where the very attempt to interpret history and elicit what any past figure really meant is either impossible, or has no point.

This also important implications for the relationship between past and present, for what a contextualist approach to the study of history asserts with its insistence on the particularity and specificity of the past as well as the contingency of its products is not a continuity between past and present, but rather a *dis*continuity. This is what is meant by the idea 'the past is a foreign country', the title of David Lowenthal's study of how we treat the past, respond to historical knowledge, and suffuse it with the concerns of the present:

> The past thus conjured up is … largely an artefact of the present. However faithfully we preserve, however authentically we restore, however deeply we immerse ourselves in by gone times, life back then was based on ways of being and believing incommensurable with our own. [26]

The study of the past is indeed closely related to present concerns and interests.[27] This accords with the insights of writers from George

H. Sabine to Robert Cox on the extent to which political theories, and histories of political theories, are themselves a part of politics and therefore always serve some political purpose or other.[28] This is where a sense of context is crucial. However, any approach that posits a radical discontinuity between past and present (temporal) and/or between one cultural formation and other (spatial), is immediately open to question. History cannot be read as a series of unique moments with no connection between them. Nor can human communities be understood as unique cultural constructions lacking the connections that make them comprehensible and meaningful to each other. This brings us to cultural contextualism.

In treating the past as a 'foreign country', historical contextualism posits periodic divisions through time, such that each period is understood independently, and in its own terms. The study of 'foreign countries' in world politics, by contrast, deals specifically with distinct *spatial* entities in the present, such that each must be made sense of in its own alterity. Cultural contextualism, as a spatial notion, differs from historical contextualism in a startling reversal, for the culture concept incorporates an historical dimension, as is clear when culture, and cultural *traditions*, are understood as something transmitted from the past. This is captured by the idea of cultural patrimony defined as 'a world of shared public meanings … inherited from the past, developed and contested in the present, and transmitted across the generations to the future'.[29] It is equally reflected in claims that 'a body of knowledge constitutes "a culture" only to the extent that it is in practice acquired, deemed valuable, and hence conserved and *communicated across time* by the members of a group'.[30] Here there is an explicit continuity between past, present and future, with culture-as-context stretching back in time through the concept of tradition. This is quite at odds with historical (and historicist) contextualism.

There are, however, some distinct resonances between cultural contextualism and some versions of the new cultural history. Richard Biernacki, for example, suggests that while some historians have focused on discontinuities, there may also be 'continuities and partial coherences of symbols and practices that transcend fluctuation in the pragmatic context of action'. Whether focusing on continuities or discontinuities, Biernaki suggests that cultural analysts define the pragmatic contexts within which symbols are used in order to reveal overall patterns that 'utilitarian manipulation of symbols … do not readily explain'. This, he says, is the explanatory challenge that led Geertz to pose questions concerning not only how agents use symbols to project meanings, but also

how and when symbolic deployments create 'overriding experiential realties' that affect forms of action.[31] Beyond this, his analysis suggests that the new cultural history began in opposition to what was seen as the crude foundationalism of social historians and economistic Marxists who relied on a material base for their suppositions. He further alludes to the new history as emphasizing the 'founding reality of culture'[32] and, in the newer kinds of research, says that 'culture' seems less likely to be reified as a naturally enduring structure, and more capable of being interrogated in terms of how agents put it to work.[33] But this suggests that despite the apparent anti-foundationalism of the cultural historians, culture-as-context itself becomes a foundation. It also leads us back to issues of instrumentalism that culturalist approaches have too often dismissed as materialist. Although there is no doubt that material interests are a powerful motivation for many actions, instrumental behaviour need not always be driven by material considerations.

With respect to the existence of communities in a temporal sense, at least one communitarian provides a very strong sense of continuity with the past, showing clear links with classical conservatism's objections to liberal rationalism. Communities of memory, it is argued, not only tie us to the past, but

> turn us towards the future as communities of hope – we strive to realize the ideals and aspirations embedded in the past experience of those communities … Such communities carry a moral tradition that helps to provide the narrative unity of our lives, which entails an obligation to sustain and promote the ideals and aspirations embedded in their history through memory and hope, linking our destiny to that of our ancestors, contemporaries and descendants.[34]

There follows a defence of tradition, drawing explicitly on Burke and placing prime importance on the interpretation and application of 'moral principles and virtuous exemplars from history'. This contributes to 'a historically extended, socially embedded argument about the good of the community whose identity it seeks to define'.[35] This demonstrates once again that the form of contextualism invoked here, which is essentially culturalist, has a very strong emphasis on historical continuities and the partnership between past, present and future in terms of specific normative traditions and is therefore quite at odds with the historicist version.

The language of contextualism, particularism, specificity, and so on has found its way into most areas of the human sciences, including the

study of world politics. Here, the language of contextualism is usually deployed in opposition to the universalist premises and assumptions that both realism and liberalism share. It is also meant to serve as a corrective 'for certain Western biases and assumptions'.[36] Thus one contributor to contemporary debates, drawing on insights from historical sociology, insists that because the concept of sovereignty developed in the wake of the Westphalian settlement, it is a 'historically and geographically specific, rather than [a] transhistorical concept'.[37] In contrast, some constructivists do seem to award the concept of sovereignty a transhistoric role, positing its existence in such diverse historic settings as Ancient Greece, Renaissance Italy, Absolutist Europe and the modern Society of States, all of which are also said to constitute 'international societies' (implying that 'international society' is also a transhistoric construct). But it is the values that the concept of sovereignty embodies, and the practices it gives rise to, which are then said to differ according to historical context, or rather according to the 'unique conception of the moral purpose of the state' which in each case has given it 'a distinctive cultural and historic meaning'.[38]

These authors share a commitment to a notion of context in the conceptualization of sovereignty, since both use the language of historical, geographic and/or cultural specificity. However, their respective texts disclose no meeting of meaning in relation to the concept of context itself, for the formulation of 'context' as referring to historical and/or cultural and/or geographic specificity is itself underspecified. More generally, the differing approaches demonstrate the problem of identifying exactly what it is that should be contextualized as historically, culturally or geographically specific, and of distinguishing which elements should be taken as actually constitutive of context, as well as where one context ends and another begins.

Contextualism and normative international theory[39]

Contextualism has been prominent in the language of communitarianism in normative international theory as well as in analyses inspired by poststructuralism. While the latter approaches do not necessarily identify themselves as communitarian, they are nonetheless opposed to universalist assumptions in theories of world politics on similar grounds, that is, the privileging of specificity and particularity over the global or universal. The privileged entity in communitarian theory is, not surprisingly, 'the community' which is understood as an entity delimited

in space – although not necessarily in time – defined in terms of a shared way of life, and providing the concrete locus in which individuals are embedded and through which they acquire a sense of identity as well as basic moral beliefs. On many counts, this is fairly unobjectionable and few sensible people are prepared to reject the commonsense approach it offers on the source of people's initial moral values, or to devalue the importance of community as such for a range of social goods. But people's ideas, including ideas of what constitutes 'the good', do not stand still, nor do their attachments necessarily remain constant.

Other versions of communitarianism have been at least as concerned with issues such as 'the cancerous effects' of market individualism on community life.[40] This has strong resonances with socialist concerns about social justice.[41] Communitarianism in socialist thought, however, relies less on explicit historical or cultural themes than on an ethic of care that binds individuals together in a community of mutual responsibility and which replaces norms of hierarchy as well as differential rewards and treatment with egalitarian norms. But communitarianism is now more often associated with conservatism. In addition to the Burkean strand illustrated above, the call for the restoration of 'civic virtues' – which includes an emphasis on responsibilities rather than rights – illustrates clear conservative elements.[42] Furthermore, it is the contemporary association of the term with identity politics that advocates of the 'third way' (a reformulation of social democratic principles for 'new times' and 'new politics'), see as most problematic and from which they specifically distance themselves:

> The term community does too much work in communitarian theory: a society or a nation, for example, is only a community in an elliptical sense. Moreover, if they become too strong, communities breed identity politics, and with it the potential for social division, or even disintegration. Even in its milder forms, identity politics tends to be exclusivist, and difficult to reconcile with the principles of tolerance and diversity upon which an effective civil society depends.[43]

With respect to morality in the international sphere, communitarian approaches have asserted the cultural specificity of values and norms against universally valid moral precepts. If it is taken as self-evident that ethical systems represent constructions of reality based on a particular world view, and that such constructions are irreducibly varied by virtue of their unique cultural foundations, it is difficult to evade a relativist conclusion.[44] This understanding derives from anthropological theories

of cultural relativism. We shall examine these in due course, but for present purposes cultural relativism can be summarized as an insistence on an irreducible diversity among cultures: '[E]ach culture is a unique whole with parts so intertwined that none of them can be understood or evaluated without reference to the other parts and to the cultural whole, the so-called pattern of culture.' And: 'Ethics, as part of a culture, cannot be understood or evaluated apart from the distinct world of the society to which it belongs.'[45] This view of a distinct and entirely self-referential community also depends on a reified concept of culture as denoting a unique, bounded entity, rather than culture as a dynamic process which is expressed not simply as a set of practices and beliefs within the community but in relations *between* communities. Thus culture is understood not just as an attribute of a community, or even as the defining characteristic of a particular community, but as synonymous with the community itself. It is noteworthy that nationalist conceptions of culture depend on an almost identical formulation which, given that nationalist and anthropological understandings of culture share a common intellectual heritage, is not surprising.

One of the grounds on which opponents of relativism stake their case is that even if there are significant variations in cultural values giving rise to different normative orientations, one need not accept these as right and good.[46] Further, cultural relativist/communitarian claims tend to be inherently conservative, favouring the rights of established elites and denying any 'right' of internal minority dissent. And if what is valuable is determined by what is already established, 'then where does that put the position of individuals or small groups who seek to articulate a moral view out of line with what is valuable?'[47] It is clear, then, that the (cultural) practices of some members of the group may well entail the subordination or ill-treatment of other members in the name of 'culture'. Further, if value is entirely self-referential, there are no grounds for external criticism.

These issues, and many of the others raised above, are important for a more general theoretical problem with the relationship between culture and ethics. Put simply, the form of ethical relativism derived from a culturalist perspective (especially in the anthropological formulation) is wholly framework-dependent because it depends on positing a delimited 'context' as the foundation for an ethical system. The notion of 'a culture' – and the group to which it attaches – provides this contextual framework. This may be contrasted with non-framework relativism which holds that any given context, such as 'a culture', is likely to contain a multiplicity of interpretive possibilities which in turn give rise to

multiple ethical positions.[48] This version therefore implies the relativity of individual perspectives rather than group perspectives. There is a sharp contrast here with the premises of cultural relativism. For whereas the non-framework position negates social control over conduct – by effectively abstracting individuals from their social embeddedness and assigning them complete ethical autonomy, thereby denying the validity of culturally-determined bases of ethical norms and practices – the essence of cultural relativism is located in the group codes which are assumed to regulate all aspects of social life.[49]

Taken to its logical conclusion, cultural relativism repudiates one form of ethical plurality (namely, the individualist, non-framework dependent form) in the name of another, because it is founded on an irreducible ethical plurality between cultural groups. The theory also insists that each separate cultural group comprises the foundation on which its own ethical framework is constructed, and that each such framework is equally valid. Some contemporary defences of multiculturalism come close to defending the relativist position. Bhikhu Parekh, for example, emphasizes the cultural embeddedness of humans and argues that 'moral life is necessarily embedded in and cannot be isolated from the wider culture' and that a way of life can be judged neither good nor bad 'without taking full account of the system of meaning, traditions, temperament and the moral and emotional responses of the people involved'. In his broader critique of 'moral monism', Parekh argues that it is given to grossly misunderstanding other life ways, producing a 'hermeneutical disaster'. He goes on to suggest that early moral monists, such as Plato and Aristotle, regarded non-Greek life ways as having little to recommend themselves.[50] But he ignores one very important ancient alternative to this line of thinking – cosmopolitanism.[51]

For most critics, culturalism relativism leaves us without the moral resources for criticizing the practices of cultural groups other than our own, even where such practices involve genocide or slavery. Historical contextualism, in its most radical form, logically denies the grounds for moral criticism of *any* historic community, *including* our own. Contemporary cosmopolitanism offers a very different set of perspectives. It is described by one set of its proponents as representing various aspirations or visions including a 'proposed new politics of the left' as an alternative to ethnocentric nationalism and particularistic multiculturalism; a vision of global democracy and citizenship; and a framework for linkages between social movements. It seeks to promote a 'post-identity' form of politics which recognizes overlapping interests and cultural multiplicities and hybridities, while rejecting narrow culturalism and conventional

notions of belonging that are the hallmark of communitarianism.[52] It is very different from the moral monism depicted by Parekh and against which his multiculturalism is constructed. Indeed, the highly multicultural character of cities such as London, New York, or Melbourne is precisely what leads them to be described as 'cosmopolitan'. The same can be said of a number of Middle–Eastern cities during their own 'golden age' of cosmopolitanism which actually thrived in an age of imperialism, but which was later undone by nationalist and religious movements.[53] This indicates that cosmopolitanism is not to be confused with a rejection of cultural difference but rather its recognition in a softer, more flexible form. Thus cosmopolitanism embraces social and cultural pluralism while rejecting a relativist ethic.[54]

In terms of international normative theory, cosmopolitanism promotes ethical precepts that transcend cultural boundaries *and* nation-state boundaries, providing an over-arching moral basis for global order.[55] Rejecting the proposition that moral standards are located only in 'the lived values of specific communities', cosmopolitanism assumes that all humans share certain attributes and needs that create a common moral bond.[56] This reflects aspects of both Stoic cosmopolitanism and Enlightenment thinking which repudiated the provincial and arbitrary character of particular cultural traditions and contexts, replacing them with an explicitly universal theory of human nature requiring in turn a universal moral framework.[57] It also required a sharp modification of the notion of 'aliens' or 'outsiders' which, in the case of some early Stoics, meant breaking down the rigid barriers between Greeks and 'barbarians'. This way of thinking, however, does not entail the assimilation of those considered 'different' so that variations are obliterated. Again, it implies a 'soft multiculturalism' which appreciates difference, but not to the point of either worshipping it or awarding it a unique moral status. Cosmopolitanism therefore rejects both xenophobia *and* xenophilia.

Contemporary cosmopolitans also hold that people's behaviour within states – including governing authorities and their agents – is, in principle, subject to critical scrutiny in the wider sphere of the international community. Tyrannical and rights abusive behaviour is regarded as the legitimate concern of 'humanity' at large, and those responsible may, again in principle, be held to account. In practice, this does not mean supporting any act of intervention carried out in the name of human rights. Few cosmopolitans would disagree that peaceful relations are best served by a presumption against intervention. In other words, intervention may be sometimes be justified, but it always *has* to be justified. And intervention by force in the name of humanitarianism requires the most stringent of criteria.[58]

On a cosmopolitan view, where suffering and hardship are evident in any part of the world, those with the resources to assist have a general duty of care to do so. 'Intervention' in these cases may simply take the form of humanitarian aid. These cases may arise, for example, in relation to natural disasters, pandemics, refugees and the environment. A cosmopolitan may also endorse some form of intervention where a cultural minority is threatened by a hostile majority. The point is that moral obligations are not restricted to one's own community. None of this means that context as such is unimportant, but the contexts with which cosmopolitans are concerned clearly transcend local spaces, including those defined by the sovereignty principle.

The universalist elements of cosmopolitanism and its concern for 'humanity' are not to be confused with the absolutist insistence on the logical autonomy of valid moral rules from any cultural or social context. Universalism is sometimes misunderstood as relegating culture to virtual irrelevance in the wider moral scheme of things, whereas most versions of universalism acknowledge an explicit link between ethics and culture. Morality itself is commonly viewed as universal *in* human culture, and therefore not independent *of* culture – as the absolutist position suggests – while the forms that moral concepts take are acknowledged as variable according to circumstances.[59] But from this point on, cosmopolitan arguments stress human commonalities rather than human variances in social life. They do so with a view to demonstrating that obvious differences in ways of life around the globe do not preclude the possibility of establishing norms of conduct in world politics. Intersubjectivity is therefore not restricted to the boundaries of specific communities, but extends beyond them. Not all versions of cosmopolitanism are as moderate as this, and just as contextualism in historical studies provides an antidote to anachronism, so contextualism in the study of world politics provides an antidote to crass ethnocentrism and the uncritical application of univeralist principles and solutions. This has been a contentious issue in world politics, especially with respect to what is seen as the unwarranted universalization of 'Western values' and their imposition on other parts of the globe in the form of certain 'good governance' and 'democracy promotion' agendas.

Theories of *human* rights, however, are universalist by definition because they regard all people as equally 'human' regardless of any particularity that attaches to them in terms not just of culture, but age, gender, class, physical appearance, capability etc. It is simply by virtue of a person's human-ness that she or he is regarded as possessing a 'human' right – not because they are a particular *kind* of human. This is indeed a legacy of certain aspects of 'Western' thought. A cosmopolitan, however,

would insist that human rights advocates are not necessarily insensitive to difference or to context (although some may well be in practice). What cosmopolitan human rights theory requires is that people are not placed in a hierarchy which automatically privileges any one kind of human over another: for example, a male human over a female human, a member of a high caste over a low caste person, an American national over an Iraqi national, or a member of 'culture x' over 'culture y' with respect to basic rights – such as the right to life. One problem with 'cultural specificity' is that cultural beliefs often entail precisely this kind of hierarchical privileging. Cultural specificity also requires a concept of 'the other' – of categories of humans as being either one of 'us' or 'not us'. It might even allow that some 'others' are not fully human and may therefore be eliminated without disturbing the conscience.

Contextualizing contextualism

Historical contextualists are right to highlight that what is at issue in the study of history are current concerns or motives. But this suggests that one needs to perform a contextualization of precisely *those* concerns and motives. These include arguments that reject, say, the appropriateness of democracy and accompanying notions of civil and political rights in non-Western contexts. Without pre-empting the later discussion, I will next set out in summary form the way in which some contextualist/communitarian arguments have been applied to issues of culture and democracy as well as certain problems with contextualist approaches to the 'politics of difference'.

The recent history of debates about the prospects of democracy as a universal model has seen the promotion of local variants based ostensibly on 'local culture' – including 'African democracy', 'Asian democracy', 'Arab democracy' along with variants such as 'Confucian democracy' or 'Islamic democracy'. Virtually all of these have been opposed to 'Western' models of democracy and human rights, and most have found support in a conservative version of communitarianism constructed against the cosmopolitan paradigm. This reflects the concerns of those who have not only taken a cultural turn towards contextualism but who have also expressed their particular concerns in terms of a West/non West dichotomy.

Arguments supporting the specificity of 'Asian values' or 'African values' or 'Islamic values' see both 'Western' democracy and the concept of universal human rights as based solely on the values of liberal individualism – values that are themselves cast as peculiarly Western.

Communitarian critiques of (liberal) democracy vis-à-vis cultural traditions in East Asia, as mentioned in Chapter Two, have formed part of a more general critique of US democracy promotion. Here, I wish to highlight the fact that some critiques deploy an equally problematic contextualism, constructing 'the West' and *its* ideas as specific and particular: 'Liberal democratic ideals and institutions command almost universal allegiance in Western societies, a phenomenon to be understood in the light of the West's shared history and culture. … [60] … liberal democracy, 'informed and justified by the ideals of equality and freedom' is a 'culturally distinct, historically contingent artefact not readily transferable to East and Southeast Asian societies which have different traditions and conceptions of human flourishing.[61]

This argument is based on several suspect premises and assumptions. First, it employs a naive culturalism in dichotomizing and relativizing 'Asia' and 'the West' in such generalized terms. Second, it pays too much homage to cultural determinism. Third, it implies that notions of freedom and equality are valued only by 'Westerners'. This not only misrepresents many East Asians, but grossly overstates the extent to which 'Westerners' are themselves freedom-loving individualists imbued with a normative commitment to democracy and human rights. And fourth, it fails to acknowledge the fact that liberal democratic ideas and institutions have only recently become widespread in the West itself. Sixty years ago, democracy was in rather short supply in Western Europe and even 30 years ago it was still only a dim prospect in parts of Southern Europe, not to mention Eastern Europe. Japan and India have been democracies longer than Portugal, Spain, and Greece.

Moving to the Arab Middle East where stereotypes also abound, one commentator compares the notion that Arabs are fundamentally different from Westerners, and are imbued with a social philosophy that is incomprehensible in Western terms, with earlier explicitly racist accounts of the Arab character. But she goes on to suggest that 'the conviction that Arabs and Westerners are fundamentally unalike seems to be a difficult one to shake, in part perhaps because it is shared by policymakers and analysts in the Arab world as well'.[62] More recently, and in a climate of thought and opinion heavily influenced by the events of '9/11' and the 'war on terror', it has been suggested that cultural theories explaining authoritarianism in the Middle East have taken an explicit 'orientalist' tone in linking it with an intrinsic incompatibility between Islam and the values of democracy.[63]

Other studies, however, suggest that democracy at this particular juncture in world history lacks appeal in the Arab Middle East precisely

because more open political processes would give access to Islamist groups, something not welcome by incumbents or their supporters.[64] Another study suggests that those living within a particular system may perceive authoritarianism as supportive of their interests, and that a range of socio-economic structures and ideational factors must be taken into account in analyzing the apparent strength of authoritarian rule.[65] All this points to the need to recognise a much broader 'context' for the study of democracy and/or authoritarianism in places like the Arab Middle East or East Asia, in which no factor, including religion or culture or history, is simply taken for granted as constituting *the* context.[66]

Another influential area of study where explicit contextual approaches have been evident is in the 'politics of difference' and/or the 'politics of recognition', although these debates have usually been situated within national societies rather than the broader international sphere and have been concerned to address the perceived deficiencies of liberal political theory in terms of domestic governance. Some of the most important debates on 'politics of recognition' have revolved around the concept of multiculturalism with proponents of 'recognition' formulating their arguments in explicit opposition to liberal theories of governance and constitutionalism. From a communitarian/multiculturalist perspective, liberal political institutions subordinate cultural differences among citizens to an overarching legalistic uniformity which effectively denies appropriate recognition to minorities. In short, liberal constitutionalism and its forms of governance cannot do justice to cultural diversity or ethnic difference within the state because it assumes sameness among people rather than acknowledging legitimate differences.[67]

The communitarian approach is also associated with a more general 'politics of difference' which has seen demands for equal recognition made with respect not just to cultural identity but gender and sexual identity as well as marginalized groups of all kinds.[68] In cultural studies, is it said that a 'politics of difference' aims to 'trash the monolithic and homogeneous in the name of diversity, multiplicity and heterogeneity; to reject the abstract, general and universal in light of the concrete, specific and particular; and to historicize, contextualize and pluralize by highlighting the contingent, provisional, variable, tentative, shifting and changing'.[69] In political philosophy, Iris Marion Young's promotion of the politics of difference is also asserted in explicit contextualist terms. She rejects as illusory the effort to construct a universal normative system insulated from a particular society and insists that normative reflection invariably begins 'from historically specific circumstances because there is nothing but what is, the given, the situated interest in

justice, from which to start'. She therefore limits her critical analysis of social justice to Western welfare capitalist societies, and the United States in particular, because she says that her principles and categories cannot simply be applied to the context of international relations or to issues of justice in eastern or southern hemispheres (i.e., the 'non-West').[70] An apparent advantage of approaches like this is that one's work is inoculated against accusations of Eurocentricity and the sins of Enlightenment rationalism and universalism. But while it represents a form of reflexivity, it also creates an epistemological comfort zone by erecting a boundary around the putative cultural and historical space known as 'the West'. Apart from reinforcing the dichotomous formulation of West/non-West, this approach posits an enormously broad 'context' – 'the West' – within which subjectivities, and intersubjectivities, are effectively contained. Restricting one's intellectual space to 'the West' in the name of sensitivity to context is clearly problematic for students of world politics who can scarcely confine themselves to the study of their own country, hemisphere or 'civilizational area'.

There are some implications as well for feminist theory, for if we apply the *cultural* politics of difference to gender relations we find that it can easily privilege 'culture' over inequalities arising from gender. One feminist critic of culturalism argues that liberal notions of universal equality within a framework of common humanity have enabled not only women to assert claims to equal treatment, but oppressed groups whose inferior status is also defined by cultural factors.[71] Others point out that discourses of difference can oppress as well as resist, and that the deconstruction of the monoliths of West/Third World, along with other binaries of self/other, us/them enables women in diverse locations to strengthen their discursive space.[72] Other critics of the politics of difference and/or recognition argue that there has been a 'premature normativism' in much contemporary political theory and 'an all too quick reification of given group identities, a failure to interrogate the meaning of cultural identity, and a turning away from the sociological and historical literature on these topics, which are dominated by methodological "constructivism" ', all of which result in hasty policy recommendations that risk freezing existing group differences.[73]

The discussion above suggests that contextualism can function as another mechanism supporting either Orientalist and/or Occidentalist formulations of cultural entities in world politics. It is an irony that some commentators, evidently scandalized by the promotion of Orientalist images of Muslims by 'the West', seem to have no difficulty in contributing to an equally problematic Occidentalism. Says one

scholar, 'within the Western imaginary, every Muslim is a potential terrorist'.[74] This clearly suggests a single, uniform 'Western imaginary' that is invariably prone to negative, stereotyped thinking about Muslims and admits of no nuances, no heterogeneity, no pluralism of thought. Muslims who are themselves part of the West are ignored as is virtually anybody who might think differently to the stereotype. One is entitled to assume that if the author is prepared to exclude himself from the grip of this delusional imaginary, then there might just be others out there who can also see the light despite their Western-ness.

This brings us to the notion of collective identity defined in terms of culture. But first we should note that there is also a long-standing notion of *individual* identity. In European political and social thought this may be seen as emanating from various influences since at least the seventeenth-century. The Protestant Reformation, the philosophy of Descartes, the political economy of Adam Smith, the development of notions of natural rights (which go back even further) – all these have contributed to a tradition of individualism which is now taken to be characteristic, even definitive, of 'the West' and of which Western Europe is the original heartland. Indeed, it is individualism and an associated cluster of values that have been used as the major point of contrast between 'the West' and 'its culture' and the non-West. More specifically, a commitment to the myth of an 'individualistic West' as opposed to, say, a 'communitarian East' which completely ignores the elements of communitarianism or collectivism developed in both conservative and socialist thought in Europe (but much less significant in American political thought), has been a major factor in reinforcing highly simplistic dichotomies in world politics.

Looking again at the notion of culture as constitutive of identity and its manifestations in the politics of recognition, one important exponent has argued for a 'politics of equal dignity' as a necessary condition for appropriate recognition. This is based quite simply on the idea that all humans are worthy of equal respect which is derived, in turn, from the notion of a 'universal human potential'.[75] But for this to be true, it must be a capacity that individual humans share regardless of their position within their cultural group or society. All this is entirely consistent with an individualistic notion of universal human rights and indeed with a universal ethical theory, albeit a fairly thin one. Yet the communitarian enterprise generally insists that universal moral theories 'inevitably fail when called on to generate every day principles'.[76] Given that the 'politics of recognition' itself seeks to generate a universal moral principle of respect for, and recognition of, difference this claim is

curiously self-defeating. Equally important, the emphasis on social unity demanded by communitarians actually runs the risk of suppressing diversity within the group or community.[77] Liberals, too, offer a universal moral framework in which all persons are assumed to be worthy of respect – but one which does not usually fasten on any particular context, cultural or otherwise.[78] Rather, the constitutive elements of 'the context' as such remains open. This means that neither context nor community need be defined solely by reference to one's 'cultural group' and that the plurality of associations, and indeed 'communities', that one may belong also falls within the ambit of recognition.

These issues, together with the contrasting conceptions of the human person described above, underscore the respective liberal and communitarian approaches to human rights. A great deal of contemporary normative theory has revolved precisely around the relationship between culture and human rights, especially in relation to the international sphere. Less attention has been directed to the relationship between culture and democracy, at least with respect to international normative theory. Indeed, since it is widely regarded as an expression of civil and political rights, democracy has often been treated as an 'add-on' to the human rights issue. But while they are mutually supportive, human rights and democracy are two quite distinct concepts.[79] Even so, many of the normative theoretical concerns for world politics are similar. For example, the basic principles and assumptions about universal human rights and those of liberal democracy are both deeply implicated in arguments about the appropriateness of liberal norms and institutions outside their putative heartland – 'the West'.

The critique of various approaches to contextualism sketched above should not be taken to imply that a critical awareness of contextual factors and a reflexive approach to analysis is not important. It is self-evident that cultural and contextual differences not only exist as between different times and different places, but that they also give rise to varying perspectives on a whole range of political, economic and social issues. However, as one historian of ideas has pointed out, ideas and beliefs change constantly, and so do the contexts within which they are produced.[80] This reinforces the notion that culture is a process, or rather something that is constantly *in* process, rather than a fixed and stable 'thing'. This point is often overlooked in analyses that put an excessive emphasis on Difference and invest far too heavily in its effects. This leads to a conception of culture, or a 'cultural context' as a static object. Or as another commentator puts it, the discrete civilizational or cultural categories that are so often taken for granted all too frequently

require a 'freeze-frame' version of culture which produces fixed and timeless mentalities.[81] If 'culture' is to be treated seriously, and as a dynamic force, such views need to be rejected. We return to these themes later in the book. The final concern here is with ideology and power relations and their implications for contextualizing contextualism.

John B. Thompson has pointed out that 'ideology' often has a negative, critical connotation so that to characterize a view as 'ideological' is to criticize it implicitly.[82] Marx certainly saw ideology as a set of false beliefs purveyed by those who wished to disguise their own self-interested agendas. In something of a reversal, the sociologist Daniel Bell attempted to restrict its application largely to left-wing ideas.[83] Whether coming from the left or the right, however, ideology came to be viewed as vehicle for 'shabby motives and appearances'.[84] Ideology has also been opposed to science or at least 'scientific truth', an opposition rejected by Foucault partly because of his objections to the claims of science.[85] But Thompson says that there is also a more neutral conception in which ideologies are regarded simply as systems of thought or belief.[86] Thompson's purpose, however, is to reformulate ideology so as to focus on the relationship between meaning and power and, in particular, on how meaning may serve to establish and sustain relations of power which are systematically asymmetrical. In this sense, ideology, broadly speaking, is understood as '*meaning in the service of power*'.[87]

Thompson's approach resonates with the 'cultural turn' in that he is concerned with how meaning is 'constructed and conveyed by symbolic forms … from everyday linguistic utterances to complex images and texts' and with investigating 'the social contexts within which symbolic forms are employed and deployed'.[88] But his ideas are also connected to an earlier tradition of thought which linked ideology to power and interests in the production of political authority. Looking at David E. Apter's work, we can see that he drew explicitly on the insights of Georges Sorel with respect to the role of ideology in building solidarity which, when firmly cemented by myths, provides in turn for the moral basis of society. Apter goes on to suggest that 'the connection between solidarity and morality is the essence of authority' and, further, that solidarity and myth 'as expressed in ideology are commonly manipulated in order to supply a moral dimension to political forms'. Ultimately ideology in this sense assists in legitimating an elite and justifying their power.[89] These ideas are generally consistent with Gramsci's conception of hegemony as the control and manipulation of civil society by cultural/political elites.

Later studies in ideology, as exemplified in the work of Terry Eagleton, have continued to use the concept to denote the ways in which meaning

serves relations of domination through a number of strategies. These include promoting beliefs and values congenial to the purpose of domination; naturalizing and universalizing such beliefs so as to make them appear both self-evident and inevitable; excluding rival forms of thought by some unspoken but nonetheless systematic logic; and obscuring other, inconvenient understandings of social and political reality.[90] To the extent that people believe what they are served up through these strategies, and even come to identify with those who deploy them to sustain their own power and privileges, Eagleton proposes that the study of ideology becomes, among other things, 'an inquiry into the way people invest in their own unhappiness'.[91]

Although one could argue that 'ideology' does other things as well, the critical approach outlined above relates to the themes of the present study in emphasizing links between culture and ideology or, more specifically, culture *as* ideology. To the extent that culture may operate in this sense – that is, as a set of discourses, accompanied by relevant symbols, whose purpose is to legitimate the power and authority of an elite – it therefore serves relations of domination and repression. Further, if it is in the purpose of such discourses that 'meaning' is to be found, it follows that the sort of questions we should ask about the role of culture are: to what extent is culture seized 'from above' by elites? Is it deployed as an instrument of social and political control? Is the idea of culture used to empower, legitimate and authorize some at the expense of others? And what are the implications of this for culturally relative understandings of forms of rule and the communities over whom rule is exercized? Far from providing an antidote to exercises in domination and repression, certain key aspects of the turn to culture actually support them. The culprit here, I suggest, is the version of contextualism where 'culture' is taken as 'context' and transformed into a simplistic reified construct. Thus there is a need to identify, and contextualize, not the specificity of any local, traditional culture that allegedly supports authoritarian elites, but *the specificity of the political context within which such elites, and their supporters, actually invoke the specificity of traditional culture*. Further, to use Geertz's idea, although not necessarily in the way he intended, we need to look at the way in which elites weave the webs of significance – which may as well be called ideologies – in which communities and their members are ensnared. This is where context really does count.

4
Culture and the Emergence of the Human Sciences

The emergence of the culture concept and its association with notions of human difference and sameness is closely associated with the growth of knowledge, together with the organization of knowledge into fields of professional specializations, principally in Europe and later in the United States. A major purpose of this chapter is to show how early developments set the stage for the development of the culture concept in the nineteenth century. It also considers how Europeans viewed people from other parts of the world, and how they viewed themselves, from the 'Age of Discovery' onwards. Edward Said's *Orientalism* is certainly the best known and the most influential study of this subject. His principal theme is that the Orient constitutes the site of Europe's oldest, greatest and richest colonies, the source of its own civilizational heritages and languages and also its major 'cultural contestant' – by providing Europeans with their 'deepest and most recurring images of the Other'. In this way, the Orient helped 'to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience'.[1] However, while images of the Orient were clearly important in shaping senses of self within Europe, they were by no means the only influence, for the impact of exploration in other parts of the world was at least as profound. Further, the responses to knowledge of other people in other places was diverse and complex, containing ambiguities and contradictions that Said and others writing in a similar genre leave largely unexplored and which tend to be obliterated by such overworked categories as 'the European' or 'the Western' and 'its Others'.

In a recent study of international relations and the 'problem of difference', Inayatullah and Blaney claim that the greatest obstacle to their efforts in theorizing international relations/international political economy from a third-world viewpoint is embedded in 'Western culture's

experience with difference itself'. They argue that, since at least the time of the Reformation and its wars of religious purification, 'Western culture' has been 'so traumatized by the problems of difference that its habitual mode of dealing with it has been to self-righteously ignore it, or to defer confronting it indefinitely'.[2] Apart from exemplifying a central problem with much contemporary scholarship in terms of its simplistic treatment of 'the West', this statement takes a giant leap from a set of historical circumstances in the seventeenth century to an inflated generalization about 'Western culture' which does not do justice to the historical record. The authors further assert that the 'problem' of difference *within* Europe translates directly into a problem with difference between 'the West' and the 'non-West'. This is a very problematic transition which is insensitive to intra-European or intra-Western difference. It illustrates the problem of treating Europe or the West as a reified construct possessing an unproblematic 'identity' in international relations which can then be used as one side of a West/non-West dichotomy.[3]

Rather than being completely obsessed with alterity, and always identifying 'others' in terms of 'difference', Europeans were also given to discerning similarities in the most exotic specimens of humanity. As Margaret T. Hodgen notes, the voyages of discovery and the travels of merchants and missionaries certainly brought Europeans face to face with an astonishing array of cultural diversities. But they revealed an equally astonishing assortment of cultural likenesses too: 'When the usual Europocentric comparisons were made, variance, dissimilarity, and difference were observed, it is true, but cultural correspondences also made themselves known and, to some observers and for some purposes, seemed actually to predominate.'[4] The interest and concern with both similarities and differences was to continue over the centuries, with both ways of thinking producing highly imaginative suppositions about the human condition in both its generalities and its particularities.

The age of discoveries

To explain the formulation of culture as a leading concept in the human sciences in nineteenth-century Europe, one should probably start at least as far back as the Renaissance which saw a flourishing of ideas in relation to art and aesthetics and, importantly, aspects of Church authority. The latter, especially, is taken as evidence of the first glimmerings of the modern as distinct from the medieval outlook.[5] This was accompanied by emerging ideas about 'science' which gained momentum as new knowledge was acquired in the 'Age of Discovery' – or more accurately

'Discoveries' – which began in earnest in the late fifteenth century and in which we find the beginning of the phenomenon now known as globalization.[6] So while the Renaissance saw knowledge and ideas develop on the basis of reaching back into the past to rediscover classical learning, European exploration in distant parts of the world meant reaching out to places that had previously existed only in the imagination, if at all. The contrast in approaches between the classical humanist's propensity to 'lie grovelling in the dust of their studies' and those interested in 'Science or knowledge of the World' on the other, was drawn as far back as 1615 when the author of these comments urged attention to the comparative study of existing human societies around the world.[7] Reflecting on this period from the vantage point of the early twentieth century, J.L. Myres wrote of the 'new vistas of the world that were opened up by the voyages' the 'new types of men, of modes of life, of societies and states', knowledge of which now forced new comparisons and new questions.[8]

The extent of change in European thinking about both sameness and difference among humans over the next several centuries, especially in terms of social evolutionism, may be partly understood in contrast to the general medieval outlook in which there was no allowance for significant change in either biological or social terms. The universe was hierarchically arranged, stable and unchanging, just as God had created it. Against this background, the transformation of thinking over the next few centuries was radical: 'The concept of a timeless inventory of Creation was transformed into one that was viewable as historical, developmental, evolutionary, or progressive – one in which transition from form to form, or from culture to culture, far from being contrary to reason and theoretically disallowed, was accepted as the way things work.'[9]

Motivations among Europeans for long distance sea-going exploration which started in the fifteenth century varied. Some were driven by the lure of riches, but scientific interest and sheer curiosity were major factors as well.[10] Reports from Pacific voyages, in particular, provided significant stimuli for a host of new ideas ranging from scientific method to theories of social as well as biological evolution. The foundation in 1660 of the 'Royal Society of London for Improving Scientific Knowledge' was also associated with significant changes in the location of social and intellectual authority, representing an important step in the transition from medieval and Renaissance ideas to those which underpinned modern science.[11] With the expansion of knowledge made possible by voyages of discovery, ethnology as a field of study – in some ways a forerunner to the discipline of anthropology[12] – came to

acquire, quite literally, a vast new empire full of human specimens far more exotic than those encountered closer to home. Some were brought back to Europe as curiosities to be exhibited both in public and at private gatherings, prompting many questions about the human condition, and of sameness and difference, superiority and inferiority, unity and diversity, and so on. A significant concern was with both the origins and ends of human existence. Further, if all humans were members of the same species and therefore the result of a single act of creation, what could account for the variation not simply in physical appearance, but in what seemed to be quite different levels of attainment in all fields of endeavour from social organization and political institutions to artistic expression, technical knowledge and general skills?

Explaining difference

One answer to these questions was eventually found in a model of social evolution, developed to account for human differences within an overarching unity which reached its apogee in the nineteenth century and lingered on well into the twentieth century. The fact that human societies appeared to vary so profoundly – with the starkest contrasts being drawn between the stage of civilization achieved by Europeans (especially those of Western Europe) and the native inhabitants of places like Australia, Tierra del Fuego and the islands of Melanesia, was a serious challenge to universalist thinking.[13] A neat resolution of the problem was proposed by the theorists of social evolution who identified stages of linear progress from savagery through barbarism to civilization, thus enabling the classification of all human societies within a universally applicable framework.[14] The Scottish school of natural philosophy proposed another schema of societal progression from hunter-gathering, pastoralism, to agriculture and finally to commerce, otherwise known as the 'four stages theory'.[15] Nineteenth-century evangelism in Britain added a Biblical allegory to describe British superiority in contrast to the apparent backwardness of other parts of the world.[16] The 'Great Chain of Being', a vision of cosmic order in which every thing from the tiniest grain of sand to the angels in heaven was arranged on an ever-ascending ladder of existence, was no longer represented as invariant, as in earlier periods. It now embraced Progress without disturbing its essentially hierarchical nature, and could thus account for the rise of civilization from lower stages of achievement.[17]

All this meant that those who seemed at present inferior might nonetheless reach, in due course and under the right circumstances, the

same lofty level of attainment that marked European societies: 'The very contrast between the way of life [of lower and higher societies] … teaches us that every human community to whom God has accorded existence may thus emerge from barbarism and want to refinement and to enjoyment.'[18] But not all ethnologists subscribed to this view. The President of the Ethnological Society of London, Sir John Crawfurd, believed in no such historical destination for barbarians. He subscribed instead to a notion of polygeny which implied that while Europeans had certainly been made in the Creator's own image, others were the result of quite separate creations. And if pressed to provide the 'aims and objectives' of a course of study in primitive societies, he would almost certainly have summarized these in terms of the edifying contrast they provided for the achievements of European society. Addressing an audience in London, he said: 'I think I may safely congratulate you that you are not the red men of Tierra del Fuego, but civilized white men and accomplished women, the humblest among you having the power of enjoying more of the comforts and pleasures, physical and intellectual, of life, than the proud lords of a horde of ten thousand barbarians.'[19]

By proposing separate 'creations' and radically different 'race types' as opposed to a single act of creation or monogeny, polygeny repudiated the inherent quality of humanness that underpinned social evolutionism. For all its other faults, social evolutionism was in fact founded on the basic universal principle of a common humanity, with a physical, intellectual and moral unity, and which therefore could not accommodate the insidious form of racism that polygeny took. By challenging the universalist assumption of monogeny, polygeny involved a shift from the emphasis of the human as a social being to a biological one.[20] Polygeny also provided a justification for slavery in which vital economic interests in both Europe and America were vested. Disputes within the 'science of race' gathered momentum in the first half of the nineteenth century. A polygenist faction seceded from the Ethnological Society of London which then formed its own Anthropological Society of London in 1863. In the next few decades, however, political circumstances changed significantly. The American Civil War, combined with further developments in scientific thinking following geological discoveries as well as the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species* in 1859,[21] saw the two societies bury the hatchet and merge into the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.[22]

But this scarcely signalled an end to 'race thinking' which remained a powerful force in the social, political and scientific thought of the period. True believers in their own superiority soldiered on, and not just

in the American south. Henry Proctor's *The Evolution of Culture*, published in Britain, persisted in arguing that the Book of Genesis showed Adam as the progenitor of the white race while the coloured races were anterior. Proctor argued further that the 'mechanical' view of evolution characteristic of Darwin's theory could not explain 'why the oldest-known peoples should also be the lowest and the least advanced in culture while the latest-comers are the highest and greatest, the most advanced and the most numerous'. But if the 'Great Architect of the Universe' was working all things out according to design, then it was clear to Proctor why the 'lower races [were] dying out, and why the highest races alone [were] advancing to the highest degree of culture and refinement'.[23] The reference here to the demise of 'lower races' is almost certainly related directly to the decimation of native populations brought about, not by divine plan, but by introduced diseases as well as mass murder by some colonizing agents who regarded them as nothing more than pests to be cleared from otherwise valuable land.

Stories of people from distant places, and the ethnological specimens occasionally exhibited in the interests of public edification, undoubtedly had a profound impact on how people in Europe saw themselves. This impact commonly affirmed the superiority of European civilization in virtually all spheres of life from the technological to the aesthetic and the moral. Certainly, this is the principal message of critical studies of 'Orientalism' and of most critical studies of European colonialism, including Hardt and Negri's *Empire* which insists that the dynamics of colonialism worked to homogenize the multiple realities of actual colonial situations by creating a single overriding opposition that pushed differences to the absolute and then subsumed the opposition under 'the identity of European civilization'.[24] All the same, responses in Europe to encounters with 'others', including colonized others, were not uniform and a number of contemporary works have illustrated their diversity.[25] Further, social evolutionism was antithetic to the kind of racism that justified chattel slavery, and in which other 'races' were effectively regarded as less than human.

René Descartes went well beyond the social evolutionists in accommodating human difference, displaying a form of cultural relativism, with hints of a hermeneutic disposition, on a par with contemporary sensitivities:

> While travelling, having realized that all those who have attitudes very different from our own are not for that reason barbarians or savage but are as rational or more so than ourselves, and having

> considered how greatly the self-same person with the self-same mind who had grown up from infancy among the French or Germans would become different from what he would have been if he had always lived among the Chinese or the cannibals … I found myself forced to try myself to see things from their point of view.[26]

Far from using knowledge of other people in other places as always affirming European superiority, there is also evidence that it was sometimes used to the opposite effect. J.J. Clarke's study of the 'China cult' during the Enlightenment, especially among the French *philosophes*, shows a very different picture from the attitudes focused on in Orientalist critiques. Beginning with Montaigne, Clarke elucidates an engagement with Confucian thinking that was to develop into a thoroughgoing critique of European society. Voltaire, described as the 'leading French Sinophile' of his time, penned his *Essai sur les moeurs* as a 'frontal assault on the political and religious institutions of his day, arguing for the inherent superiority of Chinese moral philosophy, as well as of its political system, which he claimed was based not on an hereditary aristocracy, but on rational principles' and, further, that it is to the East that 'the West owes everything'.[27]

It was not only the Orient that was used to produce the contrasting imagery in many of these instances. Accounts of the Pacific and some of its inhabitants also figured prominently. But whereas the Sinophiles used a notion of China's superiority in civilizational terms, Pacific peoples were often exalted precisely because of their *un*civilized condition. Diderot's *Supplément* is well known for its searing critique of European – or more specifically French – politics and society which he composed using (a rather inaccurate and romanticized) interpretation of Louis de Bougainville's reports of life in Tahiti which helped to promote the more general allegory of the Noble Savage.[28] Similarly, Cook's account of the Society Islands gave Coleridge an image of utopia as a point of contrast with Britain's slave dystopias in the Caribbean,[29] while another author has shown how the 'cult of the savage' had an explicit moral theme which associated virtue with primitivism in opposition to civilization.[30] Yet another analysis shows how the South Seas archetype represented a region exempt from the ravages of nature as well as the mores of civilization.[31]

Parts of the New World attracted similar attention. Among the Hurons of Canada, the Baron de Lahontan believed that, exempted from the laws, prisons and torture of his own society, they 'pass their Life in a State of Sweetness and Tranquillity, and enjoy a pitch of Felicity to

which the *French* are utter strangers'.[32] This view supported John Locke's basic Enlightenment principles – the benevolent state of Nature governed by Reason. And for some Britons searching for links to their own pasts, the 'Pacific craze' and fascination with South Sea islanders inspired new perspectives on earlier inhabitants of the British isles, contributing to the reinvention of the ancient Angles, Jutes and Saxons as Britain's own noble savages, thereby providing the myths of Anglo-Saxonism with 'an "objective" coloration by association with current social science'.[33] At the same meeting that Crawfurd delivered his negative remarks on the much maligned Fuegans, another presenter provided a quite different view. While commenting critically on their appearance, which he attributed largely to the harsh physical environment, he nonetheless gained 'the most favourable impressions of the Fuegians (*sic*) [and] … in calling to mind the various classes of human beings I have encountered, I cannot but think of them all as more deserving our respect and goodwill than is generally considered'. He added pointedly that the sole exception to the warm and kindly manner of these people was one character who had been brought to London (possibly for an exhibition) and who had clearly been corrupted by the experience.[34] All these ideas generally went beyond a simple, sentimental exoticism. Summing up the more general impact of Pacific voyaging on European thinking, Myres says that:

> The Pacific Islanders … with their Garden of Eden existence, challenged all preconceived notions of the defective mentalities of races remote from Europe, and effected an almost Copernican revolution in the self-centred ethnology of the discoverers. If a South Sea Islander like Omai could pick up English, play chess, behave like a gentleman after a few months' consort with Europeans, there could not be much amiss with his mind; and it was clearly time to amend current conceptions as to the identity of the primitive with the remote.[35]

The response of Christian organizations which followed the early explorers and traders was something else again. The development of mission activity following exploration was of course extensive, covering virtually every continent as well as the smaller landmasses and islands in between them. The normative thinking that accompanied it, however, was very different from that described above. Unlike the critics of European society who sought moral lessons in the study of primitive societies, for missionaries that the flow of moral knowledge and learning definitely went the other way – from European/Christian civilization to

the spiritually bereft of newly discovered lands. The London Missionary Society, established in 1795, declared as its purpose the spreading of 'the knowledge of Christ among heathen and unenlightened nations' with its first triumphs being realized among the 'debased and savage islanders of the Pacific'.[36] Their souls may have been equal, but it seemed little else was. The first of their missions was despatched to the very place that had captured the imagination of Diderot and his contemporaries – Otaheite (Tahiti) – and which had subsequently become the archetypal South Pacific paradise.

