Culture

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Abstract Culture is considered as a key term in anthropology, now in critical mode, and to be worked through powerful tropes that lead to issues in politics, interpretation, translation, stereotype and racism. Anthropology is described as a cultural system itself, with a large supporting institutional apparatus, not unlike the culture industry as critiqued by Adorno and the Frankfurt School. The high mass culture/high culture distinction is considered and some distortions explained (away). Street culture and culture as (development) resource are evaluated, leading to an assessment of culture as souvenirs, trinkets and the ephemera of tourism as a modern commodity fetish. How this measures up to political struggles is again considered in the light of work by critics such as Fanon and those engaged with anti-imperialist struggles worldwide.

Keywords Adorno, anti-imperialism, commodity, culture, Malinowski, translation, trinkets

'You are on earth . . . there's no cure for that.' (Beckett, *Endgame*)

Every commentary on culture must begin with a ritual acknowledgement of the local and the global, and of the twinned inextricably bound antithesis of becoming universal and becoming particular, of identity and difference, and contest over these terms. Of course any easy model of culture is delusional in its simplicity, and the local–global nexus obfuscates and enshrines an untenable and thought-congealing homology that is so fragile it should immediately be toppled ('what is falling down should be pushed' – Nietzsche). The task of denoting Culture in encyclopaedic mode is fraught with the impossibility of capturing an always-morphed term – multiple meanings, multiple sites, political struggle. In this sense the categories of Culture are infinitely varied, and so this entry begins with a necessarily incomplete survey, taking account in turn of anthropological notions of culture, mass culture, high culture, cultural translation, culture as a resource, political cultures and cultural movements. Some considerations of the state of culture today are ventured at the end, but with no end in sight, encyclopaedia, for mine would include, or even start with, Bataille's *Encyclopaedia Acephalica* (1995), which self-consciously included the most disparate things: from 'big toe' to 'ritual'. No doubt the parameters must be dialectically open ended, both expansive and collapsing categorization in on itself. Borges/Foucault's list of the Emperor's animals, some of which from a long way off look like flies, might also suggest a model. The open-ended and incomplete encyclopaedia cannot merely mouth the words of openness in its own destabilization, and it should be more than an application of hyperlinking to old hierarchies. All that said, culture was pretty much presented as a kind of complete *compendium* in the good old days. Thus we could begin with anthropology (not just because that is my disciplinary training).

The anthropological notion of culture has a certified and defended heritage in anthropology since Sir Edmund Burnet Tylor – culture as that collection of pots and pans, bit and pieces, that we all have: 'that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society' (Tylor,

1871). This notion was not the levelling egalitarianism that some anthropologists perhaps thought it was – despite everyone having 'a culture', there were from the beginning tables and grids, and hierarchical schemas aplenty, setting out differences. In the 19th century cultural development ranged from the savage to the civilized in Louis Henry Morgan (1877/1965), or was based on the developmental model of the organism in Herbert Spencer (1901). Culture here was bounded, specific to groups and places, and could be named – though anthropologists like Sir James Frazer were loathe to meet those they wrote about ('Heaven forbid' he is supposed to have said when asked if he had ever spoken to any of the heathen). Culture, nonetheless, was global from the start for anthropology, and it was the scholar's task and duty to set it down and explain it, albeit from afar, with attendant distortions. Later this task and duty enters the Malinowskian project of cultural transcription through 'fieldwork' in which the anthropologist spends time (conventionally a year or two) living 'the life of the natives' in order to discern, and present, 'the native's point of view' (Malinowski, 1922). With some hesitations along the way, and revisionist anxieties a-plenty, this remains the dominant methodological precept.

Critiques of fieldwork need to be foregrounded, including their historical context. Bronislaw Malinowski arrived in Australia just in time to become an enemy 'intern' during the First World War. In a subsequent deal with Governor Hunt, who saw the advantage in having the anthropologist assist with 'native administration', Malinowski was permitted to conduct research in Papua New Guinea. He arrived on his first visit to a PNG village accompanied by the local colonial constabulary. It is a matter of record that he established and championed close work with 'informants' in order to glean the particulars of a specific cultural group through 'participant observation'. Though it was many years before he was able to get his Trobriand ethnography into print (after many rejections from publishers he wrote to his wife to say that he would have to enter the margarine industry if Methuen did not take the book), his career was a success. He was responsible for training a generation of scholars (Firth, Evans-Pritchard, Leach – see Stanton, 1997) who in turn carried out various field studies, and, along with Radcliffe-Brown in Sydney and South Africa, and Franz Boas in the USA, he established fieldwork as the modus operandi of anthropology departments throughout the world. It was only with the unravelling of colonialism in the face of anti-colonial movements that fieldwork became more difficult in some places. A re-evaluation rocked the discipline throughout the 1970s and 1980s (see Hymes, 1974; Clifford and Marcus, 1986). Yet the sanctity of fieldwork was sustained despite an excoriating critique, and slowly fieldwork was brought 'home' and applied to minorities at the margins of the metropole, just as it was to the 'natives' of colonial times. A subsequent backlash against critical reflexivity was perhaps encouraged by the institutional need to promote a distinctive methodology (contra sociology, cultural studies or geography) and this idea of a distinctive disciplinary mode of inquiry has buttressed postgraduate training programmes (now fee-paying) and kept a significant number of practitioners in gainful employment ever since.

The Malinowskian transcription of bounded culture was supplemented with systemic and comparative analysis such that increasingly notions of change, network, syncretism and flow became commonplace (see, for example, Ghosh, 1992). Eventually even the venerable institution UNESCO felt obliged to start its 'World Culture Report' of 1998, by saying: 'Cultures can no longer be examined as if they were islands in an archipelago' (UNESCO, 1998: 16). The often-unacknowledged anti-colonial context of such critiques was one where there was a return of the anthropological gaze by those increasingly wary of being so intently stared at. This imposed a rethinking of ethnocentrism and eurocentrism, so as to establish discomfort and doubt, and even a kind of paranoia, as part of a vocation for anthropology. A celebrated story about the pan-Africanist leader and critic of neo-colonialism, Kwame Nkrumah, perhaps best illustrates this.

On the wall behind the desk in Nkrumah's presidential office after he took power in Ghana in 1957, there was displayed a picture of an African man breaking the chains that had bound him. The heroic figure in the foreground was surrounded, in the four corners of the picture,

by fleeing Europeans: these were in turn, a colonial administrator, a missionary with a cross, a trader, and an anthropologist carrying the book *African Political Systems*.

This image is powerful, but also a stereotype as anthropologists sometimes sided with anti-colonial struggles and very often gave material and intellectual support to anti-racist, anti-capitalist and popular-democratic nationalist movements. The work of Kathleen Gough would be a case in point, though her career was significantly damaged by rightist criticisms of her partisanship. Eric Wolf was also singled out by Margaret Mead as a 'communist' (on the politics of anthropology, see Gledhill, 2000), and even the mildly anti-establishment figures of the 'writing-culture school' of the 1980s were subject to denigration by their peers (often fairly so, Nugent, 1991). Today it is a commonplace view that the anthropologist as translator of 'culture' is never an uninterested character, and the championing of 'fieldwork' now comes with the routine of automatic reflexivity and critical appraisal. Of course it cannot be denied that the work of cultural translation is important, and despite the 'methodological absolution' (Banerjea, 1999: 18) sought in such reflexivity, the argument that translation is necessary seems plausible, if flawed in interesting and interested ways. In a revealing allegory Clifford Geertz tells an Indian story that has the world resting on the back of an elephant, which is itself standing on a turtle, and that the interpretive winks of anthropology are like the turtles that, proverbially, go all the way down (Geertz, 1973). We are told knowledge is perspectival, yet the discipline remains largely based in the enclaves in which it began – in England it is still LSE and Cambridge that receive the larger part of funding for the study of others – the imperial structure of the institutions is not redistributed. And so translation is maimed to the degree to which the distance between the Nkrumah story and the parable of the turtles is calculated 'reflexively' and not explicitly in terms of power and privilege.

Thus anthropology might be better described as a cultural system itself. If it claims to be local in focus, its institutional apparatus has a far wider reach. Anthropology (and cultural studies, social theory, geography) might be characterized as a wholly institutionally based global system of knowledge about the peoples of the world. It is organized with researchers and research projects, teaching programmes and degree structures, publishing houses, theoretical schools (more than one, more than a succession of paradigms), methods, debates, tenure, career, course guides, reading lists, footnotes. And this whole agglomeration is more than a project of transcription, translation and comparison for the instruction and edification of those lucky enough to gain places in the teaching factory. As a privileged system then, anthropology reaches well beyond any specifically local instance of the cultural.

