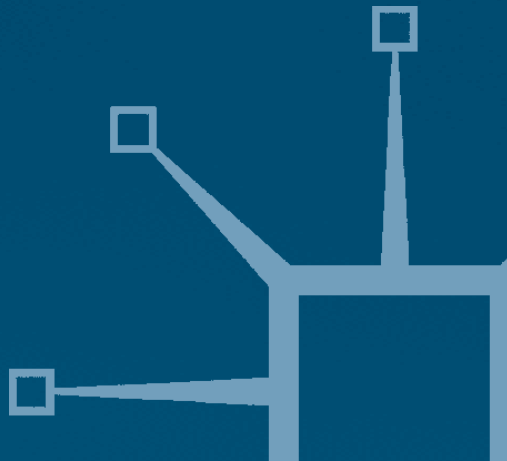


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Conceptualizing the West in International Relations

From Spengler to Said

Jacinta O'Hagan



Conceptualizing the West in International Relations

Also by Jacinta O'Hagan

CONTENDING IMAGES OF WORLD POLITICS (*co-editor with Greg Fry*)

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From Spengler to Said

Jacinta O'Hagan

School of Political Science and International Studies

University of Queensland

Australia

palgrave



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For Gary

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Introduction: The West and Cultural World Order

In the decade since the conclusion of the Cold War, International Relations scholars have anxiously sought to identify and explain the actors and forces that are shaping the emerging world order. Among the debates stimulated by the conclusion of the Cold War, two of the most dramatic focus on the contrasting visions of world order presented by Samuel Huntington's 'clash of civilizations' and Francis Fukuyama's 'end of history' theses. Huntington's 1993 essay¹ has become one of the most widely discussed articles of contemporary International Relations.² His analysis of the post-Cold War world is radical and shocking, suggesting an era in which world politics is dominated by conflicts between civilizations. His thesis contains dire warnings to the West that it must consolidate to meet the threats of disintegration from within and attack from without. Conversely, Fukuyama's image of world politics is one of a world divided between societies still evolving through the processes of history, and those which have successfully evolved to a post-historical state. In this context, the West is viewed as at the forefront of a broad civilizing process, providing the model of the rational state towards which the rest of humanity is evolving.

These theses present starkly contrasting images of the emerging world order that highlight the significance of cultural identity. The West plays a pivotal role in both these images of world order, yet their conceptions of the nature and role of the West is also markedly different. In Huntington's, the West is a powerful but declining entity battling to maintain its strength and influence in a world of multiple and conflicting civilizations. In Fukuyama's, the West provides a universal model of human progress and development. How are we to understand these contending conceptions of the West and of its role in the emerging world order? Intriguingly, International Relations, the discipline most closely concerned with analysis of world politics, provides little assistance in thinking conceptually about what or who the West is. This is intriguing given that the West is undoubtedly a significant concept in international relations. It is acknowledged as a political, economic and military force of unprecedented standing. The West

is also considered to be one of the central architects of major modern international institutions, such as the League of Nations, the UN, the IMF and the WTO. Assumptions about the importance of the West are interwoven into the main paradigms of International Relations: realism, liberalism and structuralism. However, these paradigms provide little conceptual space for understanding the nature and complexity of the West.

International Relations primarily theorises the world as one of states. However, the West is not a state, but most commonly conceived of as a civilizational entity. The paradigms of the discipline provide no explicit category into which civilizations can be placed. Consequently, civilizations have been largely absent from International Relations theory. For instance, although Huntington's essay tapped into a broader discussion about the future of the West,³ there was no contemporary debate on civilizational interaction in International Relations scholarship to which it could contribute. As Huntington's theses demonstrated, an interest in civilizational identity and its political significance is beginning to emerge in the discipline (Neumann, 1998; Jackson, 1999; Lynch 2000; Williams & Neumann, 2000). However, there is a need for further investigation of the way in which civilizational identities are perceived and represented, and consideration of how these identities frame perceptions of what is possible and desirable in world politics. In particular further reflection is required on how powerful civilizational identities such as the West are perceived.

The objectives of the study

This study seeks to broaden our understanding of international relations through reflecting on conceptions of the West in writings on world politics. At one level, its objective is to consider in more depth how the West is conceptualized through exploring how it is described in different contexts and under different influences. It identifies both continuities and variations in these conceptions in order to enhance our awareness of the complexity of representations of the West, and to suggest that these relate to the complexity of the community itself. It assumes that ideas and perceptions matter in international relations, contending that how a community is perceived and represented is important since this shapes and influences analysis and prescriptions. The study is also based on the belief that political identities are not innate or given, but shaped and reshaped on an ongoing basis by the context in which they operate, as well as by interpretations of histories and traditions. They are embedded in social and cultural contexts and constituted by relationships and interaction. In asking how the political identity of 'the West' is conceptualized, shaped and reshaped under different conditions, the study does not try to identify one, authoritative definition of the West. Nor is it an effort to disprove the existence of the

West. Instead, it seeks to use these conceptions to explore the complexity and dynamism of conceptions of the West.

At a second level, the study explores conceptions of the West in relation to broader assumptions about the nature of what is referred to here as the 'cultural world order'. The way in which the West, widely perceived to be a pivotal actor and influence in modern international relations, is conceptualized provides insights into different possibilities for interaction, and different assumptions about the possibilities for world order. Through examining this, the study participates in a broader debate about how conceptions of cultural identities and cultural world order contribute to perceptions of, and prescriptions for, world politics.

This study, then, is not a history of the West, although it does consider the way in which the history of the West has been perceived. Nor does it pretend to establish a new grand theory, or paradigm, within International Relations. It does not suggest that culture provides the principal organizing or explanatory principle in world politics. However, it does suggest that the discipline would benefit from more consciously reflecting on how the identities political communities are conceptualized, and on the role of culture and history in shaping perceptions of communities and their interaction.

Cultural world order

What, however, do we mean by the 'cultural world order'? The concept is introduced to refer to assumptions about interaction between broad cultural identities at the global level, the most significant of which are referred to as civilizational identities. It refers to assumptions about the nature of interaction between civilizational identities in world politics. Such assumptions vary widely. For some, civilizations are multiple and diverse, for others, the concept of civilization is singular and universal, incorporating the whole of humanity in a project of progress and development. Some view civilizations as innately conflicting, others as converging. Assumptions about the cultural world order implicitly frame perceptions of interaction and the possibility for progress and change in relations between peoples, and are deeply connected to perceptions of the political and economic world orders.

Cultural world order is distinguished from the concept of the political world order, taken as relating to the interaction of political communities, and of economic world order, taken here to concern the structure of relations of production and exchange. However, the political, the economic and the cultural cannot ultimately be treated as totally separate; they are deeply interwoven and interactive dimensions of any society. Assumptions about the cultural world order frame perceptions of interaction and the possibility for progress and change in relations between peoples, and are deeply connected to perceptions of the political and economic world orders. This is not to argue that assumptions about culture determine the

political and economic world order. However, perceptions of both the economic and political world orders may be influenced by presumptions about whether relations between people and communities from different civilizational identities are likely to be characterized by conflict or co-operation, or presumptions about the potential for the transfer of ideas and institutions between civilizations. For some, such processes promise convergence and interdependence, for others, domination or imperialism. Therefore, analysis of assumptions about civilizational interaction can deepen our understanding of the perceived possibilities for interaction in all realms of world order. While it seeks to avoid overstating their significance, this project investigates perceptions of civilizational identity as an important, if at times implicit, element which frames important debates in world politics. Therefore, it suggests we can usefully examine conceptions of the West in relation to associated assumptions about the relationship of the West to other civilizational identities.

As noted above, assumptions about the cultural world order vary widely and are influenced by perceptions of civilization. Two key strands can be identified in the etymology of 'civilization'. The first is a singular sense, which implies a universal process of development towards a higher form of society. This strand can be seen as evolving in tandem with the evolutionary and progressive ideals of the French Revolution. The second is a pluralist sense, which refers to diverse cultural communities. The evolution of this strand is evident in some of the Romantic tradition in Western thought that emphasize the plurality and diversity of cultures.⁴ Increased awareness of the diversity of human culture enhanced the pluralist concept of civilization, but this awareness has not necessarily produced a broad acceptance of the equality of civilizations, leading to the perception by some of a hierarchy of civilizations. Furthermore, it has continued to coexist with the concept of civilization as progress towards a superior form of society. In nineteenth-century Europe, it was widely assumed that Western civilization was at the forefront of this process. Into the twenty-first century, both the singular and pluralist sense of civilization persist in the vocabulary of politics.

The way in which the term civilization is employed is significant in what it says about how the cultural world order is conceived by the particular author. This can be a world order defined by a sense of the unity of humanity flowing in a single developmental process, or an order which encompasses essentially separate communities pursuing their own distinctive history. It may also shape perceptions of interaction between human communities. These may be conceived as relations of conflict, of domination, or co-operation and exchange. Not only can we identify different conceptions of 'civilization', but also different assumptions about the pattern of civilizational history. For some, it occurs in cycles, or in waves, while for others, it represents a linear pattern of teleological development.

Conceptions of the West occur within these differing perceptions of civilization and of the pattern of civilizational histories. These perceptions shape expectations and interpretations of interaction between people from different cultures as following trends of integration or incommensurability. These assumptions are important in framing perceptions of the possibilities for interactions between different peoples. They may also be significant in framing the analysis of the role of a major civilizational identity such as the West in the cultural, political and economic world.

As Andrew Linklater has noted, a recurrent theme in Western moral and political thought is the tension between particularism and universalism. In the context of International Relations, this is represented in the question of whether there is or could be a universal human community or a plurality of communities (Walker, 1988; Linklater, 1990; Rengger, 1992). This tension is manifest in the debate between the cosmopolitan and communitarian traditions in normative International Relations theory.⁵ This debate is one concerned as much with the possibility for, and desirability of moral, as for political community. It addresses the question of whether a global moral community is evolving, as the cosmopolitan tradition suggests, or whether moral community will remain located and focused in the particular community in which individuals are engaged (Clark, 1999: 134).

An important, if at times implicit, dimension of this broader debate is the issue of the prevalence of cultural plurality or diversity and the possibility for cultural universality. Underlying assumptions about cultural plurality or universality are implicit in how images of self and other are constructed in international relations, assumptions that influence readings of the past, analysis of the present and prescriptions about the future. These assumptions can influence perceptions about the possibility for interaction across and between particular communities. Furthermore, they can influence perception of whether a framework for interaction has or is evolving in which all communities are engaged. If so, where does such a framework stem from? Is it the product of the expansion of a particular cultural community – a form of cultural hegemony – or is it based on the discovery of universal principles of coexistence in a genuinely multicultural framework of interaction?

These questions can be used to reflect upon the meaning of civilizational identity and the implications of how interaction between civilizational identities is perceived. They are critically linked to conceptions of the West, and of its role in cultural world order. Perhaps one of the most important questions in this respect is whether the West represents a universal culture, or is at the forefront of a universalizing civilizing process, or whether it is a local culture that has attained a global reach? (Harding, 1998). The scale and extent of influence exercised by European based societies over the rest of the world is something that has intrigued generations of scholars from many different disciplines who sought to identify the secret of the West's success. The sociologist Benjamin Nelson, building on the work of Max

Weber, argued that to understand the growth and power of the West, it is necessary to go beyond material and technical factors to examine how the culture of Western societies facilitated a capacity to both reach out to, and draw in, ideas and insight from others. Nelson stresses that the West's capacity for fraternization facilitated communications with and borrowing from other civilizational identities. Furthermore, he suggests that the West was strengthened by a greater degree of tolerance and less rigid codes of inclusion and exclusion than were found in comparable civilizational identities (Nelson, 1976). These qualities, argues Nelson, allowed the West to engage in broader communities of discourse that both strengthened it and facilitated its expansion (Nelson, 1973; Linklater, 1998). In certain respects, therefore, Nelson represents the West as a civilizational identity that is based upon a cosmopolitan foundation. It is, in important respects, defined by its capacity to reach beyond the local, the parochial and to engage in multicultural dialogue.

Others, however, lay greater emphasis on the hegemonic rather than the dialogic dimensions of Western growth and expansion, positing that the West remains a particular civilizational identity that has had the capacity to project its culture at a global level. However, while its institutions, norms and even structures of thought have become globalized, they remain particular to the West rather than universal or a complete body of knowledge. Sandra Harding (1998), for instance, discusses how Western scientific thought is profoundly shaped by the historical and cultural context in which it evolved. Cultural preferences, she argues, may guide the questions asked and the causes investigated. Chris Brown (2000) similarly suggests that the promotion of norms and ideas such as human rights, civil liberties and liberal democracy by Western states promotes the values and norms of a particular cultural perspective rather than a universal consensus that incorporate mutual respect for diverse cultures.

Questions of cultural universality and diversity that are canvassed in the debate between these positions are of importance since they influence the way in which the role of the West is perceived in world politics today, whether Western norms and values should be treated as the hegemonic projections of still powerful societies, or as providing the foundations for an evolving, multicultural international society.

The West: the power of the word

The foregoing demonstrates that the West is widely perceived to be a central actor in world politics and a critical element of any cultural or political world order. Therefore, how it is conceptualized and how its role in that cultural world order is perceived, can tell us much about broader assumptions relating to that cultural world order.

The term 'the West' peppers the language of commentary and scholarship in world politics. It appears in an abundance of books and articles, such as *Islam and the West* (Lewis, 1993), 'The West and the Rest' (Mahbubani, 1992) and *Twilight of the West* (Coker, 1998). The West is often invoked in antithesis to a similarly broadly constituted 'other' – the East, the Orient, Islam, Asia, the Third World. The West, meaning the antithesis to the communist East, was central to the language of Cold War politics. Despite the collapse of this East, the West remains central to the language of post-Cold War politics, illustrated by references such as those to the West's role in the Balkans, or the West's position on human rights. In the late 1990s, the decision to extend NATO to include Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic was discussed as bringing former Eastern bloc states under 'the protection' of the West. In the 1999 Kosovo conflict, NATO was frequently referred to as 'representing the West'. In media debates, it is not uncommon to hear discussion of how the West should respond, for instance, to the conflict in Chechnya or Central Africa, or other such locations.

In the history and language of world politics, the West is often presented as a cohesive community, its evolution following a natural progression from ancient times to the future. Yet the legacy of ideas on which conceptions of the West draw is diverse and, at times, contradictory (Dasenbrock, 1991). *The Oxford English Dictionary* devotes no less than three pages to its definition, and another four to associated terms. Its definitions encompass the West as a location, as a jurisdiction – the Western part of the Roman Empire subsequent to 395 AD; a religious community – the Latin Roman Church in contrast to the Eastern Orthodox church; a cultural and racial community defined in antithesis to Asia or the Orient – perhaps its most common usage; and, more recently, as an ideological community, denoting the non-communist states of Europe and North America in the twentieth-century.⁶

In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the concept of the West evokes very different images in different contexts. The West of the early twentieth century was still an imperial West. In this context, it is often conceived of as predominantly white, Christian and with its heartland in Europe. However, conceptions of the West also draw deeply on a tradition of liberalism and efforts to introduce Western liberal principles into the structures and institutions of international politics. The establishment of the League of Nations and the promotion of international law, open diplomacy and self-determination demonstrate this. The liberal dimension of the West became more pronounced in the international realm in the mid-twentieth century. The concept of the West in this era is most immediately associated with resistance to totalitarianism, first in the form of fascism, then communism. Geographically, the line dividing West and East was drawn in Europe, and the heartland of the West moved towards

the United States. But the term 'the West' is imbued with a conceptual as much as a geographical meaning in this era, connoting a community of liberal, capitalist societies. However, the conceptions of the West in the bipolar context coexisted with the concept of the West constituted in antithesis to the Third World. In this context the West represented the world's wealthy, developed and industrialized societies.

In the post-Cold War era, conceptions of the West no longer revolve exclusively around concepts of ideology or development. Some commentators speculated that the West as a political community would be unable to retain its cohesion without the threat of the Soviet Union (Harries, 1993). Others saw the demise of the West with the unravelling of the Atlantic community that had been a core of this identity during the Cold War as the structures of American and European societies change and the Western European powers become more engaged in their European community (Coker, 1998). However, despite the demise of the communist East, and the rapid development of certain post-colonial societies, particularly in East Asia, the West as a concept has become neither redundant nor universal. It remains part of the political vocabulary in discussions about the maintenance of international order, security and economics. Daniel Deudney and John Ikenberry (1993/94) define the contemporary West as consisting of Western Europe, North America and Japan. Their West is based on the logic of 'industrial liberalism' and distinguished by a private economy, a common civic identity and public institutions. Its hub, and ultimately the model upon which this conception is built, is the United States. For these authors political culture and shared norms play a significant role in defining the West.

For many the West, its practices, institutions and norms, form the core of globalization. Others understand the West as a regional, cultural community rather than a global one; one which is powerful but not unrivalled (Huntington, 1996a). However, in an increasingly fluid international environment, it is hard to conceive of the concept of the West becoming a purely territorial or racially exclusive one.

What is evident is that while conceptions of the West are frequently deployed in discourses of international relations, it is not always the same conception of the West that is being discussed. At times the term may refer to the UN, at times to the United States, at others to the colonial or former colonial powers of Europe, elsewhere to the advanced capitalist economies of the world. The West is often perceived as an actor, a powerful actor, yet the nature of its agency is problematic. The West is not a formal political community in the same sense in which sovereign states or international organizations are. It is not a formal alliance, although it is a conception often used to refer to formal and informal alliances of actors, the most prominent of which is NATO. Despite the West being a concept that is rooted in geography, it is not simply a place, nor is it only a racial or reli-

gious community, although all these properties form important dimensions of what the West is perceived to be. Therefore, while the West is widely acknowledged as a central force in world politics, its character, composition and the nature of its agency are interpreted in different and, at times, in contesting ways.

As noted, the West is often invoked in antithesis to a similarly broadly constituted other – the East, the Orient, Islam. It has been used to call upon a loyalty that goes beyond local priorities. Its ‘membership’ appears fluid and capable of contextual redefinition. It is perhaps from this fluidity or plasticity that the idea of the West derives its power and continued currency, allowing it to flow across and coexist with, existing local and regional communities and identities. However, its power also derives from the sheer scale of the influence in world politics of actors and ideas associated with the West.

The impact of the West

Therefore, while acknowledging that the constitution of the West is complex and subject to interpretation, we must also acknowledge that it is identified with a range of powerful actors and processes that have helped to shape contemporary world politics, actors such as the United States and the European powers, processes and ideas such as imperialism, capitalism and democracy. In many respects, the impact of these actors and processes identified with the West has been unprecedented in its scope and extent. For the purposes of analysis, we can divide the perceived influence of the West on modern international relations into three key elements: ‘the West’ as actor; ‘the West’ as institutional model; and ‘the West’ as an intellectual foundation. As actor, ‘the West’, meaning principally Europe and the United States, has been a dominant force in modern world politics. Mann describes the nineteenth-century West, as a multi-power civilization, and undisputed global hegemon (Mann, 1993, vol. 2: 262–4). European expansion from the sixteenth century onward meant that Western powers became involved economically, militarily and politically in Asia, Africa and the Americas; the affairs of Europe coming to influence and dominate those of other continents. Fieldhouse estimates that by 1800, Europeans controlled 35 per cent of the world’s landed surface; by 1878, 67 per cent; and by 1914, 84 per cent (Fieldhouse, 1984: 3). Mann estimates that by 1913, Western powers contributed to nine-tenths of global industrial production. Increasingly the concept of ‘Western powers’ was expanded to also include the United States. Even when the direct control exercised by Western states and empires over societies was reduced through decolonization, they maintained predominance in the world’s systems of production, trade and finance. This meant that the newly emerging societies continued to operate within the context of extensive Western power. During the Cold War, the

former imperial powers were split by the ideological bipolarization which created the 'Western' and 'Eastern' blocs. While this produced tremendous rivalry for global influence in the political, military and economic field, it did not undermine the dominance of these powers in the international system. Only in recent decades did Western states feel the pressure of serious economic competition, emanating from the industrializing economies of East Asia. The military, economic and political capacity of the West has therefore been widely perceived to be a dominant feature of modern world politics.

Therefore, as an actor, the West is widely perceived as a dominant force in modern world politics, expressed through the physical expansion of Western powers. However, through its expansion, ideas and institutions that were generated in a European context, came to provide the framework of 'international society' (Wight, 1966a; Bull and Watson, 1984). This is a further mechanism through which the West is often perceived as shaping international relations. The framework of the contemporary international system rests upon foundations derived from Western models; the sovereign territorial state, the network of diplomacy, the procedures of international law (Bull and Watson, 1984: 2). In addition, many of the major economic and political institutions founded in the twentieth century – the League of Nations, the UN, the GATT and WTO and the International Monetary Fund – were modelled around Western political and economic principles, and Western interests.

Concepts now widely utilized in international parlance, such as democracy and capitalism, are typically viewed as having their foundations in the West, that is in European thought and history. For a long time, 'modernization' and 'development' were taken as being synonymous with Westernization. Although modernization theory has since been subject to criticism and review, in many parts of the developing world modernization and Westernization are still assumed to be the same thing (Gordon, 1989: 48–51). Concepts such as 'modernization' and 'development' have been the vehicles for the globalization of the principles of the European Enlightenment, such as rationality and progress. An important aspect of the contemporary debate on globalization concerns the degree to which globalization is a pseudonym for Westernization; the growth of global interconnections a vehicle for the projection of Western interests, ideas and values (Tomlinson, 1999).

Finally, the way in which the academic discipline of International Relations describes and analyses world politics largely derives from 'Western' historical experience and intellectual traditions. That is, International Relations draws deeply on European and American history, philosophy and political traditions. Therefore, the West is widely perceived both as an influential force and source of formative processes and ideas in International

Relations. This in itself encourages us to think more deeply about who or what is being discussed when we employ the concept of 'the West'.

The West as a civilizational identity

The West is often perceived as not simply a military or political alliance, but as a broad or diffuse community distinguished by a common culture, histories and traditions. We need, then, to come to grips with the nature of the West as a cultural entity. As Richard Falk has observed, '[t]hose who emphasize the cultural basis of political action often tend to regard the appropriate unit of analysis to be civilization rather than state' (1990: 268). As noted above, civilization is a complex term and the subject of many definitions. These variously highlight the significance of material capabilities, intellectual and technical skills, linguistic and spiritual commonalities shared by broad communities of people. Fernand Braudel's definition of civilizations describes communities which endure across lengthy periods of time and which comprise both material and philosophical dimensions (1980). Robert Cox elucidates by defining civilization as 'a fit between material conditions of existence ... and intersubjective meaning.' (1999: 5) He goes on to note '[m]aterial conditions change. So do the meanings that people share intersubjectively. Civilizations are thus in slow but continuing development. Change is of their essence.' (Ibid.)

This alerts us to the further debate as to whether, in discussing civilizations, one should search for the essential qualities that define a particular civilization, what Jackson calls a substantialist approach, or to adopt an approach that treats civilizations as unfolding processes, projects, practices and relations (Jackson, 1999: 142). Cox's definition points to the latter: 'Civilizations ... are to be thought of as processes or tendencies rather than essences.' (1999: 14) In this study I lean towards a processual approach since this provides us with a more dynamic conceptualization of civilization. However, the focus of this study is less on definitions of civilization *per se*, and more on exploring how conceptions of the qualities and boundaries that define and constitute a particular civilization marry with perceptions of identity. That is, how conceptions of civilization contribute to perceptions of who a community is and what they do.

Therefore, in this study, I treat the West as a *civilizational identity*. By a civilizational identity I mean a form of identity which locates the immediate ethnic or national community within the context of a broader, cultural community, a transnational community, often extensive in geographical and temporal scope. A civilizational identity might be perceived as encompassing a multiplicity of languages, ethnicities, religious denominations, but united by some elementary shared histories, traditions, values and beliefs. These influence the way people believe the world should be, the

goals that should be striven for and, perhaps more fundamentally, the things that are at stake. It may also influence perceptions of what is the acceptable mode of conduct in the global arena. Civilizational identity may be perceived as important in helping to form values, priorities, goals and norms. In this respect, a civilizational identity provides the opportunity for membership of a normative community, one that is not necessarily fixed, but capable of change, evolution, diversity and even inconsistency! Civilizational identities can be employed by states but do not constitute the totality of state identities. They may help to locate the state's political identity in a broader context, such as the cultural and religious community of Asia or of Islam. However, they might also be used to undermine the cohesion of the state's identity as occurred, for instance, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, or in Russia with regard to Chechen separatism. Civilizational identities may be an aspect of national or state identity, but they locate the state or nation in a much broader imagined community. Civilizational identity presents only one level of cultural identity, but it appears to be an increasingly important one.

Civilizational identities as social constructions

As signalled above, civilization is a complex concept. Underlying its usage is a range of implicit assumptions. The term comes loaded with the dual connotations of group difference and of progress, the two meanings often subtly interwoven in our language and perceptions. The deployment of the rhetoric of civilizational identity is becoming increasingly prominent in the language of world politics. However, there is often a tendency to treat cultural and civilizational identities such as the West as something naturally occurring and organic, as given and fixed, and even as unitary. Because cultural identities often draw upon perceptions of history and tradition as an important source of direction and legitimacy, they are often perceived as ancient and even primordial. However, as Edward Said argues, cultures are neither given nor organic or spontaneous, but socially constructed frameworks of interpretation (Said, 1993; Eagleton, 2000; Parekh, 2000).

While they draw on history, they are always constructed from selective representations of self and other in the past and the present. Cultures are highly political constructions. The selection of one representation over others portrays some as more authentic and legitimate whilst marginalizing others. They can signify who is considered as a legitimate member of the community and who is seen as an outsider. During the Cold War, for instance, the West was defined in antithesis to the Marxist systems of the East, despite the foundations of Marxism in the intellectual traditions of Europe and despite the existence of strong communist parties within certain societies in Western Europe. In the context of the contemporary

'Asian values' debate, certain values, such as freedom of the press and individualism have been portrayed as aspects of Western, and therefore, foreign culture. In this context, certain representations of the West have been deployed to build a particular sense of a distinct Asian identity (Mahbubani, 1999).

The politics of culture can, therefore, be highly significant in the formation of political identities and interests. Viewing cultures as social constructions allows us to understand them as not necessarily fixed, but dynamic, constantly in the process of re-presentation in the context of contemporary needs and forces. Lapid suggests it can be more fruitful for understanding world politics to treat cultures as emergent, constructed contested and interactive (Lapid, 1996: 8; Sewell, 1998). As a form of cultural identity, civilizational identities will, therefore, always be complex and, to some extent, contingent on the environment in which they are articulated.

One of the factors that has perhaps militated against the treatment of civilizations as significant actors in world politics is their somewhat intangible nature. The frontiers between civilizations are broad and murky. In contrast, sovereign states appear to provide a more concrete representation of community, with their territorial frontiers and institutions encased in solid buildings. However, as Benedict Anderson (1991) points out, the nation-state owes its identity and cohesion as much to intangible, intersubjective factors as to the more tangible manifestations of community. As he argues, community is as much an 'imagined' as a tangible entity. His work on the constitution of national communities provides important theoretical insights into the constituting of broadly based and dispersed political communities. Anderson's work on 'imagined communities' can be usefully applied to civilizational entities such as the West to assist in understanding their substance and importance in world politics. The West can be viewed as an imagined community in the sense that it is a broad transnational association, which extends over a broad geographical and temporal canvass. It encompasses peoples who may have no immediate contact with one another, but who perceive themselves to be part of the West. There is, therefore, a shared identity and some element of common interests, ideas and values. It is taken to represent certain traditions, handed down in the course of the long history of the West.

The foregoing suggests, then, that conceptions of the West in world politics are multiple, complex and contingent. How do we grapple with this complexity and variation in seeking to understand how the role of the West is perceived? Do these various conceptions all represent the same West? Should we seek to identify the most authentic representation and privilege this in our discussions? To select one conception risks presenting an essentialized view of the West, losing the insights which the alternative conceptions provide. Rather than seeking to eliminate this complexity, it may be useful to ask what this tells us. Our understanding of International

Relations may be enriched by considering what the variation tells us about perceptions of the West and of its role in world politics, and of the likely interaction between Western societies and those of other civilizational identities.

International Relations, civilizational identities and the West

Viewing the West as a civilizational identity and an imagined community allows us to be more comfortable with understanding the West as a complex entity, broad in geographic and temporal range, which changes and evolves. It may also help to explain the absence of conceptual analysis of the West in International Relations. Consideration of the role of civilizations in contemporary International Relations has been minimal. There was interest in their role in writings on world politics in the early twentieth century. This interest was sustained among international historians and sociologists. However, during the Cold War, the discipline quickly came to view the state as its principal focus of enquiry. The tendency to shy away from civilizations was perhaps a result of a propensity to marginalize issues pertaining to culture in International Relations.

While there was an interest in political culture in the work of postwar American political scientists such as Gabriel Almond and Stanley Verba (Almond and Verba, 1963), the issue remained marginal to International Relations until the 1990s. In part this was due to the predominance of an empirical, scientific epistemology in the discipline that favoured the study of observable, measurable data rather than the more subjective and difficult to quantify issues entailed in culture and identity (Jacquin-Berdal *et al.*, 1993). Furthermore, the most prominent paradigms of International Relations seek to present theories that are universal in application, regardless of the characters of the actors under consideration. Finally, the tendency towards positing universal truths in International Relations is facilitated and reinforced by a lack of reflection on the extent to which International Relations as a discipline is based upon the historical and intellectual evolution of the West (Chakrabarti Pasic, 1996). While International Relations scholars may demonstrate knowledge of this legacy, this does not necessarily translate into a consciousness of how, or if, the cultural specificity of the legacy constrains its broader relevance to world politics. This allows the discipline to perceive itself as universal and acultural since it tends to mask the cultural foundations upon which the discipline is built.

Therefore, for a variety of reasons, the conceptual analysis of the role of culture and of civilizational identities in international and world order was long neglected. However, in the post-Cold War era International Relations has been subject to rethinking and review in response to the turbulence

and transformation of contemporary world politics (Lapid, 1996: 4; Rosenau, 1990). The shape of the international system was radically altered by the collapse of bipolarity. The states system itself is being subjected to a variety of centrifugal and centripetal pressures, witnessing both the fragmentation and the convergence of states as a result of the pressures of technological, political, economic and social change (Camilleri and Falk, 1992; Clark, 1997; Ferguson and Mansbach, 1996; Kaplan, 1997). These changes are forcing International Relations scholars to reconsider their perceptions of political communities in world politics in order to understand, let alone explain or predict, events and trends. These events have encouraged a more explicit interest in forces which shape political communities, their interests and their interactions. Culture is one of these forces. The role of culture is an important dimension of a number of contemporary debates relating to issues such as the resurgence of ethnic nationalism, the impact of globalization and the efficacy of humanitarian intervention. The terms 'the West' 'Asia' and 'Islam' are increasingly common features of these debates. In cases such as the emergence of ethnic nationalism during the 1990s, in locations like Kosovo, Bosnia, Chechnya and Indonesia, local cultural identities not only became important political identities but were significantly articulated in the context of broader civilizational identities – Islamic, Slavic or Orthodox and the West.

Furthermore, in recent years, there has been a radical growth in interest in the reflectivist approaches to world politics and in normative issues in the discipline. Critical theorists and constructivist scholars have argued forcefully that in analysing world politics, we must understand the ways in which agents, structures and institutions are socially constituted. These developments have consequently prompted a renewed interest in questions about how identities and interests are constituted and represented in world politics. They have also prompted us to note that the constitution of identities and interests is an intensely political and often contested process. Representations of particular identities, and of particular communities, are not always consistent but can vary greatly across time and across perspective. This presents us with the challenge of discovering whether we can identify cohesion and continuity where there is also diversity and complexity.

The renewed political and disciplinary interest in culture and identity discussed above makes this an opportune time to examine a range of conceptions of the West. This study demonstrates points of commonality and difference that coexist across a range of conceptions. However, as noted above, it does not seek to produce or sanction *the* definitive conception of the West. This raises questions regarding how we can understand the coexistence of complex and multiple images of the West without seeking to authorize any one of these. This study suggests that the answer to this problem lies in recognizing the influence of context on the various conceptions. One of the features of the recent work on culture and identity has

been to highlight the dynamic and fragmented or pluralist nature of these forces (Campbell, 1998a; Dittmer and Kim, 1993; Lapid, 1996; Lawson, 1996; 1997). For instance, Campbell (1998a) argues that the identity of the state is not fixed, but constantly in the process of constitution and reconstitution. In order to retain their attractiveness, identities must evolve to maintain their relevance to changing circumstances (Bloom, 1990; Parekh, 2000). Therefore, to understand the coexistence of a variety of concepts of the West, it is useful to keep in mind the contexts in which they were formed and the perspectives from which they evolve. This study, therefore, locates the conceptions of the West in the context of their historical environment, intellectual influences and broader perceptions of the cultural world order.

Methods for studying the West

Drawing on the above influences, this study treats the West as an evolving social construction and examines factors such as the historical and intellectual environment, which shape interpretations of it. It approaches the West as a series of representations, investigating how it is conceptualized in the work of seven twentieth-century thinkers.

The representations chosen are those of Western scholars or scholars who have worked in the West, meaning here Europe or the United States. While this limits the study's capacity to reflect on non-Western conceptions of the West, it does allow us to reflect upon the rich diversity of conceptions within the West, indicating that even within the West, there is no single or homogeneous conception of self. This approach has been adopted, first to overcome the tendency to reproduce essentialised dichotomies that reduce the complexity of both West and non-West. Furthermore, this approach contributes to efforts to correct the lack of critical self-reflection that often characterizes Western scholarship. In matters of culture, Western scholars have been skilled at establishing disciplines for the study of the other, of that which is not Western. In certain respects, this suggests that Western scholarship speaks from a position of universal objectivity that allows it to comment upon the localized characteristics of other societies. In contrast, critical self-reflection on how Western culture has been perceived and constituted raises challenging and, for some, disturbing tensions and contradictions that exist within the broader identity of the West.⁷

The authors selected for this study are not all International Relations scholars, but all were significant in articulating and shaping contemporary thought on the role and future of the West in world politics. All made major and often radical contributions to contemporary debates on the political world order based upon important and distinctive assumptions about the nature of the cultural world order. This study examines their

conceptions of the West within the context of their assumptions about cultural world order. It applies to each a framework of analysis that uncovers points of commonality and difference in these conceptions, and explores factors that influence this diversity.