It is clear, then, that although knowledge of other societies in other places provided a mirror in which Europeans could contemplate their own reflections, the images were diverse. While many likely persuaded themselves of their own intrinsic superiority and of their right to colonize distant lands, for a significant minority it prompted a serious effort to think critically about the shortcomings of one's own society. What can be said with little qualification is that encounters on the far side of the world had an enormous impact in Europe across a very significant range of thought and activity affecting Christianity, art, anthropology, popular culture, literature and science as well as social and political theory.[37] And that impact produced a range of responses far more complex than many superficial readings of 'Orientalism' allow.

What various native people may have thought of the Europeans they discovered sailing their waters – or rather, some 'peculiar floating samples of European society'[38] – is another matter. However, there is no reason to suppose that their responses were any less complex, just as it is unrealistic to depict them as the passive subjects of European influences or helpless casualties of their depredations, thereby 'dragooning them into playing the role of a stereotyped victim in a Western passion play'.[39] And while we cannot dispute the superiority afforded by European weapons and technology, to depict native people as inert is to at once deny them agency and impute to their own ways no resilience. One prominent historian of the Pacific has emphasized that intruders were often manipulated far more often than they realized, turning attention from 'the Good, Noble or Romantic savage to the Politick Indigene'.[40]

The agency of colonized people is a theme that Edward Said acknowledged, in retrospect, had been largely neglected in *Orientalism*. This omission was rectified to some extent in *Culture and Imperialism*. But what Said restored was not just any form of agency. He focused explicitly and restrictively on resistance: 'that response to Western dominance which culminated in the great movement of decolonization all across the Third World'. It was never the case, he said, 'that the imperial

encounter pitted an active Western intruder against a supine or inert non-Western native; there was *always* some form of active resistance and, in the majority of cases, the resistance finally won out'.[41] Said focuses on (Western) discourses that are replete with stereotypes about various 'others', which support the mission of bringing civilization to primitives or barbarians, and which illustrate 'the disturbingly familiar ideas about flogging or death or extended punishment being required when "they" misbehaved or became rebellious, because "they" mainly understood force or violence best; 'they were not like "us", and for that reason deserved to be ruled.'[42]

Said's framework of analysis in the later work nonetheless remains two-dimensional. It is 'the West' and the 'non-West' and, at least from the perspective of the colonizers, 'them versus us'. Similarly, Hardt and Negri, although always emphasizing that it is colonialism that produces absolute alterities, *re*produce it themselves in their repetition of such motifs as: 'The European Self needs violence and needs to confront its Other to feel and maintain its power, to remake itself continuously.'[43] While the record of European colonialism shows that virtually all of what Said describes is true, it remains only part of the story. Floggings and executions, postures of moral superiority on the part of privileged groups and so on were as much a part of life *within* places like England as it was elsewhere. And such structures and practices almost certainly existed within many 'other' societies as well. Furthermore, at least some indigenous elites conspired or collaborated with colonizing agents or, as suggested above, manipulated them to their own advantage. Relations of domination and exploitation, repression and resistance, are scarcely confined to West/non-West relations – they occur as much within these categories as between them.

That colonialism often had a very distinctive class element, and that the upper social strata of both the colonizers and the colonized got along very nicely in at least some cases, is suggested in another recent study which presents quite a different view of the colonial enterprise. David Cannadine's *Ornamentalism* proposes that the British Empire was based at least as much on ideas about social hierarchies as racial ones. Cannadine argues that this entailed fashioning an image of the empire abroad in terms of the social hierarchy at home. Understood in this way, the British Empire was as much, perhaps even more, about 'the replication of sameness and similarities originating from home as it was about the insistence on difference and dissimilarities originating from overseas'. Thus it was less concerned with creating 'otherness' than with the 'construction of affinities' on the grounds that social hierarchies, where they

were encountered abroad, were comparable to those at home.[44] And the same sometimes occurred in reverse.

The case of Fiji is especially interesting in colonial history not only for the fact that one of the paramount chiefs there twice requested the British to colonize the islands, and on the occasion of the first refusal (by Britain) made a similar request to Germany (which also refused), but also because when the islands were eventually ceded to Britain (voluntarily, by the most powerful chiefs), Queen Victoria was assimilated immediately and directly into the existing indigenous hierarchy. When decolonization eventually came onto the agenda in the post-War period, it was initially met with stiff resistance from indigenous leaders, thus confounding the now conventional dichotomous analysis of domination and resistance in the new culturally oriented schools of colonial discourse analysis.[45] Furthermore, to read the entire history of agency among colonized people in terms of resistance and a quest for national liberation runs the risk of anachronism. With some exceptions, it tends to read the texts of modern nationalism 'into a historical record which did not yet, and could not yet, contain it'.[46] Rather, explicit ideas about *national* liberation and self-determination were forged in the early twentieth century and absorbed by indigenous elites privileged enough to be educated in metropolitan centres.[47] There were certainly resistance movements, but it is misleading to read them as nationalist movements *per se*. Moreover, such movements did not necessarily represent all the various people or groups located within colonial states. We return to some of these matters in Chapter 6, but here we may note the value of insights provided by historical contextualism on the problem of anachronism.

The organization of knowledge

General developments in the systematic organization of new knowledge from the early modern period onwards, and related questions of method, are another important part of the story. The burgeoning interest in knowledge as such, and the means to spread it via print media, had seen the production in 1728 of the first encyclopaedia produced anywhere in Europe (or America) in the modern era.[48] These were the forerunners to a more general proliferation of encyclopaedias which attempted to both convey knowledge to a wider audience and to organize it in some systematic way. That they made their appearance during the period now referred to as the Enlightenment is no coincidence. However, the major figures of the Enlightenment were not concerned merely with the acquisition of knowledge and the various means of

organizing it. To the extent that they shared a common 'project' as social and political critics, religious sceptics and political reformers from their various locations in Edinburgh, Naples, Paris, Berlin, Boston and Philadelphia, it was to promote an ambitious program of secularism, humanism, cosmopolitanism and the freedom of moral, but autonomous beings, from unwarranted social and religious strictures.[49]

Another important development in the organization of knowledge was the establishment of societies devoted to the study of different forms of knowledge and which became a vehicle for the professionalization of knowledge in the late nineteenth century. In France, the Société des Observateurs de l'Homme, founded in1799 was one of many scientific organizations set up at the start of the Napoleonic period.[50] At the same time, the concepts necessary for the study of difference between human communities around the world were developing. According to Han F. Vermeulen's study, the terms *Ethnographie, Ethnologie, Völkerkunde and Volkskunde* appear to have emerged in Europe from the 1770s. In French, *ethnologie* was coined in 1787 in Switzerland before it was established by the Société Ethnologique de Paris in 1839. In England, 'ethnography' first appeared in a journal in 1834 while the term 'ethnology' achieved prominence in 1842/43 with the founding of the Ethnological Society of London. The similarity between the concepts is due to the fact that they all referred to a study of peoples or nations that was descriptive and historical. Further, it seems that the distinction between *Völkerkunde and Volkskundei* is that the former applied to the study of all people, whereas the latter applied to the study of one people only. Thus the opposition between 'Western' and 'non-Western' (or European and non-European), by which the distinction between *Völkerkunde and Volkskunde* is usually explained, was not valid for the late eighteenth century and emerged only in the nineteenth.[51] All this points to a process of the conceptualization of ethnology, or *Völkerkunde*, as a 'science of nations'. The establishment of ethnographical societies and museums, as well as the concurrent transformation of ethnology into a 'science of races' further consolidated the field. Vermeulan's conclusion is that the discipline of ethnology or ethnography, as the Greek-derived neologisms of the German concepts *Völkerkunde and Volkskunde*, was conceptualized in the last 30 years or so of the eighteenth century as part of the Enlightenment endeavour to impose some order on 'the growing body of data on peoples, nations or *Völker* in the world of that era'.[52]

Another important field of study was philology. In tracing the historical development of languages this subject was also thought capable of providing profound insights into the basics of human historical

development. Under the influence of Wilhelm von Humboldt, philology had become central to the curriculum in German universities. Humboldt, in turn, had been influenced by ideas traceable to Étienne Bonnot de Condillac – ideas that rejected the notion of one original, God-given, human language, positing instead the independent development of diverse languages within human communities that could be studied comparatively. It became in itself a 'science of man centrally concerned with the *Volksgeist*, the spirit of the people' the close study of which would be repaid through revealing 'the unique spiritual path of a nation's culture'.[53]

The study of history also underwent changes in this period, especially with respect to its relationship with culture. Among the challenges that culturalist ideas presented to Enlightenment science was a broad Romantic reaction of 'feeling and spirit' against the view that the impassive calculations of the mathematician or natural scientist can yield genuine insights into the human condition. The tension continued into the twentieth century with proponents of a different identity for the human sciences objecting to the model of natural science being used as the foundation for all the sciences.[54] An important element of that debate was historicism, an approach to history seeking to 'recapture the unique qualities of an historical situation'.[55] In this sense it is almost identical to the more recent formulation of historical contextualism.

Although it is difficult to set even an approximate date for the beginnings of historicism,[56] its formulation in the modern period is often attributed to Giambattista Vico's *New Science* and Johann Gottfried Herder's *Also a Philosophy of History*. The former challenged the ability of science to produce general theories of the natural world, arguing that it is only what is humanly created (i.e., what he would now call culture) that can be humanly understood and therefore made the subject of a genuine science. Wilhelm Dilthey is credited with proposing an important difference between the cultural sciences and the natural sciences. Since the subject matter of the former is humanly made, then the object of study is one in which the student actually participates closely.[57] Dilthey also spoke in terms of a 'cultural system' which sprang from the needs of individuals to form 'a stable relationship to the whole of human society'. To the extent that this is 'carried on in the same way in many minds', individuals are linked together in a social and historical bond thereby forming the cultural system.[58] In Herder, however, we find what seems to be the most radical of historicist positions, for he held that there is no progress or regress in history and that every historical period, which includes each period's particular values, must be understood entirely in

its own terms.[59] We shall see later that Herder's philosophy of history yielded some of the most important insights for the subsequent development of anthropological thought on the subject of discrete 'cultures' as well as later theories of nationalism which built on this idea. However, the individuation of nations which Herder's approach to history helped to draw out was not accompanied by any particular political project, let alone one which associated the nation and 'its culture' with a state of its own.

All these developments prefigured the growth of formal academic disciplines within the human sciences as part of the more general organization of knowledge from the nineteenth century through to the present. In England, so great was the interest in new knowledge that at the annual meeting of the Ethnological Society of London in 1855, complaints were made that the various scientific societies had grown so numerous, and the subject matter of science so greatly subdivided in them, 'as to be in some measure disadvantageous to the members of all'.[60] There were complaints, too, that many of the societies, even the most prestigious among them, were dominated by amateurs or worse: 'In England, out of about 800 Fellows of the Royal Society, the greater part of them know nothing of science, and of course their votes swamp those of the members most competent to pronounce opinions.'[61]

Developments in the United States followed a similar path. At the first joint meeting of the Scientific Alliance of New York the opening address noted the proliferation of various scientific societies, leading to poorly organized means of disseminating knowledge.[62] Just as important was the uneasy relationship between pure science and the pursuit of profit, with the worth of knowledge being measured in terms of its market value by the 'worshipers of the pound weight and the foot rule'.[63] The lack of public funds for research in universities was another problem. Not a single research chair had been established. In contrast, the government of Germany supported substantial scientific departments,[64] and so German universities were a popular destination for a new generation of American postgraduate social scientists emerging around 1880.[65] Other influences were evident in the founding of the American Philological Society in 1869 modelled directly on the German association established 30 years earlier.[66] Part of the success of German higher education and scholarship in this period has been attributed to the restructuring of university teaching and research along disciplinary lines and the appointment of distinguished chairs to new disciplines – Hegel in philosophy and Niebuhr in history among them – combined with the educational values of Humboldt and the emphasis on contributing to national culture at the highest level.[67] The academic enterprise and its

role in the organization of knowledge was therefore taken as an expression of national culture and attainment.[68]

The development of history as a professional undertaking followed a path designed to secure an authoritative status for its practitioners.[69] Not surprisingly, Germany again led the way followed by France, the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan, Belgium and other countries in due course. The importance of the German historian Leopold von Ranke and his ideas on methodological rigour and attention to primary sources cannot be underestimated. In the United States, the idea, or rather the ideal, of 'objective science' achieved almost cult status, and no group was more prone to scientific imagery and the mantle of professionalism it provided than the historians.[70] The relationship between history and nationalism will be explored later. Here we should note that where the profession thrived most it is at least partly because of its links with nationalist movements. This can be read in different ways, however, with some arguing that it was more the case of nationalism needing the historians rather than the other way around.[71]

Knowledge and method

The very idea of scientific knowledge implied close attention not only to how that knowledge is organized and professionalized, but also to how it is reliably produced. The emergence of the human sciences was therefore inevitably attended by issues of methodology. Of special interest here is the role of positivism in the development of the human sciences which has played an important part in the notion of the unity of method, that is, the notion that there is a single method proper to both the natural and the social sciences.[72] This implies a universalism quite at odds with the historicist ideas noted above. The antecedents of the rise of nineteenth-century positivism are well known, starting with Francis Bacon's empiricism which sought to banish the prejudices which obscured the laws of nature. The formulation of positivist method, however, was left to Auguste Comte, the founder of sociology. And it was not long before the relationship between positivist method, the production of objective knowledge and universally valid laws of human behaviour gained considerable ground:

> As regards the Positive method … It is nothing more nor less than the application of the principle that in the study of nature we are concerned merely *with the facts before us and the relations* which connect these facts with one another … . The science of any order of

> phenomena has nothing to do with the origin or ultimate explanation of the phenomena, but simply with their observed properties and the laws or order of sequence, according to which these properties are formed and subsist. *Facts and the invariable laws that govern them*, are, in other words, the pursuit and only legitimate pursuit of science.[73]

Another supporter of the method explained how its elements of pluralism, especially as between nations and races, were accommodated within a comparative framework:

> Positivism … while aiming at unity, by no means discourages partial diversity – it aspires to found a universal doctrine it is true, but not to obliterate those broad demarcations which separate nation from nation and race from race. From the individual we advance to the family, from the family to the city, from the city to the nation, from the nation to the race … Man having everywhere begun by being a fetich-worshipper and a cannibal. Instead of indulging our horror and disgust of such a state of things by denying it, we should admit a collective pride in that human progressiveness which has brought us into our present state of comparative exaltation … Some philosophers suppose a state prior even to fetichism; a state in which the human species was altogether … incapable of any speculation whatever; in that lowest condition in which they now suppose the natives of Tierra del Fuego and some of the Pacific Islanders to be … [but] … the human organism, in all times and places, has manifested the same essential needs, differing only in their degree of development and corresponding mode of satisfaction.[74]

Alternatives to positivist methodology were often regarded as a metaphysical luxury, confined purely to the sphere of speculative thought, and quite useless in the real world of action. Indeed, there was a heavy emphasis on utility and practicality in promoting the very progress which both theory and method found, in any case, to be the natural and inevitable trend for all human development. Lord Macauley contrasted this with 'ancient philosophy' which disdained to be useful, dealing only with ideas of moral perfection, 'so sublime they could never be more than theories'.[75]

The ultimate purpose of positivist methodologies was to support the establishment of universally applicable laws of behaviour, whether of elements, biological organisms or with respect to the social behaviour of humans. All this accorded with the linear view of progressive history

and social evolutionism as well as the unity of science and method, as illustrated in the above quotations. Thus the study of the social life of humans was not to be distinguished from the natural sciences. The French writer Joseph Marie de Gérando (1772–1842), author of *Considerations on the Diverse Methods to Follow in the Observation of Savage Peoples*, depicted the 'science of man' as the noblest of all the *natural* sciences with its method setting the standard for all the others. This, he said, began with careful observation, proceeded to comparative analysis, and from there to the 'general laws' of human development and behaviour.[76] De Gérando's memoir has been described as fascinating simply as a capsule of summation of the anthropology of the French Enlightenment which resonated with many ideas in late nineteenth-century evolutionist social theory. These held that since human nature was fundamentally the same in all times and places, its development being governed by natural laws, it followed that once a proper method had been established, the broad outlines of all social change could be given in advance: 'man developed from his earliest state in a slow, unilinear evolutionary progress whose eventual goal was perfection and whose highest present manifestation was western European society'.[77]

The comparative method of analysis, modelled on natural history and comparative anatomy and deployed as the basis of empirical research in the study of social evolution, was soon to become the most widely accepted method of social science research.[78] A late-nineteenth-century practitioner of the method, noting its correspondence to the inductive method used in physical and experimental sciences, opined that since its application in other fields of knowledge including geology, palaeontology, philology, archaeology, mythology, jurisprudence and so on, it had brought about 'amazing progress', including the falsification of previously prevalent beliefs that the world was created in six days.[79]

The comparative method was employed in early anthropological research as an important tool in the construction of social evolutionary models on a global scale. Using data from different societies, a general model could be constructed showing a hierarchy of development from lower to higher. There was no requirement to study every single society in the entire world in all its detail before classification, for once a general picture was obtained on the basis of a few key facts, the comparative method allowed one to fill in the gaps simply by drawing on knowledge about other societies adjudged to be at the same level of development.[80] This had practical applications in British colonial rule. For example, the utilization of indirect rule was seen as appropriate only in those situations where the subject people had already reached a certain stage in

their social evolution, and the comparative method was used to determine just what that stage was: 'From evolutionist indices to developmental stages – religious beliefs, rites of passage, political institutions, and so on – administrators were able to classify whole cultures in the evolutionist taxonomy even when their knowledge of these cultures was very limited, since they assumed that cultures judged in the same stage were virtually identical.'[81]

The anthropological enterprise therefore became attached to a quest for knowledge, not merely for satisfying intellectual questions, but for promoting the more effective governance of alien peoples. The records of the Ethnological Society of London illustrate the profession's eagerness to demonstrate its utility according to Macauley's dictum:

> Each Governor of our Colonies ought to know the Ethnology of the aborigines in the Colony he governs, in order to rightly administer its political and social affairs, so as to act justly between settlers and natives. And the Colonial minister ought to know the Ethnology of all our Colonies, in order to form a sound judgement on the administration of all the Governors acting under his authority. These important truths are trite and common place to Ethnologists, and require only to be stated to commend themselves to those acquainted with the aim and scope of Ethnological science. It is hoped that such knowledge will in future be deemed indispensable for colonial government.[82]

The British anthropologist E.E. Evans-Pritchard later defined the comparative method as the attempt to establish 'laws or universals, in the sense of providing propositions to which there are no exceptions, by comparative analysis'. But Evans-Pritchard was no fan, citing the method as producing over-ambitious projects which either came to grief on the rocks of ethnographic fact or produced extraordinarily simplistic and unsustainable typologies.[83] The greater the effort to produce universals, the more tenuous the abstractions or hypotheses become. He concluded that over an entire century the method had produced little that was both reliable and significant, yet it remained in vogue in the United States where it had become known as the cross-cultural approach.[84] Indeed, just five years before, a leading American anthropologist, after first explaining that the cross-cultural approach sought to look at 'any problem of human life from the point of view of the total range of human institutions and modes of behaviour to be found all over the world', went on to assert that its importance was so obvious that, once stated, 'we can but wonder why it took so long to discover'.[85]

The particular form of comparativism devised in the nineteenth century and criticized by Evans-Pritchard was certainly too crude to sustain its own ambitions. The basic principles, however, remain the basis for the comparative school of studies in world politics:

> The study of comparative politics rests on a fundamental assumption. It is that human behaviour is broadly speaking constant: that it will be the same in the same circumstances, regardless of time and space. … The overwhelming weight of evidence is that *homo sapiens* is a very homogeneous species [and] such differences as exist between the populations of different parts of the world are trivial. … On the other hand many historical studies seek to explain only specific sequences of events as they happened over time, in their own terms (historicism). What political scientists seek to do is to obtain general theories purporting to explain human behaviour … to derive sets of propositions describing the conditions under which specific types of behaviour will take place. These propositions will then be valid for all time and places and not just for some specific sequence of historical events.[86]

A quite different approach to comparativism, however, has been put forward by a contributor to the more recent cultural turn in the study of history:

> Being comparative permits us to ask, possibly even to provide tentative answers to, big questions. It also permits the researcher to call attention to intellectual content present in one setting and not in another. It allows our vision to be more rather than less ethnographic, because the distinctive can best be seen in the face of its absence elsewhere.[87]

The juxtaposition of these two views of comparativism illustrates nicely the concern of universalist approaches to identify sameness, and the concern of culturalist approaches to identify difference.

Conclusion

The impact of the wider world on the development of certain human sciences within Europe was clearly significant. 'Discovery' of other places and people, however, did not generate a singular response on the part of European thinkers, as implied by those concerned to demonstrate 'the cultural unity and particularism of European political thought'.[88]

An exclusive focus on how European thinkers responded to the 'Other' also neglects the equally important influences on dynamics *within* various European societies, including those emanating initially from revolutionary France. Indeed, it has been suggested that modern social science as such emerged from the social upheaval of 1789 as well as its violent aftermath.[89] So too did modern notions of democratic legitimacy and the nation as an entity on which this legitimacy could be conferred in practice – as we shall see in later chapters.

The general developments discussed above also provided much of the impetus for the disciplinary development of social and cultural anthropology from the late nineteenth-century onwards. And although the explicit idea of social evolutionism came to be less and less acceptable as a basis for universalist thinking, it has remained implicit in theories of modernization and development and the comparativism on which studies in these areas rest. Social evolutionism dominated much ethnological and anthropological thinking in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but it never went entirely unchallenged. Subsequent developments in anthropological thought – especially the kind of cultural anthropology developed in the United States by the German–American anthropologist Franz Boas and his students – saw it completely overturned. With these scholars we find the beginnings of the objectification of culture, the construction of radical difference, and the rise to prominence of ideas about cultural and moral relativism, all of which were conceived in explicit opposition to the various universalizing projects of positivist methodology in the nascent social sciences and the hierarchical assumptions they supported.

5
Culture/s: Conceptualization and Theorization

The emergence of the culture concept is best understood as the application of the word 'culture' to a complex of ideas which certainly existed before the late nineteenth century but which lacked, until that time, a definitive term to encapsulate all that it conveyed. Conventional wisdom has it that there actually emerged, within a couple of years of each other, two very distinct, almost mutually exclusive concepts of culture in Anglophone thought – the humanist and the anthropological. Although they have more in common than is generally acknowledged, it is the latter manifestation that is the focus of critical attention here because of its emphasis on 'difference' and the way in which it has been used to define human communities in the sphere of world politics. It is also an anthropological conception of culture, especially as it developed in American cultural anthropology, that was initially used to counter racialist ideas based on biological premises. At the same time, it worked to repudiate the evolutionary frameworks within which the superiority of European societies was often imagined, thereby producing a significant change in thinking about both sameness and difference. But the further development of anthropological ideas about culture, especially in alliance with hermeneutics, produced an insider/outsider dichotomy with profound implications for the way in which 'culture' is understood to structure world politics.

Humanism meets anthropology

'Culture' names an abstract concept and is therefore a heuristic device – a way of thinking about or organizing facts – whose meaning is grasped best by examining the way it is used.[1] Before it was recruited to name certain specific concepts in the human sciences, the word 'culture' was

used in English for several hundred years, most commonly in agri*cultural* terms.[2] At first glance, this seems quite unrelated to both the humanist and anthropological connotations. The agricultural sense reflected its origins in the Latin *cultura* which occurred in the composite term *agri cultura* – tilling or cultivation of the soil. But it was also allied to uses denoting training, fostering, and adornment as well as worship and cult (*cultus*). Cicero spoke of *cultura animi* – culture of the mind – which he identified with philosophy. Later, it came to signify the cultivation of arts and letters and of the intellect more generally.[3] Raymond Williams notes that, from a relatively early stage, the word was used in English with reference to a process of human development. In Bacon (1605) and Hobbes (1651), for example, there are clear uses relating to the 'culture of the mind'. In 1779 the Scottish thinker, John Millar, opined that the inhabitants of so many parts of the globe were 'destitute of culture'.[4] In a travel account published in 1801, the inhabitants of the East Indies are described as 'ignorant of culture, subsisting only on fruits, covered with the skin of beasts … killing the old men and the infirm who could no longer follow in their excursions'.[5] In 1827 Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary* gives meanings for *culture* with respect to both the act of cultivation, as in tillage, as well as the 'art of improvement and melioration' more generally,[6] while the term 'civilize' means to 'reclaim from savageness and barbarity; to instruct in the arts of regular life'.[7] In all these understandings and usages of culture/cultivation, what is commonly featured is a notion of 'control and organization, refinement and sublimation of nature'.[8] This is also reflected in the fact that the 'savage', or 'natural man' was defined as such by an apparent lack of 'civility', although this was not always viewed in negative terms.[9] In summary, the development of 'culture' as an independent noun or as describing an abstract process was by no means a sudden one in English usage.[10]

In 1869 Matthew Arnold set out the clearest statement to date of a humanist conception of culture that was explicitly evaluative and normative. Embodied in intellectual, literary and artistic achievement, culture in Arnold's famous formulation culminated in 'a pursuit of our total perfection by means of getting to know, on all matters which most concern us, the best of what has been thought and said in the world'.[11] In this sense, culture referred primarily to the cultivation of a body of values, especially those transmitted from the past to the future through artistic and literary works.[12] Thus culture had an organic quality built around a set of core values, not dissimilar to an anthropological conception. In addition, Arnold opposed liberal individualist ideas, believing that values supporting freedom for the masses would allow

them to fall prey to baser instincts, to the primal emotions of barbarism – the antithesis of culture.[13] He supported instead a rather conservative notion that society required a stable hierarchical order which in turn provided a source of identity and security. But Arnold's interest in culture was related very specifically to 'what good it can do', arguing that it had an important role to play in 'diminishing human misery' and inspiring the noble desire 'to leave the world better and happier than we found it'.[14]

Given the very precise moral purpose of Arnold's vision, it is not surprising that his conception of culture is described as strongly normative. This also emphasizes the political aspects of culture highlighted not just by Arnold and his contemporaries, but by many of the cultural critics of the twentieth-century as well who went on to develop the field of cultural studies with its explicit focus on politics and, under the influence of Marxist ideas, on ideology. Arnold and his contemporaries employed the term 'culture' in a critical tradition of protest against the negative impact of industrialization and its palpable lack of humane values beyond individualistic and material satisfactions, while providing a positive vision of what could be achieved, especially through education.[15] Arnold also distinguished his normative approach to knowledge from the 'scientific' which implied value free enquiry.

A second conception of culture was formulated by the British anthropologist, Edward B. Tylor just two years after the appearance of Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy*. Despite the subsequent proliferation of definitions in the discipline and their refinements and elaborations, Tylor's remains one of the most widely cited in anthropological literature. Indeed, despite the claim that 'modern anthropology begins with Franz Boas',[16] it is Tylor's definition of culture that appears more often in textbooks, at least in Anglophone scholarship, as well as on the UNESCO website.[17] The continuing authoritativeness of Tylor's definition is all the more interesting because he belonged to the school of social evolution which placed European civilization at the highest point of achievement to date. Tylor's definition conflated existing ideas about civilization and culture with the very commonly used phrase 'customs and manners'. He concluded that: 'Culture or Civilization, taken in its widest ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.'[18] Tylor did not specify the exact means by which one society was to be distinguished from another, although it was implicit in this formulation that 'culture' was that distinguishing element. In summary, Tylor performed a formal reification of the culture concept,

turning it from a process – implied in the idea of cultivation – into a thing in itself.

Tylor's anthropological approach is generally regarded as positive and descriptive rather than normative and evaluative, thereby placing it firmly within the realm of the scientific rather than the moral or aesthetic. It is partly for this reason that Arnold's conception, and that of Tylor and subsequent anthropologists, are often depicted as opposed to or in tension with each other. Certainly, Arnold's conception is often read (especially by anthropologists) as elitist, endorsing a notion of 'high culture', and not merely worthless in application to the concerns of anthropology, but ethically suspect as well. Kroeber and Kluckhorn maintain that Arnold's conception, along with other humanist interpretations,

> is not only ethnocentric, often avowedly Hellenocentric; it is absolutistic. It knows perfection, or at least what is most perfect in human achievement, and resolutely directs its 'obligatory' gaze thereto, disdainful of what is 'lower'. The anthropological attitude is relativistic … it assumes that every society through its culture seeks and in some measure finds values …[19]

One contemporary anthropologist, following this example, has said that if 'we want to retain the idea of culture as an *analytic* tool, we must begin by dismissing Arnold's construction of it'.[20] Arnold's liberal humanist ideas embodied in his notion of culture, however, were much more complex and ambiguous than simple assumptions about elitism convey. And if Arnold's notion of culture 'was universal in its moral scope and application, emerging from and directed towards what was distinctively human in humanity',[21] then it shares some important common ground with anthropology which, after all, has also been concerned to delineate, through the concept of culture, that which is distinctively 'human'.

Arnold was concerned with the need to promote education so that people could become more critical of their own society. He was especially opposed to the notion that education consisted of nothing more than the acquisition of 'facts', scientific or otherwise, and urged that people develop their critical faculties so that they could reflect not just on what these facts may mean, but on more general purposes and ideals. He was concerned with the 'cult of inequality' in Victorian society and its injustices. He supported the development of political democracy, although he remained nervous of some of its cultural consequences. He was certainly convinced of the inability of the aristocracy to provide worthwhile leadership, such serenity as they possessed coming not from

a personal harmonization of ideas through the nurturing of culture, but from never having had any ideas to trouble them in the first place.[22]

Arnold was therefore ultimately concerned with the role of culture and how it might be used to address social problems. This was certainly different from the concerns of the anthropologists with 'primitive' societies. But anthropologists, too, were concerned to say something about their own societies through the comparative study of cultural phenomena in other places. Furthermore, a number of later anthropologists adopted quite explicit humanist ideas in their work.[23] More generally, the humanist approach places a strong emphasis on the relationship between culture and the development of shared values which contribute to social cohesion. Like the anthropologists, Arnold, was concerned with social order, even functionality, in his quest to avoid 'anarchy'.

Arnold's humanist conception may have categorized culture as 'lower' and 'higher', but so too did the evolutionist view which persisted well beyond Tylor's time. But whereas Arnold perceived the different levels as existing within his own society, anthropological evolutionism equated 'lower' and 'higher' with the differences between European and non-European societies. Nearly forty years after Tylor, another prominent British anthropologist actually explained the 'higher' type in terms of a humanist conception thereby illustrating that the humanist and anthropological conceptions were not entirely unrelated and could, at times, be used to support each other:

> The types of culture are, in fact, reducible to two, a simpler and a more complex, or, as we say, (valuing our own achievements, I doubt not, rightly), a lower and a higher. The Humanities … those humanizing studies that, for us at all events, have their parent sources in the literatures of Greece and Rome – concentrate on whatever is most constitutive and characteristic of the higher life of society.[24]

Thus it is an anthropological conception of culture that makes the distinction between the higher and the lower, the primitive and the civilized. As late as the 1970s, Margaret Mead still distinguished between 'high' cultures and 'primitive people without a written language and without full participation within a great society'.[25] This way of thinking is now surely obsolete, but the distinction between 'Western' and 'non-Western' implicit in so much anthropological thought remains, forming the basis of the dichotomy pervading numerous contemporary discussions of 'culture' in the sphere of world politics.

Several other commentators have also argued that the two late nineteenth-century conceptions were not as far apart as they might

seem at first glance and that Tylor's formulation probably owes a great deal to Arnold. Stocking has suggested that Tylor's concept 'did not leap full-blown from [his] brow in 1871', and believes that it probably owed more to his near-contemporary, Matthew Arnold, than many anthropologists might be willing to admit. In explaining this, Stocking says that in 'the anthropological creation story, the two culture concepts are seen in competition for dictionary and general intellectual precedence, which outside the anthropological ethnos has perversely been awarded to the false or outmoded humanist meaning'.[26] However, 'culture' scarcely sprang without precedent from Arnold's brow either, having acquired a distinct humanist meaning over a considerable period of time. While the sense of culture in Arnold's work is generally described as 'normative', it is in fact an anthropological, and thus 'scientific', formulation that has become the touchstone for contemporary normative theory, at least with respect to the sphere of world politics.

Tylor's use of the word 'culture' in an anthropological sense, while novel in some ways, did not actually name a novel complex of ideas, for this certainly existed well before. Kroeber and Kluckhorn, among others, note that the broad underlying idea was encapsulated in the work of many writers from Herodotus onwards who discerned the varying 'life-ways' that characterized different population groups.[27] The English phrase that immediately preceded Tylor's sense use of culture was simply 'customs and manners'. A review of literature in the century or so preceding the mid-Victorian period in Britain reveals many of publications using this phrase in almost exactly the same way we would use 'culture' now, as in 'the culture *of*' a certain population group or of a whole country. A book published in 1841 entitled *Institutions, Customs and Manners of the Japanese*, includes sections containing 'anecdotes illustrative of the character and manners of the Japanese' with more specific sections on political institutions, language, literature and science, arts, manufactures, trade and productions, religion, and so on.[28] This includes just about every aspect of that 'complex whole' referred to by Tylor which readily translates into the 'whole way of life' formula taken up not only by anthropologists but also by figures such as T.S. Eliot in the twentieth century who used this term quite explicitly.[29] At the 1855 meeting of the Ethnological Society of London, we find an address entitled 'Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders, with Illustrations of their Manners and Customs'.[30] Clearly, then, ethnologists and others were using 'customs and manners', sometimes allied with other concepts such as 'character', 'institutions', 'traditions' and 'superstitions', in ways which show a very close proximity to the understanding of culture in the later anthropological sense.

In French, terms such as *manières* and *mœurs* (terms encompassing manners, habits, customs, ways, morals, styles, method etc.) had long conveyed very similar ideas. The famous *Encyclopédie* contains entries for both *mœurs* and *manières*, these being defined partly by reference to the other and linked as well to *coutume* (custom, habit, usual practice, customary law).[31] The distinction between the two terms lies in their orientation to the inner and outer dimensions of human behaviour – *moeurs* are in the nature of 'habits of the heart' while *manières* refer more to external aspects or manners. The Dictionary of the French Academy, published in the early 1760s, had an entry for 'culture' defined as 'interest in the arts and the mind'. This seems closer to Arnold's humanist understanding. Well before then, Montaigne had described 'moral science' as a field devoted to 'considerations of the nature and circumstances of different peoples, and of the customs of different nations',[32] an understanding with a distinct comparative dimension.

In both French and Spanish the word 'culture' developed from 'cult' which had, and still retains, a religious meaning.[33] *Kultur* appears in German in Adelung's second dictionary in 1793, apparently as an import from France and with the same meaning attached.[34] Another source suggests that it developed within German philosophy and was identified with *Bildung*, the cultivation of inner life and one's mental and spiritual capacities.[35] Kroeber and Kluckhorn maintain that Tylor borrowed the word culture directly from the German,[36] but it seems just as likely that he was influenced by Arnold's usage. In any event, although the earliest of the anthropological definitions of culture in English was decisive for seeing culture as a 'complex whole', thereby prefiguring the 'whole way of life' approach, Tylor did not quite articulate the concept of '*a* culture' which in turn allowed for the plurality of 'cultures' already identified by Herder a century earlier.

In the English speaking world, this step was to be taken more than twenty years later by the German-born Franz Boas, the most important founding figure in American cultural anthropology.[37] Nonetheless, it seems quite certain that Tylor acquired at least part of his understanding of culture from German historical ethnologists[38] giving it a resonance which distinguished it from that of Arnold's. And in Tylor's work, possibly influenced by Herder's appreciation of difference, we find a certain respect for the subjects of his studies:

> the religions of savage tribes may be rude and primitive … (but) they do not lie too low for interest and even for respect. The question really lies between understanding and misunderstanding them … Far from its

> beliefs and practices being a rubbish-heap of miscellaneous folly, they are consistent and logical in so high a degree as to begin, as soon as even roughly classified, to display the principles of their formation and development; and these principles prove to be essentially rational[39]

Perhaps the most important development in the use of the word 'culture' in English, and which informed the understandings that it later acquired in anthropology, came through the work of Herder who, although no nationalist, formulated ideas about both culture and the nation that were exceptionally important for the later development of nationalist ideology. Herder may have been the first to speak of 'cultures' in the plural, and to refer to the specific and variable elements of culture between nations, and over different periods, as well as those of distinct social and economic groups within nations.[40] The significant plural of Herder's thinking deliberately opposed any singular or unilinear sense of 'civilization',[41] something which Franz Boas would later make much clearer.

The concept of culture as encapsulating 'that complex whole' was the result of long-term processes of development in intellectual thought, stimulated and informed by encounters with exotic others as well as reflection, both positive and negative, on European societies and issues of difference and similarity, happiness and achievement, progress and purpose. Much of the thrust of theorizing supported attempts to construct universal theories which could explain or otherwise accommodate diversity, often (but not always) to the advantage of the theorists' own society or civilization. Positivist methodologies, far from being normatively neutral and therefore possessing the objective scientific integrity that they aspired to, were in fact implicated in such projects. They not only favoured some blatantly ethnocentric constructions of knowledge but also provided the basis for the development of scientific racism in physical anthropology as well as other disciplines.

Race and racism

Ideas about 'race', broadly understood, are not confined to any one geographical, cultural or historical sphere. Race thinking can be found in the ancient world of the Greeks and their neighbours just as it is found on all continents in the contemporary world. It is understandable, however, that race thinking should frequently be associated with influential strands of European thought following the voyages of exploration and discovery that exposed people in Europe to the variety of

human life in terms not just of 'customs and manners' but of physical appearance as well. It is nonetheless misleading to define 'race' simply as a 'framework of ranked categories dividing up the human population … developed by Europeans following their global expansion … in the 1400s'.[42] For in the same way that race thinking was not *exclusively* European, however elaborately developed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, neither was it encompassingly European. Europeans were almost as familiar with human variety under the empires established by Greece, Macedonia and Rome, as under the post-1492 empires of Spain, Britain and France. And perceptions of race did not drive them in only the one, negative direction. The extreme form of racism that came to prominence in nineteenth- and-twentieth century social and political thought was not a feature of earlier periods. While there were 'constant reiterations of some of the features of medieval polar typologies' with pigmentation playing a part, all humans belonged to the same 'family of God'. That remained so 'as long as no political or economic interest called for a theoretical imputation or debasement with respect to any group of dependent people.'[43] Population groups were commonly differentiated in terms of 'nation', not 'race', which initially carried a strictly zoological connotation applicable only to animals.[44]

Racial thinking, however, proved exceptionally useful to both imperialism and slavery, projects aided by an especially invidious form of bad science. But there is a tendency to underestimate the extent to which social change within Europe contributed to the growth of racialized thinking, providing a new model for the interpretation of class relations and national identity.[45] Gobineau's global racism was designed primarily to explain the supposedly biological nature of the challenge (from below and within) to the French aristocracy that issued from the Revolution of 1789 and after. In Britain, ideas about the inferiority of the Irish were often expressed in explicit racialist terms, although particular biological traits were not necessarily used as the essential marker of difference. Ideas of 'race' as marking different descent groups, lineages or bloodlines also came to be used in the interpretation of history. Matthew Arnold's father, Thomas, spoke of the English as a nation whose forbears, though they had 'learned to speak a stranger's tongue, yet in blood … were Saxons'.[46] Notions involving human 'bloodlines' had yet to receive the imprimatur of science which, as it developed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in particular, endowed them with a putatively objective quality. A combination of the diverse elements contributing to racialist ideas in Europe, including descent, manners, customs, climate also produced the idea of national character.

Encounters outside of Europe prompted the further development, rather than the beginning, of race thinking. The development of comparative natural history on a global scale reinforced the idea of typologies which became central modern scientific studies. The appearance of Linnaeus' *Systema Naturae* in 1735 provided the basic framework for modern biological classification, while nonetheless accommodating the idea of the 'Great Chain of Being'. Linnaeus's system also included a racial sub-classification of the human species, based initially on skin colour – white, red, yellow and black – with each placed on one of the four major continents.[47] By the early 1800s, skin colour, along with resistance to certain diseases, was seen as occurring through natural selection. Darwin attributed these findings to a Dr W.C. Wells whom he acknowledged as the first to speak of the principle of natural selection, although it was initially restricted 'only to the races of man'.[48]

In 1795 Johan Friedrich Blumenbach devised a division of the entire world population into five basic racial groups: Caucasian, Mongolian, Ethiopian, American and Malayan.[49] But even this did not necessarily imply a hierarchical ranking. Blumenbach himself explicitly rejected such a move, attributing the racial differences he discerned as due to climate rather than innate intellectual attributes. Nonetheless, he cannot be regarded as an early cultural relativist because he did assume that Caucasians provided the standard from which the other races must be considered deviant.[50] Similarly, Alexander von Humboldt, one of the most liberal of late eighteenth/early nineteenth thinkers, who believed that no nation or people was in itself more or less noble than the next, and that all humans 'are in like degree designed for freedom',[51] nonetheless resorted to explanations based on some kind of innate mental difference to explain what appeared to be unequal levels of achievement. Humboldt puzzled over why Arab achievements in culture and science had flowered so remarkably soon after the rise of Islam while Scythian tribes remained stagnant, even though both were nomadic and shared virtually the same kind of climate and environment.[52] Thus Humboldt was not obsessed by notions of European superiority.

One thinker who consistently refused to place Europeans at the centre of creation, adopting the most thoroughgoing monogenist position, was Herder:

> For each genus Nature has done her share and to each she has given its proper progeny. She has divided the ape into as many species and varieties as possible, and extended these as far as she could. But thou, o man, honour thyself: neither the pongo nor the gibbon is thy

> brother, but the American [Indian] and the Negro *are*. These, therefore, thou should not oppress, or murder, or rob; for they are men like thee; with the ape thou canst not enter into fraternity.[53]

He also made an important distinction between race on the one hand, and nation on the other. The latter was to be understood as a strictly cultural category while the concept of race had no place in the study of humankind. The latter, in turn needed to be rigorously separated from 'natural' history with its zoological connotations.

> [I] should like to express the hope that [the] distinctions that have been made – from a perfectly laudable zeal for scientific exactitude – between different members of the human species will not be carried beyond bounds. Some, for instance, have thought fit to employ the term *races* for four or five divisions, according to regions of origin or complexion. I see no reason for employing this term. Race refers to a difference of origin, which in this case either does not exist or which comprises in each of these regions or complexions the most diverse 'races'. For every distinct community is a *nation*, having its own national culture as it has its own language. The climate, it is true, may imprint on each its peculiar stamp, or it may spread over it a slight veil, without destroying, however, its original national character. … In short, there are neither four or five races, nor exclusive varieties, on this earth. Complexions run into each other; forms follow the genetic character; and *in toto* they are, in the final analysis, but different shades of the same great picture which extends through all ages and all parts of the earth. Their study, therefore, properly forms no part of biology or systematic natural history but belongs rather to the anthropological history of man.[54]

Certain influential European figures therefore rejected the idea of biological race altogether. Scientific attention to issues of human difference in terms of race was never, in any case, confined simply to distinctions between Europeans and various groups of non-Europeans. The search for 'better methods of making racial comparisons and standardising racial indices' had also focused attention on Europe where 'Teutonic', 'Alpine' and 'Mediterranean' racial types were discerned.[55] In addition, European history itself came to be analysed in racial terms and physical anthropology was joined by social anthropology in identifying the finer points of difference. This took place in an atmosphere of growing nationalism and rivalry in which 'theories of difference and exclusion,

whether based on nation, class or race, seemed almost necessary for social identification and moral orientation'.[56]

Nonetheless, a serious effort was made by others to provide a scientific basis for claims of Caucasian superiority, as well as to support polygenist theories. Various studies linking intellectual capacity to the physical size of the skull were undertaken in sometimes fraudulent exercises in 'craniometry'. A fair amount of fudging produced results favouring the Caucasian skull size and so the notion that Caucasians actually possessed larger crania than other 'races' could be interpreted as confirming their intellectual and moral superiority. And since male skulls were on average noticeably larger than those of females, a further consequence was the affirmation of male superiority. There is little need to elaborate on what this meant for institutions such as imperialism and slavery on the one hand and the domestic subordination of women on the other. But racialist views supporting polygeny and slavery were eventually overwhelmed by both 'better' science as well as by moral argument, although this would never suffice to end race thinking.

In summarizing some of the racial thinking of the period, including 'scientific' racism, especially as it concerned issues of method and the interpretation of data produced by craniometry (and later IQ testing), Stephen Jay Gould has drawn attention to a problem with the 'allure of numbers' in the human sciences – 'the faith that rigorous measurement could guarantee irrefutable precision, and might mark the transition between subjective speculation and a true science as worthy of Newtonian physics'. The craniometrists may not have been conscious political ideologues – they actually regarded themselves as apostles of objectivity. Nonetheless, they confirmed the common prejudices held by the 'comfortable white males' who, from positions of relative power and privilege, insisted that the darker races, along with women and the poor, occupied their subordinate roles according to the dictates of nature. In sum, numbers were deployed, less to generate new theories than to illustrate a priori conclusions about race, gender and class. Gould suggests that science today may be no less susceptible to prevailing social norms.[57]

One remedy for these developments was found in an approach that attempted to consider human societies or groups, not within a comparative framework which posited a standard set by mainstream, middle class West European (or American) societies, but one in which each was to be understood and appreciated in its own terms. It was no less scientific in orientation, for it depended on a rigorous empiricism with respect to hard data. But the data was interpreted using a very different

approach. This brings us to the further development of anthropological ideas about culture which saw the decline both of biologically based racial theories purporting to explain human difference and of social evolutionism and its universalist premises. There emerged instead notions of culture, and of a plurality of 'cultures'. These approaches, disposed very strongly to both relativism and determinism, were constructed in explicit opposition to both racial and evolutionary paradigms and were decisive for the next important stage in the political career of the culture concept.

From universalism to relativism

One of the original inspirations for the emergence of anthropology as a discipline was the notion that the links between contemporary humanity and its earliest ancestors could be traced within a progressive evolutionary framework running from lower or primitive social forms to the higher or civilized. The differences between 'primitive' and 'civilized' did not connote incommensurability, otherwise they could not have been accommodated within a universal theory of linear development. The shift away from the evolutionary paradigm, however, depended on a much more radical sense of difference and this required, in turn, a new mode of discourse provided by the idea of *a* culture – especially as developed in the work of Franz Boas and his students – as an enclosed world of shared ideas and customs. This was later reinforced by functionalist sociology as a similarly bounded universe of self-reproducing structures.[58] Once the evolutionary schema with its hierarchical linkages was overturned, a notion of radical incommensurability could be developed which repudiated all universals about humanity at large.