Culture of course was never easily presented as a matter of general franchise. The anthropological discussion of culture in 'all' its guises should of course be read against an older European notion of culture which was intrinsically hierarchical, if, by the 20th century, somewhat in transition. The critique of privilege took a different form in the context of western industrial societies. Here the mass culture/high culture distinction was central to the cultural dynamic of European thought. Two sides of a broken heritage, the Marxist philosopher Theodor Adorno called it. Often misconstrued as a defender of elite culture, Adorno's effort was to examine and relate the commodification he saw before him of both Beethoven and mass culture. He did not think that these two 'torn halves' could together add up to an authentic whole so long as reification and exchange-value were the driving determinants of cultural experience. At least in his own assessment Adorno did not privilege high culture as many seem to assume – on the leap day of 29 February 1940 he wrote one of his last letters to the critic Walter Benjamin explaining that he was not out to 'save' culture (Adorno and Benjamin, 1999: 320). His critique was designed to provoke awareness of the ways industrialization affects both high and mass culture through the routinized processes of the culture industry, and so through the co-option of every last trace of creativity into commerce. In an earlier letter he set this out clearly:

> . . . the dialectic of the lowest has the same value as the dialectic of the highest. . . . Both bear the stigmata of capitalism, both contain elements of change. . . . Both are torn halves

of an integral freedom, to which, however, they do not add up. It would be romantic to sacrifice one to the other. (18 March 1936, in Adorno and Benjamin, 1999: 130)

Much of the value of the Frankfurt School, and its legacy for the study of culture, is secured only through a sophisticated reading of their work that does not discredit Adorno's political project. His motivation is materialist and the difference of the materialist model of culture from those 19th-century developmental tables of anthropology (that Marx read in the work of Morgan) are worthy of note. For Marx, the level of civilization is crucial to the mode of production and the needs and wants of, for example, workers. In the *Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels identify the bourgeois mode of production as necessarily expanding every-where, it 'batters down all Chinese walls' and 'compels' all countries to adopt 'the bourgeois mode of production' (Marx and Engels, 1848/1952: 8). This is the source of much misreading however, as Marx was later at pains to point out that his developmental schema of shifts in the modes of production was only a 'sketch' and not to be taken as a blueprint or prediction for all parts of the world. The analysis was one that proceeded at a high level of abstraction for Marx and the detail, for example the details of culture – he refers specifically to books and paintings, and the work of teachers in the teaching factory – were all 'peripheral phenomena'. At the level of abstract analysis, these matters could 'be ignored when considering capitalist production as a whole'. They could be 'left for later' (Marx, 1867/1967: 1049). This does not mean that culture is not significant for Marxism, only that at the level of abstraction that identifies the general mode of production, the specificities of cultural production are not significantly different from production as such. Adorno's effort takes its cue here to show that specific moments of bourgeois culture are industrialized in necessarily similar ways.

This becomes crucial where Adorno identifies how every commodity tries to be unique. While noting, with Horkheimer, that 'culture now impresses the same stamp on everything' (Adorno and Horkheimer, 1944/1979: 120), Adorno also recognizes that the standardization of mass products had even to 'standardize the claim of each one [product] to be irreplaceably unique' (Adorno, 1991: 68). These were, however, 'fictitiously individual nuances' (Adorno, 1991: 35), examples of the rule of the 'iron grip of rigidity despite the ostentatious appearance of dynamism' (Adorno, 1991: 62). Yet Marx's claim that the bourgeois system batters the Chinese wall until it adopts the bourgeois mode of production does not mean that we all become the same. Here lies the crucial misunderstanding of those who think that the commodity system simply compels uniformity. On the contrary, it is clear that cultural difference is industrialized such that we adopt the mode of 'a smorgasbord of cultures, our society subsists on the mass consumption of variegated and heterogeneous lifestyles' (San Juan, 2002: 6).

Of course 'culture' at this level is also a matter of interpretation. This is the problem with culture as something people have – is it what they do or what they are? As culture morphs from something you have to something you do, it becomes clear that today culture is not equivalent to identity. It is by now established that culture is not something simply to be understood or to be translated in the old anthropological sense without cognizance of the politics of translation and the situatedness of subjectivity. In any case, each translation is a new creativity – and certainly confidence in fixed positions on culture is unstable. No translations are correct; they are creative, more or less with fidelity, never exact, always new. Culture as identity cannot be perfectly translated; cultural artifacts can be remade in other codes. Here the philosopher Jacques Derrida is helpful on idiom – the multiple meanings of a word in one language do not necessarily map the same way in another. Language is a limited model for culture, and text as a metaphor for the social also has limitations that exclude specificities and/or the political context of interpretation (Geertz, 1988).

Here culture as idiom might be supplemented with the idea that it becomes less a bounded entity and more of a resource as increasing 'parts' of culture are drawn into market relations. Instead of a culture you belong to (unambiguous identity, fixed in place), the culture industry replaces identification with cultural activity, and so the exchange value of culture comes into focus. Unfortunately, and increasingly in cultural studies, this happens in a restricted way. Post-modernist theorizing thrives here where the total (and totalitarian) cultural system examined

by Adorno and the Frankfurt School is displaced into a foreshortened commodity analysis focused primarily on trinkets and objects. An analysis that reads only the popular first chapter of *Capital* remains at the level of commodities where Marx emphasized the importance of a cascading sequence of market, production, circulation, credit, the state and so on. This can be seen from examining the presentational organization of the book as a whole. In a way that has similarities with the fieldwork and transcription limits of Malinowskian anthropology, and the symptom not the cure of naïve psychoanalysis, the systemic and abstract aspects of Marx's analysis are missed if it is the tables, coins and metaphors that become the object of primary interest (cf. Derrida, 1993/1994). Commodity analysis stops short if it ignores productive structures, public works, collaborative labour, communications systems, legal forms, governance, financing, etc. For example, to take just the impact of law upon the cultural economy, any adequate analysis must include the influence of legal apparatus such as trade negotiations, GATT and tariff debates, copyright and intellectual property legislation – all of which impinge upon the exchange and movement of objects, trinkets, property.

Similarly, the postmodern cultural studies focus upon street culture fails in its explanatory effort if it does not take into account the ways appropriation and reification operate in the context of the night-time economy of regenerated urban centres, thriving on cheap and often 'illegal' immigrant service sector workers, themselves trapped on below par wages facilitating the gastronomical multicultural façade in the restaurant enclaves and food malls (see Kalra, 2000, for more on this).

Another example with which to illustrate the ways culture needs to be rethought as part of a wider political system is to see how culture has become a resource for tourism, used as an attraction, an attention grabber and as vehicle for development contracting. From the museum or temple to the backpacker cafe or seedy bar, the marker of culture is a rating in the Lonely Planet or Michelin guide, or an Arts Council grant. The systemic here becomes something like a voluntary management of the cultural market, and conflict is neutralized under a model of negotiated exchange and equivalences. At the level of the social or public sphere there is a similar lack of controversy and, as George Yúdice points out: 'civil society increasingly looks like an alibi for neoliberalism' (2003: 158). Under pressure to 'manage' the cultural, all manner of institutional bodies emerge with an investment in culture. Culture today becomes ever more a matter of administration:

> The notion of culture as a resource entails its management, a view that was not characteristic of high culture or everyday culture in the anthropological sense. And to further complicate matters, culture as a resource circulates globally, with ever increasing velocity. (Yúdice, 2003: 4)

While I do not think all circulation of culture is merely a further complication, nor am I convinced that circulation velocity is best calculated only as acceleration (multiple speeds of the circuits of capital were already outlined in Marx, 1847), clearly the management of cultural resources is a key problematic. Culture as a resource is the debased mediation of trinkets and structure. Entire departments of the civil service and bureaucracy are engaged with documentation and form-filling to ensure that adequate quality outcomes, audit trails, accountabilities and appraisal criteria are in place. Here culture attains exchange-value and is valorized-recuperated in the most abstract ways. The subsumption of identity (as 'monitored' object) must necessarily close off that which cannot be contained. Abstraction here transmutes an open process into a compendium of product registers, and drags them to market.

In a related reification (of the commodity – its fetish character), the idea that culture is itself emancipatory in its non-hegemonic versions accommodates the subcultural to the ghetto on the one hand and opens it up for (rampant commercial, not revolutionary) celebration on the other. Where cultural studies™ becomes a glorification of resistance without context we can indeed accept San Juan's taunt that culture as a substitute for politics becomes 'an apology for commodity fetishism' (San Juan, 2002: 228). It is not difficult to agree where he follows Francis Mulhern, who warns that:

> There is no space, and in fact no need, for struggle if all popular culture, abstracted from 'high' culture and from historical realities of inequality and domination, is already active and critical, if television and shopping are already theaters of subversion. (Mulhern, 1995: 40)

The targets here are writers like John Fiske and Danny Miller, but for me the problem is best encapsulated in the title of Scott's book *Weapons of the Weak* (1985). Where the 'independent' or 'autonomous' recombative or resistive reception of media product or ideology is achieved by working-class boys (Willis, 1977), or where bourgeois conventions are challenged by Gangsta rappers and subcultural stylists (Hebdige, 1979), does the culture industry tremble at, or celebrate, the diversity of industriousness? Punk, rap, Ché t-shirts and books on 'resistance' have all become items for purchase in high street stores. This is not to say resistance should be dismissed as inconsequential, but the tendency towards uncritical celebration needs to be evaluated. The logic of audience resistance, for example, implies surely that all audience members are creative (consumers). If this is so, a radical democratization of media is on the cards, breaking with the producer–spectator hierarchy and opening production to all. A failure to deliver the requisite redistribution of resources impedes this opening of creativity and allocates 'resistance' to a limited register. The optimism that sees the Internet as a vehicle for mass active participation forgets the massive profits ensured by the commercialization of 'new' media – itself differentially accessible across race, class, gender and geography. Thus, in the commodity embrace, the diminutive celebration of resistance and its egalitarian logic, in writers like Scott, Fiske (1988), Miller (1995) and Clifford (1997), elides the significance of struggle, and those who struggle are reduced to a 'weak' – disorganized, circumstantial and specific – belligerence. Organized anti-colonial movement is again unacknowledged by those who set themselves up as manager-translators. Ironically, the charge that Adorno was elitist is made from a position that ignores the special privilege of the manager who translates (a cultural broker at the very least; a refined aesthete, perhaps; pencil-sharpener more often; certainly web-connected). We do well to remember how the cultural industry is suited to a viewpoint that can pacify political struggles (Malinowski arrives with the police) – the volatility of change and organized resistance is erased when the translated 'culture' must be fixed in snapshot form for sale in the knowledge market.

So it is not without a purposefully ironic echo of Tylor's definition of culture as that 'complex' of 'art, law, morals, custom' that we might turn now to Algiers. In the context of struggle for a popular democratic revolution to liberate Africa from colonialism, Frantz Fanon wrote:

> A national culture is the whole body of efforts made by a people in the sphere of thought to describe, justify and praise the action through which that people keeps itself in existence. (1968: 155)

Surely 'culture' includes those most important, and too often under-reported, too quickly forgotten, or effectively erased, moments – irruptions – of popular democratic mass struggle liberation. The past century is replete with examples to which only the military right (armed with CIA 'contra'-style resourcing) seems carefully to attend. Russia, China, Algeria, Korea, Cuba, Nicaragua, Palestine, Nepal . . . the cultures of people's movements are themselves a heritage.