All are authors writing in the twentieth century, the period in which International Relations developed as a discipline; but from different periods of the century. The twentieth century was a tumultuous era in world politics, one that saw unprecedented political, economic, technological and social change. Western states, Western ideas and Western power were widely perceived as at the heart of many of these changes. However, as noted above, perceptions of its identity and of its role have varied greatly at different eras and in different contexts. The century thus provided a rich vein to mine in relation to perceptions and representations of the West. Discussions relating to the West in world politics in the mid-twentieth century often conceive of it as constituted primarily in antithesis to the Soviet-led Eastern bloc. This is not the focus of this study. While assumptions that underlie conceptions of the West in the Cold War context are not excluded, this study seeks to place them in a broader context that precedes, succeeds and exceeds the Cold War environment. It examines conceptions of the West that precede the Cold War, in addition to those which discuss the West in the post-Cold War context, and those which discuss the West in relation to societies beyond communist Europe and the Soviet Union.

In looking at conceptions drawn from different parts of this century, the study examines how the historical context frames perceptions of civilizational identity. In examining the West from a historical perspective, the study aims to escape one of the pitfalls that International Relations is often accused of falling into, that is the neglect or misuse of history (Ashley, 1984; Cox, 1981; Kratochwil, 1996). However, the study also compares perspectives drawn from similar periods, highlighting the influence of other factors, such as the intellectual environment, on these conceptions.

The first two scholars selected, Oswald Spengler and Arnold Toynbee, illustrate the interest in the early part of the twentieth century in civilizational interaction as an important aspect of world politics. Spengler's controversial *The Decline of the West* sold over one hundred thousand copies and provoked debate throughout Europe. Written in wartime Germany, it demonstrates a Romantic pessimism for the future of the late modern West in the context of a broad cyclical view of civilizational history. It expressed a sense of disillusionment, if not doom, which reflected an important aspect of that era. Spengler's conception of the West, discussed in Chapter 3, is of a great, but decaying civilization in a cultural world order comprising separate, self-contained civilizations pursuing independent histories, rather than a universal history of human progress. Spengler's philosophical approach resonates strongly with contemporary post-modernism in its critical attitude to universalism, its accentuation of the

importance of relativity and in being grounded in a metaphysics of flux. Arnold Toynbee, also writing in the first half of the twentieth century, shared Spengler's interest in placing the West in the broader context of civilizational history. He was one of the most prolific and widely respected scholars of international relations of his generation, not only in Europe, but also in the United States and Asia. In a series of studies that captured the imagination of scholars and the public at the onset of the Cold War, his work presents a critical analysis of the modern West that is examined in Chapter 4. Like Spengler, Toynbee also conceptualized the West within a cultural world order comprising separate civilizations experiencing cycles of expansion and retraction. His West was the leading civilization, but one threatened with spiritual and physical decline. Toynbee did not see the West as a universal civilization, but did perceive it to provide a framework for a global, multicultural society. Both Spengler and Toynbee demonstrate an interest in civilizations as the central units of history and seek to understand the West in a broader cultural context.

Martin Wight and Hedley Bull are discussed together in Chapter 5 as foundational authors of the influential International Society or 'English school' of international relations. In contrast to many of their contemporaries, their work encompassed an awareness of the relevance of civilizational interaction to international relations in the context of the evolution of international society. Although the majority of their work was produced during the Cold War era, they provide an analysis of international relations which, while encompassing the dynamics and structures of the Cold War, exceeds that immediate environment. The concept of the cultural world order found in their work also involves a plurality of civilizations, but one that appears more integrated than Spengler and Toynbee's. Their West is a central, formative influence shaping modern interaction through the structures and institutions of international society.

The final set of scholars examined present three very different representations of the West and of cultural world order in the later part of the twentieth century. The works of Francis Fukuyama and Samuel Huntington represent two distinct approaches to thinking through the meaning and implications of the end of the Cold War and the future world order. Fukuyama's 'end of history' essay provoked a storm of debate by heralding the end of the Cold War and the victory of the West. His thesis is examined in Chapter 6 as an influential example of a liberal, progressive conceptualization of the future of world politics and the role of the West. Fukuyama's concept of the cultural world order is shaped unambiguously by a belief in teleological human progress. Humanity is seen as involved in a civilizing process with the West at its forefront. In contrast, Samuel Huntington's equally provocative 'clash of civilizations' thesis, discussed in Chapter 7, has become one of the most widely discussed essays in modern International Relations, articulating a pessimistic, *realpolitik* perspective of

future world order. Huntington's conception of cultural world order comprises a plurality of competing and essentially incommensurable civilizations. Furthermore, he argues that cultural identity is becoming the organizing principle of the political world order. In this context, he perceives the West to be a powerful but declining civilization that needs to regroup and consolidate.

In contrast again to both Fukuyama and Huntington, Edward Said's work focuses on the West not as a liberal but as an imperial entity. Said's *Orientalism* is widely regarded as one of the most important works in generating the genre of post-colonial studies. His work, which is examined in Chapter 8, provides a radical and critical view of the West and civilizational interaction drawn, in some respects, from outside the West. Said's cultural world order implies a plurality of civilizations, but suggests that this has been dominated by an imperial West in the modern era. His conception of the West entails a representation of representations. Through this, he critiques how the West constructed its identity through its representations of non-Western peoples.

The examination of these important thinkers in tandem presents a rich and diverse range of perspectives, both on the West and on the cultural world order, that suggest a variety of possibilities for cultural and political interaction. The method chosen is necessarily limited in that only a small selection of perspectives is examined. A number of other important and influential scholars could also have been included in this study, scholars such as Fernand Braudel, William McNeill or even Max Weber or Benjamin Nelson, to name but a few. These scholars have also shaped popular understandings of who and what constitutes the West writing from disciplines such as history and sociology. However, the aim here is to examine a representative rather than a necessarily comprehensive selection of conceptions of the West and this selection is sufficient to this task. The examination of a broader range of thinkers may provide the focus of future research.

This study begins with a discussion in Chapter 1 of the main paradigms of International Relations, demonstrating that none provides an adequate conceptual framework for analysing the West in world politics. It considers this absence, suggesting that it is in part due to the epistemological premisses and theoretical aspirations of these paradigms. Chapter 2 proceeds to build a framework for the analysis of conceptions of civilizational identities such as the West and their relationships to cultural world order. The chapter discusses how this framework can address the complexity and contingency of the West by drawing on insights from literature on the politics of identity and representation. The framework focuses on the context in which the conceptions were formed and articulated; assumptions about the nature of the cultural world order; the objective and normative boundaries of the West that these conceptions present. These include how the West is

perceived and defined in these representations in relation to territory, religion, race, power, norms and institutions.

Chapters 3 to 8 then apply this framework to each of the authors selected. Each chapter reviews perceptions of cultural interactions between the West and non-West within the context of the authors' assumptions about the cultural world order and the community's boundaries. Examination of this range of perspectives illustrates the complexity and contingency of conceptions of the West. Through this, it is hoped that this study will contribute to broader reflection on the important questions of who and what is being invoked when the concept of the West is employed in world politics.

It also encourages a healthy respect for the contingency of other civilizational identities, such as Islam or Asia, which are also frequently invoked in contemporary political discourse. But in addition, the study raises important questions about how interaction between civilizational identities is variously perceived and about whether these lead us to anticipate conflict, convergence or co-operative coexistence between various civilizational identities. Perceptions of the structure of relations between these imagined communities and of whether there can be commensurability between different civilizational identities in a multicultural world, have implications for how we perceive international society. Is this essentially a hierarchical society in which the norms of the dominant culture prevail, or is there the possibility for negotiating a society in which the values of all participants are not only acknowledged but given expression? In such a context, how might common norms and values be negotiated and managed? These are crucial questions that apply to contemporary debates relating to issues such as the evolution of the human rights regime and norms of intervention. As such, they deserve our fullest attention.

1

The West, Civilizations and International Relations Theory

The absence of the West from International Relations theory

If we are interested in learning more about the nature and role of the West in world politics, it would seem natural to turn first to the academic discipline most closely concerned with the study of world politics, that of International Relations. How has the discipline of International Relations understood and explained the West in relation to world politics? How do the frameworks of analysis the discipline provides help us to examine a civilizational identity such as the West? In his 1959 work, *Man, the State and War*, Kenneth Waltz identifies three levels of analysis for understanding the dynamics of international relations: the individual; the state; and the system of states. This conceptualization, with minor variations, has been highly influential in the discipline. However, none of these categories accommodate analysis of the West or of civilizational identities more generally. While the West is frequently referred to in discussion of world politics by International Relations scholars and commentators, and is widely assumed to be an important actor and influence in international affairs, its nature and composition remain largely unexamined in International Relations theory. In these respects, the West is absent from International Relations theory. What explains this absence? In part, it is linked to the epistemological premisses of International Relations' main paradigms, taken here to be realism, liberalism and, to a slightly lesser extent, Marxism (Holsti, 1985; Smith, 1995: 18; Wæver, 1996), and to their theoretical aspirations.

Realism, the state and the West

The state is the central political community employed in the study of world politics. The discipline of International Relations was born from a desire to understand and prevent war between states and all the key paradigms, to a greater or lesser extent, continue to acknowledge the centrality

of the state. Realism, the major school of thought which gives primacy to the state as a unit of analysis, assumes that the principal actors in world politics are groups, rather than individuals (Buzan, 1996; Schweller and Priess, 1997) The primacy of the state is most evident in realist approaches, still the dominant paradigm in International Relations thought. Realists view international relations as the interaction of sovereign territorial states in a situation of anarchy in which states are driven by the pursuit of interests defined by some as power (Morgenthau, 1964: 5), by others as security (Holsti, 1995; Waltz, 1979: 91). Neo-realists, while focusing on the role of structure in the international system rather than the agency of the state in their analysis of international politics, continue to see states as the key actors in the international system (Buzan, 1996: 49). Their systemic focus makes no additional space for consideration of civilizational identities in international relations.

While realism is not fixed upon the nation-state as a timeless and universal category, it is fixed in its view of the nature of the units in world politics. The units change in form and composition, but retain their essential character, motivation and goals – the drive for power or security. Whether the units examined are tribes, city-states or empires, they remain ‘self regarding units’ (Gilpin, 1979: 18; Waltz, 1979: 91). Therefore, while the character of the state may change, its basic nature in the realist schema of international politics does not. It remains the key unit of analysis operating under the logic of anarchy in pursuit of its own interest regardless of its cultural character.

Realism recognizes the potential for associations between states, but this is based on issues of interest rather than necessarily on cultural identity. For instance, states may form an alliance to maintain a balance of power in the system. However, such alliances will be necessarily temporary and subject to states interests: ‘Whether or not a nation shall pursue a policy of alliance is, then, a matter not of principle but of expediency’ (Morgenthau, 1964: 181). Similarly, Waltz’s argument suggests alliances are functional and do not presuppose ideological, normative or cultural links:

If pressures are strong enough, a state will deal with almost anyone
It is important to notice that states will ally with the devil to avoid the hell of military defeat. (Waltz, 1979: 166)

If states were self-seeking, self-regarding units, one would expect that associations on the basis of a transnational form of identity such as the civilizational would have little or no relevance. However, assumptions of transnational identities such as the West slip into realist discussions of world politics. Morgenthau, for instance, assumes the West to be an important actor in world politics. In discussing the Cold War bipolar system, he notes:

The superpower that could add India or a united Germany to its allies might well have gained a decisive victory in the struggle between East and West. (1964: 360)

In relation to challenges to colonialism, he argues:

The moral challenge emanating from Asia is in its essence a triumph of the moral ideas of the West. ... In the wake of its conquests, the West brought to Asia not only its technology and political institutions, but also its principles of political morality. (1964: 359)

Furthermore, Morgenthau presupposes the West to be a fundamental element of the international system as a whole. For example, he acknowledges that his discussion of the conduct of international politics focuses primarily on Western civilization, '[t]he civilisation with which we are here of course mainly concerned' (1964: 231). He also attaches great importance to the intellectual and moral cohesion of Western civilization as a critical element of the balance of power:

... the fuel that keeps the motor of the balance of power moving is the intellectual and moral foundation of Western civilisation. (1964: 221)

The West is, therefore, important to Morgenthau in being both an instrumental and a moral force, a normative foundation. It assumes an importance that does not derive from his theoretical structures of international politics. Morgenthau's references to the West make assumptions about its nature, constitution, and its centrality. Such assumptions are not accounted for in his state-centric model of power politics.

Morgenthau's position is not unusual. It is also evident in the work of other classical realists such as George Kennan. Kennan like Morgenthau views states as the central actors in International Relations, but proceeds to further assume important divisions between the communities of West and East. This is demonstrated in the title of his work, *Russia and the West*. Kennan frequently phrases his analysis in terms of the relationship of Russia, or the Soviets, to the West, stressing the need for the 'Western world' to stand firm against the threats emanating from the Soviet Union (Kennan, 1967, vol. 1: 250). This is something more than simply relations between self-regarding states pursuing functionally defined national interests. For Kennan, the West is clearly a broader community that encompasses states; there are strong assumptions of normative links between its members. Such communities, however, are not explained or analysed by realist theory.

John Mearsheimer's neo-realist analysis of the implications of the end of the Cold War clearly conceives of the international system as a system of

states. At the same time, the concept of the West remains relevant to his understanding of the contemporary world order. The bipolar Cold War order is based upon an 'East–West' division, with the West comprising democratic states united under American hegemony in the face of the Soviet threat (Mearsheimer, 1990). Similarly, for the neoclassical realist, William Wohlforth, the Cold War was a conflict 'caused by the rise of Soviet power and the fear this caused in the West.' (Wohlforth, 1994: 96).

The sense of the West as a significant community for realist authors was further accentuated by the post-Cold War debate with regard to the future collapse of Western cohesion (Cruise O'Brien, 1992/93; Harries, 1993; Walt, 1994). These discussions highlight the implicit significance in realist analysis of the West in world politics, but also accentuate the absence of a suitable category of analysis within realism for examining the nature and interaction of civilizational identities. In the work of Robert Gilpin (1979) we do find a sense of the West as a civilizational entity. Gilpin is conscious of the West as a civilization which has become pre-eminent on a global scale for a variety of developmental and organizational reasons, effectively establishing the parameters of the international system. The Western system and the international system consequently become virtually indistinguishable. Yet while Gilpin is aware of the West in his work and of the impact it had as a civilization in shaping world politics, he does not reflect on it as a community except to explain its superiority. In part, this is because he does not reflect on how civilizations fit into his structural theory of world politics, with civilizations appearing to be pre-modern communities subsumed under the Western states-system.¹

Authors in the realist tradition, therefore, incorporate conceptions of the West into their commentary on International Relations but not into their theoretical structure. Furthermore, there is little reflection on the extent to which their theoretical structures are premised on Western historical and intellectual traditions. Realist International Relations scholars acknowledge their intellectual debt to a range of 'classic' texts by European authors. These include Thucydides, Hobbes, Rousseau and Machiavelli. Histories of the evolution of international relations typically focus on the establishment of the modern European state system of secular, sovereign, territorial entities through the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, the Concert of Europe, and the operation of the balance of power in nineteenth-century Europe. The discipline focuses in more depth on the twentieth century and the politics of World War II, the Cold War and, more recently, the turmoil of the post-Cold War era. The politics of Europe and US–Soviet relations receives the most detailed analysis. As Walker notes, there is a tendency to neglect the interaction between political communities prior to and outside of the system of territorial, sovereign states (Walker, 1989).² Therefore, while realism aims to present a theory of International Relations that is universal in its application, it draws predominantly on Western historical, intellectual

and institutional precedents in constructing this theory. The theory it constructs allows little conceptual space for reflection on the role and nature of broad cultural communities such as the West out of which it evolves.

Liberalism, individualism and the West

During the rapid growth of International Relations as a discipline since the mid twentieth century, realism has been the dominant theoretical paradigm. However, other strands of thought consider a broader range of actors in world politics. The most prominent of these paradigms is often labelled the pluralist or liberal paradigm. Like realism, liberalism is a broad, generic title used to describe a wide range of thinkers and positions.³ Despite this diversity, liberalism can be viewed as 'an integral outlook' (Gray, 1995: xiii). These strands of thought share core assumptions including a belief in progress towards greater human freedom through promotion of peace, prosperity and justice; the belief in the realization of human freedom through greater co-operation; and the belief in transformation of human society via modernization. At the heart of classical liberal thought are the principles of freedom and progress (Zacher and Matthew, 1995). The central subject of these processes is the individual.

While much of contemporary liberal and neo-liberal international thought accepts the importance, if not the primacy, of the state as the most important collective international actor (Baldwin, 1993: 9; Keohane and Nye, 1977; 1987), its attitude to the relationship between the citizen and the state differs from that of realism. It understands the state as a pluralist community composed of individuals (Keohane, 1989: 174).

While liberal, and particularly neo-liberal thinkers, have not rejected the analysis of the international system as anarchic (Baldwin, 1993: 4), they see an international system which has more incentives towards co-operation and a greater focus on the potential for progress, learning and change. Liberal theorists have investigated how states learn to co-operate and how transnational structures and interests evolve through processes of interaction, interdependence and integration in both the economic and political fields.⁴ In emphasizing the potential for co-operation and interdependence, the liberal perspective also suggests that states may not be as hostile and self-regarding as realism implies. For instance, Karl Deutsch's work on security communities indicated that factors which contribute to mutual identification, shared values and procedures, and 'a trust bred of the predictability that mutual identification' brings are important in world politics, suggesting these are important to the formation of political associations (1957: 36, 56).

Furthermore, liberal International Relations theorists, particularly the neo-liberals, have been more willing than realists to acknowledge a broader range of significant actors in world politics. This pluralist conception of

world politics acknowledges the role of non-state actors such as multinationals and non-government organizations (Keohane and Nye 1972; 1977; 1987). The role which regimes and international organizations play in the international system has also been a major feature of neo-liberal research (Krasner, 1983; Ruggie 1983).

Therefore, liberal International Relations theorists do acknowledge a broader range of significant actors in world politics and conceptualize interaction as encompassing possibilities for change and integration. However, in practice, liberal International Relations theory still presents little conceptual space or active reflection on communities based on common cultural identity, such as the West. Despite acknowledging a role for different actors, civilizational identities are not easily accommodated in this paradigm. The conceptual space offered by this perspective for analysis of the West is, once again, limited.

The West in liberal theory

Despite the fact that civilizational identities such as the West are not easily encompassed by the conceptual framework of most liberal international theorists, 'the West' and associated terms appear in the work of these scholars. For instance, Keohane and Nye (1977: 28) refer to the role of force in 'East-West' relations in their discussion of complex interdependence, as does Hoffmann in his discussion of liberal international theory (Hoffmann, 1987: 135). In these cases, the West implies the community of democratized and industrialized capitalist states in contrast to the community of communist states led by the Soviet Union. This is also the sense of the West which Richard Rosecrance employs when he speaks of 'Western weapons of technology' confronting 'Eastern numbers and ideological zeal' (1986: 160–1). However, the West in liberal international theory is not only an ideological alliance constituted in antithesis to the communist bloc. If it were, one would assume that the end of the Cold War and the end of the 'East' would have led to the dispersal of the West.

However, the idea of the West continues to be employed in contemporary liberal international theory. Authors such as Francis Fukuyama (1992) refer to the West as a community of liberal, democratic states achieving relatively peaceful relations among themselves in contrast to the still developing world in which power politics still prevail. Elsewhere, Fukuyama refers to the West in relation to societies based upon European cultural traditions in contrast to those, for instance, of Asia (1995b: 37). David Deudney and John Ikenberry clearly articulate a sense of the West as a community with a 'reality beyond bi-polarity'. For them, the West encompasses the liberal democracies of Western Europe, North America and Japan, forming a 'civic union' that draws on a tradition of 'industrial democracy' that precedes and exceeds the Cold War. They understand the peace and stability of the

West as based on the structural integration of their organs of security, economy and society (Deudney and Ikenberry 1993/94: 18).

Not only do these authors suggest that the West is a significant form of community in world politics, their comments also suggest that it is a community deeply associated with the liberal tradition itself. In fact, 'the West' is the implicit context within which liberalism is embedded. As Anthony Arblaster observes, '[l]iberalism is the dominant ideology of the West' (1984: 6). It is an ideology drawn from the experiences and philosophy of Western Europe; a philosophy of modernity, emerging out of the scientific, political and intellectual revolutions of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe, expressing faith in man's capacity for material and moral progress. Although a product of a secular revolution, it provided 'a basis for moral and ethical life consistent with deep-seated Christian values and beliefs' (Zacher and Matthew, 1995: 111).

The development of liberal thought is closely linked to the political, social and intellectual evolution of Europe and North America. The intellectual antecedents of modern liberal theorists are predominantly European and American thinkers, such as Locke, Kant, Bentham, De Tocqueville and Hegel. Liberalism evolved from the European Enlightenment and the ideas of the British, French and American revolutions, including the underlying concepts of freedom, equality and individualism. The liberal political models and institutions of republicanism and democracy derive from European and American institutions.

European expansion eventually encouraged the globalization of liberal ideas, ultimately helping to stimulate revolt against European colonialism and imperialism (Barracough, 1964; Bull, 1984b; Panikkar, 1953). However, liberalism remains closely equated with the West, and liberalization with Westernization. In the context of the Cold War, the West and liberalism were virtually synonymous, the West believing it represented the liberal ideals of freedom, democracy and the free market. For Fukuyama, the 'triumph' of liberalism at the end of the Cold War is synonymous with the 'triumph' of the West:

The triumph of the West, of the Western *idea*, is evident first of all in the total exhaustion of all viable systematic alternatives to Western liberalism. (Fukuyama, 1989: 3)

Linguistically and conceptually, the West and liberalism blend into one. However, liberalism is not viewed universally as an emancipatory philosophy and has been associated by some with the continuing projection of Western control over the non-West.⁵ Voices from the developing world have argued that liberal standards and procedures are a form of cultural imperialism, imposing Western standards under the guise of universal standards.

Arblaster argues that in the later twentieth century, liberalism has become increasingly conservative and more closely associated with describing the interests of Western societies, giving priority to the individual's freedom over issues such as achieving of equality in social and economic areas. This has helped to discredit liberalism in the Third World (Arblaster, 1984: 326–32). For instance, in the contentious debate over human rights, it has been argued that the current human rights regime is not sufficiently sensitive to the diversity of social, economic, cultural and political realities in different countries (Alitas, 1993; Chua, 1992; Liu, 1993). Instead, human rights are often seen to represent Western values, pursued at times, to further the Western economic and political goals (Awanohara, Vatikiotis and Islam, 1993; Kausikan, 1993).⁶ Debate as to whether liberal ideals mask or project Western interests have also occurred in the context of humanitarian intervention, such as the NATO intervention in Kosovo (Ali, 1998; Said, 1998). In the broader arena of political economy, globalization is viewed by some as a pseudonym for Westernization (Tomlinson, 1999).

Liberal norms and values are, therefore, closely associated with the West, despite the ambition of liberalism to describe universal values and aspirations for all humanity. While liberal theoretical approaches in International Relations can encompass serious consideration of a broader range of actors, in practice, mainstream liberal theorists have not availed themselves of opportunities to reflect on the role in world politics of broader communities such as civilizational identities. In principle, liberal theories focus on the individual as the foundation of pluralist communities. In practice, modern liberal theorists have acknowledged the primacy of the states system and focused on understanding how other actors interact with, and constrain, states in their analysis of institutions, regimes and processes of interdependence or regional integration.

Although in the post-Cold War environment liberal international theory may provide openings for reflection on issues relating to civilizations, cultures and identity, it still provides no category in its framework of analysis for civilizational communities. While references to the West as a significant actor in world politics can be found in liberal commentaries, the nature and role of this actor is rarely interrogated at a conceptual level. In part, this may be due to the embeddedness of liberal theory in Western historical and intellectual traditions. While projecting a universalist theory, liberalism privileges the history, structure and traditions derived from Europe and the United States.

In recent years, there has been an effort to reformulate liberal International Relations theory into a more rigorous, social science paradigm. This is best demonstrated in the work of Andrew Moravcsik (1997). Moravcsik has sought to articulate a theory that he argues is prior to, and more fundamental than, alternative paradigms in that it sees the most significant force in world politics as the configuration of state preferences.

These preferences are not exogenously given or fixed, but shaped by state–society relations. Moravcsik's 'new liberal theory' is based on three core propositions: that the fundamental actors in world politics are individuals and private groups; that states (or other political institutions) represent subsets of domestic society – they are essentially representative institutions; and that the configuration of interdependent states preferences determines how states behave (1997: 516–20).

Moravcsik's articulation of liberal theory, therefore, encapsulates many of the elements alluded to above in respect of highlighting the role of individuals, domestic constituencies and transnational linkages in shaping the behaviour of states and other actors in world politics. However, he consciously seeks to develop a general theory which is 'nonutopian and non-ideological', stripping away important elements of the normative core of the liberal canon. This reformulation of liberalism moves even further towards a theory devoid of particular cultural attributes that focuses on the strategic interaction of rational actors. The determination of material and ideational preferences is something Moravcsik treats as occurring in the pre-political realm:

Socially differentiated individuals define their material and ideational interests independently of politics and then advance those interests through political exchange and collective action. (1997: 517)

However, this implies that issues of identity and culture can be significant in that they may be factors involved in shaping states' preferences. Yet we gain little insight from this theory on where such interests and perceptions emanate from and how they evolve.

Marxism, neo-Marxism and the unit of class

A third important paradigm found in International Relations pertains to perspectives deriving from Marxist thought. Although Marx was not primarily concerned with the specific functions of international politics,⁷ his ideas have significantly influenced International Relations theory, particularly in the area of international political economy and the practice of international politics (Kubalkova and Cruikshank, 1985).⁸ Marx viewed the states system as a superstructural effect of the struggle between classes in a succession of modes of production (Linklater, 1989: 2). It would ultimately wither away when replaced by a universal social order, which would be both classless and stateless. The most basic unit of analysis is, therefore, class (Kubalkova and Cruikshank, 1985: 17).

While Marx focused primarily on class division within and across states, later thinkers, such as the *dependencia* school and 'world systems' theorists looked more closely at the structures of the international system. This

mode of analysis, while discussing relations between states, gives primacy to economic relationships and the international division of production, labour and exchange rather than to political relations. Political relations become more a function of economic structure, as do relations between civilizations. Yet again, while the West is implicit both in the language and structures of Marxist-based International Relations thought and in its application to international politics, again the scope for analysing the West within its theoretical structure is limited to that of an agent of structure.

Marx and the West

For many years the perception of what constituted East and West that dominated International Relations derived from the division between the liberal capitalist system and the communist system based on Marxist thought. This is ironic since Marxism is itself derived from Western intellectual traditions. As Wallerstein points out, Marx was also a child of the Enlightenment drawing from this tradition an emphasis on the secular, and a commitment to science and reason (O'Brien, 1995; Wallerstein, 1984: 165). His views of the world, particularly in his early work, can be described as divided on West/non-West lines. The West is characterized by the triumph of individualism and the growth of capitalism, while the rest of the world was largely lumped together under the 'Asiatic mode of production', the most primitive of four historical stages of development (Lichtheim, 1979: 166; Sawyer, 1978; Turner, 1978). Marx's remarks on colonialism's impact on the non-West suggest that he understood it to be ultimately a force for progress. The Asiatic mode of production, characterized by Oriental despotism, was seen as inherently stagnant and needing the stimulus of Western capitalism as a cruel but necessary revolutionary force (Marx, 1983a). This is famously illustrated in Marx's comment that:

England has to fulfil a double mission in India: one destructive, the other regenerating – the annihilating of old Asiatic society, and the laying of the material foundation of Western society in Asia. (Marx, 1983b: 337)

In this respect, Marx explicitly distinguishes between civilizations of West and non-West on the basis of perceived levels of development (Lichtheim, 1979; Sawyer, 1978)

Neo-Marxism, International Relations and the West

In the twentieth century, ideas derived from Marxist analysis have been used to explain inequalities between developed and underdeveloped countries. In analysing a world structured along a core-periphery division, it is a community's location in the international schema of production that is the relevant issue. For instance, Andre Gunder Frank examined the uneven

development of capitalism. He argued that the underdevelopment of peripheral countries was a direct result of development at the core which had drawn away surplus from the periphery through the structures established under colonialism (Frank, 1967). However, although this analysis considers the consequences of Western expansion and colonization, it is not overtly an analysis based upon distinctions between the West and non-West as civilizational identities.

Immanuel Wallerstein, one of the most prominent of structuralist scholars, does address the role of the West as a distinct social system in international relations. In doing so, he provides useful insights into its nature and its role in world politics. However, his conception of the West is shaped by his interpretation of it as an element of the structure of the world system. Wallerstein's analysis of international relations focuses on the structure of this system rather than on the political communities within the structure; their role and place is related to their location in the world system. His analysis is holistic in that he rejects the employment of divisions between the realms of economy, polity and culture (Wallerstein, 1990b). Economic factors are represented as prior and the source of significant processes and structure in his analysis. The inter-state system is viewed as one institutional structure among a number in the integrated framework of the modern world system. This modern world system is the capitalist world system, a system that began in fifteenth-century Europe and expanded outward achieving unprecedented global scope, incorporating other societies into it. The system of sovereign states is represented as the political framework that evolved in concert with the expansion of the capitalist system, as the framework that best facilitated this expansion (Wallerstein, 1990a; 1996: 89).

The West, as represented by the modern capitalist mode of production, became the dominant social system in the modern era and stands at the core of the capitalist world system. Wallerstein argues that the modern capitalist mode of production, in absorbing all other social systems and establishing itself as the only world system, used the tools of the Enlightenment to promote itself as the only form of civilization. In this respect, the West, or Western civilization, came to absorb or replace the plurality of civilizations that preceded it (Wallerstein, 1984: 165; 1991b: 223). Therefore, Wallerstein does consider the role of civilizations in world politics. However, he does not treat civilizations as an empirical reality; rather they refer to 'a contemporary claim about the past in terms of its use in the present to justify heritage, separateness, rights' (1991b: 235). Consequently, he views civilizational claims as a means of seeking legitimacy, or more recently, part of the rhetoric of resistance within a capitalist economy (Wallerstein, 1984: 167). Therefore, civilizational interaction is treated as fundamentally a function or product of economic interaction.

Wallerstein is interested in the impact the West has had on other members of the world system. Placing it at the core of the global

core-periphery structure, his analysis is, in a literal sense, Western-centric since he views the West as the core around which all other societies rotate. However, his perspective focuses on the West as an element of structure. His discussion of the ideas and norms that constitute the West focuses on their relation to the process of capitalist accumulation, which is the real heart of his structural framework.

Neo-Marxist authors have, therefore, demonstrated some interest in, and awareness of, the West as a significant community in world politics. However, they focus primarily on the West as a system of production, operating at the core of the structure of the world system. It is the power relations between core and periphery, rather than the changing constitution of the West as a civilization identity or community that interests this school of thought. Once again, the language of the West and non-West permeates the application of neo-Marxist analysis: the West is synonymous with the core, the non-West with the periphery. In the language of international affairs, the West was for a long time automatically equated with the developed world; in other words, the successful, industrialized, capitalist economies which were members of the dominant international trade regime.

The map of East and West is better explained by the map of nineteenth-century European imperial expansion than by geography. For instance, the club of advanced industrialized societies includes not only the geographic West, in the sense of Western Europe, but also those former colonies and dominions in which white, European culture had become predominant. How else could Australia or New Zealand be considered as Western? The West of politicians and commentators such as Sukarno (Modelski, 1963), Mahathir (1986), Panikkar (1953) and Said (1978) is a West characterized by colonial expansion, and by economic and technological power. Therefore, a structuralist analysis of recent world politics presents the West as the developed world and the capitalist social system becomes synonymous with an aspect of the structure of the world system.

Therefore, as with the more prominent paradigms of International Relations thought, structural theories allows limited conceptual space for reflection on the role of the West as a civilizational identity.

Why the absence?

The main paradigms of International Relations theory, then, provide limited theoretical space for the exploration and explanation of the constitution of the West as a community within world politics. Indeed, until the recent revival of interest in its role and future in the post-Cold War period, it was rarely seen to be a category that required explanation and exploration within the discipline. Realism displays little interest in communities beyond the state. Liberalism, while displaying more interest in transna-

tional communities, has largely failed to provide analysis of the West as a distinct political community. Neo-Marxism draws the West into its analysis, but analyses it as an agent of the structure of the international system. However, all these paradigms are built on the foundations of European historical experiences and intellectual traditions. International Relations theory is, therefore, deeply embedded in the history and philosophies of the West, making more puzzling the fact that so little room is provided for analysis of this important community and for its role in world politics.

Explaining this theoretical silence may be assisted by returning to our analysis of the West as a cultural entity, a civilizational identity. The absence of reflection on the West in International Relations may then be usefully considered in the broader context of the discipline's treatment of issues of culture and identity. The epistemological and universalist theoretical premisses of International Relations have constrained discussion of culture, and tend to marginalize the discussion of civilizations in the modern discipline.

Conceptualizing civilizational identity in International Relations: the limits of the discipline

Civilizations on the margins

Consideration of the role of civilizations in contemporary International Relations has been minimal, although this may now be changing.⁹ There was interest in their role in writings on world politics in the early twentieth century and, as noted above, civilizations played a critical role in the ideas of scholars such as Spengler and Toynbee. Elements of this interest remained in the work of British International Relations scholars in the International Society school (Bull and Watson, 1984; Watson, 1992; Wight, 1991). It was also evident in the work of international historians such as Adda Bozeman (1960), William McNeill (1991) and Fernand Braudel (1995), and the sociologists Benjamin Nelson (1973; 1976) and Immanuel Wallerstein (1984; 1991). However, the state-centric tendencies of postwar realism and the narrowing of theoretical constructs during the Cold War effectively pushed this area of inquiry out of the main schools of the discipline. Occasional references to civilizations can be found in International Relations literature, yet these references often demonstrate a lack of reflection at a conceptual level on the role and nature of civilizations, or treat civilizations as pre-modern communities that have been subsumed into the global span of Western civilization.¹⁰ In the post-Cold War era, renewed interest in civilizations and civilizational identity has been stimulated by the challenges of understanding political community and identity in a new political environment where culture appears to be increasingly prominent.

Perhaps the prior neglect of civilizations in analyses of world politics is not surprising. Discussing their role can be challenging and sensitive for a variety of reasons. Factors that have militated against the treatment of civilizations as significant forces in world politics include their breadth and their somewhat intangible nature. Civilizational identities are fluid conceptions. As noted above, while conceptions of the West are frequently deployed in discourses on international relations, it is not always the same West that is being discussed. Furthermore, the frontiers between civilizations are often murky. In contrast, sovereign states appear to provide a more concrete representation of community, with their territorial frontiers and institutions encased in solid buildings. However, both are ultimately socially constructed entities deriving from inter-subjective understandings of the institutions and structures that distinguish communities from one another.