Although Boas began his career with a notion of culture framed by both humanist and evolutionary usages, he was influenced as well by developments in his native Germany where Herder had introduced the important plural usage of the term along with a very strong sense of the equal worth of all human communities and a concomitant rejection of any standard against which 'progress' might be measured. Boas studied physics before taking up anthropology. But he came to believe that its general principles were not appropriate to anthropological work. Instead, he turned to history. He actually used the terms 'physics' and 'history' to denote two broad, contrasting approaches, 'the former seeking laws and subordinating particular events to abstract generalizations, the latter seeking the thorough understanding of phenomena – even individual events – and making laws or generalizations merely instrumental

to that end'.[59] It was this approach that Boas and his students adopted in their further development of the culture concept. In so doing, they extended it to embrace a more thoroughgoing sense of difference between human communities. This stamped American cultural anthropology with its strong anti-evolutionary bias and a commitment to the fundamental historicity of all cultural phenomena, grounding them in specific, local historical processes.[60] By the 1890s Boas spoke of culture as something societies possess and of 'cultures' as the object of ethnological enquiry, thereby introducing the plural usage in English.[61]

Boas's commitment to scientific rigour has never been in question but this did not mean that he started from a normatively neutral position. The Boasian school was concerned to counter the racialist theories purveyed by the eugenicists and racial anthropologists of the period. The theories of Boas and his followers were therefore opposed not only to the monogenist evolutionary framework developed by Tylor and his contemporaries but even more so to the polygenists and others determined to promote theories of explicit racial hierarchies. Boas himself accepted the term 'race' – it had become common to denote different population groups thus – but it had little substance beyond physical descriptive uses. Much of his work focused on the links, or rather the lack of them, between race on the one hand and character, cultural achievement, progress, intelligence, emotions, and so on, on the other. He was consistent in his conclusions that hereditary factors are of little importance compared with social or cultural environment:

> The variety of response of groups of the same race but culturally different is so great that it seems likely that any existing biological differences are of minor importance. … The North American Indians are reputed as stoic, as ready to endure pain and torture without a murmur. This is true in all those cases in which culture demands repression of emotion. The same Indians, when ill, give in to hopeless depression. … The buffalo hunter was an entirely different personality from the poor Indian who has to rely on government help, or who lives on the proceeds of land rented by his White neighbours. … Ethnological evidence is all in favour of the assumption that hereditary racial traits are unimportant compared to cultural conditions.[62]

In countering social evolutionism, Boas also promoted ideas about both historical particularism and holistic paradigms. These aimed at discouraging methodological comparativism and the generalizing theories they produced by focusing attention on the specific cultural world of

individual groups. In so doing, Boas was also concerned to sever the connection between correlation (statistical and descriptive) and causation: 'We cannot say that the occurrence of the same phenomenon is always due to the same causes, and that thus it is proved that the human mind obeys the same laws everywhere.'[63] Comparisons could be made, but comparability must first be demonstrated. The criteria for comparability, however, is no straightforward matter. In studying ideas of race and heredity in science, the sociobiologist Edward O. Wilson attempted to infer a homology between an instance of human behaviour and an instance of animal behaviour by labelling them with the same name, including 'warfare', 'marriage' and even 'adultery': 'By this labelling technique, the sociobiologist is then allowed to compare behaviours in different species, without proving that the behaviours are functionally homologous.'[64] This is precisely the kind of thinking that Boas opposed.

Despite emphasizing difference, Boas also accepted broad universals including a fundamental human nature giving rise to the universality of religion, language, custom and so on in human life: '[T]here is no people that lacks definite religious ideas and traditions; that has not made inventions, that does not live under the rule of customary laws regulating the relations between the members of the tribe [and] there is no people without language.'[65] But what was clearly suspect was universalization via the collection and cataloguing of like instances of behaviour, beliefs or artefacts. For Boas, this method assumed that the same features always develop from the same causes, leading to the fallacious conclusion 'that there is one grand system according to which mankind has developed everywhere; that all the occurring variations are no more than minor details in this grand uniform evolution'.[66]

The Boasian school objected to the thoroughgoing ethnocentricity of so many of their contemporaries who judged everything and everybody against their own standards. This led to the important notion that other people (or 'cultures') should be judged only in terms of their own standards, not those of the ethnographer or any other 'outsider'. With respect to the race/culture nexus, Boasian anthropology sought to place the major emphasis on the social or cultural determinants of human behaviour and so to exclude biological factors almost completely. Culture could therefore be viewed as a unified and self-bounded realm of phenomena rigidly differentiated from other factors.[67] But this approach was not without its own problems. One critic argues that it became as extreme as that of the hereditarians: 'It was expressed in the formula *omnis cultura ex cultura*, which, in asserting that cultural phenomena can only be understood in terms of other cultural phenomena,

was predicated on the existence of an unbridgeable chasm between biology and cultural anthropology, and so inexorably involved an absolute cultural determinism.'[68]

Whereas Tylor developed his idea of culture largely within the prevailing evolutionary schema which implicitly sorted standards of worth into lower and higher categories, Boasian anthropology ruptured the link between culture and biology that characterized evolutionary thought, dispensing with any formulation assigning greater or lesser value to different cultural groups. This required, however, an absolute emphasis on cultural relativism and determinism. It certainly proved effective in combating biologically-based racist theories. But it did not defeat racism as a form of prejudice, which found other criteria to fasten on, one of these, ironically, the concept of culture itself. By replacing biological difference with cultural difference and investing the latter with the properties of incommensurability, racism was not eradicated; it simply returned to an original point of departure asserting once again 'the absolute, impenetrable, untranslatable character of different ways of being'.[69]

Boas did not formulate an explicit doctrine of cultural and ethical relativism. This was left to his students who subsequently led the discipline in the direction of a primarily *cultural* anthropology. Boas did, however, articulate many of the essential ideas, illustrated in part by his approach to museum exhibits. By arranging an exhibit of artefacts holistically by tribe or group rather than by classes of objects, one could appreciate the group's 'culture' in its totality and, most importantly, in its own terms.[70] Thus Boas was able to highlight the *relativity* of different groups while showing how they were influenced by their own very particular geographic and historical milieu – in fact by their own unique context. This is what gave substance to the notion of culture *as* context.

Many recent studies of the development of cultural anthropology along these lines highlight the 'sustained emphasis on the plurality of cultures as being isolated, discrete, independently functioning, integrally organized totalities'[71] and the strong tendency to use the word 'culture' holistically to designate societies themselves, rather than referring to one or other of their attributes.[72] Certainly, this usage appears in Boas's work from the late 1890s although it was not expressed in more concrete terms until years later. By 1917, Robert Lowie stated explicitly that culture is 'a thing *sui generis* which can be explained only in terms of itself', and not in terms of race or environment. Like Boas, however, he did not regard it as an integrated whole, but more an ad hoc patchwork of many different borrowings and developments over time.[73] Although British social anthropology did not embrace relativism in the same way, the

idea of holism and culture as context, along with a wholesale dismissal of evolutionism, marked the influential work of Bronislaw Malinowski who rejected the study of one or other cultural traits except against the background of the 'whole' culture.[74]

A clearer sense of culture as a thematic unity was explicit in Ruth Benedict's ideas. Among these was the notion that different cultures gave rise to different basic collective character types or 'modal personalities'. Thus the Dobuan 'personality' was paranoid while the Kwakiutl displayed megalomania. This was a marked shift away from Boas's anthropology because of its concern to link the study of culture to the production of individual character traits. But the most important break with Boas's work came with Edward Sapir who proposed a re-thinking of culture along lines that incorporated humanist elements as well as embodying a 'national genius'.[75]

A very explicit formulation of cultural relativism was provided by Melville J. Herskovits whose concept of culture followed more conventional Boasian lines in positing it, first, as something that all humans, but only humans, possess; second, that it is learned and not inherited in any sense (and is not therefore related to biological race) so that it differs from one society to the next; and third, that it carries validity only for the members of the particular society whose culture it is and who live by its precepts.[76] Cultural relativism takes its cue from the emphasis on specificity contained in this last point, and thus its basic principle is that: '*Judgements are based on experience, and experience is interpreted by each individual in terms of his own enculturation.*'[77] Herskovits went on to reject absolute moral standards, arguing that these are effective 'only as far as they agree with the orientations of a given people at a given period of their history'.[78] But he did not subscribe to a conception of culture that acted as a straightjacket on groups or their individual members, let alone one that assumed a fixed and timeless category that was incommensurable with other such categories. Nonetheless, the link between particular cultures and norms meant that morals were tied firmly to specific contexts.

Another important aspect of anthropological theorizing about culture was the issue of ethnocentrism and, again, Herskovits dealt with this issue in his more general approach to culture. Ethnocentrism, he wrote, is just what its literal meaning implies, 'the end result of a psychological process by which [people] center their world in their own group, seeing it in their own dimensions, judging conduct by their own standards, planning so as to achieve in terms of their own ambitions'. As a universal in human experience, he continued, ethnocentrism resides in the deepest

levels of individual personality and group identification: 'Yet because of this fact, its power tends to be overlooked, even where it is elevated to the status of a virtue in terms of exclusive loyalties.' To illustrate the specific relationship between ethnocentricity and culture, Herskovits further elaborated the meaning of the latter as 'signifying the totality of learned human behaviour'. This gave culture the prime role in regulating the relationship of members of a society with each other, patterning their aesthetic perceptions and ordering their concepts of the universe, conditioning the ways in which they perceive and react to time and space and, in accordance with the notion of cultural relativism noted above, giving to individuals the ethical norms by which they guide their own conduct and judge that of others. 'There is literally no moment in the life of an individual' he concludes, 'when the influence of culture is not felt.'[79] Culture therefore forms the total subjectivity of each and every person and ethnocentrism becomes one of its inescapable consequences. But to the extent that this applies to all people at all times, it is ultimately an absolutist position.

The twin doctrines of cultural relativism and ethical relativism came to constitute the foundations of many studies emanating from American cultural anthropology as well as informing important strands of moral philosophy. The doctrine of cultural relativism relied on the initial rupturing of the link between culture and biology – first effected by Boas. This became foundational to the enterprise of cultural anthropology throughout the twentieth century, giving rise to a notion of 'radical alterity' or 'Difference-with-a-capital-D' between cultural groups which remained a feature of later moves to symbolist/interpretivist modes. In commenting on the latter, Roger Keesing argued that in order to show that concepts of personhood, emotions, agency, gender and the body are culturally constructed, Difference must still be demonstrated (and celebrated) and 'cultures' must be placed in separate compartments and characterized in essentialist terms.[80] Keesing went on to argue that poststructuralist thought had also been caught up in a number of contradictions in its critical examination of the taken-for-granteds of Western thought:

> [P]ost-structuralism has undermined the old dualisms – civilized versus primitive, rational versus irrational, Occident versus Orient – on which anthropology's exoticizations have implicitly rested. Yet at the same time, post-structuralist thought, too, urgently needs radical alterity to show that our taken-for-granteds represent European cultural constructions. To argue that logocentrism is a legacy of Greek

> philosophy requires a non-logocentric alterity – somewhere – that is uncontaminated by Greeks.[81]

Looking at the tenor of anthropological writing from the nineteenth century onwards, it is evident that the Difference that was emphasized most consistently was that between 'the West' on the one hand, and the various 'non-Western' cultural groups on the other (although these exact terms were not generally used then). This was partly because the great majority of anthropologists engaged in producing ethnographies from this period onwards were themselves members of 'the West' – mainly European or North American but increasingly with contributions from places such as South Africa, Australia and New Zealand (i.e. European settler societies). The contrast that was most likely to be drawn in their work was between their 'own' culture and that of their native subjects or, in some instances, minority groups within broader national societies.

The way in which the West/non-West divide operates can also be seen in terms of the dynamics of world politics at various times. When Herskovits wrote, colonialism was coming to an end and the old colonial powers were having to come to terms with their former subjects on a more equal footing. Herskovits perceived his audience as largely American, and his remarks were only obliquely addressed to those engaged in divesting themselves of colonial empires. But for his own domestic audience, Herskovits pointed out that whereas American diplomats may have dealt with British diplomats in London on issues to do with India or the Sudan, or with the Dutch in the Hague with respect to Indonesia, who were at least culturally similar to themselves, they now needed to learn to deal directly with their counterparts in Jakarta, New Delhi or Khartoum whose world views, he said, were very different:

> It is understandably difficult for those accustomed to a world under the tutelage of the powers of Western Europe and, later, the United States, to accept as equals those who, with varying degrees of benevolence, they regarded until quite recently as peoples whom the more advanced nations must guide to higher stages of culture and thus to an eventual future participation in world affairs. It is not easy for those who have sat in judgement to realize that they are being judged; to understand that they can suggest and negotiate, but not order; to take into account motivations and patterned responses far different from those of the countries with whom they had been accustomed to deal. … We have left behind a multi-cultural world

> where only a small segment of the peoples inhabiting it really counted; we are living in the same multi-cultural world, but one in which peoples with the most diverse modes of thought and behaviour are in continuous interaction.[82]

He argued further that the problems raised by the new realties of world multiculturalism would have to be addressed by marshalling all the scientific skills at their disposal. The answer to the problems that this raised, when it came, must involve a reorientation in thought that, 'by giving full weight to the cross-cultural factor, will grant to all peoples their right of choice to identify their future with the continuities of their ancestral heritage'.[83] Thus the postcolonial age was ushered in and with it a host of critical questions concerning the relationship between former colonial powers, not simply in terms of formal political status, but also with respect to the more general status of knowledge about 'others'. This included the right of 'the West' to construct representations of other societies, especially through ethnography. Among anthropologists, one solution was found in an interpretive approach based on hermeneutics.[84]

Hermeneutics and its critics

In its simplest form, hermeneutics involves the interpretation and analysis of texts. First applied to texts of a sacred nature – such as the Bible – it developed a broader application to encompass virtually all texts. Today it could be applied to the analysis of comic books, political speeches and debates, examination scripts, movies, conversations, sporting matches and so on. The meaning of 'text' has therefore broadened, probably beyond anything imagined by the originators of the hermeneutic idea. Friedrich Schleiermacher is usually credited with pioneering the theory of hermeneutics as an art of interpretation focusing on what a text was supposed to mean to its original readership, thereby emphasizing authorial intention. It effectively placed the text 'in context'. In addition, proper interpretation was necessarily circular, requiring the parts of the text to be understood in relation to the whole, and the whole in relation to the parts – similar to the Boasian scheme for understanding 'a culture'. Variations and new directions were further developed by Wilhelm Dilthey and Martin Heidegger, as well as the latter's pupil, Gadamer. All differed in the approaches they worked out. Gadamer, in particular, questioned the importance awarded to original authorial intention. He suggested instead that it is the relationship

between the text and the reader – along with the subjectivities surrounding this relationship, such as language, norms, traditions and preconceptions – that is all-important in the act of interpretation.[85] The application of hermeneutics to the tasks of cultural anthropology meant that culture was to be understood, not just as a context, but as a 'text'.

Conceived by some as the deconstruction of Western epistemology and foundationalism, and indeed 'Western philosophy' itself,[86] hermeneutics was developed in the hands of ethnographers as a study of social meaning based on the 'native point of view'. This had been implicit in the earlier work of anthropologists such as Boas, Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown. It was made explicit in the interpretive anthropology of Geertz, who developed a hermeneutic approach to ethnography based on the earlier ideas of Gadamer and others.[87] Briefly, the hermeneutic approach rejects formal, functional and quantitative methods and it especially rejects claims to neutrality or objectivity on the part of the observer. For Geertz, interpretative explanation 'trains its attention on what institutions, actions, images, utterances, events, customs, all the usual objects of social-scientific interest, mean to those whose institutions, actions, customs, and so on they are'.[88] Geertz's interpretive method, indeed, went further. Rather than simply taking the 'native's point of view' as the final word, the perceptions and knowledge of the observer were to be blended with those of the native.

> With the compilation of interpretations of texts, actions, symbols, social forms, and events, going from the particular to the general and back again, understanding and meaning slowly emerges. It is presented in the form of 'thick description', it preserves the magic of life, it tacks back and forth from one viewpoint to another, from one level to another, and it leads to an understanding of the meaning of one's own, as well as other, cultures.[89]

Ernest Gellner, social anthropologist, student of nationalism, and one the most strident of critics of anthropological hermeneutics, set about denouncing its follies. The method, he wrote, embraces a facile and self-congratulatory relativism which cannot stand up to the logic of what anthropologists actually do. For no anthropologist could possibly say that witchcraft actually works in country X, just as its practitioners say it does, and still claim scholarly credentials. Gellner went on to assault its practitioners as dogmatists of a particularly vacuous kind: 'because all knowledge is dubious, being theory-saturated/ethnocentric/paradigm-dominated/interest-linked. …, etc., therefore the anguish-ridden

author … can put forward whatever [s/he] pleases. The end result of the murky relativism and semiotic mysticism that it indulges in, he says, 'leaves us wondering whether we have been offered an explanation of a social order or merely a description of its atmosphere'.[90]

Gellner's attack on the hermeneutic turn in anthropology was a manifestation of an interesting display of rivalry between proponents of British and American approaches, with Gellner representing the former. Clifford Geertz had previously criticized an article by the British social anthropologist E.E. Evans-Pritchard on aspects of anthropology in Africa, and a substantial section of Gellner's article cited above was actually a defence of Evans-Pritchard's work as well as a counter-attack. Geertz had described Evans-Pritchard's confident writing style as betraying an imperious manner and attitude that he implied was characteristic of the 'so-called British school of social anthropology'. Geertz argued that Evans-Pritchard brought Africans 'into a world conceived deeply in English terms, and confirming thereby the domination of those terms'. Geertz somehow interpreted this not as ethnocentrism on Evans-Pritchard's part but, worse still, an attitude that 'their [African] differences from us, however dramatic, do not, finally, count for much'.[91]

Geertz's assessment of Evans-Pritchard's work is not obvious from what Evans-Pritchard actually wrote. Reading Geertz in light of his own hermeneutics, we may say that he applied a liberal dose of creative hermeneutic interpretation to get at Evans-Pritchard's 'real' meaning and give it a 'thick description'. Yet it is unlikely that Evans-Pritchard would have conceded that Geertz accurately captured his 'authorial intent'. Geertz read Evans-Pritchard's text 'in context', perceiving him to be male, white, British, middle class etc., all of which evidently imbued him automatically with the values that had sustained the British empire in its heyday. Geertz's reading of Evans-Pritchard itself amounted to a form of ethnography which ought in principle have led him to a deeper appreciation of his 'own culture' – that of the United States, or more particularly its tribe of cultural anthropologists. Arguably, Geertz's critique was itself highly ethnocentric. American cultural anthropology had the effect of socializing its students in particular ways – and one of these involved hostility towards imperialism (especially of the British variety). Thus Geertz, wearing his opposition to imperialism on his sleeve, may have read into Evans-Pritchard's work what he wanted to see there – an imperious attitude nurtured in an imperial culture of which British social anthropology was simply another manifestation.

Gellner had a few choice points of his own to score, including his characterization of the sacred text of the American Declaration of

Independence as 'one of the most comic and preposterous documents ever penned'. Thomas Jefferson, he wrote, was not in any sense a fool, and nor were his fellows. But this did not stop them from affirming an absurdity which held that certain truths about rights etc. 'were actually *self-evident*'. For the vast majority of humankind, this claim 'would have been unintelligible or at best blasphemous, heretical and subversive'. Where Geertz had interpreted Evans-Pritchard's attitude in terms of British imperialism, Gellner sought the explanation for the 'egregious folly on the part of otherwise perfectly sober, responsible and competent men' (i.e. the Founding Fathers) in the American cultural milieu which, although rather unusual, they took so much for granted that they mistook it for the human condition in general. This 'individualist world in which men are free to choose their own aims' seemed so obvious a world to them, one in which all men live as of right, that no other world could possibly measure up. 'America is inclined to culture-blindness because … it takes its own luminously individualist culture for granted and sees it as manifestly obvious.'[92]

The Geertz/Gellner episode highlights some interesting aspects of interpretation, critique and ethnocentricity. For whereas anthropology has traditionally seen ethnocentricity as a problem in interpreting 'exotic' cultures, where 'non-Westerners' are the objects of interpretation, it can be just as much of an issue in interpreting the natives of any 'Western' location. Geertz interpreted Evans-Pritchard's original text in the context of what he assumed to be British imperialism, obtaining a reading which in turn became another text. If we then place Geertz's own text in *its* context, it can be read as an ethnocentric critique of a leading figure in a rival school of thought. For a critique of British social anthropology from the perspective of American cultural anthropology (or vice-versa) is no less ethnocentric or subjective. The antidote to ethnocentricity is meant to be a highly refined sense of reflexivity – something which is clearly absent from Geertz's attack on Evans-Pritchard. Gellner, no less certain of the rightness of his position, concluded that Geertz's highly amusing analysis of Evans-Pritchard's style was a weapon which could easily be turned in the opposite direction, the sauce for the imperialist goose being the same as for the relativist gander.[93]

Another critic of the hermeneutic trend in anthropology has also focused on its relativist implications. In an essay on the political and moral dimensions of 'the European tradition', Ferenc Feher takes us back to the Westphalian moment, describing it as propitious for the emergence of a hermeneutical political and moral culture necessitated pragmatically by the end of religious warfare within Europe.[94] The legacy of the

Peace of Westphalia was, of course, the doctrine of sovereignty and non-intervention. Feher notes, however, that this did not pave the way to an immediate recognition of legitimate 'texts' outside of Europe. This was not to come about until those 'great training grounds of the supremacy of the European text', the colonial empires, had disappeared. In the aftermath of the collapse of its authority, and in the era of increasing relativism – that is, in the late twentieth century – Feher says that 'Europe' becomes just one text among many and, in a charitable reading, it transpires as being no better or worse than any other – just different.[95] He argues that this brings philosophy (in a general sense) to a cross-roads – or perhaps a dead end – for if the absolute relativism of certain postmodern trends prevail, 'we will no longer have the concepts to explain why the Holocaust was any more than an unpleasant event for one mini-discourse demolished by another, considerably larger mini-discourse, which, without a doubt, justified its act "from within" '. Similarly, the theoretical justification for the emotional and practical judgement that the Holocaust, along with the Gulag and colonial genocide, were infinitely evil is lost.[96]

The problem for Gellner, Keesing, Feher, and other critics of relativist anthropology, is the denial of foundations for moral claims that extend beyond any given cultural collectivity in either time or space. This raises the way in which anthropological hermeneutics treats the inside/outside construct. Geertz's interpretive framework requires a division between 'insiders' and 'outsiders' and although it acknowledges the value of both, the 'insider' occupies a privileged position in the interpretation of any cultural practice. This implies that it is somehow wrong to criticize cultural practices other than one's own, or to even extend one's analysis beyond the boundaries of one's own 'cultural space'. This is what creates the rather problematic 'epistemological comfort zone', discussed in Chapter 3, within which one can evade accusations of ethnocentricity. Further problems emerge when the insider/outsider dichotomy is constructed in parallel with the West/non-West divide. Indeed, anthropology has, since its inception, been most concerned to illustrate how non-Western cultures differ from those of the West.

Conclusion

Anglophone anthropology has played a major, although not exclusive, role in establishing contemporary understandings of culture.[97] Humanism has also contributed, giving rise to a tradition of cultural criticism that has an important ongoing role in shaping how culture is

conceived and how it is implicated in structures of domination. Although the humanist approach seems at odds with the apparent egalitarianism of anthropological precepts, it has helped nonetheless to distance the study of human difference from some of the less attractive aspects of biologism, especially in its racialist manifestation. Cultural anthropology delivered a doctrine of cultural relativism which further undermined racialist theories by teaching appreciation of the sophistication and complexity of 'alien' cultures. It also provided the basis for the idea of culture as context, with a strong emphasis on the notion that unique cultural contexts determine the legitimacy of values and norms.

The significance of cultural relativism for world politics is evident in the extent to which communitarian theory and other culturalist approaches draw explicitly on certain of its key assumptions. However, a problem for culturalist approaches based largely on anthropological ideas has been identified by George E. Marcus who points out that much of the ethnographic work carried out in interpretive anthropology has rarely dealt with the ways in which 'closely observed cultural worlds' are embedded in larger systems. The descriptive space of ethnographical work has not seemed appropriate for the wider frameworks within which local politics takes place and which have generally been studied in separate works: 'The world of larger systems and events has thus often been seen as externally impinging on and bounding little worlds, but not as integral to them.'[98] The idea of a sphere of 'political culture' relating to larger systems, usually corresponding to the borders of a nation-state but maintaining a conceptual framework informed by anthropological precepts, seemed a promising approach to wider issues. We turn next to a discussion of ideas about culture and context more specifically in relation to the study of world politics.

6
History, Culture and the National State

The development of the culture concept took place in the wake of an enormous expansion of knowledge in both social and natural spheres and as part of the attempt to theorize a vast new array of facts about the world and its various inhabitants. It also took place in an age of state formation and contributed to the consolidation of the sovereignty concept. It is therefore unsurprising that the culture concept should come to reflect the exigencies of the political ideas or ideologies surrounding such movements. These included ideas about the other side of sovereignty, that is, the basis of political authority within the state which in turn prompted further thought about the relationship between rulers and ruled and how the latter were to be characterized. While the concept of nation was not an empty one, just waiting to be infused with cultural elements and new ideas about the state and its occupants, it had the flexibility to accommodate the complex of more explicit political and cultural associations that emerged from the seventeenth century onwards in relation to political community. These were to include democratic ideas which awarded a particular political legitimacy and authority to '*the* people' which in the nationalist formulation came to comprise '*a* people'. And although democratic ideas were not essential for nation-making purposes they played a key role in many cases, as did certain strands of historiography. These ideas took on different nuances in the colonial world where history joined with other professionalized disciplines, including anthropology and archaeology, in constructing accounts of the societies found there. These later found renewed purpose in anti-colonial nationalisms. But the notion that local resistance movements and their intellectual foundations took their cue from European nationalist thought has been challenged by postcolonial writers whose focus on indigenous agency has raised additional issues concerning the

power/knowledge nexus. However, since postcolonial writers tend to focus on the power of European colonizers, the power of national elites in the period since formal independence, and issues of domination and repression in *that* context, have received far less attention.

Nations and nationalism

There is no widely agreed definition for either the nation or the ideology of nationalism, beyond the fact that the former is a species of collective identity grounded in some notion of culture, while the latter movement involves a political programme demanding recognition, in some formal way, for that identity. What is far from settled in nationalism is the role of the cultural component as distinct from a political component, the balance between 'subjective' elements like will and memory and more 'objective' ones like territory and language, and the extent to which nationalism is primarily a cultural rather than a political movement.[1] Advocates of particular nationalisms, including some historians, have often supported a primordial approach to the nation to strengthen its political claims, depicting it in terms highlighting robust qualities of longevity, relatedness, constancy and emotional attachment. The national group is defined, and differentiated from other such groups, through an array of factors which usually includes a shared history and common culture (including language and religion, art and artefacts), a stock of rituals and symbols and a repertoire of myths (including myths of origin), all contributing to a common identity. Primordialism regards the tendency to form such groups, and to relate to them with a deep emotional attachment, as ultimately embedded in human nature. From this perspective, the nation is perennial, and its existence in one form or another is essentially constant through time and space. Nations thus defined may be posited as 'natural' candidates for political organization – a strategy that fuses culture and nature, rather than opposing them. The primordialist approach resonates with widespread, popular conceptions of the nation and expresses the nationalist assumption 'that nations are facts of nature that have differentiated humanity into distinctive cultural communities, each of which has its own territorial habitat and capacities for self-government'.[2] The sociobiological version of primordialism links ethnicity directly to biological kinship, thereby reinforcing the claim that ethnic groups or nations are 'naturally occurring units'.[3]

The understanding of 'nation' outlined above is almost indistinguishable from 'ethnic group'.[4] Indeed, a primordialist approach emphasizes certain qualities of 'nation-ness' precisely in terms of ethnicity – as

distinct from other possible forms such as the civic nation which has no essential connection with a particular ethnic group, at least in theory. If there is any difference in contemporary understandings between the categories of *ethnos* and nation, this is found in the political dimension. An ethnic group, defined largely in terms of certain common cultural characteristics and heritage, may or may not seek political autonomy as a means of preserving, enhancing or asserting its identity, but a 'nation' is an entity that, almost by definition, represents itself as requiring, in a normative sense, some form of political autonomy. The contemporary world abounds with examples of such groups whose demands range from a measure of sub-state autonomy to a separate, independent sovereign state. Ethnonationalism emerges when an ethnic group comes to regard itself as a 'nation in waiting' and develops a political agenda for full-scale political autonomy.

The primordialist concept of 'nation' is distinguishable from the modernist concept which arose as a direct response to national historiographies steeped in anachronism, romanticization and essentialism. The modernist approach sees the nation as a product of modernity itself, a phenomenon that includes, but is not limited to, the emergence of the sovereign state system in Europe and the politically attuned myth-making that accompanied it, namely the political ideology of nationalism. The modernist approach therefore rests implicitly on a contextualist understanding of both nations and nationalism as historically contingent constructs rooted specifically in the emergence of European modernity and the sovereign state system. Despite a common point of departure, modernists may diverge over any number of issues, including how the basic categories – 'modernity', 'nationalism', the 'nation' etc. – are actually defined, how they relate to ethnicity, what role industrialization, colonialism, elite interests, communication technologies, language and so on have played, and so on. There is also no agreement as to the future of nations and nationalism. What is noteworthy about the modernist approach for present purposes is that it generally emphasizes the role of contingency and provides scope for constructivist perspectives that highlight the relational, situational and instrumental aspects of nationalism as a form of political identity.

A third approach, ethnosymbolism, is a response to both primordialism and modernism. Its major concession to the modernists is in identifying national*ism* with developments in the not-so-distant past. But it joins with primordialism in locating the origins of nations (and ethnic groups) in the depths of the pre-modern past, and so endorses their perennial presence in history. Ethnosymbolism's major proponent,

Anthony D. Smith, points out that while recognition of the pre-modern origins of nations and ethnic groups does not necessarily lead to a primordialist perspective, the assumed antiquity of such groups is nonetheless foundational to the entire primordialist framework which depicts them as both perennial and natural.[5] Smith's ethnosymbolism contrasts with most modernist accounts by emphasizing the subjective elements of attachment to nations and ethnic groups by their members, and the institutionalization of these elements through recorded myths, memories, traditions, symbols, art, music, literature, law, ritual and so on – elements very similar to those constituting Tylor's 'complex whole' or Geertz's 'web of significance'. The possession of a particular complex of cultural elements attached to a particular past provides evidence for the 'pedigrees of particular nations or different types of nations'. Due attention to these, Smith suggests, will deter the scholar of nations and nationalism from seeking refuge in 'a one-sided and ethnocentric "modern western" version of the concept of nation'.[6] But this is a concern shared by some modernists as well. Benedict Anderson, for example, says that the widespread assumption among scholars that almost everything important in the modern world originated in Europe is a conceit.[7]

In summary, since modernist accounts identify a discernible starting point for both nations and nationalism in modern European history with a subsequent expansion throughout the rest of the globe, modernism may be likened to a 'big bang' theory of origins. Primordialist approaches, on the other hand, represent a classic steady-state model through the representation of nations in terms of timeless essences. Ethnosymbolism, as a 'third way', synthesizes aspects of both. More generally, the theorization of nationalism is further complicated by the number of forms it can assume, rendering it a promiscuous concept to which a variety of causes may be attached.[8] Others have argued that it is not a distinct ideology at all since different nationalists have assigned to the self-governing nation such a variety of ends that a plethora of qualifying labels have been attached to their projects. One list includes liberal, conservative, socialist, cultural or political nationalisms,[9] while others have identified linguistic, racial, religious, or ethnic varieties.[10] Yet another study notes distinctions between Western and Eastern (European), French and German and demotic and ethnic forms.[11]

Still others have sought to separate the elements of cultural nationalism from political nationalism. One well known analytical distinction was formulated by Friedrich Meinecke in his *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat* in 1907. The political form was attributed largely to Enlightenment principles and the revolutionary spirit of 1789 in that it sought to construct

a new constitutional order based on rational principles. Cultural nationalism, however, was seen as more characteristic of anti-Enlightenment thought in Germany, especially in its emphasis on individuating nations. For Meinecke, the highest form of nationalism combines both forms in a culturally homogeneous and sovereign *Nationalstaat*.[12] More recently it has been argued that cultural nationalism remains analytically separate from political nationalism because the former focuses on the moral regeneration of the community whereas the latter seeks autonomous state institutions. Even so, it is acknowledged that while the goals and techniques of cultural nationalism differ from the more explicitly political variety, the cultural mode of expression nonetheless tends towards development into a political movement.[13]

The dynamics of ethnonationalism make it impossible to separate the cultural from the political since the former provides the essential justification for the latter. Indeed, ethnonationalism embodies very specifically Gellner's 'normative nationalist principle' which is linked in turn to a principle of self-determination in the form of ethnocracy. More than this, nationalisms practically everywhere have turned 'culture' into a sacred symbol which at once constitutes, and is constituted within, the nation and its claims to sovereignty, and which ultimately serves political power.[14]

Both the normative principles of nationalism and of self-determination represent eminently democratic ideals. But their practical expression does not necessarily produce democracy. For the issue is not simply whether the national entity (however defined) possesses sovereignty but precisely where sovereign power is located *within* that entity. Monarchies, dictatorships and the like may well embody the normative nationalist principle. By definition they also embody the descending thesis of government where supreme power and authority is located at the top and imposed on those below. For *a* people (the nation) to become *the* people (in the sense of *demos*), the source of sovereign power and authority must ascend from below. More generally, the relationship between nationalism and democracy is an uneasy one, mediated by the nature of the state or, more particularly, the character of the regime under which government is constituted. These issues are often analysed through the prism of 'political culture', a topic we return to Chapter 7.

State and nation

Whether or not 'nations' in general, or any nations in particular, really do have a pre-modern past, ideas about the actual longevity of any given

nation have been exceptionally important to many nationalist causes in the present. When expressed in primordialist terms, the nation assumes an almost organic quality through foundational myths of 'blood and belonging'. This was implicit in much of the rhetoric behind state-making movements in nineteenth-century Europe, resulting in the emergence of new 'national' states such as Greece in 1830, Belgium in 1831, Italy in 1861, Germany in 1871 and Romania, Serbia and Montenegro in 1878.[15] As for the state, although receiving its most explicit formulation in modern Europe with the development of the doctrine of sovereignty and all its corollaries, it has numerous antecedents in pre-modern periods. Indeed, states as political communities have existed in a huge variety of forms for thousands of years, ranging from the smallest settled communities of ancient times to the mass societies of the present period.[16] Leaving aside issues about the antiquity of nations and/or states, our concern in this section is to trace some important connections between ideas about the nation and culture on the one hand, and their links to both democracy and the state on the other. Of particular interest is how the sovereign state system became linked to the nation, and the part played by the emergent concept of culture in supplying this link.

The birth of the modern state and state system is conventionally traced to 1648 when the devastating Thirty Years' War ended with the Peace of Westphalia. This war is generally characterized as based on religious rivalries, as reflected in its resolution via separate Catholic and Protestant peace conferences at Münster and Osnabrück respectively, combined with fears over the hegemonic designs of the Holy Roman Emperor, Ferdinand II, and Philip IV of Spain. The Peace reflected the interests and concerns of its principal architects – France, Sweden and Holland. These included reducing the authority of the papacy and its imperialist claims (and with it, that of the Hapsburgs), and granting co-equal juridical status to established and emergent states. The Westphalian moment effectively formalized a long train of political and theoretical developments, including monopoly claims by the state over such matters as declarations of war and the negotiation of peace, diplomatic representation and the authority to make treaties with foreign powers.[17] It is also seen as effecting a synthesis of norms revolving around a 'secularizing spirit' which established the pre-eminence of temporal authority.[18] In summary, sovereignty was located within a territorial state and vested in its ruling elements, and not in any broader sphere. This scarcely prevented further warfare within Europe, but it tended to change its rationale from religion to 'reasons of state'.[19]

At first, this sovereign state had few, if any, conceptual links to the idea of 'nation'. The idea of a 'nation-state', implying that the state is

built around a particular nation and derives its essential rationale from this entity, was virtually absent. Rather, sovereignty was established at the top of the socio-political hierarchy that controlled a territorial unit, and there was little sense that it enclosed a unit characterized by common cultural features. The political community described by Hobbes or Locke, for example, was assumed to arise from a social contract between atomistic individuals. Thus the constitutive elements of these communities were not defined in any of the terms which resonate with 'a nation' understood as even vaguely related to an ethnic group let alone a 'culture' which would not be conceptualized in explicit terms for some time. In fact, except to the extent that they were encompassed within a form of political sovereignty, the communities that resided within the boundaries of the territorial state remained basically undefined.[20] State identity, if it existed at all, was largely a matter of the projection of the sovereign's character.

The sovereign state, however, did meet a fledgling ideal of the national state towards the end of the eighteenth century. Indeed, it has been argued that the 'modern state' as such is an invention of the French Revolution, for however much earlier doctrines of sovereignty and representation prefigured it, the modern state required for its foundation the unity of those who fell under its authority; 'one people, one nation, morally bound together by a common identity'.[21] But entities such as the 'French nation' usually displayed a highly inconvenient pluralism which undermined the singular concept of the national state and provoked insecurities among ruling elements who needed to anchor state legitimacy in some sub-stratum. What followed was the project of 'nation-building', described as 'a polite term for the ideological and cultural homogenization of a country's population' to accommodate the aspirations of the modern state and its legitimacy.[22] Explicit links between state and nation in European social and political thought, then, were forged through revolution, although support for these links was to find expression in both pro- and anti-revolutionary camps. With respect to revolutionary ideology, this embodied a complex set of ideas, many of which transformed previous understandings of social and political relations and their moral bases. Perhaps the most significant for both nationalism and democracy in Europe was the change in the status of people within the territorial state from subjects of a monarch to a national citizenry, with sovereignty now residing exclusively in the latter entity.

The transformation effected by this change also required inverting the earlier dominant conception of legitimate power embodied in the descending thesis of government. In this thesis, original power was

located in the deity and embodied in a supreme earthly leader, usually a monarch who exercised power over those within his, or occasionally her, realm. The resulting hierarchy had been assumed to reflect the God-given, and therefore *natural*, order of things. This accords with medieval and early Renaissance thought rooted in beliefs concerning the immutability of pre-ordained hierarchy. This now gave way to the ascending thesis of government in which original power was located in the people – the 'nation.'[23] The problem shifted from determining who God had ordained as sovereign to who constituted the nation.

The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen was universal in its scope since humankind constituted a single moral world. But it required for practical purposes a limited and clearly delineated entity in which to ground the new concept of citizenship, and the 'French nation' presented itself as the most viable candidate. The emergence of democratic governance principles therefore gave rise to an ideology of unification in a national state. However, the understanding of the nation that emerged in France was probably closer to older republican usages than to modern cultural understandings.[24] These principles were certainly revolutionary at the end of the eighteenth century, for they challenged the dominant paradigm of the dynastic state based on hereditary authority. But the new emphasis on 'the people', and their claims to political equality and the rights of citizens, saw the beginning of an end to a system in which the needs and interests of the masses had counted for little.[25] Beyond this, the French revolution is also seen as providing 'a compelling example of both the dangers and potentialities of nationalism harnessed to democratic populism', although it would be some time before this became apparent.[26]

A body of counter-Revolutionary and counter-Enlightenment thought both in France and elsewhere soon seized the moral high ground. It endowed the nation, with an essential spirit and character that became tied intimately to the emerging concept of culture. Against the universalism and rationalism of the Revolution and the philosophy of the Enlightenment which had underscored its intellectual dynamism, Romantic thought in its political manifestations sought to emphasize the particularistic aspects of community as the natural and morally proper basis of human existence. Thus the moral superiority of universal humanity declared by the French National Assembly was rejected on the grounds that since humanity was articulated into nations and did not exist independently of them, a universal account of humanity 'was an abstraction without a moral status and claims'.[27] Edmund Burke supplied a number of important objections to the ambitions of universal

reason, arguing that because each individual society was based on innumerable intricate mechanisms – what we would now call cultural traditions – which had developed *naturally* over a considerable period of time, and which mere human reason was simply incapable of grasping in all their complexity, the notion that blueprints could be drawn up for the ordering of an ideal social and political order were not only ludicrous but positively dangerous.

But while Burke's ideas, and those of other conservatives opposed to the Revolution, emphasized both the individuality and opacity of any given society's social and political arrangements, they were not explicitly nationalistic. The utter uniqueness of each society was to be promoted much more vigorously by subsequent thinkers who delineated the more distinctive features of nationalist ideology. John Breuilly identifies the idea of uniqueness as a form of historicism which had been articulated earlier by Vico but which Herder developed in a particularly striking way and which was then linked firmly to a specific national concept.[28] As noted previously, Herder viewed every historical period, including the particular values of each period, as requiring understanding entirely in its own terms. Herder's historicism therefore involved an understanding of history not as a march of events towards a single, rational *telos*, but rather as the continuous manifestation of the multiplicity of ways and means by which the human mind expresses itself in the diversity of the world's nations. This was still reconcilable with his belief in the unity of humankind, for all of history and all of nature, in their many and various manifestations, reflected a higher, divine purpose.[29]

In terms of normative theory, true morality began to be seen as embedded in a self-contained, self-referential and self-justifying cultural system regarded as synonymous with the nation and which, in turn, was ideally coterminous with a legal/territorial state. Gellner, among others, argued that the idea of the 'sovereignty of culture' meant that the cultural community not only celebrated and venerated its absolute uniqueness, but ultimately validated itself in its own idiosyncrasy.[30] It thus required no external endorsement – except, perhaps, that of God – and the religiosity of many earlier thinkers on the subject ensured that God was in fact recruited to this task.

The most fertile ground for the development of these ideas had been prepared in Germany where anti-French, and eventually anti-Enlightenment, sentiments developed following the prosecution of imperialistic French ambitions along the Rhine. This prompted the German revolutionary élite to formulate their own definition of the nation in terms which effectively repudiated the more universal aspects

of human existence supported by Enlightenment thought. In contrast with the relative cultural neutrality of legalistic concepts such as *Staatsnation*, then, the concept of the *Kulturnation* gained significant ground.[31] The intellectual foundations for much of this project may be located in Herder's pioneering work on language and poetry which infused the concept of culture with a certain national essence – and vice versa. For the nation was imbued, in turn, with a certain cultural essence. In the ideological development of nationalism, and especially in view of its focus on the state as a tangible, practical expression of the political and moral status of the nation, the criterion of a distinctive culture provided an important basis for the task of demarcating one nation from the next. Though the key criterion was not mere territoriality, it served to reinforce territorial claims or rights when required.[32]

Herder's views of culture and the national spirit, as it happened, were explicitly anti-chauvinistic. And he articulated views which accord precisely with contemporary contextualist positions, namely, that each cultural community must be appreciated in its own terms and according to its own historic moment, and not against the standards of any other community, past or present. Herder attacked what he saw as the arrogant ethnocentricity of Enlightenment universalism and progressivism, views which resonate with anthropological themes concerning culture and its implications for moral relativism:

> The universal, philosophical, philanthropic tone of our own century readily applies 'our own ideal' of virtue and happiness to each distant nation, to each remote period in history. But can one single ideal be the sole standard for judging, condemning, or praising the customs of other nations or periods? Is not the good scattered throughout the earth? Since one form of humanity and one region cannot encompass the good, it has been distributed in a thousand forms … throughout all continents and centuries.[33]

Herder proposed that 'human civilization lives not in its universal but in its national and peculiar manifestations'.[34] But he did not formulate definite associations between culture and the nation on the one hand, and the political aspects of state formation and the bases of state legitimacy on the other – and certainly not in terms of the nation realizing its destiny in its own sovereign state. Herder's tender regard for the beauty and harmony found in all nations stands in stark contrast with ideologies of racial difference that emerged in the nineteenth century, and led to the genocidal tragedies in the next century.

The associations between culture, nation and state were left to later, more explicitly nationalist writers like Fichte who transformed the Kantian ethical imperative of individual self-determination into a collective project undertaken in order to 'realise the authentic national will – in a state of one's own'.[35] But self-determination in the name of a group, however constructed, represents a corruption of Kant's ethical imperative. Fichte's articulation of nationalism, moreover, asserted the legitimacy of *Realpolitik* holding that there was no law or right between states, save that of the stronger state.[36] This is scarcely compatible with the Kantian vision of perpetual peace, or the principles established at Westphalia. Fichte was a vigorous proponent of the organic fusion of state, nation and culture as the authentic expression of distinctive human communities, and especially that of the German nation which, in his time, had no political unity. Like Herder, he placed particular emphasis on language, binding people together in one 'inseparable whole' decreed by the laws of nature, to form a common community into which people of different descent and language could not be absorbed without causing confusion and violence in the steady 'progress of its culture'.[37] This required a primordial account of the antiquity of the nation to enhance its authenticity and legitimacy. Primordiality also embraced an organic motif that allowed it to be construed as a naturally occurring entity – not an artificially constructed unit. But the nation was viewed as more than just an organic entity like a tree or an animal, a forest or a herd. It was assigned characteristics peculiar to the human individual in the sense of constituting a living being with a distinctive, sacred soul.

In social and political terms, these organic, primordialist and quasi-religious views contrasted sharply with the rationalist Enlightenment contention that since political communities were capable of reconstituting themselves afresh by means of, say, a new political constitution (such as that devised by the Assembly in France), or even by remaking the whole of society *de novo*,[38] there was no justification for regarding any existing political arrangements as being natural or God-given. Clearly, the humanism of the *philosophes*, and their vision of future possibilities, demanded a radically different moral basis to supplant the old order values. But the 'optimistic idealization of the future' which, as Kohn has noted, characterized so much of Enlightenment thought, was opposed by the romantics with a 'similar idealization of the past'.[39] In accord with the commitment to the past as the organic paradigm for the present and the future, the nationalist project therefore required a

reinvigoration of the relationship between nature and culture in the face of Enlightenment challenges.

Culture and nature

The opposition between nature and culture is said to have a long history in Western thought, starting at least as far back as Plato and continuing through to figures such as Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau and Condillac and then to the founders of anthropology as well as its heirs in the twentieth century. On this basis, it is argued, the culture/nature opposition has become an integral part of 'Western metaphysics'.[40] In mainstream theories of world politics, it has further been suggested that these have been based on a longstanding but erroneous assumption that 'nature will one day overcome culture'.[41] The culture/nature opposition is evident in many strands of thought, but the same can not be said of the entire corpus of 'Western thought'. Organic theories of the state in Europe are saturated with naturalistic assumptions, especially those supporting the descending thesis of government as well as later anti-revolutionary and anti-Enlightenment perspectives that assimilated established political structures to a pattern of ordered revealed in the natural world. And much nationalist thought sought to fuse culture and nature in a political theory of the state. Similar elements were evident in European political conservatism. As a reaction to rationalist theory and revolutionary practice, conservatism arose within the same general political environment as nationalism and contributed substantially to anti-Enlightenment thought. Although conservatism, like all political ideologies (including nationalism), falls well short of a single, coherent, homogeneous character,[42] one of its most important classical strands characterizes the community in terms of a God-given, hierarchical, functional order based on organic principles. This characterization set conservatism firmly apart from the rationalist doctrines of socialism and liberalism.[43]

The organic principles of conservatism produced a moral order explicitly concerned with the internal political organization of a community. But it was easily extended to justify the differentiation of nations into separate organic entities, one from the other, just as one individual is distinguishable from another. With respect to human individuals, however, the relevance of the organic simile ended with the physical body. Individual people did not and could not by themselves constitute a 'moral system'. It was only in a social community that humans could find moral meanings as derived from the ensemble of norms, values and

practices that together constitute the community's culture. This accords Boas's view of culture on which the doctrines of cultural and ethical relativism rest. These perspectives also came to inform important aspects of comparative political studies relating to ideas of 'national character' and, later, 'political culture'. And they have formed an important subtext of realist thought in IR which assumes that 'the essence of social reality is the group' and that the group constitutes 'the foundation of political life'.[44] All this clearly accords with contemporary communitarian thought as well.

The roots of the specifically anthropological dogma separating nature and culture, reflecting an archaic metaphysical polarity between body and soul, are seen as a legacy of Rousseau.[45] Historians, too, have contributed to this dualism as reflected in certain methodological concerns. In Prussia, Johann Gustav Droysen (1808–1884) stands in a line of historical enquiry from Humboldt to Dilthey in attempting to distinguish the methods of historical enquiry from those of the natural sciences. Droysen saw these as inappropriate to historical studies since they did not focus on causal explanation. For Droysen, history deals not with inert matter but with acts of volition, by individuals and communities, and this determines the methods proper to history. He believed that both historical science and natural science were 'ways in which the human spirit views things, the forms in which this spirit cognizantly grasps and takes possession of the ethical, natural world' and that to 'view the ethical world in growth and becoming, in its movement, is to view it historically'.[46] Droysen departed from Humboldt and Ranke in that, for them, the important units of history are individualities while for Droysen, history was a whole and must be understood as such; 'the acts of volition are parts of a total pattern'.[47] Droysen's conceptualization of history is similar to the conceptualization of culture as a 'total pattern', implicit in Tylor's original idea of the 'complex whole', adverted to by Benedict and Kluckhorn as the 'total-culture pattern',[48] and formulated by Geertz as a 'web of significance'.