Thus, to schematize: the 'cultural transcription' model of Malinowskian fieldwork required the myth of the omnipotent and all-seeing 'translator'. Later this transmutes into other fields with the area studies specialist (and the new media orientalism of the world cinema specialist, or the sociologist and policy maker on 'ethnicity', where the race relations industry and ethnic arts funding tends to codify both identity and subsequently activities). A critical appraisal would find that the commissars of culture are the ones to be interrogated and the critique of the authority of the translator should suggest a more nuanced line. The authority of style questioned under contextualizing political conditions that include anti-imperial movement and struggle, from the internationals, India, China, Vietnam to Iran/Iraq, would suggest a more problematic context for evaluating those turtles of Geertz. The categories,

events, histories for consideration here, in terms of impact often disavowed, but shaping intellectual movements, are of course open to interpretation. Is it so radical to insist that interpretation of culture include cultural movements, nationalist culturalist uplift, cultural pedagogy and the cultural revolution?

The overall argument might suggest a trajectory that begins by noting that Culture in Europe was first conceived as high culture, and its civilizational categorizations were marshalled across its versioning of world 'history'. This was later complemented by an emergence of the notion that everyone has culture, there is even a working-class culture, mass culture, and here an anthropological notion ascribes culture to all, however unevenly rewarded or valued. After critiques of imperialism and of anthropological 'authority' this notion is further displaced by the global adoption of culture as a resource that transmutes cultural uplift and cultural revolution for the culture industry: tourism, for example, or national and regional film funding councils. The ideology that maintains this co-option of culture as resource includes ethnicity, difference and identity in the global context. These terms may be debated. Difference, for example, seems particularly suitable for a digitized, transglobal cultural marketplace. And isn't the promotion of ethnicity and diaspora not an uncritical celebration of circumstantial privilege and opportunism in exactly that place where a more organized, even nationalist, conceptual apparatus is necessary to build alternatives to imperialism?

In the 21st century, the old debate between those who see the important sites of cultural creativity to be 'interstitial' versus those who cling to a more essentialist notion of culture may now be so old it's obsolete. What might have been characterized – or caricatured – in a series of opposed foci such as syncretism versus coherence; centre versus periphery; diaspora versus nation; third space versus tradition; postcoloniality versus nationalist anti-colonialism – are all now superseded somewhat by the global predicament of war, terror, poverty and death. The categories of culture as resource or as commodity either defend against desperate backs-to-the-wall suicide bombing, or from colossus single superpower overkill; fear at home or homeland security crackdowns. The culture of terror threatens, but we go on.

Culture is both playground and commodity; it is the refined and profound, mundane and extreme. Culture is simultaneously crossed by identity, tradition and change; resource, bulwark, contest. It is the lullaby of a symphony on CD, or the sweet sigh of a junkie's fix hitting the vein. It is that collection of pots and pans . . . and they are for sale. It is what makes us human, in a vast variety of, sometimes still changing, ways. It is not something wholly separate from the politics of commerce, nor religion or hate, and it behooves us to remember this – to seek out its analysis, which is culture too. It is a contested domain, and for good or worse, it is our 'predicament' that we cannot yet do without (Clifford, 1988). We live in it, there is no other choice, even for Robinson alone with Friday on his island. You are soaking in it. Encyclopaedias too.

And so at the end we should return to a dialectical and mediated understanding of the homology between local and global versions of culture. The becoming particular of culture might be traced through various incarnations and avatars in bounded form, identity, commodity and culture as a resource; the becoming universal in developmental schemes, (naïve) modes of production projections, cultural activity and culture industry. The mediation would be to look to the process of local struggles with universalist support. For solidarity across differences, for a liberation of all that relies upon the liberation of each. For the lessons of translation that would learn to learn from below (Spivak, 2000).

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Culture Alive

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Every definition or description of culture comes from the cultural assumptions of the investigator. Euro-US academic culture, shared, with appropriate differences, by elite academic culture everywhere, is so widespread and powerful that it is thought of as transparent and capable of reporting on all cultures. It is, however, also a multiform cultural system, marking the descriptions and definitions it produces. Cultural information should be received proactively, as always open-ended, always susceptible to a changed understanding. The specialist speaks from the ever-moving, ever-shifting ground of her or his cultural base, knowingly pushed back or unacknowledged as transparent.

Culture is a package of largely unacknowledged assumptions, loosely held by a loosely outlined group of people, mapping negotiations between the sacred and the profane, and the relationship between the sexes. On the level of these loosely held assumptions and presuppositions, change is incessant. But, as they change, these unwitting *pre*–suppositions become belief systems, organized suppositions. Rituals coalesce to match, support, and advance beliefs and suppositions. But these presuppositions also give us the wherewithal to change our world, to innovate and create. Most people believe, even (or perhaps particularly) when they are being cultural relativists, that creation and innovation are their own cultural secret, whereas others are only determined by their cultures. This habit is unavoidable. But if we aspire to be citizens of the world, we must fight this habit.

When the tendency to think of our own culture as dynamic and other cultures as static is expressed by a powerful group towards less powerful groups, a political problem arises. This problem surfaced in the 1960s, when the volume of migration from the old colonies increased greatly. A new sub-discipline called 'Cultural Studies' emerged, first in Britain, then in the United States, and now available in universities worldwide. This is happening within academic culture. The Cultural Studies position can roughly be summarized thus: the colonizers founded Anthropology in order to know their subjects; and Cultural Studies was founded by the colonized in order to question and correct their masters. Both disciplines study culture; the first studies the culture of others as static and determining, the second the culture of one's own group – as dynamic and evolving. As a result of this polarization, Anthropology has launched a comprehensive self-critique.

In spite of its self-critique, Anthropology can only study the self-conscious part of cultural systems, drawing from it more academic conclusions than the practitioners of the culture; even when it slips into Cultural Studies and focuses, in the style of Pierre Bourdieu, upon aspects of the culture of the metropolis. Cultural Studies is concerned with that self-conscious part as if it worked for real cultural change, at least for the investigator within the culture studied. But the part that works for change escapes the study of cultural dynamics. Culture alive is always on the run, itself the irreducible counter-example. For the Cultural Studies investigator, that incommensurable part is lodged either in the academic culture he or she shares with the anthropologist, or the moving wedge of the metropolitan culture into which he or she has entered as a participant.

This is not to say that the people from that culture who have remained in the nation of origin in social strata separated from the general academic culture are more authentic representatives of the culture in question. It is to say that there is an internal line of *cultural* difference within 'the same culture'. This holds not only for the nation of origin but also for the state to which the cultural minority has immigrated. The academy is a place of upward class mobility, and this internal cultural difference is related to the dynamics of class difference. It is related to the formation of the new global culture of management and finance and the families attached to it. It marks access to the Internet. It also marks the new culture of international non-governmental organizations, involved in development and human rights, as they work upon the lowest social strata in the developing world.

Before the advent of modernity, the country to town movement, the field to court movement, the movement along the great trade routes operated to create the kind of internal split of cultural difference within the same culture that may be the real motor of cultural change. Across the spectrum of change, it is the negotiation of sexual difference and the relationship between the sacred and the

profane that spell out the rhythms of culture, always a step ahead of its definitions and descriptions.

The word 'culture' belongs to the histories of Western European languages. If we want to move into the elusive phenomenon in other places, below the shifting internal line of cultural difference, we will not look for translations and approximations of the word. Such synonyms carry on their back the impulse to translate from the European, which is a characteristic of the colonized intelligentsia under imperialism, and thus is the condition as well as the effect of that differentiating internal line. They will not let us go below it. We must rather learn a non-European language well enough to be able to enter it without ready reference to a European one. We may discover Creole versions of the word 'culture' which will complicate our argument. But they are neither the same word nor its translation.

Anthropologists and comparative historians learn field languages but customarily do not enter them so that they become languages of reference. Cultural Studies investigators typically do not relate to their native languages or the languages of their immediate or remote places of origin as languages of reference. The only route to learning languages in this way is through instruction in reading the verbal art in these languages and instruction in philosophizing through ethical systems in them. However, this would require educational reform.

Such efforts might make us realize that every cultural process, even in the belief system and ritual sector, moves because human beings imagine and create fictions of all kinds, including the rational fictions that extend philosophy; and that it is not possible for one of us to have access to an exhaustive sense of all the cultures of the world. Study of diversity in metropolitan space should make us aware of the limits to the production of cultural information outside the metropolis.

Let me qualify everything I have said by suggesting that in the field of culture alive there are no mistakes. Cultural continuity, made possible by cultural change, is assured by cultural explanations, coming from all sides, insiders and outsiders, rulers and ruled. The study of cultures is part of culture – the anthropologist's picture of elders initiating young men and women, as well as these very words you read. Culture is a place where different explanations always collide, not just by races and classes, but by genders and generations. Culture is its own explanations. It is possible that the assumption of a collectivity sharing a culture is not an essential truth, but a millennial increment of the need to explain.

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Culture and Cultural Analysis

Michael M.J. Fischer

Without a differentiated and relational notion of the cultural (the arts, media, styles, religions, value-orientations, ideologies, imaginaries, world-views, soul, and the like), the social sciences would be crippled, reducing social action to notions of pure instrumentality. When singularized, frozen, or nominalized, 'culture' can be a dangerous concept, subject to fallacies of pejorative and discriminatory hypostatizations (we have reason, they have culture) or immobilized variables (their culture is composed of x features). The modern social science use of the term 'culture' is rooted in the historical milieus that arose with the dismantling of the religious and aristocratic legitimations of feudal and patrimonial regimes, and the agons of Third World particularistic 'cultures' against First World claims of universal 'civilization'. As a counterpoint to definitions of culture as the 'best' productions in aesthetics, knowledge, and morals, the anthropological understanding removes the hegemony of cultural valuation from elites with its erasure of attention to demotic and subaltern forms, and instead asserts the importance of understanding the relations between all cultural forms at play and in contestation within social formations.