The tendency of International Relations scholars and analysts to shy away from the concept of civilizations was also a result of a propensity to marginalize issues pertaining to culture in International Relations. In certain respects, the utility of culture as an analytical concept was compromised where it was seen as implicated in the exercise of power, employed as a tool to differentiate but also to diminish the non-West.¹¹ In other contexts, it was viewed with suspicion where cultural explanations were used to provide internalist explanations for difficulties and problems, such as a lack of development, masking external and structural sources of inequality (Berger, 2001). These factors helped to push culture to the margins of political science and even further to the margins of International Relations. However, the epistemological and universalist theoretical premisses of International Relations have also constrained discussion of culture and thus tend to further marginalize the discussion of civilizations in the modern discipline. These important points warrant examination in more depth.

Culture and epistemology

Although a number of scholars have pointed to its importance, until recently culture was not treated as an issue of significance or urgency in International Relations. One of the causes of this marginalization is the sheer complexity of culture. As Raymond Williams (1983) points out, there is not one true definition of the term. It acquires different meanings in diverse disciplinary contexts. The sociologist Immanuel Wallerstein outlines two key types of usage of the concept. The first is the use of 'culture' to summarize the way in which groups distinguish themselves from other groups. The second is its use to define certain characteristics within a group to signify that which is 'superstructural', as opposed to base, or 'symbolic' as opposed to material. It is in this sense that the concept is used to refer to

the artistic or philosophical qualities of a particular group (Wallerstein, 1991: 158).

In some respects, these two senses often blend together with the distinct art or intellectual heritage of a society helping to define the unique identity of a group. It is, however, primarily the first sense that pervades the use of culture in world politics today. Ethnic, tribal, religious and civilizational identities are increasingly called upon to distinguish communities and explain their political interaction. This highlights a further complexity in the concept of culture: it is a concept which is applied to the practices and norms of groups formed at many different levels in societies. It can be used to refer to something very local, such as the culture of the local neighbourhood; to something transnational, such as youth culture or pop culture; or to distinguish a particular geographic, linguistic or ethnic community (Parekh, 2000). In other words, the group referred to can be very narrow or broad in temporal or geographic scope. It may be related, but not necessarily confined, to the territorial, sovereign state. Finally, a further area of contention is whether culture should be conceptualized as a system of symbols or as practice (Geertz, 1973; Sewell, 1999). David Campbell defines culture as 'a relational site for the politics of identity, rather than a substantive phenomenon in its own right.' This requires us to think of culture in terms of performance rather than a fixed substance (Campbell, 1998a: 221).

Darby and Paolini (1994) characterize International Relations as a discipline that feels more comfortable with precise, concrete terms and argue that culture may be perceived as too loose and imprecise a concept for analysis. It is in this context that the epistemology of International Relations is a factor that has inhibited the study of culture. From the 1950s, when the discipline began to blossom, there was an impetus towards making International Relations a truly scientific enterprise. This was signalled by Hans Morgenthau's efforts to define International Relations as an empirical science that studied facts rather than values or aspirations (Morgenthau, 1964). As Stanley Hoffmann (1977) notes, efforts to apply instrumental reason and scientific methodology to the study of International Relations were well received in the atmosphere of the 1950s and 1960s, the era in which the behaviouralist revolution moulded the emergent social sciences. The resurgence of neo-realism reinforced the positivist tradition, while reducing the emphasis on quantifiable methods. However, neo-liberal institutionalists have also largely seen themselves as working within a positivist epistemology.¹² The positivist tradition limited International Relations theory's capacity to deal with culture. As Jacquin, Oros and Verweij argue, the theory's bias for observable and measurable processes and behaviour led to research agendas that excluded ideas, perceptions, meanings and values which did not lend themselves to quantification, inhibiting the study of culture in International Relations (Jacquin *et al.*, 1993).

International Relations theory and universal truths

Criticisms levelled at the discipline's scientific methodology can be broadened in a more general critique of the rationalist epistemological foundations of the discipline, drawing attention to the universalist assumptions of the main paradigms of International Relations theory. Critical social theorists have argued that from the eighteenth-century Enlightenment to the present day, Western thought has been dominated by a scientific approach to knowledge and society which is empiricist and positivist, projecting a narrow concept of social reality as a universal agenda for all theory and practice (Ashley, 1984; Cox, 1981; George, 1994; Walker, 1993).

These criticisms have been levelled at a broad spectrum of International Relations scholarship, most noticeably neo-realist thought. They highlight the tendency of the most prominent paradigms of International Relations theory to present theories that are universal in application; that is they presume to identify rules of behaviour or process in the international system which are relevant across time and space and ultimately operate regardless of the characters of the actors under consideration. Realism posits a vision of international relations as a realm of recurrence and repetition as actors pursue their quest for security and power. Liberal theories are ultimately premised on a faith in human progress and greater emancipation achieved through reason and the capacity to learn, presenting what is, ultimately, a progressive theory of world politics. Structuralist theories generated from Marxist foundations exhibit a belief in change generated by the dialectical forces of history.

Therefore, these paradigms present theories that are presumed to be universally relevant and transcend local or regional cultural features and differences. In this sense, they present culture-neutral theories of world politics. This has meant that issues such as culture and identity are treated as variables which should be viewed as attributes of the actors that do not impact on the broader workings of the international system. Questions about culture and cultural diversity become subsumed into the claims of the state; cultural difference becomes an issue of national identity (Walker, 1990). Realism, in particular, has tended to treat culture as a factor that should be analysed at the unit, or state level. Therefore, culture may be removed from the equation, either as a factor that distracts the analyst from the 'facts' of power and capability or as a unit-level characteristic that does not alter the impact of the systemic structure that constrains all states in the same way (Rengger, 1992; Waltz, 1979).

In part, the tendency towards positing universal truths in International Relations is facilitated and reinforced by a propensity in a number of key sectors of the discipline towards the neglect of history as a tool of critical analysis. As Friedrich Kratochwil notes, this does not mean that International Relations does not use historical data, 'but the use of "history" shows mostly a confirmationist bent rather than a critical dis-

tance and theoretical sophistication.' (Kratochwil, 1996: 216). The neglect of history as a critical tool in the dominant approaches such as neo-realism is, in many respects, a consequence of the preference for scientific and quantitative methods.¹³ Furthermore, as Kratochwil and Walker point out, limited and narrow notions are often employed when the discipline appeals to history (Kratochwil, 1996; Walker, 1989). Historical discussions often focus on the emergence of the modern state system. This tendency limits the possibility for consideration of other communities and histories within, let alone outside, the European context. Richard Little argues that neo-realists do not deny the relevance of history or political change, but they assert that important features of international politics have occurred throughout the history of the international system. These need to be 'accounted for in terms of the unchanging systemic structure' (Little, 1993: 85). However, as Little further notes, such an ahistorical approach fails to take into account the different roles and meanings that may be attached to these features or processes in different contexts. This may distort our understanding of these processes. It also limits our capacity to understand the ebb and flow of change (Cox, 1981; Little, 1993).

Furthermore, the neglect of history in the hitherto dominant approaches tended to undermine the discipline's capacity to reflect upon the broader social and historical context from which key concepts, institutions and presumptions about the international system have been derived (Chakrabati Pasic, 1996). This not only led to a failure to illuminate the contingency of concepts and presumptions, and to limit consideration of alternative possibilities, but also allowed the discipline to perceive itself as universal and acultural since it tended to mask the cultural foundations upon which the discipline is built. This is a tendency that is perhaps now in retreat in certain sectors of the discipline with the pronounced interest in understanding the evolution of particular ideas and collective identities that is particularly evident in much constructivist scholarship.¹⁴

The universalist assumptions of International Relations theory are, then, a second important reason for the lack of reflection on the role of culture in International Relations. However, the capacity to present these theories as universal is facilitated by a lack of awareness of, or reflection on, the degree to which they themselves emanate from particular cultural premisses. Masked by aspirations toward universality and culture-neutrality are the foundations of International Relations theories in Western European historical experiences and intellectual traditions.

International Relations theory's debt to the West

As Hoffmann (1977) points out, International Relations emerged out of British and American scholarship, dominated in the post-World War II

period by American scholars reflecting American concerns. As noted above, the intellectual traditions from which International Relations draws its main theoretical models are the Western schools of thought. The 'classic' texts of the discipline are drawn from Greek, European and American scholars such as Thucydides, Machiavelli, Carr, and Waltz (Der Derian, 1988). The historical memory of the discipline is almost exclusively that of the evolution of the Western states system. The origins of International Relations traditions are drawn from the Greek city-states, the Italian Renaissance or the European states system of the eighteenth century (Walker, 1993). The models of behaviour upon which theories are based are drawn primarily from the history of European, then American, engagements in international politics of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Although other societies are viewed as implicated in these politics, the system is presumed to rotate around the dynamics and concerns emanating from the European core.

While International Relations scholars may demonstrate knowledge of this legacy, this does not necessarily translate into a consciousness of how, or if, the cultural specificity of the legacy constrains its broader relevance to world politics. Furthermore, key texts are rarely discussed as ideas emanating from a particular historical or cultural context. Der Derian and Walker both note the tendency to reify certain texts, such as works of Machiavelli, Hobbes, Rousseau and Carr, elevating them above alternatives and, furthermore, reifying particular readings of these texts without considering the social and historical circumstances that contributed to their production. Similarly, Der Derian and Walker argue that there is a tendency to project certain key concepts and institutions within International Relations, such as the state, sovereignty and security, as universal, rather than considering these as evolving at particular points in time to meet particular circumstances (Der Derian, 1988; Walker, 1989; 1993).

This suggests that the conceptual evolution of International Relations is closely linked to the intellectual and historical evolution of the 'West', in this context, Western Europe. As Richard Falk comments: 'The framework of modernism associated with the rise of the West is the main intellectual background against which thought about international relations developed.' (Falk, 1990: 268). The power of the West, in terms of political and economic capabilities, facilitated the expansion of Western ideas, institutions and structures. This has occurred through the globalization of institutions such as the sovereign state, the system of bilateral and multilateral diplomacy and, underlying these, the system of international law. This produces, in effect, the hegemony of Western political culture in international society.¹⁵ As Falk comments, the globalist rhetoric that evolved in association with international society and, more broadly, international relations tended to 'disguise patterns of interstate hegemony, especially as between Europe and the rest of the world' (Falk, 1990: 268). This hegemony masks

the cultural premisses of the international society and of International Relations in general. However, the perception of International Relations and the international systems it describes as culture-neutral inhibits inquiry into the role of cultural identities in International Relations, one of the most central of these being the West itself.

Therefore, for a variety of reasons, the conceptual analysis of the role of culture and of civilizational identities in international and world order has long been neglected. However, once we begin to ask questions about their relevance to world order, a number of interesting issues emerge. We become aware that the current world order is underpinned by a political system that is fundamentally based on the ideas, institutions and experiences of Western civilization. We also note that the conceptual tools we employ to analyse world order, drawn from the discipline of International Relations, are not culture-neutral but deeply embedded in the intellectual and historical evolution of the West. We now turn to consider the growing awareness of the significance of cultural identity in world politics and its impact on framing the emerging world order.

The return of cultural identity to world politics

While the concept of civilization is certainly a complex one, it is not redundant. In recent years, conceptions of civilizational identity, such as Islam, Asia and the West, are becoming increasingly pronounced in the language used to locate and explain political interaction (Jackson, 1999). What has prompted this resurgence of interest? Why have cultural factors become so prominent and appealing in explaining and understanding world politics? Fritz Gaenslen (1997) suggests that when stable orders become unsettled and the grounds for collective identities are undermined or disturbed, issues relating to identity politics become more pronounced. These elements are certainly present in the current international political environment. In the last decade, world politics has been undergoing a period of rapid flux and uncertain transformation. It is uncertain in the sense that the political order that had been dominant, the bipolar system, has disappeared, but the nature and form of the order that will replace it is still evolving. The states-system itself is being subjected to a variety of centrifugal and centripetal pressures, producing both the fragmentation and the convergence of states as a result of the pressures of technological, political, economic and social change. This era has also been characterized by the growth of globalization and the increased prominence of ethnic and religious identity in contemporary world politics.

These changes have forced students of world politics to reconsider their perceptions of political communities in world politics in order to understand, let alone explain, the role and influence of these processes and actors in world politics. These events have encouraged a more explicit interest in forces shaping political communities, their interests and their interactions.

This is increasingly demonstrated in specific subfields of the discipline, such as foreign policy (Hudson, 1997; Hudson and Sampson, 1999), strategic studies (Ball, 1993; Booth, 1979; Johnston, 1995) and political economy (Ward, 1998). This is not to suggest that culture influences were not previously present in world politics. However, their importance in the past was often subjugated to other factors, such as ideology or geo-strategic considerations, which were interpreted as having primacy.

The growth of interest in the role of cultural identity in world politics, however, also stems from developments within the intellectual environment. Over the last decade or so, the discipline of International Relations has experienced a growth in new, critical voices. Yosef Lapid describes it as being subjected to a 'burst of critical scrutiny' which, while not totally undermining the dominant paradigms, has 'instituted greater intellectual and sociological flexibility in IR scholarship.' (Lapid, 1996: 4) There has been an awakening of interest in the way in which culture and identity shape perceptions of actors, of interests, roles and processes in world politics. This stems in part from the growing interest in the normative and intersubjective dimensions of world politics found particularly in critical theoretical and constructivist perspectives.¹⁶

Literature on the politics of identity and representation raises questions about how communities are constituted and circumscribed. Identity politics play a critical role in both defining the boundaries of any community, and in providing the community with an inner sense of cohesion (Campbell, 1998a; Connolly, 1991; Dittmer and Kim, 1993; Inayatullah and Blaney, 1996; Norton, 1988). Discussion of the processes of differentiation, of inclusion and exclusion, are important to our understanding of how communities define and represent themselves and others (Connolly, 1991; Inayatullah and Blaney, 1996; Linklater, 1990; 1992; 1998). This in turn influences the forms of interaction that are anticipated and legitimated. The significance of perceptions and representations has been acknowledged within International Relations in fields such as foreign policy analysis. However, it has been most prominent in the literature produced by critical theorists and, in particular, post-structuralist scholars. Drawing on theories of discourse, language and signification, these scholars argue that representations and discourse do not just reflect, but constitute the social world. They challenge the faith of what they characterize as 'modern culture' in uncontested, coherent representations of communities and identities as homogeneous, fixed and authentic. They stress that power and received assumptions order perceptions and representations of reality (Ashley and Walker, 1990; Der Derian, 1989; Shapiro, 1989). This study does not engage in many of the deeper debates stemming from post-structuralist perspectives. However, it does draw on insights from some of these debates. In particular, it is influenced by the contention that conceptualization and representation are meaningful and important dimensions of world

politics. It also contends that the representations of a community are not always consistent, but can demonstrate great diversity. Communities and their representations are therefore often complex.

In recent years there has been a growing interest in the contribution which constructivist scholarship can make to our understanding of world politics. The term constructivism is employed to describe a broad range of scholars with diverse interests and epistemological approaches. That which unites them is an interest in understanding the processes and implications of the social construction of world politics. At the level of ontology, the constructivists regard world politics as, in many important respects, a social as much as a physical environment. Constructivists demonstrate an interest in exploring how various dimensions of world politics are constituted by examining the interplay between intersubjective ideas, collective identities and material factors. Constructivism does not propose a theory of International Relations, nor seek to identify fixed universal unitary theories of structures and actions. It is an approach through which to understand the processes that shape actions and interests in international relations, and the processes through which structures are produced and reproduced. Some have defined constructivism as a continuation of the critical theoretical project (Price and Reus-Smit, 1998). Others see it more as a *via media* between rationalism and radical interpretivism (Adler, 1997). An important assumption that this study draws from critical theorists and constructivists is that, in many respects, world politics is socially constituted. Institutions and actors are socially constituted rather than exogenously given, their identities sustained by intersubjective understandings.

It also shares the broad interest in the role which identity plays in world politics. Constructivist scholarship has, in particular, highlighted how interests are shaped by identities and norms associated with them. This suggests that identification with large collective identities may be important in shaping and legitimating the actions and goals of actors in world politics. In respect of this, some scholars working in the broad context of the constructivist approach have specifically addressed how issues of culture can shape the behaviour of particular organizations or the policies of particular states.¹⁷ Constructivists have been keen to argue that a more nuanced understanding of world politics is gained by seeing actors and structures as mutually constituted in an ongoing process. These assumptions reinforce the argument that world politics should be seen as a dynamic and shifting arena.

Constructivist scholarship has, therefore, highlighted the role of collective identity in world politics, acknowledging that collective identity is something more than an aggregate of individual identity (Adler, 1997; Klotz and Lynch, 2000; Wendt, 1996; 1998). Scholars like Rodney Bruce Hall (1999) and Jutta Weldes (1999) have demonstrated the growing interest in the formation and impact of collective identities, working principally

at the level of national identity. Heather Rae (forthcoming) has explored how the construction of national and state identities through policies of inclusion and exclusion can have drastic, indeed life threatening, implications for the individuals who are the subjects of these policies when manifested in policies of genocide or ethnic cleansing. Such work provides critical insights into how the significant political community of the nation-state has evolved and is reproduced, shaping perceptions of interest and goals in world politics.

However, there remains much work to be done on investigating the sources of identity and, in particular, the fusion between identity and culture. While state identity is undoubtedly one of the most important levels of identity in world politics, it remains only one level of identity. Perceptions of a nation-state's identity are often built upon selection and representations of both local and broader transnational elements of cultural identity. It may be useful, therefore, to look more deeply at the sources upon which nation-state identities are based. Therefore, while it shares much in the way of ontological assumptions with a number of constructivist scholars, this work seeks to go beyond the analysis of the nation-state to explore more deeply how perceptions of key transnational, cultural identities are constituted in ways that vary and contend. It also raises questions about the implications of these identities which may in themselves help to frame perceptions of interests and actions.

Conclusion

A greater awareness of assumptions regarding civilization may enhance International Relations' capacity to reflect on the nature and role of the West in world politics. The West remains largely uninterrogated in the main paradigms of International Relations theory. These conceptual gaps are at least in part a result of a broader tendency to marginalize issues relating to culture and cultural identity in world politics by the discipline. This tendency, however, tends to stifle inquiry not only into the impact of culture in shaping communities, perceptions and interests in world politics, but also in shaping the discipline of International Relations itself. The cultural premisses that underlie the main theoretical paradigms of International Relations tend to be hidden. The existing paradigms are unlikely to provide us with the tools to reflect upon the nature and role of the West in world politics. Therefore, we need a framework for bringing analysis of conceptions of the West and, through this, the role of civilizational identity into International Relations to facilitate our understanding of the possibilities for world order that are being envisaged. This may be done by drawing on the insights on the constitution of structures and identities that can be drawn from critical theoretical and constructivist perspectives.

2

Towards a Framework for Conceptualizing the West in International Relations

The preceding chapter noted the absence of reflection on the West and on civilizations more broadly from International Relations theory, and considered some factors that may have produced this gap. The challenge presented by this absence is to provide a framework for thinking critically and conceptually about the West and civilization interaction in International Relations. Any such framework should suggest a way to critically analyse various conceptions of the West, linking these to the broader context of assumptions about the cultural world order, while allowing for consideration of the complexity and contextuality of conceptions of the West. The goal of this chapter is to develop such a framework.

In the Introduction, we discussed the shifting range of conceptualizations of the West. These demonstrate conceptions that not only change over time, but also exhibits apparent inconsistencies. The West is first and foremost a locational concept, yet the community it encompasses expanded its territorial scope to establish and include societies from all over the globe. The West might primarily be conceived of as based on peoples of the white race, yet it has incorporated people of many races in its communities and alliances over the years. The West might be conceived of as primarily a Christian community, yet it is equally characterized by the secularization of public life. Furthermore, many people of the Christian faith, in Russia or the Middle East for instance, would not be seen as part of Western society. The West was the birthplace of liberalism and liberal values are frequently held to be the normative heart of the West. Yet the West also created the most powerful series of colonies and empires that the globe has ever seen. Moreover, it was the birthplace of both fascism and of communism, an ideology seen as the antithesis of the West during the Cold War. The West is widely perceived as representing wealth and power; yet within Western societies there existed, and continue to exist, poverty and enormous inequalities.

The West is obviously a complex and varying identity. It is an identity that encompasses a broad range of material and normative dimensions.

Furthermore, perceptions of the central characteristics that distinguish it vary, across time and perspectives. This indicates that conceptions of the West should be explored with an awareness of the context in which they are articulated.

These features pose difficulties for constructing a framework for analysis. While it is important to recognize and seek to identify continuities in conceptions of the West, it is also necessary to address the complexity demonstrated by these conceptions. Rather than seeking to eliminate this complexity, it can be useful to ask what this tells us about the West as an identity, and what it implies for comprehending its interaction with other identities in world politics. In this respect, we are pursuing a processual, rather than a substantialist, definition of the West, to use the terms coined by Patrick Jackson. That is to say, the West is viewed here as a conception that has important material, institutional and normative dimensions, but one that is constantly in the process of evolution, its identity and presence unfolding through the social practices, processes and projects which serve to draw and redraw boundaries between it and other entities (Jackson, 1999). As noted above, thinking about the West as a civilization identity facilitates our thinking about it as a cohesive, yet complex, evolutionary and contingent.

Also, as noted above, to date, the International Relations community has largely focused on the modern state as the predominant political community and political identity in world politics. This is a territorially defined community, its borders inscribed on maps, its population enumerated in censuses, its government and constitution operating through officials, representatives, and formally designated channels and institutions. However, as Benedict Anderson has pointed out, despite the firm material institutions and structures through which it is represented, the community that underlies the nation-state is as much a social as a tangible, material construction (Anderson, 1991). Anderson's concept of 'imagined communities' presents the nation-state as something more than a territorial community containing a population. Indeed, he argues that the demarcation and quantification of the state that instruments such as the map and the census performed *required* an ability to conceptualize a community existing among diverse and dispersed populations with little or no physical or day-to-day contact, but who were able to conceive of themselves existing simultaneously (Anderson, 1991: 24). In this sense, the community must be imagined to permit it to exist. Anderson conceives of the community of the nation as 'a deep, horizontal comradeship' (1991: 7). Some form of mental bonds establishing links between people across time and space facilitates its existence. What is important in Anderson's work is the identification of inter-subjective understandings of community across time and space as a critical element in creating and sustaining the modern nation-state.

Anderson's work on 'imagined communities' can be usefully applied to thinking about civilizational identities such as the West. The West is not a clearly defined territorial entity. It is not constituted by any single language or ethnic group. However, this is not to say that it does not have an identity constituted by boundaries, symbols, myths and histories and a broad, if dispersed, sense of fraternity. The West is an imagined community in the sense that it is a transnational community that extends over a broad geographical and temporal canvass, encompassing peoples who may have no immediate contact with one another, but who perceive themselves, or are perceived, to share a common identity and some element of common interests, ideas and values. No common language unites the West, but the 'language' that constitutes it draws on concepts and principles whose lineage is traced deep into history. Perceptions of history play a crucial role in representing, legitimizing and perpetuating the 'imagined community'. Considering the West as an imagined community helps in coming to terms with the less tangible dimensions of its role and influence in International Relations. In addition, it allows us to be more comfortable with its complexity.

Identity politics and International Relations

In addition to providing useful tools with which to approach the study of the West, viewing the West as a civilization identity and an imagined community encourages us to draw on literature from studies of the politics of identity and representation. Discussion of the politics of identity was not a prominent aspect of International Relations literature until the 1980s. Questions of identity tended to be treated at the unit level, being subsumed into studies of domestic and comparative rather than international politics (Bloom, 1990; Tickner, 1996). As Lapid (1996: 6) comments, identity like culture tended to be treated as self-evident and unproblematic by much of the theoretical literature. In effect, this meant privileging certain political communities and treating their identities as given, rather than investigating the processes through which political identities are constructed and the way in which they shape interests and actions. These privileged identities have been the state and the nation. The tendency to accept these collective identities as given led to a fairly static, monolithic perception of identities. States and nations tended to be assumed as stable and homogeneous in their identities (Krause and Renwick, 1996).

Since the 1980s, however, interest in the role of identities in international relations has become more evident. International Relations scholars such as Der Derian, Shapiro and Campbell set out to consider the impact of processes of identity politics on world politics, drawing into International Relations insights from disciplines such as philosophy and linguistics

(Doty, 1996; Neumann, 1996). In addition, feminist International Relations scholarship has been an important force that has 'nudged' the discipline into questioning whom the nation and state really represent and speak for, drawing attention to the significance of other identities, such as gender, which are formed below and across state level (Tickner, 1992; Zalewski and Enloe, 1995: 302). The move to explore the importance of collective identities in world politics has been further enhanced with the emergence of constructivist scholarship. As noted in the preceding chapters, constructivists are deeply interested in the interplay between collective identity and interest formation in shaping the structures and institutions of the international systems (Price and Reus-Smit, 1998).

Interest in the role of identity politics in shaping international relations has been further stimulated by developments in world politics. In the post-Cold War era, issues relating to forms of identity such as ethnicity and religion have become increasingly prominent as world politics emerges from the shadow of a bipolar ideological divide. Globalization has also heightened this interest. The globalization of production, services, finance and labour, and the consequences of flows of refugees and migrants, for instance, has created challenges to traditional conceptualizations of political communities and their identities.¹

Identity is now being more consciously incorporated into the traditional agenda of International Relations. Security studies and democratic peace theory have sharpened the focus on perceptions of threats or possibilities for co-operation that arises from shared or differing political identities (Tickner, 1996: 147–8). However, here again, the identities of the units involved are still often taken as a given, rather than complex and evolving. However, exploration of the role of identity in International Relations has been most evident in critical theory and constructivism. These perspectives have strongly challenged the perception of political identities as autonomous and fixed. They are critical of the failure of the main paradigms of International Relations to consider the structures and institutions of world politics, and the international system, as socially constructed rather than objective givens (Campbell, 1998a; George, 1994; George and Campbell 1990; Wendt, 1998). One consequence is the neglect of the role of identity in shaping world politics. As Campbell (1998a) and Shapiro (1989) argue, the way in which identities are constituted and represented is in itself a significant exercise of power and an important aspect of world politics. Rejecting the notion that the state or nation are the only significant collective identities in world politics, critical theorists treat identities as multiple, complex and constantly in the process of constitution and reconstitution (Alker and Shapiro, 1996; Lapid, 1996). Similarly, constructivist scholarship highlights that the identities are not exogenously given but emerge through interaction, being shaped by and in turn shaping

both the domestic environment and the international structure, its institutions and rules (Price and Reus-Smit, 1998; Ruggie, 1998).

'Community or death': processes of identification and differentiation

The evolving interest in the role of identity politics and the formation of political communities offers useful insights into the processes of the constitution of community and identity which can assist in devising a framework for analysis of the West. The concepts of community and of identity are closely interwoven. A shared identity is an essential component to the constitution of a community. A sense of community implies a group of people who perceive they have something in common at some level; a sense of shared identity. The constitution of identity is part of the process of defining political community; of defining the borders of inclusion and exclusion and the basis upon which they are drawn.

The impulse to identify with the group is a fundamental human impulse. In its most basic form, the individual human must engage with the community to survive. However, humans rarely limit their sense of identification to only one group. An individual can simultaneously identify with a variety of collectives in different contexts. Each community may appeal to a different quality or need in the individual. Indeed, the community must have some form of relevance and offer some perceived benefit to the individual to invoke and maintain identification (Bloom, 1990: 51–2; Parekh, 2000): 'Identities can be imposed, but most are not; rather they are embraced because they deliver what people want' (Ferguson and Mansbach, 1996: 29).

Identities are social as much as psychological constructs. A basic element of identification is the perception of some form of common quality or experiences among the potential members of the community. They must have something, though not necessarily everything, in common. Norton argues that an awareness of this commonality provides a basis for the establishment of common interests, goals and even common action (Norton, 1988: 47). This may lead to the establishment of structures and, or, norms to enhance or protect the common identity. Conversely, it could be argued that shared practices can produce a sense of common interests and collective identity.

An awareness of a collective identity at some level, or in relation to certain attributes, values or goals forms an important aspect of the constitution of a community, even a broad imagined community such as the West. A community is, in part, defined by the ways in which this collective identity is defined. This process of definition involves the drawing of boundaries which describe who may be included or excluded (Linklater,

1990; 1998). The process of definition involves differentiation.² Differentiation is an inescapable part of identity formation. In recognizing that which is different, the self begins to define itself. Without differences, argues Connolly, an identity loses its distinctness and solidity: 'Identity requires difference in order to be, and it converts difference into otherness in order to secure its own self-certainty' (Connolly, 1991: 64).

The move to establish an authentic or homogeneous identity for a community can prove dangerous, primarily for those constituted as the 'other' in antithesis to one's own identity. This can mean not only the exclusion of the other but also its constitution as inferior or threatening. Connolly observes that

... a powerful identity will strive to constitute a range of differences as intrinsically evil, irrational, abnormal, mad, sick, primitive, monstrous, dangerous, or anarchical – other. It does so in order to secure itself as intrinsically good, coherent, complete, or rational and in order to protect itself from the other that would unravel its self-certainty and capacity for collective mobilisation if it established its legitimacy. The constellation of the constructed other therefore becomes both essential to the truth of the identity and a threat to it, by just being other. (1991: 65–6)

The issue here is not so much the necessity to differentiate, but the tactics of devaluing the other because of this difference. The other can become a scapegoat created and maintained to secure the appearance of a true identity. Furthermore, the drive to achieve self-certainty, to confirm the 'true' nature of one's identity is fraught with implications if we accept the contention that identities are not only multiple, but also relative and repeatedly constituted, rather than fixed and objectively given.

A similar concern with the implications of devaluing that which is different is demonstrated in Edward Said's discussion of the constitution of the 'Orient'. In his analysis of European and American encounters with peoples of the Middle East, Said describes the constitution of the Orient as a device that, in itself, helped to constitute and reinforce the identity of the West. Said argues that Orientalism was a family of ideas which constructed the Orient as a community in antithesis to the West. The East was irrational, authoritarian and lazy, the West rational, logical, peaceful, liberal, vigorous and scientific. Said's analysis presents a West which perceives the Orient as distinctly different, hostile and essentially inferior. Such perceptions helped to reinforce the West's self-perception as progressive, and justified in its intellectual and institutional subjugation of such hostile and backward societies, if only for their own benefit (Said, 1978). Such perceptions were crucial to concepts such as the 'civilizing mission' that normatively legitimated European colonial expansion.³

Tzvetan Todorov also demonstrates concern with regard to the impact that tactics of differentiation can have on the course of civilizational interaction. Todorov confronts the problem of meeting the other as both different and equal. In his analysis of the European encounter with the peoples of the Americas, Todorov describes how difference was equated with inferiority, whereas equality was equated with similarity (Blaney and Inayatullah, 1994: 28; Todorov, 1984: 151–67;). He argues that, in their encounters with the peoples of the 'New World', the Spanish largely alternated between viewing the 'Indians' as either 'noble savages' or 'dirty dogs'. They were perceived as people without culture. It was, therefore, legitimate to project one's own culture onto these 'objects'. Todorov argues that the Spanish, as led by Columbus and Cortes, were unable to treat these peoples 'as a subject, having the same rights as oneself, but different' (Todorov, 1984: 49). The peoples of the New World were presented with the options of conquest or conversion, but not coexistence. Todorov's work demonstrates how processes of differentiation are of relevance to the conduct of international and inter-civilizational relations, and how a community's perception of its identity can be constituted, reconstituted and reinforced through contact with those perceived as different. In describing the carnage and upheaval heaped upon the Indians, he illustrates the potentially devastating consequences that equating difference with inferiority may have on these relations.

Todorov's discussion of the relationship between the Spanish and the peoples of the Americas depicts a series of encounters in which the sense of difference and distance between two broad cultures was vast and apparently radical. Both he and Said suggest how these encounters doubtless helped to bolster the Europeans' self-image as a superior and progressive culture. This is an issue also explored by Iver Neumann (1999) in his discussion of the constitution of 'the East' in the form principally of Turkey and Russia in European identity formation. These perceptions often filter into assumptions about the character of the West more generally. In contemporary context, the constitution of the West continued to be based on perceiving it in antithesis to other political and cultural communities. For instance, during the Cold War the identity of the West was constituted in response to the perceived threat of the Soviet Union. The presence of the Soviet Union as a threat helped to create and perpetuate institutions such as NATO – an institution that not only had a military function, but helped to consolidate a particular perception of the identity of the West as one based on shared democratic values (Klein, 1990; Williams and Neumann, 2000). A community's sense of its own identity is constituted and reinforced through encounters with that perceived as outside the community, but it is also shaped by processes of differentiation within. As Ann Norton argues, political identity often emerges with greater clarity when the polity confronts the individual whose inclusion is ambiguous:

In confronting the question of whether these people belong within or without the polity, those within it are obliged to enunciate those differences that distinguish them from all others, to consciously define the limits of their identity. (Norton, 1988: 4)

In this way, the process of defining the community's identity enhances or contributes to the constitution of the community by helping to define the parameters of the group, defining the qualities thought appropriate and those alien to it. The 'other' provides the axis on which acceptable and unacceptable political activities and identity are constructed (Dalby, 1990: 13). For instance, Bradley Klein discusses how NATO helped to produce and protect a singular image of Western identity as progressive, modern and industrialized, marginalizing a variety of other identities relating to religion, gender or race. Such identities can become sites of political contestation. For instance, during the 1990s, some argued that feminists and advocates of multiculturalism were undermining the cohesion of Western civilization (Gress, 1997; Kurth, 1994). They are treated as threatening the perceived unity and identity of the West while making the political identity of the West appear homogeneous rather than multifaceted. However, these contests may also provide the vehicle for extending or redefining the community's identity over time.

The process of differentiation, particularly with respect to those 'liminal' to the community, helps to generate abstract principles upon which the community or polity is based. It helps to define the normative dimensions of any imagined community. It also contributes to the conceptualization of the community as an apparently objective entity, independent of the views or wishes of any single constituent members. Furthermore, the conceptualization of the community as an objective entity helps to perpetuate the community beyond the active participation of any single member and to retain what Norton calls a constant character over time (Norton, 1988: 53–4).