Adam Kuper, in examining the anthropological distinction between nature and culture, also sees it as a Western convention, but does not claim that it is characteristic of 'Western thought' as a whole. His argument is a specific response to Lévi-Strauss's thesis that all people build an opposition between culture and nature into their cosmological thinking. Kuper says this as an ethnocentric illusion and effectively adopts the reasoning of historical contextualism, proposing that culture and nature are not objective realities but historically specific constructs that do not necessarily find parallels in the ideologies of other peoples.[49]

This has important implications for the meaning of culture, which we return to in the concluding chapter.

However prevalent the opposition between culture and nature may appear in 'Western thought', there are alternative standpoints that view culture as a *development* of nature rather than its antithesis. In addition there are ideas that see culture and nature combining to legitimate certain social and political arrangements. Indeed, culture and nature are fused in some versions of nationalist thought as part of the project of delineating the 'authentic state'. In this respect we may recall the separation of culture from biology which seemed at least implicit in both Arnold's and Tylor's formulations, but which was much more prominent in Boasian cultural relativism and determinism. This has been seen as effecting a rigid separation of culture from nature *per se* not only in anthropological thought but in the human sciences more generally. Horigan argues that an opposition between culture and nature became essential for their legitimation and justification. On the one hand, he says, the distinction provided the human sciences with their own object and justification, namely 'culture'. On the other, it provided a principle of demarcation, of what culture is *not* and of what, therefore, does not fall within the human sciences. He argues further that this was achieved by marking out culture as 'a self-enclosed and unified realm of phenomena set apart from, and opposed to, natural/biological phenomena: a separate "level" of reality'.[50]

The case, however, is not quite so straightforward. While Boasian theory sought to repudiate one particular view of nature adopted by the evolutionary school – and in the process contributed to the fall of scientific racism – 'nature' was brought back by means not dissimilar to those promoted by the theory of nationalism. In short, the 'integrally organized totality' described above in terms of *a* culture is taken implicitly to be the *natural* vessel within which humans thrive. What becomes contingent, then, is not the unit *per se*, but the particular differences between them. Difference itself, however, may also be objectified by becoming a 'natural' dividing line between human communities, thereby eliminating contingency in the construction of 'one culture, one nation, one state'. This is the authentic state in which culture and nature are fused in an organic whole.

In his critical anthropological study of nationalism and culture in Quebec, Richard Handler notes that the objectification of culture which emerged from Western social science permits analysis of the social world in terms of its bounded parts, which are understood atomistically. Like 'things'(and like individuals), nations or ethnic groups are taken 'as

bounded, continuous, and precisely distinguishable from other analogous entities'. Thus nations and ethnic groups are distinguishable by the 'culture' that each possesses: 'And if culture is pressed into service to distinguish one bounded collectivity from another, it too must be bounded: that is, culture must be analyzable and identifiable, such and such a "trait" belonging to this nation or originating in that region.'[51] Finally, Handler points to the naturalistic qualities built into cultural nationalist assumptions, arguing that the nation and the national individual embedded within it take on a 'natural reality', an 'essence' acquired and fixed through natural processes.[52] In summary, the objectification of culture as a naturally occurring entity, and as possessing a certain fixity, tends to negate its contingent properties and leads to a static conception that effectively repudiates its social, political and moral dynamism. It is this objectification of culture that renders the concept so problematic for normative international theory.

History and nationalism

The part played by historical studies in constructing 'the nation' is comparable to the role of anthropological studies in constructing 'culture'. Both became involved in the process of individuating groups or communities, often in complementary ways. It is no coincidence that Herder is regarded as providing the foundational concepts for both the discipline of anthropology and the ideology of nationalism – the former through the notion of individuated cultures and the latter through the idea of historically rooted, individuated nations. Thus while anthropology delineated the cultural practices that made certain groups unique, the task of history was to provide a record of their continuity from deep in the past. It has been remarked that virtually all national histories in Europe displayed no lack of zeal in demonstrating the uniqueness of their particular nation-states, leading to a 'historiography of special paths'. This served a number of purposes – both intentional and unintentional. The concern to emphasize difference obviously obscured those common traits that various 'nations' of Europe shared.[53]

The idea of a national history played an important role in legitimating state-building strategies in post-Napoleonic Europe. Historical studies joined with linguistic scholarship in contributing to origin myths that established a basis for national identity. It was no coincidence that linguistic scholarship blossomed during a period of intense self-consciousness about national identity in the nineteenth century: 'Poets revealed the living spirit in language and scholars equipped that spirit

with a past', contributing to 'a heady idealism in European struggles for national self-assertion and independence from Ireland to Greece and from Finland to Catalonia'. There was also a close accord between academic scholarship and public aspiration in the creation of nationalist sentiment, evident in a rich body of historical writing about national states and languages.[54]

In the United States, the overwhelming majority of historians became political historians, 'and patriotic historians *of* America at that' so that history became a means of constructing or affirming the nation while in France, in the wake of military and political humiliations in the period 1870–71, historians collaborated with state authorities in rehabilitating history as part of a programme of national regeneration.[55] Some of the traditional purposes of history in terms of establishing moral exemplars came under challenge in a school of professional historiography of which Ranke was the foremost proponent. Noting first the extent to which history was so often put to the task of 'judging the past [and] of instructing the present for the benefit of future ages', Ranke went on to state that his own work did not aspire to such grand purposes: 'It wants only to show what actually happened (*wie es eigentlich gewesen*).'[56] The French historian Prosper de Barante evinced a similar approach: 'We are sick of seeing history like a tame hired sophist lend herself to every proof that people want to draw from her.' 'What we want of her is the facts.'[57] Both were committed to a systematic procedure that required hard evidence. For the German historians who were deeply involved in the struggle for national unification, and who played such an active part in the course of events as in the decisive years between 1830 and 1871, Ranke's ideal of historical objectivity 'seemed to express a regrettable degree of moral indifference'.[58] Ranke intended his method to eliminate false evidence, anachronism and moralism, and this made it possible for history to achieve a record of past events in its purest form, thereby replacing moral tales by dispassionate scholarship.[59]

French historiography developed along a nationalist path, although it generally took a distinct approach to the moral tales of history, the heroes of the nation and the French mission in the world at large. Unlike many German historians who focused on state power and prestige, the revolutionary role of 'the people' formed the basis of French exceptionalism. The prominent French historian, Jules Michelet, regarded the French Revolution more or less as the sacred source of the nation's character and the emergence of modern France as 'the brilliant culmination of universal history'. For Michelet, the 'glorious motherland is henceforth the pilot of the vessel of humanity'.[60] English historiography drew

on yet other traditions in illuminating the greatness and uniqueness of the nation. One of the most prominent in the nineteenth century was the tradition of constitutional (as opposed to revolutionary) liberty which, in contrast to German historicism, had a distinct teleological trajectory. The history of English constitutionalism was one of progress, the key foundation for so-called Whig history.[61]

Commitment to objectivity gave an aura of legitimacy and authority to a new generation of professional historians emerging in both Europe and the United States from the mid- to late nineteenth century. In this, they took their cue from the Germans, but were no less tainted by political purpose. When Ranke gave his inaugural address, he explained the affinity between politics and history in terms of the working out of objective forces which were actually part of a meaningful process guided by the 'finger of God'.[62] Ranke's essential conservatism and implicit repudiation of the critical ideas of the Enlightenment characterized the romantic reaction more generally, stimulating the 'great flowering of historical studies in the nineteenth century'.[63] Iggers writes that although the Prussian university system, as reformed by Humboldt in the wake of Napoleonic defeats, gave greater independence in teaching and research, university appointments were controlled by an inner circle that ensured new appointees came from the same social background and political outlook. Dissidence was difficult, both in political and methodological terms. Methodology focused on philological examination of archival documents. But many historians, including such figures as Droysen, Sybel and Treitschke, approached their archival research with definite political views which they then documented selectively. They saw themselves as serving political and social order as well as a powerful Germany, and in the process created any number of historical myths. Droysen's history of Prussia, which endowed it with a 'German mission' from the Middle Ages, is a prime example.[64] Acton was moved to comment that the purpose of historians such as Droysen was not to 'diminish the lustre that surrounds their heroes, or exalts their rivals … [but to] extract political influence out of a chequered tradition'.[65]

In France, there was a 'turn to history' among liberals from about 1815 in an attempt to legitimize the post-revolutionary state. Crossley writes that they looked to history for the purpose of fashioning an ideology based on the national past which could support both individual rights as well as a sense of communal belonging: '[T]he past was reinterpreted as a grand narrative of national purpose and the Revolution was defended as the legitimate culmination of a long process of struggle.'[66] When Italy was created, not only did the leaders of the new state have

to create Italians, they also needed a national history to provide a suitable context for the project of nation-building. Elsewhere, state agencies sponsored national historiography through their various official scientific bodies including the Académie Française, the Leopoldine-Caroline Academy (in Germany), the Royal Society and other academies of science in Berlin, Saint Petersburg and Stockholm.[67] The task of constructing and consolidating a national identity was taken up with enthusiasm by various contributors: 'in the journalistic-literary, celebratory, monumental, iconographic and scholastic fields; in the last with a real effort towards national pedagogy'.[68] If anything is 'essentially *un*contested' it is the link between nation-building and historiography from the time of the American and French revolutions.[69]

In the colonial world, history met with anthropology, archaeology and other professionalized disciplines of academic study to construct accounts of the societies found there. In Africa, for example, oral traditions became a source for both anthropology and history, and on gaining independence the leaders of former British colonies in Africa 'found their own motives for continuing the investment in history begun by Britain.'[70] More generally, history as a knowledge system became firmly embedded in institutional practices that invoked the nation-state at every step, and the global presence of history within education systems serves only to underscore the point. Historians therefore owe that presence to 'what European imperialism and third-world nationalism have achieved together: the universalization of the nation-state'.[71] The story of social history bears this out. Despite avowing rationalism and universalism, social history has been largely incapable of breaking free of the constraints of national boundaries. One scholar notes that the nationalization of social histories 'derived both from the peculiarities of the discipline in each nation and from the national histories they were part of and helped shape'. For all its international ambitions, then, social history merely contributed to generating exceptionalisms.[72]

The language of national self-determination that underscored the Versailles settlement provided the ideological underpinnings for the anti-colonial nationalisms that flourished in the earlier part of the twentieth century. But not until after the next major conflagration of 1939–45 did the European empires wither away, under pressure from various sources, not least from the anti-colonial nationalist movements. Colonialism had become an economic burden and, even if it did continue to serve other strategic interests, the cost–benefit balance was simply not worth it. So while the British withdrawal from Africa, India and other parts of Asia from the 1940s through to the early 1960s is regarded as

somewhat reluctant, by the mid- to late 1960s Britain had become increasingly keen to divest itself of its remaining colonies, especially in the Pacific. Interestingly, the forces of anti-colonialism did not necessarily take the form of specific country-based nationalisms, at least in the initial stages. One commentator has noted that in Africa, anti-colonial movements first took the form of pan-Africanism. But since the struggle had to take place in the individual colonies, each soon produced its own specific nationalist movement led, for the most part, by educated elites most of whom had acquired knowledge of European nationalist ideas.[73] Ashis Nandy argues that the concept of the modern nation-state managed to overpower virtually all other surviving notions of the state outside the West 'as so many instances of medievalism and primitivism'. The process was strengthened when, in society after society, 'indigenous intellectuals and political activists confronting the colonial power found in the idea of the nation-state *the* clue to the west's economic success and political dominance.' Thus the idea of an indigenously based nation-state was not seen as a contradiction in terms and was adopted by leaders as diverse as Sun Yat-Sen and Kemal Ataturk.[74]

The notion that local resistance to colonialism took its cue from European categories of thought, however, has been challenged by postcolonial writers. Partha Chatterjee, for example, has sought to re-cast the history of anti-colonial nationalism so as to grant not just practical, but also *intellectual* agency to the resisters, thereby providing an alternative history of ideas. Chatterjee does this by distinguishing between political and cultural nationalism. The former challenges colonial power in seeking to establish its own nation-state with all the trappings of sovereignty. The latter allows colonized people to assert their difference and autonomy in another way. He argues that the 'object' in nationalist thought is still 'the Oriental' who retains the essentialist character depicted in Orientalist discourse. But this object is not passive: 'He is seen to possess a "subjectivity" which he can himself "make".'[75] This form of anti-colonialism, it is suggested, therefore takes its cue not by imitation of Western exemplars, but from its own sense of *difference* from Western ideas about human freedom and dignity.[76] It certainly allows postcolonial historiography to travel on a very different path, constructing a past more in keeping with the postcolonial present than the one-dimensional colonial representation of the past it rejects. Nonetheless, it is similar to the kind of cultural nationalism, generally attributed to German romantic/nationalist thought, and described by Meinecke and others, that worked to individuate nations by emphasizing essential differences. In the case of postcolonialism, however,

individuation tends to occur not simply along national lines but along the much broader lines of the former colonial world vis-à-vis Europe or 'the West'. As an engagement with, and a critique of, European thought in both rationalist and relativist modes, and how political and social thought/knowledge is directly implicated in the exercise of power, the writings of figures such as Chatterjee are caught in two basic contradictions. The first is entrapment within the binary East/West. The second is the use of major European thinkers, including Gramsci and Foucault, and the recruitment of Romantic ideas such as those of Herder, in constructing a critique of 'European thought'. Further, the critique is constructed in such general terms that the pluralism of the latter category is elided.

Another problem concerns the 'institutional consecration' of certain forms of thought in postcolonial studies in terms of a commitment to 'post'-theoretical protocols. Prominent figures in the field such as Homi Bhaba, Robert Young, Sara Suleri and Trinh T. Minh-ha have condemned as 'naïve or, worse, tacitly authoritarian, any commitment to universalism, metanarrative, social emancipation, revolution'.[77] However, the 'tendential thrusts' of postmodernism and postcolonialism, at least in their initial forms, actually point in quite different directions. Postcolonialism, by virtue of its critical stance against domination, necessarily embraces a grand narrative of its own, namely, emancipation.[78] Such alternative grand narratives have been emphasized by Said in some of his post-*Orientalist* work, especially *Culture and Imperialism*. There, he notes that 'the grand narratives of emancipation and enlightenment mobilized people in the colonial world to rise up and throw off imperial subjection.' And it is not just in the former colonial world that these ideas took hold: 'many Europeans and Americans were also stirred by these stories and their protagonists, and they too fought for new narratives of equality and human community'.[79] Thus Said, in his later work, suggests a move away from some of the more restrictive categories posited in *Orientalism*.

The actual historiography of colonialism of course has other aspects. With respect to India, it is said that earlier imperial historians were mainly concerned with how the British had taken control and then unified the sub continent, rarely looking at indigenous contributions. And when nationalist historians began to produce their own versions of history, these tended to hark back to a proverbial golden age, and then proceeded to describe how foreigners had arrived, conquered, and then exploited their sacred land and peoples. On the whole, then, both imperial and nationalist writing constituted a single form of historiography: 'a flip-side

of ruler's-eye view history, in various shades of black and white on obverse and reverse sides'.[80]

There is now a very substantial literature in the genre of colonial discourse critique much of which, again, takes its point of departure from Edward Said's work. However, it travels along many different trajectories within a general discursive field constructed in opposition to Enlightenment epistemology and a largely undifferentiated European historiography infected, rather then merely inflected, with 'pretensions' to universality, rationality and objectivity. Practitioners in the field of colonial discourse critique have often reacted against these suppositions by endorsing the essential relativity of all knowledge. But by doing this, the point of analytic departure is simply shifted from one extreme to another. Relativist epistemology entails endorsing the proposition that what we can 'know' is determined by a range of contingent assumptions embedded in language, culture, time and place. But knowledge is also a function of power. Indeed, this Foucauldian insight is what lies at the heart of colonial discourse critique. Thus as one commentator has written, colonial discourse critique aims to re-interrogate the past with a view to exposing the particular conditions under which 'knowledges' were produced and authorized: 'the self-referential ways in which they "represented" the subjects of their study: and the relations of domination by which their own constructs were imposed on those subjects, at the expense of the latter's "different" understandings'.[81]

What writers in the field have usually focused on, however, is the power wielded by European colonial powers and the knowledge produced under the conditions imposed by that power. As noted in the introduction, the problem of the power/knowledge nexus as it has operated under the aegis of national elites in the period since formal independence therefore receives little attention. Given that the entire field of colonial discourse critique is constructed very specifically against European knowledge/power, this is hardly surprising. But the issue of the power of indigenous elites does raise many questions that this field is unable to address adequately, if at all. This is where the new cultural history, especially as applied in postcolonial studies, actually fails to identify an important part of the *relevant* context that contemporary critiques need to address.

Conclusion

The commonplace assumption that 'Western philosophy' has long supported a rigid dividing line between nature and culture is untenable

since various nationalist projects have actually joined these concepts as part of their legitimating strategies. This has been complemented by nationalist historiography in delineating the nation and providing it with a more substantial context, again in support of legitimating strategies. The conceptualization of nations linked them to the possession of both cultures and histories which, along with claims to a particular geographic space, formed the essential *context* within which their needs, interests, rights and destinies could be articulated in a statist form. Thus the culture concept became incorporated into a powerful species of anti-Enlightenment nationalism, underpinning the 'authentic state' as the ultimate, natural, context for human fulfilment. Colonial discourse studies have taken issue with the claim that the intellectual underpinnings of liberation struggles simply borrowed from European nationalist thought. Whether this is so is less at issue than the fact that, by privileging the local and constructing a counter-narrative specifically against European/colonial historiography, these discourses have tended not only to breathe new life into the dubious West/non-West dichotomy and equally suspect notions of context, but to also cut away the ground from which criticism of local or indigenous elites can be mounted in current political struggles.

7
Conceptualizing Culture in Political Studies

The notion that cultural difference is a prime constituent of the boundaries of sociopolitical communities has featured strongly in both anthropological thought and nationalist historiography. The historical development of political studies also reflected these assumptions. From at least the time of Montesquieu, political theories of the constitutive effects of culture were expressed in terms of 'national character'. This idea of state identity held sway for almost two hundred years and it was not until after the Second World War that it give way to the now familiar concept of 'political culture'. A principal concern of the political culture school was with the prospects for democracy in various parts of the world. The devastating impact that fascism had had in Europe, and the growing strength of communist authoritarianism to the East, demonstrated that there could be no complacency about support for democratic institutions.

The post-war period also saw the decolonization movement gather pace. As it did so, debates about the prospects for democratic institutions in other parts of the world stimulated further interest in political culture approaches. All this took place at a time when the idea of democracy was, for the first time in history, unrivalled in its moral prestige. Virtually without exception, political leaders around the world, including those involved in anti-colonial nationalist movements, claimed to be democrats. Not surprisingly, democracy became one of the most contested of all political concepts, a situation in which relativist discourses flourished. We begin the investigation of these developments with the professionalization of political studies and, in particular, the foundations for the study of world politics on which the distinctive streams of comparative politics and international relations were to develop.

The foundations of world politics

As with other disciplines, the professionalization of political studies and its formal establishment as an academic discipline occurred largely in the period from the mid- to late nineteenth century, although there were important precursors in Holland, Sweden and Finland from the early seventeenth century. The *École Libre des Sciences Politiques* was founded in Paris in 1872 and professional chairs, sometimes in conjunction with other disciplines, were established in Ireland, Denmark and Belgium soon after. In pre-war Germany, politics was an important subject, but was usually studied as part of other subjects such as sociology while in Britain, despite the establishment of the London School of Economics and Political Science in 1895, separate departments of politics were not generally established in universities until the 1950s. National professional associations started to appear in the pre-Second World War period, although it was not until after the war that the trend really took off.[1]

A political science chair in the United States was established jointly with history at Columbia in 1857. As it developed in the United States, the scientific study of politics increasingly distanced itself from moral philosophy and care was taken not to confuse its purposes with other newly emergent and individuated social sciences such as economics, psychology and sociology,[2] although it remained open to ideas from elsewhere. Its concerns were largely contained within the sphere of the state, and the scientific study of politics provided the framework within which national ideals, institutions and processes could be understood, debated and reformed.[3] The earliest professional journal, the *Political Science Quarterly*, was founded in 1886 although the American Political Science Association was not established until 1903.[4] As with the professionalization of history, the formalized study of politics itself evolved within national frameworks. As a UNESCO report issued in 1949 stated, political science had received 'the stamp of [each] country's particular historical tradition, educational mould, constitutional system, social structure and philosophical conceptions'.[5] Nonetheless, there was also a great deal of cross-fertilization of ideas and methods between universities in Europe in the United States.

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the scientific study of politics was largely historical, evolutionary and comparative. Woodrow Wilson's ambitious work on *The State*, first published in 1889, is an exemplar of the kind of work produced in this period in political science. It begins with an analysis of the earliest forms of government

thought to have existed in ancient history and then through to the usual suspects – Greece and Rome – then the Teutonic polity followed by modern national entities, France, Germany, Great Britain and other European states, and finally the United States.[6] An important focus for political studies in both modern Europe and the United States was on the evolutionary progress of democratic ideas. Methodologically, the scientific approach itself developed a more analytical, descriptive and explanatory character by the 1920s. This trend strengthened with the work of Charles E. Merriam who aimed to develop the study of politics as an objective, methodologically sophisticated, social scientific endeavour. The study of the history of political thought remained complementary to this endeavour rather than in competition with it.[7] The behavioural revolution with its more explicit emphasis on adapting the methodology of the natural sciences was still some way off. In the meantime, the historical and comparative method was widely regarded as the only scientific means of discerning the laws of political development.

International relations as a distinctive field did not develop until well into the twentieth century, although one important early work published at the turn of the twentieth century delineated some basic contours of the field, including the dynamics engendered by a competitive struggle for power by states in the international sphere on the one hand, and mechanisms for the stability of world order on the other including the role of international law, arbitration procedures and peace conferences.[8] In his historiography of international relations within the United States, Brian Schmidt writes that the initial containment of political studies in one principal stream was due to the fact that both the internal and external aspects of state sovereignty were accommodated within the existing theoretical discourses of political science. Virtually the whole of political science in fact revolved around the national sphere and even when issues such as international law were examined, the approach was still very much informed by theories of the state.[9]

Significant changes took place over the next few decades, especially in the wake of the First World War. Indeed, the formal foundation of IR as a distinctive branch of political studies is traced to the establishment of the Woodrow Wilson Chair of International Politics at University College Wales, Aberystwyth, in 1919, and as a direct result of the war. Of course it drew on existing reservoirs of scholarship not only in political science but in law and history as well. The study of IR as a specialized stream in political science in the United States also picked up momentum in the same period although, as in Britain, it built on previous work in politics and other subjects.[10] Comparative politics acquired its own

profile, examining ideas, structures and institutions within particular states and comparing these with other states. IR, on the other hand, focused largely on relations between states, and on how issues concerning power, anarchy and order played out in the international sphere. The general field of world politics was therefore neatly divided so as to reflect the two faces of state sovereignty.

Many studies in world politics in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries remained focused largely on Europe and/or the United States. As noted above, Woodrow Wilson's expansive work paid scant attention to any societies outside of Europe and the United States. Some of the colonies of the British Empire – Canada, Australia and India – were covered in just a few pages along with a paragraph or two on the topic of colonial government.[11] His comments on the scope of his work provide a snapshot of thinking at the time, confirming the extent of the prejudices held by most scholars in Europe and the United States with respect to other parts of the world:

> For purposes of widest comparison in tracing the development of government it would of course be desirable to include in a study of early society not only those Aryan and Semitic races which have played the chief parts in the history of the European world, but also every primitive tribe, whether Hottentot or Iroquois, Finn or Turk, of whose institutions and development we know anything at all. Such a world-wide survey would be necessary to any induction which should claim to trace government in all its forms to a common archetype. But, practically, no such sweeping together of incongruous usage and tradition is needed to construct a safe text from which to study the governments that have grown and come to full flower in the political world to which we belong. In order to trace the lineage of the European and American governments which have constituted the order of social life for those stronger and nobler races which have made the most notable progress in civilization, it is essential to know the political history of the Greeks, the Latins, the Teutons, and the Celts principally, if not only, and the original political habits and ideas of the Aryan and Semitic races alone. To know other systems which are defeated or dead would aid only indirectly towards an understanding of those which are alive and triumphant.[12]

Notwithstanding Wilson's inattention, the study of colonial government came to acquire considerable importance, not only among the colonial powers in Europe for whom it had practical relevance, but also

in the United States, faced with the task of administering dependencies following the Spanish–American war.[13] This drew inevitable attention to how reliable scientific studies could contribute to the practical task of colonial administration. One leading authority on the subject found that earlier studies had produced little more than historical surveys. A more rigorous scientific comparative method, it was claimed, should narrow the time span of studies while maintaining a broad field of phenomena to be compared.[14] Thus colonial government in both Europe and the United States entered the study of world politics.[15] Following decolonization, such studies were transformed to support a new agenda, providing a point of departure for the interdisciplinary field of 'development studies' incorporating anthropological, economic, geographic, political and other perspectives on what is now called the 'global south'.

One study of the enmeshment of the culture concept in IR argues that the inter-war years saw the anthropological concept gain ground at the expense of the humanist conception, the latter having been implicated in the German experience of 'war-kultur' and therefore discredited by association.[16] Certainly, developments after the Second World War saw many changes, including the special status of IR itself. The journal *World Politics* produced its first issue in 1948. Its opening article stated that the field of international relations as such was still in its virtual infancy, and that the question of whether it should be regarded as a separate branch of learning 'or as just a miscellany of materials and methods drawn from existing subjects' was still hotly debated. The answer depended on considerations of utility and, in the aftermath of the Second World War, the importance of the subject needed little advocacy: 'Recent events have reinforced the growing conviction that the questions of international relations are too complex and dangerous to be dealt with any longer as sidelines of existing disciplines.'[17]

Conventional wisdom has it that IR underwent a fundamental change in the late 1930s and 1940s in both the United Kingdom and the United States, with a new generation of 'realist' scholars repudiating the approach of an inter-war school of 'idealist' scholars.[18] The latter are generally depicted as having placed a utopian faith in the ability of international institutions, such as the League of Nations, to bring about a peaceful and prosperous world order. Realist theory, on the other hand, promised to 'tell it how it is' by focusing principally on the dynamics of power in the international sphere. The work of the early school of 'classical realism' is typified by Hans Morgenthau who, in his *Politics Among Nation*, first published in 1948, asserted that all politics,

whatever the ultimate goal may be, is embedded in a struggle for power rooted deeply in human nature.[19] But Morgenthau did not produce a study devoid of attention to cultural differences – the concept of national character figured quite prominently. It was the later school of structural realism in the United States that stripped the realist approach of concerns with human nature and/or culture. Furthermore, the connections between the national and the international persisted in Morgenthau's work, and in that of the English School. But structural realism imposed a much more rigid dividing line between these, with 'culture' as such remaining a property of the domestic realm.[20] Classical realism, however, failed to follow through on the interconnections between power and culture. Much the same can be said of post-War liberal theories of international order which, given their more conscious universalist orientation and institutional focus, rarely considered such issues in depth. Some scholars in the English School did turn their attention to cultural issues, but largely under the more amorphous category of 'civilization' as exemplified in the work of Arnold Toynbee and Martin Wight. This work, however, has been criticized for failing to set out any systematic theoretical account of a cultural conception of international systems, offering not much more than historical narratives 'understood as the encounter of cultures or civilizations'.[21]

In the meantime, the experience of the Second World War precipitated further commitment to research funding, especially in the United States. The Magnuson–Kilgore Bill for the establishment of the National Science Foundation, introduced into the US Congress in 1945, prompted lengthy hearings at which a national interest case for funding political studies in all fields was made. Against criticisms that politics was not a genuine science, a parade of the profession's top scholars made the case not only for their scientific credentials, but also for the importance of the knowledge they produced. In addition to data on military personnel, armaments and other logistical matters, it was vital to know about 'the enemy's culture, national character, political system, class structure, history and traditions'.[22] The importance of culture as a conceptual tool in political science was specifically recognized, although its precise role remained rather vague, at least until the idea of 'political culture' was worked out as part of the behavioural turn in the 1950s and 1960s. But 'political culture' was always implicit in the notion of 'national character', and this notion had long been viewed as essential to understanding the character or identity of the state itself.

State identity and national character

Self-imagery in nationalist terms among European states had long drawn on a number of resources, including comparisons with the wider world as well as with imperial prowess in the colonial era. But within Europe, the rise of nationalisms had seen comparisons made closer to home, and these often entailed an essentialization of so-called national characters in nineteenth-century historiography.[23] In Britain, the idea that traditions of liberty and progress made it superior to other European nations, and justified their civilizing mission in the Empire, flourished. What fuelled German notions of superiority was the possession of their particular *Kultur* in contrast to a decadent West European *Zivilisation* on the one hand, and Slav 'barbarity' on the other. Elsewhere in Europe, other states developed their own narratives of national greatness and superiority. Italians had the classical heritage of Rome to call on while the prestige of French national character was embedded in a revolutionary tradition.[24] All these were a projection of what might now be called state identity.

The appeal of 'national character' can be traced to at least the mid-eighteenth century when Montesquieu used it to differentiate between various peoples. *Moeurs* and *manières* contributed to the overall picture, but other factors played their part too: 'Mankind are influenced by various causes: by the climate, by the religion, by the laws, by the maxims of government, by precedents, morals and customs; whence is formed a general spirit of nations.'[25] Tocqueville clearly took the notion for granted in writing of the 'unfortunate consequences for the national character of Americans' due to the 'steadily increasing despotism of the majority' which, he said, was 'the chief reason for the small number of remarkable men in American politics today'.[26] Edmund Burke used the term to encapsulate the essentials of Englishness as they had developed over the centuries. It appeared subsequently in the work of figures such as J.S. Mill and Walter Bagehot, the latter adapting Burke's idea of the 'cake of custom' in describing various national traits: the sluggishness of the English, the volatility of the French, and so on. Indeed, Bagehot dwells on the poor character of both the French and the Irish in turn, comparing these unfavourably with the 'rough instinct' of the English, the latter being more solid and reliable.[27]

Other national character approaches adopted an organic 'natural history' perspective in which the soul of the nation, revealed through 'its' culture, emerged as the product of a long growth process and was

considered virtually unchangeable.[28] Whereas earlier writers like Montesquieu attributed differences to a range of factors, including climate, some studies were explicitly racialist, picking up themes popularized in the nineteenth century and carried over into the twentieth. Charles H. Pearson's *National Life and Character* was built around the still commonplace notions of higher and lower races – and the fear that the latter might come to dominate. His idea of 'nation' coincided more or less with 'race', exemplified in a characterization of the 'British race' as 'highly gifted in political intelligence'.[29] Other racialist notions were based more on ideas of ancestral identity than distinctive biological traits. This provided the celebratory version of Anglo-Saxonism in Britain – a contrast to the heritage of other European 'stocks', especially the Irish. Edward Gibbon Wakefield echoed widely held opinions when he described the Irish as possessing a 'servile, lazy, reckless habit of mind' in contrast with the 'energetic, accumulating, prideful, domineering Anglo-Saxon race.'[30]

William McDougall adopted the notion of a 'group mind', deploying concepts from social psychology along with ideas of human nature in an effort to be 'strictly scientific' rather than philosophical, seeking to 'ascertain and state the facts and principles of social life as it is and has been', rather than as it should be. McDougall attempted to distance his work from the implications of German idealism and its notion of a 'collective mind'. Yet he acknowledged 'the great and necessary part played in human life by the Group Spirit and by that special form of it which we now call "Nationalism" '.[31] Several years earlier, Ramsey Muir had written that nationalism could not be defined in terms of any criteria save mere sentiment. The nation, he said, turned out to be an elusive idea, incapable of analysis by formulae or by testing. Least of all, he said, could it be considered in terms of 'the brutal and childish doctrine of racialism'. In the final analysis, Muir proposed that the nation exists only because its members passionately believe in its existence.[32] This is strikingly similar to Benedict Anderson's portrayal of the nation as an 'imagined community'.[33]

McDougall, however, remained convinced that there was more to psychological elements than shared sentiments. A nation's substance was reflected in a mentally constructed framework, rendering it 'capable of effective group life, of collective deliberation, of collective volition'.[34] The crowning task of psychology, he said, was to 'investigate the nature of national mind and character and … the conditions that render possible the formation of the national mind and tend to consolidate the national character'. For a definition of the latter, McDougall drew on Alfred

Fouillée who had studied Europeans in general and the French in particular. Starting from the observation that national character is not the simple sum of the individual characters, Fouillée proposed that it emerged as a creation of history and the traditions of past and present generations, culminating in a 'national spirit'. But this spirit is more than an effect, it is also a cause because it is not simply fashioned by individuals, but fashions them in turn. It follows from Fouillée's formulation that just as the nation has an existence different (although not separate) from the existence of individuals, 'so the national character implies that particular combination of mental forces of which the national life is the external manifestation'.[35] None of this necessarily implied a move away from racial thinking, for McDougall went on to consider innate differences due to race, mentioning along the way their manifestations in various types including 'the Negro, the White, and the Yellow' as well as the Semitic, the Celtic, Anglo-Saxon, the Breton, the Norman and so on.[36]

A similar understanding was proposed by Ernest Barker who agreed that the unity of a nation's character is rather 'a matter of faith than of sight.' It acquires its unity and permanence of form over time as the nation develops its 'congeries of wills, acting through the centuries'.[37] Barker rejected a single racial basis for the nation, endorsing rather a 'blend' of races, believing that an emphasis on race or any other single factor, such as culture, exaggerates just one aspect of its unity which is found only in a spiritual sense.[38] Nor did he see the nation as preceding the state. In a thoroughgoing modernist vein, he wrote: 'It is not nations which make States; it is States which make nations.'[39] National character emerges as the sum of acquired tendencies developed by a national society, 'the house of thought which men have made that their minds may dwell there together.'[40] This, then, is culture, and yet more than culture.

Up until at least the end of the Second World War, there persisted a strong belief in the relatively static and immutable nature of social and cultural characteristics of which national character was a manifestation. One study has found that notions about national character along with 'active' and 'passive' races abounded, sometimes differentiated on the basis of history-making races as opposed to races that were the objects for the others – and such notions were by no means exclusively German.[41] But towards the end of the war, one academic commentator wrote of national character as a 'rather discredited term', partly because of its associations with racism and other forms of facile stereotyping, and noted that most studies exhibited preconceptions about what

characteristics a nation possessed, and then proceeded to explain them.[42] Another critic referred to the illusion that nations possessed differing characters as having been 'one of the most dangerous and most potent of the elements making for war' the only remedy for which was a world federation based on a conception of common humanity.[43]

The fascist experience in Europe played a significant part in debasing 'natural' scientific ideas about the inherent inequalities of peoples and this, combined with the rapidly escalating processes of decolonization or self-determination, created a climate favourable to a universal potential for change. Optimistic ideas of development and modernization were proposed and the new theories that emerged and became intellectual exports, largely from the United States, often went to the opposite extreme by embracing a completely ahistoric emphasis on economic development.[44] Or as another commentator put it, modernization seen from the American perspective simply implied that 'American values must eventually prevail all over the globe.'[45] Ideas about national character nonetheless persisted, albeit in a culturalist rather than racialist version. Margaret Mead wrote that in the United States, the scientific study of national character 'as the application of anthropological and psychological methods to contemporary modern societies' had been stimulated by the 'problem of waging a total war, including psychological warfare'.[46] Mead explained that '[w]ithin each culture, attitudes towards the hearth, the soil, and the country, towards rulers and enemies, are very highly patterned and can be shown to fit the coherent character structure of the people'. Thus she argued for the importance of the national character approach in constructing new political forms suitable for enhanced international cooperation. These would take into account 'the very different ways in which the French and the Swiss, Burmese and Great Russian, Argentinian and Nigerian and Javanese, American and Greek, are at present able to relate themselves to larger units of authority.'[47]

In the 1960s national character was reformulated once again in terms of social psychology. It referred now to 'relatively enduring personality characteristics and patterns … modal among the adult members of society'. Its proponents sought to measure these scientifically to produce 'reliable and valid applications across national lines' and to determine 'the relation of national character to the political systems found in modern national states, and more specifically, to the establishment and maintenance of democracy'.[48] The study of *national* character therefore shaded into a delineation of the *democratic* character as distinct from its authoritarian counterpart. This harked back to certain nineteenth-century

ideas concerning the relationship between national character and form of government. Values such as liberty and altruism that were assumed to produce a predisposition towards democratic forms, for example, were regarded as related inextricably to an overall national character. One author maintained that the connection between liberty and national character has a very long history: 'The Greeks came to define their civilization and themselves in terms of liberty, in contrast with the "despotic" kingdoms of Asia' and, since that time, 'the qualities required from the citizenry of a free community have provided a fundamental focus for national character studies'.[49] A question raised by these ideas concerned whether political systems could be 'transplanted', or whether they could grow only in their own particular environment, an issue to which we return in the next chapter.

The idea of national character was also deployed in IR. Morgenthau was among those who found the concept useful, but he related it less to social psychology than to the more specifically anthropological notion of 'cultural patterns'. He identified national character as an element of national power which was distinguished both by elusiveness from the point of view of rational prognosis and by its 'permanent and often decisive influence upon the weight a nation is able to put into the scales of international politics'.[50] Morgenthau went to remarkable lengths in his use of what now seem to be the simplistic stereotypical resources of the national character approach:

> Locke's philosophy is as much a manifestation of British individualism as Magna Carta, due process of law, or Protestant sectarianism. In Edmund Burke, with his undogmatic combination of moral principle and political expediency, the political genius of the British people reveals itself as much as in the Reform Acts of the nineteenth century or the balance-of-power policies of Cardinal Wolsey and Canning. What Tacitus said of the destructive political and military propensities of the Germanic tribes fitted the armies of Frederick Barbarossa no less than those of William II and of Hitler. It fits, too, the traditional rudeness and clumsy deviousness of German diplomacy. The authoritarianism, collectivism, and state worship of German philosophy have their counterpart in the tradition of autocratic government, in servile acceptance of any authority so long as it has the will and force to prevail, and, concomitant with it, the lack of civil courage, the disregard of individual rights, and the absence of a tradition of political liberty. The description of the American national character, as it emerges from Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*, has not

> been deprived of its timeliness by the intervention of more than a century.[51]
>
> National character cannot fail to influence national power; for those who act for the nation … all bear to a greater or lesser degree the imprint of those intellectual and moral qualities which make up the national character. The 'elementary force and persistence' of the Russians, the individual initiative and inventiveness of the Americans, the undogmatic commonsense of the British, the discipline and thoroughness of the Germans are some of the qualities which will manifest themselves, for better or for worse, in all the individual and collective activities in which the members of a nation may engage.[52]

What makes Morgenthau's belief in the power of these highly subjective categories all the more noteworthy is his unqualified commitment to the existence of an objective, universal 'human nature' which forms the very basis of his realism. Of his six cardinal principles, the first is that politics and society are governed by objective laws rooted in human nature – laws that are impervious to our preferences and are challenged only at the risk of failure.[53] Morgenthau therefore accommodated a thoroughgoing particularism within a rigid universalism. At the time Morgenthau composed these passages, however, the heyday of national character studies was already in decline.[54] A successor concept waiting in the wings offered a new and more scientific approach to the comparative study of democratic and authoritarian tendencies as well as to more general comparisons and assessments of state identity in world politics.

The move to political culture

The culture concept clearly enjoyed a certain profile in professionalized political studies since the nineteenth century, especially through the idea of national character. But it was in the post-Second World War period that it gained momentum across a broader range of disciplines, leading one commentator to suggest that the culture concept was 'coming to be regarded as the foundation stone for the social sciences'.[55] At the same time, there was an increased emphasis on the ideational factors denoted by the concept. Robert Berkhofer wrote that just as the word 'attitude' underwent a transformation from denoting a physical stance to a term implying an 'inner mental state', the meaning of culture also came to be understood more often in terms of its ideational aspects rather than the other components of Tylor's 'complex whole'. He further noted

the increasing use of terms such as 'norms' and 'values' in social science, thus emphasizing the normative and evaluative aspects of human behaviour. Although the beginnings of this trend can be located in the 1920s and 1930s, it reached 'full-blown proportions' only in the aftermath of the Second World War, radiating chiefly from Harvard's Department of Social Relations led by Talcott Parsons in sociology and Clyde Kluckhorn in anthropology,[56] the same department in which Clifford Geertz trained.

This presaged the behavioural turn of the 1950s and 1960s which, in political science, involved a rejection of the dominant legal orientation, moral biases and narrow focus on the kind of comparative analysis employed in the immediate post-war period.[57] It also entailed another methodological move to shore up the scientific credentials of the profession in the United States and to distance the practitioners of the *science* of politics from political philosophy. Writing in the wake of the behaviouralist turn, Daniel Bell noted that his own interest in history and ideas was likely to be regarded as 'old-fashioned' since the language of the social sciences had become oriented to 'hypotheses, parameters, variables, and paradigms' while its procedures were multivariate, isolating single factors or clusters and holding them constant while particular variables were measured and quantified.[58] Behaviouralism therefore focused on the *scientific* study of norms and values or, put another way, the objective study of subjectivities. The rise of the political culture idea represented an important manifestation of this trend in comparative politics.

The first mention of the term 'political culture', along with an indication of its potential range of applications, was by Gabriel A. Almond in 1956: 'Every political system is embedded in a particular pattern of orientations to political action', a pattern which he found 'useful to refer to … as the *political culture*.'[59] It did not necessarily coincide with a particular political system or society, nor was it the same thing as 'general culture'. Almond also said that it was 'the failure to give proper weight to the cognitive and evaluative factors, and to the consequent autonomy of political culture, that has been responsible for the exaggerations and over-simplifications of the "national character" literature in recent years'.[60]

The political systems to which Almond applied the political culture concept consisted of a four-fold classification: the Anglo-American, the Continental European, the pre-industrial/partially industrial (outside the European–American area and the totalitarian systems), and the totalitarian political systems. This allowed one to bring together units which differed in institutional terms – such as the United States and

Britain and certain of the Commonwealth countries (presumably Australia, New Zealand and Canada) – but which Almond perceived as nonetheless sharing a common political culture. The purpose of Almond's scheme was to devise a typology to replace the unsatisfactory array of classificatory schemes on offer in comparative politics in the 1950s. These included two–dimensional structural schemes such as parliamentary–presidential, two-party or multi-party and so on; regional schemes which lumped together countries simply on the basis of contiguity; and particularistic schemes – American Government, British Government, the Soviet Union and so on. The latter scheme, he said, could not actually be called a *system* of classification since all were single cases. The new concept allowed classification on a more substantive basis.[61] In summary, Almond attempted to refine the categories of comparative political studies in line with the scientific method of taxonomy and classification into which all actual cases could be placed. His political culture concept was to become immensely influential in comparative politics over the half century that has elapsed since it was first formulated and it still pervades discussions in the field.

It did, however, get off to a slow start and it would be almost another seven years before Almond, together with co-author Sidney Verba, employed the concept in a more substantial work on the 'civic culture'.[62] Their main purpose was to examine the social structures and practices that sustained democratic politics, especially in light of the development of fascism and communism in the inter-war years in Europe. This had shaken the 'faith of the Enlightenment in the inevitable triumph of human reason and liberty', and 'raised serious doubts about the inevitability of democracy in the West'.[63] In addition, they believed that the study of political development in the new nations of the decolonizing Third World required an approach that went beyond the formal institutions of democracy and looked to the problem of nurturing a political culture consistent with the democratic model of a participatory state.

> the ways in which political elites make decisions, their norms and attitudes, as well as the norms and attitudes of the ordinary citizen, his relationship to government and to his fellow citizens – are subtler cultural components. They have the diffuse properties of belief systems or of codes of personal relations, which the anthropologists tell us spread only with great difficulty.[64]

Almond and Verba argued that the culture concept itself gave access to the frameworks and approaches used in anthropology, sociology and

psychology, thereby enriching analysis in terms of such categories as socialization, culture conflict, and acculturation. At the same time, they were concerned to avoid importing some of the ambiguities that arose in anthropological work into their own specifically political framework, and so claimed to be employing the concept in only one of its many meanings: 'that of *psychological orientation towards social objects'*. When they spoke of the political culture of a society, it was limited to 'the political system as internalized in the cognitions, feelings, and evaluations of its population', and thought that by doing so, they could escape the diffuseness of general anthropological terms like 'cultural ethos' and avoid the assumption of homogeneity implied by the concept. From this they derived the commonly cited definition of the 'political culture of a nation' as 'the particular distribution of patterns of orientation toward political objects among the members of the nation'.[65]

This was comparable to Alex Inkeles's approach to 'national character' since it looked for modal patterns of thought or belief that could be used systematically to produce correlations across national lines. Although studies in both national character and political culture recognized that individual attitudes varied within a given national population, and that there were often significant 'sub-cultures', including those of distinct ethnic groups, both were nonetheless based on the idea that the boundary of *a* political culture coincided with a larger political 'system' and in most cases this was the state.[66] It followed that the entities in possession of a political culture were in fact states. Given that comparative politics was oriented towards cross-national comparisons, this was scarcely avoidable. The result was categories such as 'Mexican political culture' or 'Chinese political culture'. Some anthropological studies adopted a similar framework, and their findings were not markedly different from those of the comparative political scientists.[67] Ruth Benedict sought an answer to the question: 'what makes Japan a nation of Japanese?'[68] Margaret Mead wrote of child-rearing practices in Russia (such as swaddling babies very tightly) in terms of the children 'learning to be Russian'.[69]

In the 1960s, the future of political culture studies seemed secure. Its precepts concerning the role of culture was supported not only by anthropological perspectives but by other influential bodies of theory as well such as functionalism and systems theory. And since it was firmly connected to a behaviouralist framework, it seemed much more scientific than the old national character studies. By the early 1980s, however, challenges to mainstream theories of political culture identified a catalogue of problems. These included its conceptualization as: idealizing

capitalist-technological political secularization; resting on inadequate, ambiguous, unproven or false assumptions; producing reductionist, culture-bound, non-explanatory and descriptive statements; approaching problems in a particularistic rather than holistic manners; and being static, limited in method and oriented to passive and conditioned behaviour.[70]

Despite the difficulties and criticisms, the concept of political culture as envisaged by Almond and Verba survived, more or less in the form of conventional wisdom, and was in fact given a new lease of life with the publication of *The Civic Culture Revisited* in 1980.[71] The emphasis was once again on the conditions for stable democratic government. A number of problems with the original methodology of political culture studies were identified (for example, in how cross-national surveys were conducted), but the value of the concept of political culture itself was not in doubt. By the mid-1980s, prominent authors of political science textbooks clearly accepted the Almond and Verba formulation without question. In Britain, Richard Rose's 1985 edition of *Politics in England*, defined political culture as 'a more or less harmonious mixture of the values, beliefs and emotions dominant in a society … that influence support for authority and compliance with its basic political laws'.[72] Dennis Kavanagh, in another British politics textbook, wrote that:

> Every political system is embedded in a political culture. At one time, historians, anthropologists, and political scientists spoke of a 'national character'. Now we are more likely to refer to the political culture – the values beliefs, and emotions that give meaning to political behaviour. These are the values which create dispositions for people to behave in a particular way or which provide justifications for behaviour.[73]

In an earlier, more nuanced study, however, Kavanagh acknowledged political culture as an 'analytical abstraction' rather than a 'fact' about any given national sphere. Perhaps aware of its deterministic implications, Kavanagh said that 'the political culture does not *do* anything … [it is] a mediating rather than determining influence',[74] and that 'to talk of a culture requires a fair amount of generalization, and statements on this subject are not easily supported by 'hard' or quantitative evidence.[75] Other criticisms discerned in the concept an inherent conservatism with its fixation on systemic stability in addition to a very ethnocentric tendency to elevate Anglo-American political cultures to 'inspirational models'.[76] And historians who adopted the concept were said to have

often failed to distinguish values and beliefs from interests, simply conflated them under its general rubric.[77] At least some of the new cultural historians were therefore accused of using the concept in ways that evaded the issue of power, and who exercises it.[78]

Writing in the mid-1990s, however, Larry Diamond claimed that political culture theory had stood the test of time and that only a crude application of its ideas would see it as more or less determining both political structures and political behaviour, or as resistant to change over time.[79] But that is precisely what at least some leading scholars appeared to do. In an influential work on Asia, Lucian Pye wrote in 1985 that 'the drama of politics' in that region was being played out by leaders and followers whose roles were largely prescribed by culturally determined concepts concerning the nature of power. His thesis was that 'political power is extraordinarily sensitive to cultural nuances, and that, therefore, cultural variations are decisive in determining the course of political development'.[80] Pye explicitly acknowledged his debt to the pioneering work on political culture carried out by Almond and others, stating that it should not be necessary to offer even a token defence of political culture as the foundation stone of comparative political analysis. This is all the more interesting when we consider that Pye, in 1972, found the concept elusive, one that 'initially promised powerful and vivid insights but which soon became vague and empty through indiscriminate use'.[81]

If the concept did not even need a token defence in 1985, Pye nonetheless presented one against structuralist analyses and rational choice models which concentrated on individual motivations and actions. He also attacked 'Western' universalist assumptions about the nature of political power. Indeed, Pye reversed himself, and dismissed various criticisms of the political culture approach that claim 'the concept opens the way to fuzzy thinking and sloppy explanations' or that 'denounce it for being too deterministic'.[82] Pye's rejection of Western (and especially American) universalist models for understanding political power may seem a refreshing change from the ethnocentrism of democracy promotion projects. But the speed with which he rushed to embrace a culturalist position only led Pye into other traps. Particularism is not an adequate reply to the limitations of universalism. This brings us to the most prominent of the culturalists in the present period, who, like Pye, seems to have executed a major reverse in his thinking.