The 1970s

Cultural studies, (post)structuralism, and symbolic or interpretive anthropology transformed cultural analysis in the 1970s, along with feminism, media and performance studies, new historicism, and early studies of decolonization and new nations.

Symbolic anthropology drew upon the quasi-cybernetic paradigm of Harvard's Social Relations Department under Talcott Parsons, the semiotics of C.S. Peirce, R. Birdwhistle, and T. Sebeok, structural linguistics (field linguistics classes taught systematic methods of elicitation and analysis of cultural units), Thomas Kuhn's notion of paradigms and Noam Chomsky's generative grammar. The core course in the Anthropology graduate program at the University of Chicago was organized into Cultural Systems, Social Systems, and Psychological Systems. David Schneider (founder of the Society for Cultural Anthropology) argued that the cultural system provided the principles of organization for the social system; Clifford Geertz (1973) argued that the cultural system was logico-meaningfully integrated, the social system functionally integrated, and the psychological system psycho-dynamically integrated. Geertz thus wrote essays on religion, ideology, common sense, art, and moral thinking as 'cultural systems'. Schneider argued that the distinction between etic and emic could not be sustained, thereby making all systems of thought, native and scientific, merely variant modes of cultural accounting. Victor Turner analyzed the Ndembu 'forest of symbols' with a widely imitated combination of structural-functional (Durkheim, van Gennep) analysis of mythic charters and ritual process, Freudian fusions of corporeal-emotive and cognitive-symbolic poles in symbol formation, and Kenneth Burke's performative notions of the rhetorics and grammars of motives.

The turn towards *interpretive anthropology* led by Geertz and Turner followed from the instability of the etic/emic and the cultural/social system distinctions, and drew upon the hermeneutic and phenomenological traditions of Dilthey, Weber, Freud, Schutz, Ricoeur (who also taught at Chicago), and Mircea Eliade (also at Chicago).

Meanwhile in fall 1966, structuralism and poststructuralism arrived simultaneously in the United States via *The Structuralism Controversy: The Languages of Criticism and the Science of Man* conference at the Johns Hopkins University with Lévi-Strauss, Derrida, Lacan, Barthes, and others, an event that would lead to a dominant strand of cultural work of the next generation [Macksey and Donato, 1972]. In France, structuralism and post-structuralism were modalities of French response to the traumas of World War II, Americanization, and the influx of North Africans after the Algerian War of Independence. Lévi-Strauss brought together the enthusiasm of post-war thinking about set theory, linguistics, and cybernetics with an elegy and reconstructive method for aboriginal cultures destroyed by colonialism in Australia and in the Americas. He and his fellow structuralists (Georges Dumézil, Jean-Paul Vernant, Michel Détienne, Pierre Vidal-Naquet) transformed the study of Greek mythology and myth studies in general. No longer could anyone identify deities with single virtues (god of wisdom) without considering that deity's structural position vis-à-vis others; no longer could one version of a myth be privileged without considering the entire set of transformations that a mythic structure makes possible. Lévi-Strauss seemed at the time to vanquish (in favor of deep, pervasive, regenerative mythic and social structures) the attempt by Jean-Paul Sartre to fuse voluntaristic, politically engagé, existentialism with the inertial forces of history understood through Marxist lenses. Lacan, the early Foucault, and Bourdieu were received in the United States as elaborations of this culturalist structuralism.

Foucault's insights into disciplinary power and the birth of the clinic may have had something to do with a kind of Freudian *nachträglich* or post facto recognition of his experiences as an adolescent: the reformatory to instill heterosexual codes, and watching compliance to the Nazis in his native Poitiers ('we all have a fascism in our heads'; Raber, in Herman, 2004). Derrida and Lyotard were more explicit about the legacies of World War II. Lyotard's *Postmodern Condition*, Evan Carton points out:

> turns – between chapter 9 'Narratives of the Legitimation of Knowledge', and chapter 10, 'Delegitimation' – on a paragraph devoted to Heidegger's notorious 1933 Rector's Address, . . . and the new chapter begins, 'In contemporary society . . . [where] the grand narrative has lost its credibility'. (Carton, in Herman, 2004: 24)

The essay is about the coming of the computer and information age in which local language games and performativities will have more force than past universalist ideologies for mass mobilization (in the name of History, Reason, or Progress), and where incommensurabilities among language games and value systems will challenge two centuries of standardized linguistic, religious, educational nation-building (as France copes with Muslim North African immigrants). Similarly, Derrida in his first major work (*Of Grammatology*) takes on the 'ethnocentrism which everywhere and always, had controlled the concept of writing . . . from the pre-Socratics to Heidegger'

and introduces the image of ashes that would grow as a motif in his corpus, quoting Edmund Jabes, 'Où est le centre? Sous la cendre' ('Where is the center? Under ashes') (Derrida, 1967: 24).

The stress in interpretive anthropology and poststructuralism on culture as contested meanings created, negotiated, and performed in locally polyvocal contexts dovetailed also with the rise of *Cultural Studies*. In Britain, Cultural Studies arose at Birmingham University from literary studies, branching out under the leadership of Raymond Williams and Stuart Hall into youth and popular culture, ethnicity, hybridity, race, and class cultures. In the USA, Cultural Studies grew out of American Studies redirected by anthropologists and folklorists (initially at the University of Pennsylvania), and from labor and social history as in the work of George Lipsitz (1990, 2001). For a time, centers for Cultural Studies sprang up to create interdisciplinary work between the humanities and social sciences, until the field was eventually reimperialized by English and Literature Departments, losing not only its ethnographic and social science edge, but its fledgling efforts to work in languages other than English (ironically the language of most writing about postcolonialism) except in Comparative Literature Departments.

The 1980s

The 1980s produced revised modes of cultural analysis, followed in the 1990s by changing infrastructures (media, environment, biotechnology, and violence) that took on new cultural salience. The 1980s' revisions included new approaches to using ethnography to investigate and map the changing nature of cultural and social forms at the end of the 20th century (Marcus and Fischer, 1986); inquiries into the multiple disciplinary tools that could be employed in making cultural analysis more trenchant and revealing (Clifford and Marcus, 1986); the incorporation of transdisciplinary approaches (feminism, deconstruction, film and media studies, new historicism, science and technology studies, cyborg anthropology); the efforts to revive area and global studies with fresher ideas about how to do multi-sited ethnographies of mutually dependent activities in dispersed parts of larger systems or networks; and inquiries into second-order modernization and the risk society (Beck, 1986; Fortun, 2001; Petryna, 2002). New journals propelled these initiatives, including: *Cultural Anthropology* (vol. 1, no. 1., 1986), *Public Culture* (vol. 1, no. 1, 1988), *Positions* (vol. 1, 1992), *Visual Anthropology* (1987), *Subaltern Studies* (vol. 1, 1982), *Representations* (1983), and the eight-volume annual *Late Editions* (1993–2000).

The 1990s

In the 1990s, a new experimental, recombinant, mode of cultural thought, writing and visualization took material shape, through the combination of commercial biotechnologies (shaped by post-1980 legal, financial, and technological infrastructures) and information technologies (particularly after the World Wide Web in 1994 and linked databases made the Internet an everyday medium). Lyotard's 1979 speculations on the postmodern condition of knowledge and the role of the computer in making information available suddenly seemed both quaint and prescient: quaint in failing to foresee the many-to-many communication uses, the way just-in-time accounting could reorganize the business world, and the way email would speed up the pace of work and introduce new stratifications; yet prescient in the apperception of new local language games and formats, including increased communicative reach through flows, codes, and performativity rather than single propositions or arguments. Compare also: Gregory Ulmer's efforts to think Derrida through electronic media [1985, 1989, 1994], Avital Ronell's re-readings of telephony in Alexander Graham Bell's America versus the place of technology in Heidegger's Germany [1989], Friedrich Kittler's contrast between the cultural formations carried by standardized German in 1800 and the gramophone, film, and typewriter in 1900 [1985, 1986], and the efforts by Mark Poster, Jacques Derrida, and Michael Fischer to rethink the oral versus literate cultures debate (Goody, 1977; Ong, 1982) for new electronic modes of communication [Poster, 1990, 2001; Derrida, 1996, 2001; Fischer, 2001, 2003).

As restratification processes proceeded in the aftermath of the implosion of the Soviet Union and the decline of the bipolar world, violence and religious legitimations repackaged themselves. Derrida suggested that globalatinazation through the capital concentration and mergers of transnational media conglomerates would make Islamic and other 'fundamentalist' resistance movements appropriate and be undone by the new media, like a kind of auto-immune disease, intense, virulent and violent, very much like AIDS, the plague of these years whose dynamics also gave rise to new modes of cultural work, with activists pushing for changes in drug approval processes, using the Internet to challenge the hierarchical relations between doctors and patients, insurance companies and beneficiaries, and the entire healthcare system. Globalatinazation, AIDS (and SARS, multidrug-resistant tuberculosis, mad cow disease, and other viruses), 1990s' financial crises moving rapidly across the globe from East Asia to South

America, and worries about climate warming, all made the 1980s cultural notions of alternative modernities seem, if not quaint, more relational than ever, differentially connected to the global patchwork of political and cultural economies. Ethnic and religious warfare intensified and led to renewed analyses of the limits and weaknesses of constitutional forms of governance and the lack of local rootedness of human rights and global humanitarian industries.