The boundaries and bonds of community

Differentiation facilitates the drawing of the boundaries of the community. In turn, boundaries reinforce strategies of inclusion and exclusion. As Linklater reminds us, understanding strategies of inclusion and exclusion, and the grounds upon which these are justified are central to understanding the nature of political and moral communities (Linklater, 1990; 1998). In the context of international relations, territory has come to provide one of the most immediate and obvious sites for the drawing of boundaries. The territorial definition of community is particularly significant in the modern Western political tradition. The concept of political community has become intimately incorporated with the concept of territory in the modern European state system in which the state's sovereign capacity is

conceptualized in relation to its exercise of control over a defined territory (Mount, 1997; Ruggie, 1993). This has led to the expectation of a 'necessary alignment' between territory and identity that has been prominent in International Relations (Campbell, 1996: 171). This 'necessary alignment, may be under challenge in the face of transnational organizations and political identities that are not confined to territorial locations, but it is still powerful.

However, while territorial boundaries may constitute a significant dimension of the identity of communities, they present only one dimension. As Norton observes, political boundaries and identities are also drawn in history, culture and ideology (Norton, 1988: 4). One of the most significant features of post-Cold War international politics has been the rediscovery of the importance of other dimensions of identity, such as ethnicity, language and religion. The contribution of such elements of identity to political communities to a large extent had been overshadowed by the ideological geopolitics of the Cold War.

In the twentieth century, the nation-state has been a potent political symbol and goal, its legitimacy enhanced by the broad appeal of the idea of self-determination. Although many national identities highlight a dominant race, language or religion, in practice, very few states are homogeneous (Connor, 1978; Dittmer and Kim, 1993: 10). Nonetheless, the heterogeneity of most states has not weakened the power of national identity as a political force in international relations. This suggests that the identity of a national community is built around something more than seemingly objective criteria such as territorial boundaries, language or race. There must be some sense of commitment by members to the community and a need for a form of acceptance as a member of the community. Dittmer and Kim (1993) suggest that to understand the constitution of a community's identity it is necessary to go beyond purely analytical concepts of identity that describe the 'objective' features of a community to understand the subjective qualities which give the community substance. In their discussion of national identity, they highlight the networks and relationships that attach the individual to the community and the values it is perceived to represent. These attachments can be powerful, in many cases persuading individuals to make enormous sacrifices for the perceived good of the community. As Anderson observes, in the last two centuries, millions have been willing to die for the imagined communities of nations (Anderson 1991: 7). In the twentieth century, many have also sacrificed themselves for concepts such as freedom as much as for a specific territorial homeland.

The bonds of attachment that can inspire such actions must be strong and deeply rooted. Anderson explores the way in which language can develop the attachments of national identity. He notes that using the vocabulary of kinship and home – idioms to which all people feel a natural

attachment – the language of nationalism is able to evoke self-sacrificing love (Anderson, 1991: 143–5). Dittmer and Kim stress the relationships established via common symbols and shared myths and histories in constituting communal identity. In this, they seek to capture what makes the identity dynamic. It also helps to explain how a community is constituted on an intersubjective basis by its members, its leaders, its narrators and scholars.

This suggests that in seeking to understand how the identity of any community is constituted we look not only at the borders that delimit a community, but also at the channels through which individuals relate to the identity of the collective, and through which this identity is regenerated. Symbols, myths and histories can legitimize a community's rules and goals; help to define its membership and provide a vehicle to perpetuate it beyond the lifetime of its individual members as myths and symbols are passed from generation to generation, and to new members (Norton 1988: 5). If we conceive of symbols as also incorporating concepts, we can see how the myths and symbols of a community can contribute to its normative bonds. In the context of the West we might consider the French Revolution, the American Declaration of Independence or the erection and fall of the Berlin Wall as foundational and powerful symbols of traditions of individualism, freedom and equality. The examination of such symbolic dimensions helps to elucidate the qualities that provide a community with cohesion and continuity.

The role of histories and representations

Community identities then are treated here as dynamic and ongoing. Just as the identity of the individual develops over time, the identity of the collective evolves with changing historical circumstances. All political communities are subject to challenge and change, as shifting social and political circumstances bring about new identifications and loyalties, sometimes superimposed on old loyalties and identities (Bloom, 1990: 63; Ferguson and Mansbach 1996: 36). The identity of a community must be to some degree flexible if the community is to remain relevant to changing historical circumstances. Without this flexibility, a community may become irrelevant to its members, perhaps even redundant. In this sense a community's identity is dynamic; it is continually being reconstituted.

At the same time, there must be some element of continuity that provides an identity with cohesion and meaning. How, then, do collective identities maintain both continuity and dynamism? Norton assists in understanding how this is achieved through representation. She argues that the seemingly established order is constantly in flux. As Norton argues, people both preserve collective identity and bind themselves to it through

material embodiments – constitutions, institutions, documents and monuments. These materialities she describes as *representations*. A representation (or a *re*-presentation) preserves things in their absence, but in repeating things, it also reinterprets them:

... each representation, occurring in a different context, attaches additional associations to the act or individuals that is recalled, and disguises the significance of once meaningful attributes. Thus representation shows itself to be at once endlessly repetitive and ever changing. (Norton, 1988: 97)

Norton's concept of representations in some ways parallels Dittmer and Kim's notion of symbols and myths. These authors focus our attention on the significance of conceptual icons that articulate the norms and goals of the community. They provide a focus for its identity and a vehicle for its perpetuation, a means by which the identity of the community can maintain a sense of continuity. As the interpretations of these myths and symbols, these representations evolve to meet changing historical circumstances, so does the constitution of the community. This allows the community to be reconstituted in relation to the context in which it occurs.

The concept of 'representation' is also critical to the work of post-structuralist authors such as Michael Shapiro. For Shapiro (1989), our understanding of the world is mediated by meanings and values imposed not only by our immediate consciousness, but also by various 'reality making scripts' inherited from surrounding cultural and linguistic conditions. It is influenced by interpretations shaped by our cultural context. Representations do not just reflect, but also constitute the social world, imparting meaning and value to things (Shapiro, 1988). Representations, then, contribute to the production of knowledge and identity. They circulate through discursive practices, become naturalized, and acquire the air of 'truth' (Doty, 1996). These 'truths' become part of our social reality and shape our understanding of the past. Farrands (1996) observes that all societies, traditional and modern have 'foundational myths', incidents or situations that explain their origins and character. Campbell (1996: 165) similarly refers to *coup de force*, performative acts or events that provide a critical sense of foundation to the community's identity. The French Revolution could be seen as such a foundational myth in conceptualizations of the modern West; the Chinese Long March fulfilled a similar role in modern Chinese society (Farrands, 1996).

The significance of foundational myths in interpreting a society's past highlights the importance of history in shaping and maintaining political identities for the present. A sense of common history, shared by the members of the community, helps to provide or explain continuity in its

symbols and representations; it can enhance the cohesion of the community and its sense of identity. History links the community of the present with that of the past: 'The remaking of history expresses an affirmation of continuous identity, transcending material conditions.' (Norton, 1988: 112). History, then, functions to explain the identity of the community, and to justify its current constitution and conduct. History is announced in many locations in a society. It can be produced through official histories authorized by administrations, through academic discourses and the school system – a critical site for the reproduction of historical memory. History is also produced and reproduced through the media and discussions in community, family and peer groups. The creating and reproduction of histories is not a simple process. Histories can be highly contested, particularly when interpretations of the past are at odds. Even the most comprehensive of historical texts is, of necessity, selective; all histories are ultimately interpretations (Carr, 1961).

As Renan notes, history is as much about forgetting as remembering in that our perception of the past is influenced by what is left out as well as by what is included in our histories. Furthermore, our perception or sense of history may not always be accurate. For example, traditions that may appear ancient might, in fact, be recent innovations. Nation-states, Hobsbawm reminds us, are a relatively recent innovation, but often seek to portray themselves as ancient and natural political communities rather than modern constructs (Hobsbawm, 1983: 7). Invented traditions, and possibly traditions in general, build upon particular interpretations of a community's history, serving to enhance the cohesion and legitimacy of existing structures by drawing on the community's sense of the past (Hobsbawm, 1983: 12). Legitimacy is often, although not exclusively, drawn from a sense of continuity with the past.

The past can be used to provide a sense of authenticity for the present. Lawson, for instance, argues that ethno-nationalism has often used the idea of the *ethnos* as the natural and authentic community forming the basis for the 'authentic' state (1995: 10). Strong links may be made between claims to sovereignty and collective memories of past injustices, such as Serbian suffering under Turkish rule or the dispossession, famine and migration which the Irish suffered under British authority (Lawson, 1995). Particular interpretations of events in history, of culture and tradition, can be used to support and authenticate political institutions, or as Lawson argues, the positions of particular elites (1996; 1997). At the same time, this can delegitimize alternative readings of history or alienate opposition by casting it as somehow unauthentic or foreign. In this sense, history can be used to reinforce, rather than examine claims to authority.

History can be used to provide a sense of cohesion in a community by reaffirming a shared identity. The role of history in the process of differentiation and identity formation can be most obvious in times of flux, when

communities are losing their cohesion and identities are in the process of re-inscription. Such periods can see the intensification of a sense of identity that may previously have been weak or less relevant to political and social life.⁴

History, tradition and culture, in enhancing the sense of solidarity within the community, can also alienate and exclude those who do not conform to the authorized identity. Members of the community can become 'strangers'. Defining the stranger can be a political and a violent process with claims to authenticity of one identity displacing or dominating others. Campbell speaks of the violent deployment of history in the present as a means of defining political struggle and in support of contemporary political goals (Campbell, 1996: 174). For example, in the case of the fragmentation of Yugoslavia, intellectuals have been accused of feeding the process of fragmentation by promoting memories of ancient conflicts, ancient divisions which glorified the self and stereotyped the other (Campbell, 1996: 174; Job, 1993). While this might have enhanced a sense of Serbian or Croatian solidarity in the post-Cold War environment, it simultaneously promoted the exclusion of ethnic groups from what had been a heterogeneous, if not always united, political communities.⁵ Representations of history are, then, a critical element in process of differentiation.

A framework for analysis

There is then a rich body of ideas and insights we can draw on for exploring conceptions of the West as a civilization identity. While important boundaries are drawn around communities through processes of differentiation, collective identities are also constituted by perceptions of shared norms and beliefs. It is important to see identities as dynamic, constituted and reconstituted in response to issues and circumstances. However, it is also important to consider how identities are sustained through history and tactics of representation that provide continuity between past, present and future, but also allow for adjustment as perceptions of the nature and role of the community shift over time.

Relating these insights to exploration of the West as a civilizational identity suggests that a framework for analysis should acknowledge and investigate the boundaries conceived as differentiating the West from other communities. However, it should also investigate perceptions of shared norms, beliefs and institutions that provide the subjective dimension of a community, giving it substance and character and enhancing its cohesion. It also suggests the need for awareness of how history and representations have been employed to explain the community's past and present. Finally, it suggests that civilizational identities, like other identities, should be treated as dynamic and subject to reconstitution under the influence of the

context in which they are being conceived of and articulated. One of the critical contexts within which the West is conceptualized is that of its interaction with other civilizational identities. These are discussed here as constituting perceptions of the cultural world order.

This study acknowledges and examines the complexity and contextuality of conceptions of the West by adopting a comparative approach, discussing its conception by a range of selected authors. It identifies differences and continuities in how the West is conceptualized within the context of assumptions about cultural world order. Therefore, as noted above, this is not an effort to define the West, but to explore ideas about who and what constitutes the West and what the implications of these ideas are for world politics. In an effort to locate where these perceptions emanate from and in order to examine the influences that may have shaped the perspectives of these authors, each chapter first outlines the broad historical and intellectual context in which they worked. This is not to argue that these influences are in themselves sufficient to explain particular approaches, but it does help us to contextualize and better understand the interpretations, emphases and priorities in these various conceptions of the West and cultural world order. We then identify key underlying assumptions about the nature of civilizations and their interaction, and about the shape of the cultural world order. These assumptions provide the cultural context for these conceptions of the nature of the West, of its role in the cultural world order and its relationship with other civilizational identities.

We then move to focus on how each of these authors conceptualizes the tangible and normative boundaries of the West. Four boundaries have been selected which have the potential to express significant, visible dimensions of the West's identity. The first selected is perhaps the most obvious one of territory: the primary and perhaps most immediate conception of the West that springs to mind is that of the West as a location. We examine the extent to which each conception identifies the West as a specific territorial location, and the extent to which that location and focus is perceived as changing over time as the West expands. We also identify the different perceptions of the relationship between the community of the West and territory. Some see the relationship as an organic one; others focus on the relationship as socially and politically constructed.

The second critical boundary is that of religion. Religion is widely understood as a significant and powerful feature of community identity. This is no less the case with the West, where Christianity is commonly perceived as providing both spiritual and political foundations for the modern West. Religion is widely perceived as helping to differentiate the West from other civilizational identities, providing the West with some element of normative cohesion and providing elements of the political foundations of the West. However, perceptions of the defining qualities of the West's religious identity and of its role in the evolution of the West do

vary. Therefore, we explore here the role which religion plays in constructing the identity of the West, but also examine perceptions of the relationship between religion and politics, in particular the separation of religion and politics.

Race is also a powerful dimension of community identity, although one which has often been neglected in discussions of international politics. Here it is explored as the third critical boundary of the West. The significance of racial differentiation to constituting the West is evident in all the perspectives examined, though is more explicit in some than in others. We explore the different meanings and importance attached to racial differentiation in the context of the politics of inclusion and exclusion, of establishing relationships of power and hierarchy, and for potential structures of conflict in relations between West and non-West.

The fourth boundary considered is that of power. One of the most common features of conceptions of the West is the perception of it as a community distinguished by its exercise of unprecedented power. We examine how this power is conceptualised. All perspectives conceive of the West's power as based upon material capacity and technical ingenuity. However, all also see this capacity as supported by and even, in some cases, constituted by, ideational and institutional power. We explore then perceptions of the West's capacity to define and control the structures and institutions of world politics through mechanisms such as international institutions, law and culture. Finally, we examine the differing perceptions of whether Western power is declining or increasing, and of the perceived external and internal challenges to Western power.

We then proceed to explore perceptions of the more subjective dimensions of the West in examining interpretations of its norms and institutions. Each of the perspectives emphasizes the importance of norms and institutions in defining the West, although their interpretations of the role and nature of these varies. Each implies that norms are critical in providing a sense of cohesion to the West and, in certain respects, in establishing a normative hierarchy in relations with other civilizational identities that empowers the West. We analyse the key norms taken to characterize and distinguish the West, such as individualism, freedom and equality, and explore how these are variously interpreted. We note points of tension that are identified between certain of these key norms, such as that between equality and individual freedom, and also consider the tensions demonstrated between Western liberal norms and practices of domination and imperialism. We note in particular contending positions on whether these norms are transient or permanent features of the West, and on whether the norms that characterize the West are transferable to other civilizational identities.

Similarly, we examine the key institutions assumed to characterize the West.⁶ The institutions discussed are primarily political institutions that are

broadly perceived by the authors examined here as the vehicles for expressing and even expanding Western influences and ideas. Again, we investigate commonalities and differences in the key institutions identified and in how their roles are interpreted. For instance, the survey of different perspectives demonstrates markedly different attitudes towards the institutions of representative government. As with the normative boundaries of the West, we observe here different views regarding whether the institutions of the West are transitional or permanent features, and as to whether their transmission to the societies of other civilizational identities is feasible or desirable.

Finally, marrying conceptions of cultural world order with the conceptions of the boundaries of the West, we examine how interaction between West and non-Western societies have been perceived in each case, and interpreted, both historically and in the present. We ask what is the perceived relationship between the West and other civilizational identities? For some it is a relationship of leadership, for others one of domination. We examine the perceptions of the impact of civilizational interaction on the communities involved. Are these seen as positive or destructive and for whom? Are civilizational identities perceived as becoming more alike through processes of interaction or does interaction exacerbate differences and conflict? This leads to the question of whether the West is perceived as providing a universal model towards which other civilizational identities are progressing. Furthermore, to what extent is the West perceived to have developed political, technical, economic or normative frameworks within which civilizational interaction now occurs? Moreover, this framework allows us to pose the question of what are the implications of the conceptions of the West within the context of different models of cultural world order for world politics?

This framework provides a mechanism for addressing the absence in International Relations theory of reflection on the conception of the nature and role of the West in world politics, but does so in a way that allows us to appreciate the complexity and contingency of these conceptions in relation to their particular historical and intellectual contexts. Furthermore, it locates conceptions of the West in relation to broader assumptions about cultural world order that are an important, if often understated, dimension of our images of world politics and of the possibilities for interaction between peoples.

3

Faust in the Twilight: Conceptions of the West in Oswald Spengler

'Nineteen-nineteen was the "Spengler year". Everyone seemed to be reading him; everyone was wondering just who he was.' Within eight years of its publication in 1919, sales of *The Decline of the West* had reached one hundred thousand copies (Hughes, 1952: 89). Why did this weighty and complex tome excite so much interest in the years following the World War I? One of its attractions was that it purported to explain the turbulent past; but it also claimed to forecast the future of the West.

Oswald Spengler's approach was radical in many respects. He had written a history of civilization in which the West appeared as one of many civilizations, departing from the more conventional contemporary assumption of the West and civilization as virtually synonymous. The cultural world order Spengler presents comprises multiple, organic, self-contained and essentially incommensurable civilizations. His conception of the West is infused with the sense of the organic development of society as an integrated whole within the framework of an essentially self-contained history. Furthermore, his prognosis for the West is a gloomy one of decline and disintegration: this 'Faustian' civilization is entering the twilight of its life-cycle. This was a significant departure from conventional assumptions of the innate progressiveness of the West; but it was one that spoke to the insecurities of the era.

Spengler's work provides a remarkable conception of the West as a civilizational identity moving towards decay and demagoguery, which even today is unsettling. However, the ideas used to construct this conception are not unprecedented. Spengler drew on influences and traditions that represent important elements of Western culture and thinking, including views that are anti-liberal and post- or anti-modern. This chapter comments upon the ideas expressed in Spengler's key work, *The Decline of the West*,¹ but also refers to some of his shorter works. These include the essay 'Prussianism and Socialism' (1967), published between the first and second volumes of the *Decline*; and two works published towards the end of his life, *Man and Technics* (1932) and Spengler's last book *The Hour of Decision*

(1934). Each of these works develops themes and ideas touched upon in the *Decline*. They depict the West at a time of great flux in European and world history. At the same time, Spengler's West is deeply embedded in a broader, complex conception of civilizational history

Spengler's era and influences

The Decline of the West provided a grand, panoramic and ultimately pessimistic vision of a gradually decaying Civilization.² Although Spengler was not necessarily typical of intellectuals in his era, his work drew on an important intellectual tradition that was suspicious, if not pessimistic, with regard to the prospects and consequences of development and the increased sophistication of Western civilization. Spengler's pessimistic temperament and keen sense of tragedy enabled him to illuminate a dimension of man's past as few other historians had done (Fischer, 1989: 72).

Spengler (1880–1936) lived during an era of transition and growing tension. He was born into a Germany recently unified, a hybrid society that saw the persistence of feudal institutions within a context of modern capitalism and machine technology; a powerful community still somewhat unsure of how to achieve its role as a force in the world (Fischer, 1989; Tuchman, 1966). The genesis of the idea for the *Decline* came to Spengler during 1911. The Moroccan crisis of that year, which brought Germany to the brink of war with France, was for him a portent of the catastrophe to come. This was an era of arms races, imperialist clashes and developing blocs of alliances. It was also an era of growing militancy and militarism (Hughes, 1952: 15). Spengler's sense of pessimism and tragedy was enhanced by the personal poverty and hardship that he experienced during the course of World War I when he was writing *The Decline of the West*. He wrote during an era of trauma and change for Germany. Following defeat and humiliation in the World War I, Germany experienced a period of turbulence under the Weimar Republic. This political system struggled with the extreme economic pressures of hyperinflation, reparations and depression in the 1920s, and eventually crumbled under the pressure of the rise of extremist political groups that brought the National Socialists to power in 1933. Spengler's work is infused with a sense of shame and dismay at the fate of Germany after the war. There is a palpable sense of betrayal that Spengler places on the shoulders of the German liberals and intellectuals who he believed had undermined the German nation. There is also a sense of threat emanating from revolutionary Russia and the increasing political and economic vitality of the colonial peoples.

Intellectually, this was also an era of uncertainty. Confidence in Western liberal ideas of rationalism and progress was challenged by the scepticism of authors and philosophers such as Georges Sorel, Vilfredo Pareto and

Friedrich Nietzsche. In the nineteenth century, Alexis De Tocqueville and Jacob Burckhardt had raised questions about the wisdom and future of democracy, Burckhardt fearing the manipulation of the masses by tyrants. Nietzsche took Burckhardt's criticisms of the decadence of contemporary Western society further, forecasting that a new elite, Nietzsche's supermen, would sweep away the decadence of the nineteenth-century bourgeois society, introducing new values of barbaric simplicity. Scholars such as Freud and Pareto proposed 'intuitive theories' of human action, arguing that the basis of human action might lie beyond the level of logical thinking (Hughes, 1952: 19–25). Such ideas challenged the assumption of man as an innately rational actor; implying human action may be driven by deeper impulses.

In intellectual currents of this era, the view was prevalent that struggle and conflict were forces of growth and renewal. The idea of struggle was integral to both the ideologies of Darwinism and Marxism and was an important element of *realpolitik* in the political arena (Fischer, 1989: 38) Spengler's images of the productive impact of struggle and his pessimism with regard to the future course of Western civilization reflect these trends, although he rejected Darwinism as based on superficial causality (*Decline*: 231).

Within Germany, some elements of the intellectual community sought to blend the old cosmopolitan and liberal ideas of the Romantics with the *realpolitik* of the Germany in the machine age (Fischer, 1989: 42–4). Spengler demonstrates the influence of both of these trends but he stands outside the German historicist tradition that encompasses Hegel, Marx and Weber (Farrenkopf, 1993: 391–2). His anti-liberal and anti-modern views reject the faith in reason and progress found in these authors, as well as the belief in continuities in history found in Hegel, for instance.³ On the other hand, Spengler can be located within a tradition of pessimistic thought that is represented in the German context by Nietzsche (Farrenkopf, 1993: 391; Springborg, 1993: 77).

Spengler's work reflects the influence of his training as a classical scholar. For instance, his conceptualization of history as a cyclical process involving organic cultures demonstrates both his rejection of progressive thought and the influence of classical thinkers. Both Aristotle and Heraclitus had applied the idea of life-cycles as observed in nature to human society. This facilitated the notion of viewing human society as passing through stages of spring, summer, autumn and winter, or youth, maturity and old age. Heraclitus further observed not only the cyclicity of nature but also its transience (Fischer, 1989: 86). Spengler knew the work of Heraclitus well, having written his doctoral thesis on the philosopher. His own work applied this concept of the natural order of things to human history. Spengler viewed cultures as progressing through a cyclical life span while constantly engaged in a process of self-transformation.

Cyclical conceptions of history were not confined to the classical scholars and can also be found in the work of Machiavelli and Vico. The Romantic Movement also adopted them in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. In contrast to traditional Christian and secularized Enlightenment views of history in terms of the linear progression of mankind, the Romantic movement preferred to investigate the unique development of distinct cultures which grew like biological organisms. Spengler echoed the Romantics in his presentation of history as the study of an organic society, studying the spirit or *Geist* of that community as it was expressed through all aspects of society, including art, architecture and philosophy.

One of Spengler's chief influences and a key proponent of the Romantic Movement was Goethe. His work provided Spengler with the principal character in his conceptualization of the West—Faustian man. The second key influence whom Spengler acknowledged was Nietzsche.⁴ Nietzsche's influence was substantial, although there were points on which Spengler differed from his predecessor (*Decline*: 19; Hughes, 1952: 62). Nietzsche also subscribed to a cyclical view of history believing that contemporary Western civilization was on the verge of major change. The force, which for Nietzsche impelled change, was a 'will to power'. This is a central theme in Spengler's *Decline*. Like Nietzsche, Spengler believed that politics was essentially driven and governed by elites rather than the masses (Fischer, 1989: 105; Hughes, 1952: 62).

Spengler's perceptions of the West and of cultural world order were carved from this compilation of morphological conceptualizations. His pessimism with regard to the fate of the West is in no small part founded on his perception of civilizational histories as a natural process of growth and decay. His perception of struggle and the will to power as the dynamic forces which drive cultures derived in part from his readings of authors such as Heraclitus and Nietzsche, but were no doubt reinforced by the intellectual and political environment during which he wrote. These forces helped to shape Spengler's distinctive understanding of the role of civilizations in history and politics.

Conceptions of Civilizations

Civilizations stood at the heart of Spengler's complex historical philosophy. As John Farrenkopf notes, he played a path-breaking role in choosing to focus on civilizations rather than on nations or peoples as had been conventional in the nineteenth-century historiography.⁵ As a classical scholar, he was aware of the significance and vulnerability of civilizations in history (Farrenkopf, 1993: 393–4). His conception of civilizations is characterized first and foremost by a sense of their plurality, and secondly by their impermanence.

Spengler distinguished between Culture and Civilization. He saw Cultures as single organic entities:

The high Culture ... is the waking-being of a single huge organism which makes not only custom, myths, technique and art, but the very peoples and classes incorporated in itself the vessels of one single form-language and one single history. (*Decline*: 234)⁶

Like any other organic being, they enter into a life-cycle which brings them through periods of growth, blossoming, maturity and decline – or childhood, youth, maturity and old age. This process lasted, on average, one thousand years. The transition from a culture at its height to the processes of decline mark the transition from Culture to Civilization: once the 'inner possibilities' of a Culture have been achieved, it 'mortifies, or 'congeals' into a Civilization (*Decline*: 74). Civilization is the period when the soul of a Culture has exhausted its truly creative potential, reached fulfilment and becomes mummified in the culture and society of the metropolis.

The distinctions that Spengler draws between Culture and Civilization have precedents in German literature, in, for instance, the work of Kant, Nietzsche and Thomas Mann (Hughes, 1952: 72). Norbert Elias notes that Kant distinguished between 'civilization', interpreted as a form of propriety or outward behaviour, in contrast to 'culture', conveying a sense of accomplishment. *Zivilization* was a term which meant something useful, but superficial and second rank in comparison to *Kultur* (Elias, 1978: 4).⁷ Spengler's employment of the terms similarly tends to privilege Culture as a more creative and valuable phase of social existence.

Spengler advocated a morphological approach to the study of these organic entities rather than a systematic one.⁸ To him, the history of mankind was the history of the separate development and decline of various Cultures and Civilizations. Cultures may intersect and affect one another. However, their development is not interdependent. Cultures were independent entities and mutually incomprehensible (Hughes, 1952: 72). Pursuant to this thesis, Spengler set out to demonstrate that all aspects of a Culture are shaped by the character and dynamic of the Culture rather than by a universal system of progression. Each Culture was perceived to have its own unique soul. The soul shapes a Culture's world-view, its view of history and of nature. The uniqueness of each Culture is reflected in every aspect of its societies:

There is not *one* sculpture, *one* painting, *one* mathematics, *one* physics, but many, each in its deepest essence different from the others, each limited in duration and self-contained, just as each species of plant has its peculiar blossom or fruit, its special type of growth and decline. (*Decline*: 17)

Spengler's vision of history was of the cyclical life histories of independent cultures, 'separate worlds of dynamic being' (*Decline*: 14). Therefore, he did not see history as a rational, linear progression of mankind. Spengler rejected teleology and the rationalistic school of history that constantly sought causality instead seeing history as more spontaneous and phenomenal: 'a picture of endless formations and transformations, of the marvellous waxing and waning of organic forms' rather than 'a sort of tapeworm industriously adding onto itself one epoch after another' (*Decline*: 6, 18). Therefore, like a human being, within the confines of the natural life-span and aging process, a Culture is in charge of its own quest for fulfilment.

In Spengler's conception of history, not all populations form 'peoples'. 'Culture peoples' were distinguished from primitive peoples in that they have an inner, spiritual unity that defines them as 'nations'. Underlying nations, he argued, is an 'Idea'. The pursuit of this idea forms the quest for the fulfilment of a Culture's 'Destiny'. It is the pursuit of 'Destiny' that forms 'world-history'. Thus, the foundations of a Culture as a community were as much normative as objective. Spengler was only truly interested in what he described as 'world history'. The majority of mankind, he argued, was locked into an ahistorical cycle of life and death. Only Cultures made history (*Decline*: 73, 243).

For Spengler, history was about the quest for spiritual fulfilment. Not all Cultures achieved fulfilment, some being snuffed out through contact with another civilization, as happened with Mexican Culture; others having their creative spirit stifled by the weight of an older, alien Culture, as was the case, argued Spengler, of Arabian and Russian Cultures (*Decline*: 268). Still other Cultures, having proceeded through the stages of growth and decline, lingered on long after their cultural decay as the 'scrap material' of history, as in the case of Indian and Chinese Civilizations (Dray, 1980: 107). What is most significant here is the sense of the histories of Civilizations as independent. The essence of their historical experiences was derived from within, not through interaction with other Cultures. Spengler's morphological imagery described each Culture as like a seed which contains within it the vital DNA that determines its potential growth. World history becomes like a forest composed of a variety of plants. These plants may coexist, they may compete for light and nutrition and impact upon each others growth, but they remain separate plants (Dray, 1980).

A Culture's pursuit of its 'Idea' was not perceived as a purely intellectual process, but one of action and struggle. Ideas are realized through actions not words (Spengler, 1967: 70). Struggle is a critical dynamic in Spengler's reading of history. In this he echoes contemporary modes of thought with regard to the productive impact of conflict in which the stronger wins out. His work is littered with images of battle, warriors and struggles. War is for Spengler a form of creative tension, the dynamic of history. 'War is the

creator of all great things. All that is meaningful in the stream of life has emerged through victory and defeat.' (Spengler, 1928, vol. 2: 363) Countries existed for war, and only through war did a nation or ideology demonstrate superiority over another (Hughes, 1952: 103; Spengler, 1967: 70). Although Spengler rejected the Darwinist model of evolution through struggle, his own theories posit a cultural state of nature, nasty and brutish if not always short. The beast of prey appears repeatedly as a metaphor for a strong and vigorous leadership or culture. Pacifism is treated as symptomatic of weakness and decay (Spengler, 1934: 225). The achievement of universal harmony, even through the hegemony of a dominant order, appears to be unattainable (Spengler, 1967: 70). This overall conception of civilizational interaction differs markedly from those that see the evolution of cultures as deriving from interaction and cross-fertilization, or views different cultures as phases of civilizational evolution.

The boundaries of Spengler's West

Spengler's aim in *The Decline of the West* was to locate the West of the epoch 1800 AD–2000 AD in the broader chronology of Western cultural history, viewed as an organic cycle. His conclusion was that this epoch corresponds to the period of transition in the West's maturation from Culture to Civilization. The West had already reached its peak and entered into the latter half of its life-cycle, onto the path of gradual decline. Spengler's understanding of civilizational history leads to a distinctive conception of the West that has profound implications for the way in which he interpreted the West's relationship with other civilizations. His conception of the West must be understood within the overall thesis of *The Decline*. His aim was firstly to determine the position of the contemporary West within a hypothetical organic cycle of Culture and Civilizations. Second, he sought to portray the West as a Culture separate from Classical antecedents.⁹ As Dannhauser remarks, this is a clear rejection of the traditional Hegelian division of history into ancient, medieval and modern as a process that 'fudges' three completely different Cultures and Civilizations. Spengler saw no such continuities in world history (Dannhauser, 1995: 123).

Each civilization was for Spengler an organic unit, with its own history and life-cycle. In *The Decline of the West*, Spengler wove an integrated history of the Western culture and politics throughout his text, linking the different stages of growth to architectural styles that characterized them. Spengler's West was born with the awakening of Faustian Culture in the German plains c.1000 AD. During what is traditionally known as the High Middle Ages, Spengler's new Faustian culture was characterized by Christianity, the institutions of feudalism, the establishment of imperial authority and the reformed Papacy. This era reached a stage of fulfilment in

the architecture of the Gothic era, but Spengler viewed the West as reaching its pinnacle in the art, architecture and scholarship of the Baroque era. Intellectually, it was a period of free inquiry. Politically it was a time characterized by the authority of the dynastic state. This era also saw the shift of the focus of the Culture to the cities.

The Renaissance however, represented not an era of rebirth and growth, but 'breakdowns in internal contradictions'. As Werner Dannhauser observes, it represented a rebirth of the classical spirit in a Faustian setting, an occurrence that could not be accommodated in Spengler's theory of the independence of Cultures (Dannhauser, 1995: 124). Consequently, the Renaissance is treated as a counter-movement to the Gothic ideal, but one ultimately rooted in the Gothic spirit and form (*Decline*: 121–5; Spengler, 1967: 32). The Baroque era descended into the charm of the Rococo that for Spengler marked the development of style and form, the real creative spirit of the West beginning to ebb.

The Enlightenment was viewed as an era of criticism and destruction as expressed through rationalism, intellectual and artistic life focusing on the great cities and the political rise of the bourgeoisie. Philosophically, culturally and politically, the nineteenth century was the commencement of 'winter' for the West, with intellectualism and money as the key forces in politics. The industrial age was recognized as greatly empowering the West and stemming from the spiritual dynamism and ingenuity of Western culture, but it is treated as a transient phase. It is a phase that Spengler both celebrates and laments as signalling the passing of a purer, pre-industrial era (Farrenkopf, 1993: 399). Spengler saw the twentieth century presaging the new era of blood and warfare, the coming of the new 'Caesars' to restore passion and traditional values to politics. The new era would be one of perpetual and total warfare for power between outstanding personalities. The great cities, or megalopolis, would continue as foci, but the cities would be beset with social problems, their intellectual and cultural life essentially sterile. Spengler forecast an eventual descent into a new primitiveness for the West – an end of history. However, while Spengler predicted the onset of major wars, he did not envisage the sudden epochal destruction of the West, but its gradual decline over several generations. This image is one of the West was entering its twilight or sunset years.

Spengler placed a high priority on the internal dynamic or soul of a civilization. To him, the Western or Faustian soul was dynamic, constantly questing, seeking to command nature, to penetrate space and to explore the concept of the infinite. Spengler's conceptualization of the West and its boundaries are deeply interwoven with the way in which he perceived the spirit of the West.

Territory

Spengler attaches great importance to the relationship between Cultures and their territories or locations, a relationship that changes as a Culture

matures. Territory provides not only objective boundaries, but also moulds the community. From the outset, Spengler established a crucial link between territory and community. For him, the Culture of a race arises out of a particular soil and is inextricably bound to it. The shape and nature of a landscape, its flora, light and atmosphere are reflected in a Culture. Populations that migrate to a new soil or homeland gradually change and become a new race (*Decline*: 254). The relationship between land and community is also seen as changing as the locus of a Culture shifts from land to city. A Culture is born on the land, but as cities develop, they become the focus of the Culture. Cities grow into large cosmopoli, becoming densely populated and rigidly constructed. The cities are necessary for the fulfilment of a Culture, but are also the catalyst of its destruction and decay. They act as the terminus of a Civilization (*Decline*: 245–52, 379).