In his 1991 book on the 'third wave' of democratization, Samuel Huntington examined two versions of the cultural obstacle-to-democratization thesis, one implying that only Western culture provides

a suitable basis for democratic politics, and another asserting not only that one culture is peculiarly favourable to democracy, 'but that one or more cultures are peculiarly hostile to it'. *Against* such deterministic prognostications, he argued that cultural traditions are dynamic rather than static and rejected the idea that particular cultures are permanent obstacles to development. He further pointed to the heterogeneous nature of the 'great historical cultural traditions' such as Islam and Confucianism, arguing that each is a highly complex body of ideas, beliefs, doctrines, practices, and so forth.[83] This is at odds with the later 'clash of civilizations' thesis discussed earlier. As critics have pointed out, Huntington's core justification for his thesis is not just Difference, but the essential immutability of Difference and the tendency for conflict to develop along cultural or civilizational 'fault-lines'.[84]

To summarize, the perspectives of the political culture school, although not necessarily deterministic in their assumptions, have nonetheless been marshalled in the construction of political theories of causal determinism, allowing issues like political development to be explained in terms of distinctive national histories on the one hand, and the socialization of individuals within a particular cultural framework on the other.[85] The implicit determinism of the political culture concept is related to one of its primary purposes, namely to explain why some countries sustain democratic politics while others fall victim to fascism or communism. The political culture concept was also intended to aid analysis of the post-colonial world in the Cold War period. The notion of political culture was therefore not simply advanced as an interesting academic idea, but an important part of a more practical agenda of democracy promotion in the Cold War period where democracy itself became the hottest of all 'essentially contested concepts'.

Contesting democracy

Numerous commentators have remarked on the fact that democracy has only recently come to be regarded as the cornerstone of 'the good' in world politics, achieving a moral prestige unknown in any previous period and claimed as the basis for virtually all the world's regimes, regardless of actual practices. Democracy owes its currency to two primary, inter-related factors. The first was the experience of the Second World War. Disgust with the fascist ideologies that had motivated the Axis powers, and the revulsion that attended realization of their ultimate consequences in the Holocaust, served to bolster democracy's credentials as the most desirable and morally creditable form of

government. It was linked to standards for basic human rights so grossly abused in the death camps, and to the interests and well-being of the masses of ordinary men and women whose political and moral status had been transformed since the French Revolution. 'The people' now embodied the ultimate source of political legitimacy and authority. They were those whose interests the political system was meant to serve and, just as importantly, who were considered most competent to judge those interests by deciding who was to govern them.

The second factor was the decolonization movement which gained momentum in the aftermath of the Second World War with Harold Macmillan's 'winds of change'. Now all 'peoples', not just Europeans, or their descendants in other parts of the globe, were entitled to exercise the right to self-determination. So whereas the principle of national self-determination in the form of sovereign statehood was promoted only within Europe following the First World War, it was now extended world-wide. This set the scene for the European state system and its foundational principles of sovereignty to become established as the global organizing norm for political community. The sovereignty principle of course has two dimensions, the first concerning the status and integrity of any given state vis-à-vis other states, and decreeing non-intervention in its internal affairs while the second concerns the location of sovereignty within the state. Given the ascendance of democratic ideas, sovereignty was now formally vested in 'the people'. The ideology of nationalism sought to define this entity more precisely in terms of '*a* people' delineated by common cultural characteristics.

In their previous lives as colonial entities, the new states had obviously not been governed democratically, although local legislatures with limited powers had often been instituted under colonial rule along with fairly extensive systems of local government including participatory elements. The boundaries established by colonizing powers also tended to play havoc with the indigenous communities and their own pre-existing political systems and affiliations, including relationships with neighbouring communities. Decolonization rarely solved any of these problems. It tended rather to exacerbate them, for 'state-building' measures were often heavy-handed, and included the subordination of smaller or weaker groups in the interests of a creating a nation – *a* people – to match the state. Democracy was usually one of the first casualties.

The point of setting this out is not to delve into the fate of democracy in the former colonial world, but rather to draw out some of the key issues relating to culture and democracy. A major debate that emerged with postcolonial developments concerned precisely the relationship

between the two. For as much of the former colonial world succumbed to one-party dictatorships, this was frequently justified on the grounds that these somehow embodied local cultural preferences and was therefore 'democratic in its own terms' – that is by reference to its own context. In the case of the former colonies in Africa, for example, one-party rule was defended by some as 'intrinsically African' – a reflection of Africa's own cultural traditions rather than an imported, alien version of 'Western democracy'. And what was intrinsically and authentically African in cultural terms was therefore more legitimate in an African context.[86]

In the meantime, the prestige of democracy was such that it was not just the West that claimed to be its champion, but the communist bloc as well. Clearly, very different interpretations were offered, one emphasizing democratic equality and the other liberty. This contributed to Gallie's depiction of democracy as an 'essentially contested concept'.[87] At much the same time, George Orwell declared that in the case of a word like democracy, its very prestige meant that attempts to produce an agreed definition was resisted on all sides: 'The defenders of any regime claim that it is a democracy, and fear that they might have to stop using the word if it were tied down to any one meaning.'[88] One prominent democratic theorist of the post-war period also noted that for the first time in history there seemed to be no political doctrines or ideologies being promoted that were actually anti-democratic, at least in rhetorical terms. This contrasted with the inter-war period when promoters of fascism were perfectly open about their hostility to democracy.[89]

The contest for democracy therefore comprised three competing approaches or models. The first was 'Western' democracy, usually equated with 'liberal democracy'. It is against this approach that the other two models were largely constructed: the communist version of socialist democracy based on the principle of greater equality; and the culturalist approach which emerged from various parts of the Third World, and which rested on an appeal to the essentially democratic nature – and superior legitimacy – of local cultural traditions. Sometimes both ideological and culturalist arguments were employed together. Further, each approach was itself variegated. In 'the West', for example, post-war Europe embraced both the democratic socialism of certain Scandinavian countries as well as the market liberalism of Thatcher's Britain while in the United States, support for democratic socialism has historically been very weak in contrast with most European countries as well as with Australia, New Zealand and Canada. 'Western democracy' therefore took many forms.

An important aspect of democracy's 'internationalization' in the post-war period was US foreign policy, especially with respect to communism. The emergence of superpower rivalry saw the promotion of democracy by the United States constructed explicitly in opposition to communism, but with the promotion of free markets rather than free people taken as the measure of a regime's credentials. State elites in the Third World who chose alignment with the United States rather than the Soviet bloc found it advantageous to adopt a façade of democratic constitutionalism, even though their regimes were anything but democratic in practice. The United States was happy enough to accept the 'democratic' credentials of most right-wing authoritarian regimes, as long as they remained in the anti-communist camp. One notable result of US foreign policy in terms of democracy promotion in the Cold War period was to stretch the meaning of democracy to 'embrace an extraordinary variety of friendly but repressive regimes'.[90] These included the regimes of the Somozas in Nicaragua, Pinochet in Chile, Marcos in the Philippines, Diem in South Vietnam, and Mobutu in Zaire. The latter was described as 'America's staunchest African ally during the Cold War'.[91] It is worth remembering that Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden are one-time friends of the United States as well.

The perverse relativism underpinning these alliances was condemned in at least some quarters in the United States, for it had some very unwelcome implications not only for how the recent history of fascism and the Holocaust were to be understood, but for the Cold War battle against communism too.[92] 'Cultural relativism in anthropology was a prime target, since nothing could be more disarming in a global struggle of ideologies and social systems than to suggest that there was no universal, absolute standard by which belief systems and practices could be judged.'[93] But the anthropological conception of culture nonetheless maintained its ground throughout the Cold War period, underpinning comparative politics through the political culture concept and providing the opponents of rationalist theories, along with many supporters of the postcolonial movement, the essential basis for their own projects.

Conclusion

Studies in history, anthropology and politics have all been deeply concerned with the nature of political community and with what makes each community distinctive. As the discipline of politics first developed, it adapted key aspects of historical, evolutionary and comparative approaches to classify and analyse different forms of government or

political institutions. The almost mystical idea of national character for many years provided the essential basis for delineating the identity of different political communities or states. Although tainted with racialist connotations, the national character approach nonetheless survived well into the post-war period when the behaviouralist alternative in the form of political culture displaced it. But although widely endorsed and utilized in comparative political studies to the present time, the way in which political culture has been conceptualized and operationalized remains problematic. In addition to its deterministic and relativistic aspects, political culture approaches have largely neglected the relationship between culture and power.

The post-War period also saw democracy acclaimed universally as the most desirable form of government, but with little agreement as to its form and content. A plethora of contending models emerged, configured largely around liberal, socialist, organic/conservative and/or culturalist ideas. With the events of 1989–90, the contest between communist and liberal versions of democracy came to an apparent end, even if history did not. But far from affirming the triumph of universal values associated with both capitalism and liberal democracy, arguments supporting the cultural particularism of basic values flourished in the aftermath. And although culturalist arguments had always featured in discourses about democracy in much of the former colonial world, the conditions of the post-Cold War world were distinctly favourable to their reinvigoration. Culturalist models of democracy gained ground most notably in those parts of the world where confidence in newfound economic strength combined with defensiveness concerning entrenched political power produced the conditions for their renewed assertion. Culturalist aspects of the 'new Asianism', which we consider next, illustrates important aspects of the relationship between culture and power that have usually been neglected in contextualist approaches.

8
Contextualizing Cultural Politics

Although culturalist ideas formed part of a broad postcolonial discourse from an early stage in the post-Second World War period, rapidly changing conditions following the end of the Cold War saw cultural politics move to centre stage in various parts of the world. It was especially pronounced in the Asia-Pacific where the economic dynamism of the region prompted proclamations of a coming 'Pacific century' by commentators from such diverse sites as the world of international business to cultural studies. This gave rise to a species of regional identity in the form of a 'new Asianism' dependent not only on a stereotypical and over-homogenized representation of 'Asia' but also an equally stereotypical construction of 'the West'. The deployment of Confucianism provided the original basis for a version of 'Asian values' that later became projected more broadly across the region. As noted earlier, discourses on these themes have become muted in the post-9/11 world, but the more general implications for understanding cultural politics in the international sphere remain important. The use of a cultural category such as Confucianism to underscore alternative models of democracy also raises the issue of how cultural diversity may be accommodated in democratic theory and how democracy 'fits' into different contexts. Communitarian approaches to these issues have generally revolved around three inter-related arguments. The first is that the development of democracy is specific to the modern industrialized 'West' and is not necessarily valid for other contexts. The second holds that for democracy to take root outside 'the West', it must be modified to suit local cultural contexts, sometimes drastically so. A third argument is that, in some places, there are pre-existing or indigenous political forms that are essentially democratic and far more appropriate in the local context than any introduced species could possibly be. In an era which has seen democracy

promotion by force, these arguments are well worth considering. But there are also a number of problems, as we shall see below.

The new Asianism

The 'new Asianism' refers to a way of imagining Asia, or more especially the sub-region of Pacific Asia,[1] in terms which are thought to distinguish it from other regions, but especially 'the West'. The phenomenon does not constitute a single, uncontested body of ideas formulated, or subscribed to, by an easily identifiable set of actors. On the contrary, it lends itself to a number of different interpretations. It includes, but is not limited to, the 'Asian values debate', a discourse focusing largely on human rights and democracy issues and situated within the broader set of discourses about the rise of Asia in world affairs. Proponents of 'Asian values' have been ostensibly concerned to counter hegemonic Western discourses and to reassert an Asian subjectivity and an Asian version of modernity based on authentic cultural and moral values.

The 'new' in 'new Asianism' distinguishes the contemporary phenomenon from earlier periods in which the idea of Asia, as well as a notion of 'pan-Asianism' was prominent. The latter notion flourished in the nineteenth century and in the earlier part of the twenty-first century until the onset of the Second World War. Focusing primarily on the idea of a struggle against Western imperialism, it may be seen as a defensive reaction to Western pressures, serving as an adjunct to nationalism and instrumentally subservient to it.[2] The 'new' Asianism was formulated in the post-independence period, building principally on the idea of an underlying set of shared cultural values shaping both the political and the economic destiny of the region.[3] Throughout much of the 1990s it was borne along on the tide of spectacular economic growth which fuelled assumptions about the role of cultural forces driving it. Commentators talked readily of an 'Asian renaissance' and a coming 'Pacific century'.[4] The economic boom was initially led by Japanese exports as well as investment in industry and technology. From the late 1960s Japan was joined by the 'Four Dragons', or newly industrialized countries/economies (NICs or NIEs) – Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Korea – and then in the 1980s by Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia.[5] Since then, China has come to occupy much attention in the analysis of economic and other trends and continues to play an increasingly prominent role in regional and world affairs into the twenty-first century. Despite recession in Japan in the early 1990s and the regional financial crisis in 1997, the overall achievements in

economic growth put paid to earlier pessimistic prognoses that the region was trapped in a vicious cycle of under-development from which there was little chance of escape in the near future.[6]

One factor often blamed for earlier periods of economic backwardness was 'culture' or, more specifically, 'Confucian culture'. Weber famously attributed China's difficulties with modernization specifically to Confucianianism.[7] But it is this same Confucian culture that later came to be regarded as the key to explaining the 'miracle' of the region's economic growth.[8] One of the many ironies of this is that Confucianism (along with Taoism) regards entrepreneurial activity with a disdain verging on contempt. This makes the centrality now accorded to Confucianism by management theorists attempting to explain the roots of East Asian dynamism less than persuasive.[9] Nonetheless, the perception of Confucian culture as a key explanatory variable has gathered widespread support. One commentator suggests that the preference for a cultural explanation 'may be understood within the neo-conservative perception of the decline in public morality in the West, specifically, within their critique of excessive individualism' and that the perceived collectivist sentiments attributed to Asian cultures served 'all too readily as a quick answer to the success of the Asian NIES'.[10]

A key feature of the new Asianism – illustrated in part by the contrast between a collectivist 'East' and an individualist 'West' – is the dichotomization of 'Asia' and 'the West'. The contrast with 'the West' gives 'Asia' a coherence that it can scarcely possess otherwise. Those most deeply involved in promoting the idea of Asian values are obliged to agree that the region is marked by irreducible cultural diversity. Even Samuel Huntington has not posited an 'Asian' category to encapsulate the cultural or civilizational diversity of the Asian region, although he does draw broad distinctions between Western democracies and those in Asia, using 'Western individualism' and 'Confucian values' of 'consensus and stability' to illustrate the distinctions.[11] So although some national constructions of identity in the region take points of contrast from neighbouring countries, others, both national and especially regional, tend rather to be constructed in opposition to the West.[12] The model of Confucianism promoted in Singapore, for example, builds upon the explicit contrast with the West, rather than with Islam, Hinduism or any other cultural construct. Moreover, the version of 'Asia' imagined in the Asian values debate has clearly not been set up as a contrast with, say, 'Africa' or 'Latin America'. Indeed, to do so would be to defeat much of the purpose of the exercise. One critic argues that the very idea of Asia is ultimately empty and that the 'ideology of

Asianism' attempts to fill the void by attributing positive, essential meaning to a geographic concept by means of the juxtaposition with the West.[13] This is directly comparable to Said's analysis of how 'Europe' came to be understood by opposition to the East.

Proponents of regional identity have usually regarded it as the product of historical evolution – nurtured through processes which are unique and particular and cannot be simply replicated elsewhere. And although economic or geographic criteria. have tended to carry weight in functionalist rationales for regional integration, cultural criteria have gained ascendancy in many different regions, finding support among those promoting internal cohesion and homogeneity as essential to the prospects of a regional bloc playing a coherent international role.[14] The cultural politics of regionalist/culturalist discourses, however, has scarcely been restricted to the Asian region. In parts of postcolonial Africa, political rhetoric in support of one-party authoritarian rule claimed that it was rooted in African culture while the legitimacy of opposition parties was rejected as 'alien, capitalistic and a relic of imperialism'.[15] The South Pacific region developed its own version of the discourse, known as the 'Pacific Way' which stressed virtually the same set of values under the rubric of 'tradition' with a particular emphasis on consensus.[16] Similar arguments have been mounted among Islamic countries of the Middle East.[17] Nor is it restricted to the former colonial world. Regional integration in Europe has certainly produced ideas of 'Europeaness' expressed in fundamental socio-cultural terms which underscore a common identity regardless of local variations.[18] This is assumed to be embedded in a distinctive set of shared cultural values constituting a political identity that is modern, rational and secular and which upholds the basic principles underpinning human rights and democracy.[19] In this way, the idea of Europe as a cultural or civilizational entity is 'imagined' in social terms by reference to these values.[20] More often than not, the same values are also ascribed to the broader entity known as 'the West'. Defining this entity, however, is not completely straightforward since 'the West' that figures so prominently as 'Asia's other' in the construction of region is not necessarily the same 'West' that appears at other times. 'The West' includes Western Europe, large swathes of Central and Eastern Europe recently incorporated in the EU, the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, and sometimes Japan as well. This has contributed to Japan's highly ambiguous position with respect to both 'Asia' and 'the West' and some of its own dilemmas of national and regional identity.[21] Above all, the articulation of a core cultural identity is usually an elite strategy imposed from above. The

same can be said of nationalist ideologies. Indeed, regionalist constructions of identity deploy strategies similar to those of nationalism in the creation of relational contrasts against which an identity can be constructed.[22] This is as true of the 'Europe' defined by the EU as it is of the version of 'Asia' promoted via the new Asianism.

Despite efforts to emphasize or exaggerate Difference between Asia and the West, the comparative study of 'ideational constructs' actually demonstrates numerous points of comparison across the alleged civilizational divide. Sovereignty, along with the doctrine of non-interference, is the strongest norm underpinning regional organization in Pacific Asia, yet the original model is deeply rooted in the European historical experience and, in contextualist terms, is 'specific' to that experience. In Europe, on the other hand, sovereignty receded rapidly in the post-War period as new norms of regional integration developed. Another example relates to ideas of community and collectivism – notions foundational to the new Asianism. Asianist literature typically provides sharp contrasts between a thoroughgoing liberal individualism in the West vis-à-vis the collectivism allegedly inherent in Asian societies. But what is rarely noted is the fact that two very 'Western' ideologies – classic European conservatism as well as socialism – are just as strongly committed to communitarian values. Moreover, many proponents of the new Asianism are committed to one of the most significant offshoots of liberal individualism – capitalist economics. Yet much of the Asianist celebration of community values and 'society before self' is actually derived from socialist values which, in turn, were historically constructed in opposition to capitalism. Some of the tensions and contradictions within the new Asianist discourse are well illustrated in the cultural politics of 'Asian democracy' in Singapore, to which we turn next.

The cultural politics of Asian democracy[23]

Cultural pluralism has not ruled out the near universal adoption of the basic institutions of constitutional democratic government: constitutions, parliaments, political parties, elections and voting can be found in virtually every country in the world, along with norms of state sovereignty. But cultural factors have long been identified as a prime reason for the inability of many countries to maintain a system of adversarial politics where opposition is widely accepted as legitimate and where power may alternate between rival contenders. A prime example of these problems is provided by the case of Singapore where political opposition is condemned as divisive and as an impediment to 'nation-building'. The

imposition of unity and conformity has been supervised closely by a leadership imbued with a strong sense of its own unique capacity to create a well-ordered political, social and economic structure resting on a high degree of harmony and consensus.

Singapore's authoritarian governance is both concealed and justified by its Confucianization of politics. Lee Kuan Yew, who laid the foundations of a system his son now controls as Singapore's third Prime Minister, is the author of the appropriation of Confucius, seeking to defend *il*liberalism by grounding it in an appeal to ancient and ineffable Chinese traditions. Nonetheless, when seeking to wrest sovereignty from British colonial control, Lee had recourse to universal civil and political rights, such as the freedom to organize and to hold peaceful protests. And he aptly warned: 'repression is a habit that grows'.[24] And so it has grown in Singapore, where the defence of universal human rights has been reversed, replaced by a questionable and politically convenient invocation of 'local' values. Elections in Singapore are tightly controlled to minimize opportunities for genuine competition. Individuals who run against People's Action Party (PAP) candidates, and electorates that actually vote them into parliament, suffer the consequences at the hands of a government with very little tolerance for such behaviour. The ruling party punishes electoral districts that do not toe the line while opposition politicians are harassed and intimidated relentlessly. The Internal Security Act – with its provisions for indefinite detention without trial – has sometimes been used against political opponents. But the civil law has proved just as useful, with PAP figures successfully prosecuting defamation cases and bankrupting opponents in recent years. Censorship of the media is equally relentless, inducing effective self-censorship.[25]

Socially, PAP policies have been equally rigid. Every aspect of public and private life is tightly controlled through education, health, housing, employment, pensions and the strict regulation of associational life. Not surprisingly, the government rejects the concept of 'civil society' in the sense that this names a social space free of government regulation or surveillance. In its place we find a concept of 'civic society' emphasizing duties and obligations to the community rather than 'individual rights'. Explanation of the differences between 'civic' and 'civil' in formal discourses in Singapore are phrased in terms of communitarian versus individualistic values and practices. Civic values are of course those depicted as communitarian in nature, emphasizing 'self-help, social responsibility and public courtesy' and working for the 'larger good of society'. Civil values, which include individual rights such as free speech, are depicted as far less worthy and representative only of 'special interests'.[26]

Singapore's political system has deployed culture in general, and Confucianism in particular, as a political tactic against the legitimacy of political opposition. This must be understood against the background of rapid economic change in Singapore since full independence in 1965, and the social and political consequences of such change. In the early post-independence period, modernization was vigorously promoted and 'traditional cultural values' were regarded as inhibiting the attitudes needed to create an economically robust state. After just a decade and a half, however, the PAP perceived that it could well fall victim to its own success, for modernization very often meant political liberalization as well. Attention therefore shifted to readjusting official ideology and, with it, the cultural/political orientation of the population so as to achieve modernization *sans* liberalization.

A major turning point came when the PAP's share of the popular vote started to decline. By the late 1970s Prime Minister Lee began to express public concern about too much 'Westernization'. This included the development of a more open, critical public political culture manifest in the electorate's growing willingness to listen to a variety of alternative ideas about politics and government, and to vote for opposition candidates. Particular attention was given to the 'problem' of the Singaporean Chinese, with Lee Kuan Yew expressing concern about the corrosive effects that Western influences were having on this population group.[27] Singaporean Chinese, viewed as especially vulnerable to the insidious effects of Western culture, therefore became a priority for re-education. Since they also constituted around three quarters of the population, with Malays, Indians and other smaller groups making up the remainder, they happened to be politically the most significant. Thus traditional Confucian ethics were recruited to bring the ethnic Chinese firmly back under the ideational control of the government. In as far as Confucianism is Chinese, Singaporean Chinese could be expected to feel a 'natural' affinity with it. This project was difficult to promote, however, partly because Singaporean Chinese had never had any particular familiarity with Confucian teachings.[28] Nonetheless, the stereotypical equation of Confucianism with Chineseness worked well, if measured by the degree of tacit acceptance with which it was met.

In 1983 the Institute of East Asian Philosophies (IEAP) was founded for the purpose of advancing the understanding of Confucian philosophy so that it could be reinterpreted to meet the needs of contemporary society.[29] Elements of harmony, consensus and society before self – the very essence of what was later to become the core of 'Asian values' – were emphasized as culturally authentic and explicitly contrasted with

the dissent and individualism said to mark Western liberal democracies. One IEAP scholar proposed to dispense with the oppositional elements of democracy altogether, arguing that 'the genuine consent of the people going through the process of selection in a one-party state is … democratic' and that whereas Western democracy allowed debate both inside and outside government, the 'Eastern form of democracy' allowed government to reach a consensus 'through closed debate with no opposition from without'.[30]

The PAP nonetheless wanted Singapore to be called a democracy, thus shoring up its credentials as a modern state commanding respect in the international sphere where no state could actually call itself authoritarian. Postcolonial states such as Singapore had argued for independence on the basis of self-determination and all the normative implications this principle has for democracy. But substance generally mattered less than appearances. In Singapore, as in other authoritarian states, the challenge for the PAP in the postcolonial order was to revise democracy so as to retain the formal institutions while eliminating any substantive challenges to their monopoly of power. The very civil and political liberties so passionately argued for under British colonial rule were now repudiated at the point of inconvenience to new power-holders. There is nothing new in partisanship and self-interest defeating a general principle. What is of interest here is the way in which particularistic cultural principles were harnessed to this cause.

Regardless of the actual lack of Confucian knowledge or understanding among the Singaporean Chinese, the fact that a quarter of Singapore's population was not ethnically Chinese meant that those belonging to ethnic minority groups were alienated by the emphasis on what was seen as a purely Chinese programme. Precisely because Confucianism was equated with Chineseness, it could not neutrally embrace a population that was also Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, Sikh and so on. But the political project of creating a set of values to contrast with those of the West could not be abandoned. Confucianization therefore gave way to a 'shared national values' campaign. Again this was initiated and closely supervised by the PAP government, being formally introduced in a white paper entitled 'Shared Values' released in 1991. In addition to stressing the dangers of 'Western values', four key values were identified as common to all the major 'Asian' traditions: 'the placing of society above self; upholding the family as the basic building block of society; resolving major issues through consensus rather than contention; and stressing racial and religious harmony'.[31] The set of Confucian values promoted earlier was therefore transformed into a set

of generic 'Asian values'. Packaging what was simply a very conservative set of social and political values was not only more suitable for Singapore's diverse population but more readily available elsewhere in the region, especially in neighbouring Malaysia where the then Prime Minister, Dr Mahathir, was keen to promote Asian values as the basis for his own particular brand of anti-Westernism while shoring up the legitimacy of his own political position. Since then, the Asian values discourse has moved back and forth between a narrower focus on 'Confucian values' and the broader Asianist approach, depending on the country concerned and the audience. But Confucianism, like any relatively complex system of thought, whether embodied in religions like Islam and Christianity or ideologies like socialism and liberalism, contains ambiguities and contradictions accommodating a variety of interpretations.

Interpreting Confucius

'Confucianism' names a complex set of ideas almost universally assumed to have originated with a historical figure known in English as Confucius, otherwise rendered as Kongzi, Kung Ch'iu, Kung Tzu or K'ung Fu-tzu.[32] A native of Shandong province, Confucius is thought to have lived during the transition from the Spring to Autumn period of the Zhou Dynasty from around 551 to 479 BC, when chaos and disorder attended the breakdown of political and social order. The original teachings attributed to Confucius – contained largely in the collection of sayings known as *The Analects* or *Lunyu*[33] – reflect a concern with establishing lasting peace and harmony in social and political life. It was a formula for what we might now call 'good governance' incorporating a strict set of rules, rituals and relationships supporting a moral order based on virtue. It resembled a feudal order in which the emperor or 'son of Heaven' stood firmly at the helm. Although authoritarian, it placed an unequivocal emphasis on benevolence and leadership by moral example rather than force or coercion, and enjoined the ruler to govern not in his own interests, but in the interests of those under his care. This approach was deemed likely to engage widespread acquiescence and contentment among the populace at large, and was therefore much more rational and efficacious than blunt instruments of coercion.

Rulers were regarded as successful to the extent that their conscientious duty of care attracted uncoerced deference, loyalty and obedience, producing widespread peace and harmony. While maintaining the need for hierarchy as a vital principle of this order, meritocracy was introduced

as a means of nurturing moral qualities and making the best use of available talent. This system further implied duties and obligations according to one's place in the system. Family relations were rigidly defined according to gender and birth order. These relations were projected onto the wider sphere of society and state, with the emperor standing as the ultimate father figure. Society and state were conceived as a single organic entity with no distinction between the political and social realms. Despite usually being categorized in religious terms – possibly because of references to the 'way of heaven' and to the emperor as the 'son of heaven', and due to a metaphysical conception of heaven more generally as a source of virtue – Confucianism is an essentially secular tradition of thought.[34] It also displays a thoroughgoing humanism with clear universalist assumptions that matches anything produced in European philosophy.

Confucian thought was developed by generations of scholars with figures as diverse as the mystical Mencius (Mengzi or Meng Ke) to the rationalist Hsün Tzu contributing highly influential interpretations. The contrast can be illustrated by reference to their views of human nature. While Mencius championed the inherent goodness of the human (equating goodness with what was natural), Hsün Tzu regarded it as essentially evil, and believed that only training and education could overcome it.[35] Different Chinese emperors adopted and developed aspects of the tradition in ways that added to its complex evolution. Confucianism as a tradition of social and political thought, then, has not maintained a single, consistent and uncontested body of doctrine – no tradition does. It owes much to successive thinkers and their attempts to maintain its practical relevance at different times and according to different demands. It is not a 'neatly packaged organic whole in which the constitutive parts fall naturally into their places' but has rather displayed the usual ruptures of cultural constructions, 'being forged and re-forged, configured and re-configured'.[36] Nor was Confucianism the only body of thought to develop in China. Scholars of Chinese political philosophy can point to the existence of anarchists, humanitarian socialists, legalists, ceremonialists, absolutists, cooperativists, imperialists and constitutional monarchists.[37] And there are more distinct philosophical traditions associated with Taoism and Buddhism, each of which has had a significant impact. It would therefore be a serious mistake to simply conflate Chineseness with Confucianism – a mistake parallel to conflating European social and political thought with liberalism while ignoring conservatism, socialism and other systems of ideas.

It is interesting to note that 'Confucianism', as a word and doctrine, may have a relatively recent origin, emerging in the sixteenth century when Jesuits who travelled to China sought to encapsulate a particular complex of ideas encountered there.[38] And the historical figure of Confucius that emerged in the twentieth century is more likely a product fashioned over just a few centuries, rather than millennia, and performed 'by many hands, ecclesiastical and lay, Western and Chinese'.[39] Even the *Lunyu* may well be a composite work compiled by different authors over time rather than by a single figure of doubtful historicity.[40] The hypothetical essence of Confucian wisdom, moreover, is as contestable in China as it is in 'the West'. One scholar argues that the Jesuitical re-creation of the 'native hero', Kongzi, was taken up by Chinese intellectuals, becoming part of the inventive myth-making vital to engineering 'a new Chinese nation through historical reconstruction', a project itself inspired by 'the imported nineteenth-century Western conceptual vernacular of nationalism, evolution, and ethos [which] lent dimension to the nativist imaginings of twentieth-century Chinese, who reinvented Kongzi as a historical religious figure.'[41]

The complexity of Confucianism is further illustrated by its treatment of political criticism. On one reading, it posits coterminous political and social realms. Harmony – the basic principle for the right ordering of these realms – depends ultimately on individuals acting correctly in their given roles and accords with an organic conception of the state and an uncompromisingly moralistic view of political power together with the idea of rule by moral example. Thus political power is not obtained through competitive adversarial processes but bestowed on certain individuals in accordance with the fundamental principles of a static, passive, paternalistic and hierarchical order.[42] The stress on harmony and consensus can, on this reading, be interpreted as incompatible with criticism of those who hold political power for it threatens the integrity of the state, bringing disorder and confusion.[43] Such an interpretation is anathema to the give-and-take of competitive politics. It is antithetic as well as to the idea that people within a society have different outlooks, values and interests and are entitled to give them political expression.[44] On this composite reading, it seems reasonable to infer an antipathy to the contemporary democratic process which takes open dispute, lively contestation and compromise as normal.

Confucianism, however, is sufficiently complex and fluid to lend itself to varying interpretations. While the principles set out above describe an ideal order, it does not assume that political leaders have perfect knowledge or always conduct themselves in accordance with the highest

principles. Elements of the tradition assign a valid place to criticism and modify the idea that the 'mandate of heaven' is completely unassailable from below. Criticism is permitted if based on moral concerns, although it cannot legitimately be *political* as it is in a system where competition for power is regarded as normal.[45] And although the enforcement of laws and morals usually requires unquestioning obedience, there are textual exceptions for resistance on moral grounds. A leading contemporary Confucian scholar notes that in the case of a morally responsible minister, 'where the ruler has departed from *tao*, it is quite proper for the minister to follow *tao* rather than his ruler', and notes that: 'If the ruler is dogmatic and authoritarian, the subject can revolt and choose a better one. The Book of Mencius considers revolution to be the right of the people.'[46]

On another interpretation, Confucianism can actually support civil liberties, including freedom of expression, which is basic to the role of constitutional opposition, although the grounds on which this can be done differs from the standard liberal justification: 'Whereas Western liberals justify freedom of speech on the ground of personal autonomy, Confucians see this as a means for society to correct wrong ethical beliefs, to ensure that rulers would not indulge in wrongdoing.'[47] Others emphasize that Confucianism 'is too rich and complex to be presumed ignorant of the value of individuality' and see openings in it that are hospitable to republican ideas, at least in so far as the value of individual self-development and the cultivation of virtue is concerned.[48] One scholar has produced a detailed study attempting to identify underlying liberal ideas in Chinese political philosophy.[49] However, others argue that none of this should be taken to imply that there is anything like a liberal tradition implicit in Confucian thought, claiming the latter lacks such inherently liberal notions as individual and human rights,[50] evidence for which might be taken to lie in the absence of any institutional protection for dissenters.[51]

In summary, Confucianism may be interpreted as both allowing and disallowing criticism, depending on the circumstances. Even assuming that only a conservative reading was obtainable, it does not follow that societies with a Confucian legacy are incapable of tolerating a form of oppositional politics compatible with democratic government. A 'culture' that exists at any given point of time does not forever determine how people think and behave, at least not if culture is understood as a dynamic set of practices that are created and recreated in response to changing circumstances rather than as a straitjacket that forever binds communities within its grasp to a fixed set of beliefs and values. And even if we

suppose that Confucianism and liberalism represent completely antagonistic value systems, we still cannot conclude that 'Western thought' and 'Asian thought' are polar opposites on a cultural/ideological spectrum. Neither liberalism nor Confucianism exhaust the varieties of accessible thought in either category. If we compare key aspects of Confucianism not with liberalism, but with Western/European conservative ideology and nationalist thought, it is relatively easy to find points of convergence. The nineteenth-century philosopher and nationalist, Ernest Renan, took the view that free speech should not enjoy institutional protection, albeit for different reasons than conservative Confucianism.[52] Closer to the latter tradition is a strand of classical European conservatism founded on organic principles of harmony, consensus and the notion that people have allotted roles and functions, duties and obligations.[53] This also accords with contemporary communitarian thinking which has its champions in both the Asian region and the West. Communitarianism itself comes in both conservative and socialist varieties, the shared point of departure being their opposition to liberal individualism and the repudiation of a range of community ties and obligations that is thought to be implied by it. This brings us now to the matter of cultural diversity and particularism in democratic theory and practice more generally.

Democracy and cultural/political pluralism[54]

Modern representative institutions reflect a certain ethic of political rule expressed by the word 'democracy' itself, a form of rule meaning 'rule or power of the people'. In its indirect, representative form, this means that people choose their rulers, but do not themselves rule directly. Beyond the descriptive meaning of democracy, there is also a distinct normative dimension. It provides democracy with its most basic justification: that it is *right* that people exercise ultimate political authority. This does not mean that political rule is always directed to the welfare or best interests of the people at large. For although this may be assumed to be part of the package, it does not distinguish the primary normative principle of a benevolent dictatorship from a democracy.

A pluralist position supports the notion that a variety of institutional forms can accommodate the primary norm of democratic rule, and these may reflect a variety of cultural (or other) factors. In addition, and again without losing the connection with the primary normative principle, varying cultural (or other) considerations and circumstances may result in differential emphasis being placed on certain secondary normative

principles of democracy, such as liberty, equality and community. This does not imply that equality, for example, may legitimately be crushed in the name of freedom – or vice versa. It does not resolve such vexed questions as whether social and economic equality are a 'democratic right', or at least a prerequisite for meaningful political equality. And it does not offer a resolution of the apparent tensions between communitarian and individualistic approaches to social, economic and political life.[55] Rather, it acknowledges that different political communities can legitimately pursue different modes of democratic expression according to cultural or other contextual differences. In other words, democracy can accommodate a significant measure of cultural *and* political pluralism. This general pluralist position acknowledges both the fallibility of human constructions as well as the diversity that is characteristic of human communities – within as well as between them. But it stops well short of an 'anything goes' relativism by limiting interpretive possibilities and allowing that some forms of democracy may be better than others. In this sense, it is neither universalist in endorsing a single authoritative standard or interpretation of 'democracy', nor relativist in endorsing any and all interpretations as equally valid. A succinct statement of how this works out conceptually is as follows:

> Singularism [universalism] is to be understood as defying the thought that there may be a variety of conceptions of good cherished by different groups of human beings. Pluralism, on the other hand, allows for the multiplicity of the concept of the common good as well as freedom of choice on the part of the individual to choose his or her own community life. Relativism goes a little further than this and holds that once such conception of good is as good as any other, there being no overarching standard. Pluralism keeps open the possibility for ranking these different concepts of good.[56]

This pluralist approach also places limits on the kinds of regimes which may legitimately call themselves democratic. The leaders of regimes of course, can call their preferred style of rule anything they like, but this does not mean that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is actually democratic. Pluralism therefore allows for a certain degree of flexibility in both theorizing second order norms, principles and political practice, but maintains certain conceptual standards and limitations beyond which a regime cannot be regarded as democratic. This provides a minimal but nonetheless necessary and sufficient basis for comparative political scientists to go about the business of comparing.

This contrasts with a dogmatic relativism that allows an unlimited range of interpretive possibilities – whether these are linked to a cultural framework or not. Although this seems, on the face of it, to be a more 'democratic' epistemological position to adopt than one prescribing conceptual standards and limitations, the rigid relativist position can (and does) in fact provide a protective cloak for authoritarianism, as illustrated in the discussion of 'Asian democracy'. The pluralist position described here also rejects a dogmatic universalism endorsing a single authoritative standard of 'correctness' for democracy, for this works to silence alternative views and leaves little space for the legitimate diversity that characterizes democratic politics. But the pluralist position is not entirely unassailable either. Indeed, given the fallibilism inherent in an open model, it must remain receptive to criticism. So whereas the relativist and universalist positions described here both entail a certain closure of discourse – and for that reason are dogmatic – the pluralist position always remains open.

Simply setting up a pluralist model, however, leaves unanswered certain problems in world politics, including accusations that some elites in 'the West' have attempted, in the name of ethical universalism, to assume moral authority in areas such as democracy and human rights so as to pursue hegemony by other means.[57] Much the same has sometimes been said about democracy promotion projects implying that the political systems of 'non-Western' countries must be remade in the image of 'the West' in order to achieve 'true' democracy. A recent critique of the enterprise of comparative politics suggests that the 'culture of the modern West', because it presents itself as *the* framework for understanding 'the other', continues to assume that less developed non-Western others are simply at an earlier stage in the 'evolution of the self'.[58] This further implies that commonality between Western selves and non-Western others, assumed by this implicit evolutionist framework, still needs to be nurtured: 'Those to whom difference is attributed must be taught, and, if unwilling, they must be forced to recognize that assimilating to the "sameness" of Europeans is good for them. This remains the white man's pedagogical burden – a burden carried by the politics of a particular type of comparison.'[59]

Another commentator criticizes 'Western governments who support democracy in Africa as the process through which the universalizing of the Western model of society can take place.'[60] For Islamic societies, absorption of the principles of 'Western' democracy have been urged prescriptively as a means of moving 'confidently into the 21st century'.[61] Thus it has been argued that many 'Western' academics and elites, in

attempting to impose their own particular version of democratic practices and institutions, not only through moralistic rhetoric and posturing but also through such instrumental means as aid conditionality, structural adjustment policies, favourable (or unfavourable) trade regimes, and so forth, are guilty of arrogance, neo-imperialism and cultural chauvinism. There is no doubt that many of these criticisms are right. But arguments highlighting the ethnocentrism, hypocrisy and instrumentality of democracy promotion projects led by 'Western' political elites should not be confused with arguments against democracy *per se*. Further, whatever truth lies in such criticisms is corrupted by the continuing dogmatic assumption of a simplistic West/non-West dichotomy.

As suggested at the beginning of this chapter, the cultural contextualist approach asserts the specificity of democracy's rise in the modern industrialized 'West', the need to modify it for local conditions, and/or the possibility that local practices may be more democratic and far more appropriate. Such arguments, however, run the risk of embracing the fallacy of origin. Where an artefact, invention, practice, custom, law or idea *comes from* does not determine by whom it may be 'owned'. Ideas and practices are never the exclusive preserve of those with whom they may have originated. The printing press is not distinctively Chinese by virtue of having originated in China, just as the telephone is not distinctively American by virtue of its origins in the United States. Musical idioms like jazz and rap are not exclusively African American by virtue of their origin in African America, just as Beethoven's works are not exclusively German. Christianity is not exclusively or distinctively Middle Eastern by virtue of originating in the Middle East, or Buddhism Indian by virtue of its origin there. Nor is the idea of democracy exclusively British or French or American, as distinct from, say, Spanish, Indian or Japanese, merely because it caught on earlier in the first set of countries rather than the second. The fact that there are democracies throughout the world, from Botswana, to India, parts of East Asia, South America and so on demonstrate that the idea of democracy does not belong to, or in, certain geographic spaces to the exclusion of others.

The *polis* of ancient Athens was neither modern nor Western, although the political experiences and philosophical speculations that emerged in classical times have long been regarded as having made vital contributions to the West's civilizational 'heritage'.[62] Conventional assumptions about the essential 'Europeaness' of classical democracy are, in any case, unreliable. At least two studies have cast a rather different light on the civilizational location of the ancient Greek democracies. One suggests that racism and 'continental chauvinism' has infected

European historiography to the extent that the influence of colonizing Africans and Semites, which had a major impact on cultural and political characteristics of the Hellenic world, has been written out of the story. It may therefore be necessary to rethink the fundamental bases of 'Western Civilization' by incorporating these non-European influences.[63] The second study places the origins of city-republican forms in the Middle East, arguing that a relatively advanced form of democratic governance existed in communities there, some of which pre-date the age of Athenian democracy by about 1,000 years.[64]

The idea of 'the West' as the sole historical purveyor of democratic norms is also suspect in the face of evidence from other parts of the globe which lends support to the argument that pre-existing or indigenous democratic political forms should be resurrected rather than importing an alien Western model. Forms of community displaying characteristics of democratic political organization, for example, have been identified in the African past[65] as well as in East Asia.[66] It may be concluded, then, that it would be perfectly legitimate for North African, Middle Eastern or other communities to claim the same democratic genealogy as 'the West', or even enter superior claims as the legatees of a democratic history and culture reaching back into antiquity. But the point is not that 'the West' cannot lay exclusive claim to some given historical legacy, in this case democratic. Rather, it is that any cultural heritage is an ideational one, lodged in the present where it is the preserve of all and any who *think* them.

Conclusion

The discussion has canvassed a variety of issues relating to the deployment of 'culture', and it has done so *in the context of specific political projects*, including both the construction of regional identity as well as alternative versions of democracy based on certain cultural traditions, themselves constructed in specific ways to support particular interpretations. 'Culture' therefore represents less a context that shapes politics, than a politics that exploits ideas about culture.[67] So rather than simply accepting something like Confucianism as an 'authentic cultural context' in which contemporary political practices in certain parts of Pacific Asia should be placed so as to facilitate understanding and appreciation of different ways of doing things, this chapter has sought to show how 'culture-as-context' itself serves as a highly political construction and therefore needs to be contextualized. 'The West' can, and has been, constructed in a particular way as part of the very same process. The

political process of dichotomization, too, readily yields spurious outcomes, like 'Orientalism' on the one side but, no less obnoxiously, various forms of 'Occidentalism' on the other.

Equally important is the fact that ideas do not belong to specific places. They 'belong' wherever they happen to take root. Culturalist ideas developed in the human sciences clearly have a resonance well beyond Europe or North America. Indeed they provide many of the intellectual resources for the construction of the Asia/West dichotomy on which the cultural politics of the new Asianism and/or the model of Confucian/Asian democracy rests. There is also a case for regarding the cluster of concepts that underpin 'Asian values' and 'Asian identity' as assembled very largely on the edifice of the 'Asia' studied by Western scholars. This is so not just in terms of the geographic conceptualization of Asia, but also those studies based broadly on the concept of 'Asian political culture' that has informed the 'new Asianist' paradigm. The subject point produced through this paradigm is at least partly a product of reconstituted images of cultural heritage or tradition derived substantially from Western studies of the Orient.[68] This by no means implies a 'Western' hegemony or monopoly of ideas. Rather, it shows that the political elites most closely involved in promoting culturalist projects have found those intellectual resources most suitable for the task, and used them in what amounts to a self-Orientalizing discourse that works precisely because it confirms many of the old, but eminently serviceable clichés about 'East is East'.

9
Beyond Dichotomies in World Politics

The turn to culture in the study of world politics, and the implicit adoption of contextualism as a normative/methodological framework, has sought to confront the perceived deficiencies of conventional approaches and the universalist and rationalist assumptions that underpin them. Against the certainties of a unified framework of explanation for all phenomena, the culture concept has been formulated as an alternative framework underpinned by an implicit contextualism within which the diversity of subjectivities are given due recognition. In international normative theory, as expressed primarily in a particularistic communitarianism, the cultural turn has sought to award precedence to community based norms and values rather than more abstract global norms which universalize the individual as the principle bearer of rights. The most enthusiastic proponents of the turn to culture have made extraordinary claims for the possibilities that it opens up. The extravagance of some claims, however, is matched by the burden of problems that emerge when concepts of culture and context, and the particular version of community which is posited alongside these, are themselves subjected to close scrutiny. Rather than breaking down the crude dichotomous formulations that abound in perceptions of world politics, culturalist approaches have tended to strengthen them. In addition, the culture concept and allied notions of context have often simply inverted conventional hierarchies, privileging the local over the global or universal while reinforcing conservative, authoritarian and nationalist ideologies and agendas.

A principle focus of this study has been the emergence over time of a complex of dichotomizations, each carrying with it a set of assumptions about knowledge, identity, subjectivity and power in which ideas about culture and context are deeply implicated: the universalist/relativist

divide with its implications for epistemology and methodology in the human sciences; the West/non-West divide in which various Orientalist/Occidentalist configurations have flourished; and the insider/outsider dichotomy which has drawn strength from the culturalist reinforcement of the specificity of discrete human communities. Each of these divides map on to each other in a number of ways, producing a conjunction of seductive dichotomies through which many ideas in world politics have been framed. Dichotomies are not necessarily 'false' in the sense that one or other, or both, of the antimonies are composed of lies or fantasies, or that the contrasts they offer bear no relationship to 'reality'. The problem lies in the tendency to assume that a dichotomy offers an either/or choice, and that if we cannot accept one then we must accept the other. Dichotomies also tend to imply incommensurability between opposing elements, or negation: if something is not black then it must be white.