Circa 2005

We live today under the sign of the film *Safar-e Qandahar* by the Iranian director Mohsen Makhmalbaf, and its image of prostheses being parachuted from Red Cross helicopters to Afghan men running on crutches to catch them. Under this sign, at least three sites intersect of deep play (overinvestments of money, power, fantasy, hope and fear, putting our existential, ethical, and social stakes at risk): (1) the reconstruction of society in the wake of social trauma and structural violence; (2) immersion in telemedia that affect access to information, formation of public sentiments, and manipulation of the public sphere, governance, and personal subjectivities; and (3) changes in life science institutions involving both profound commercialization of biological research, and efforts of patient groups using the Internet and other new information technology tools to force accountability on the institutions of science and what is made to live and who is let die.

Just as, Lyotard might say, there is no Jew and we are all jews (female, queer, normalized, neurotic, vulnerable, struggling for recognition, autonomy, rights, community, place, citizenship), so there is no culture, and all we do is cultural. Culture is not a variable; culture is relational, it is elsewhere or in passage, it is where meaning is woven and renewed, often through gaps and silences, and forces beyond the conscious control of individuals, and yet the space where individual and institutional social responsibility and ethical struggle take place. Cultural anthropology operates in a set of third spaces: where new multi-cultural ethics are evolving out of demands that cultures attend to one another, and within techno-scientific networks where the demands of the face of the other, history, and autobiographical figurations counter the reduction of all to the same. The challenge of cultural analysis is to develop translation and mediation tools for helping make visible the differences of interests, access, power, needs, desires, and philosophical perspective. Above all, as we begin to face new kinds of ethical dilemmas stemming from developments in biotechnologies, expansive information and image databases, and ecological interactions, we are challenged to develop differentiated cultural analyses that can help articulate new social institutions for an evolving public sphere and civil society.

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Bildung

Josef Bleicher

The concept of *Bildung* (educative self-formation) may well be the most grandiose thought to emerge in the 18th century, according to Gadamer (1975), who considers it the guiding concept underlying the rise of the humanities. In tandem with them, it engendered the movement that evolved new aesthetic and moral standards and ideals and also challenged the orientation towards a narrow Enlightenment rationalism in the name of the rounded *Bildung* of the individual. This notion of *Bildung* later informed the education system in Germany with its emphasis on integrating a wide range of subjects and competences within a framework established with reference to the *Vorbild* (model) of the classic languages and authors. Here it followed the precepts of Wilhelm von Humboldt, who succinctly stated that 'The true purpose of the human being is the Bildung of all his strengths into one integrated whole.'

In the 19th century, while accompanying the transformations related to the industrialization of Germany with critical commentary, the meaning of *Bildung* itself was transformed. At the cultural level, it found itself trying to maintain the inheritance of humanist ideals in face of the dehumanizing effects of rapid industrialization, and the transition of Germany from a *Kulturstaat* (state identity based on culture) to a modern, economically driven nation-state belatedly clamouring for a place on the world stage. *Bildung* thus became streamlined into *Ausbildung* (training, expertise) to answer the need for skilled manpower, and thus increasingly approximated the notion of 'education' prevalent in other European countries. Concomitantly, at the socio-political level, sharpening social differentiation accompanying the modernization of Germany saw its remaining humanistic essence become the canonized, elitist preserve of the *Bildungsbürgertum* (that segment of the bourgeoisie defined by the accumulation and use of cultural capital).

The conceptual history of *Bildung* parallels that of *Kultur*, as the micro- and macro-levels of cultural self-formation. Interestingly, both these emblematic concepts arise out of a naturalistic

context. In the case of *Bildung*, it originally denoted a 'natural formation', as in well-formed limbs or other successful forms created by nature. Transposed first by Herder into a humanistic ideal, it reached its apex in the *Weimar Klassik* of Goethe and Schiller. The semi-religious undertones of the fulfilment of human potential as the most noble project are themselves remaining traces of the elaborations it experienced within the mystical tradition. It thus maintains its link with the idea of a *Bild* (image) of the Higher Powers contained within us, and serving as a *Vorbild* (model) that entails the exhortation to engage in its *Nachbildung* (modelling upon). Celebrated in Klopstock's *Messiah*, this notion of *Bildung* had a signal effect on Goethe. The aspect of a spiritually guided formation as 'modelling upon', together with the organicist origins of the concept, provided an instance of the union of God and Nature that Goethe considered the sign of deep meaningfulness. It chimed in perfectly with his own work on the metamorphosis of plants, where, as an early theory of evolution, he traced the workings of a *nisus formativus*, translated as *Bildungstrieb*, that is, a formative self-organizing drive. We here approach the ultimate and highest understanding: 'This immensity personified approaches us as a God, as Creator and maintainer whom we are called upon to worship and revere in all ways possible.' *Selbstbildung* of the individual accords with the self-organization already apparent in matter, and more so in organic growth, which all provide symbolic references to it. Exemplified in the new genre of the *Bildungsroman* (the novel), tracing the course of an individual's self-formation, such as *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre* [1829] with its maxim: 'through the useful towards the True and the Beautiful', it directs our attention to the most noble and pressing task of bringing all the potentials contained within us to full expression.

Gestalt (integrated form) and *Gesetz* (rule), the defining terms of Classicism, are indispensable for *Bildung*. Goethe thus also highlights the further dimension of self and society, individual and world, required for self-development. Only in service to the community, in self-restraint and submission to ethical demands, can *Bildung* shape the individual.

God, Nature, community: these thus are the points of reference for *Bildung*. Transcending mere acquisition of knowledge, *Bildung* points to a way of integrating knowledge and expertise with moral and aesthetic concerns. On the basis of a successful integration of thinking, willing and feeling, it enables sound judgement, indicated by a developed awareness of what is appropriate, and is expressed in tact, good taste, and a sense of community. It entails openness to difference and a willingness to self-correct. *Bildung*, in the classic sense, thus also contains a projective anticipation of the 'good life', of human freedom enacted with responsibility for self and others in the open-ended project of self-creation.

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文化 *Bunka*

David Buist

文化

[Chinese (Putonghua): *wénhuà*; Japanese: *bunka*; Korean: *munhua*]

The notion of global knowledge necessarily implies an appreciation of regional and local differences. The global diffusion of the social and cultural sciences provides a framework facilitating worldwide communication among intellectuals through a degree of sharing of common concepts. However, the variation in local historical, cultural and social circumstances can produce subtle variations in the context and application of concepts that might otherwise be regarded as 'universal'. As concepts diffuse outwards from their original context of application, redefinitions inevitably multiply. The linguistic mechanisms of conceptual appropriation are varied, ranging from wholesale verbal transplantation to the coining of new words from existing lexical resources. In neither case is a simple 'copy' of the original reproducible. Some process of 'translation' or linguistic 'transformation' is inevitably involved. 'Equivalence' of meaning is a product of translation, not its prerequisite, and what constitutes 'equivalence' has to be negotiated in the process. Here, I examine the reappropriation of the word 文化 as a 'translation' of the 'culture' concept. As the main entry on culture amply demonstrates, this is itself far from being an internally homogeneous concept. This entry seeks to probe the further complexities raised by 'translation'.

Although most of what I say here refers specifically to Japan, the concept of 文化 can in some sense be regarded as an 'East Asian' concept. This is partly why I have chosen to retain the original characters (which are recognized and used in China and Korea as well as Japan) rather than resorting to a Romanized phonetic transcription (which would inevitably reflect the local variations in pronunciation of the characters). As with many of the concepts appropriated from European thought in the latter half of the 19th century, the initial process of translation occurred in Japan, and the resulting terms were subsequently adopted also in China and Korea. Throughout East Asia, until comparatively recently, the dominant medium of literary and intellectual discourse was Classical Chinese. The characters and compounds derived from this tradition have continued to provide the building blocks for much verbal innovation and translation.

Etymologically, 文化 denotes the process of acquiring (or causing another to acquire) literacy and learning, and by extension, of 'cultivation' in the sense of the adoption of manners and dispositions of thought characteristic of the dominant social class. On its own, the character 文 refers primarily to the written language. As well as denoting the medium of characters, sentences and texts, its meaning can also embrace in some contexts the 'content' or 'message' expressed through that medium ('knowledge') and the process of its transmission ('education'). The character or concept typically opposed to 文 is 武 (usually pronounced '*bu*' in Japanese). 武 refers to military force. Prior to the Meiji Era (1868–1912), especially during the Edo Period (1600–1867), Japanese rulers would sometimes appeal to 文 as an alternative instrument of rule to 武 (*bu*, military force). This involved the promotion of the 'peaceful' arts of literacy and learning instead of the honing of military skills. With the end of the violent upheavals of the 'Warring States' (Sengoku) Period, and the establishment of a stable regime under the Tokugawa Shoguns, rulers sought to bolster the legitimacy of their rule by supervising the development of what we might now call 'culture' (文). To some extent, this also implied the spread of literacy and knowledge among the general populace as a part of what could be called a strategy of ideological control as opposed to simply relying on the threat or use of force. Contrary to later depictions of the Edo Era as a 'dark age' prior to the 'enlightenment' of the Meiji Era of modernization, Japan had undergone processes of social change that were analogous to certain aspects of 'modernization' even before the adoption of European knowledge and social models in the late 19th century. Emiko Ikegami (2005) describes this as 'proto-modernity'. One aspect of this was the relatively high level of education and literacy among the population, and the existence of a significant publishing industry based on wood block printing. Popular manuals of instruction in etiquette and refined manners,

artistic and literary appreciation, and basic historical and geographical knowledge were widely produced and consumed.

Thus, prior to its use as a 'translation' for the newly introduced concept of 'culture', 文化 is perhaps best described as having been part of the terminology of governance. Before the 20th century it was not a very widely used term, but it had already acquired certain associations which had consequences for its subsequent usage and meaning. Like 'culture', it originally referred to a form of 'high culture' – literate, refined, prestigious and close to the sources of political power. However, it also had a processual dimension (denoted by the second character 化, meaning 'change' or 'transformation') which was generally conceived in transitive terms as the action of an agent (the ruling elite) educating and ideologically incorporating the masses.