These preconceptions are important to Spengler's territorial conceptualization of the West. He sees the West as primarily a culture of north-west Europe, born in the eleventh century on the plain between the rivers Elbe and Tagus (*Decline*: 97). Its character, art and architecture were shaped by the plains and forests of the brooding North, and by its subtle light, hardened by its difficult climate (Spengler, 1932: 78). Spengler portrays the West as blossoming in the Germanic heartland, but not solely confined to this region. He discusses the West as moving westward as it matured and ultimately declined, shifting in its focus from the rural north to the cities of the late nineteenth century, such as New York, London, Paris and Berlin (*Decline*: 253; Spengler, 1967: 40).

This territorial conceptualization of the West is striking, not only for its Germanic locus, but also for what it excludes or marginalizes. The Mediterranean is traditionally viewed as the source of Western culture. Yet Spengler painted the societies of the Mediterranean as on the margins, occupying an ambiguous position, caught between the influences of three Cultures – the Hellenic and Magian and Western. Spengler also explicitly excluded Russia from the West. 'The distinction between Russia and the West', he maintained, 'cannot be drawn too sharply' (Spengler, 1967: 122). Given that Russia was commonly regarded as one of the great powers of Europe at this time, its exclusion from the West would have been regarded as unusual by many (Hughes, 1952: 76).¹⁰ However, Spengler regarded the Westernization of Russia as essentially superficial. In its soul, Russia was completely alien to the West. The Russian Revolution that Spengler argued, installed an Asiatic regime in Russia, had exacerbated this difference: 'Russia is lord of Asia. Russia *is* Asia.' (Spengler, 1934: 213; *Decline*: 271) Spengler's conception of the relationship between the West and territory is, therefore, both powerful and distinctive.

Race

Spengler's work is popularly, although often misleadingly, associated with his views on race. Race was for Spengler a 'decisive element' in life that

helped shape a Culture (*Decline*: 257). His references to the importance of race and 'blood' in a Culture's history are frequent. However, he treats race as a spiritual, rather than a biological category. Consistent with his organic methodology, Spengler argued that races have roots in and are shaped by the landscape that they inhabit. However, he rejected notions of race as bred by physiological features, or racial identity as a function of blood descent. It was the strength not the purity of a race that Spengler viewed as important (Spengler, 1934: 219). He dismissed physiological definitions of race as symptomatic of the heavy hand of Darwinism. The qualities which defined race were inner qualities, in particular, a sense of a common ideal or destiny—'racial feeling'. Race was a spiritual and cultural bond between people, not a physical one:

In race there is nothing material but something cosmic and directional, the felt harmony of a Destiny, the single cadence of the march of historical Being. (*Decline*: 265)

In keeping with this understanding of race, Spengler described the racial boundaries of the West in terms of its spiritual qualities. He describes the West as comprising Faustian races, emanating from Northern Europe, first thrusting outward into the world in the Viking migrations (Spengler, 1932: 81). While Spengler recognized important differences between national groups within the West, he believed they all shared the same Faustian spirit (Hughes, 1952: 107; Spengler, 1967). Consequently, Spengler distinguished the races of the West from the peoples of the Hellenic and Magian cultures of the past and from contemporaries such as the Russian, Jewish and Arabic races.

Spengler's West is implicitly a predominantly white West. This became more explicit in his later works, where he demonstrated a growing concern with regard to tensions and rivalries between the white races of the West and the 'coloured races' (Spengler, 1934: 208). The coloured races, by which he meant non-white peoples living both within and outside the territory controlled by the West, resented the imperialist West and were filled with a burning desire to destroy it. This included Russia, which had now removed its 'white mask' and become Asiatic 'with all its soul' (Spengler, 1934: 209). Again, we glimpse Russia as culturally distinct and distant from the West. In both *Man and Technics* and *The Hour of Decision* he warned that the coloured races would eventually turn against and conquer the exhausted Faustian man (Hughes, 1952; Spengler, 1932; 1934).

Although racial distinctions are critical to Spengler's schema of civilizations, this does not make him a racist in the sense of believing in a hierarchy of the races. He dismissed notions of innate racial superiority, or of there being a master race.¹¹ However, in his later work he did argue that the West was in the process of committing racial suicide through policies such as population control and the employment of medical science to sustain

the weak in society, reducing the vigour and strength of the white races (Spengler, 1934: 222–4). Furthermore, he argued that the last best hope for the West for resistance and rejuvenation lay in the German people, the youngest and least exhausted of the Western peoples (Spengler, 1934: 225). Therefore, race provided a crucial boundary for Spengler's West. However, it is more a spiritual and normative boundary than a material one.

Religion

Spengler's philosophy of culture and history was strongly relativist. Not surprisingly then, he rejected the idea that there was one universal truth: 'There are no eternal truths: every philosophy is the expression of its own and only its own time' (*Decline*: 31). It follows, therefore, that for Spengler, religion was something unique to each Culture, shaped by the spirit of that Culture. He believed that religions evolved and changed as Cultures matured, but remained integrally related to the community. Consequently, Spengler's West is characterized by unique and evolving religious traditions rather than a community participating in a universal religious experience. His conception of the religious boundaries of the West is distinctive for its Germanic focus and for the emphasis placed on the spirit of the individual.

Disillusioned with contemporary religion, Spengler focused on German Catholic Christianity of the Gothic age as the quintessential religious expression of youthful Western Culture (*Decline*: 330–3; Fischer, 1989: 31). However, given the historical roots of Judeo-Christian religion, it would be impossible to conceive of the West's Christian faith as without antecedents, and Spengler did acknowledge these. He discussed Western Christianity's complex interdependence with the Magian faiths out of which it arose, and traced the development of the Christian Church from an Aramaic peasant faith that had been absorbed by Hellenic society (*Decline*: 281–5). He noted the significance of the ministry of Paul in the development of a Western church that was Greek, urban and literate in its focus (*Decline*: 291). However, Spengler pointed not only to antecedents from the Hellenic and Magian Cultures, he also traced the elements that linked the Gothic church with pre-Christian paganism, and with the Faustian myths and gods of Valhalla. Spengler saw a unity rather than a tension in the myth-making of the northern pagan and Christian circles, conceiving the consolidation of the German hero-tales and the Arthurian legends as a similar force and movement to the flourishing of Catholic hagiology in the tenth and eleventh centuries (*Decline*: 202). These elements combined in Spengler's West to give birth to a unique religion of the West.

While acknowledging its antecedents, Spengler firmly distinguished the character of the Western Church from the Hellenic and Magian religions. He emphasized the monotheism of Western religion in contrast to Hellenic. Even more pronounced was the emphasis he placed on the spirit of the individual in Western Christianity. He distinguished Western

Christianity from its antecedents in the nature of man's relationship with God. He portrayed Hellenic and Magian religions as essentially fatalistic. In contrast, Western man has an individual relationship with his God, a relationship within which the individual assumes some measure of responsibility. In essence, the Western church was distinguished by the participation of the free individual who chooses their fate. The sense of Free Will was central to Spengler's concept of the Faustian soul. This soul is described as:

An Ego lost in Infinity, an Ego that was all force, but a force negligibly weak in an infinity of greater forces; that was all will, but a will full of fear for its freedom. (*Decline*: 334)

As a Culture matures, so its form and institutions change. Spengler traced the changes in the West's religious identity with the shifts in the Faustian religion from its high point in the German Catholic church through the challenges provided by the reformation towards puritanism, described as a fanatical revival of piety which contained within it the seeds of rationalism. This in turn was followed by materialism (*Decline*: 343; De Beus, 1953: 28). For Spengler, this more secular society, governed by rationalism and materialism, represented an element in the West's ultimate decline. This contrasts to the conception of the creation of a secular society as a mark of the West's progress and an aspect of its strength. Instead the Protestant faith is portrayed as a diminution of the purity of the earlier church. This stands in contrast to his contemporary, Max Weber, who related the spirit of Protestantism to the success of the West through capitalism (Weber, 1930; Farrenkopf, 1993: 402).

The boundaries of religion formed a distinct element of Spengler's conception of the West. Yet once again, these were not boundaries that were materially defined. The religion of the West was organically linked to the inner spirit of the West, a further expression of the unique soul of the West. Evolution and change within Western religion were regarded as related to the maturing of the West.

Power

Spengler's concept of power was in many ways fairly abstract, containing spiritual and morphological components. Power stemmed in part from the inner spirit of a Culture, in part from the stage of growth that a Culture was experiencing. Spengler considered the West unrivalled due to its status as a still growing Culture, but also to its dynamic character. He conceptualized the West as the only extant Culture still in the phase of fulfilment. Other extant Cultures had either ossified or failed to achieve their potential. This naturally gave the West enormous advantages relative to other Cultures. However, the power of the West both enabled and endangered it. For Spengler, the dynamic and exploratory spirit of the West was demonstrated

by Western science, technology, art and a will to travel. For instance, the Spanish explorers exemplified a spirit unafraid to challenge nature and explore space, pushing aside boundaries on a global scale (*Decline*: 174). The Faustian soul not only inspired the physical conquest of the world, but also the morale of shaping that world. The Faustian 'will to power' is one 'which laughs at all bounds of time and space, which indeed regards the boundless and endless as its specific target', which seeks to mould and shape the natural and intellectual world (Spengler, 1932: 79). Here we see the West treated as exceptional in terms of its global scope and its transformative impulses.

Spengler argued that the West's drive to explore the infinite was also expressed intellectually in its mathematics and science, principally physics (*Decline*: 62–3). Combined with a preoccupation for measurement, these qualities facilitated the development technologies, a theme explored in *Man and Technics* (1932). In many ways, technology provided the ultimate expression of the Faustian soul. He described the West's passion for technology as:

...the outward – and upward – straining life-feeling – true descendant, therefore, of the Gothic. ... The intoxicated soul wills to fly above Space and Time. (*Decline*: 411)

Technology, therefore, evolved from the Faustian spirit. The West's monopoly of technical power and knowledge translated into economic capacity and wealth. This provided the critical foundation on which the West's military capacity was built, and the foundation of the West's unrivalled superiority in the nineteenth century (Spengler, 1932: 99).

However, Spengler's view of technology is an ambivalent one. While the industrial age is treated as a period of unrivalled Western superiority, it is regarded as transitory rather than the foundation point of unlimited growth and development, again distinguishing Spengler from modernist thinkers (Farrenkopf, 1993: 398). Furthermore, within the fruit of the West's sources of power lay the seeds of its destruction. Spengler believed that machines that had at first allowed men to enslave nature had now enslaved man (*Decline*: 411–12). He argued that, on the one hand, technical thinking had become too esoteric and artificial; on the other, mechanization had taken over Western civilization, threatening to poison and sterilise both the natural environment and the soul of Faustian man (Spengler, 1932: 93). Furthermore, he castigated the West for squandering its privileges by foolishly liquidating its monopoly of technical knowledge as more non-Western societies became industrialized (Spengler, 1932: 100–1). Writing in an era in which Germany was being devastated by economic depression, Spengler was concerned that the privileged but increasingly alienated Western economies had become vulnerable to competition from

low wage economies where the work ethic was stronger (Spengler, 1932: 89, 100). The West's power in terms of technological capacity is, therefore, treated as exceptional, although under challenge externally from other Cultures, but also internally from the forces that the West's technical and intellectual capacity had unleashed.

Spengler's pessimism with regard to the increasingly negative dimensions of technology in the West accorded with his organic thesis on the cycle of Cultures and the finite nature of growth and power. He believed that in the early twentieth century, the West was reaching the limits of achievement, exhausting its inner possibilities in all fields (*Decline*: 212–25). Consequently, many of the achievements which other commentators would regard as signifying the growth and expansion of the West and its power, indicated for Spengler the consolidation of the West as a creative intellectual force. This is also evident in his attitude to economics and politics, in particular to ideas with regard to capitalism, or the 'money economy'.

As in other fields, Spengler rejected the idea of a universally valid form of economic thought, seeing economic life as unique to each Culture. However, all economies matured through the cycles of their Cultures. The development of the 'money economy' coincided with a Culture becoming increasingly urban (*Decline*: 406). As a Culture matured in the metropoli, money rather than ideas becomes a source of power, and comes to dominate politics. Eventually, the money economy tears away at the soul, and destroys the unity of a Culture. For Spengler modern Western capitalism was such a progression. Curiously for one who admired the spirit of struggle and competition, Spengler did not hold the spirit of capitalism in high esteem. This low regard stems from the perception that capitalism promotes individual aggrandisement rather than the welfare of the community. He characterized it as emanating from the English aspect of the Faustian spirit, depicting Anglo-American society as the heartland of this particular development in Western Civilization (*Decline*: 402; Spengler, 1967). The Culture was, in a sense, moving westward away from its spiritual heartland in Germany and becoming more tawdry and materialistic. In the process, the power of capital, expressed through big business, was dominating and corrupting Western politics (Spengler, 1967: 118).

Spengler, therefore, treats the West as an exceptional Civilization that has achieved unprecedented levels of power. Yet it is not the sheer weight of this capacity that defines the West for Spengler, but its Faustian character. This is also the source of its power. The West's desire and capacity to explore and shape the rest of the world are inseparable aspects of his conception. At the same time, the power of the West is transient, founded upon the continuing strength of its spirit. As the spirit ebbed towards exhaustion, so the power of the West became vulnerable. This was marked

for Spengler by tendencies towards pacifism, complacency and urban alienation (Spengler, 1934: 205–7; Farrenkopf, 1993).

Norms

A strong normative dimension evidently underpins the boundaries of the West's identity for Spengler. His cultural communities were constituted around, and driven by, an inner spirit or central idea. Concepts of territory, race, religion and even power were derived from inner sources as much as they were materially generated. Common perceptions, such as 'race feeling', and shared traditions and histories helped to generate the 'peoples of Cultures' as metaphysical communities. Yet, while the normative dimension is critical to Spengler's conception of the West, many of the norms, values and institutions commonly associated with the West he regards as transitional or specific to only a part of the West.¹² In this conception, liberal values and institutions, often celebrated as central achievements of the West, mask the realities of power that underlie politics.

Spengler laid great emphasis on the spirit of the individual as a central aspect of the Faustian character. This is most powerfully expressed in his exploration of the exercise of the individual's free will in Western Christianity (*Decline*: 303). He also observed the emergence of the 'ego', the 'I', in the languages of the West (*Decline*: 136–7), and the celebration of the inner-person in Western history and art, in biography, portraiture and drama (*Decline*: 136, 166, 171). However, individualism was not the defining norm of Spengler's West. The spirit of individualism does not overwhelm or detract from the significance of the community in this conceptualization; it was part of the spirit of that community. Within the West, Spengler recognized some nations as more individualistic than others. For example, the English national spirit was characterized as one of individualism, expressed in its economic institutions through capitalism, and in its political institutions through liberalism. However, Spengler juxtaposes these norms and institutions with those of the Prussian nation whose spirit gives priority to the community. The individual achieves fulfilment within and through the community, through service and obedience. These values are expressed in the bureaucratic authoritarian state through 'Prussian socialism', a term which Spengler employs to mean 'collective instinct' rather than class theory (Spengler, 1967: 10).¹³ In his 1919 work, 'Prussianism and Socialism', Spengler represents the tension between ideas which privilege the individual and the community, between capitalism and socialism, as one of the central struggles of modern history. This is not represented as a struggle between the West and outside ideas, but as a battle for ideological supremacy within the West linked to the battle for hegemony between the Anglo-American tradition, representing individualism and capitalism, and the Prussian tradition, representing the collective ideal (Spengler, 1967).

In other areas, norms and values often viewed as central to defining the West are portrayed in Spengler's work as manifestations of the West as a maturing Culture. For instance, the spirit of rationalism is represented not as an aspect of the West's growth, but as symptomatic of a Culture whose creative spirit is waning. Spengler saw all later Cultures entering into a period where intellectualism gained prominence and power. Intellectualism, he suggested, with its focus on words and abstract ideas, masked the reality that politics was driven by power. The dominance of intellectualism in the West was signalled by the Enlightenment that introduced the critical spirit of rationalism, a school of thought that Spengler defined as based purely on materialism (*Decline*: 343). This was viewed as a negative force that attacked and undermined the traditions of a Culture, replacing them with empty ideas and catchwords (*Decline*: 365). Rationalism was a new religion which replaced God with force, but which itself had no soul.

Similarly, Spengler had little or no faith in the concepts of rights and freedom as propounded by Enlightenment thinkers, seeing them as symptomatic of a Culture heading towards spiritual decline. Liberalism and socialism were philosophies of an age of theory that Spengler believed was drawing to an end (*Decline*: 390). Based on the principles of liberty and equality, these philosophies promoted a broader distribution of political power through practices such as universal suffrage. But for Spengler, while democracy promised to devolve power to the people, in reality, power remained in the hands of a minority. Those with the real power in the late West manipulated elections, those with money such as big business and those who controlled the Press (*Decline*: 391–7). He argued:

The concepts of Liberalism and Socialism are set in effective motion only by money. ... There is no proletarian, not even a Communist, movement that has not operated in the interest of money, in the directions indicated by money and for the time permitted by money. (*Decline*: 367)

These ideas that promised to free the peoples of the West were enslaving rather than emancipating them. Democracy was but a transition phase to the new era of 'Caesarism'. Again, there is a sense of the Culture moving westward as it declined, and of the significant tensions within the Culture. The development of many of the unsavoury norms and ideas of late Culture in the West are ascribed to England and the United States. These include the development of political and economic liberal ideas, the press and the extensive financial manipulation of elections (*Decline*: 368, 393). While these were accepted as appropriate to Anglo-American culture, Spengler denounced them as disastrous when transferred to other contexts, such as Germany (Spengler, 1967: 44).

Spengler was, then, very conscious of the importance of the spiritual and normative dimensions of a Culture. However, he was equally conscious of the underlying power structures and forces of politics. These forces were as central to the constitution of the West as other cultures. Spengler's treatment of the ideas and norms often viewed as representing the West is, therefore, unconventional. A similar trait can be found in the way he viewed the institutions of the West.

Institutions

In Spengler's work, no one institution emerges as a permanent or fixed expression of the West. The meaning of institutions is closely related to the context in which they are formed. Hence, Spengler argues that concepts such as 'democracy' and 'republicanism' were not constant but meant different things in different cultural contexts (*Decline*: 361). This entails a rejection of the idea of institutions that are universally relevant and highlights once again the contingency of the social forms that emerge from particular Cultures and Civilizations. Spengler identifies no single institution as a permanent expression of the West. His conception of the West accommodated a range of different political traditions and institutions. The norms and institutions underlying authoritarianism, liberalism and socialism are all accounted for in his historical mosaic. In part, they are understood as aspects of the West's morphological growth, but at other times the coexistence of different ideas expresses different national characteristics within the West.

The state was a central institution of politics for Spengler, the ultimate form of community. World history is referred to as the history of states, and of the wars between them (Spengler, 1967: 69). However, Spengler did not see the state as constituted by abstract universal institutions and norms, but by the spirit of a community at its particular point in history:

The true political shape of any given country is not to be found in the wording of its constitution; it is rather, the unwritten, unconscious laws according to which the constitution is put into effect. (Spengler, 1967: 71)

Therefore, Spengler did not delineate a fixed concept of how a state should be constituted. However, he laid great emphasis on the unity of spirit in a community, and on the relationship between the leadership and the people in conceptualizing the nature of particular states. Good leadership was understood as a central quality of a state, but it derived primarily from the skills of the leader – qualities inherited by the ruling classes (*Decline*: 382). As leadership devolved to the lower estates, it became less responsible, more self-interested (*Decline*: 364).

Spengler's understanding of leadership patterns lead to a distinctive reading of political institutions of the West. The high point of politics in

the West was represented by the dynastic states of Europe, particularly the unified strong leadership the *ancien régime* of French-formed culture (*Decline*: 83). The rise of the bourgeoisie and concomitantly of urban politics in eighteenth-century Europe marked the beginning of the transition of the West from a Culture to a Civilization (*Decline*: 364–5), providing the arena for forces that rose to undermine tradition and stability. These forces were the rise of intellectualism and of money: ‘Intellect rejects, money directs – so it runs in every last act of a Culture drama, when the megalopolis has become master over the rest’ (*Decline*: 367). The French Revolution, while ‘glorious’ in some respects, also signalled the introduction of the destructive element of ‘the mob’ as a force in politics. The rise of representative and parliamentary politics signalled the civilizational phase of the West. Parliament, then, is another Western institution that Spengler treated with caution, if not scepticism. For Spengler, parliamentary government was a product of English society. In this context he admired its success. But the secret of this success lay in the informal but continued exercise of power by the educated and traditional elite. This helped to maintain a basic political cohesion. On the continent and in Germany, however, Spengler had seen the parliamentary system become a divisive rather than a cohesive force (*Decline*: 373).

Once again, Spengler outlined significant differences in the character of communities within the West, this time with respect to institutions. Spengler represents institutions of representative politics that might be thought to characterize the West, not only as not universal, but also as appropriate only to a subsection of Western civilization (Spengler, 1967: 71–2). Furthermore, such institutions were treated as transient rather than fixed features of the West. In fact, current Western institutions such as parliamentarianism were predicted to decay with the onset of the new ‘Caesarism’ (Spengler, 1967: 89). In fact, Spengler’s discussion is imbued with a sense of decline rather than progress in the quality of the institutions of the modern West.

Interaction between the West and non-West

An understanding of Spengler’s views on civilizations, and on the boundaries within which he conceptualized the West, provides important insights into how he perceived and analysed interaction between the West and other civilizations. His work celebrates the West as a Culture that has achieved unprecedented levels of technical and intellectual growth and control; but it is distinctive in its rejection of theories of broad human progress, and its consciousness of the finite nature of the West’s own development and progress. It is also distinctive in its Germanic focus.

Underlying Spengler’s perception of civilizational interaction is his belief that civilizations are multiple. He acknowledged not only the existence, but

also the importance of other civilizations in human history. The West was not taken as the sole representative of civilization. As Farrenkopf notes, Spengler played a pioneering role in expanding the horizons of European historical inquiry beyond Euro-centric constraints to include non-Western cultures on a roughly even footing with the West (Farrenkopf, 1993: 398). In fact, Spengler was critical of the Euro-centric focus of Western scholarship. He considered Western 'world history' as inordinately skewed towards the history of the West and the assumption that the West represented some form of fulfilment in man's overall development. The West, he complained, 'rigs the stage' of world history, regarding itself as 'the fixed pole' around which the history of other Cultures revolved (*Decline*: 13).

Spengler was critical of viewing history as falling into 'ancient-medieval-modern' periods as used by Western historians. This, he felt, privileged the significance of the 'modern' age and failed to represent the significance and independence of Cultures which preceded the West in other parts of the globe. World history should be 'the complete biography' of these independent cultures (*Decline*: 230; Farrenkopf, 1993: 396). In this respect, Spengler's cultural world order is clearly pluralist and even multicultural in that it recognizes both the existence and importance of cultures other than the West in world history, and independent of their relationship with the West. Furthermore, while Spengler recognized the spectacular growth and achievements of the West, he emphasized the limits of that growth:

...the future of the West is not limitless tending upwards and onwards for all time towards our present ideals, but a single phenomenon of history, strictly limited and defined as to form and duration, which covers a few centuries and can be viewed and, in essentials, calculated from available precedents. (*Decline*: 30)

The stage of growth achieved in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries 'hitherto looked on as the highest point of an ascending straight line of world history' are really 'a stage of life which may be observed in every Culture that has ripened to its limit' (*Decline*: 29-30). He dismissed what he saw as misguided and inaccurate conceptions of world history that adopted a progressive perspective. The West progressed, therefore, only within the terms of reference of its own Culture. Spengler did not see its growth as representing the progress of mankind as a whole. There is no teleological, civilizing process, but the rise and fall of a series of civilizations across time and space. At the same time, he excused the tendency to view Western history as world history due to the unique breadth of the West's world-view: 'We men of the Western Culture are, with our historical sense, an exception not a rule. World-history is our world picture and not all mankind's' (*Decline*: 12). Therefore, while rejecting Western notions of universal progress,

Spengler still treated the West as exceptional in its breadth of influence and of its world-view. The West is exceptional but not universal.

Spengler acknowledged and wove into his discussion different facets and qualities of particular sections of Western society into the history of the whole Culture. Overall, however, Spengler's work seeks to convey a deeply integrated understanding of Western history and culture. While Spengler could not ignore the influence of other cultures, as noted above, he strongly emphasized the qualities that made the West unique. From the outset, he distinguished the West from Hellenic Culture, which he referred to as Apollonian Culture, a term borrowed from Nietzsche. While most historians trace the history of the West from its Graeco-Roman antecedents, Spengler sought to distance the two, comparing and contrasting many aspects of the two cultures throughout his work, constantly illustrating difference rather than progression from one to the other.¹⁴ Furthermore, he presented a conception of the West in which all aspects of social development relate to internal dynamics rather than trans-cultural movements, or the stimulation of inter-cultural relations.

Given that Spengler saw Cultures and Civilizations as historically independent, it is understandable that the historical dynamic was viewed as coming from within a Culture or Civilization rather than from interaction with others (Dray, 1980: 102). This does not mean that the impact of interaction is insignificant. However, it was not understood as the source of history. Interaction emerges more as a function of the inner dynamics of Civilizations, driven by their internal spiritual quest for fulfilment. Spengler certainly appeared most interested in the internal dynamics of Western Culture, with interaction presented as a secondary concern.

While Spengler denied the historical interdependence of Cultures, he could not deny the impact that the West had made upon the lives of other Cultures and Civilizations. Spengler does treat the West as one of a number of Civilizations, while it is also perceived as the only one still at a stage of growth. Other Civilizations are seen as fossils of the past, or strangled without reaching fulfilment. Therefore, the West is again treated as exceptional in that other Civilizations were not viewed as coexisting in the present on an equal footing. Western Culture was defined as one that constantly pushed outward, to explore and shape the world, and Spengler acknowledged that this had influenced the fate of non-Western peoples. For instance, the encounter between Mexican and Western Cultures led to the collapse of the young Aztec Culture, an encounter that demonstrated for Spengler the brutality, randomness and irrationality of history (*Decline*: 239–42). The primitive soul of Russian Culture had also been suffocated by the West; by efforts to force it into an alien Western mould through the policies initiated by Peter the Great (*Decline*: 270–4). Spengler believed that

an underlying spirit of the Russian revolution was a desire of the Russian people to throw off this alien superstructure.

Spengler largely accepted that for the most part, the West's relationship with the non-West was unequal and, in the nineteenth century, largely an imperial one. Spengler does not applaud or romanticize imperialism. It is portrayed as exploitative and oppressive, but he accepts that it is a normal aspect of the relationship between High Cultures and other peoples (Spengler, 1934: 204; Farrenkopf, 1993: 402). It does, however, signify decline rather than growth: 'Imperialism is Civilisation unadulterated.' (*Decline*: 28) There is then a strong sense of civilizational hierarchy implied in Spengler's discussion in the relationship between the modern West and non-West, although this was not perceived as a permanent hierarchical relationship. In its decline, Spengler foresaw a significant shift in the nature of the West's relationship with the non-West. In his later works, this was discussed in terms of the relationship between the white and non-white races, an early twentieth-century image of the 'West against the Rest'.

In the twentieth century, Spengler perceived the non-West posing major threats to the West, both economically, through low wage economies, and politically, through the non-West's uptake of liberal and socialist ideas. The two central threats identified were Russia and an increasingly dynamic Japan. In this context, Spengler's differentiation of Russia from the West becomes highly significant (Spengler, 1934). Spengler recognized that the threat from the non-West stemmed from an understandable resentment felt towards the imperialist West, but it was fuelled by an increased capacity to challenge the West. This shift in the balance of power Spengler ascribed to foolish dissemination of the technological knowledge, skills and political ideas (Spengler, 1932: 101). However, while the non-West constituted a visible external threat, the real enemy of the West for Spengler was internal decline. Loss of the fighting spirit, intellectual and creative sterility, falling birth rates, the breakdown of the family, all fed the internal decay that makes the imperial power vulnerable to attack from the 'barbarians at the gate' (Spengler, 1934: 205). Here, Spengler drew upon his classical scholarship to model a pattern of Western decay that paralleled the history of other declining civilizations. The fear of civilizations becoming jaded and lethargic with prosperity and age can also be found in other authors, even among liberal thinkers such as John Stuart Mill and Toynbee. Spengler compounds this fear with the concept of a West riven throughout its history by ongoing struggle for hegemony of the Faustian soul (Spengler, 1967: 6). The vitality of the West is, therefore, a critical factor in Spengler's reading of the course of civilizational interaction.

Spengler's perception of interaction is coloured by an intensely competitive perception of civilizational relationships. Cultures and civilizations are

portrayed as not only incommensurable, but locked into relationships of struggle where weakness in one creates opportunities for others. Therefore, World War I and the League of Nations, in which the 'coloured races' were allowed a say in disputes between white states, were regarded by Spengler as critical points at which the West demonstrated weakness, losing the respect of the 'coloured races' (Spengler, 1934: 209–10). They are not viewed as representing the expansion of a universal international society, but as a dimension of a broader battle between civilizational identities. In this context, he perceived the non-West as not simply wishing to compete with the West, but to destroy it (Spengler, 1934: 218).

However, Spengler's discussion of the threat posed to the West from other peoples does not suggest that these peoples would be able to build upon the civilization of the West. As Farrenkopf notes, they are seen as inheriting the tools, but not the spirit of the West, with non-Western people taking over 'forms that have virtually completed their process of cultural evolution and exhausted their inner possibilities – they are end forms' (Farrenkopf, 1993: 395; Spengler, 1932: 103). The assimilation of non-Western peoples of Western science and technology amounted to 'little more than an impressive act of imitation' (Farrenkopf, 1993: 399). Most importantly, the challenge posed by the non-West through imitation of the West was not viewed as the commencement of a new global culture. The rise and fall of the West is not, therefore, a dimension of a broader history of human progress.

Therefore, Spengler's perception of the West's interaction with other peoples, cultures and civilizations presents a curious mix of opinions. He argued that there is no world history constituting a universal process due to the independence, incommensurability and mutual incomprehension of Cultures. He stressed competition and challenge more than cross fertilization in his discussion of civilizational interaction. At the same time he portrayed the West as a global civilization that has a sense of world history, due not to teleology, but to the unique qualities of the West. While it has touched all other civilizations, its expansion is not an infinite process. It is a civilization in long-term decline, heading for an era of war and demagoguery. While other civilizations may imitate in order to compete with the West, it did not provide the foundations for a universal civilization. Therefore, Spengler did not suggest that humanity was moving towards the evolution of a single human civilization through emulation of the West.

Conclusion

Spengler's conception of the West is embedded in a cultural world order comprised of independent and largely incommensurable civilizations. Civilizations are organic entities, pursuing independent cycles of growth

and decay. Within this context, Spengler presents a deeply integrated conception of the West that radically differs from conventional images of this civilizational identity. The history of the West that Spengler presents sought to explain the present point in history within a broad, cyclical process. It is distinctive in its sense of the organic development of society as an integrated whole within the framework of an essentially self-contained history. It is also distinctive in its rejection of theories of broad human progress and its consciousness of the finite nature of the West's own development and progress. Looking at an era that to many demonstrated the West at a stage of unprecedented growth, Spengler saw only consolidation that would lead to retraction.

Critical to Spengler's constitution of the West are the internal bonds and shared characteristics that unite the diverse components of this community. The external characteristics of the West were seen to emanate from the internal *Geist* of the community. Therefore, his conception is essentially of a spiritual and normative community rather than a material one. However, Spengler is critical of many of the norms and institutions commonly associated with the West, such as progress and rationalism. In some respects, Spengler's analysis of the West is based on a philosophical approach that resonates strongly with elements of contemporary postmodern thought in its critical attitude to universalism, its accentuation of the importance of relativity and in being grounded on a metaphysics of flux. However, while in Spengler's analysis there is little commensurability and cohesion between civilizational identities, these identities themselves demonstrate strong elements of common spirit or character that provide them with a coherence within.

One of the distinctive features of Spengler's West is its strongly Germanic nature, demonstrated, for instance, by his treatment of the Renaissance as an outgrowth of Gothic rather than Mediterranean Culture. The youthful creative source of the West was located in the German heartland, but mature features of the West are associated with the societies of England and the United States. The decline of the West is, therefore, associated with the influence of these regions. Spengler's consistent differentiation of Western and Hellenic Cultures is also striking. The West is not simply a natural progression or rearticulation of Hellenic Culture but a unique entity in itself. This is consistent with Spengler's theory that the history and culture of civilizations are essentially self-contained, rather than linked by trans-cultural trends and movements. Spengler's ideas were not unique. For instance, precedents exist in his interpretation of the history of the High Middle Ages through to the seventeenth century as high points in Western culture (Hughes, 1952: 85–6). Similarly, there are precedents for his critical assessment of nineteenth-century Western culture. However, Spengler's overall panorama and pervading pessimism with regard to the future of the Western community were and remain unsettling. His work, however,

reminds us of the range and complexity of ideas and traditions which contribute to the civilizational identity of the West. These are not confined to liberal, materialist or progressive conceptions of society. Western traditions and thinkers have also drawn deeply on communitarian roots and conceptions of history that emphasize cyclicity and even continuity as much as progress. In Spengler's case, drawing on these traditions produced a conception of the West that rejected much of what is often assumed to be quintessentially Western.

Spengler's cultural world order resembles a state of nature. His image of inter-civilizational relations, particularly in his later work, is not only competitive but also conflictual. The impact that civilizations have upon one another is largely negative. Within this context, Spengler viewed the West as exceeding its civilizational predecessors and dominating its contemporaries through the sheer scale of its intellectual, technical and spiritual capacity. However, while the West is conceptualized as exceptional and global in scope, and the dominant civilization in modern world history, Spengler does not suggest that it provides a model, foundation or framework for a universal civilization. His concept of the separateness and cyclicity of civilizations eliminates any prospects for a universal order outside the framework of imperialism. Instead, Spengler is anti-cosmopolitan in tone. Spengler's image of cultural world order is one that encourages cultural consolidation rather than the pursuit of universal ideals or structures. Ultimately, Spengler's conceptions are shaped by the perception that the West's power is in decline. Faustian man is entering his twilight years. However, while he acknowledges that the fading West is increasingly challenged by non-Western rivals, he does not identify a potential successor to the West. Therefore, in the long run, the world order that Spengler describes is an uncertain and insecure one, likely to be characterized by struggles for power, both within the decaying West and outside.