A more moderate appraisal of the turn to culture proposes that 'the truth of objectivism' now competes, 'on more nearly equal terms, with the truths of case studies that are embedded in local contexts, shaped by local interests, and coloured by local perceptions'.[1] What this suggests is dialectic between the antimonies and a process of cross-referencing between different levels of analysis, enabling an ongoing conversation rather than a closure around one or other of the oppositions. This provides scope for the kind of dialogue and synthesis that may enable scholars of world politics to better appreciate what different approaches have to offer.[2]

In this final chapter, we first examine the conjunction of dichotomies evident in the universalist/relativist and West/non-West configurations, and then the insider/outsider dichotomy. The final section considers the possibilities for moving beyond these dichotomies while addressing the normative concerns embedded in each of the antimonies. I suggest that a pluralist dialectic provides for sufficient methodological flexibility in meeting normative concerns. 'Moving beyond' therefore does not entail a permanent transcendence of the dichotomies. Even if this was possible, this is not what pluralism is about.

A conjunction of dichotomies

Critical approaches to the normative thrust of universalism usually associate it almost exclusively with 'Western culture and values' as well as with the kind of epistemological imperialism or political proselytizing that has inspired certain projects of democracy promotion and human

rights campaigns – projects which often seem to have picked up where colonialism left off. The 'problem of universalism' is therefore intimately bound up with what is perceived to be a thoroughly Eurocentric view of what constitutes the 'universal good'. For many critics, the culture concept with all its relativistic ballast, has appeared to be the only effective intellectual weapon against what is seen as a distinctly one-sided, ethnocentric and therefore 'false' universalism.

There is no denying the link between universalism and the rationalist philosophies and ideologies that emanated from the Enlightenment and which underpin important strands of normative theory. Universalism has also provided the essential premise for scientific methodology developed over the same period, the influence of which has been pervasive throughout the human sciences. This has scarcely guaranteed reliable results, nor have the 'universal frameworks' posited as the basis for various scientific methodologies always turned out be free of parochial values, as various culturalist and other critiques have shown. Universalism is clearly an indelible feature of 'Western thought', playing an exceptionally important role in the norms and methods of all the sciences. But as this study has sought to show, 'Western thought' is much more complex than that.

In political and social thought, for example, the values of rationalism and universalism criticized by culturalists have historically underpinned not only liberalism, but socialism as well, and both ideologies have found considerable support outside 'the West'. On the other hand, the ideology of conservatism as developed in Europe has been ambivalent towards both rationalism and universalism. Then there is the fact that conservatism and socialism have also joined in criticism of liberal individualism, embracing instead – albeit in different ways – certain aspects of communitarianism. The complex relationship between these three longstanding ideologies, and their points of convergence and divergence, therefore provides just one illustration of the multifaceted nature of 'Western thought'. It follows that when 'Eastern' or 'Confucian' or 'Islamic' ways of thinking are juxtaposed to 'Western thought', and pronounced incommensurable, we must ask: which version of the latter is being used? Similarly, which version of 'Eastern' or 'Islamic' thought is being contrasted? Even something more specific like 'Confucianism' can be constructed in a variety of ways, reflecting the purposes that different groups or agents want it to serve. The same obviously applies to Islam, Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, Marxism, liberalism and so on

If we consider the general principles and values associated with universalism itself, we also find that these are scarcely restricted to European rationalist thought. Islam embraces universalism (and

monotheism) in much the same way as Christianity – not surprising since both religions share a common, and distinctly non-European ancestry. Elements of universalism have also been identified in other 'world' philosophies and/or religions. In both Indian and Chinese philosophy, for example, 'the way', whether to *samadhi, nirvana*, or union with the *tao*, is not only open to all but, in Indian philosophy at least, will eventually be found by all: 'In Hinduism this universalist perception springs naturally from the belief that we are all divine … . Consequently, it falls to each individual to find his or her way to enlightenment'.[3] In Confucianism, too, there is an 'emphasis on commonality rather on the differences between human beings' along with the injunction that a person is to be treated as an end in him or her self.[4] This is directly comparable to the Kantian notion that people must always be treated as ends in themselves, and not as a means to anyone else's end or as part of a utilitarian calculus, and is widely recognized as a founding principle of universalist normative theory and the respect for persons (individuals) that underlies it. Among the Ibo of Nigeria, an individualist ethic emerged independently through the notion of *chi* – originally a term referring to a personal deity and now standing for the fate or destiny of an individual, as well as for the combination of characteristics that renders people personally responsible for their own actions in life. Furthermore, *chi* denotes an inner strength enabling individuals to stand up for their own views when they disagree with the rest of the community and to accept defeat at any given time on the basis that another's *chi* happened to prove stronger on the occasion.[5]

Many other examples could be used to show instances of commensuration rather than incommensurability between 'Western' and 'non-Western' ideas. But it has been difference rather than sameness that has attracted the most attention, and which has certainly been emphasized in anthropological thought. One commentator has noted that the 'sharp contrasts often drawn between "Western" and "non-Western" selves have very likely been exaggerated because researchers usually contrast simplified and idealized cultural conceptions of the self rather than comparing descriptive accounts of subjective experience.' This tendency has been especially noticeable where researchers, following Malinowski and Mead, and including Geertz, have attempted to 'demonstrate the culture-boundedness of Western conceptions and theories of person, self and emotion by presenting data from around the world which appear to contradict it'.[6]

These convergences and divergences highlight, once again, the fact that 'Western' thought, culture, values, principles and so on cannot be

reduced to any kind of simple singularity, free of contradictions and ambiguities, which may then be taken as constituting one side of a dichotomy, and against which a suitable opposition can be constructed in the form of 'East', 'Asia', 'Islam', 'non-West' etc. This very common but highly problematic kind of simplification underpins studies in both Orientalist and Occidentalist modes, the latter being especially common in postcolonial studies. One critic has argued that the relativism that characterizes postcolonial discourses is capable of producing 'so extreme a rhetoric against Reason and Universality, and such finalist ideas of cultural difference that each culture is said to be so discrete and self-referential, so autonomous in its own authority, as to be unavailable for cognition or criticism from a space outside itself, lest the outsider be seen as a bearer of that Enlightenment rationality which is said to be colonizing and repressive *tout court*'. The logic of such cultural differentialism leads to the privileging of self-representation over all other kinds and to treat it 'as a moment of absolute authenticity'.[7]

With respect to Edward Said's style of analysis, a major problem stems from an inclination towards reductionism as well as the tendency to ignore much of the complexity of European studies of the Orient as well as their accompanying motivations and impulsions, or else 'to constrain these to fit an overly simplistic mould'.[8] As we have seen, responses in Europe to encounters with other people(s) around the world historically provoked a diverse range of responses, both negative and positive, and prompted not only a self-congratulatory affirmation of superiority among some, but a thorough-going self-critique among others, producing both xenophobia *and* xenophilia as well as all shades in between. The misrepresentation of the history of ideas in 'the West' through selective accounts of texts simply contributes to the dichotomization denounced by Said, but which has worked itself back into his own critique.

We have critically examined one manifestation of Occidentalism in the 'new Asianism', but it is scarcely limited to this. It is as evident, in different ways, in movements as diverse as Islamic fundamentalism(s), some indigenous rights movements and trends in the development of Afrocentric studies[9] which are successors to the earlier *négritude* genre. Each of these posits a more authentic subjectivity, but each nonetheless shares a similar foundation in a culturalist opposition to 'the West', against which their subjectivities are constructed. With respect to the new Asianism, there is a real difficulty in establishing any coherent account of actual cultural 'incommensurability' that would support the bifurcation required by an Orientalist/Occidentalist dichotomy. There is also a problem in applying the notion of 'incommensurabilty' to

describe the relationship (or non-relationship) between different cultural formations. Since the notion of incommensurability underpins the dichotomies of both the universal and the particular, and the West/non-West in any of its versions, it is worth examining in a little more detail.

The incommensurability thesis is usually associated with the work of Thomas Kuhn and Paul Feyerabend who were specifically concerned, albeit in very different ways, with scientific paradigms rather than with cultural systems *per se*.[10] It has appeared especially relevant to cultural anthropology which posited the idea of distinct, self-enclosed, unified cultural worlds. Although Malinowski's work is more often associated with the propensity to totalize 'cultures', Boas's ideas contributed too, as illustrated by his approach to museum exhibits. His method of comprehending cultures, and the relationship between the items which comprised any given cultural group, we may recall, was by way of a holistic approach through which the various parts could be understood in relation to each other and to the whole. At the same time, he rejected the 'abstraction' of an individual item, such as a mask, from its own specific context into an exhibit of masks from different cultural formations which were then compared with each other. And he did so because he held that the object could only be properly understood and appreciated in its own context – a context which effectively comprised its own special, incommensurable world. It followed that *all* cultural objects as well as beliefs and values (which are cultural by definition) must be understood by reference to their own unique context and not by reference to larger (universal) frameworks which are simply not valid for the purpose.

Considering the notion of cultural commensuration together with that of context, as implied in the Boasian scheme, it seems that commensuration is achievable only within specific contexts, and not between them. 'The mask' is commensurable with other, different, objects within the same cultural formation by virtue of their relatedness through culture, while commensuration with objects outside that cultural formation is either difficult or impossible. As discussed in Chapter 3, 'culture' is thereby reified in order to make it function as a self-contained framework. Formulated in this way, the doctrine of cultural relativism provides no resources for critically evaluating the practices of different 'cultural groups' within a common framework that transcends specific contexts. This undermines the very foundations not only of comparative politics but of comparative ethnography as well.

If we turn to a strict historicist version of contextualism which posits a radical separation of past from present, this seems unable to supply the

normative or methodological resources for criticizing past practices within our own 'culture', including colonialism, genocide and slavery, for these must also be placed within their own specific context and judged according to the standards of that context. At best we could say that these practices were wrong according to certain widely accepted moral standards of the day – for example, of Christian ethics. But the interpretation of Christian ethics in previous centuries was no straightforward matter either. We have seen that some views supported polygeny which in turn allowed certain non-Caucasian 'others' to be treated as lesser beings. Furthermore, a very widely accepted Christian ethic supported colonialism as a means of saving souls.

Another manifestation of the universalist/relativist bifurcation is the cosmopolitan/communitarian divide. In strongly culturalist versions of communitarianism, the community is defined by 'its culture' which includes its very own moral universe. The normative thrust of communitarianism therefore tends to relativism (in a cultural sense) and generally stands opposed to cosmopolitan claims about moral principles.[11] The notion of the 'community of humankind' is practically an oxymoron since communities are by definition a discrete portion of the whole. In contrast, cosmopolitanism transcends, but does not negate, the local and affirms the validity of certain universalist principles in such matters as basic human rights. This does not necessarily settle what is 'basic' in the way of rights, but it provides a minimum framework for universalist claims.[12] Neither approach need lead to a form of absolutism, either by denying the relevance of the social or cultural world(s) in which humans actually live or by insisting on such a radical incommensurability of unique cultural worlds that a notion of common humanity becomes impossible. But without some concessions to pluralism by a universalist, or to minimum standards of moral behaviour by a relativist, both do tend towards absolutism.

In Chapter 3 we noted that some proponents of communitarianism, using the language of both historical contextualism and cultural specificity, have driven a firm dividing line between East and West on the issue of cultural values underpinning democracy. The claim is that the almost universal commitment to liberal democratic ideas and institutions in the West is to be understood in terms of its shared history and culture and, further, that the ideals of equality and freedom that underpin them have produced 'a culturally distinct, historically contingent artefact' which is not readily transferable to societies with different traditions.[13] This quotation is part of a text which also makes clear the authors' strong objection to 'a US government policy to promote liberal

democracy abroad, regardless of local needs, habits and traditions'.[14] The problem is that however much one may sympathize with critiques of US democracy promotion, this particular response relies on a naïve cultural contextualism in dichotomizing 'the West' and the 'non-West'. Such arguments may also lead to privileging another set of political elites through invoking the superior authenticity of, say, the 'Confucian tradition'.

This version of communitarianism also implies that the notions of freedom, equality and rights that underpin liberal democratic practices are valued only by 'Westerners'. It is ironic that while the stereotyping of regions like 'Asia' as despotic is evident in strands of European thought, these 'Orientalist stereotypes' are readily promoted in the region itself by certain of its political leaders and intellectuals.[15] Once again, these problems enjoin us to critically examine the context within which such arguments are actually mounted, and especially what interests, needs and purposes are served, for this is the context that must count in analysis. This is entirely in accord with the Foucauldian approach that insists that statements be interpreted in terms of the wider discourse of which they are part,[16] itself a variation of John Austin's 'total speech situation' which underlies methodological contextualism.[17]

Not only are 'Asian' and other 'non-Western' people too often represented as illiberal in contrast to 'Westerners', such assumptions blithely assume that 'Westerners' are freedom-loving individualists imbued with a deep normative commitment to liberty and equality. We have noted that such assumptions fail to acknowledge the fact that liberal democratic ideas and institution have only recently become widespread in the West itself. The apparent allegiance to these ideas and institutions which emerges from 'the West's shared history and culture' therefore needs to be placed alongside a more complete picture of the West which includes histories and 'cultures' of authoritarianism in both communist and fascist forms in addition to other products of 'Western culture' which of course include genocide, slavery, torture, fascism, militarism, colonialism, imperialism, the inquisition, religious fundamentalism, nationalism and romanticism as well as secularism, humanism, pacifism, communism and so on. Clearly, not all these have been exclusive products of 'Western culture' and most have appeared in other parts of the world at one time or another. But to the extent that at one time or another they have indeed all emerged in the West, they illustrate beyond question the irreducible diversity of its political experiences and legacies. When something is attributed to the 'West's shared history and culture' we must always ask: which history and which culture? The fact

that many of the same practices, ideas, theories or projects have also arisen outside the West, either independently as well as by imitation, syncretism or imposition, demonstrates the comparability, compatibility and commensurability of elements on either side of the West/non-West dichotomy.

The 'fallacy of origin' is yet another problem. The erroneous assumption that because a particular value (and the practices associated with it), have originated in a particular place, they can only be regarded as truly authentic and relevant *for* that place, suggests that if liberalism does have exclusive roots in 'Western political philosophy', then it cannot possibly have legitimacy for people socialized in different traditions. Social movements supporting liberal ideas about human rights and democracy throughout the 'non-Western' world belie this assumption. Nor is it a one-way street, as evidenced by the ever-increasing popularity of practices and beliefs such as Buddhism in the West. The fallacy of origin argument posits an essential cultural incommensurability that takes too little account of the malleability and dynamism of human intellectual activity and the ability to think beyond the limits of one's immediate cultural horizon. This brings us to the insider/outsider dichotomy.

Insiders v outsiders

The claims of identity based on uniqueness require a relational contrast or contradistinction which affirms a sense of belonging to a distinctive entity. Identity claims, based as they are on the uniqueness of each cultural realm and a contrasting set of 'outsiders', tend at the same to homogenize the plurality of any given set of 'insiders'. As we move deeper into the insider/outsider logic, 'the insider' becomes a uniform singularity and 'a context' is produced from which an authentic voice can speak. The authenticity of the voice reinforces the authenticity of the context, and vice-versa. This is a closed hermeneutical circle, entirely self-referential and acknowledging no legitimacy outside its own privileged sphere. Outside voices, if they presume to comment critically on anything within that special context, may simply be branded as illegitimate. Favourable comments, however, may be accepted since these show suitable 'understanding' and 'sensitivity'. Although more sophisticated versions of the hermeneutic thesis acknowledge the value of perspectives from both 'insiders' and 'outsiders', the major beneficiaries of the thesis are undoubtedly the 'insiders'. Where the symbolic, rhetorical, and strategic resources of 'culture' have been seized from above by state or other political elites, however, it is difficult to accept an

interpretation from the 'insider' vantage point as necessarily representing a freely formulated social consensus.

'Politics of tradition' debates illustrate other key aspects of the problem. In a study of some of the island states of the South Pacific, I have argued that culturalist defences of authoritarian institutions which are depicted as 'traditional' and therefore contextually authentic, are usually directed rhetorically against the values of 'Western' democratic politics. However, they are targeted in a very practical political way at internal (indigenous) critics. These cannot be branded as Eurocentric interlopers who simply do not 'understand' the cultural traditions in question, and whose criticisms display a crass insensitivity to context, nor can the protective cloak of sovereignty be assumed. Rather, internal critics are classed as traitors to their own cultural traditions or 'too Westernized' and therefore out of touch with local values. In this way, even an internal critic can be externalized and rendered 'inauthentic'. Ironically, it is usually the elites who have had the most exposure to Western ideas and values through education in metropolitan centres, as well as extensive and continuing participation in international fora, who not only brand their opponents as inauthentic but who also uphold the most conservative elements of tradition as right and proper for others to follow.[18]

The phenomenon of 'traditionalism' is itself a species of 'culturalism' because 'tradition' itself is represented as 'a culture',[19] and as part of a history which is by no means as a 'foreign country'. Traditionalism has also been the subject of debates stimulated by critical works on 'the invention of tradition' which have focused, among other things, on the ideological components of traditionalist discourses.[20] I have argued previously that where ideas about tradition and/or culture provide normative support for established political authority, traditionalism emerges as an indispensable adjunct to conservatism.[21] And, as Connolly suggests, the ideological rendition of tradition implies that established institutions and practices are to be regarded not as a set of human constructions that may be changed or reformed, but as a set of natural forms which command the unquestioning allegiance of those implicated in them.[22] Those among the 'insiders' who refuse to conform may be cast as apostates, heretics or traitors.

The insider/outsider dichotomy is also supported by some versions of the 'politics of difference'. In Chapter 3, we saw that Iris Marion Young insists that normative reflection can only begin from historically specific circumstances. She therefore adopts a self-limiting analysis of social justice by refusing to apply her principles and categories to issues of justice

in non-Western hemispheres.[23] This casts her as an 'insider' with an authentic voice in 'the West', but an 'outsider' with respect to the rest of the world where her self-contextualization as 'Western' seems to deny her (or any other 'Western' commentators) any voice at all. But the principles on which she bases her norm of discursive non-intervention are themselves drawn from European traditions of thought as expressed in hermeneutics and post-structural thinking rather than those of the 'others' which she disqualifies herself from commenting on.

The case against the insider/outsider dichotomy in which the insider is accorded a privileged interpretive position has been taken up by a number of critical anthropologists. Adam Kuper, for example, writes that in postcolonial anthropology, African intellectuals were among those making a nationalist case against foreign ethnographers from the 1960s onwards and, as the nativist discourse developed, it increasingly deployed the culturalist rhetoric of the 1970s and 1980s in depicting the foreign ethnographer as 'imprisoned in a culturally-constructed mind-set' and lacking the essential resources 'to understand the native [and] master the inwardness of the native language'. The premise that only natives should study natives is, he says, the *reductio ad absurdum* of a whole movement in anthropology which has dangerous implications for contemporary anthropology and its preoccupation with ethnicity. The precedent for this is what European ethnologists once called the *Volkskunde:* 'the romantic celebration of an ethnic identity by nationalist scholars' which reached its apotheosis in Nazi ethnology.[24] As shown in Chapter 4, this form of ethnology developed in Europe from the late eighteenth century as a part of the broad enlightenment endeavour to impose some order on the increasing volume of data on nations or *Völker*.[25]

The ideas which have historically underpinned the academic study of ethnological, cultural, national or racial *difference*, and which legitimate the dichotomization of insider/outsider and privilege the former with an authentic voice, have therefore developed as part of a very European intellectual tradition. A contextualist approach would warn against 'erecting some contingencies of European political history into a universifiable theoretical formula'.[26] But this has proved no obstacle to the nationalist, racialist or culturalist formulation of the insider/outsider dichotomy achieving widespread endorsement in any number of locations and in the service of various causes, including those of post-colonial projects endorsing nativist aspirations. The anthropological replacement of biological difference with cultural difference simply returns racism to its point of departure since it asserts, once again, 'the

absolute, impenetrable, untranslatable character of different ways of being'.[27] On this view, cultural relativism joined with an insider/outsider dichotomy represents not the denial of racist categories of human difference, but rather their reaffirmation under a new banner. As Stewart Hall observes, biological racism and cultural differentialism constitute not two separate (and opposed) systems but rather two registers of racism.[28] Kuper notes that contemporary cultural anthropologists repudiate the popular notion that differences are 'natural', but goes on to point out that a rhetoric placing great emphasis on difference and identity is scarcely well placed to counter such views. Rather, it serves to sustain them. It should therefore come as no surprise that culture now serves as a politically correct euphemism for race in strong versions of multiculturalism: 'The anti-racist celebrates Chicano identity and stands up for the particular rights of the Chicano, but these rights are available only to a person who was born to be a Chicano.'[29]

Similar points have been made in relation to nationalism and racism. George Mosse has argued that race (like culture) may be construed as an exclusive nationalist totality which, while encompassing the whole human personality, simultaneously transcends the individual in its claims to immutability, truth and the creation of a moral universe.[30] Further, the terms in which the study of 'race relations' is constructed in social scientific discourse (as distinct from its earlier treatment in the natural sciences) runs the risk of 'legitimating and perpetuating the very categories it sets out to undermine'.[31] Thus although the original anthropological purpose of cultural relativism was to affirm the equal worth of all 'cultures' (and, in the end, all people), the assertion of difference and relativity over and above anything that human communities, and individual members of human communities undermines the principle of equal recognition.

Yet another fundamental issue for students of world politics concerns the causes of conflict. Ideas which function to reinforce 'culture' as a marker of essential difference, and which constructs insiders/outsiders along these lines, also tend to take it as a primary cause of conflict between groups. This is the main message of the 'clash of civilizations' thesis. But although cultural or ethnic or religious differences may well be important elements in conflict situations, this is no reason to accept that they are, in themselves, the cause of conflict. Similarly, what is often at issue in culturalist versions of the 'politics of difference' are not the differences themselves, however these are defined, but differentials in power relations. If we are to look for 'causes' as such, these are more likely to be found in how differences actually become politicized. It may

well be that cultural, ethnic or religious differences are more easily politicized than other kinds of difference, especially when harnessed to nationalist causes which feed off the insider/outsider dichotomy. Any evidence concerning 'causes', however, needs to be very carefully treated – for what is sometimes seen as a cause may well be an effect. It is therefore mistaken to take any measure of difference, cultural or otherwise, as a 'cause' in and of itself. The mistake is magnified when cultural, ethnic or religious *difference* is invoked as the primary explanation for a conflict, thus glossing over other relevant factors.[32]

These examples illustrate that 'culture' – the social world humans create – is eminently dynamic, and it is precisely for this reason that *cultural* behaviour was originally depicted in contrast to the apparent fixity of biologically-determined traits or attributes (notwithstanding the fact that these are not fixed either, being subject to adaptation). Changes in Europe over the second half of the twentieth century, with the transformation of formerly fascist and communist societies, clearly illustrate the inherent dynamism of what we call culture. Who would be prepared to say that cultural or social formations in other parts of the world are *less* dynamic than those found in the West? The record in the Asian region speaks for itself. Singapore has been transformed beyond recognition in the last half century, although attributing this to a reinvented 'Confucianism' as the decisive context for transformation verges on the ridiculous. Economic growth in other parts of the region has produced equally spectacular transformations. Japan has undergone several periods of profound change since the Meiji Restoration, and none as dramatic as in the wake of the Second World War. Indeed, it is perhaps because of the unsettling knock-on effects of rapid growth and thorough-going social change that notions such as 'Asian values' or 'Japanese culture' give comfort by providing a sense of something that is *un*changing over time.[33] Similarly, Al-Azmeh's critique of the discourse of cultural authenticity in Islamist revivalism notes that the postulation of an historical subject continuous in time, and distinctive from other historical subjects, is essential for maintaining its integrity against a backdrop of very rapid and profound change.[34]

To summarize the general discussion concerning the basic epistemological dichotomy of universalism and relativism, and which flows over and into the dichotomization of West/non-West and insider/outsider, it seems that both poles possess a certain logical simplicity. This perhaps explains their appeal and their persistence as the principle paradigms in theories of knowledge. Universalism attempts to simplify the world to the point where it fits a single schema and where all social and political

phenomena can be subjected to the same general normative and methodological rules. This is one solution to the 'problem' of explaining human difference, with its self/other and insider/outsider distinctions, that has underpinned the development of the human sciences.

Culturalist and relativist approaches have opposed this formulation on the grounds that human differences cannot be assimilated, either methodologically or normatively, to a single universalist model. Further, the insistence that the whole of humankind is *naturally* divided into cultural groups renders everyone an insider to one group and an outsider to others. In the ideal world of the nationalist, cultural groups are constituted as autonomous political communities and so universality of the national concept itself covers the particularity of its applications.[35] The same applies to the culture concept as it was formulated in the human sciences. Indeed, any political or social theory purporting to embrace humanity as a whole is inescapably universal, and relativist approaches are therefore incoherent. The statement that 'all systems of values and beliefs are cultural constructs and valid only within their own context' is inescapably universalist in encompassing all cultural systems, at all times, within a single framework which in turn informs a universally applicable set of normative and methodological assumptions. This point is not especially new, and the paradox has been noted previously in relation to both nationalism and cultural relativism.[36] What is less often noticed, and what reinforces the paradox, is the extent to which the universality of 'nature' itself has been harnessed to support both particularist nationalist and cultural relativist claims. Further, the radical nationalism sometimes purveyed by political elites, including those of post-colonial states, often goes hand-in-hand with a profound cultural conservatism. Invoking the 'naturalness' of the institutions which affirm existing structures of power and status, is more likely to entail a continuation of elite privilege and control rather than a project of emancipation or self-determination for ordinary people in a democratic sense. Again, this is where it is crucial to acknowledge the inter-relationship between culture, ideology and power.

A second universal element implicit in cultural/ethical relativism is related to the moral position of any given cultural/national system *vis-à-vis* others. Cultural relativism, together with the insider/outsider construction, generally denies the legitimacy of external criticism or interference. However, the justification for the immunity of any particular community from criticism or interference by outside forces (that is, by members of other groups), cannot logically be grounded solely within that system. A normative claim to non-interference entails a duty, on the one

hand, not to interfere with 'other' systems, while on the other hand it assumes a duty on the part of 'others' outside that system to also refrain from interference in one's own. This accords with the logic of 'peaceful co-existence' on which the doctrine of state sovereignty is founded. Defenders of the political integrity of discrete cultural-normative systems must therefore appeal to some standard of justification which is both external to that system and universal in its application insofar as it endorses the independent, sovereign status of each and every such system as a matter of common morality.[37] Thus appeals to a universally applicable set of moral principles seem inescapable, again rendering a relativist logic incoherent.

None of this is meant to suggest that 'culture' or cultural differences as such do not count or that 'sensitivity to context' is not important. But relativizing, reifying and privileging conceptions of culture, especially those proposed by ruling elements whose interpretive practices are self-serving, cannot be sustained on either normative or methodological grounds. Culture clearly functions, among other things, as a means of social and political control, and inequality or disadvantage within a group is frequently legitimated through elite claims founded on the self-referential moral structure of 'the culture'. Only minimal effort is needed to see how particular cultural formations, and the logic of culturalist claims which defend them, can work to oppress certain classes of people (defined, say, in terms of gender, age, caste or socio-economic group) and determine for them a subordinate position in a hierarchy of power and privilege justified by reference to a morality of context.[38] This draws attention to the continuing relevance of the study of ideology as meaning in the service of power. Recognizing the extent to which culture serves power and privilege therefore remains a crucial part of any critically attuned study of world politics.

Contours of a cosmopolitan pluralism

A remaining question is how to move beyond the dichotomies of universalism/relativism, West/non-West, insider/outsider, or any of the variations on these, as well as the cosmopolitan/communitarian divide in international normative theory. In the space between the opposing poles of virtually any dichotomy lies a middle ground on which pluralists assemble. It goes without saying that very term 'pluralism' has had various applications in the human sciences and is open to a number of interpretations, from the notion of interest group politics, to plural society theory and philosophical pragmatism. Because it stands for 'the

many' rather than 'the one' – it is sometimes mistakenly equated with relativism. In addressing problems relating to issues of 'dialogue and synthesis' in the study of world politics, one leading scholar notes that pluralism, properly understood, cannot be of the type that allows an 'anything goes' approach. Indiscriminate tolerance is simply the flip side of the dogmatism characteristic of the 'monologue of science', suggesting that in the absence of true foundational standards, no standards are possible. He goes on to affirm a constructivist perspective that advocates an 'engaged pluralism' as a stance that recognizes that concrete phenomena are susceptible to competing explanations.[39]

With respect to culture and normative theory there is, in practice, a middle ground of agreement on a range of issues. Few communitarians would support the custom of human sacrifice, even if it was endorsed by the 'cultural community' within which it was practiced. And it is hard to imagine that any would want to claim that the death camps of Nazi Germany could be justified by reference to the unique moral universe of Nazism. These are the repugnant consequences of an absolutist relativism that takes the cultural turn to an untenable extreme. Thus as one postmodern historian admits: '[W]hat can one usefully say about National Socialism as an ideology or political movement and regime via theories that appear to discount rationality as a mode of explanation, that resist claims of truth, relativize and disseminate power, cannot assign responsibility clearly, and do not privilege (one) truth or morality over (multiple) interpretation.'[40] On the other hand, universalists would be hard put to justify 'rights' as absolute or to deny that some communities may legitimately value certain rights more highly than others. Nor could a universalist justify one, and only one, vision of 'the good' that is universally applicable across time and space, especially when it comes to deciding who has the authority to define 'the good' and impose it on others who may disagree. Due attention to cultural and social factors, and the plurality of values that emerge in different settings, must play a part in any viable normative theory alongside more general principles. Radical approaches to either universalism or relativism, by attempting to provide clear and unambiguous answers and rules, actually lead to dogmatism and closure.

Pluralism, however, does not provide a site from which neat, clear-cut answers can always be delivered. It certainly lacks the logical simplicity of relativism and universalism. It is better characterized as an untidy meeting place of contesting ideas, lacking firm foundations for the certainties delivered from the opposing poles, where loose ends can never be neatly gathered in, where boundaries (such as they are) remain fuzzy,

and where cut-off points for tolerance of this or that practice always seem to require a measure of arbitrary judgement. This approach is best described as cosmopolitan pluralism. It is cosmopolitan in its breadth, because it incorporates humanity as a whole, but pluralistic in character because it both acknowledges and values the diversity within that whole. It lies between the conventional understandings of a rigid universalism requiring uniformity, and an incoherent relativism, and repudiates the dogmatic elements that characterize both. Above all, it is dynamic, allowing for the contingent as opposed to the absolute and acknowledging 'culture' as endlessly shifting and changing, and certainly never fixed permanently in any particular shape or form. It is capable of recognizing the importance of specific, local circumstances and socializing influences on individual human development while refusing to accept determined outcomes or completely relativized norms.

Pluralism itself is also a position which, although quite evidently related to certain strands of 'Western' thought, is scarcely alien to other traditions of pluralism and toleration around the world. 'Asianists' would be the first to agree that this kind of pluralism has indeed flourished throughout the region for centuries, and historians of the Middle East would have little difficulty in identifying distinct elements of cosmopolitan pluralism under the conditions of medieval Islam and the Ottoman Empire. What is less often tolerated, and not accepted as part of conservative constructs such as the 'Asian way' or fundamentalist Islam is *political* pluralism. But to say that an antipathy to political pluralism is deeply rooted in 'Asian culture', 'Arab culture', 'Islam' or the particular 'political culture' of this or that state is to contribute to stereotyping of exactly the kind rightly objected to by Said and other critics of Orientalism. But it is especially disingenuous when voiced 'from within' by those who enjoy the power and privileges of authoritarian rule backed up by culturalist claims. Any pluralist approach worth the name will obviously recognize that pluralism exists not only between groups, but within them as well, and will be critically attuned to all claims about 'culture' and who it serves to empower.[41]

Students of world politics are called on to deal with a highly pluralistic world in which both similarities and differences abound. It is commonsense to adopt an approach that is sensitive to cultural, historical and other contextual factors, evinces a willingness to listen to competing narratives and consider all sides of a problem. This is good practice from both a methodological and normative point of view, leading to informed interpretation and explanation. However, suspending moral

judgement about 'other cultures' not only makes no methodological sense, it is normatively unsustainable as well when it comes to issues such as genocide, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, the war in Iraq, and so on. In contemporary world politics, it is scarcely possible *not* to make value judgements about problems and issues in locations other than our 'own' national or cultural spaces. This is quite apart from the fact that to consciously contain judgements within the boundaries of national spaces and the 'cultures' which they are assumed to contain, as some proponents of the politics of difference/recognition do, is to at once reify and over-privilege them. The real problem for the study of world politics is not how to avoid making value judgements about those who occupy what may seem to be a different set of subjectivities, but how to make value judgements that are as well-informed and reflexive as possible and which take into account both general principles about the human condition (including due consideration of how such principles are arrived at) as well as the particularities of any given situation or context. This applies as much to the study of 'other cultures' as to the 'war on terror'.

The culture concept's emphasis on difference has helped to generate many insights about difference and the problems of ethnocentrism and are clearly important in the study of world politics. But promoting dogmas about the incommensurability of cultures and values and therefore of key ethical norms, not only privileges rather than meliorates ethnocentricity, it is unsustainable on both normative and methodological lines. In addition, the notion of culture as constitutive of difference too often leads to a conception of culture as static and unchanging, fixed and timeless. Thus the stress on the way in which culture divides and differentiates human groups not only blinds us to the fact that 'difference' may sometimes simply be a matter of idiom, it can also blind us to other ways of understanding what culture is and what it can do. As this study has sought to show, this is at least partly because of the way in which culture was conceptualized in anthropology in its early stages, entangled with nationalist doctrines, and applied in the study of world politics. If one is to take the role of culture in world politics seriously, then more attention must be paid to other ways of conceptualizing it. This requires an approach, such as that of cosmopolitan pluralism sketched above, that stresses its dynamic properties with respect to inter-group as well as intra-group relations and its potential role in transcending so-called 'fault-lines' in world politics, whether along grand civilizational lines or national/cultural ones.

Contemporary anthropologists are now among those who endorse a more dynamic approach which also questions aspects of the cultural turn and its emphasis, implicit or explicit, on contextualism as both

norm and method. Just as Chaney proclaimed the 'crisis of intellectual confidence' in conventional methodologies and approaches in the human sciences precipitated by the turn to culture, anthropologists concerned with the problems generated by the culture concept itself announced a 'moment of crisis' in anthropology and the methods of ethnography. The following quotations illustrate a number of difficulties that contemporary anthropologists have now identified in relation to their 'master concept' and which are directly relevant to the study of world politics:

> Anthropology … has been predicated on maintaining clear boundaries between self and other, which, in turn, is a reflection of what is perhaps the most politically significant fact shaping anthropology – that of Western knowers and non-Western knowns and represented. At work in the dichotomy of self and other … [is] the invisible notion of cultures as identifiable, discrete, coherent, and separate from our own. To the extent that the culture concept has been the primary tool for making the other and for maintaining a hierarchical system of differences, we must direct our creative efforts against this concept. … We need to look at similarities, not only at differences; by emphasizing connections, we also undermine the idea of 'total' cultures and peoples.[42]

> Cultural relativism provides an inaccurate set of descriptions of moral pluralism since it wields a misguided conception of culture. Relativist rights theorists … seem quite unaware of recent discussion of 'culture' in the social sciences and humanities which have sought to de-reify this concept and so deprive it of its ontological security. Instead, the various relativisms totalise and reify 'culture', constructing it as internally uniform and hermetically bounded. 'Culture' is seen as shared and normative, not as cross-cut by social differences (age, caste, gender, etc.), or characterised as contested, fragmented, contextualised and emergent. Culture is referred to as an entity, not as a process; as a noun, not a verb. For their doctrine to be coherent, cultural relativists seem to hold to a nineteenth-century notion of culture as discrete and homogeneous, as a product of isolation, and as the basis of all similarity between human beings. Their relativism is predicated upon bounded conceptions of linguistic and cultural systems, but it falls apart in contexts of hybridity, creolisation, intermixture and the overlapping of political traditions.[43]

> Culture is used selectively for that which seems most salient to the outsider, namely difference. This use gives a truncated account of what others are thinking and doing. It does not represent their grounds for

> action, but only those grounds that are contrastive, special for the 'other', and not reasons that would hold for 'us'. It thus leads to exoticizing, but more importantly to mutilating the other's point of view: representing it only partially … Further, in personal interaction whenever the thoughts and actions of another are interpreted as cultural, they tend to be turned into exemplars of exotic behaviour. Thereby the time of behaviour in question is *not* situated as in a chain of interaction between persons (to be understood and judged in communicative, social, and moral contexts); on the contrary it is removed from the interaction and situated as collective, stereotyped features of groups and contrasting identities … Thirdly, 'culture' is used increasingly in public debate to define an arena for contesting discourses on 'identity'. Under current conditions, such discourses provide an extremely fertile field for political entrepreneurship; they allow leaders and spokesmen to claim they are speaking on behalf of others; they allow the manipulation of media access; and they encourage the strategic construction of polarizing debates that translate into battles of influence. Such battles create hegemony and reduce options; they disempower followers and reduce the diversity of voices.[44]

What emerges from these various critiques of the culture concept is that its conceptualization as a factor in world politics needs to give more prominence to its dynamic properties, especially in terms of the fact that change and transformation takes place *through* something called culture. As suggested at the beginning, the culture concept requires restating as a highly complex and contingent process rather than an objective, concrete 'thing' that defines the foundations for political communities and/or values systems. Understood as a process, culture moves from a thing which 'a people' possesses, or which possesses them, to a dynamic that enables change and adaptation as well as sustaining continuity and predictability. Conceiving culture in this way helps us to avoid stereotypical assumptions that a nation-state such as Japan possesses a fixed and identifiable thing called 'Japanese culture', or that Muslims all share a common 'Islamic culture', or that any given country possesses a 'political culture' that ultimately determines its identity or its interactions in the sphere of world politics.

As a continuous process, cultural change is not to be equated with 'progress'. It can obviously lead to both negative and positive outcomes and therefore has no necessary *telos*. The limits to cultural adaptability and inventiveness must be recognized as well.[45] But for any form of study that deals with relationships between groups – as world politics

does – it is imperative to understand that the capacity to interact lies in the dynamics of culture itself. Things may well be done differently in 'foreign countries', both past and present, but the fact that we are cultural creatures in the first place implies the ability to learn to navigate around new and different situations and to extend the capacity for intersubjective communication well beyond our immediate social, cultural and political contexts. Viewed in this way, it is not 'culture' that throws up barriers to understanding and interaction, but 'culture' that actually enables it.[46]

Conclusion

It has been said that to study the history of ideas is to study meaning, and therefore culture, from a historical perspective.[47] Similarly, cultural history has been defined as the study of the processes by which meaning is constructed.[48] Both formulations suggest that 'meaning', and everything that follows from it, including representation and interpretation, value and interest, is culturally constructed. If we 'contextualize' the emergence of the culture concept and the general meaning with which it was endowed in anthropology, we find that it was itself 'culturally constructed' by European theorists. And this occurred for a specific purpose which, in general terms, was 'to account for the collective articulations of human diversity' and more specifically in cultural anthropology as a 'liberal alternative to racist classifications of human diversity'.[49] The very meaning of culture (in all its variations) is therefore itself 'a cultural construction', rather than an 'objective reality', with a specificity located in the European encounter with difference. This renders problematic those studies which attempt to use the concept of culture to identify as 'culturally peculiar' or 'historically specific' any other concept, such as the 'state of nature'.[50] For if we follow the argument to its logical conclusion, we cannot isolate the culture concept from its own historical and cultural setting and use it in a completely neutral way.

Seen in this light, culturalist responses to universalist theories and methodologies, including normative and methodological concerns to treat 'other cultures' on their own terms, are no less Eurocentric. They are saturated with those 'Western' norms and values devised within and through both historicist and anthropological approaches to the issue of difference. When dealing with 'the other', then, we may well ask whether this 'Western folk idea' can be applied to other 'cultures' that do not necessarily possess such a notion of 'culture'.[51] But if the culture concept as formulated in Western thought does have resonance in

'other' places, this simply demonstrates, once again, the fallacy of origins, the incoherence of relativism and the problems of methodological contextualism. For students of world politics, an appreciation of how the culture concept began its career in the human sciences, and how it has informed various social and political theories involving sameness and difference, self and other, may lead to a better grasp of the complexity of the issues involved and away from the more simplistic and reified categories that are invoked in the name of both culture and context.

Notes

1 Introduction

1. I include under the term 'world politics' both comparative politics and international relations (IR).
2. David Chaney (ed.), *The Cultural Turn: Scene-Setting Essays on Contemporary Social History*, London, Routledge, 1994, pp. 40–41.
3. This trend has been observed by a number of scholars. See for example, Yosef Lapid, 'Culture's Ship: Returns and Departures in International Relations Theory' in Yosef Lapid and Friedrich Kratochwil (eds), *The Return of Culture and Identity in IR Theory*, Boulder (CO), Lynne Rienner, 1996, pp. 3–44.
4. See the various contributions to Stephanie Lawson (ed.), *The New Agenda for International Relations: From Polarization to Globalization in World Politics?*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2002.
5. The term 'culturalist' (and 'culturalism') is used to describe positions constructed explicitly in opposition to universalist epistemology and methodology and which posit a strong notion of cultural specificity or context – either spatial or temporal or both.
6. Walter Lacqueur, 'Postmodern Terrorism', *Foreign Affairs*, 75 (5), 1996: 36.
7. Richard Crockatt, *After 9/11: Cultural Dimensions of American Cultural Power*, London, Routledge, forthcoming.
8. Daniel Philpott, 'The Challenge of September 11 to Secularism in International Relations, *World Politics*, 55 (4), 2002: 90. On the Salafi movement see Quintan Wiktorowicz, 'The Salafi Movement in Jordan' *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 32 (2), 2000: 219–40.
9. See Samuel P. Huntington, 'The Clash of Civilizations?', *Foreign Affairs*, 72 (3), 1993: 22–49 and Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, New York, Simon & Shuster, 1996.
10. A similar approach is taken in Julie Reeves, *Culture and International Relations: Narratives, Natives and Tourists*, London, Routledge, 2004.
11. Andrew Linklater, *The Transformation of Political Community*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1998, p. 1.
12. John Armstrong, 'Nations Before Nationalism' in John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith (eds), *Nationalism*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1994, p. 141. Armstrong credits the Norwegian anthropologist, Fredrik Barth, for developing this and other related insights into boundary construction.
13. See Michael Walzer, *Spheres of Justice: A Defence of Pluralism and Equality*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1983, p. 32.
14. Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1983, p. 125; Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1986, p. 211.
15. See Charles R. Beitz, *Political Equality: An Essay in Democratic Theory*, Princeton (NJ), Princeton University Press, 1989, pp. 222–23.

16. K.J. Holsti, 'International Relations at the End of the Millennium', *Review of International Studies*, 19, 1993: 407.
17. See Bhikhu Parekh, *Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory*, Houndmills, Macmillan, 2000, esp. pp. 1–11.
18. Mark Bevir, *The Logic of the History of Ideas*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999, p. 1. See also Adam Kuper, *Culture: The Anthropologist's Account*, Cambridge (MA), Harvard University Press, 1999, p. 16.
19. I refer primarily to the history of intellectual thought in Europe and the United States where the 'human sciences', as they are studied in most universities throughout the world, first emerged. I have not attempted to trace the emergence of the culture concept, if it exists as such, in intellectual traditions elsewhere.
20. A.L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn, *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions*, New York, Vintage Books, 1963, pp. 3–4.
21. Herodotus, *The Histories*, London, Penguin, 1972, Bk III, p. 219.
22. T.A. Sinclair, *A History of Greek Political Thought*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1951, pp. 40–41.
23. See Ronald P. Formisano, 'The Concept of Political Culture' in *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 32 (3), 2001: 418.
24. Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, rev. edn, New York, Oxford University Press, 1983.
25. Kroeber and Kluckhohn, *Culture*.
26. Archer cited in Roland Robertson, *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture*, London, Sage, 1992, p. 36.
27. Ibid., p. 33.
28. Kuper, *Culture*, p. xi.
29. Glenn Jordan and Chris Weedon, *Cultural Politics: Class, Gender and Race in the Postmodern World*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1995, pp. 6–8.
30. John Storey, 'Cultural Studies: An Introduction' in John Storey (ed.), *What is Cultural Studies: A Reader*, London, Arnold, 1996, pp. 1–2. Emphasis added.
31. Reeves, *Culture and International Relations*, p. 2.
32. John Rundell and Stephen Mennell, 'Introduction: Civilization, Culture and the Human Self-Image' in John Rundell and Stephen Mennell (eds), *Classical Readings in Culture and Civilization*, London, Routledge, 1998, p. 6.
33. See Arnold J. Toynbee, *Civilization on Trial*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1948, p. 72.
34. Rundell and Mennell, 'Introduction', p. 7. Reeves also discusses the German distinctions between *kultur* and *zivilization*, and the opposition to Anglo-French notions of civilization embodied in *kultur*. See Reeves, *Culture and International Relations*, pp. 20–22.
35. See Gerrit W. Gong, *The Standard of 'Civilization' in International Society*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1984.
36. Jacinta O'Hagan, *Conceptualizing the West in International Relations: From Spengler to Said*, London, Palgrave, 2002, p. 3.
37. Stephen Howe, *Empire: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2002, p. 15. The British empire, for example, was clearly dominated by an English power elite.
38. Jonathan Spencer, 'Occidentalism in the East: The Uses of the West in the Politics and Anthropology of South Asia in James G. Carrier, *Occidentalism: The World Turned Upside Down*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1995, p. 234.

39. See, generally, Aziz Al-Azmeh, *Islams and Modernities*, London, Verso, 1993.
40. O'Hagan, *Conceptualizing the West*, p. 7.
41. See, for example, Stephanie Lawson, *Tradition Versus Democracy in the South Pacific: Fiji, Tonga and Western Samoa*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996 and Stephanie Lawson, 'The Cultural Politics of Asia-Europe Relations' in Peter Preston and Julie Gilson (eds), *The European Union and East Asia: Inter-Regional Linkages in a Changing Global System*, Cheltenham, Edward Elgar, 2001, pp. 29–45.
42. Edward Said, *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient*, London, Penguin, 1995.
43. Tzvetan Todorov, *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other*, New York, Harper & Row, 1985.
44. William Connolly, *Identity/Difference: Democratic Negotiations of Political Paradox*, Ithaca (NY), Cornell University Press, 1991, p. 40.
45. Ibid., p. 41.
46. Ibid.
47. Michael Thompson, Richard Ellis and Aaron Wildavsky, *Cultural Theory*, Boulder (CO), Westview Press, 1990, p. 21.
48. William Roseberry, 'Marxism and Culture' in Brett Williams (ed.), *The Politics of Culture*, Washington and London, Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991, p. 19.
49. Thompson *et al*., *Cultural Theory*, p. 21.
50. Jon Stratton and Ien Ang, 'On the Impossibility of a Global Cultural Studies: "British" Cultural Studies in an "International" Frame' in David Morley and Kuan-Hsing Chen (eds), *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*, London, Routledge, 1996, p. 365.
51. See Ulrich Beck, 'Cosmopolitan Realism: On the Distinction Between Cosmopolitanism in Philosophy and the Social Sciences', *Global Networks*, 4 (2), 2004: 131–56.
52. Connolly, *Identity/Difference*, p. 41.

2 World Politics and the Cultural Turn

1. Peter Burke, *Varieties of Cultural History*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1997, p. 183.
2. Kuper, *Culture*, p. 2.
3. See Nancy Armstrong, 'Who's Afraid of the Cultural Turn?', *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, 12 (1), 2001: 18. See also Richard Rorty, *The Linguistic Turn: Essays in Philosophical Method*, Chicago (IL), University of Chicago Press, 1967.
4. Donald R. Kelley, *The Descent of Ideas: The History of Intellectual History*, Burlington (VT), Ashgate, 2002, p. 301. The best known work is Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 2nd edn, London, Sheed & Ward, 1975.
5. Armstrong, 'Who's Afraid?', p. 18.
6. See Hans-Peter Söder, 'The Return of Cultural History? "Literary" Historiography from Nietzsche to Hayden White', *History of European Ideas*, 29 (1), 2003: 76.
7. Caroline F. Ware, (ed.), *The Cultural Approach to History*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1940.
8. Caroline F. Ware, 'Introduction' in ibid., p. 3.