During the Meiji Era, greater attention was given to the 'Western' concept of 'civilization' rather than to 'culture'. 'Civilization' was usually rendered as 文明 (*bunmei*) in Japanese. To the extent it was used at all, 文化 tended to be treated as a synonym of 文明. 文明 meant, above all, 'Western civilization' with particular emphasis on the industrial, military and institutional technologies of the dominant European and North American states. By emulating these, the Meiji rulers sought to transform Japan into a modern nation-state on equal terms with the encircling Western powers which were then colonizing much of the rest of Asia.

According to Nishikawa Nagao (1993), the first use of 文化 in a manner close to its dominant contemporary meaning was in a newspaper commentary written in 1889 by Riku Katsunan, who was an advocate of 'cultural nationalism' as opposed to the then dominant 'state nationalism'. The gist of this article was to call for the formation of a unified 'national culture' expressing the distinctive character of the Japanese people as a whole. This embraced not only 'high' literary culture, but also *everyday* customs (風俗 *fuzoku*). As Nishikawa also points out, the 'culture' concept was appropriated at a moment when 'civilization' and 'culture' were emerging in Europe as opposing elements of a dichotomy. This was especially so in Germany, where *Kultur* came to be valued as the more 'authentic' and 'indigenous' alternative to the *Zivilisation* associated largely with external, especially French and Napoleonic, models. In many respects, the intellectual and political trajectory in Japan followed that of Germany. German Bismarckian models of modernity were increasingly adopted in preference to the British, French and American models popular in the early Meiji Era. This was accompanied by an increasing

interest in German thought and philosophy, which included absorption of German notions of 'civilization' as being 'external' and 'material', and 'culture' as being 'interior' and 'spiritual'. 文明 and 文化 came to represent respectively the two poles of this conceptual dichotomy. 文化 became the 'object of desire' in an introverted search for authenticity and cultural cohesion, which was explicitly conceived as a remedy for the social upheavals caused by Meiji 'civilization'.

During the Taisho Era (1912–1926) use of the word 文化 greatly increased. It ceased to be a peripheral concept and took on crucial significance in intellectual and wider social discourse. The diversity of its meanings and uses likewise multiplied. It became a subject widely discussed by major philosophers of the period (including Nishida Kitaro, Kuki Shuzo and Miki Kiyoshi) and the founders of Japanese folklore studies (notably Yanagida Kunio and Orikuchi Shinobu). The notion of 'popular culture' (大衆文化 *taishūbunka*) also emerged, along with the development of consumer lifestyles. 文化 became a commercially exploitable concept, as is reflected in such phrases as 文化包丁 (*bunkabōchō* 'cultural chef's knife') and 文化住宅 (*bunkajūtaku* 'cultural residence'). This attachment of 文化 to the names of artifacts of the new consumer lifestyle was one way of emphasizing the desirable qualities of the products concerned. At the same time, there was also a significant stream of socialist thinking that sought to develop 'proletarian culture' as an anticapitalist alternative.

Despite the 'democratizing' tendencies of the Taisho Era, the potential of 文化 as an instrument of governance had not been entirely exhausted. Indeed, as some commentators have pointed out, the development of essentialist notions of the 'distinctive character' of Japanese culture during the Taisho Era provided the groundwork for the subsequent development of an imperialistic state ideology in the period immediately before and during the Second World War (Pincus, 1996; Harootunian, 2000). The attempt to construct an all-embracing state-dominated social system for wartime mobilization in the 1930s encouraged the development of the idea of 'cultural policy' (文化政策 *bunka seisaku*). The clear definition and demarcation of a specific sphere of life as 'culture' facilitated its integration into a unitary and efficient system geared to military success. Such explicit definitions of 文化 tended to be extremely broad, embracing everything from education, the arts, religion, and social welfare, to information and propaganda (Miyahara, 1943). 文化 could thus fulfil the function of a totalizing concept abetting the complete integration of society under government control for a single objective.

The use of the concept of 文化 in Japan since the end of the Second World War can roughly be characterized by three aspects. First, it has continued to be linked to the concept of 'culture' as used in the social and cultural sciences, and its meaning has developed along with the continuous introduction of new theoretical approaches from Europe and North America. In the post-war period, the field of cultural anthropology (文化人類学) was established in Japan, and later in the 1990s, the fields of cultural sociology and cultural studies (文化研究) were introduced.

However, there are other uses of the term 文化 that can only be understood in the context of that word's specific history in Japan. The post-war Japanese state has deliberately used 文化 as a means of bolstering its claim to be a 'peace state' (平和国家) forever renouncing warfare. In contrast to its wartime use, 文化 is now once again employed as a counter to the image of military force, especially in diplomatic relations, where 'cultural exchanges' are a frequent feature of official contacts with other countries. Even in internal affairs, the idea of 'cultural promotion' (文化振興) has sometimes been invoked as a desirable complement to the dominant goal of economic growth. As well as seeking to present Japan as a 'peace state', official policy has promoted the related or synonymous goal of constructing a 'cultural state' (文化国家). At the end of the 1970s, under Prime Minister Ohira, a grand vision proclaiming the 'Age of Culture' (文化の時代) was formulated as a guideline for official policy-making in the aftermath of Japan's extremely successful high growth policy in the 1960s and 1970s.

A third aspect of the use of 文化 in the post-war period is the discourse known as 日本文化論 (*Nihonbunkaron*). This developed into a major genre in the commercial publishing market especially in the 1970s and the 1980s. The central theme of this discourse is the characterization of the supposedly distinctive features of Japanese 文化 as compared to the culture of other (usually American or European) countries. One could argue that this was an appropriation or internalization of the essentialist characterizations of the 'enemy culture' conducted by American anthropologists during the Pacific War. Although the content of the characterizations of Japanese culture varied little, the evaluation of these essen-

tialized characteristics changed from negative to positive as Japan developed into a major economic power (Aoki, 1990). Cultural factors came to be cited as the principal reasons for Japan's high level of economic growth. Indeed, economic success has acted as a general stimulus to cultural confidence and has encouraged government investment in cultural diplomacy (as noted above) and the founding of institutes for research on 'Japanese culture' (such as the 国際日本文化研究所 or International Institute for Japanese Studies based in the city of Kyoto and founded in the mid-1980s under Prime Minister Nakasone).

In conclusion, one can say that 文化 is still very much alive as a central concept in academic, political and popular discourse. Its meanings have ramified, absorbing most of the principal senses of 'culture' in addition to the associations of the term prior to the 20th century. Representations of 'Japanese culture' as a uniquely distinctive totality are no longer as dominant as they were in the 1980s. Discourse on 文化 has since become more diverse and less prone to essentialism. There nevertheless remains a significant latent potential for totalization and government or commercial manipulation of the 'culture' concept, no less so in Japan than elsewhere.

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Postcolonial Cultures

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Words that bear a 'post-' as prefix defer to, but differ from, the terms they qualify. 'Postcolonial' derives its meaning from a complex relation to 'colonial', which in turn derives its significance from the sense of 'colony' as a territory annexed or controlled for settlement or profit. Motives that mixed curiosity, profit and adventure propelled Europeans after 1492 into a series of interactions with peoples previously unfamiliar to and separated from them by large expanses of ocean and land. European expansion took two forms: settlers looked for land and religious freedom, adventurers and traders looked for commercial gain. In time these interactions shaped and were shaped by differences between the belief-systems, technologies, economics, religions and cultures of Europeans and the peoples they encountered. The quest for land or profit followed a pattern in which Europe exploited relations of difference to its advantage, while the European nations competed with one another in the race for territory and dominance. Settlement and trade grew into empires. Success was the result of various combinations of aggressive enterprise, technological capability and the will to power. Modern imperialism was paralleled by three developments that reinforced the asymmetry between Europe and its colonies: the Industrial Revolution, the rise of modern capitalism, and the rationalization of the instruments of institutional management and governance. An additional factor that entered this equation in stages during the 20th century was the steady rise to power of the USA, especially after the collapse of the former Soviet Union. The conditions of inequality that subsidized empires persisted past the end of imperialism, and were often aggravated – as in the case of many African and some Asian nations – by incompetent or corrupt regimes, and dissension among constituent elements of the new nation. That is where 'postcolonial' comes in. When post-independence leadership reneged on the hopes that had subsidized anti-colonial struggles, 'postcolonial' became the sign of recognition for the inequalities that beset new nationhood after the end of colonialism

in an era of uneven industrialization and globalization. On the other hand, once nationhood had accomplished its often anti-climactic political goals, anti-colonial resistance and nationalist fervour found themselves dissipated in a celebration of diaspora, multiculturalism and hybridity, and 'postcolonial' has had to struggle to keep clear of degenerating into ethnic chic or the blandishments of 'cosmopolitan'.

Many of the preoccupations that characterize the contemporary study of 'postcolonial cultures' were anticipated at about the time that the consequences of European imperialism were diagnosed from the colonies by intellectuals such as Aimé Césaire (*Discourse on Colonialism*, 1950), Frantz Fanon (*Black Skin, White Masks*, 1952), Octave Mannoni (*Prospero and Caliban*, 1956), Albert Memmi (*The Colonizer and the Colonized*, 1957), George Lamming (*The Pleasures of Exile*, 1961), C.L.R. James (*The Black Jacobins*, 1962), Amilcar Cabral (*The Weapon of Theory*, 1966), Roberto Fernández Retamar ('Caliban', 1971), and others, who have since been canonized as formative influences on 'postcolonial studies' (Brydon, 2000). Poets from the colonies had been active on this front even earlier. The Négritude movement made an impact in Africa and the Caribbean, and acquired a wider European resonance when Jean-Paul Sartre, in the 1940s, highlighted formulations on race and writing first articulated by Césaire, Léopold Senghor and Leon Damas in the 1930s. These were meant to redress the ethnic disparagement that accompanied colonialism by reviving racial pride among the colonized. The strategy had precursors in black writing of the Harlem Renaissance, and in W.E.B. Du Bois' *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903). Later writers from Africa questioned the adequacy of Négritude on the grounds that it invoked an untenable form of ethnic essentialism, fell back on romantic simplifications of pre-colonial cultures, and merely inverted the binaries fostered by colonizers on the colonized. Nevertheless, the movement was the precursor for various forms of cultural nationalism that took part in the political struggle for freedom from colonial rule.