4

The Parochial Civilization: Arnold Toynbee's Conception of the West

The importance that Arnold Toynbee attached to civilizations in his reading of world history is illustrated in his statement that '[t]he encounter between the World and the West may well prove ... to be the most important event in modern history' (Toynbee, 1958b: 233). For him, this civilizational encounter is an outstanding instance of a historical phenomenon that is one of the keys to understanding the history of mankind. As for Spengler, civilizations were central to his reading of world history. Toynbee's cultural world order also comprises a plurality of independent civilizations in various stages of growth and decline. However, in contrast to Spengler, Toynbee treated encounters between civilizations as critical events in the broader context of human history.

Toynbee's quotation also highlights the significance that he attaches to the role of the West in such encounters in modern history. Toynbee wrote extensively on the role of the West in world politics. However, the West features in his work as but one actor in a complex set of relationships between a plurality of civilizations. Toynbee recognizes the West as an ascendant civilization, suggesting that, at one level, it has created the foundation for a global society. At the same time, he was critical of aspects of the West and its impact on other societies, rejecting the idea that the West in itself represents a universal civilization. While Toynbee's West exercised a global reach, it was wedded to narrow and parochial ideas and institutions.

Toynbee (1889–1975) was a prolific, provocative and complex author. His work is breathtaking in scope and volume. His distinguished career as an historian and commentator on world politics spanned more than sixty years of the twentieth century, during which he produced just under three thousand publications (McNeill, 1989: 289). The impact of the century's dramatic events and changes can be seen in his reading of world history and politics. The volume and scope of his work naturally gives rise to a degree of complexity. This is augmented by significant tensions within Toynbee's work, relating, for instance, to the role of religion in civilizational history and the extent to which the West provides a central, formative force in the cultural world order.

This chapter does not survey Toynbee's complete works, but draws on a selection of key publications relating to civilizational interaction and the West. These include *A Study of History*, his major work published in three stages between 1934 and 1954;¹ *Civilisations on Trial*, a collection of articles and lectures published in 1948; and *The World and the West*, a published collection of Toynbee's 1952 BBC Reith lectures. In these, we find a complex concept of the cultural world order in which the modern West becomes a central actor.

Toynbee's era and influences

Toynbee's career was highly varied, bringing him fame in Britain, Europe and Japan, and celebrity status in the United States. Unlike Spengler, he was not solely an academic. In fact, he seemed uneasy within the confines of academia, resigning from teaching positions at both Oxford and the University of London after relatively short periods. Toynbee also travelled widely as a journalist and commentator on world affairs. He worked with organizations affiliated to the British Foreign Office during the World War I and II and was a member of the British delegations to the Peace Conferences in 1919 and 1946. Most of his working life was spent as Director of Studies at the British, subsequently Royal, Institute of International Affairs in London. There, he divided his time between writing and editing the annual *Survey of International Affairs* (1925–55).

Toynbee studied and later taught Classics and Ancient History at Balliol College, Oxford and his work reflects both his early interest in Byzantine and Middle Eastern history and his classical education. This was an era in which classical thought remained a powerful influence. Toynbee's work reflects these influences in, for instance, his translation of models drawn from classical city-states onto the global and civilizational scale (McNeill, 1961: 35–6; Stromberg, 1972: 14). And like Spengler, Toynbee was influenced by the cyclical view of history common in classical literature.

Three scholars who strongly influenced Toynbee were Plato, Herodotus and Thucydides. Toynbee shared with Plato the quest for unity in complexity, exploring the interconnectedness of things (McNeill, 1961: 44). He also echoed Plato in his use of metaphors to convey his message. His early work was influenced by Herodotus' study of the Persian War from which Toynbee drew the theme of the dichotomy between east and west. However, both McNeill and Stromberg speculate that the structure of *A Study* ultimately reflects the stronger influence of Thucydides, who conceived of the breakdown of societies along the model of Greek tragedy (McNeill, 1989: 96; Stromberg, 1972: 14). World War I brought the work of Thucydides to life for Toynbee in a vivid and powerful way, suggesting parallels between Graeco-Roman and Western civilizations, and the idea of cyclical patterns of history:

Thucydides had declared that war 'proves a rough master, that brings most men's characters to a level with their fortunes.' It was this kind of psychological brutalisation that Toynbee had in mind in attributing the breakdown of civilizations to unregulated warfare. (McNeill, 1989: 96)

The conjunction of insights into classical history and the War strongly influenced Toynbee's views of the destructive impact of war on civilizations, with unregulated warfare a brutalizing force that had contributed to the breakdown of civilizations (McNeill, 1989: 96). In marked contrast to Spengler, Toynbee portrayed war as a destructive, degenerative force rather than an agent of creativity (Stromberg, 1972: 92).

Toynbee's initial ambition was to write a history of Greece. However, in the early 1920s this expanded to a history of European civilization as a whole, his ideas increasingly shaped by the perception of patterns of growth, breakdown and dissolution of civilizations. Toynbee's macro approach was unusual, though not unprecedented. Working models existed, for instance, in Eduard Meyer *Geschichte des Altetrum*s (1884–1902) (McNeill, 1989: 31). However, two significant influences that shaped Toynbee's method of comparative civilizational history were the works of F.J. Teggart and Oswald Spengler. Teggart advocated a broad, comparative historical methodology, studying societies such as India and China as well as those of the Europe and the Near East (McNeill, 1989: 100). Such a comparative methodology was also adopted in Spengler's *Der Untergang des Abendlandes* that Toynbee read in 1920. Navari suggests that Toynbee only read Spengler in 1920 and found him 'unilluminating, dogmatic and deterministic'. (Navari, 2000: 291). However, McNeill describes Spengler's work as 'a powerful factor' in altering Toynbee's outlook from focus on the perennial interaction between 'East' and 'West' in Eurasia to the history of multiple, separate, parallel civilizations whose rise and fall conformed to certain broad, tragic patterns (McNeill, 1989: 98). This facilitated Toynbee's radical departure from conventional nineteenth-century European history in portraying Western civilization as one of many such communities rather than epitomizing civilization itself. McNeill further argues that Toynbee also borrowed from Spengler the idea that civilizations were 'intrinsically separate' and incapable of meaningful communication (McNeill, 1989: 101). However, Toynbee's concepts of civilization affiliation and renaissance indicate that, in some instances, relationships between civilizations can be meaningful and constructive.

Toynbee theorized that civilization growth was stimulated by the development of a creative minority. This idea has been attributed to the influence of the French philosopher Henri Bergson who argued that progress in society was not automatic or unconscious, but stimulated by the acts of creative individuals (Stromberg, 1972: 22). Bergson appears to be one of the few contemporary philosophers who influenced Toynbee.

Unlike Spengler, he seems little influenced by intellectuals such as Nietzsche and Pareto, or writers such as Elliot, Joyce or Proust. Nevertheless, Toynbee's conception of the West was powerfully shaped by the broader political environment and by his personal involvement in the events of this era. Toynbee was deeply influenced by the suffering and destruction of World War I when he worked at the Foreign Office Political Intelligence Unit, documenting atrocities in Armenia and in Europe. In 1919, he was an adviser on Middle Eastern Affairs in the British delegation to the Peace Conference.

He was deeply disillusioned by the handling of affairs by the imperial powers and the duplicity of Allied policy towards the Middle East (McNeill, 1989: 82). During the 1921 war between Greece and Turkey, Toynbee travelled to the front line observing further atrocities, this time waged on the Turkish population by their Greek adversaries. These experiences provided a living demonstration of the result of encounters between civilizations. In *The Western Question in Greece and Turkey: A Study in the Contact of Civilisations* (1922), he argued that both the Greek (Byzantine) civilization and Turkish (Middle Eastern or Islamic) civilization were in a process of dissolution due to their encounters with the more dynamic West. This process was exacerbated in both civilizations by the borrowing of elements of Western culture, in particular the institutions of the Western nation-state (McNeill 1989: 110). This theme became central to Toynbee's work on civilization interaction and the impact of the West. His suspicion of the negative impact of the borrowing of elements of Western culture was reinforced by his observations of Asian societies during a trip to Japan in 1929. He interpreted the disruptions and radical changes in societies such as India, China and Japan as indications of the breakdown of other civilizations under the pressure of contact with the West (McNeill, 1989: 135–40). His work on the West's impact on the non-West, particularly as expressed in *The World and the West* (1953), was widely criticized in Britain by those who felt he had been unduly harsh on the West, representing only the negative aspects of its impact on the non-West and failing to point to the benefits it had brought (McNeill, 1989: 223).

Toynbee's suspicion of the nation-state was reinforced and heightened by the course of international affairs in the 1920s and 1930s when he edited the annual *Surveys of International Affairs*. He observed the rise of aggressive nationalism in Germany, Japan and Italy, and the failure of its containment through collective security at the League of Nations. Underlying his observations of international affairs was a conviction that plural sovereignties of the 'parochial' nation-state were 'an evil that had to be somehow transcended' (McNeill, 1989: 174). Toynbee's experience of war and liberal tendencies inclined him to support the key tenets of postwar liberal diplomacy, such as collective security. However, the failure

of collective security and sanctions produced some disillusionment with secular and legal structures as a means to settling international quarrels.

Toynbee came to see the failure of the League of Nations as a failure in faith, particularly when contrasted with the mass support generated by 'quasi-religious' movements such as communism and fascism (McNeill, 1989: 185). Elements in Toynbee's personal life combined to heighten the role of religion in his theories of the course of world history.² This, added to his disappointment with the secular structures of 1930s diplomacy, led Toynbee to argue that Western civilization could only be saved by the redirection of the mind and spirit towards God and away from the nation-state (McNeill, 1989: 170). In the early 1940s, Toynbee's writings and speeches laid increased emphasis on the significance of religion and the relevance of Christianity to Western civilization.³

As the war drew to a close, Toynbee's emphasis on Christianity lessened slightly, but he remained convinced that national-state structures had to be superseded if a just and lasting peace was to be attained. In the postwar period, Toynbee travelled frequently to the United States, where he was extremely popular between 1947 and 1954. He believed the era signalled the emergence of the United States as the new world empire, the West's 'universal state', adjudging it likely to be a more benevolent regime than its rival, the Soviet Union (*A Study*: 2/328–31; McNeill 1989: 210–8).

This diverse range of personal, political and intellectual influences led Toynbee to produce a complex theory of civilization history and a critical and distinctive conception of the West.

Conceptions of civilizations

Toynbee's conception of the West, while influenced by his analysis of contemporary world politics, is deeply embedded within a philosophy of history focused on civilizational development and interaction; that is to say, like Spengler's, its context is a world history constituted by a plurality of civilizations. Toynbee also viewed civilizations or 'societies' rather than nations or periods as the intelligible units of historical studies (*A Study*: 1/11; Toynbee, 1958a: 195–7). Toynbee and Spengler both believed that civilizations evolved through life-stages rather than existing in fixed states. This consciousness of the multiplicity and mortality of civilizations in both scholars is related to the broad historical perspective that they derived from their studies of the classics. However, although Toynbee like Spengler identifies patterns in the rise and decline of civilizations, he rebuffed the notion that civilizations are destined to follow a fixed, predetermined life history. He rejected Spengler's theory of civilizations as organic entities and any suggestion that a civilization's course is predetermined by factors such as race or

environment (*A Study*: 1/51–9, 210). Instead, he argued that civilizations grow in response to challenge, suggesting that ‘creation is an outcome of the encounter, that genesis is a product of interaction’ (*A Study*: 1/67).

Where Spengler presented a morphological concept of civilizations, Toynbee presents an anthropomorphized and social one. For Toynbee, while growth often entailed physical challenges and conquest of the external and material environment, true growth is a process of self-realization; an inner, spiritual rather than an external, material process (*Study*, 1/199; 2/198). It is the achievement by a people of a sense of self-determination, meaning the capacity to control their own destiny rather than be driven by external or natural forces. Loss of self-determination indicates decline (*A Study*: 1/208). Toynbee believed that the process of response to challenges is led by creative leaders within the society, surrounded by an elite described as the ‘creative minority’ (*A Study*: 1/189). This elite must be able to inspire the majority to adopt or emulate their chosen course of action, a process Toynbee called *mimesis* (*A Study*: 1/214–6), a concept that perhaps shares something with Gramsci’s concept of hegemony. Navari describes this as an evolutionary theory, derived from Toynbee’s reading of J.C. Smuts’ *Holism and Evolution* (Navari, 2000: 292).

Toynbee did not view the growth of a civilization as limitless and infinite. Indeed, his diagnosis of the current state of civilizations implies that most eventually disintegrated. The process of breakdown involves political and social conflicts, ‘times of troubles’, characterized by wars – ‘routs and rallies’ – leading to the establishment of peace under the auspices of a ‘universal state’ crafted by the ‘dominant minority’ within the civilization. This was the stage that Toynbee felt Western civilization had reached, with the United States as the most likely and attractive candidate for the role of the universal state. The ‘universal state’ is ultimately undermined by the combination of challenges from a ‘universal church’ that emerges from the ideologies of the ‘proletariat’ and external attacks, but it can also be weakened by complacency within. For Toynbee, the complacency or arrogance bred by success can inhibit a civilization’s capacity to meet new challenges, or lead to overextension and decline. Toynbee suggests that successful societies of the past had ‘rested on their oars’ and fallen into the ‘nemesis of creativity’ during which they bound themselves to ephemeral institutions and techniques (*A Study*: 1/307–37). This tendency was based on the illusion that the universal state is immortal rather than a transient set of structures (*A Study*: 2/4–10). Some civilizations, however, never achieve their full potential, being arrested or absorbed by other cultures (*A Study*: 1/164–85). Others become frozen in time, proceeding gradually on a course of collapse, making them vulnerable to the influence of, and even absorption by, more vigorous cultures such as the West in the modern era.⁴

McNeill argues that Toynbee saw civilizations as essentially separate entities, conjecturing that only two meaningful forms of interaction could be recognized; affiliation and renaissance (1989: 102).⁵ However, encounters between civilizations play a critical role in Toynbee's cultural world order. His concept of the cultural world order is premised on the belief that encounters between civilizations lead to the breakdown of weaker civilizations, their integrity undermined by cultural borrowing from the stronger (McNeill, 1989: 102–3). At the same time, the decline of a civilization is ascribed primarily to internal rather than external factors such as war and class strife that ultimately undermined most of the known previous civilizations (Toynbee, 1958a: 32). Societies in a state of growth do not submit to external attack, only those already weakened by internal decline. The crises occurring in non-Western societies during the modern era, he argues, resulted from their inability to resist the challenge of the stronger West.

Therefore, Toynbee's theory of civilizational encounter allows him to account for both external and internal challenges. There is, perhaps, some tension in Toynbee's theory in the degree to which a civilization's history is shaped by patterns of growth or by internal resources. He ultimately appears to place the responsibility for the course of a civilization's fate in its own hands, determined primarily by its response to challenges and new social forces. Such forces should give rise to new elites, alternatively the old institutions of the society may adapt to new pressures, but failure to do so results in either hazardous revolution or complete breakdown (*A Study*: 1/280). Civilizational decline, therefore, is regarded as a likely but not inevitable process. Toynbee did not assume that conquest, either of other peoples or nature, was necessarily a sign of growth; it can indicate disintegration. In this, Toynbee demonstrates his antipathy towards war and his suspicion of technology and materialism. War is perceived as a destructive force, waged by wicked aggressors (Stromberg, 1972: 92); militarism often a sign of excess. Technical achievement, he argued, can also be misleading, since many civilizations have continued to expand and innovate while in a state of social decline (*A Study*: 1/189–97).

Toynbee thus presents a rich theory of civilizational history and a cultural world order comprising interacting civilizations in various stages of growth and decline. However, this theory fails to provide a clear definition of what constitutes a civilization (Braudel, 1980; Fitzsimons, 1961; McNeill, 1961). For instance, in his earlier work, Toynbee analyses civilization as commencing at a point in which 'human will takes the place of the mechanical laws of the environment as the governing factor in the relationship.' (Quoted in McNeill, 1989: 96). In *A Study*, Toynbee distinguishes primitive peoples, whom he sees as static and essentially backward looking in their social habits, from civilizations which are dynamic and forward looking (*A Study*: 1/49). Elsewhere, he describes civilization as 'a movement

not a condition, it is a voyage, not a port', an effort to perform an act of creation (Toynbee, 1958a: 57–8; Braudel, 1980: 190). These definitions lack clarity. However, Toynbee was clear in dismissing any suggestion of the unity of civilization, that is to say that there is only one civilization (*A Study*: 1/37).⁶

Western Christendom, which evolved into the modern West, is listed in Toynbee's *A Study of History* as but one of twenty-one known civilizations, five of which are currently in existence (*A Study*: 1/34).⁷ However, the West is treated as exceptional in that it is the only civilization believed to be in a stage of growth rather than petrification or decline. However, he believed the West was undergoing its 'times of trouble', teetering on the edge of the disintegrative process (*A Study*: 1/275–349). Since the seventeenth century, it had undergone a crucial breakdown and three cycles of warfare. This did not preclude the West's physical and technological expansion in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. However, Toynbee perceived the West as reaching a crisis point, entering a fourth cycle of war and upheaval that in preceding civilizations had led to social disintegration (*A Study*: 2/273). While Western civilization had successfully conquered the challenges that the natural world and other civilizations had presented, it was vulnerable internally to war, exacerbated by the modern threat of nuclear annihilation.

There is some ambiguity in Toynbee's work as to whether the West was irrevocably doomed to extinction as Spengler had surmised (Geyl, 1956). Perhaps Toynbee himself was not sure of the answer. He maintained the hope that disintegration was not inevitable; that the West could save itself through the correct inspiration and insight. That inspiration was spiritual and could only be found in religion (*A Study*: 2/319). Moreover, he suggests that if the West could avoid nuclear annihilation, it could provide the framework for a global, multicultural society. He favoured some form of supranational world government that would enable the West and humanity to rise above the pervasive, parochial state politics (*A Study*: 2/328). In essence Toynbee wanted the West to do what it had not done so far, to rise above its own parochialism.

The boundaries of Toynbee's West

His broad, historical perspective shapes Toynbee's conception of the West. He distinguishes between a medieval and modern West, with the modern West emerging from the collapse of Christendom; the emergence of humanism. In the twentieth century, the West moves from the modern to the postmodern age (*A Study*: 2/308). However, the boundaries and evolution of the modern and postmodern West are shaped by an inner spiritual character that implicitly links all three phases of development.

Territory

Conceptions of territory are important to Toynbee's West in two key respects. First, they help to locate the West as a community that emanated from the Mediterranean region. Second, they provide an important institutional dimension to Toynbee's West in the form of the territorial state. Toynbee saw the West's geographical boundaries expanding outwards over time, but with its genesis occurring on the fringes of the old Hellenic civilization. The 'backbone' of the West was the old Roman Imperial frontier running from Rome to Aachen and forming the core of the Carolingian realm. From this region, the political core of Western Christendom grew erratically during the Crusades. However, the consistent physical expansion of the modern West commenced in the fifteenth century. Unlike Spengler, Toynbee embraced Renaissance Italy as the core of the medieval West. He depicts the influence of the Italian intellectual and administrative revolution flowing northwards across the Alps to the Atlantic coast where England and Holland subsequently assumed leadership of the Western world (*A Study*: 1/232; 2/150). The Renaissance also produced the revival and further evolution of the concept of the territorial sovereign state as the central political unit. The emphasis placed on the territorial dimensions of political community is an important feature of Toynbee's evolving West:

The essential feature of the Western political ideology had been its insistence on taking as its principle of political association the physical accident of geographical proximity. (*A Study*: 2/222)

Toynbee treats the physical expansion of the West as a function of Western technological innovations and intellectual revolutions. Ocean navigation allowed Europeans to establish contact with previously unknown civilizations. Subsequently, the West grew as a territorial entity through colonization. However, Toynbee does not automatically equate the spread of Western ideas and political control with the physical expansion of the West as a community. As he makes clear in his essay 'The Psychology of Encounters', Westernization and membership of the West are not synonymous for him (Toynbee, 1958b). In *A Study*, only the countries 'occupied by Catholic and Protestant peoples in Western Europe, America and the South Seas' form the geographic domain of Western Christendom (*A Study*: 1/7). By the late 1940s, the centre of Toynbee's West was clearly shifting away from Europe and towards the United States, which Toynbee saw emerging as the West's 'universal state' (1958a).

Race

Territorial conceptions, therefore, played a significant role in defining the boundaries of Toynbee's West. How important were other less tangible

boundaries such as those of race and religion? Toynbee was sceptical of the way racial differentiation had been employed by the West; yet race still played a significant role in defining his conception of this community. At the commencement of *A Study of History*, Toynbee dismissed race as a determinant of the growth of civilizations, rejecting links between superficial physical characteristics and the qualities which stimulate civilizational development. The destiny of civilizations is determined by their responses to challenges, not predetermined by physical characteristics, he argues. He had little time for notions of racial superiority and was dismissive of theories suggesting that civilizational decline is related to racial degeneration (*A Study*: 1/52, 249). He regarded the practice of stigmatizing certain races as inferior as part of a process of dehumanization applied by aggressive and ascendant races, such as Europeans during their colonial expansion. Although dehumanization might take religious, cultural or racial forms, Toynbee found the racial form the most despicable since it provides an insurmountable barrier to the discriminated. His views here foreshadow the work of contemporary scholars, such as Edward Said and Tzvetan Todorov. He argues, for instance:

In stigmatising members of an alien society as 'Natives' in their own homes, 'top-dog' is denying their humanity by asserting their political and economic nullity. By designating them as 'Natives' he is implicitly assimilating them to the non-human fauna and flora of a virgin New World that has been waiting for its human discoverers to enter in and take possession. On these premises the fauna and flora may be treated either as vermin and weeds to be extirpated or as natural resources to be conserved and exploited. (*A Study*: 2/230)

However, although Toynbee dismissed notions of racial superiority, he still employed racial differentiation. While he did not see the West as constituted by a superior civilization, he did see it as predominantly white. While acknowledging the West had expanded to encompass many other races in its global net of political and economic interests, Toynbee conceived of the 'dominant minority' of the West as predominantly white, with non-Western peoples forming the bulk of the West's 'internal proletariat' (*A Study*: 2/99). In the latter stages of *A Study*, he appears concerned with the implications of racial differentiation for the West, speculating about the challenges that the successful 'Westernization' of the peoples of Asia and Africa might pose to the West and Russia. He anticipated this might lead to demands for a more equitable distribution of territories and resources. In the face of such a challenge, Toynbee speculated that the West and Russia might find common cause sufficient to override their ideological differences. In contrast to Spengler, who treated Russia as an Asian civilization, Toynbee suggested that Russia might act as 'the White Man's Hope' against 'the

Yellow Peril' (*A Study*: 2/317). While conscious of racial distinctions and potential rivalries, these did not present a barrier to political co-operation. For instance, when constituting the 'free world' in antithesis to the Soviet Union, India is readily included as an ally of the coalition of the free world opposed to tyranny (1958b: 261). Thus while Toynbee was not racialist, his conception of the West entailed a racial dimension.

Religion

Religion in the form of Christianity, and particularly the Catholic Church, is a fundamental force shaping Toynbee's West. The West is conceived of as a civilization that occurs in the context of the Christian era, Western Christendom providing the antecedent to the modern West. He saw the Catholic Church as playing an influential role in establishing and enhancing the community of Western Christendom, facilitating the growth of nascent political institutions that came to characterize the West.

First, Christianity is viewed as a chrysalis that linked the Hellenic with Western society. Toynbee's theory of history suggests that universal churches born out of the collapse of one civilization in their turn nurture the growth of a new civilization. Christianity arose 'out of spiritual travail that was a consequence of the breakdown of the Hellenic civilization' (*A Study*: 2/88). In its turn, it nurtured the new civilization. It flourished in the spiritual vacuum of the declining Roman Empire, retaining its 'integrity' through the 'dark ages' to lay the foundations for Western achievements in economics, politics and culture (*A Study*: 2/82–8; Toynbee, 1958b: 297). Emphasizing the strong links between Judaism and Christianity, Toynbee acknowledges that Christianity was produced by a synthesis of elements from Hellenic and Syriac societies (*A Study*: 2/257–60). However, as Toynbee observed, the civilization which it nurtured proved homogeneous and relatively intolerant of other religions within its midst. This homogeneity was expressed in religious terms by the high level of religious intolerance which existed in Western Christendom until after the Wars of Religion; subsequently, it was expressed politically in the evolution of the communal homogeneity of the parochial nation-state (*A Study*: 2/173–4).

Christianity also played a formative role in the territorial expansion of the West. It expanded both through 'peaceful penetration', absorbing other communities through conversion; and through military encounters such as the Crusades in which 'warriors consciously, and not entirely hypocritically, thought of themselves as extending or defending the frontiers of Christendom' (*A Study*: 2/188). While medieval Christians were unable to consolidate the territories conquered during the Crusades, the encounters provided a territorial dimension to the conception of Christendom. Toynbee also notes that the battle with Islam provided some impetus for Western Europeans to explore the oceans beyond Europe's shores. Western reaction to Syriac pressure was the incentive for Europeans to push out of

the Iberian Peninsula in to Africa, Asia and the Americas. The 'Iberian energy' provided the 'mustard seed' that transformed Western Christendom into "the Great society": a tree in whose branches all the nations of the Earth have come and lodged' (*A Study*: 1/124–5).

Religion further helps define the boundaries of Toynbee's West in distinguishing it from the Christendom of the East. Toynbee traces the growing estrangement of the two civilizations, which emerged from the old Roman Empire, the eastern section traditionally looking to Constantinople as its political and spiritual capital, the western to Rome. Both claimed to be the sole heir to the Christian universal church, and the Roman Empire, their interests clashing in a struggle for predominance in south eastern Europe and southern Italy.

Toynbee highlights the mutual dislike of these two societies: 'To the Greeks the Latins were barbarians; to the Latins the Greeks were on their way to becoming "Levantine"' (*A Study*: 2/195). This was exacerbated by ecclesiastical controversies which masked political conflict and rivalry that was accentuated by the growth in economic and political strength of the East's less sophisticated cousin (*A Study*: 2/194). The divisions led to a breach between the two civilizations in the late twelfth century that widened until, in the fifteenth century, the Eastern Orthodox Christians opted for political submission to Turkish rule in preference to accepting the Latin Pope's ecclesiastical supremacy (*A Study*: 2/195). In Toynbee's eyes, the rivalry between Western and Eastern Christendom helped to further define the distinctive character and boundaries of Western Christendom, the forerunner of the modern West.

The Western Papacy grew in strength during the medieval era and, for Toynbee, contributed substantially to the political unification and identity of Christendom. The reforms of the Hildebrandian Papacy facilitated the creation of a *Respublica Christiana*. This doctrine provided a spiritual unity that superseded temporal authority while simultaneously allowing the development of secular diversity and devolution that facilitated the emergence of the 'parochial sovereign state'. At its zenith,

[t]he gossamer filaments of the Papal spider's web, as it was originally woven, drew the medieval Western Christendom together into an unconstrained unity which was equally beneficial to the parts and to the whole. (*A Study*: 1/351)

Toynbee, then, saw the Catholic Church as playing an important role in establishing the community of Western Christendom; in enhancing its growth and expansion; and in nurturing its unity at critical points in time. However, he did not view the modern West as a Christian, but as a post-Christian society. Ironically, the demise of Christendom can be read from Toynbee as a further formative force since it facilitated the rise of secularism.

The rise of secularism in the West was, for Toynbee, intimately related to the demise of religion as a political force (*A Study*: 1/350). He links this demise both to the hubris of the papacy and to the disillusionment with religion bred by the religious wars of the seventeenth century, producing a new sense of tolerance in Western society (*A Study*: 1/300; 2/153). It also strengthened the secular tendencies that were evolving with humanism. For Toynbee, the spirit of humanism critically distinguished the modern from the medieval West:

From the Modern West's own point of view, its modernity had begun at the moment when Western Man thanked not God but himself that he had outgrown his 'medieval' Christian discipline. (*A Study*: 2/150)

The Renaissance is a central moment in Toynbee's conception of the evolution of the modern West, constructing a secular cultural heritage that eliminated religion. The growth of secularism in Western society is perceived as facilitating its expansion into non-European societies, Toynbee arguing that the nineteenth-century secular West was more attractive to other societies than the seventeenth-century religious variant (1958a: 81–2; 1958b: 269). At the same time, secularism created a spiritual vacuum in modern Western society, the void created by the exclusion of religion from politics filled by ideologies such as liberalism, fascism, communism and nationalism (*A Study*: 2/148).

As Toynbee's life and work proceeded, he modified his views on the relationship between religion and civilizations. He laid greater emphasis on the significance of religion in the cultural world order, eventually subordinating civilizations to religions by suggesting the breakdown of civilizations assisted and provoked spiritual progress (McNeill, 1989: 188). Increasingly, he saw history as a process of spiritual revelation and an arena that provided the potential for progress. He treated Christianity as the culmination of the advent of higher religions and became increasingly convinced that power politics and parochial interests could only be superseded by religious commitment. In this context, the chief challenge to man is that posed by God. (McNeill, 1989: 219; Navari, 2000)⁸ In the later volumes of *A Study*, he suggests that the West's and indeed humanity's best hope for salvation lay in the rediscovery of the Christian spirit that remained within secular Western society (*A Study*: 2/319). Religion, therefore, plays an important and increasingly pronounced role in Toynbee's conception of civilizational history and in defining the community of the West. However, his increased focus on religion came to somewhat obscure his concept of the nature and structures of civilizational interaction (Barraclough, 1956: 120).

Power

Toynbee's West is characterized by an unprecedented and largely unrivalled level of power (*A Study*: 2/320). The source of this power is seen

as both technical capacity and the spiritual capacity to meet a range of challenges and achieve self-determination. However, For Toynbee as for Spengler, power was as much a threat as an asset to the West.

Toynbee defines the modern West as maintaining a monopoly of world power until 1945 when it was finally challenged by the 'Western heresy' of Soviet Communism (*A Study*: 2/148; 1958b). The emergence of the modern from the medieval age was marked with the consciousness of a sudden increase in power,

...including both power over other human beings, manifested by military conquests, and power over physical nature, manifested in geographical explorations and scientific discoveries. (*A Study*: 2/200)

For Toynbee, technical prowess is a key element of the West's power, science a central element of its character. Even the medieval West is described as mechanically ingenious and 'disgustingly materialistic', and the modern era as the era of the machine (*A Study*: 1/242). Most significantly, the Western technological revolution allowed it to reach beyond the perimeters of Eurasia and ultimately knit together the world of previously separate societies through innovations in transport and communications (*A Study*: 2/23). Through these, mankind was transformed into a single, global society. The unification of the world, although not initiated by the West, was completed within a Western framework (Toynbee, 1958a: 69, 142).

However, while in some respects, the boundaries of Toynbee's West are delineated through its power in the sense of technical capacity, this capacity is treated with caution. Toynbee suspected geographical expansion and technical innovation could be misleading measures of a civilization's development since both could continue to occur once a civilization had begun to decline (*A Study*: 1/190). The West was not necessarily immune from such trends. In addition, Toynbee like Spengler feared the damaging impact of technology on Western society. He was concerned that modern Western society was becoming increasingly mechanized, bureaucratized, specialized and depersonalized, draining the spirit of creativity so crucial to a civilization's capacity to innovate (*A Study*: 2/334–9). In his later writing, Toynbee was very concerned with the threat of annihilation posed by atomic weaponry (Toynbee, 1958a: 33–5), and with the impact of science at the spiritual level, implying that science and technology could be a source of hubris and complacency for Western civilization. Furthermore, the satisfaction derived from scientific achievement is ultimately limited. Intellectual and technological capacity were important only in so far as they forced man to grapple with more fundamental moral issues, provoking the expansion of physical as well as mental horizons (*Study*: 2/99, 150). This spiritual strength underlies a civilization's capacity to meet the challenges presented to it.

The spiritual power of the West is demonstrated for Toynbee by its creative responses to a series of challenges. First came the challenge of anarchic barbarism that followed the collapse of imperial Rome; this was met with creation of an ecumenical ecclesiastical community, *Respublica Christiana*. The second challenge to Western Christendom was the need for a politically and economically efficient state system. This was met by the resurrection and adaptation of the city-state system, a system ultimately transferred to the rest of the Western world. The replacement of economic autarky with an ecumenical economic interdependence formed a third challenge, which the West was in the process of facing in the mid-twentieth century (*A Study*: 2/275–6). In certain respects, Toynbee here anticipates the challenges faced by states and societies in a globalized world.

Toynbee questioned the West's continued capacity to meet new challenges with innovative responses. As Navari notes, social classes provide an important agent of change for Toynbee. In particular, he identifies the middle classes as a crucial agent in the generation of the West's growth; he described them as the 'leaven' that has created the modern world (Toynbee, 1958a: 30). One of his concerns was that this creative minority was increasingly less able to fulfil this role, becoming too regimented, and too pressured by forces such as taxation that sapped its energy and creativity. Could the West survive without this creative minority? (Mason, 1958: 64).

Power as technical capacity is, then, only one measure of a civilization's strength for Toynbee; mental and spiritual capacity are also crucial. He viewed Western power as unprecedented, but not inexhaustible, the West needing to draw more deeply on spiritual sources of power if it was to survive. While power is an important feature of the West, its superiority to other civilizations is not described as permanent. Toynbee was convinced that non-Western civilizations would ultimately reassert their influence, restoring equilibrium of power to the cultural world order (Toynbee, 1958a: 87, 142–3).

Institutions

Toynbee was more inclined to discuss the central institutions of the West rather than the norms that underlay these institutions. He identifies two core sets of institutions as the foundations of the strength of the West, the sovereign secular state and parliamentary representation. Both are taken as demonstrating the West's capacity to innovate in response to challenges. As such, they are viewed as fundamentally parochial rather than universal institutions in that they evolved as responses to the challenges of particular eras.

Toynbee distinguishes the modern state which emerged in Western Europe as a community defined territorially and united on the basis of language rather than religion (*Study*: 2/157). The roots of this political community lie in the demise of imperial and papal transnational authority and the subsequent rise of the Renaissance city-state based on the resuscitation of

its Hellenic predecessor and the rejuvenation of Roman law (*Study*: 1/350; 2/246). The evolution of the concept of constitutional government is a significant feature of the West, a product of the fusion of Renaissance administrative efficiency with feudal institutions to establish institutions of parliamentary representation which themselves became the wellspring of political authority. These institutions became widely imitated:

...as the nineteenth century passed into the twentieth, all the peoples of the Earth became possessed of an ambition to clothe their political nakedness with parliamentary fig-leaves. (*A Study*: 1/238)

From the parliamentary concept stemmed modern democracy. Toynbee links political and economic evolution of the West by arguing that democracy provided a propitious social setting for the invention of industrialism. Democracy and industrialism are treated as initially positive forces that helped to dismantle barriers between peoples and instigate growth (*Study*: 1/288).