9. See Joseph Mali, *The Rehabilitation of Myth: Vico's New Science*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1992, pp. 258–59.
10. Robert F. Berkhofer Jr., 'Clio and the Culture Concept: Some Impressions of a Changing Relationship in American Historiography' in Louis Schneider and Charles Bonjean (eds), *The Idea of Culture in the Social Sciences*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1973, p. 99. For an account of the cultural turn in French historiography, see Roger Chartier, *Cultural History: Between Practices and Representations*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1988.
11. Richard J. Bernstein, 'Incommensurability and Otherness Revisited' in Eliot Deutsch (ed.), *Culture and Modernity: East-West Philosophic Perspectives*, Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press, 1991, p. 85.
12. Armstrong, 'Who's Afraid?', p. 18.
13. Chaney, *Cultural Turn*, p. 10.
14. John Storey, 'Cultural Studies: An Introduction' in John Storey (ed.), *What is Cultural Studies? A Reader*, London, Arnold, 1996, p. 3.
15. Said, *Orientalism*.
16. Geeta Chowdry and Sheila Nair, 'Introduction: Power in a Postcolonial World: Race, Gender and Class in International Relations' in Geeta Chowdry and Sheila Nair (eds), *Power, Postcolonialism and International Relations: Reading Race, Gender and Class*, London, Routledge, 2002, p. 12.
17. Ronald Niezen, *A World Beyond Difference: Cultural Identity in the Age of Globalization*, Oxford, Blackwell, 2004, p. 151.
18. Ashis Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self under Colonialism*, Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1983, p. xi.
19. Specifically, Michel Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge*, London, Tavistock Publications, 1972, and Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, New York, Vintage Books, 1979.
20. Larbi Sadiki, *The Search for Arab Democracy: Discourses and Counter-Discourses*, London, Hurst & Co., 2004, p. 177.
21. Sanjay Seth, Leela Gandhi and Michael Dutton, 'Postcolonial Studies: A Beginning …', *Postcolonial Studies: Culture, Politics, Economy*, 1 (1), 1998: 7–11.
22. Terry Eagleton, 'Postcolonialism and "Postcolonialism" ', *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, 1 (1), 1998/9: 26.
23. Lisa Anderson, 'Democracy in the Arab World: A Critique of the Political Culture Approach' in Rex Brynen, Bahgat Korany and Paul Noble, *Political Liberalization and Democratization in the Arab World: Vol. 1: Theoretical Perspectives*, Boulder (CO), Lynne Rienner, 1995.
24. See Victoria E. Bonnell and Lynn Hunt, 'Introduction' in Victoria E. Bonnell and Lynn Hunt (eds), *Beyond the Cultural Turn: New Directions in the Study of Society and Culture*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1999, pp. 2–3.
25. Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, London, Hutchinson, 1975, p. 5.
26. See Bonnell and Hunt, 'Introduction' p. 2.
27. Hayden White, 'Afterword' in Bonnell and Hunt (eds), *Beyond the Cultural Turn*, pp. 315–16, 323.
28. Nancy Nelson Spivey, *The Constructivist Metaphor: Reading, Writing and the Making of Meaning*, San Diego (CA), Academic Press, 1997, p. 3.
29. Nicholas Onuf, *World of Our Making: Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations*, Columbia,, University of South Carolina Press, 1989, p. 40.

30. Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, 'Taking Stock: The Constructivist Research Program in International Relations and Comparative Politics', *Annual Review of Political Science*, 4, 2001: 404–05.
31. Barkin quoted in Patrick Thaddeus Jackson and Daniel H. Nexon, 'Constructivist Realism or Realist-Constructivism?', *International Studies Review*, 6, 2004: 337.
32. Alexander Wendt, 'Identity and Structural Change in International Politics' in Yosef Lapid and Friedrich Kratochwil (eds), *The Return of Culture and Identity in IR Theory*, Boulder (CO), Lynne Rienner, 1996, p. 48.
33. John M. Hobson and J.C. Sharman, 'The Enduring Place of Hierarchy in World Politics: Tracing the Social Logics of Hierarchy and Political Change', *European Journal of International Relations*, 11 (1), 2005: 66.
34. Wendt, 'Identity and Structural Change', p. 50.
35. Peter J. Katzenstein, 'Introduction: Alternative Perspectives on National Security' in Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1996, pp. 18–19.
36. Tim Dunne, *Inventing International Society: A History of the English School*, London, Macmillan, 1998, p. 187.
37. Note that postmodernism and poststructuralism are not identical and that Foucault explicitly denies that he is a poststructuralist. See Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, London, Tavistock Publications, 1970, p. xiv.
38. Donna U. Gregory, 'Foreword' in James Der Derian and Michael J. Shapiro (eds), *International/Intertextual Relations*, Lexington (MA), Lexington Books, 1989.
39. Ashley quoted in Onuf, *World of Our Making*, p. 12.
40. Andrew Linklater, 'The Achievements of Critical Theory' in Steve Smith, Ken Booth and Marysia Zalewski (eds), *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996, p. 279.
41. Ibid., p. 282.
42. Christian Reus-Smit, 'Constructivism' in Scott Burchill, Andrew Linklater, Richard Devetak, Jack Donnelly, Matthew Paterson, Christian Reus-Smit and Jacqui True, *Theories of International Relations*, 3rd edn, Houndmills, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, p. 197.
43. See Anthony Giddens, *Central Problems in Social Theory*, London, Macmillan, 1979.
44. For a discussion of variations on the dialectical approach to structure and agency see Stuart McAnulla, 'Structure and Agency' in David Marsh and Gerry Stoker (eds), *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, 2nd edn, Houndmills, Palgrave Macmillan, 2002, pp. 278–281.
45. George Steinmetz, 'Introduction: Culture and the State' in George Steinmetz (ed.), *State/Culture: State Formation After the Cultural Turn*, Ithaca (NY), Cornell University Press, 1999, p. 2.
46. Ian Clark, *The Post-Cold War Order: The Spoils of Peace*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 224.
47. On the former, see Georg Sorensen, *The Transformation of the State: Beyond the Myth of Retreat*, Houndmills, Palgrave Macmillan, 2004, esp. pp. 83–96, and on the latter, Daniele Archibugi and David Held (eds), *Cosmopolitan Democracy: An Agenda for a New World Order*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1995.

48. Daniel Deudeney and G. John Ikenberry, 'The Nature and Sources of Liberal International Order', *Review of International Studies*, 25 (2), 1999: 182.
49. See Francis Fukuyama, 'The End of History', *The National Interest*, 16, 1989: 3–18, and Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, London, Hamilton Hamish, 1992.
50. Lee Marsden, *Lessons From Russia: Clinton and US Democracy Promotion*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2005, p. 186.
51. Daniel A. Bell and Kanishka Jayasura, ' Understanding Illiberal Democracy: A Framework' in Daniel A. Bell, David Brown, Kanishka Jayasura and David Martin Jones (eds), *Towards Illiberal Democracy in Pacific Asia*, New York, St Martin's Press, 1995, p. 1.
52. Chan Heng Chee, 'Democracy: Evolution and Implementation: An Asian Perspective' in Robert Bartley, Chan Heng Chee, Samuel P. Huntington, Shijuro Ogata (eds), *Democracy and Capitalism: Asian and American Perspectives*, Singapore, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1993, p. 5.
53. See Sheila Carapico, 'Foreign Aid for Promoting Democracy in the Arab World', *Middle East Journal*, 56 (3), 2002: 392.
54. Bruce Russett, 'The Fact of Democratic Peace', in Michael E. Brown (ed.), *Debating the Democratic Peace*, Cambridge (MA), The MIT Press, 1996, p. 58.
55. Bruce Russett, 'Bushwhacking the Democratic Peace', *International Studies Perspectives*, 6 (4), 2005: 395–96.
56. See Stephanie Lawson, 'Democracy and the Problem of Cultural Relativism: Normative Issues for International Politics', *Global Society*, 12 (2), 1998: 251–70. Note that the cultural specificity of socialism or communism has not generally featured in these discourses.
57. Huntington, 'Clash of Civilizations?'.
58. Samuel P. Huntington, 'No Exit – The Errors of Endism', *The National Interest*, 17, 1989, p. 3.
59. Ibid.
60. Ibid., p. 11.
61. Amin Saikal, *Islam and the West: Conflict or Cooperation?*, Houndmills, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, p. 9.
62. Anna Secor, 'Islamist Politics: Antisystemic or Postmodern Movements?', *Geopolitics*, 6 (3), 2001: 118.
63. See Bassam Tibi, 'Culture and Knowledge: The Politics of Islamization of Knowledge as a Postmodern Project? The Fundamentalist Claim to De-Westernization', *Theory, Culture and Society*, 12 (1), 1995: 3.
64. See Alex Inkeles, 'National Character' in Roy C. Macridis and Bernard E. Brown (eds), *Comparative Politics: Notes and Readings*, 3rd edn, Homewood, Ill., Dorsey Press, 1968.
65. Joel S. Migdal, 'Studying the State' in M.I. Lichbach and A.S. Zuckerman (eds), *Comparative Politics: Rationality, Culture, and Structure*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1977, p. 212.
66. Ronald L. Jepperson, Alexander Wendt and Peter J. Katzenstein, 'Norms, Identity, and Culture in National Security' in Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1996, p. 33. Emphasis added.
67. Jepperson, Wendt and Katzenstein, *Culture of National Security*, p. 56.

68. See, for example, Hedley Bull and Adam Watson (eds), *The Expansion of International Society*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1985, and Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, London, Macmillan, 1977.
69. For example, R.G. Anand (ed.), *Cultural Factors in International Relations*, New Delhi, Abhinav Publications, 1981.
70. For example, Adda B. Bozeman, *Politics and Culture in International History: From the Ancient Near East to the Opening of the Modern Age*, Princeton (NJ), Princeton University Press, 1966.
71. Hans Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 4th edn, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1966, p. 122.
72. T. S. Eliot, *Notes Towards a Definition of Culture*, London, Faber & Faber, 1962, p. 83.
73. Daniel Lerner and Harold D. Lasswell (eds), *The Policy Sciences: Recent Developments in Scope and Method*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1951. Reeves, *Culture and International Relations*, also provides an account of the use of the culture concept in IR in earlier periods.
74. See Yosef Lapid, 'Culture's Ship: Returns and Departures in International Relations Theory' in Lapid and Kratochwil (eds), *Return of Culture*, p. 5.
75. Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State and War*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1959, see pp. 16, 81, 159.
76. Richard Falk, *Explorations at the Edge of Time: The Prospects for World Order*, Philadelphia (PA), Temple University Press, 1992, pp. 37–38. Also, the ascendancy of the West was often 'explained in cultural terms associated with the liberation of reason from the grip of superstition and religion.'
77. R.B.J. Walker, 'The Concept of Culture in the Theory of International Relations' in Jongsuk Chay (ed.), *Culture and International Relations*, New York, Praeger, 1990, pp. 6, 9, 11.
78. See, generally, Peter J. Katzenstein, 'Introduction: Alternative Perspectives on National Security' in Katzenstein (ed.), *Culture of National Security*, pp. 1–32.
79. Beate Jahn, *The Cultural Construction of International Relations: The Invention of the State of Nature*, Houndmills, Palgrave, 2000, p. 29.
80. Jacinta O'Hagan, *Conceptualizing the West in International Relations: From Spengler to Said*, London, Palgrave, 2002.
81. John Mueller, *Quiet Cataclysm: Reflections on the Recent Transformation of World Politics*, New York, Harper Collins, 1995, p. 4.
82. See James N. Rosenau, 'Pre-Theories and Theories of Foreign Policy' in R. Barry Farrell (ed.), *Approaches to Comparative and International Politics*, Evanston (IL), Northwestern University Press, 1966, p. 60 and James N. Roseneau, 'Ageing Agendas and Ambiguous Anomalies: Tensions and Contradictions of an Emergent Epoch' in Lawson (ed.), *New Agenda*, p. 22.
83. Peter J. Katzenstein in 'The Role of Theory in Comparative Politics: A Symposium', introduced by Atul Kohli *et al.*, *World Politics*, 48 (1), 1995: 1–2.
84. Lapid, 'Culture's Ship', p. 3.
85. Valerie M. Hudson, 'Culture and Foreign Policy: Developing a Research Agenda' in Valerie M. Hudson (ed.), *Culture and Foreign Policy*, Boulder (CO), Lynne Rienner, 1997, p. 4.
86. Bruce Russett, 'Reintegrating the Subdsiciplines of International and Comparative Politics', *International Studies Review*, 5 (4), 2003: 10.

87. Dominique Jacquin, Andrew Oros and Marco Verweij, 'Culture in International Relations: An Introduction to the Special Issue', *Millennium*, 22 (3), 1993: 376–77.
88. An exception noted here is Peter Worsley's work which examined the institutionalized images that the US and Soviet Union held of each other during the Cold War. See Peter Worsley, 'Images of the Other' in Robert A. Rubinstein and Mary LeCron Foster (eds), *The Social Dynamics of Peace and Conflict: Culture in International Security*, Boulder (CO), Westview Press, 1988.
89. Another exception is Anand, *Cultural Factors*.
90. See Roland Bleiker, 'Neorealist Claims in Light of Ancient Chinese Philosophy: The Cultural Dimension of International Theory', *Millennium*, 22 (3), 1993: 401–21.
91. In addition to recent works cited above, other examples include Jill Krause and Neil Renwick (eds), *Identities in International Relations*, London, Palgrave, 1996; Scott M. Thomas, *The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations: The Struggle for the Soul of International Relations in the Twenty-First Century*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005. The latter is part of a whole series on culture and religion in international relations.
92. See, for example, John Borneman, *Subversions of International Order: Studies in the Political Anthropology of Culture*, Albany, State University of New York Press, 1998.
93. Michael J. Mazarr, 'Culture and International Relations: A Review Essay', *Washington Quarterly*, 19 (2), 1996: 179.
94. Alastair Ian Johnston, 'Thinking About Strategic Culture', *International Security*, 19 (4), 1995: 35.
95. Ibid., p. 64. See also Alistair Iain Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History*, Princeton (NJ), Princeton University Press, 1995.
96. Jahn, *Cultural Construction*, pp. 2–3.
97. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire*, Cambridge (MA), Harvard University Press, 2000, pp. 125–26.

3 Context and Contextualism

1. For a review of relevant literature in the broadly postmodern camp that appeared in the early post-cold War period see Jim George and David Campbell, 'Patterns of Dissent and the Celebration of Difference: Critical Social Theory and International Relations', *International Studies Quarterly*, Special Issue: *Speaking the Language of Exile: Dissidence in International Studies*, 34 (3), 1990: 269–93. Constructivism is sometimes defined as incorporating postmodern approaches, but it is difficult to simply merge everything under a simple constructivist label, however convenient. It should also be noted that not all constructivist literature is steeped in the language of contextualism, although it is implicit in its epistemological and ontological premises. For a review of constructivist literature up to 2001 see Finnemore and Sikkink, 'Taking Stock'. More recent discussions of constructivism may be found in Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse and Beth A. Simmons (eds), *Handbook Of International Relations*, London, Sage, 2005.

2. Ben-Ami Scharfstein, *The Dilemma of Context*, New York, New York University Press, 1989, p. 1.
3. Ibid., pp. 1–2.
4. Ibid., p. 3.
5. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 2nd edn, London, Sheed & Ward, 1975, pp. 155–56.
6. Roy Dilley, 'Introduction: The Problem of Context' in Roy Dilley (ed.), *The Problem of Context*, New York and Oxford, Bergahn Books, 1999, p. 1. Interestingly, it was Malinowski who railed against the depiction of human beings, their social structures and activities through formulae, symbols and equations. See Bronislaw Malinowksi, 'Must Kinship Studies be Introduced by Mock Algebra?', *Man*, 30 February 1930, p. 19.
7. Scharfstein, *Dilemma*, p. 7.
8. See Alan Barnard and Jonathan Spencer (eds), *Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology*, London, Routledge, 1998, pp. 535–39. See also Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1977.
9. Gary Goertz, *Contexts of International Politics*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994, p. 1.
10. Ibid., p. 52.
11. Reeves, *Culture and International Relations*, p. 6.
12. Alan Swingewood, *Cultural Theory and the Problem of Modernity*, Houndmills, Macmillan, 1998, p. xiii.
13. Ibid., p. 71.
14. Ibid.
15. Kelley, *Descent*, p. 3.
16. J.G.A. Pocock, 'The History of Political Thought: A Methodological Enquiry' in Peter Laslett and W.G. Runciman (eds), *Philosophy, Politics and Society*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1967, p. 194.
17. Ibid., pp. 195–96.
18. Ibid., p. 195.
19. Baron de Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws*, Trans. Thomas Nugent, Introduction, Franz Neumann, New York, Hafner Publications, 1949, p. 301.
20. See Quentin Skinner, 'Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas', in James Tully (ed.), *Meaning and Context: Quentin Skinner and His Critics*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1988, pp. 30–67.
21. Preston King, *Thinking Past a Problem: Essays on the History of Ideas*, London, Frank Cass, 2000, p. 185.
22. Ibid., p. 198.
23. See Quentin Skinner, 'A Reply to My Critics' in Tully (ed.), *Meaning and Context*, pp. 255–56. Skinner identifies Martin Hollis, Keith Graham, Preston King and Ian Shapiro as accusing him of at least close association with the relativist camp.
24. King, *Thinking Past*, p. 209.
25. Scharfstein cited in Dilley, 'Introduction', p. 7.
26. David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1985, p. xvi.
27. I have written extensively about some of these problems in terms of the politics of tradition: see Lawson, *Tradition Versus Democracy*.

28. See Preface to George H. Sabine, *A History of Political Theory*, 3rd edn., London, George G. Harrap & Co., 1951, p. 7 and Robert W. Cox, 'Social Forces, States and World Orders' in Robert Keohane (ed.), *Neorealism and its Critics*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1986, p. 207.
29. Timothy O'Hagan, 'The Idea of Cultural Patrimony', *Critical Review of Social and Political Philosophy*, 1 (3), 1998: 147–57.
30. Ann Rigney, 'Introduction' in Ann Rigney and Douwe Fokkema (eds), *Cultural Participation: Trends Since the Middle Ages*, Amsterdam, John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1993, p. 1, emphasis added.
31. Richard Biernacki, 'Method and Metaphor after the New Cultural History' in Bonnel and Hunt (eds), *Beyond the Cultural Turn*, pp. 69–70.
32. Ibid., pp. 82–83.
33. Ibid., pp. 83–84.
34. Daniel Bell, *Communitarianism and its Critics*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1993, p. 125.
35. Ibid., p. 126.
36. Kenneth A. Dahlberg, 'Contextual Analysis: Taking Space, Time and Place Seriously', *International Studies Quarterly*, 27 (3), 1983: 258. Dahlberg, however, proposes to use evolutionary theory as the basis for contextual analysis which is surely as 'Western' as any theory could possibly be.
37. Stephen Hobden, 'Can Historical Sociology Be Critical?', *Alternatives*, 24 (3), 1999: 407.
38. Christian Reus-Smit, *The Moral Purpose of the State: Culture, Social Identity, and Institutional Rationality in International Relations*, Princeton (NJ), Princeton University Press, 1999, pp. 6–7.
39. Parts of this section draw from Lawson, 'Democracy and the Problem of Cultural Relativism'.
40. Henry Tam, *Communitarianism: A New Agenda for Politics and Citizenship*, Houndmills, Macmillan, 1998, p. 3.
41. On socialism see Preston King (ed.), *Socialism and the Common Good: New Fabian Essays*, London, Frank Cass, 1996.
42. See Amitai Etzioni, *The Spirit of Community*, London, Fontana, 1995.
43. Anthony Giddens, *The Third Way and its Critics*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2000, pp. 63–64.
44. See Bimal Krishna Matilal, 'Ethical Relativism and Confrontation of Cultures' in Michael Kraus (ed.), *Relativism: Interpretation and Confrontation*, Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 1989, p. 349.
45. John Ladd, 'Introduction' in John Ladd (ed.), *Ethical Relativism*, Belmont (Calif.), Wadsworth, 1973, pp. 2,3. An interesting variation on the idea of a transcendant global moral community is contained in Frost's constitutive theory of international ethics which differs in terms of the conception of the basic community of humankind. Whereas the moral community of humankind is often conceived as existing independently of the modern state system, Frost says that modernizing inter-state practice provides the idiom within which normative argument occurs. Mervyn Frost, *Ethics in International Relations: A Constitutive Theory*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996, p. 85.
46. See Nigel Dower, *World Ethics: The New Agenda*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 1998, pp. 42–43.

47. Ibid., p. 43. A similar point is made by Merrilee H. Salmon, 'Ethical Considerations in Anthropology and Archeology, or Relativism and Justice for All', *Journal of Anthropological Research*, 53 (1), 1997: 49.
48. See Michael Kraus, 'Introduction', in Kraus (ed.), *Relativism*, p. 2.
49. Melville J. Herskovits, 'Cultural Relativism and Cultural Values' in Ladd (ed.), *Ethical Relativism*, p. 76.
50. Parekh, *Rethinking Multiculturalism*, pp. 47, 49.
51. There is a very brief critical reference to Stoic thought at pp. 16 and 17, and no discussion of cosmopolitanism, either ancient or contemporary, at all.
52. Steven Vertovec and Robin Cohen, 'Introduction: Conceiving Cosmopolitanism' in Steven Vertovec and Robin Cohen (eds), *Conceiving Cosmopolitanism: Theory, Context and Practice*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2002, p. 1.
53. Sami Zubaida, 'Middle Eastern Experiences of Cosmopolitanism' in Vertovec and Cohen (eds), *Conceiving Cosmopolitanism*, p. 37.
54. This is similar to the version of 'pluralistic multiculturalism' that has been contrasted with 'particularistic multiculturalism', where the former advocates a 'richer common culture' in lieu of the particularist insistence that no common culture is possible. Diane Ravitch quoted in Daniel C. Littlefield, 'Politics and Multiculturalism' in Elizabeth Fox-Genovese and Elisabeth Lasch-Quinn (eds), *Reconstructing History: The Emergence of a New Historical Society*, London, Routledge, 1999, p. 18.
55. Charles W. Kegley Jr., 'The New Global Order: The Power of Principle in a Pluralistic World' in Joel H. Rosenthal (ed.), *Ethics and International Affairs: A Reader*, Washington D.C., Georgetown University Press, 1995, p. 118.
56. Joseph Boyle, 'Natural Law and International Ethics' in Terry Nardin and David R. Mapel (eds), *Traditions of International Ethics*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1992, p. 122.
57. See Samuel Fleischaker, *The Ethics of Culture*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1994, p. ix.
58. Intervention in Iraq by US forces and their allies in 2002 would fail at the first hurdle of a humanitarian justification since it was explicitly on the grounds that Iraq (allegedly) possessed weapons of mass destruction that intervention had occurred. Humanitarian concerns became an *ex post facto* justification when it was discovered that there were no such weapons.
59. Herskovits, 'Cultural Relativism', p. 74.
60. Bell and Jayasura, 'Understanding Illiberal Democracy', p. 1.
61. Ibid., p. 9.
62. Anderson, 'Democracy in the Arab World', pp. 80–81.
63. Marsha Pripstein Posusney, 'The Middle East's Democracy Deficit in Comparative Perspective' in Marsha Pripstein Posusney and Michele Penner Angrist (eds), *Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Regimes and Resistance*, Boulder (CO), Lynne Rienner, 2005, p. 5.
64. Michele Penner Angrist, 'The Outlook for Authoritarianism' in Posusney and Angrist (eds), *Authoritarianism*, p. 227.
65. Nicola Pratt, *The Failure of Democratization in the Arab World*, Boulder (CO), Lynne Reinner, forthcoming, 2007.
66. See also Sadiki, *Search for Arab Democracy*, esp. ch. 1. He also argues for the need to take 'specificity and context' into account to avoid an uncritical

reliance on Eurocentric definitions of democracy, and to highlights problems with invoking simplistic views of Arab 'culture' and/or 'history'.

67. See James Tully, *Strange Multiplicity: Constitutionalism in an Age of Diversity*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995. Some liberal theorists, however, have responded by exploring the ways in which liberalism can accommodate cultural differences without compromising its essential principles. See, for example, John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, rev. edn, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1999; Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1995.
68. See, for example, Cornel West, 'The New Cultural Politics of Difference' in Simon During (ed.), *The Cultural Studies Reader*, London, Routledge, 1993, pp. 203–17, Charles Taylor, 'The Politics of Recognition' in Charles Taylor (ed.), *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, Princeton (NJ), Princeton University Press, 1994, pp. 25–73, Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, Princeton (NJ), Princeton University Press, 1990, Andrea T. Baumeister, *Liberalism and the Politics of Difference*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2000 and Mark Blacksell, *Political Geography*, London, Routledge, 2006, ch. 5, 'The Politics of Difference', pp. 76–92.
69. West, 'New Cultural Politics', p. 257.
70. Young, *Justice*, p. 5.
71. For a more detailed argument along these lines see Anne Phillips, *Democracy and Difference*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1993.
72. Eleanor Gorman and Vivienne Jabri, 'Locating Difference in Feminist International Relations' in Vivienne Jabri and Eleanor O'Gorman (eds), *Women, Culture and International Relations*, Boulder (CO), Lynne Rienner, 1999, pp. 8, 11.
73. Seyla Benhabib, *The Claims of Culture: Equality and Diversity in the Global Era*, Princeton (NJ), Princeton University Press, 2002, pp. viii-ix.
74. Mark B. Salter, *Barbarians and Civilization in International Relations*, London, Pluto Press, 2002, p. 3.
75. Taylor, 'Politics of Recognition', p. 41.
76. Samuel Fleischacker, *The Ethics of Culture*, Ithaca (NY), Cornell University Press, 1994, p. 5.
77. See Chandran Kukathas, 'Liberalism, Communitarianism, and Political Community, *Social Philosophy and Policy*, 13 (1), 1996: 92.
78. An important exception is liberal nationalism as exemplified in the work of Isaiah Berlin and, more recently, David Miller who has worked at refining Berlin's ideas. See David Miller, 'Crooked Timber of Bent Twig? Isaiah Berlin's Nationalism', *Political Studies*, 53 (1), 2005: 100–23.
79. Recent discussions on this point include Anthony J. Langlois, 'Human Rights without Democracy? A Critique of the Separationist Thesis', *Human Rights Quarterly*, 25 (4), 2003: 990–1019; Lin Chun, 'Human Rights and Democracy: The Case for Decoupling', *International Journal of Human Rights*, 5 (3), 2001: 19–44 and Tony Evans, 'If Democracy, Then Human Rights?', *Third World Quarterly*, 22 (4), 2001: 623–42.
80. George Boas, *The History of Ideas: An Introduction*, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969, p. 45.
81. John Agnew, *Geopolitics: Revisioning World Politics*, 2nd edn, London, Routledge, 2003, p. 120.

82. John B. Thompson, *Ideology and Modern Culture: Critical Social Theory in the Era of Mass Communication*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990, p. 5.
83. Daniel Bell, *The End of Ideology: On the Exhaustion of Political Ideas in the Fifties*, rev. edn, New York, Free Press, 1962, p. 393.
84. David E. Apter, 'Introduction: Ideology and Discontent' in David E. Apter (ed.), *Ideology and Discontent*, New York, Free Press, 1964, p. 16.
85. See, especially, Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, London, Tavistock Publications, 1970.
86. Thompson, *Ideology and Modern Culture*, p. 5.
87. Ibid., p. 7. Emphasis in the original.
88. Ibid.
89. Apter, 'Introduction', pp. 18, 20.
90. Terry Eagleton, *Ideology: An Introduction*, London, Verso, 1991, pp. 5–6.
91. Ibid., p. xiii. Other studies of ideology see it as more than a set of ideas and symbols which shore up the position of established or aspiring elites. For example, Wilson's study of 'compliance ideologies' takes these as supporting a wider range of interests, including those of the less privileged. See Richard W. Wilson, *Compliance Ideologies; Rethinking Political Culture*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1992, p. 20.

4. Culture and the Emergence of the Human Sciences

1. Said, *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient*, London, Penguin, 1995, pp. 1–2.
2. Naeem Inayatullah and David Blaney, *International Relations and the Problem of Difference*, New York, Routledge, 2004, p. viii.
3. Foucault has also spoken, without any sense of appreciating the simplification that is being performed, of 'Western knowledge' and 'Western culture'. See, for example, Michel Foucault, 'Preface to the English Edition', *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, London, Tavistock Publications, 1970, pp. xxiii–xxiv.
4. Margaret T. Hodgen, *Early Anthropology in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1964, p. 296. Hodgen provides numerous examples ranging over several centuries to support this statement.
5. Bertrand Russell, *History of Western Philosophy*, London, Unwin Paperbacks, 1979, p. 483.
6. The founding of the city of Manila in 1571 is seen not only as the birth of Pacific Rim trade, but of globalization itself. See, generally, Dennis O. Flynn, Arturo Giráldez and James Sobredo, *Studies in Pacific History: Economics, Politics, and Migration*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2002.
7. Edward Grimstone quoted in John Linton Myres, 'The Influence of Anthropology on the Course of Political Science' first delivered in 1909 as Presidential Address to the Anthropological Section of the British Association for Advancement of Science, 1909. Revised version published in *University of California Publications in History*, vol. 4 [Berkeley, University of California Press, 1916–1917], Millwood (NY), Kraus Reprint Co., 1974, p. 16.
8. Myres, 'Influence of Anthropology on the Course of Political Science' in *University of California publications in History*, vol.4, Millwood (NY), Kraus Reprint Co., 1974, p. 7.

9. Hodgen, *Early Anthropology*, p. 435.
10. See, for example, J.C. Beaglehole, *The Exploration of the Pacific*, 3rd edn, London, Adam & Charles Black, 1966; David Arnold, *The Age of Discovery*, 2nd edn, London, Routledge, 1983; Gavan Daws, *A Dream of Islands: Voyages of Self-Discovery in the South Seas*, Milton, Qld., Jacaranda Press, 1980.
11. See Charles Bazerman, Series Editor's Introduction to Dwight Atkinson, *Scientific Discourse in Sociohistorical Context: The Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London, 1675–1975*, Mahwah NJ, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1999, p. vii., and Joseph Ben-David, 'Organization, Social Control, and Cognitive Change in Science' in Joseph Ben-David and Terry Nichols Clark, *Culture and its Creators: Essays in Honour of Edward Shils*, Chicago (IL), University of Chicago Press, 1977, p. 245.
12. Ethnology and anthropology are closely related in the history of intellectual thought. While they more or less merged into anthropology in some parts of Europe (and certainly in England), as well as in the US, ethnology remained a distinct field of study elsewhere.
13. In contrast with these groups, Polynesians (a category which includes the indigenous people of Tahiti, Hawai'i, Samoa, Tonga, Cook Islands and New Zealand) were generally regarded as superior, and were the usual point of reference for the more romantic images of the Pacific. The inhabitants of Tierra del Fuego, or 'Fuegans', crop up frequently in early ethnological or anthropological material as exemplars of the most primitive type of human.
14. Noting, however, that Darwin's theory of evolution did not imply 'progress' and that adaptation was contingent, not determined. It was Herbert Spencer who depicted history as a linear progression along which human societies could be placed according to their state of development.
15. See, generally, Ronald L. Meek, *Social Science and the Ignoble Savage*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1976.
16. Samson, *Imperial Benevolence: Making British Authority in the Pacific Islands*, Honolulu, University of Hawai'i Press, 1998.
17. See E.H. Gombrich, *In Search Of Cultural History*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1969 for an account of Hegel's thinking on the subject, and Arthur O. Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being*, Cambridge (MA), Harvard University Press, 1936 for its general, classic treatment.
18. John Connelly, *Addresses to the Ethnological Society of London*, 25th May, London, W. M. Watts, 1855, p. 5.
19. John Crawfurd, 'On the Conditions which Favour, Retard or Obstruct the Early Civilization of Man', *Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London*, vol. 1, London, John Murray for the Ethnological Society, 1861, p. 177.
20. See Nancy Stepan, *The Idea of Race in Science: Great Britain 1800–1960*, Houndmills, Macmillan, 1982, p. 4.
21. Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species*, London, Penguin, 1985.
22. Myres, 'Influence of Anthropology', p. 74.
23. Henry Proctor, *The Evolution of Culture*, London, L.N. Fowler & Co., 1913, pp. 2–3.
24. Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, Cambridge (MA), Harvard University Press, 2000, p. 128.
25. See, for example, Niezen, *World Beyond Difference*, pp. 152–3.
26. Quoted in Kroeber and Kluckhorn, *Culture*, p. 4.

27. J.J. Clarke, *Oriental Enlightenment: The Encounter Between Asian and Western Thought*, London, Routledge, 1997, pp. 44–45.
28. This is often wrongly attributed to Rousseau. See Ter Ellingsen, *The Myth of the Noble Savage*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 2001.
29. See Tim Fulford, Debbie Lee and Peter J. Kitson, *Literature, Science and Exploration in the Romantic Era: Bodies of Knowledge*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004.
30. Neil Rennie, *Far-Fetched Facts: The Literature of Travel and the Idea of the South Seas*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1995.
31. Robert Irwin Hillier, *The South Seas Fiction of Robert Louis Stevenson*, New York, Peter Lang, 1989.
32. Quoted in Peter J. Weston, 'Some Images of the Primitive Before 1800', *Journal of European Ideas*, 1 (3), 1981: 225–26. Emphasis in the original. Jahn, throughout her *Cultural Construction of International Relations*, argues that it was the discovery of 'natural man' in the form of the American Indian, and their apparent embodiment of the 'state of nature', that played the major role in the emergence of the social sciences. Despite an enormous literature on similar themes in the Pacific, she does not mention this region.
33. Kathleen Wilson, 'Pacific Modernity: Theater, Englishness, and the Arts of Discovery: 1760–1800' in Colin Jones and Dror Wahrman, *The Age of Cultural Revolutions: Britain and France, 1750–1820*, Berkely, University of California Press, 2002, p. 86.
34. W.P. Snow, 'A Few Remarks on the Wild Tribes of Tierra del Fuego from Personal Observation' *Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London*, vol. 1, London, John Murray for the Ethnological Society, 1861, pp. 262, 267.
35. Myres, 'Influence of Anthropology', p. 45.
36. London Missionary Society, *Historical Summary Showing the Origin, Growth, and Present Position of the London Missionary Society*, London, LMS, 1894, pp. 2–3.
37. On the impact of the South Pacific in particular see Bernard Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific 1768–1850: A Study of Art and Ideas*, London, Oxford University Press, 1960; Rod Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific: Colonial Discourse from Cook to Gaugin*, Cambridge, 1987; Vanessa Smith, *Literary Culture and the Pacific: Nineteenth Century Textual Encounters*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998.
38. Nicholas Thomas, *Discoveries: The Voyages of Captain Cook*, London, Allen Lane, 2003, p. xx.
39. Kuper, *'Culture'*, p. 222.
40. Spate, *Paradise Lost and Found*, p. 211.
41. Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, London, Vinatge, 1993, p. xii.
42. Ibid., pp. xi–xii.
43. Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, p. 129.
44. David Cannadine, *Ornamentalism: How the British Saw Their Empire*, London, Penguin, 2001, p. xix.
45. For details of the Fiji case see Stephanie Lawson, *The Failure of Democratic Politics in Fiji*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1991.
46. Eric Hobsbawm,*The Age of Empire 1875–1914*, New York, Vintage Books, 1989, p. 78.
47. Ibid., 78–79.

48. James M. Wells, *The Circle of Knowledge: Encyclopaedias Past and Present*, Chicago, The Newberry Library, 1968, see esp. pp. 6–11. Note that significant works of reference existed elsewhere in the literate world. The *Huai Nan Tzu*, for example, is a compendium of knowledge consisting of twenty treatises, which include technical tracts as well as ideas and beliefs, produced in about 140BC by an academy of scholars in China. See Robert Audi (ed.), *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, 2nd edn, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999, p. 396.
49. Peter Gay, *The Enlightenment: An Interpretation: The Rise of Modern Paganism*, New York, W.W. Norton, 1966.
50. George W. Stocking Jr, 1992, *Race, Culture, and Evolution: Essays in the History of Anthropology*, Chicago (IL), University of Chicago Press, p. 15.
51. Han F. Vermeulen, 'Origins and Institutionalization of Ethnography and Ethnology in Europe and the USA, 1771–1845', in Han F. Vermeulan and Arturo Roldán (eds), *Fieldwork and Footnotes: Studies in the History of European Anthropology*, London, Routledge, 1995, pp. 39–40.
52. Vermeulen, 'Origins and Institutionalization of Ethnography and Ethnology', pp. 40–41. Vermeulan also mentions the numerous expeditions sent out by the Imperial Russian Academy of Sciences from the 1720s onwards through to the 1780s, following an official policy that 'in order to govern the diverse nations which were part of the empire, they should be studied intensively' (see pp. 43–44).
53. Roger Smith, *The Fontana History of the Human Sciences*, London, Fontana, 1997, p. 379.
54. Ibid., p. 338.
55. George Iggers, *The German Conception of History: The National Tradition of Historical Thought from Herder to the Present*, Middletown (CT), Wesleyan University Press, 1968, p. 29.
56. As with many of the ideas discussed here, it may be traced to classical times. Aristotle had already observed that historical statements dealt with singulars rather than universals. See Iggers, *German Conception*, p. 29.
57. Raymond Williams, *Culture*, London, Fontana, 1981, p. 15.
58. Wilhelm Dilthey, 'The Nature of Philosophy' in *W. Dilthey: Selected Writings*, ed. and trans. H.P. Rickman, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1976, p. 130. Despite his attachment to the classical and romantic heritage and the independence of the human sciences from the natural, Dilthey nonetheless stands accused by Gadamer of also remaining attached to a Baconian scientific model. See Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 2nd edn, London, Sheed & Ward, 1975, pp. 8–9.
59. For a discussion of Vico and Herder and their contribution to historicism see Smith, *History of the Human Sciences*, pp. 340–51; see also Iggers, *German Conception*, especially pp. 30–31 and Isaiah Berlin, *Vico and Herder: Two Studies in the History of Ideas*, London, Hogarth Press, 1976.
60. Connelly, *Address*, p. 3.
61. Charles Babbage, *The Exposition of 1851, or, Views of the Industry, the Science and the Government of England*, London, 2nd edn, John Murray, 1851, p. 150.
62. Scientific Alliance of New York, *Addresses Delivered at the First Joint Meeting*, American Museum of Natural History, 15 November 1892, publ. New York 1983, p. 7.

63. Ibid., p. 12.
64. Address of Hon. Addison Brown: 'On the Need of Endowment for Scientific Research and Publication' in ibid., pp. 21–24.
65. Dorothy Ross, 'The Development of the Social Sciences' in James Farr and Raymond Seidelman (eds), *Discipline and History: Political Science in the United States*, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1996, p. 85. See also James Farr, 'Political Science and the State' in Farr and Seidelman (eds), *Discipline and History*, p. 65.
66. See report of the preliminary meeting held 13 November 1869, University of New York, in *Proceedings of the American Philological Society* bound with *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, vol. 1, 1869–70, p. 5. This report also mentions the establishment of a French society only two years previously.
67. Smith, *History of the Human Sciences*, p. 377.
68. The link between *Bildung* as an ideology of self-cultivation and a higher unity-in-diversity with a 'total' quality of its own became an important theme in Germany after 1890 when the link between cultivated individuals and their national culture was addressed. See Fritz Ringer, '*Bildung*: The Social and Ideological Context of the German Historical Tradition', *History of European Ideas*, 10 (2), 1989: 197–98.
69. Peter Lambert, 'The Professionalization and Institutionalization of History' in Stefan Berger, Heiko Feldner, Kevin Passmore (eds) *Writing History: Theory and Practice*, London, Hodder Arnold, 2003, p. 42.
70. Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: The 'Objectivity Question' and the American Historical Profession*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1988, pp. 31–33.
71. Lambert, 'Professionalization', p. 47.
72. On debates about the unity of method, as well as the relationship between positivism and empiricism (noting that the two are not one and the same thing), see Martin Hollis, 'The Last Post?' in Steve Smith, Ken Booth and Marysia Zalewski, *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996, especially pp. 302–303.
73. Anon., 'Comte and the Metaphysicians' in *The Edinburgh Review*, April, 1866 (pamphlet bound with a collection of similar papers as *Philosophical Tracts, 1783–1880*, British Library), pp. 1–2. Emphasis in the original.
74. Anon., 'A Reply to the National Paper on Positivism', ibid.
75. Lord Macauley, *Literary Essays* (contributed to *The Edinburgh Review*), London, Oxford University Press, 1913, p. 365.
76. Cited in Stocking, *Race, Culture and Evolution*, pp. 21–22.
77. Stocking, *Race, Culture and Evolution*, p. 26.
78. See Peter Hanns Reill, 'The Construction of the Social Sciences in Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century' in Johan Heilbron, Lars Magnusson and Björn Wittrock (eds), *The Rise of the Social Sciences and the Formation of Modernity: Conceptual Change in Context, 1750–1850*, Dordrecht, Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1998, p. 121.
79. Ramkrishna G. Bhandarkar, *The Critical, Comparative, and Historical Method of Inquiry: As applied to Sanskrit Scholarship and Philology and Indian Archeology*. Bombay, Nirnaya-Sagara Press, 1888, p. 2.
80. Henrika Kucklick, *The Savage Within: The Social History of British Anthropology, 1885–1945*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1991, p. 78.

81. Ibid., p. 218.
82. Richard Cull, *A Sketch of the Recent Progress of Ethnology, Address to the Ethnological Society of London*, 25 May, London, W.M. Watts, 1855, pp. 1–2. Note that in other countries where anthropology flourished as a professional undertaking it was also tied to colonizing enterprises. Dutch cultural anthropology, for example, began in the Netherlands East Indies where 'senior colonial officers of the nineteenth century realized the advantages of recording languages and customs of the indigenous populations.' Alan Barnard, 'Dutch Anthropology' in Barnard and Spencer (eds), *Encyclopaedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology*, p. 167. See also the chapters on applied anthropology in government in A.L. Kroeber (ed.), *Anthropology Today: An Encyclopedic Inventory*, Chicago (IL), University of Chicago Press, 1953.
83. E.E. Evans-Pritchard, *The Comparative Method in Social Anthropology*, London, University of London, Athlone Press, 1963, pp. 4–6.
84. Ibid., pp. 14–16.
85. Melville J. Herskovits, *Cultural Relativism: Perspectives in Cultural Pluralism*, ed. Frances Herskovits, New York, Random House, 1972, p. 97.
86. Peter Calvert, *Comparative Politics: An Introduction*, Harlow (Essex), Pearson Education, 2002, pp. 10–11. A more moderate pluralist line is taken by other contemporary comparativists: see, for example, Todd Landman, *Issues and Methods in Comparative Politics: An Introduction*, London, Routledge, 2003; while the authors of some classics of studies in comparative politics were never troubled much by issues of method: see S.E. Finer, *Comparative Government*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1970; although Herman Finer, *The Theory and Practice of Modern Government*, 4th edn, London, Methuen, 1961, p. 3 commences by stating that: 'No human situation here and now or in the future can be identical with any situation in other times or places … [although] … there are recognizable similarities. We can get to know how men *are likely* to act in the social organization known as "the state".' Interestingly, Foucault also uses a notion of comparativism. In the preface to *The Order of Things* he says that it must be read as a comparative study in that it presents, side by side, a definite number of elements: the knowledge of living beings, the knowledge of the laws of language, and the knowledge of economic facts …'. See Foucault, *Order of Things*, p. x.
87. Margaret C. Jacob, 'Science Studies After Social Construction' in Bonnell and Hunt, eds, *Beyond the Cultural Turn*, p. 115.
88. Jahn, *Cultural Construction*, p. 96.
89. Smith, *History of the Human Sciences*, p. 423.

5 Culture/s: Conceptualization and Theorization

1. Audrey I. Richards, 'The Concept of Culture in Malinowski's Work' in Raymond Firth (ed.), *Man and Culture: An Evaluation of the Work of Bronislav Malinowski*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1957, pp. 15–16.
2. A search of the British Library's integrated catalogue for the years 1800 to 1850 reveals that all titles containing the word 'culture' (of which there are just half a dozen), without exception, were to do with agriculture, beginning

with the publication of William Tatham, *An Historical and Practical Essay on the Culture and Commerce of Tobacco*, London, Vernor & Hood, 1800.

3. Erich Kahler, 'Culture and Evolution' in M.F. Ashley Montagu, *Culture: Man's Adaptive Dimension*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1968, p. 3.
4. John Millar, *The Origin of the Distinction of Ranks*, 1779, excerpt reproduced in Jane Rendall, *The Origins of the Scottish Enlightenment 1707–1776*, London, Macmillan, 1978, p. 144.
5. Quoted in Meek, 'Social Science', p. 218.
6. Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language*, London, Joseph Ogle Robinson, 1827, p. 288.
7. Ibid., p. 202. The cognate, 'civilization', however, was given only as an act or judgement 'which renders a criminal process civil' while civility, as noted above, denoted 'freedom from barbarity' as well as politeness, elegance of behaviour, etc.
8. Kahler, 'Culture and Evolution', p. 3. This tends to undermine Jahn's argument which holds that 'culture' has been viewed as requiring rectification by 'nature'.
9. For a discussion of primitivism and its various manifestations see Horigan, *Nature and Culture*, pp. 50–65.
10. Williams, *Keywords*, p. 87.
11. Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy*, ed. J. Dover Wilson, Cambridge University Press, 1963, p. 6.
12. Roger Fowler (ed.), *A Dictionary of Modern Critical Terms*, rev. edn, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987, p. 51.
13. See Joseph Femia, *Against the Masses Varieties of Anti-Democratic Thought Since the French Revolution*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 136.
14. Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy*, p. 44.
15. Lesley Johnson, *The Cultural Critics: From Matthew Arnold to Raymond Williams*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979, pp. 1, 199–200.
16. Alexander Lesser, *History, Evolution and the Concept of Culture*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1985, p. 15.
17. See http://portal.unesco.org (accessed 30/02/05). The site acknowledges that the definition of culture has long been controversial and that the term is used in a variety of ways. Nonetheless, it is Tylor's definition that has been chosen.
18. Edward B. Tylor, 'The Science of Culture', reproduced in Herbert Applebaum (ed.), *Perspectives in Cultural Anthropology*, Albany, State University of New York, 1987, p. 37.
19. Kroeber and Kluckhohn, *Culture*, p. 61.
20. Kevin Avruch, *Culture and Conflict Resolution*, Washington DC, United States Institute of Peace Press, 1998, p. 9.
21. Francis Mulhern, *Culture/Metaculture*, London, Routledge, 2000, p. xvi.
22. See Johnson, *Culture Critics*, esp. pp. 19–24.
23. For example, Edward Sapir's reconceptualization of culture, as reported by Kuper in *Culture*, pp. 64–66, reincorporates explicit strands of humanist thought while the title of Herskovits's chapter on 'The Humanism in Anthropological Science', which he says has been 'masked by the essentially scientific orientation of the discipline as a whole', speaks for itself. See Melville J. Herskovits, *Cultural Relativism: Perspectives in Cultural Pluralism*, ed. Frances Herskovits, New York, Random House, 1972, p. 242.