The academic invention of 'postcolonial' took place in the 1980s, as the impact of Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) was assimilated by intellectuals. Fanon addressed issues of race, colonial cultures and nationalism well before 'postcolonial' acquired currency. He wrote as an activist formulating strategies from the perspective of the

imperatives of decolonization in Algeria and Africa. In contrast, Said wrote as a committed intellectual using academic scholarship to scrutinize the motives, mechanisms and effects of colonial scholarship in the complicity between knowledge and empire. Said's influence gave 'postcolonial' studies a global orientation and a base in the US academy, which rapidly overtook and assimilated the more modest growth of 'Commonwealth' studies. 'Postcolonial' studies reinforced and was reinforced by new interest in minority discourses (e.g. JanMohamed and Lloyd, 1990), and by the global development of academic curricula devoted to gender, feminism and diaspora. Cinema and music are the latest additions to this franchise, although it is too early to say who stands to profit from such liaisons. After 11 September 2001, and the death of Said, the American Right has shown signs of re-examining its academic investment in 'postcolonial studies'. Meanwhile, writers have consistently resisted the association of their work with 'postcolonial', with the argument that such terms tend to homogenize difference, simplify complexity, misdirect reading and perpetrate a new form of conceptual colonization that pushes writers into a cultural ghetto at the behest of academics struggling to place themselves closer to the centre by promoting the margins of post-imperial cultures.

In a more constructive sense, 'postcoloniality' functions as a period concept which marks the gap separating the formation of nation from the maturation of new social formations relatively free of cultural cringe. As a name for a predicament, it represents the phase of writing in which cultural identity foregrounds itself as a historical problem. 'Postcoloniality' as a state of mind occurs and recurs in individuals and communities whenever the ambivalent energies of their colonial legacy are shaped by, or give shape to, their writing. In a third sense, 'postcoloniality' provides a contingent name for the internalization of asymmetries, an ongoing process in which native inhabitants and non-European migrants struggle to find voice and representation within the cultural dynamics of a settler country. This sense addresses the issue of how cultural productions react to the marginalization imposed by dominant groups on other members or groups within their society on the basis of racial prejudice, as in the case of the Native Americans, Australian aborigines, New Zealand Māori, and Africans under apartheid. The suffixes '-ism' and '-ity' entail different connotations. Graham Huggan distinguishes between 'postcolonialism' as a form of 'anti-colonial intellectualism', and 'postcoloniality' as a mechanism within 'the global late-capitalist system of commodity exchange' (2001: 6). Robert Young

promotes 'postcolonialism' in respect to 'the political ideals of community, equality, self-determination and dignity' (2002: ix). When used in this way, the term links decolonization with bipolar struggles against oppression, injustice, discrimination or prejudice, but it also risks diluting a pathology of the cultural cringe with a secular ethics that is at once both politically correct and aesthetically bland. Aijaz Ahmad (1992), among others, has objected to 'postcolonial' for foregrounding colonial history and neglecting class and the economics of capitalism, observing that a large body of writing and cultural production during colonial and post-independence histories focuses on issues of specific and local concern, with little or no reference to the motifs prioritized by 'postcolonial studies'. But feminism has found its strategic suspicion of dominative modes useful in refining perceptions that gender as a social construct is a varied phenomenon, not to be homogenized under a western rubric (e.g. Mohanty et al., 1991; Trinh, 1989).

The narrow sense of 'postcolonial' confines it to a period concept, which refers to developments that followed European colonialism. This is now a very small part of the story. The dissolution of empire was a gradual process. Dates commemorating political independence only indicate key moments in the more gradual change from dependency to autonomy, or from national hubris to post-imperial detumescence. Moreover, new political realities did not necessarily coincide with changes in culture and society, nor ensure a steady progress towards modernity, peace or prosperity. Therefore 'postcolonial' has acquired a wider connotation. Whether we describe culture as a form of 'having' or a form of 'doing', or some kind of dynamic relation between the two notions, a culture may be described as postcolonial wherever, and for as long as, a nation or a people or a set of individuals suffers its colonial past as a legacy that mixes partial empowerment with partial disablement in respect to the habits of thought and feeling that determine cultural practices and produce cultural artifacts. The broader sense of 'postcolonial' implies awareness of the ways in which modes of thought and belief learned through colonial history continue to affect cultures after the formal collapse of empires. It turns to cultural productions and practices for an imprint of, and a reaction to, the residual force of colonialism on societies whose contemporary history is shaped by asymmetrical patterns of modernization, industrialization and globalization.

The colonizer–colonized polarity implicit in 'postcolonial' is met with a caveat. In 1992, Anne McClintock worried that the term 'reduces the cultures of peoples beyond colonialism to

prepositional time', that it 'signals a reluctance to surrender the privilege of seeing the world in terms of a singular and ahistorical abstraction', and that 'Political differences *between* cultures are thereby subordinated to the temporal distance *from* European colonialism' (1992: 86–7). The degree to which nations are overshadowed by their colonial pasts, their incipient nationhood is indeed prepositional. Her second and third worries reinforce the need for those who use the term to avoid homogenizing diversity and difference along a single axis related to Europe, and the need to recognize the ways in which lateral relations between the various ex-colonies are as important in cultural terms as vertical relations between former colonizers and the ex-colonized. Another worry about the broader connotation of the term is that it can claim to cover a disparate variety of situations: 'Does the post indicate the perspective and location of the ex-colonized (Algerian), the ex-colonizer (French), the ex-colonial settler (Pied Noir), or the displaced hybrid in First World metropolitans (Algerians in France)?', asked Ella Shohat (1992: 104). Her anxiety can be allayed only when those who use the term in its broad sense distinguish carefully between the contingent logic for each specific application.

Despite such misgivings, and in the short period of two decades, the idea of 'postcolonial cultures' has become extended – some say, distended – in scope. It currently includes reference to any ex-colonial society which gives evidence of asymmetry in respect to power (over the canons and organs of knowledge, belief and practice), access (to outlets and audiences for the production of cultural artifacts), or recognition (from peers, consumers and empowering institutions such as the state, media and educational apparatuses). The idea is applied to multicultural as well as monocultural societies, and to the features that complicate such distinctions (e.g. English/French Canadian cultures). It is used to refer to the cultural changes in former colonizers (e.g. sonnets and serials on the British Raj), in the formerly colonized (e.g. cricket in the Caribbean), to the relation between them (e.g. Dub poetry in Black Britain), to the infiltration of one by the other (e.g. Parisian Beur culture, the culture of censorship in relation to the music of Mzwakhe Mbuli), or to internalizations of the colonial relation (e.g. natives in the Americas, aborigines in Australia, Māori in New Zealand, coloured and black people under apartheid). In general, 'postcolonial studies' proposes diagnoses that might redress 'transculturation', the process whereby marginal or subordinate groups can only 'select and invent from materials transmitted to them by a dominant culture' (Pratt, 1992: 6).

The study of 'postcolonial cultures' gives particular emphasis to the ethico-political dimension that links the ideas of 'postcolonial' and 'postmodern' societies: hybridization. Homi Bhabha expands the connotations:

> Hybridization is not some happy, consensual mix of diverse cultures; it is the strategic, translational transfer of tone, value, signification, and position – a transfer of power – from an authoritative system of cultural hegemony to an emergent process of cultural relocation and reiteration that changes the very terms of interpretation and institutionalization, opening up contesting, opposing, innovative, 'other' grounds of subject and object formation. It is this double consciousness that produces what I call the *vernacular cosmopolitanism* of the postcolonial or minoritarian subject. It is a mode of living, and a habit of mind, that seeks cultural translation, not to recover the norms of universality, autonomy, and sovereignty, but to assert that there is a positive, agential value in the whole process of surviving domination that can add an edge, a cutting edge, to the critiques – contra neoliberalism or retro-Marxist – that come from those who have been displaced or marginalized on the grounds of their cultural, civilizational, or, as it is often described, moral and spiritual backwardness. (2000: 370)

In all its forms the idea of 'postcolonial cultures' refracts cultural change through the lens of displacement. Translation between languages becomes a metaphor for the translation of beliefs, values and practices between cultures. Linguistic displacement becomes an allegory for exile and diaspora. At its widest, the oppressive and exploitative dimension of colonialism provides 'postcolonial' with an application that takes in every form of victimization perpetrated by custom, prejudice or ideology on grounds of belief, gender, sexual preference, religious persuasion, or linguistic and ethnic affiliation.

However, there is a sense in which the currency of the term needs to meet with a natural datedness. The first British colony to break free from its colonial status was the USA. The formation of nation managed to avoid or evade the appellation of 'postcolonial' in a manner that has implications for other former colonies. There must come a time when 'postcolonial' ceases to be a term always open-ended about the receding future it recognizes as the plight of those it describes. For that future to stop receding there would have to come a time when a society could look on its colonial and postcolonial pasts as the assumed ground on which to live and continue changing

without being overshadowed or constrained by that history. In the United States, Noah Webster proposed an 'American standard' for language as early as 1789, and the *American Spelling Book* (1783) was selling a million copies a year by the 1850s (in a US population of about 23 million), before Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* was published in 1855, 80 years after the American declaration of independence (and in the same year as Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's far more traditional *Hiawatha*). The example suggests that the 'postcoloniality' of any culture may be identified as a moment of gradual and complex 'cross over'. However suspended or drawn out this moment may be, it is possible for peoples, nations and cultures to conceive of a time when the crossing is finally over. In that sense, the idea of 'postcolonial' cultures is contingent and provisional, like a ladder that has to be drawn up when the climbing is done, or a name that is meant to become a misnomer.