However, throughout his discussion, Toynbee stressed the parochialism and relativity of these institutions, warning against the reification of ideas and institutions such as the state and parliamentary democracy. Again, while these institutions are seen as critical elements of the West's growth, Toynbee identifies within them the seeds of destruction. His first concern was that these territorially based institutions were no longer capable of representing the contemporary political constituencies. The structure of parliament, he argues, is an assembly of representatives of local constituencies derived from a time when 'the geographical group was also the natural unit of political organization.' However, the impact of industrialization was such that

...[t]oday the link of the locality has lost its significance for political as well as other purposes. ...The true constituency has ceased to be local and become occupational. (*A Study*: 1/323)

How much more pertinent this comment seems in the twenty-first century, when production, trade and finance are becoming even more flexible and less territorially bounded, presenting challenges to the autonomy of the sovereign, territorial state. In fact, Toynbee's criticism of the role of the state in modern world politics is striking. He felt that the state, married with the forces of democracy and industrialism, produced the ideology of nationalism that was an agent of strife and destruction (*Study*: 1/285). Nationalism bred conflict and militarism, and the impact of industrialism married with nationalism intensified conflicts to the level of total war engulfing whole national communities. Nationalism reintroduced the element of fanaticism into war that had receded with the conclusion of the wars of religion. Industrialization fed nationalism and, in addition, armed

combatants with ever more destructive weapons (*A Study*: 2/313). The state, now preoccupied with this ideology, has become the subject of strife rather than an agent of growth.

Underlying Toynbee's criticism of the state and parliamentary representation was his belief that these were not universal institutions but institutional responses to particular challenges. The West was deluded by its own success into complacency, or 'the nemesis of creativity' which had contributed to the breakdown of other civilizations. Successful institutions of the past are reified, even idolized, but prove inadequate to meet the new challenges, leading to a failure of self-determination (*A Study*: 1/317–26). Toynbee believed the postmodern West had reified the 'parochial state' and parliament (*A Study*: 1/322):

Midway through the twentieth century of the Christian era the Western society was manifestly given over to the worship of a number of idols; but, among these, one stood out above the rest, namely the worship of the parochial state. (*A Study*: 2/312)

For Toynbee, this was 'a terrifying portent' since the worship of the nation-state was producing the type of fratricidal conflict which had torn apart at least fourteen of the twenty-one civilizations on record (*A Study*: 2/312). Therefore, the nation-state was perceived as the source rather than the solution to the ills of the twentieth century:

We shall not expect to see salvation come from the historic national states of Western Europe, where every political thought and feeling is bound up with a parochial sovereignty which is the recognised symbol of a glorious past. (*A Study*: 1/318–9)

Therefore to survive as a civilization, Toynbee urges the West to adapt and change some of the very institutions that to many represented its very core. These institutions had helped the West to meet challenges and optimize its own position but were not themselves sacred tenets, immune to revision. Like Spengler, Toynbee saw Western institutions as transient and evolving. However, Toynbee's West is distinguished from Spengler's by its greater capacity for self-determination, its potential to mould, rather than simply be subject to, processes of change.

The normative dimension

Although spiritual strength and innovation are critical dimensions to Toynbee's West, he does not discuss the underlying norms of the West in any great depth. Democracy emerges as a central force in the West's political growth. However, Toynbee does not present democracy as a normative ideal. In fact his support for it is qualified, perhaps reflecting a somewhat

conservative attitude to the people's role in politics leading some commentators to view him as a reactionary. As McNeill points out, Toynbee suspected that democracies had a tendency to become militant: 'Western states (including the United States) become more chauvinistic as and when their governments become more democratic' (Quoted in McNeill, 1989: 218). Furthermore, he was concerned that democratic institutions and ideas transferred to new environments had proved vulnerable to manipulation by ideological or demagogic forces (Stromberg, 1972: 79). This articulates a theme, if not a paradox, that we find in other conceptions of the West, such as Huntington's, suggesting that in essence Western norms and institutions are desirable and highly developed, but not necessarily transferable to other societies.

Toynbee did not present the West as constituted solely by the political tradition of democracy. His history acknowledges that it also inherited the tradition of tyranny from its Hellenic ancestors, the Renaissance giving birth to the absolutist monarchies of Europe in addition to constitutional governments. He traces the legacy of this more despotic form of government to the absolutist monarchies of Austria, France and Prussia, and subsequently to the evolution of totalitarian regimes in Europe in the twentieth century. Toynbee also acknowledges communism as a Western political tradition, despite its central proponents, the Soviet Union, being non-Western and using communism to challenge the West. Viewing communism – like nationalism, liberalism and fascism – as secular ideologies that had arisen in the modern West as religious substitutes, provides the foundation for Toynbee's later thesis that the West will only achieve true fulfilment through returning to Christianity (*Study*: 2/148).

However, despite Toynbee's reservations about secular liberal democracy and acknowledgement of the existence of various political traditions in the West, his work as a whole indicates that he believed the liberal tradition spoke most fully to the norms of the West. These norms are identified in his later writings as opposition to tyranny and support of a 'free world'. Here Russia is characterized as a society resigned to a tradition of autocracy. In contrast, '[t]he great majority of the people of the West feel that tyranny is an intolerable social evil' which had been put down at 'fearful cost' when it had arisen within the West in the form of fascism and national socialism:

We feel the same detestation and distrust of it in its Russian form, whether this calls itself Czarism or Communism. We do not want to see this Russian brand of tyranny spread; and we are particularly concerned about the danger to Western ideals of liberty. (Toynbee, 1958b: 239)

Thus, while Toynbee did not see the essence of the West contained in any one institution or political tradition, he demonstrated an underlying belief in the West as a liberal culture that struggled against tyranny.

Interaction between the West and non-West

Key issues emerge then from Toynbee's analysis of the West: in many respects he treats the West as a parochial civilization, in its attitudes and in its evolution. It is not a universal civilization, however it has developed a global reach technically and politically it shapes and influences other societies. Though not a universal civilization, it provides a global network for interaction. This produces some friction, in part constituting the negative impact of the West on other societies.

Both Toynbee's philosophy of civilizations and concepts of the defining features of the West were a major influence on how he read the course of interaction between the West and non-West in world history. Toynbee believed history should be broad and holistic. In order to understand one component or element, one must understand its relationship to the whole. He was not interested in the uniqueness of peoples, observed one commentator, 'it is the universal and the uniform which fascinate him'; patterns are paramount over detail (Fitzsimons, 1961: 147). This comment, if a little harsh, does highlight the interest that Toynbee displayed in the interconnection and patterns of history. He found contemporary history too parochial and incapable of seeing the vital broader context; too narrowly focused on small units such as the nation state rather than societies or civilizations.

While acknowledging that all historians tend to interpret history through the framework of their own society (*A Study*: 2/266), Toynbee was highly critical of the Western-centric focus of his contemporaries that presented a distorted view of the history of the West and other civilizations. In contrast, Toynbee sought to highlight how recent and even unexpected the West's ascendancy was. Furthermore, he argues that the West had failed to achieve what its expansion had forced other societies to do, to transcend the parochialism of its own history and appreciate the interconnectedness of histories (Toynbee, 1958a: 80-5). The world-wide success of Western civilization in the material sphere has fed misconceptions of the 'unity of history' involving the assumption that there is only one 'river of civilization', – the West's. He disputes the concept of a single, progressive history of mankind in the secular context, arguing that it was a product of Western 'cultural chauvinism'. He traces this parochial perception of history to three sources: an egocentric illusion in which Westerners perceive themselves to be a chosen people; a perception of the East as unchanging and increasingly left behind by the West, a key component of what Said later identifies as Orientalism; and what Toynbee called 'the illusion of progress' (*A Study*: 1/37-9; 1958a). The urge to revolt against the convention of identifying the Western society's history with "'History"' writ large' had prompted Toynbee to write *A Study of History* (*A Study*: 2/303). In this work, Western civilization is examined in the context of the genesis, growth and

decline of other civilizations: the West becomes a representative rather than the focus of the historical processes.

However, despite his criticism of the Western-centrism of modern historians, Toynbee was not totally immune from the tendency himself. Toynbee saw the West as one of many civilizations, but also as set apart from its predecessors by the physical and technical extent of its growth and influence:

...the expansion of Western society and the radiation of Western culture had brought all other extant civilisations and all extant primitive societies within a world encompassing Westernising ambit. (*A Study*: 2/304)

Although Toynbee did not view the outcome of Western expansion as uniformly positive, he recognized the scale of its achievement as unprecedented. Its centrality in the cultural and political world order was further enhanced for Toynbee by the acquisition of nuclear weapons, meaning that a now ubiquitous Western society held the fate of all mankind in its hands (*A Study*: 2/306). In a sense, Toynbee continued the tradition of perceiving the world as essentially divided between the West and the non-West. And perhaps, more than this, Toynbee's work highlights the paradox that the West is both parochial and ubiquitous, intruding upon the existence and structures of other civilizations in its actions and through its influence upon the structure of the international system.

Conscious of history's role in moulding a society's perception of the past, present and future, Toynbee sought to adjust his society's unbalanced focus on its own importance in the greater schema of things, yet he was unable to escape his own preoccupation with the role of the West. However, his history provides a more complex picture of the West and its relationship to other civilizations which shows the West in a unusual light: from this perspective, what might have seemed merely a difficult phase of Western history, once placed in the context of civilizational growth and degeneration, becomes a potentially fatal course. We find in Toynbee an image not of unstoppable progress but potential disaster for the West and all mankind.

Toynbee understood history as evolutionary in the sense that it involved civilizations growing through meeting internal and external challenges. Civilizational interaction forms a major component of such challenges. The interaction between the West and non-West has significantly shaped modern world history; Toynbee's West both shapes and was shaped through civilizational encounters. He saw the West as 'apparented' by Hellenic civilization, but no neat direct line of cultural continuity is drawn to connect these civilizations. Instead, there is the trauma of the stagnation and collapse of Hellenic society signalled in Europe by the collapse of the Roman Empire. The 'agents' that transmitted the legacy of Hellenic civiliza-

tion to the West were the Christian church and, later, the Renaissance movement.⁹

Toynbee's West is affiliated to Hellenic civilization, but it is not purely a product of Hellenism. It is conceptualized as a civilization of its own creation, stimulated by responses to the challenge of the physical environment and its encounters with other societies. These included the medieval West's encounters with Islamic civilization, with the Eastern Roman Empire and its response to assaults from 'pagan barbarian' tribes who pressured Western Christendom from the northeast. The medieval West was not necessarily the stronger or more dominant force in these encounters, but each helped shape and direct its identity. In the modern era, however, the West is portrayed as shifting from the recipient to the provider of challenges.

Toynbee's conception of history presents civilizations in a stage of growth putting pressure on those in decline. In Eurasia, he saw the West as the only civilization in a stage of growth from the twelfth century onward. He argues that encounters between civilizations lead to cumulative changes within the weaker civilization (*A Study*: 2/226). The processes of Westernization evidence this, where the modern West overwhelmed older yet weaker or already declining cultures. In some cases this led to the extermination of the non-West culture, as in Middle America (*A Study*: 2/179). Responses to the West varied between rejection and assimilation. Toynbee viewed attempts at outright rejection of the pervasive West as largely futile. He notes that attempts to borrow selectively from Western culture also proved futile, since the borrowing of one element of Western culture inevitably led to the intrusion of much broader Western influences, as was the experience of Turkey under Sultan 'Abd-al Hamid II (Toynbee, 1958b: 250).¹⁰ Toynbee judged the most successful strategy was to embrace Westernization as had Turkey under Kamal Attaturk, Japan in the Meiji era and Russia under Peter the Great (*A Study*: 2/227). In fact, Toynbee interprets the subsequent growth of communism in Russia as a serious attempt to challenge the West through the adoption of Western techniques and ideology (*A Study*: 2/153). Therefore, even the greatest challenge to the West is perceived as, in some respects, a product of Westernization (*A Study*, 2/153; 1958a; 1958b).

At the same time, Toynbee was scathing in his comments regarding the impact of Western institutions and ideas, such as the nation-state and industrialization, on non-Western societies. He was particularly critical of the impact of nationalism. Here, he describes previously heterogeneous communities riven apart by the force of escalating linguistic nationalism. Toynbee argues, controversially perhaps, that the nation-state is a natural product of the social milieu of Western Europe where different linguistic communities are distributed into fairly clear-cut homogeneous blocks. This social structure was a 'patchwork quilt' of communities. In contrast, Eastern Europe, Southwest Asia, India and Malaya comprise a multitude of

linguistic communities woven into interdependent societies, divided, as in the case of the Ottoman Empire, on occupational rather than geographic criteria. Toynbee compared such societies to a shot silk robe, closely interwoven and interdependent (Toynbee, 1958b: 281–3). Efforts to construct nation-states in areas previously organized into heterogeneous communities frequently spelt disaster. In the Ottoman Empire of the nineteenth century, for instance, he argues that few communities had a population even approximately homogeneous in linguistic nationality or possessed the rudiments of statehood (*A Study*: 2/157–9). In the east of Europe, he describes the ‘deadly feuds’ inspired by the ‘evil spirit of Linguistic Nationalism’ which divided the peoples of Poland–Lithuania in the nineteenth century. He continues, noting the ‘baneful effects’ of a Western ideology of nationalism on communities in India and Palestine when projected into the social environment in which geographically intermingled communities had previously managed to live together (*A Study*: 2/223).¹¹

Toynbee further laments the negative impact of Western economic ideas, such as the ‘demoralizing’ impact of Western industrialism on Southeast Asia. He was sceptical about the successful transfer of institutions of parliamentary representation and unenthusiastic about the promotion of self-determination (*A Study*: 2/223; 1/323).¹² At the heart of this analysis lie the problems of cultural commensurability with Toynbee arguing that the transfer of ideas out of their indigenous context into new ones is inherently dangerous. A force that may have a positive impact in one context may be destructive in another,

‘One man’s meat is another man’s poison’ (*A Study*: 2/222).

Ultimately, civilizational interaction between the West and non-West is treated as a critical factor in modern world history. The West was seen as uniting the world on the political and economic but not the cultural plane, something Toynbee welcomed:

In the struggle for existence the West has driven its contemporaries to the wall and entangled them in the meshes of its economic and political ascendancy, but it has not yet disarmed them of their distinctive cultures. Hard pressed though they are, they can still call their souls their own. (*A Study*: 1/8)

The non-West has been shaped by the West’s presence and ideas, but the relationship is depicted as largely an unhappy one, with the non-West unable to either successfully resist or absorb Western culture. While uniting the world at one level, at another the West had exacerbated global divisions through the spread of its ideas and institutions. At the same time

Toynbee observed that the West's ascendancy was relatively recent when viewed in the broad scope of history and likely to be transient. Despite arguing that Western influence had permeated and shaped all other cultures, he ultimately anticipated the return to a cultural equilibrium in this now unified world, with the West eventually resuming a more modest position (Toynbee, 1958a: 143.) Yet the 'scaffolding' of this unified world is built upon a framework of Western technological culture. While Toynbee denies the unification of the world at a cultural level, at another he suggests that the histories of cultures would become increasingly interwoven in this global society (Toynbee, 1958a: 84–5).

This is an unresolved tension in Toynbee's work. On one hand, he argues that the West has influenced and altered all extant civilizations, irretrievably moulding the structures of an increasingly interdependent cultural world order, while retaining the capacity to shape or destroy the future of humanity. On the other, he suggests that the West itself remains a local and parochial civilization, undergoing severe internal and external challenges and likely to return to a less powerful position in a more balanced world order. The role of the West in the future cultural world order is somewhat unclear, as is the degree of cultural interdependence Toynbee anticipates from future interaction.

Conclusion

Toynbee's conception of the West is deeply embedded in a complex and sophisticated framework of assumptions about the nature of the cultural world order. This complexity is not without significant tensions, both in regard to the cultural world order and to the role of the West. For instance, each civilization is seen as evolving through its own unique responses to challenges. At the same time, Toynbee identifies historical regularities, patterns of growth and breakdown to which civilizations conform. There are also tensions in Toynbee's changing attitude to religion. While he continues to see the rise and fall of civilizations within a broadly cyclical framework, he came to view the evolution of religion as a progressive force. As McNeill points out, this creates a tension with regard to whether priority is to be accorded to civilizations or religions, to a cyclical or progressive philosophy of history (McNeill, 1989: 227). Finally, there are tensions in the priority that he affords the West. He condemned the Western-centric focus of contemporary history but himself became preoccupied with the centrality of the West to world history.

These tensions arise in part from the lengthy period of time over which Toynbee's work was produced. *A Study*, for instance, was written over a thirty-year period. His focus and preoccupations changed over time as the world he observed changed. For instance, in the 1930s, Toynbee was deeply

influenced by the negative impact that the transfer of Western ideas such as nationalism were having on contemporary world politics. In the late 1940s and early 1950s, Toynbee's concern with nationalism was superseded by that with nuclear war, and the threat posed to the West, and the world, by the Soviet Union.

Despite these tensions, there are also important points of continuity in Toynbee's work. He consistently focuses on civilizations rather than states as the central driving force of human history. He maintains an interest in the pattern of civilizational evolution, offset by the capacity of individual civilizations to influence their fate. As with Spengler, Toynbee places his discussion of the West in a broader civilizational context, providing a distinctive perspective on the history and role of the West. In comparing the West's history to those of other civilizations, Toynbee, like Spengler, portrays the West as exceptional but still consistent with the patterns of growth established by other civilizations, suggesting that the course of Western development is finite and under challenge. A further parallel with Spengler lies in Toynbee's perception of serious challenges to the West emanating from within: these include threats from technology; from the hubris which accompanies achievement; and from the parochialism bred by the West becoming accustomed to unchallenged ascendancy. Finally, both authors identify important challenges developing from the non-West. However, writing later than Spengler and in the context of the Cold War, the central challenge which Toynbee identifies is that of the Soviet Union. However, on the whole, Toynbee treats the impact of the West on the world as unidirectional, with the non-West suffering more from the impact of the West than vice-versa.

Therefore, there are interesting parallels between Spengler and Toynbee in their contextualization and interpretation of the cultural world order and the West. However, there are also significant differences. In Toynbee's cultural world order, encounters between civilizations are not incidental, they are formative influences that can strengthen or weaken a civilization. Civilizations consequently become a part of each other's history more clearly in Toynbee's work than in Spengler's. This is evident in Toynbee's discussion of the important relationship between Hellenic and Western civilizations. Second, whereas Spengler implies that the decline of the West, if protracted, is inevitable, Toynbee holds out some hope for deliverance. This lies in part in the suggestion that the West might achieve salvation through rediscovering spiritual inspiration. Furthermore, he suggests salvation and progress could be achieved, not just for the West, but also for humanity.

Ultimately, there is some irony in Toynbee's focus on the West, despite his resentment of the Euro-centricity of contemporary history. His perception of the centrality of the West to the world is evident. It stems in part from the sheer scale of Western power, in part from the polarization of pol-

itics in the Cold War and the global consequences of nuclear confrontation. However, Toynbee also places the West at the centre of the world through its establishment of a global framework. This appears to be largely a technical and institutional framework, rather than a cultural or normative one. This implies that the West has established an enduring framework for interaction among civilizations. In this there is interesting foreshadowing of the concept of an international society found in the work of Martin Wight and Hedley Bull discussed in the next chapter. It suggests that, while the cultural world order remains a pluralist and multicultural one, the West has achieved a unique position, a form of universality in the political world order, which will persist even should the West's retreat to the status of a 'normal' as opposed to a dominant civilization. Ultimately, Toynbee's work suggests a cultural world order in which interaction between civilizations varies in nature, but forms a critical context for political evolution and interaction. It suggests that the West will remain an important component of this interaction, if not as a dominant force, then through the universal influence of its technical and political culture; whether it will be a constructive or destructive force is unclear.

5

Universalizing the West? The Conception of the West in the Work of the 'International Society' School

The legacy of a broad historical and philosophical approach to International Relations found in Arnold Toynbee's work resonates in the work of the 'English School'.¹ These scholars are characterized by their interest in the generation of international society and in explaining the evolution of the rules and institutions of the modern states-system. Theoretically, their work seeks a *via media* between the pure power politics of realism and the idealism of liberalism. They conceptualize modern international society as an outgrowth of Western civilization and interwoven with the political development of the European states-system. Their conception of international society is inextricably linked to the Western political experience. These authors have a multi-civilizational conception of the cultural world order, but perceive the West to be the central, formative influence shaping modern civilizational interaction through the structures of international society. This chapter investigates the extent to which the West is perceived as forming a universal civilization in this context.

The chapter focuses primarily on the works of Martin Wight and Hedley Bull, who significantly developed the concept of international society. It also draws on the contributions of Adam Watson. While each was distinctive in style and focus, all were committed to investigating international society as a central structure of International Relations. These authors worked in association with one another, particularly in the context of the British Committee on the Theory of International Politics.² Unlike Spengler and Toynbee, the exploration of civilizations was not the first priority of these authors. However, important assumptions with regard to civilizational interaction underlie their work. Although they do not set out to define the West, they are intensely interested in the interrelationship between West, non-West and international society (Epp, 1998). Consequently we can draw from their work assumptions as to the boundaries and nature of this civilizational identity.

The era and influences

These authors shared the experience of working in the British intellectual community of the post-World War II era, and common historical and philosophical interests. Martin Wight (1913–72) was an Oxford-trained historian who became a renowned teacher of International Relations at the LSE (1949–61) and then a Professor of History and Dean of European Studies at the University of Sussex (1961–72). Often characterized as a perfectionist, Wight published relatively little while alive, many of his works being published posthumously. A number of his key works were produced under the auspices of the British Committee including those published in *Diplomatic Investigations* (Butterfield and Wight, 1966), and the essays collected in *Systems of States* (Wight, 1977). However, many of Wight's ideas were developed and conveyed through his lectures to students, an edited collection of which was published in *International Theory: The Three Traditions* (1991). In these, Wight outlined three, interwoven traditions that are key components of Western thought: the realist, rationalist and the revolutionary traditions. The rationalist tradition is perceived as a tradition of prudence and moderation standing between the extremes of the pursuit of power and idealism which characterize the traditions of realism and revolution respectively. It is a tradition of thought central to the concept of international society (Wight, 1991: 7–25).³

In contrast to Wight, Hedley Bull (1932–85) was a prolific and wide-ranging writer. Born and raised in Australia, he studied history and philosophy at Sydney, then Oxford. He too joined the Department of International Relations at LSE where he worked with Wight. He also occupied professorial chairs at the Australian National University (1967–77) and Oxford University (1977–85).⁴ Bull wrote widely on International Relations, foreign policy, strategic studies, arms control and international law. This chapter focuses on works that investigate the foundations of international society, drawing on essays produced under the auspices of the British Committee and on *The Anarchical Society*, his best-known contribution to International Relations theory (1977). In his later work, Bull was beginning to explore more fully the relationship of the West to the non-Western world and issues of justice in world politics. *The Expansion of International Society* (Bull and Watson, 1984) and *Justice in International Relations* (1984c) are important sources for this discussion. Adam Watson (1914–), a former British diplomat and academic, worked with Wight and Bull in the British Committee and collaborated there with Bull in producing *The Expansion of International Society*. In 1992, he developed some of the themes of that volume in his monograph *The Evolution of International Society*.

These three authors knew and worked with each other in the development of ideas of international society. Wight was Bull's intellectual mentor. Bull was profoundly influenced by Wight's lectures at LSE which he attended and through their work together in the British Committee (Bull,

1966a; 1977b: 28; Dunne, 1998). Watson was deeply influenced by both Wight and Bull, viewing his own work as a continuation of Wight's (Watson, 1992: 3). The work of each of these authors is distinct, but intertwined. They shared important influences and formulated their ideas within a similar historical and intellectual framework.

One crucial element of their common intellectual framework was their perception of international law as a basic element of international society. This perception builds on the ideas of the seventeenth-century international lawyers, such as Suarez, Gentili, Pufendorf, Vitoria and Hugo Grotius, who developed the concept of a community of states, governed by law. Grotius is particularly influential in the writings of Wight and Bull, (Bull, 1966a; Dunne, 1998) in providing a secular rationalist basis for international law, a secular, universal moral order based on the rights and duties of states rather than a theocratic order (Cutler, 1991). Grotius articulated the idea that the state of nature could be social, as well as conflictual, thus providing the foundations for international society based on agreement rather than enforcement of a transcendental authority (Wight, 1991: 38).

Contemporary scholars with whom Wight and Bull worked, such as Charles Manning, head of the Department of International Relations at LSE, and the historian Herbert Butterfield, shared this interest in how order is maintained. Manning saw in the coexistence of states in the absence of central government evidence of the existence of some form of order (James, 1973: vii). This order was maintained through mediums such as international law, diplomacy and the use of force (Manning, 1962).

The historian Butterfield was one of the instigators of the British Committee and a particularly strong influence on Wight (Coll, 1985: xiii). Like Wight, Butterfield's reading of history was informed by his realism and his Christian pessimism that highlighted the ubiquity of power and violence in international politics, but also suggested that a sense of order existed. Butterfield described international order as 'a system of international relations in which violent conflict among member states was generally regulated and limited so as to protect every state against the loss of its independence' (Coll, 1985: 5).

The methodological approaches of these scholars were also shaped by the intellectual traditions in which their scholarship evolved. Wight sought to understand events, structures and institutions through comparisons and precedents in history and, in his early career, was very much influenced by the work of Arnold Toynbee (Bull, 1977b: 2).⁵ In his analysis of international affairs, Wight drew extensively on this field, particularly on classical and European history, leading some to criticize his Euro-centric perspective (Bull, 1991: xxii; Bull and Holbraad, 1979: 12). Wight saw history as a way of understanding the human predicament, a 'prophetic drama'. However, as Bull remarks, Wight did not treat history as a store-

house of precedents that can be discovered and applied as maxims of statecraft to contemporary political issues. Instead, he sought to transcend specific problems to identify patterns of ideas underlying the historical process (Bull, 1977b: 3; Dunne, 1998). Bull also valued history in the study of International Relations (Bull, 1972a: 256; 1972b: 31–3). However, his own approach reflects his philosophical training '[i]n its emphasis on the general premises, and the systematic discussion of the more general aspects of a topic, placing it in a broad intellectual context' (Richardson, 1990: 179).⁶

A feature of the work of Wight and Bull is its moral and normative focus. This was something of a reaction to existing trends in International Relations theory. Both were sceptical of the 'idealist' perspective that characterized interwar international theory; but both were also critical of the realists for their exclusion of consideration of moral issues from their analysis (Bull, 1972b; 1969; Bull and Holbraad, 1979: 18; Dunne, 1998; Richardson, 1990: 146).⁷ In their introduction to the essays of the British Committee, Butterfield and Wight remarked that, in contrast to its American counterpart, British International Relations had shown itself 'more concerned with the historical than the contemporary, with the normative than the scientific, with the philosophical than the methodological, with principles than policy' (Butterfield and Wight, 1966: 12). This approach is characteristic of the 'English school'. It stood in marked contrast to intellectual trends within International Relations in the post-World War II period in the United States where behaviouralism dominated the development of the discipline as a 'social science'. Bull engaged vigorously and critically with the behaviouralist school, most notably in his debate with Morton Kaplan where he defended the employment of the classical methods of history and philosophy over the quantitative analysis of the new social scientists.⁸ The historical and philosophical approach of the English school contributes to an understanding of the contemporary period within a capacious historical context. This approach critically underlies the broader interpretation of the West and the pluralist conception of civilization found in the work of the International Society authors.

Their intellectual but also their historical environment influenced these scholars. As noted, their work demonstrates disillusionment with the idealist theories of the early twentieth century and failure of the liberal internationalist system to contain aggression and conflict (Bull, 1977b: 3). Although a pacifist, Wight was pessimistic about what he saw as the realities of power and the inevitability of the recurrence of conflict. This was in part due to Wight's Christian pessimism and scepticism about the possibility of achieving progress in the secular world (Bull, 1991: xvi). The expansion of revolutionary states, such as Nazi Germany and Stalinist Russia, also reinforced their belief

in the benefits of a pluralist international system over a potentially totalitarian or tyrannical single world state (Bull, 1966b: 49–50; Wight, 1979: 81–94).

Both Wight and Bull, then, were acutely conscious of the role of power politics in international relations. Nevertheless, their perception of power politics was mediated by a concern for ethics and values, and an interest in the limits that states imposed on their behaviour through international law and institutions. It was also mediated by their historical and philosophical approach to the study of International Relations. This provided a certain breadth to their work and a ‘distance’ from the contemporary: their conception of International Relations exceeds the Cold War environment in which it was written. All discuss the Cold War within a broad historical context, Wight, for instance, pointing to conflicts of the past that mirrored contemporary tensions (Bull, 1977b: 7; Bull and Holbraad, 1979: 9; Wight, 1979: 90). Both Bull and Watson analyse Cold War power relations from the perspective of the traditional concept of the balance of power and view it as a conflict occurring within the context of international society (Bull, 1977a: 259; Watson 1992: 292–4). Similarly, the conception of the West that emerges from the work of these authors draws deeply on historical antecedents. The West is not just considered to be a construct of the Cold War, but an identity that emerges from the intellectual, institutional and physical expansion of Europe.

The broader perspective might also have been influenced by the location of these authors in postwar England. As Neumann reminds us, the English School ‘was and is nested in the international experiences of a European empire and great power.’ (Neumann, 1997: 42) Britain’s international perspective was not limited to the bipolar relationship between East and West as defined by the Cold War, but involved broader global concerns. Its colonial history facilitated an awareness of the world outside Europe and the United States, heightened, during the 1950s and 1960s, by the processes of decolonization (Miller, 1990a: 4). This was further heightened in Bull’s case by an increasing disillusionment with the superpowers in the 1970s and 1980s and a growing attachment to the role Europe could play in international politics (Hoffmann, 1990: 36).

An awareness of International Relations as something whose focus exceeded the European states-system or super-power relations is most evident in the work of Bull and Watson. In Bull’s case, this awareness may have derived from his travel and work outside of Europe, in Australia and Asia. In particular, his travels to India and China in the early 1970s contributed to Bull’s awareness of the complexity, dynamism and difference of the non-Western world and stimulated his investigations into the relationship between West and non-West within the international system, themes pursued in the *Expansion of International Society* and in *Justice in International Relations*. The ideas and assumptions which Wight, Bull and Watson brought to their study of international relations shaped the way in which they conceptualized the West as a

formative influence in contemporary international relations and provided the basis for their assumptions about civilizational interaction.

Conceptions of civilization

The conception of cultural world order found in this literature is a pluralist one: Western civilization is not perceived as synonymous with civilization in general, and civilizational interaction, for instance in the economic realm, is recognized as a significant part of history. However, the level of global interaction achieved under the auspices of the Western political system is treated as unprecedented, creating, in effect, a world political system (Bull, 1977a: 20–1).⁹ Furthermore, the West is treated as providing the foundations for a truly global, rather than a regional, international society. There have been earlier international societies, for instance those formed by the classical Greek state, the international system of the Hellenic kingdoms, the systems of China during the period of the Warring States and of ancient India (Bull, 1977a: 15–16). However, these occurred at a regional rather than a global level (Bull and Watson, 1984: 4–6).

What, however, is the distinction between an international system and an international society? In Wight's work, no clear distinction is made between the two. In fact, Wight uses the terms interchangeably.¹⁰ A states-system, he notes, is taken to comprise "sovereign states", political authorities which recognise no superior.' These states should have more or less permanent relations with one another, and should resemble each other in manners, religion and degree of social improvement and sharing reciprocity of interests. Wight's definition of international society also encompasses the qualities of comprising sovereign states engaged in habitual intercourse, but it is more firmly rooted historically in Europe. In 'Western Values in International Relations' Wight defines international society as,

[H]abitual intercourse of independent communities, beginning in the Christendom of Western Europe and gradually extending throughout the world. It is manifest in the diplomatic system; in the conscious maintenance of the balance of power to preserve the independence of the member communities; in the regular operations of international law, whose binding force is accepted over a wide though politically unimportant range of subjects; in economic, social and technical interdependence and the functional international institutions established latterly to regulate it. All these presuppose an international social consciousness, a worldwide community sentiment. (1966a: 96–7)

Hedley Bull, however, clearly distinguishes between a states-system and a society of states. A system is formed where 'states are in regular contact

with one another, and where in addition there is interaction between them sufficient to make the behaviour of each a necessary element in the calculations of the other' (Bull, 1977a: 10). Contact and a degree of interdependence are therefore criteria for a system. However, a society of states exists

...when a group of states, conscious of certain common interests and common values, form a society in the sense that they conceive themselves to be bound by a common set of rules in their relations with one another, and share in the working of common institutions. (1977a: 13)

While his definition of a system is based on contact and is in essence empirical, his definition of a society extends beyond common interests to common assumptions and values that help shape institutions. Bull separates the two forms of community that Wight conflates. Bull's definition of a society is less obviously, but still firmly, rooted in the historical development of the Western states-system. It reflects the model established in Europe and mirrored by only a few other communities in history.

These authors all emphasize common norms and assumptions as a foundation for international society. Further, they assume that these derive from a common culture or civilizational base. Wight remarks, 'We must assume that a states-system will not come into being without a degree of cultural unity among its members', noting that the three states-systems taken as paradigms all arose within a single culture (1977: 33). Bull is more concise: 'A common feature of these historical international societies is that they were all founded upon a common culture or civilisation or at least some of the elements of such a civilisation' (1977a: 16). A common civilization facilitates the working of international society in making for easier communication and better understanding between states, thus assisting the evolution of common rules and institutions. It is also assumed to reinforce the sense of common interests that impels states to accept common rules and institutions with a sense of common values (Bull, 1977a: 16). Watson is also emphatic in linking civilizations with the common codes of conduct, assumptions and values that underlie an international society (Watson, 1992: 312). He argues, for instance, that one factor which inhibited the admission of the Ottoman Empire into *European* international society was its 'alien' civilization that did not share European principles and assumptions in areas such as international law. In contrast, the new states of the Americas found ready acceptance in European international society, given their essentially European cultures and forms of government (Bull, 1984a: 122).¹¹

This analysis of international society, therefore, treats cultural and civilizational homogeneity as a significant element in the constitution of international society. It implies that the formation of international societies have been intra- rather than inter-civilizational processes, occurring within rather than between civilizations. European international society was

formed among states of what we commonly call the West, Europe and colonies in which European culture predominated. However, the expansion of European international society to a global international society saw the creation of a society that was multicultural in composition. The 'admission' of the Ottoman Empire to *international* society was followed by that of Japan and China – all non-Christian, non-Western civilizations. The global international society is, therefore, distinct in having a significant inter-civilizational dimension to it.