24. R.R. Marett, *Anthropology and the Classics: Six Lectures Delivered Before the University of Oxford*, Oxford, Clarendon Pres, 1908, p. 3.
25. Margaret Mead, 'Fieldwork in High Cultures' in Solon T. Kimball and James B. Watson, *Crossing Cultural Boundaries: The Anthropological Experience*, San Francisco, Chandler, 1972, pp. 120–132.
26. Stocking, *Race, Culture, and Evolution*, pp. 72–73; see also James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture*, Cambridge (MA), Harvard University Press, 1988, p. 235. Fowler also points out that both the critical and 'scientific' versions, despite their apparent difference (by virtue of their respective evaluative/descriptive functions), nonetheless overlap. Moreover, he says, 'it is arguable that the distinctions depend on the isolation of certain phenomena as expressions of human value, and the false rejection of others (institutions, social habits, political movements, etc.)'. See Fowler (ed.), *A Dictionary*, p. 51. See also Kuper, *Culture*, p. 9 where he points out that Arnold drew on Coleridge who drew in turn on the German romantics.
27. Kroeber and Kluckhohn, *Culture*, pp. 3–4.
28. P.F. Von Siebald, *Institutions, Customs and Manners of the Japanese*, New York, Harper & Bros, 1841.
29. See Eliot, *Notes*, p. 31. Eliot tends to equate culture with religion, which he also describes in terms of 'a whole way of life'.
30. Edward Shortland, 'Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders, with Illustrations of their Manners and Customs', *Addresses to the Ethnological Society of London*, 25 May, London, W. M. Watts, 1855, pp. 38–41.
31. *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire Raisoné des Sciences, Des Arts et des Metiers*, ed. Denis Diderot and Jean D'Alembert, Paris, A. Neufchastel 1751–1765). On the cross-reference of *mœurs* and *manieres*, see, for example, p. 611: '… les *mœurs*, sera naître à leur place de politesse des manieres. Voyez MANIERES'. Note that Johnson's *Dictionary* gives very similar meanings for 'custom', but which he derives from the French *coustume*, and 'manner', from *manière* (note that Diderot and D'Alembert do not use the accent for the latter term).
32. Quoted in Johan Heilbron, 'French Moralists and the Anthropology of the Modern Era: On the Genesis of the Notions of 'Interest' and 'Commercial Society' in Heilbron, Magnusson and Wittrock (eds), *The Rise of the Social Sciences*, p. 87.
33. Note that in the Diderot et D'Alembert *Encyclopédie*, p. 34, the entry for *manieres* says that among its most general usages: 'Elles sont par rapport aux mœurs, ce que *le cult* est par rapport à la religion.' Emphasis added.
34. UNESCO, *Freedom and Culture* (introduced by Julian Huxley), London, Allan Wingate, nd (circa 1950), pp. 54–55. See also Williams, *Keywords*, pp. 88–89.
35. Kahler, 'Culture and Evolution', p. 4. For a discussion of *Bildung*, with some reference to *Kultur*, but more especially to the link between the individual and the universal as well as the broader humanist tradition and its resistance to the claims of modern scientific method, see Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, pp. 10–19.
36. Kroeber and Kluckhohn, *Culture*, pp. 12–13. It is possible that these authors derive the idea of the word's German derivation from the Dutch historian of ideas, Jan Huizinga, who they quote as saying (p. 13) that: 'The word has emanated from Germany.'
37. Stocking says that in all his reading of Tylor, he found no instance of the use of the word *culture* in the plural, nor in Boas before 1895, and that it starts to

appear regularly only in the first generation of Boas' students around 1910. See Stocking Jr, *Race, Culture, and Evolution*, p. 203.
38. See John H. Honigman, *The Development of Anthropological Ideas*, Homewood (IL), Dorsey Press, 1976, p. 32.
39. Tylor, 'Science of Culture', p. 44.
40. Williams, *Keywords*, p. 89. Note, however, that although Herder is usually credited with being the first to speak of cultures in the plural, Kahler suggests that it was the Swiss historian Jakob Burckhardt who, in the middle of the nineteenth century, was actually the first to apply the concept of *a* culture to specific studies in his *Kultur der Renaissance* and *Griechische Kulturgeschicte*. See Kahler, 'Culture and Evolution', p. 4.
41. Williams, *Culture*, p. 10.
42. Roger Sanjek, 'Race' in Alan Barnard and Jonathan Spencer (eds), *Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology*, London, Routledge, 1998, p. 462.
43. Hodgen, *Early Anthropology*, pp. 213–14.
44. Ibid., p. 214.
45. Michael Banton, *The Idea of Race*, London, Tavistock Publications, 1977, p. 13.
46. Ibid., p. 24. The 'stranger's tongue' was that of the Normans.
47. See Philip Curtin, 'The Africans' "Place in Nature" ' in Martin Bulmer and John Solomos (eds), *Racism*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, p. 33.
48. Darwin, *Origin of Species*, p. 55.
49. See Johan Friedrich Blumenbach, *A Manual of the Elements of Natural History*, London, W. Simpkin & R. Marshall, 1825.
50. Stephen Jay Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man*, London, Penguin, 1983, pp. 37–38.
51. Quoted Ibid., p. 38.
52. Ibid.
53. Johann Gottfried Herder, *Ideas for a Philosophy of the History of Mankind* reproduced in *J.G. Herder on Social and Political Culture*, trans., ed. and introduced by F.M. Barnard, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1969, p. 284.
54. Ibid.
55. Stepan, *The Idea of Race*, p. 84.
56. Ibid.
57. Gould, *Mismeasure*, p. 74.
58. Roger M. Keesing, 'Theories of Culture Revisited', *Canberra Anthropology*, 13 (2), 1990: 46.
59. Lesser, *History, Evolution and the Concept of Culture*, pp. 19–20. Lesser is paraphrasing an article first produced by Boas in 1887.
60. Stocking, *Race, Culture and Evolution*, p. 210–11.
61. Franz Boas, *Race, Language and Culture*, New York, Macmillan, 1940, especially the essays on 'Advances in Methods of Teaching', pp. 621–25 and 'The Aims of Ethnology', pp. 626–38, both originally published in 1889. Note that in these essays Boas uses ethnology as denoting a more specific field within anthropology. He defines the latter as having physical and linguistic strands distinct from ethnology's focus on 'customs and beliefs' which together constitute 'culture'.
62. Ibid., p. 13.
63. Ibid., p. 275.
64. Stepan, *Idea of Race*, p. 189.

65. Boas, *Race, Language*, p. 627.
66. Ibid., p. 275.
67. Horigan, *Nature and Culture*, p. 18.
68. Quoted ibid.
69. Alain Finkelkraut,*The Defeat of the Mind*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1995, pp. 77, 80.
70. See Marshall Hyatt, *Franz Boas, Social Activist: The Dynamics of Ethnicity*, New York, Greenwood Press, 1990, pp. 20–21.
71. Jenks, *Culture*, p. 35.
72. Stephen Welch, *The Concept of Political Culture*, New York, St Martin's Press, 1993, p. 119.
73. Kuper, *Culture*, pp. 62–64.
74. See Richards, 'Concept of Culture', especially pp. 19–20.
75. Kuper, *Culture*, pp. 64–68.
76. Herskovits, *Cultural Relativism*, p. 98.
77. Ibid., p. 15.
78. Ibid.
79. Ibid., p. 75.
80. Keesing, 'Theories of Culture, p. 47.
81. Ibid.
82. Herskovits, *Cultural Relativism*, pp. 73–74.
83. Ibid., p. 74.
84. See James Clifford, 'Introduction: Partial Truths' in James Clifford and George E. Marcus (eds), *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1986, p. 10.
85. See, generally, Andrew Edgar and Peter Sedgwick, *Key Concepts in Cultural Theory*, London, Routledge, 1999, pp. 165–66.
86. See Paul Rabinow, 'Representations are Social Facts: Modernity and Post-Modernity in Anthropology' in Clifford and Marcus (eds), *Writing Culture*, pp. 234–35.
87. Herbert Applebaum, 'Symbolic and Humanistic Anthropology: Introduction' in Applebaum (ed.), *Perspectives in Cultural Anthropology*, Albany (NY), SUNY Press, 1987, pp. 485–87.
88. Clifford Geertz, 'Interpretive Anthropology' in Applebaum (ed.), *Perspectives*, p. 520.
89. Geertz, 'Interpretive Anthropology', p. 487.
90. Ernest Gellner, *Anthropology and Politics: Revolutions in the Sacred Grove*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1995, pp. 22–26.
91. Ibid., pp. 23–24.
92. Ibid., pp. 18–19.
93. Ibid., p. 26.
94. Ferenc Feher, 'Between Relativism and Fundamentalism: Hermeneutics as Europe's Mainstream Political and Moral Tradition' in Deutsch (ed.) *Culture and Modernity*, pp. 174–75.
95. Ibid., p. 181.
96. Ibid., p. 183.
97. In Europe, Dutch, French, German, Russian, Scandinavian – the list could go on – all contributed various anthropological or ethnological insights. One particularly interesting book on German anthropology which challenges

conventional assumptions about thinking in that country in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is H. Glenn Penny and Matti Bunzl (eds), *Worldly Provincialism: German Anthropology and the Age of Empire*, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 2003.

98. George E. Marcus, 'Contemporary Problems of Ethnography in the Modern World System' in Clifford and Marcus (eds), *Writing Culture*, p. 166.

6 History, Culture and the National State

1. John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith, 'Introduction' in John Hutchinson and Anthony Smith (eds), *Nationalism*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1994, p. 4. For a comprehensive study of theories of nationalism, together with an account of the role of historiography, see Paul Lawrence, *Nationalism: History and Theory*, Harlow, Pearson Education, 2005.
2. John Hutchinson, 1994, p. 1.
3. Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Oxford, Basil, Blackwell, 1986, p. 12.
4. Strictly speaking, 'nation' and ethnic group denote two almost identical concepts, making terms such as 'ethnic nationalism' almost tautological. Connor notes that 'nation' is from the Latin verb *nasci* 'to be born' (n. *nationem*, connoting 'breed' or 'race'), while *ethnos* is the Greek equivalent. See Walker Connor, 'A Nation is a Nation, is a State, is an Ethnic Group, is a …', in Hutchinson and Smith (eds), pp. 38, 43.
5. Smith, *Ethnic Origins*, p. 12.
6. Anthony D. Smith, 'When is a Nation?', *Geopolitics*, 7 (2), 2002: 29–30.
7. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. edn, London, Verso, 1991, p. xiii.
8. See Aijaz Ahmad, *In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literatures*, London, Verso, 1992, p. 7.
9. Richard Jay, 'Nationalism' in Robert Eccleshall, Vincent Geoghegan, Richard Jay and Rick Wilford (eds), *Political Ideologies: An Introduction*, London, Unwin Hyman, 1984, p. 187.
10. See Elie Kedourie, 'Nationalism and Self-Determination', in Hutchinson and Smith (eds), *Nationalism*, p. 48.
11. John Coakley, 'Mobilizing the Past: Nationalist Images of History', *Nations and Nationalism*, 10 (4), 2004, p. 535.
12. Andrzej Walicki, *Philosophy and Romantic Nationalism: The Case of Poland*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1982, pp. 65–66.
13. John Hutchinson, *Modern Nationalism*, London, Fontana, 1994, pp. 41, 46.
14. Bruce Kapferer, *Legends of People, Myths of State: Violence, Intolerance, and Political Culture in Sri Lanka and Australia*, Washington, Smithsonian Institution Press, 1988, pp. 1, 209.
15. Lawrence, *Nationalism*, p. 5.
16. For a detailed account see Stephanie Lawson, *International Relations*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2003, esp. ch. 2. See also John A. Hall (ed.), *States in History*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1999.
17. David Boucher, *Political Theories of International Relations: From Thucydides to the Present*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1998, p. 224.

18. See, generally, Daniel Philpott, *Revolutions in Sovereignty: How Ideas Shaped Modern International Relations*, Princeton (NJ), Princeton University Press, 2001.
19. John Merriman, *A History of Modern Europe: From the Renaissance to the Present*, New York, W.W. Norton, 1996.
20. See K.J. Holsti, 'War, Peace, and the State of the State', *International Political Science Review*, 16 (4), 1995, pp. 324–25.
21. Robert Wokler, 'The Enlightenment and the French Revolutionary Birth Pangs of Modernity' in Helibron *et al*. (eds), *Rise of the Social Sciences*, p. 48. This assumes that the conditions for the modernity of the state require not only the characteristics of sovereignty and territoriality but also nationality.
22. Ashis Nandy, *The Romance of the State – and the Fate of Dissent in the Tropics*, New Delhi, Oxford, 2003, p. 2
23. For an account of the descending and ascending theses of government, see Walter Ullman, *Medieval Political Thought*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1975, especially pp. 12–13.
24. Andre Liebich, 'Must Nations Become States?', *Nationalities Papers*, 31 (4), 2003: 460. See also E.J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, Cambridge, Canto, 1991, p. 88 on the connections between revolutionary and democratic conceptions of the nation which again had little to do with cultural or ethnic factors.
25. H.L. Featherstone, *A Century of Nationalism*, London, Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1939, p. 8.
26. Mlada Bukovansky, 'The Altered State and the State of Nature – The French Revolution and International Politics', *Review of International Studies*, 25 (2), 1999, p. 201.
27. Bikhu Parekh, 'Ethnocentricity of the Nationalist Discourse', *Nations and Nationalism*, 1 (1), 1995: 32.
28. John Breuilly, 'The Sources of Nationalist Ideology' in Hutchinson and Smith (eds), *Nationalism*, p. 104.
29. Georg Iggers, *The German Conception of History: The National Tradition of Historical Thought from Herder to the Present*, Middletown (CT), Wesleyan University Press, 1968, pp. 36–37.
30. Ernest Gellner, *Reason and Culture: New Perspectives on the Past*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1992, p. 120.
31. D.L. Seiler, 'Peripheral Nationalism Between Pluralism and Monism', *International Political Science Review*, 10 (3), 1989: 193.
32. Sussex and Eade, for example, write of the 'patriot-messiahs' who stand in a 'direct line of descent from a distinguished former culture', and lay claim to the modern land by right of cultural inheritance. See Roland Sussex and J.C. Eade, *Culture and Nationalism in Nineteenth-Century Eastern Europe*, Columbus (OH), Slavica Publishers, 1985, p. 4.
33. Reproduced in Johann Gottfried Herder, *Against Pure Reason: Writings on Religion, Language and History*, translated, edited and with an introduction by Marcia Bunge, Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 1993, p. 44.
34. Hans Kohn, *Nationalism: Its Meaning and History*, rev. edn, Malabar, Robert E. Krieger, 1982, p. 31.
35. Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity*, London, Penguin, 1991, p. 76.
36. See Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism*, 3rd edn, London, Hutchinson, 1966, esp. Chapters 2 and 3.

37. Johann Gottfried Fichte, excerpt from *Addresses to the German Nation* reproduced in Carl Cohen (ed.), *Communism, Fascism and Democracy*, 2nd edn, New York, Random House, 1972, pp. 285–86.
38. Lester G. Crocker, *Nature and Culture: Ethical Thought in the Enlightenment*, Baltimore (MD), The Johns Hopkins Press, 1963, p. 432.
39. Kohn, *Nationalism*, p. 34.
40. Stephen Horigan, *Nature and Culture in Western Discourses*, Routledge, London, 1988, pp. 1–5.
41. Jahn, *Cultural Construction*, p. xvi.
42. See Noël O'Sullivan, *Conservatism*, London, J.M. Dent & Sons, 1976, p. 31.
43. See Robert Eccleshall, 'Conservatism' in Eccleshall *et al.*, *Political Ideologies*, especially pp. 86–91. Like O'Sullivan, Eccleshall (p. 86) also notes that conservatism is no unitary body of thought, and that its organic strand was quite different from laissez-faire conservatism.
44. Robert Gilpin quoted in Chris Brown, *International Relations Theory: New Normative Approaches*, Hemel Hempstead, Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992, p. 26.
45. Eduardo Neiva, 'Rethinking the Foundations of Culture' in James Lull (ed.), *Culture in the Communication Age*, London, Routledge, 2001, p. 31.
46. Cited in Iggers, *German Conception of History*, pp. 109–10.
47. Ibid., p. 110.
48. Clyde Kluckhorn, 'The Study of Culture' in Daniel Lerner and Harold D. Lasswell (eds), *The Policy Sciences: Recent Developments in Scope and Method*, Stanford (CA), Stanford University Press, 1951, p. 87
49. Kuper, *Culture*, p. 145.
50. Horigan, *Nature and Culture*, p. 4.
51. Richard Handler, *Nationalism and the Politics of Culture in Quebec*, Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1988, pp. 15–16.
52. Ibid., p. 51.
53. Stefan Berger with Mark Donovan and Kevin Passmore, 'Apologias for the Nation-State in Western Europe Since 1800' in Berger, Donovan and Passmore (eds), *Writing National Histories*, p. 10.
54. Smith, *Fontana History*, pp. 384–85.
55. Peter Lambert, 'The Professionalization and Institutionalization of History' in Stefan Berger, Heiko Feldner and Kevin Passmore (eds), *Writing History: Theory and Practice*, London, Hodder Arnold, 2003, p. 48.
56. Quoted in Stephen Bann, *Romanticism and the Rise of History*, New York, Twayne Publishers, 1995, p. 20.
57. Quoted in Bann, *Romanticism*, p. 20.
58. Iggers, *German Conception*, p. 91.
59. Smith, *Fontana History*, p. 385.
60. Quoted in Lawrence, N*ationalism*, p. 27.
61. Lawrence, N*ationalism*,p. 29. On Whig history, see Herbert Butterfield, *The Whig Interpretation of History*, London, G. Ball & Sons, 1931.
62. Ranke cited in Georg G. Iggers, 'Nationalism and Historiography, 1789–1996' in Stefan Berger, Mark Donovan and Kevin Passmore (eds), *Writing National Histories: Western Europe Since 1800*, London, Routledge, 1999, p. 19.
63. Novick, *Noble Dream*, pp. 26–27.
64. Iggers, 'Nationalism and Historiography', p. 20
65. Quoted in Lionel Kochan, *Acton on History*, London, Andre Deutsch, 1954, p. 50.

66. Ceri Crossley, 'History as a Principle of Legitimation in France (1820–48)' in Berger, et al. (eds), *Writing National Histories*, pp. 49–50.
67. Coakley, 'Mobilizing the Past', p. 537.
68. Mauro Moretti, 'The Search for a 'National' History: Italian Historiographical Trends Following Unification' in Berger et al. (eds), *Writing National Histories*, p. 111.
69. Berger with Donovan and Passmore, 'Apologias for the Nation-State', p. 4. Note that this point is more likely to be made by modernists, but even if one concedes the pre-modern origins of nations it remains the case that the revolutionary movements in France and the US are largely responsible for setting in train the development of nationalist historiography, among other forms of nationalistic expression, that spread throughout Europe.
70. Lambert, 'The Professionalization', p. 53.
71. Ibid., p. 56.
72. Thomas Welskopp, 'Social History' in Berger, Feldner and Passmore (eds), *Writing History*, p. 206.
73. James G. Kellas, *The Politics of Nationalism and Ethnicity*, Houndmills, Macmillan, 1991, p. 124.
74. Nandy, *Romance of the State*, pp. 4–5.
75. Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought*, p. 38.
76. Ania Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, London, Routledge, 1998, pp. 190–91.
77. Neil Lazarus, *Nationalism and Cultural Practice in the Postcolonial World*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999, p. 9.
78. Ibid., pp. 9–10.
79. Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, p. xiii. Note that Lazarus (*Nationalism and Cultural Practice*, p. 10), cites another of Said's later contributions in support of this theme.
80. Robert E. Frykenberg, 'India to 1858' in Robin W. Winks (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, vol. V, *Historiography*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 199.
81. D.A. Washbrook, 'Orients and Occidents: Colonial Discourse Theory and the Historiography of the British Empire' in Robin W. Winks (ed.), *Oxford History of the British Empire*, vol. V, *Historiography*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 38.

7 Conceptualizing Culture in Political Studies

1. See John Coakley, 'The Organisational Evolution of Political Science', London, Blackwell/UNESCO, 2004, pp. 174–76.
2. James Farr and Raymond Seidelman, 'Introduction' in James Farr and Raymond Seidelman (eds), *Discipline and History: Political Science in the United States*, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1996, p. 15.
3. Ibid., p. 16.
4. See W.W. Willoughby, 'The American Political Science Association' reprinted from *Political Science Quarterly*, 19, 1904 in Farr and Raymond Seidelman (eds), *Discipline and History*, pp. 59–62.
5. Quoted in Coakely, 'Organisational Evolution', p. 179.

6. Woodrow Wilson, *The State: Elements of Historical and Practical Politics*, Boston, D.C. Heath & Co., rev.edn, 1898.
7. John G. Gunnell, 'Political Theory and Political Science' in David Miller (ed.), *The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Political Thought*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1991, p. 387.
8. Paul Reinsch, *World Politics at the End of the Nineteenth Century, as Influenced by the Oriental Situation*, New York, Macmillan, 1900, cited in Brian C. Schmidt, *The Political Discourse of Anarchy: A Disciplinary History of International Relations*, Albany, State University of New York Press, 1998, p. 72.
9. Schmidt, *Political Discourse*, pp. 75–76.
10. See ibid., p. 155.
11. See Wilson, *The State*, pp. 428–35.
12. Ibid., pp. 1–2.
13. Schmidt, *Political Discourse*, pp. 129–30.
14. Alleyne Ireland cited ibid., p. 135.
15. Schmidt argues that although the study of international law and international organization took up a substantial part of the discourse about international politics before World War I, the study of colonial administration along with the phenomenon of imperialism were also important subjects. See ibid., pp. 125–26.
16. Reeves, *Culture and International Relations*, p. 87.
17. Frederick S. Dunn, 'The Scope of International Relations', *World Politics*, 1 (1), 1948: 142–43.
18. For a critique of this view see Schmidt, *Political Discourse*, pp. 209–25
19. Hans J. Moregenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1948, pp. 4,13.
20. See, especially, Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State and War*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1959 and Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, Reading (MA), Addison-Wesley, 1979.
21. Sujata Chakrabati Pasic, 'Culturing International Relations Theory: A Call for Extension' in Lapid and Kratochwil (eds), *Return of Culture and Identity*, p. 97.
22. Terrence Ball, 'American Political Science in its Postwar Political Context' in Farr and Seidelman (eds), *Discipline and History*, pp. 211–12.
23. Ibid., p. 9.
24. Ibid., p. 10.
25. Baron de Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws*, New York, Hafner Publications, 1949, p. 293.
26. Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, New York, Library of America, 1984.
27. For a study of major thinkers on the subject of national character in Britain and France, see Roberto Romani, *National Character and Public Spirit in Britain and France, 1750–1914*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002.
28. See Maarten Brands, 'Political Culture: Pendulum Swing of a Paradigm? The Deceiving Perspective of Change' in Maurice Cranston and Lea Campos Boralevi, *Culture and Politics*, Berlin, Walter de Gruyter, 1988, p. 131.
29. Charles H. Pearson, *National Life and Character: A Forecast*, London, Macmillan, 1894, p. 19.
30. Quoted in Romani, *National Character*, pp. 213–14.
31. William McDougall, *The Group Mind: A Sketch of the Principles of Collective Psychology With Some Attempt to Apply Them to the Interpretation of National Life and Character*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1920, p. xi.

32. Ramsey Muir cited ibid., pp. 97–98.
33. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, London, Verso, 1991.
34. McDougall, *The Group Mind*, p. 100.
35. Alfred Fouillée quoted ibid., pp. 106–07.
36. Ibid., p. 111.
37. Ernest Barker, *National Character and the Factors in its Formation*, 2nd edn, London, Methuen, 1928, p. 5.
38. Ibid., p. 23.
39. Ibid., p. 15.
40. Ibid., p. 18.
41. Brands, 'Political Culture', p. 131.
42. Frederick Hertz, *Nationality in History and Politics: A Study of the Psychology and Sociology of National Sentiment and Character*, London, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1944, p. 40.
43. Hamilton Fyfe, *The Illusion of National Character*, London, Watts & Co., 1946, p. 2.
44. Brands, 'Political Culture', pp. 130–132.
45. Peter Harris, *Foundations of Political Science*, 2nd edn, London, Hutchinson & Co., 1986, p. 312.
46. Margaret Mead, 'The Study of National Character' in Daniel Lerner and Harold D. Lasswell (eds), *The Policy Sciences: Recent Developments in Scope and Method*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1951, p. 79.
47. Ibid., pp. 84–85.
48. Alex Inkeles, 'National Character' in Roy C. Macridis and Bernard E. Brown (eds), *Comparative Politics: Notes and Readings*, 3rd edn, Homewood (IL), Dorsey Press, 1968, pp. 36–37. Inkeles originally formulated this definition for a handbook of social psychology published in 1954.
49. Romani, *National Character*, p. 7.
50. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, p. 122.
51. Ibid., pp. 125–25.
52. Ibid., p. 127.
53. Ibid., p. 4.
54. A few further studies were produced in the genre after this time, including Geoffrey Gorer's *Exploring English Character*, London, Cresset Press, 1955. As late as 1971 a book appeared which examined differences in the level of anxiety among the 'advanced nations'. It still used 'race' as a serious basis for the scientific study of different population groups, invoking 'Alpine', 'Nordic' and 'Mediterranean' racial types along with climatic differences, to explain variations in levels of anxiety. The foreword was written by Sir Cyril Burt, better known for his fraudulent work on IQ and heredity. The book in question is R. Lynn, *Personality and National Character*, Oxford, Pergammon Press, 1971.
55. Stuart Chase quoted in Robert F. Berkhofer Jr, 'Clio and the Culture Concept: Some Impressions of a Changing Relationship in American Historiography' in Louis Schneider and Charles Bonjean (eds), *The Idea of Culture in the Social Sciences*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1973, p. 81.
56. Ibid., p. 80.
57. See Jan-Erik Lane, 'Behaviouralism' in Vernon Bogdanor (ed.), *Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Political Science*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1991, pp. 40–43.

58. Bell, *End of Ideology*, p. 15.
59. Gabriel A. Almond, 'Comparative Political Systems', *Journal of Politics*, 18 (3), 1956: 396.
60. Ibid., p. 396.
61. Ibid., pp. 392–93.
62. Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*, Newbury Park (CA), Sage, 1989.
63. Ibid., p. 1.
64. Ibid., pp. 3–4.
65. Ibid., p. 13.
66. See also Gabriel A. Almond and G. Bingham Powell, *Comparative Politics: A Developmental Approach* (Boston, Little Brown and Co., 1966), especially p. 23. Among the exceptions to this general trend is a fairly substantial literature on the various political cultures of individual states *within* the US.
67. Marco Verweij, 'Cultural Theory and the Study of International Relations', *Millennium*, 24 (1), 1995: 96.
68. Ruth Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture*, Rutland (VT), Charles E. Tuttle, 1994, p. 13.
69. Margaret Mead, 'National Character' in A.L. Kroeber (ed.), *Anthropology Today: An Encyclopedic Inventory*, Chicago (IL), University of Chicago Press, 1953, p. 644.
70. Ronald H. Chilcote, *Theories of Comparative Politics: The Search for a Paradigm Reconsidered*, 2nd edn, Boulder (CO), Westview, 1994, p. 186.
71. Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba (eds), *The Civic Culture Revisited*, Newbury Park (CA), Sage, 1989.
72. Quoted in Richard Topf, 'Political Change and Political Culture in Britain, 1959–87' in John R. Gibbins (ed.), *Contemporary Political Culture: Politics in a Postmodern Age*, London, Sage,1989, p. 52.
73. Dennis Kavanagh, *British Politics: Continuities and Change*, 2nd edn, Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 49. The identical passage appears in Kavanagh's 1985 edn quoted in Topf, 'Political Change', p. 52.
74. Dennis Kavanagh, *Political Culture*, London, Macmillan, 1992, p. 13.
75. Kavanagh, *British Politics*, p. 49.
76. Formisano, 'Concept of Political Culture', p. 401. See also Lowell Dittmer, 'Political Culture and Political Symbolism: Toward a Theoretical Synthesis', *World Politics*, XXIX, 1977.
77. Formisano, 'Concept of Political Culture', pp. 414–15.
78. Ibid., p. 395.
79. Diamond, 'Introduction: Political Culture' in Larry Diamond (ed.), *Political Culture and Democracy in Developing Countries*, Boulder(CO), Lynne Reinner, 1994, pp. 7–8.
80. Lucian W. Pye with Mary W. Pye, *Asian Power and Politics: The Cultural Dimensions of Authority*, Cambridge (MA), Belknap Press, 1985, p. vii.
81. Pye quoted in Formisano, 'Concept of Political Culture', p. 399. In the same place, Formisano notes that Verba himself had warned that political culture was in danger of becoming 'a residual category used to explain anything that cannot be explained by more precise and concrete factors.'
82. Pye, *Asian Power*, pp. 19–20.
83. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1991, pp. 299–300.

84. See, for example, Jacinta O'Hagan, 'Civilizational Conflict? Looking for Cultural Enemies', *Third World Quarterly*, 16 (1), 1995: 19.
85. See Diamond, 'Introduction', pp. 8–9.
86. See Stephanie Lawson, 'Conceptual Issues in the Comparative Study of Regime Change and Democratization', *Comparative Politics*, 25 (2), 1993: 183–205. See also Paul Nursey-Bray, 'Consensus and Community: The Theory of African One-Party Democracy' in Graeme Duncan (ed.), *Democratic Theory and Practice*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983, pp. 96–111.
87. W.B. Gallie, 'Essentially Contested Concepts', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 56, 1956: 167–68.
88. George Orwell, 'Politics and the English Language' in *Selected Essays*, London, Penguin, 1957, p. 149.
89. Giovanni Sartori, *The Theory of Democracy Revisited*, Chatham (NJ), Chatham House, 1987, p. 4.
90. Laurence Whitehead, 'International Aspects of Democratization' in Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe Schmitter and Laurence Whitehead (eds), *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule*, Baltimore (MD), The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986, p. 8.
91. Richard J. Payne and Jamal R. Nasser, *Politics and Culture in the Developing World: The Impact of Globalization*, New York, Longman, 2003, pp. 245–46.
92. Novick, *That Noble Dream*, p. 281.
93. Ibid., p. 283.

8 Contextualizing Cultural Politics

1. The countries of 'Pacific Asia' conventionally include the ten members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as well as Japan, China, North and South Korea and Taiwan, but not Australia and New Zealand. The latter have been excluded on political/cultural grounds in the past, largely on the instigation of former Malaysian Prime Minister, Dr Mahathir. Since his retirement, however, developments have seen the inclusion of Australia and New Zealand for the first time in an East Asian Summit meeting held in Malaysia in December 2005. See ABC News Online at http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200602/s1565214.htm accessed 25 February 2006.
2. Wm. Theodore De Bary, *Asian Values and Human Rights: A Confucian Communitarian Perspective*, Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press, 1998, p. 2.
3. Tessa Morris-Suzuki, 'Invisible Countries: Japan and the Asian Dream', *Asian Studies Review*, 22 (1), 1988: 5–6.
4. See Mark Borthwick, *Pacific Century: The Emergence of Modern Pacific Asia*, 2nd edn, Boulder (CO), Westview, 1998, p. 1; François Godement, *The New Asian Renaissance: From Colonialism to the Post-Cold War*, London, Routledge, 1997, especially pp. 223–33.
5. François Godement,, *The New Asian Renaissance: From Colonialism to the Post-Cold War*, London, Routledge, 1997, pp. 225–25.
6. See Gunnar Myrdal, *Asian Drama: An Enquiry into the Poverty of Nations*, New York, Pantheon, 1968.
7. Max Weber, *Religion of China*, Glencoe, Free Press, 1951.

8. For commentaries on Confucianism as an impediment to, or later as a facilitator of, economic development, see the various contributions to Silke Krieger and Rolk Trauzettel (eds), *Confucianism and the Modernization of China*, Mainz (Germany), Hase & Koehler Verlang, 1991.
9. David Martin Jones, *Political Development in East Asia*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1997, p. 38.
10. Beng-Huat Chua, *Communitarian Ideology and Democracy in Singapore*, London, Routledge, 1995, p. 150.
11. See Samuel P. Huntington, 'American Democracy in Relation to Asia' in Robert Bartley, Chan Heng Chee, Samuel P. Huntington, Shijuro Ogata, *Democracy and Capitalism: Asian and American Perspectives*, Singapore, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1993, pp. 27–43.
12. The *nihonjinron* – which refers to discourses of cultural nationalism in Japan – set up an oppositional contrast between Japaneseness and 'the West'. See Stephanie Lawson, 'Perspectives on the Study of Culture and International Politics: From *Nihonjinron* to the New Asianism', *Asia-Pacific Review*, 6 (2), 1999: 24–41. See also Kosaku Yoshino, *Cultural Nationalism in Contemporary Japan*, London, Routledge, 1992.
13. Victor J. Koschmann, 'Asianism's Ambivalent Legacy' in Peter J. Katzenstein and Takashi Shiraishi (eds), *Network Power: Japan and Asia*, Ithaca (NY), Cornell University Press, p. 83. See also Edward Friedman, 'Since There is no East and There is No West, How Could Either be the Best?' in Michael Jacobsen and Ole Braun, *Human Rights and Asian Values: Contesting National Identities and Cultural Representations in Asia*, London, Curzon Press, 2000, pp. 21–42.
14. Michael Wesley, 'The Politics of Exclusion: Australia, Turkey and Definitions of Regionalism', *The Pacific Review*, 10 (4), 1997: 526.
15. Naomi Chazan, Robert Mortimer, John Ravenhill and John Mortimer, *Politics and Society in Contemporary Africa*, London, Macmillan, 1988, p. 45.
16. See Lawson, *Tradition Versus Democracy*.
17. See Saikal, *Islam and the West*, esp. ch. 5.
18. See, for example, James O'Connell, 'The Making of Europe: Strengths, Constraints and Resolutions' in Preston King and Andrea Bosco (eds), *A Constitution for Europe: A Comparative Study of Federal Constitutions and Plans for the United States of Europe*, London, Lothian Foundation Press, 1991, p. 25.
19. See Stephanie Lawson, 'Culture, Identity and Representations of Region' in Stephanie Lawson, (ed.), *Europe and the Asia-Pacific: Culture, Identity and Representations of Region*, London, RoutledgeCurzon, 2003, pp. 1–16.
20. See Charles Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries*, Duke University Press, 2004.
21. See Yoshino, *Cultural Nationalism*.
22. See Lawson, 'Perspectives on the Study of Culture'.
23. This section draws on previously published work, especially Stephanie Lawson, ' "Contours of a Democratic Polity": The Necessity for Political Opposition' in Tim Battin (ed.), *A Passion for Politics: Essays in Honour of Graham Maddox*, French's Forest (NSW) Pearson Education, Australia, 2005, pp. 55–64.
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25. See Francis T. Seow, *The Media Enthralled: Singapore Revisited*, Boulder (CO), Lynne Rienner, 1998, p. 208.
26. 'Civic or Civil Society' in *Straights Times*, 9 May 1998, p. 48.
27. Martin Lu, *Confucianism: Its Relevance to Modern Society*, Singapore, Federal Publications, 1983, pp. 71, 85.
28. See Chua, *Communitarian Ideology*, pp. 28–29.
29. Joseph B. Tamney, 'Confucianism and Democracy' *Asian Profile*, 19 (5), 1991: 400.
30. Wu Teh Yao, *Politics East – Politics West*, Singapore, Pan Pacific Book Distributors, 1979, pp. 57–58.
31. Singapore, Parliament, *Shared Values*, Cmd. 1 of 1991, p. 3.
32. The name Confucius is a Latinized rendering of 'Kong Fuzi' which incorporates the actual name 'Kongzi' with a respectful honorific.
33. Confucius, *The Analects*, trans.. D.C. Lau, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1979.
34. See Ray Billington, *Understanding Eastern Philosophy*, London, Routledge, 1997, p. 119.
35. Ibid., pp. 128–30.
36. On-Cho Ng and Kai-Wing Chow, 'Introduction: Fluidity of the Confucian Canon and Discursive Strategies' in Kai-Wing Chow, On-Cho Ng and John B. Henderson (eds), *Imagining Boundaries: Changing Confucian Doctrines, Texts and Hermeneutics*, Albany, State University of New York Press, 1999, p. 3.
37. Leonard Shihlien Hsü, *The Political Philosophy of Confucianism*, London, Curzon Press, 1975, p. xviii.
38. Xinzhong Yao, *An Introduction to Confucianism*, Cambridge (MA), Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp. 16–17.
39. Lionel M. Jensen, *Manufacturing Confucianism: Chinese Traditions and Universal Civilization*, Durham NC, Duke University Press, 1997, pp. 4–5.
40. Ibid., p. 156. See also Hsü, *Political Philosophy of Confucianism*, pp. xiii–xv. Hsü generally supports the case for composite authorship of many of the key texts and says that significant portions of the 'Five Classics' are of doubtful authenticity.
41. Jensen, *Manufacturing Confucianism*, p. 5.
42. Pye with Pye, *Asian Power*, pp. 41–43.
43. Tamney, 'Confucianism and Democracy', pp. 402–03.
44. Pye with Pye, *Asian Power*, p. 42.
45. Peter R. Moody, *Political Opposition in Post-Confucian Society*, New York, Praeger, 1988, p. 3.
46. Tu Wei-Ming, *Confucian Ethics Today*, Singapore, Federal Publications, 1984, p. 24.
47. Joseph Chan, 'A Confucian Perspective on Human Rights for Contemporary China' in Joanne R. Bauer and Daniel A. Bell (eds), *The East Asian Challenge for Human Rights*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999, p. 237.
48. Inoue Tatsuo, 'Liberal Democracy and Asian Orientalism' in Bauer and Bell (eds), *East Asian Challenge*, p. 51.
49. See Wm. Theodore de Bary, *The Liberal Tradition in China*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1983. See also David Kelly, 'The Chinese Search for Freedom as a Universal Value' in David Kelly and Anthony Reid (eds), *Asian Freedoms: The Idea of Freedom in East and Southeast Asia*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998, pp. 93–119.

50. James Cotton, 'The Limits to Liberalization in Industrializing Asia: Three Views of the State', *Pacific Affairs*, 64 (3), 1991: 320.
51. Moody, *Political Opposition*, p. 3. The same, however, applies to the Athenian *polis* where democratic ideas were developed and institutionalized in the absence of liberal norms upholding individual rights and the protection of dissidents or critics.
52. See Preston King, *Toleration*, London, Frank Cass, 1996, p. 107.
53. See Robert Eccleshall, Vincent Geoghegan, Richard Jay and Rick Wilford, *Political Ideologies: An Introduction*, London, Unwin Hyman, 1984, pp. 79–114.
54. Parts of this section are a modification of the main arguments in Stephanie Lawson, 'Democracy and the Problem of Cultural Relativism'.
55. Issues such as freedom and equality, or political and civil rights as distinct from social and economic rights, and individualistic versus communal approaches are often posited in a dichotomous, oppositional either/or form. This oppositional construction is misleading in the sense that equality does not preclude freedom (and vice-versa), that the enjoyment of political and civil rights does not entail the suppression of social and economic rights (and vice-versa), and that individualistic and communitarian approaches are not necessarily mutually exclusive.
56. Bimal K. Matilal, 'Pluralism, Relativism and Interaction between Cultures' in Deutsch (ed.), *Culture and Modernity*, p. 141.
57. See Ann Kent, 'The Limits of Ethics in International Politics: The International Human Rights Regime, *Asian Studies Review*, 16 (1), 1992: 32.
58. Ashis Nandy quoted in Inayatullah and Blaney, *International Relations and the Problem of Difference*, p. 102.
59. Ibid, p. 102.
60. Claude Ake, 'The Unique Case of African Democracy', *International Affairs*, 69 (2), 1993: 239.
61. Brian Beedham, 'Islam and the West', *The Economist*, 332 (7875), 6 August 1994, supplement p. 6.
62. The Greek city-states in their democratic phase obviously do not measure up to contemporary standards because of the exclusion of women and metics, not to mention slaves, from political participation. Leaving aside the issue of projecting contemporary standards back into the past, what was actually defective from the contemporary perspective was not the normative principle of democratic governance but rather the highly exclusionary basis of citizenship in the *polis*.
63. Martin Bernal, *Black Athena: The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization*, vol. 1, *The Fabrication of Ancient Greece*, London, Free Association Books, 1987, p. 2.
64. Patricia Springborg, *Western Republicanism and the Oriental Prince*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1992, p. 3.
65. See, generally, Dov Ronen (ed.), *Democracy and Pluralism in Africa*, Boulder (CO), Lynne Reinner, 1986.
66. Kim Dae-Jung, 'Is Culture Destiny? The Myth of Asia's Anti-Democratic Values', *Foreign Affairs*, 73 (6), 1994: 189–94.
67. For a similar argument, see David Wright-Neville, 'The Politics of Pan-Asianism: Culture, Capitalism and Diplomacy in East Asia', *Pacifica Review*, 7 (1): 3.
68. See Miyume Tanji and Stephanie Lawson, ' "Democratic Peace" and "Asian Democracy": A Universalist-Particularist Tension', *Alternatives*, 22 (1), 1997: 147.

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1. Renato Rosaldo, *Culture and Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis*, Boston (MA), Beacon Press, 1993, p. 21.
2. See Gunther Hellman (ed.), 'Are Dialogue and Synthesis Possible in International Relations?', *International Studies Review*, 5, pp. 123–153.
3. Ray Billington, *Understanding Eastern Philosophy*, London, Routledge, 1997, p. 139.
4. Tu Wei Ming, *Confucian Ethics Today: The Singapore Challenge*, Federal Publications, 1984, pp. 8–9.
5. Steven Muhlberger and Phil Paine, 'Democracy's Place in World History', *Journal of World History*, 4 (1), 1993: 29.
6. Douglas Hollan, 'Cross-Cultural Differences in the Self', *Journal of Anthropological Research*, 48 (4), 1992: 283.
7. Aijaz Ahmed, 'The Politics of Literary Postcoloniality', *Race and Class*, 36 (3), 1995: 16–17.
8. J.J. Clarke, *Oriental Enlightenment: The Encounter Between Asian and Western Thought*, London, Routledge, 1997, p. 27.
9. See Daniel C. Littlefield, 'Politics and Multiculturalism' in Elizabeth Fox-Genovese and Elisabeth Lasch-Quinn (eds), *Reconstructing History: The Emergence of a New Historical Society*, London, Routledge, 1999, pp. 18–22.
10. See, especially, Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd edn, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1970; Paul Feyerabend, *Philosophical Papers*, vol. 1, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1981. Note that Isaiah Berlin had used the idea 'incommensurability' earlier in relation to different conceptions of liberty. On this see Fred D'Agostino, *Incommensurability and Commensuration: The Common Denominator*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2003, pp. 27, 50.
11. At least one communitarian rejects cultural relativism as an obstacle to creating moral dialogues across national lines which may in turn provide a source for global moral principles. See Amitai Etzioni, 'The End of Cross-Cultural Relativism', *Alternatives*, 22 (2), 1997: 177–89.
12. Cosmopolitanism, despite its liberal elements, also stands opposed to individualist relativism in which, in the absence of any universal or group standard, every individual person is deemed the sole arbiter of his/her own moral behaviour. The logic of cultural relativism obviously repudiates this as well.
13. Bell and Jayasura, 'Understanding Illiberal Democracy', p. 9.
14. Ibid., p. 1.
15. See Kelly and Reid (eds), *Asian Freedoms*, p. i.
16. Cited in David Marsh and Paul Furlong, 'A Skin, Not a Sweater: Ontology and Epistemology in Political Science' in David Marsh and Gerry Stoker (eds), *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, 2nd edn, Houndmills (UK), Palgrave Macmillan, 2002, p. 28.
17. See J.L. Austin, *How to do Things with Words*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1962, p. 52. The notion of the 'total speech situation', however, remains problematic because of the impossibility of drawing the boundaries which encapsulate a totality of this kind.
18. Lawson, *Tradition Versus Democracy*, pp. 162–67.
19. Alain Babadzan, 'Anthropology, Nationalism and "the Invention of Tradition" ', *Anthropological Forum*, 10 (2), 2000: 147.

20. The first significant work in this genre was a special journal issue edited by Roger M. Keesing and Robert Tonkinson, *Reinventing Traditional Culture: The Politics of Kastom in Island Melanesia, Mankind*, 13 (4), August 1982. This was followed by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983.
21. Lawson, *Tradition Versus Democracy*, p. 17.
22. William Connolly, 'Appearance and Reality in Politics' in Michael T. Gibbons (ed.), *Interpreting Politics*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1987, p. 155.
23. Young, *Justice*, p. 5.
24. Kuper, *Culture*, pp. 46–47. Kuper notes also that this approach survives in parts of Europe today and cites the example of the formation of an association of social anthropologists in Greece which decided that only 'pure Greeks' could join.
25. Vermeulen, 'Origins and Institutionalization', p. 41.
26. David Brown, 'Democratization and the Renegotiation of Ethnicity' in Bell *et al*. (eds), *Towards Illiberal Democracy*, p. 160.
27. Alain Finkielkraut, *The Defeat of the Mind*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1995, pp. 77, 80.
28. Quoted in Donald S. Moore, Anand Pandian and Jake Kosek, 'Introduction: The Cultural Politics of Race and Nature: Terrains of Power and Practice' in Donald S. Moore, Jake Kosek and Anand Pandian (eds), *Race, Nature and the Politics of Difference*, Durham, Duke University Press, 2003, p. 27.
29. Kuper, *Culture*, pp. 239–40. On the submerging of the concept of race within the concept of ethnicity, see Carol. C. Mukhopadhy and Moses T. Yolanda, *American Anthropologist*, 99 (3), 1997: 519–33.
30. George L. Mosse, 'Racism and Nationalism', *Nations and Nationalism*, 1 (2), 1995: 164–68.
31. Peter Jackson and Jan Penrose, 'Introduction: Placing "Race" and "Nation" ' in Peter Jackson and Jan Penrose (eds), *Constructions of Race, Place and Nation*, London, UCL Press, 1993, p. 5.
32. I have argued similar points in relation to cases such as Fiji – where explanations for *coups d'état* have usually been attributed to ethnic tensions, whereas the clearest instances of such tensions have followed, rather than preceded, the coups. Furthermore, the focus on ethnic difference has obscured what are probably more important problems within indigenous Fijian communities. See Lawson, *Failure of Democratic Politics*, and Stephanie Lawson, 'Nationalism Versus Constitutionalism in Fiji', *Nations and Nationalism*, 10 (4), 2004: 519–38.
33. Tessa Morris-Suzuki, 'The Invention and Reinvention of "Japanese Culture" ', 54 (3), 1995: 772.
34. Al-Azmeh, 'Discourse of Authenticity', pp. 468–86.
35. Peter J. Taylor, *Political Geography: World Economy, Nation-State and Locality*, 2nd edn, Harlow, Longman, 1989, p. 193.
36. On the universalism of the theory of cultural relativity see, for example, Bernard McGrane, *Beyond Anthropology: Society and the Other*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1989, pp. 119–20. For another argument for culture as process see also Richard A. Wilson, 'Human Rights, Culture and Context: An Introduction' in Richard A Wilson (ed.), *Human Rights, Culture and Context: Anthropological Perspectives*, London, Pluto Press, 1997, pp. 6–7.

37. On this point see also Stephanie Lawson, 'The Politics of Authenticity: Ethnonationalist Conflict and the State' in Kumar Rupesinghe (ed.), *Conflict Transformation*, London, Macmillan, 1995, p. 129.
38. Feminist critiques of communitarianism and culturalist doctrines have been especially incisive here. See, for example, Phillips, *Democracy and Difference*; Jill Steans, 'Globalization and Women's Human Rights' in Lawson (ed.), *New Agenda*, pp. 54–70.
39. Friedrich Kratochwil, 'The Monologue of "Science" ', *International Studies Review*, 5, 2003: 126.
40. Jane Caplan quoted in Gertrude Himmelfarb, 'Postmodernist History' in Elizabeth Fox-Genovese and Elisabeth Lasch-Quinn (eds), *Reconstructing History: The Emergence of a New Historical Society*, London, Routledge, 1999, p. 77.
41. For a similar argument, see Brian Barry, 'The Limits of Cultural Politics', *Review of International Studies*, 24 (3), 1998: 307–19.
42. Arturo Escobar (citing Lila Abu-Lughod), 'The Limits of Reflexivity: Politics in Anthropology's Post-*Writing Culture* Era', *Journal of Anthropological Research*, 49 (4), 1993: 381.
43. Wilson, 'Human Rights', p. 9.
44. Fredrik Barth, 'Other Knowledge and Other Ways of Knowing', *Journal of Anthropological Research*, 51 (1), 1995: 65.
45. On this latter point, see Paula Ruben and Abraham Rosman, 'The Past and Future of Anthropology', *Journal of Anthropological Research*, 50 (4), 1994: 338.
46. Similar points have been made by Reeves, *Culture and International Relations*, see especially her concluding chapter. There are, however, a number of differences in the way we arrive at our conclusions. For example, Reeves although equally critical of the anthropological conception of culture, does not consider the dichotomizations of world politics considered here, nor does she offer a critique of contextualism (indeed she endorses its methodology and uses it to some extent). Our conclusions come together, however, with her endorsement of a return to a humanist conception of culture with its universalist premises, and my commendation of cosmopolitan pluralism.
47. Mark Bevir, *The Logic of the History of Ideas*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999, p. 1.
48. Chartier, *Cultural History*, p. 14.
49. Clifford, *Predicament of Culture*, p. 273.
50. See, for example, Jahn, *Cultural Construction*, p. 168.
51. Kuper, *Culture*, p. 145.

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