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Cultural Diversity

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Keywords collective identity, cosmopolitanism, cultural goods and services, cultural policy, international relations, multiculturalism, politics of recognition

The contemporary wave of culturalism has transformed the notion of cultural diversity from a given of the human condition – and the stuff of anthropology – into a normative meta-narrative, whether culture is seen as 'the ground of perpetual, irreducible (and, in most cases, desirable and worth conscious preservation) diversity of human kind' (Bauman, 1992) or in terms of 'the conscious mobilization of cultural differences in the service of a larger national or transnational politics' (Appadurai, 1996: 15). While the culturalism is patently global, the discourses of cultural diversity as a policy ideal have been generated principally in Europe and North America and appear to have their strongest purchase there.

Everywhere, though, understandings of cultural diversity as a strategic notion tend to favour 'billiard ball' representations of cultures as neatly bounded wholes whose contents are given and static – hence mainly to be 'protected' or 'preserved'. These understandings downplay 'the ways in which the meanings and symbols of culture are produced through complex processes of translation, negotiation and enunciation' (Stevenson, 2003: 62), as well as by contestation and conflict.

The notion has also been rather specifically connoted: in the United States, for example, it was a code word throughout the 1960s and 1970s for the recognition of the civil rights of Afro-Americans; as Appiah (1987) has suggested, the call of collective identities expressed in American 'multiculturalism' is much less a reflection of 'culture' than an expression of the individual's concern for dignity and respect. It is only recently that the term has become the handmaiden of a 'multiculturalism' that seeks to celebrate the full variegation of American society. And the 21st century has introduced yet another special coding: 'cultural diversity' in international cultural politics is the standard-bearer of a campaign to exclude cultural goods and services from global free trade rules.

Once a technical term deployed by the social sciences, the term 'culture' itself has escaped all academic control and has undergone a marked inflation of usages. 'Culture' is now proclaimed as an inalienable 'right', conceived of as a value in itself, and justified as an inherited 'tradition'. It has entered the repertoires of discourses and strategies deployed by 'imagined communities' at different levels – from the activism of minorities, religious sodalities and local groups to the 'cultural policies' of nation-states. Perceived as threatened by a dominant source of 'civilization', the values of different ways of life have risen to consciousness and have become the rallying cry of diverse claims to a space in the planetary culture. 'Before, culture was just lived. Now it has become a self-conscious collective project. Every struggle for life becomes the struggle of a way of life' (Sahlins, 1994: 11).

It was in this spirit that the notion of cultural diversity was given international political legitimacy by the World Commission on Culture and Development, of whose report, entitled *Our Creative Diversity* (UNESCO, 1996), it was the leitmotif. The notion also dominates the cultural policy lexicon in Europe; the Council of Europe has issued a Declaration on it and it is foregrounded in the cultural rhetoric of the European Union. As a counterpart to the idea of a European cultural identity, built on the assumption of a shared history and common 'roots', the diversity of its cultures is proclaimed as one of the defining, if not unique, merits of European civilization (the idea was actually first mooted by the great French historian François Guizot a century and a half ago). The European Union has even adopted 'the unity of diversities' as its slogan. The principle of subsidiarity protecting this diversity gives the Union only complementary or residual competence for cultural policy, leaving the main responsibility at the level of national governments (EFAH, 2004). Yet over five decades ago, 'unity and diversity' was already the motto of the newly-formed Republic of India. But in this usage, the term merely recognized the empirical plurality of the sub-continental nation's constituent parts rather than being an overt celebration of its cultural variety; this factual usage is replicated frequently elsewhere in the non-Western world.

While the conscious mobilization of collective cultural differences and concomitant claims to the recognition of cultural rights are worldwide phenomena, the elevation of cultural diversity to the status of a value in itself and its use as a 'buzzword' in the popular lexicon have been largely Western. Within nations, the accent has begun to shift from policies with a nationalist and homogenizing cast to the acceptance and even active promotion of cultural differences, as postcolonial developments force societies to address the challenge of articulating and mediating a sense of separate as well as shared space for diverse cultural communities (Bennett, 2001). Thus, the term is now commonly deployed with a view to supporting the 'right to be different' of many different categories of individuals/groups placed in some way outside dominant social and cultural norms, hence including disabled people, gays and lesbians, women, as well as the poor and the elderly. And yet, the predominant emphasis – particularly outside the West – is on ethnic differences and the affirmations of ethnic minorities in the face of dominant majorities and/or the homogenizing tendencies of 'national' cultures. But even these affirmations are diverse, as Bennett has pointed out. They include, first, sub- or multi-national communities (the Basques or the Sri Lanka Tamils, for example) that dispute the homogenizing tendencies of national cultures, but do so on the basis of essentially similar strategies by articulating a set of associations between a territory, its people and their culture which competes with that of the dominant national culture. Second, autochthonous communities, ethnically marked, that are the result of earlier movements of peoples or boundaries. Third, diasporic cultures, produced in association with the histories of displaced peoples, involving mobile international cultural networks operating across, and offering an alternative to, the territorial logic of national cultures. Finally, indigenous cultures developed in the context of resistance to colonial occupation that typically contest national mappings of the relations between people, culture, history and territory by mobilizing deeper and longer histories.

In Europe, the topical challenge is posed by the claims to difference associated with the international movement of – mainly non-European – peoples. This has brought articulations of ethnic difference into the public sphere, rather than relegating them to the private sphere alone, an

issue that has become a key stake in the re-composition of the notion of 'national' culture and identity. How is difference heard in the public sphere and what are the strategies, social objectives and recognition goals sought by its actors (Wieviorka and Ohana, 2001)? We are in the midst of a polarized policy debate. On the one hand, the classic liberal position, which posits the primacy of the individual and her/his identity over collective belonging and restricts the affirmation of the latter to the private sphere. On the other, the communitarian approach which sees individual identity as the product of community. As an increasing number of individuals opt for the right to choose the markers and roles they use to construct their identities, how are the claims of equality and citizenship to be reconciled with the claims of difference? The challenge of including diversity within the national public sphere can also help question the 'national' culture itself and develop new understandings about its increasingly inter-ethnic and inter-racial composition.

There is an increasingly visible discourse of according respect and value to different cultures that now coexist within national civic communities. Such liberal forms of 'multiculturalism', however, may well aestheticize difference through the cosmetic celebration of cultural diversity; they may reify difference at the expense of the new patterns of interaction which might arise from their mixing and intermingling (Bennett, 2004). How to nurture relationships of difference that avoid such pitfalls? What are the forms of inter-cultural competence – both mutual translation and dialogic interchange – that this would require? Enabling all the groups that henceforth constitute the national community to assume ownership of its composite cultural identity remains a major challenge for policy-makers. This is not simply a matter of combating intolerance and exclusion, but also of giving dignity, voice and recognition in the public sphere to different cultural groups while constructing – negotiating – a sense of national community. How can we forge societies that are truly pluralistic yet possess a shared sense of belonging? What can states do to help different cultural communities live together as one national community? Are current policies and practices effective in promoting attitudes and values that encourage mutual respect? How should policies and institutions evolve so as to better respond to the needs of diverse societies? Can national identity be defined so that all communities may identify with the country and its self-definition?

This entry would be incomplete without a reference to the latest avatar of the notion, its current transubstantive reduction, through a subtle process of semantic sleight of hand, to the issue of cultural goods and services. In this guise, the term emerged at the turn of the present century, as an alternative to the limited and somewhat negative connotations of the *'exception culturelle'* that France, Canada and other nations had been negotiating since the end of the Uruguay Round discussions in the mid-1990s. When the United States attempted to make free trade principles apply to all 'cultural goods', principally their own audiovisual exports, in the context of a debate over the European Union's broadcasting directive Television Without Frontiers, France countered with the argument that a 'cultural exception' was necessary because culture was not just another type of merchandise. The shift from exception to diversity as the master concept allowed French international diplomacy to tap into a much broader range of cultural commitments and anxieties in international relations. Thus, UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, adopted in 2001, was the successful outcome of a vigorous Franco-Canadian strategy. Article 8, which is entitled 'Cultural goods and services: commodities of a unique kind', states:

> In the face of present-day economic and technological change, opening up vast prospects for creation and innovation, particular attention must be paid to the diversity of the supply of creative work, to due recognition of the rights of authors and artists and to the specificity of cultural goods and services which, as vectors of identity, values and meaning, must not be treated as mere commodities or consumer goods.

Although the Declaration contains 11 other articles that address the policy challenges of cultural diversity in a much more comprehensive way (including many of the issues discussed above), its main strategic purpose, clearly, was to legitimize policy measures taken by national governments to protect nationally produced cultural goods and services. This is also the main purpose of the 'Convention on the Protection of the Diversity of Cultural Contents and Artistic Expressions' that was adopted in October 2005 by UNESCO; it is the sense in which many individuals, non-governmental organizations, cultural activists and government officials strategically use the term today.

The principle is laudable. The goal is to foster the dynamism of contemporary cultural production rather than play a preservationist role. Yet this new international trope is also built upon unquestioned, undeconstructed discourses of nationhood. Precisely because its object is cultural diversity among nations rather than within them, it brings us little closer to a truly cosmopolitan agenda.
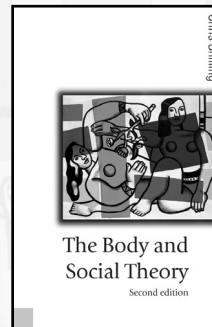
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