This raises the question of the position of the West in this society. At one level, Bull and Watson saw global international society as increasingly a synthesis of the various civilizations within it. However, at another level, they, like Wight, assume a priority for the West within global international society in a hierarchy of civilizations. In some respects, the globalization of international society constitutes the universalization of the West, or at least significant elements of that civilization. The cultural unity of this society derives from the culture of modernity that Bull takes to be an outgrowth of Western culture (Bull, 1977a: 39, 317). However, he also implies that the culture of modernity as it currently stands is inadequate to continue to provide a genuinely cosmopolitan culture for future international society, since it is an elite culture weakened by its lack of a common moral culture. This helps explain Bull's suggestion that the development of a future cosmopolitan culture may need to incorporate non-Western elements to provide the foundations for a genuinely universal society (1977a: 317).¹²

The authors of the International Society school, then, recognize a plurality of civilizations and international societies in recorded histories, but allocate a privileged position to the West in that Western international society provides the criteria for judging other international societies. This is most obvious in Wight who discusses international society as primarily the community constructed out of the Western states-system. All of the authors attribute significance to cultural or civilizational homogeneity in the formation of a society.¹³ However, modern international society is distinguished by its inter-civilizational character. Within this multi-civilizational society the West maintains a privileged position as the civilization that shaped the initial assumptions and institutions of the society. As we see below, this suggests a major unresolved tension in this literature since in the contemporary international society is simultaneously multi-civilizational and a construct of Western civilization.

The boundaries of the West in the 'International Society' school

The West is conceptualized by these authors as the community that evolved from European society, with the terms Western and European often used interchangeably. However, with the expansion of a European

into a global international society, the West is perceived as retaining a distinct identity within the broader community. What boundaries mark the West for these authors?

Territory

Europe and the territories in which European culture dominates primarily constitute the geography of the West in this literature. We can identify three salient features of the geographical boundaries of the West. As for Toynbee, the territory of the West is linked to that of Western Christendom; it is also linked to the evolution of the territorial sovereign state in Europe; and finally, the territory of the West is not viewed as static but as undergoing radical expansion. The initial territorial expansion of the West is perceived as occurring under the auspices of religion, primarily Latin Christendom, pressing south and west against Islam; south-eastward toward the Holy Land, Syria and ultimately the Byzantine empire; and eastward into the south and east of the Baltic and towards Russia. Like Toynbee, Watson highlights the drive against Islam creating the momentum that drove Europeans overseas leading to the incorporation of the 'New World' administratively and conceptually into Christendom (Watson, 1984a).

As the West evolved beyond Christendom, its territorial growth became a function of the expansion of the evolving European states. Significantly, as in Toynbee's work, we see a distinction drawn between the expansion of the range of contacts which the West established with other civilizations and the incorporation of new territories into the West. Contact was not immediately equated with incorporation. For instance, although Portugal and the Netherlands interacted with powerful civilizations and societies in Asia, these Asian societies were not incorporated into the West. This stands in sharp contrast to the relationship that Europeans established with the territories in the Americas, which were incorporated into an expanded European international society signifying the first major expansion of the West as a community into non-European territories (Watson, 1984a: 18; 1992: 219). As Watson notes, this expansion was facilitated by the physical and cultural links that were maintained between Europe and these territories:

What really and decisively made the settler states of the Americas consider themselves, and be considered, members of the European family was that they were all states on the European model, inhabited or dominated by people of European culture and descent. (Watson, 1992: 268)

Therefore there is a synergy in this analysis between the territorial expansion of the *European* society of states and of the West.

One obvious omission from the West in this conception is Russia. Russia's relationship to the West is a problematic one. At points, it is discussed as a key member of the society of European states, at others, as

constituting a different and distinct society (Bull and Watson, 1984: 218; Watson, 1992: 225–6). For Bull,

Russia ... has always been perceived in Europe as semi-Asiatic in character, a perception confirmed by the ambivalence in Russia's own mind as to whether it belongs to the West or not (Bull, 1984b: 218).

This ambiguity is heightened by the oppositional role that the Soviet Union played to the West during the Cold War. The ideological constitution of East and West that characterized the Cold War is implicitly linked in this literature to an antecedent sense of differentiation. Watson parallels the Soviet imperial structure with the Byzantine *oikoumene* that was partly overlaid, but not lost during the era of Westernization in Russia (Watson, 1992: 107–11). The ideological tensions of the Cold War, therefore, strengthened the sense of the West as territorially focused on Europe and its major colonial offshoots in International Society analysis. In the International Society conception of the West, therefore, the territorial boundaries of the West are established not just through physical expansion, but also on the creation of cultural affinity.

Religion

As in Toynbee's conception of the West, this literature discusses religion as the foundation from which the Western states-system emerged. European international society is seen as founded on the fragmentation of Christendom. The International Society authors highlight three ways in which Christianity helped to define the boundaries of the West. The West inherited from Christendom a sense of community and differentiation from the outside; it also absorbed certain qualities of universalism; and finally the fragmentation of Christendom provided the political basis for the secular states-system (Wight 1977: 27).

The International Society perspective suggests that the West inherited from Christendom a sense of community within, and of differentiation from, those outside. Elements of these can be found in the conceptions of Christian international society. Early natural law thinkers such as Vittoria, Gentile, Grotius and Pufendorf believed that a special relationship existed between the Christian states providing a sense of community and demarcating this community from those outside. As in Toynbee's conception of the West, this is traced from the distinction between *Respublica Christiana* governed by the law that applied between Christian princes and states, and the broader human community, which the natural law theorists saw as governed by the principles of universal natural law (Bull, 1977a: 29–30; Wight, 1977: 125–8). This sense of demarcation is crucial to the concept, shared by all three authors, of the emergence of an exclusively Western

community of states that applied different standards, assumptions and expectations of conduct to those outside the community.

The sense of community within was enhanced by challenges from the outside, with the principal challenge emanating from the Islamic communities that bordered Christendom. Wight observes that Islam was regarded by Christendom as 'a historical, even an eschatological, embodiment of evil' (1977: 120). The Turk came to be identified as the anti-Christ, the sense of threat providing a point of common cause to an otherwise beleaguered and fragmented Europe. This sense of differentiation that arose in the religious context was carried into the expansion of the Western states-system:

When the Europeans embarked upon their historic expansion they did so with a set of assumptions about relations with non-Europeans and non-Christian peoples inherited from Medieval Latin Christendom and ultimately the Ancient World. (Bull and Watson, 1984: 5)

For instance, Watson surmises that the exclusion of the Ottomans from European international society was based at least in part on the fact that they were not Christians (Watson, 1992: 216–18). No such religious barriers excluded the American colonists from the West (Bull, 1984a: 122).

In addition to a sense of community, Wight attributes the Western states-system's sense of universalism and missionary spirit to its theocratic ancestor. For instance, Wight describes the Papacy's claim to world monarchy as the earliest version of the assertion of European superiority. The Crusaders and the missionaries that proselytized in the medieval world, he suggests were the forerunners of the conquistadors and gunboats (1977: 119).¹⁴ While one of the defining features of the identity of the Western states-system was its secular nature, the formative influence of Christendom cannot be forgotten and is highlighted by this perspective. Wight reminds us that prior to Westphalia, the system was effectively shaped by the doctrinal conflicts of the sixteenth century. Thus, in the International Society analysis, even though the Western states-system is characterized as primarily a secular system, the society to which it gave birth was perceived as strongly influenced by its religious antecedent in its assumptions about and attitudes to other civilizations.

Race

Although religion plays an important role in these conceptions of the West, an equally important, if more implicit, role is played by race. Its role becomes more pronounced in discussions of the expansion of the West from the nineteenth century onward.

While race appears to have little or no role in the theoretical construction of international society, in practice, the racial divide in international society is quite evident (Neumann, 1997; Vincent, 1984a). European international

society was predominantly white. The West in the form of European international society, even as it expanded to the Americas in the eighteenth century, remained primarily racially homogeneous. The United States remained fundamentally aligned with European policies of racial exclusiveness in its denial of equal rights to blacks, its colonial expansion and treatment of indigenous peoples (Bull, 1984a: 122; 1984b: 218). It is only with its expansion in the nineteenth century, with the inclusion first of the Ottoman Empire and then of the Japanese, that international society becomes multi-racial.

There is, then, a perception in the literature that race implicitly contributed to the boundaries defining European international society; but there is also the sense that, as European international society expanded into a global community, race continued to differentiate West from non-West within the community:

With the important partial exception of Japan, those racially and culturally non-European states that enjoyed formal independence laboured under the stigma of inferior status: unequal treaties, extraterritorial jurisdiction, denial of racial equality (Bull, 1984a: 125).

Thus, the distinction between West and non-West is perpetuated within the global international society, a boundary drawn in part on racial grounds continuing what was effectively a dual system. As Bull notes, dismantlement of this system only really began after World War II with the major drive towards decolonization.

It is with the discussion of the role of the non-West in international society, particularly in Bull's discussion of the 'revolt against the West', that we see most clearly the operation of a racial boundary within international society, differentiating West from non-West. Watson comments on the resentment towards the racial and cultural superiority presumed by the 'white man' that was expressed within the decolonization and Non-Aligned movements (Watson, 1992: 297). Bull highlights the fight for racial equality, in particular opposition to the apartheid regime in South Africa, as one of the defining themes of the 'revolt against the West' that undermined the existing order:¹⁵

The old Western-dominated international order was associated with the privileged position of the white race: the international society of states was at first exclusively, and even in its last days principally, one of white states; non-white peoples everywhere, whether as minority communities within these white states, as majority communities ruled by minorities of whites, or as independent peoples dominated by white powers, suffered the stigma of inferior status. (Bull, 1984b: 221)

Here, then, the boundary of race in international society, differentiating the West from the non-West, is addressed specifically and acknowledged as

significant. It becomes most explicit in discussions of demands for recognition of equality by non-white communities in the late nineteenth century and twentieth century. The boundaries that the politics of race construct are, perhaps, more clearly described in the international society conception of the West than in that of Spengler or Toynbee. It provides a barrier, first between members of European international society and those outside, and then within the multi-racial international society, separating West from non-West.

Power

While religion and race help to construct community and even a sense of hierarchy in this perspective, these boundaries to the West are substantiated by differentials in power. Power is an important dimension of the West's identity for the International Society school. The technical and economic capacity of the West translates into dominance of the international system, enhancing the West's ability to shape that system and society. The West's power stems from the dynamism of European culture (Watson, 1984a: 16). Thomas Naff highlights some of its central qualities that empowered the Europeans. These included: their acquisition of overseas dominions; the development of a secular rational outlook which promoted scientific discovery; and the production of technological industrial and agricultural revolutions; and of a flexible economic system. Linking all of those achievements was the rise of strong centralized monarchies (Naff, 1984: 151).

The economic and technical capacity of the West provides the foundation and framework of its political power (Wight 1977: 33). Bull and Watson echo Toynbee in noting that European technical capacity produced the technological and economic unification of the globe, followed by European-dominated political unification in the nineteenth century (Bull and Watson, 1984: 2). Bull, in particular, highlights the significance of technological advances that led to growth in communications, enhancing global integration, though not necessarily global harmony (Bull, 1977a: 273).

The role of power as a feature of the West becomes more pronounced in this analysis as the impact of the Industrial Revolution is assessed (Watson, 1984a: 27). Bull and Watson link the consequent increased economic and military power with a change in attitude towards non-Western peoples. They link this consciousness of power to a growing sense of civilizational hierarchy, distinguishing the West from other civilizations, replacing the loose sense of equality that had characterized the earlier period of European expansion (Bull and Watson, 1984: 5):

Europeans and Asians alike had long regarded preliterate peoples as primitive but redeemable if civilised; now many Europeans came to regard civilised Asians as decadent. In their eyes modern civilisation was

synonymous with European ways and standards, which it was their duty and their interest to spread in order to make the world a better and safer place. (Watson, 1984a: 27)

The change in relationship, they argue, was demonstrated in the increased direct involvement of the West in the non-West. In the nineteenth century, European powers became more active and direct participants in the affairs of colonies as imperial rivalry heightened. In this period, the West is increasingly demarcated by power as expressed through imperialism and dominance of the evolving international system. Imperialism and overwhelming power become crucial elements of the West's identity, expressed and legitimized through the idea of a civilizational hierarchy.

However, the conceptualization of power found in the literature is not limited to material capacity. A critical dimension of the West's power for Bull was its command of intellectual and cultural authority, and of the rules and institutions of the international society, which facilitated the moulding of that society to mirror Western institutions and values (Bull, 1984b: 217). In the twentieth century, this domination of international society was weakened. The European states were challenged by the rise of new powers; by the destruction caused by World War I; the instability of the interwar period; and by the decolonization process which gathered momentum in the wake of World War II (Bull, 1984b: 224–7; Watson, 1992: 278).

Yet while the West's, and particularly Europe's, dominance of international society diminished in the sense of willingness to directly engage in the affairs of other societies, it retained the capacity to influence the norms and institutions of the international society. We continue to observe this today, as Watson notes, for instance through Western dominance of international economic regimes and institutions such as the G8 and the IMF (Watson, 1992: 304–5) and, in the political context, through Western powers' continued dominance of the UN Security Council. The International Society authors, therefore, present power as an important aspect of the West's identity. It is expressed as technical and economic capacity, but also through political dominance of the international system and the ability to establish key norms for the conduct of international affairs.

However, both Wight and Bull have been criticized for omitting an economic dimension from their study of international society (Bull and Holbraad; 1979: 16; Miller, 1990b: 71-4; Jones, 1981: 2). As noted above, their work entails important assumptions about economic and material capacity critically underlying the political and legal power of the West. However, the economic dimension of the West is not systematically explored. Bull's later work does demonstrate a greater interest in the significance of economic factors such as distributive justice, as do Watson's

references to the structural power that the West maintains through its influence in international economic regimes, but overall, the conception of the West found in these authors focuses more intensely on political and legal structures, than economic capacity.

Norms

The interest that this perspective demonstrates in power as influence that reaches beyond material capability is accentuated by the importance attached to norms and institutions in the International Society school's conception of the West. They are perceived to be critical elements in generating a community's sense of identity, helping to define it by establishing the common assumptions, values and structures. These were seen to emanate from a common civilizational or cultural base. *Western* norms and institutions are viewed as deeply integrated into the norms and institutions of international society. Therefore, this perspective is distinguished from those of Spengler and Toynbee in viewing globalized Western norms and institutions not as a superficial superstructure, but deeply integrated into a framework of transcivilizational interaction.

While Wight demonstrates a sense of the synergy between international society as a *via media* and the constitutionalist tendencies in Western political thinking (Wight, 1966a), Bull and Watson explore the integration of Western values into contemporary international society more systematically. Bull narrates global international society as deriving from a European international society, itself derived from Christian international society (Bull, 1977a: 27–33). As the society expanded, certain shared values and assumptions relating to the conduct of international affairs acquired wider acceptance. Bull emphatically argues that the conscious acceptance of these norms is a crucial element in transforming the Western-based system into a global society. Even though there has been a revolt against Western dominance in the twentieth century, this occurred *within* the context of international society, with non-Western members accepting the basic rules and institutions of that society (Bull, 1984a: 124).

Wight perhaps most clearly elucidates some of the Western values that are also found in international society. In his essay 'Western Values in International Relations' he discusses qualities often identified with the West; these include freedom and self-fulfilment of the individual. He considers the correlation of Western values with qualities such as tolerance, self-analysis and the scientific outlook (Wight, 1966a: 89). He also identifies a persistent and recurrent pattern of ideas that are especially representative of Western values. One is the 'explicit connection with the political philosophy of constitutional government.' The second is the quality of what he calls the *via media*, the adoption of policies of moderation and prudence, the '*juste milieu* between definable extremes' (Wight, 1966a: 91). For Wight this pattern of thought describes the Whig or 'constitutional' tradition of

diplomacy (Wight, 1966a: 90). Ultimately, only within the context of this tradition can international society be conceptualized as a real and meaningful entity.¹⁶ Therefore, Wight's conception of international society effectively occurs within the context of this 'rationalist' tradition that Wight describes as especially representative of Western values. Western values are thus inextricably linked with his conception of international society.¹⁷

Bull also identified key values and norms that are characteristic of the West, but have been exported to non-Western societies. Central to his earlier work are the norms which underpin order in first European, then global international society. These include sovereignty and recognition among states, norms that facilitate co-operation and coexistence in an essentially anarchic international order (Bull, 1977a; Wight, 1977).

Bull's later work demonstrates a growing interest in norms relating to the difficult issue of justice, including racial and economic equality, self-determination, and freedom from intellectual and cultural domination (1984c: 2–5). His interest was in part stimulated by the challenges that demands for justice emanating from the developing world were presenting to the current international order. However, he maintained that the norms being used to challenge Western ascendancy of that order and achieve equality within international society had themselves been absorbed from the West (Bull, 1984c: 5). His analysis suggests that Western norms that had distinguished and effectively discriminated against the non-West are now being used to reduce the privileged position of the West in international society.

Institutions

For this school, institutions are the structures through which a society expresses common values and pursues common interests.¹⁸ Like the norms of international society, the institutions are founded upon those of European international society, therefore, those of the West (Bull and Watson, 1984: 2). The basis of contemporary international society is the broader acceptance by non-Western communities of these institutions as the central channels for the conduct of international affairs. Bull emphasizes the degree to which Western domination of the system was expressed through the rules and institutions of international society, such as the laws of state sovereignty, treaty law and rules on the use of force: 'The international legal rules, moreover, were not only made by the Europeans or Western powers, they were also in substantial measure, made *for* them' (Bull, 1984b: 217). The norms of sovereignty, equality and reciprocity central to the Western state-system were upheld by the rules and institutions of international law, through the operation of the treaty, conference and diplomatic systems. The most central of these were and are the institutions of the sovereign state and of international law. Also important are a diplomatic system and a balance of power.¹⁹

This perspective treats the territorial state as the principal political institution of the West and its international society (Bull, 1977a: 71; Watson,

1992: 168). Bull defines states as 'independent political communities, each of which possesses a government and asserts sovereignty in relation to a particular portion of the earth's surface and a particular segment of the human population'. Sovereignty in this context implies supremacy over all other authorities within the community and independence from all outside authorities. Sovereignty thus has both internal and external dimensions (Bull, 1977a: 8). Since no state recognizes an external authority, all states share at least a technical equality, meaning the system comprises equal political communities (Bull and Watson, 1984: 6–7; Wight, 1977: 23). The position of states in the system is not constituted or legitimized by a supreme authority but by the reciprocal recognition of other states. In this respect, it can be seen as a social construction (Dunne, 1995: 379). Therefore, governance of the society derives from the compliance of the members with rules and the conduct of relations through consensual institutions (Bull, 1977a: 34). This quality of sovereign, equal states is seen as the central element of the Western states-system, and while not unprecedented, distinguishes it from earlier systems. It is also a defining feature of the international society established first in Europe, then on a global basis.

The existence of international law is one of the distinctive, if not unique, features of European and now global international society (Bull, 1977a: 142; Wight, 1977: 51).²⁰ The rules of the European, then global society of states, were defined in the principles of international law. Wight saw in international law evidence of the existence of international society (1979: 107). The evolution of international law as they described it draws both on the idea of a universal moral law inherited from Christendom, and from the law that evolved from the practices of states.²¹ What is significant is that both traditions from which international law is drawn from are Western. These authors see international law defining the rules applied within and outside the community of international society. In this they draw upon the natural law thinkers and Grotius in particular. Although the natural law theorists argued that a legal community of mankind existed to which universal natural law applied, they still recognized a distinct community within, the community of Christendom. The law of Christ bound this inner circle (Bull, 1984a: 119; Wight, 1977: 128). Wight and Bull identify a continuation of this dualistic system in European dealings with the non-Western world where different rules and obligations were applied. Wight argues that diplomatic practice recognized the dual nature of the international system, drawing the 'lines of amity', outside of which the rules of international law did not apply to the activities and competition of Europeans (1977: 125).

Bull argued that a decline of natural law thinking and the rise of positivist approaches in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries enhanced the West's sense of differentiation that it had inherited from Christendom. Focusing their thinking on international society as a society of sovereign

states, legal theorists recognized that as states, these political communities incurred certain rights and obligations. Entities that did not satisfy the criteria could not be members. In effect, this excluded many non-Western communities such as the Islamic emirates and Oriental kingdoms. In order to achieve admission to international society, non-European powers were required to conform to European standards of structure and conduct, articulated through international law and popularly described as the 'standard of civilization' (Bull, 1977a: 34; Watson, 1992: 273).²² The West's acceptance of the achievement of these standards by non-Western powers marks the expansion of the European to global international society.²³ Thus, international law became the agent that legitimized and universalized the rules and institutions of the Western states-system under the banner of the 'standard of civilization' (Gong, 1984: 5; Keal, 1995: 194). The institutions of the sovereign state and international law are perhaps the most central Western institutions providing the foundations of international society. They helped to define the identity of the West, but also to universalize that identity. However, the institutions of the balance of power and diplomacy also provide critical features of the West that became universalized.

While all civilizations have known the use of ambassadors, for the International Society authors the diplomatic system was the internationalization of a distinctive Western institution critical to the functioning of international society. For Bull it was a distinct product of the Enlightenment (1977a: 169). The practice of establishing permanent resident embassies is a Western European invention that Wight argues marks the development of the modern Western states-system out of medieval Christendom, extending to Asia and then the world in the nineteenth century (1979: 113).

A fourth significant international institution of the West identified by this school is the balance of power. (Little, 2000) To an extent, the acknowledgement of the importance of the balance of power, and the potential recourse to war inherent in it, demonstrate that these authors continued to acknowledge the importance of the role of force in the international system. The balance of power is again perceived to derive from Western antecedents. For Wight, it was a sophisticated central device for the defence of common interest in the states-system (1966c: 149). Watson discusses the institution as a flexible device first developed in the Italian states-system to counteract hegemony (Watson, 1992: 198–202). Bull describes the institution as a consciously maintained rather than a natural or automatic mechanism for the preservation of order that flourished in the eighteenth-century European states-system (Bull, 1977a: 106–12). The expansion of Europe extended this mechanism to manage European competition overseas. The concept remained current in the wider international society, despite being discredited in the post-World War I period (Bull, 1977a: 40; Watson, 1984a).

As for Spengler and Toynbee, norms and institutions form a critical dimension of this conception of the West. However, the norms and institutions identified appear more firmly embedded in the modern states-system than in the preceding conceptions. The state, international law, diplomacy and the balance of power are all treated as central institutions that established the procedures of the European society of states and subsequently became foundations for the global international society. They can also be seen as parts of the West's identity that became universalized. While 'objective' boundaries such as territory and race continue to differentiate the West as a distinct identity, certain of the normative and institutional dimensions of the West's identity appear more flexible. These are the elements of the West that spread and became universalized through the structures of international society.

Interaction between the West and non-West

We have noted above that the International Society authors have a pluralist conception of civilizations. Their conception of the West, however, is of a unique civilizational identity expanding on an unprecedented scale to establish a trans-civilizational system and subsequently, a global, multi-civilizational society. Within this society, the West appears to retain a unique and influential position. Do these perspectives perceive the West as eventually absorbing other civilizations, or is its position seen as one of only temporary dominance? In one sense, the dominance of the West exercised through the expansion of international society is perceived as hegemony in the process of being challenged, but in another, aspects of the universalization of the West's identity is assumed, exercising a progressive influence over the broader history of mankind.

The evolution of the Western states-system and the expansion of international society appear closely interwoven in these discussions, making it difficult at times to separate the identity of the West from that of the international society. Distinctive qualities of the West appear to shape the international society. Some of these appear to be unique: while other societies had a sense of law, none applied it across such a range of regional boundaries (Bull and Watson, 1984: 6). Similarly, no other society had expanded to encompass the whole globe, whereas the Western state-system provides 'the present structure of the political organisation of mankind' (Bull, 1977a: 295).

However, this is not simply a story of the West shaping the world. In Bull's analysis, the evolution of the West and of the international society it formed are interdependent. Bull suggests that the evolution of the European system of interstate relations and the global expansion of Europe were simultaneous and interactive processes. For instance, the idea of states with equal rights did not fully evolve until the eighteenth century. The

establishment of many diplomatic practices, such as resident embassies, only took place with the onset of European expansion. International organizations did not really evolve until the late nineteenth century (Bull and Watson, 1984: 6). As noted above, the relationship of the West to non-West during this evolution underwent major changes. The emergent sense of civilizational hierarchy is perceived to have displaced relations of loose equality with other civilizations, helping to rationalize the West's dominance of those civilizations. In this analysis, the West's overwhelming power acts as a crucial element in defining the identity of the West with respect to other civilizations; interaction helps to shape the civilizational identity of the West. Therefore, in contrast to Spengler's conception, interaction is not merely incidental, but constitutive of the West.

A clear distinction is made in the analysis of Bull and Watson between the expansion of the Western system and the expansion of the Western society of states. The system expanded through increased interaction between Europeans and other peoples, involving both incorporation and domination (Keal, 1995). The expansion of the society implied the admission of new states into a community of technical equals. Although the boundaries of race or religion initially delineated Europeans from others, the technical criteria of the nineteenth century became standards of behaviour and governance, standards based on Western norms and institutions. However, difference was perceived in the now culturally loaded context of civilization.

It is here that the inter-civilizational dimension of the expansion of international society becomes more explicit. In his essay 'The Theory of Mankind' (1991), Wight analyses the different attitudes of his three traditions to other cultures. They range from the eradication or subjugation of the other civilization to cultivation and tuition, or assimilation. All entailed a sense of the superiority of Western civilization. All three attitudes are evident in the history of European contacts with non-European peoples. The international society analysis implies the eventual predominance of the rationalist approach, with a period of tutelage leading to the absorption of new communities into international society, but how complete was this incorporation? While the expansion of European international society as defined by Bull was synonymous with the expansion of the West as a coherent identity, the growth of global international society is not equated with the West's becoming a universal culture. The preceding discussion suggests these authors sensed the persistence of boundaries and hierarchies within international society. While the creation of a global, multi-civilizational international society saw the West become a society within the broader society, the West retains a distinct and privileged position.

According to Bull and Watson, the expansion of global international society brought about the dilution of Western control of international society. However, as we have observed, both note the use of Western norms and ideas

by non-Westerners in their resistance to Western domination of the society (Bull, 1984c; Watson, 1984a) The state, for instance, became a central mechanism for achieving political and legal independence, recognition and equality. Bull stresses that the 'revolt against the West' did not seek to overthrow the institutions of international society, but to obtain equality and independence of participation *in* this society (Bull, 1984a: 124): that is, the non-West sought equality and liberty within a society based originally on Western culture, not emancipation from this society.²⁴ He is, then, describing the effective globalization of key elements of Western political culture. While the West no longer directly controls international society, other communities are perceived as functioning in the context of Western civilization. This suggests universalization of Western civilization, or more precisely, some features of it, through the channels of norms and institutions.

These authors concur that the normative consensus on which the global international society is based was founded on Western values. At the same time, Bull and Watson were conscious of the society's increasing heterogeneity and complexity, and concern for its impact on maintenance of normative consensus. As Dunne (1998: 148) observes, Bull's reading of the consequences of this heterogeneity for international order oscillates between optimism and pessimism. Bull feared that core Western values were under challenge. As non-Western peoples became stronger, there was a greater inclination to adopt a rhetoric that set these values aside. A 'deep divide' now existed between the Western powers and the Third World on normative issues and the interpretation of values, threatening to undermine the normative consensus crucial to the cohesion of international society (1984b: 224–8; 1984c). This is a debate that has become increasingly more prominent in the years since, particularly in the area of interpretations of human rights and of democracy. In addition to contemplating a redistribution of wealth within the system, both Bull and Watson imply that it may be necessary to incorporate elements of other civilizations into the norms of international society in order to maintain the cohesion of a truly universal society (Bull, 1977a: 315–7; 1984c; Watson, 1992: 308). Bull's concerns were driven increasingly, not only by a concern for the maintenance of order within the system, but also for the moral goal of justice (Dunne, 1998). Therefore, Bull conceived both the cohesion of international society and the West's institutional and normative hegemony of that society to be under threat from its the multi-civilizational character.

However, at another, more optimistic level there remains some sense of the West as a universal force, and a faith in Western-shaped international society providing a useful forum for civilizational interaction. While Bull acknowledges that the Western states-system is not the only possible form of universal political organization, he suggests it is the only one which has succeeded in achieving a durable, global political system, providing the present political structure for mankind, 'and the sense of common interest and values that underlies it'. In spite of its weaknesses and inadequacies, it is 'the principal

expression of human unity or solidarity that exists at the present time' (Bull, 1977a: 21, 259, 295). Universalist overtones surface in Bull's discussion of international society. While there is no strong thread of progressive history in Bull's work – he was anxious not to portray international politics as inevitably tied to the states-system or to the dominance of European culture – he does imply that development and progress have been linked to the expansion of the European system. The emergence of sovereign states, the rise of national consciousness and the adaptation of society to modern science, technology and economy are treated as universal rather than unique historical processes. The 'revolt against the West' is viewed as part of a broader forward movement towards human development (Bull, 1984c: 23, 34). There is, therefore, an implicit linkage between the expansion of Western civilization and the broader development of humanity.

Wight, in contrast, saw international relations ultimately as an arena of 'recurrence and repetition' that was incompatible with progressivist theories (1966b: 26). However, despite his pessimistic belief that conflict and war were recurrent features of the international system, he does admit limited possibilities for change, as is demonstrated by his faith in the existence of international society as a set of institutions and norms which can help to modify international conflict (Wight, 1966a: 98). International society permits managing, though not radically altering, the system. In the conclusion to the original version of *Power Politics*, he observed:

Powers will continue to seek security without reference to justice and to pursue their vital interests irrespective of common interests, but in the fraction that they may be deflected lies the difference between the jungle and the traditions of Europe. (Quoted in Dunne, 1998: 61)

This remark hints at a sliver of hope that politics can rise above the law of the jungle, but, furthermore, that this hope resides in the traditions of the West. Wight's analysis implies that Western values are deeply integrated with international society and, therefore, deeply integrated with the current and future developments of world politics.

In the work of Bull and of Wight, the universalization of the West through its norms and institutions provides a deeper and subtler form of influence than domination exercised by military, political or even economic power. This suggests that civilizational interaction consists of more than the West buffeting or overwhelming other civilizations, as for Spengler, and is more complex than the relationships suggested by Toynbee. It suggests that certain norms and values of the West have been integrated into the institutions of the international society, achieving a form of universalization. Moreover, while the West is not portrayed as the only civilization, it is portrayed as establishing normative and even, in the work of Bull, developmental criteria for modern humanity.

Conclusion

The International Society authors present a pluralist view of the cultural world that acknowledges the interaction of multiple civilizations in both past and present world politics. While it conceptualizes the West as a distinct civilization in this context, it simultaneously sees it as the foundation of a universal community. These authors share with Spengler and Toynbee a broad, historical perspective, although they focus more strongly on the emergence of the Western states-system than their predecessors. Like Toynbee, their conception of the West acknowledges the important political and legal foundations Christendom provided. While religion is discussed as a significant, formative force, race and power emerge as increasingly important in distinguishing the West. The intensification of interaction with other civilizations coincides with a growing sense of differentiation. Race appears to blend with power to create a sense of civilizational hierarchy, expressed in the Western-based 'standard of civilization'. The legacy of these boundaries provides a continuing sense of differentiation, but, paradoxically perhaps, the literature suggests that certain norms and institutions that distinguished the West in the 'standard of civilization' have become intrinsic to the structures of international society. In a sense, they have become the agents of the universalization of the West. At this level, the West has become a global civilization. In this, there are parallels with the concept of the West found in Toynbee's work. As for Toynbee, interaction is considered more than incidental to a civilization's growth. For Bull in particular, interaction critically contributes to the constitution of the West, the West and international society evolving interdependently.

Like Toynbee, the International Society authors depict the West unifying the world through its technological capacity and dynamic nature. However, these authors go further than Toynbee in suggesting that the West has provided the normative and institutional framework of modern world politics. Through the structures of international society, the West has created a single, global political system and the context within which all civilizations function and interact. These scholars, however, do not argue that international society has created civilizational homogeneity. Within the context of international society, the identity of the West remains distinct. Again we see an unresolved tension between the perception of the West as a universal civilization, and as one actor in a multi-civilizational world order. Wight's work in particular implies an intrinsic link between Western values, the *via media* in international relations and the construction of international society. Bull's demonstrates concerns for the challenges posed by cultural heterogeneity and the need for a redistribution of power and wealth to maintain the cohesion of international society; yet he also suggests that the West's experiences illustrate a universal process of development, and that its institutions provide the foundations for interna-

tional order and the dominant context of modern civilizational interaction. At one level, therefore, this is a conception of the West as a hegemon under challenge, at another, it retains a unique position as a universal civilization in the contemporary world order.

The tensions and issues raised by the International Society perspective resonate strongly with contemporary political debate in the post-Cold War era. In this period, we have seen an intensified focus on the growing interconnection of the global community, through the evolution of technology, the growth of economic and political institutions and linkages, and through the apparent spread of norms. In many cases, the West is perceived as the source of the innovations and structures that underpin these processes. This interconnectivity is often encapsulated by the term 'globalization'. In the context of this discussion, we may once again reflect on the extent to which globalization is a continuation of the processes described by the International Society authors, or the universalization of aspects of Western society. This raises once more the question of the extent to which the West is becoming a universal culture, or as Sandra Harding suggests, is a local culture with a global reach. Second, contemporary debates continue to reflect the tensions with regard to the universalization of certain norms and values. These issues were particularly prominent during the 1990s in the debate surrounding human rights and the extent to which the existing regimes projects essentially Western interpretations of human rights. Bull's concerns with regard to engaging non-Western values are pertinent to the discussion of the degree of flexibility that is necessary and feasible in human rights regimes to allow for the incorporation of non-Western interpretations of human rights, without diluting fundamental rights and principles.

In the post-Cold War era, we have also witnessed vigorous debates with a further issue that was an important feature of the international society agenda, that of the efficacy of humanitarian intervention (Bull, 1984d; Mayall, 1996; Vincent, 1974). Once again, debates have raged in which commentators seek to weigh up whether to sustain respect for state sovereignty as a fundamental premiss of international order, or to support demands for a broader interpretation of order that entails respecting and defending moral order and justice in defending the rights of individuals at risk. In the context of the concerns of this book, what is interesting is the related debate concerning who defines what constitutes a breach of human rights sufficient to warrant intervention and the contention that, rather than seeing the evolution of universal ethics that should drive the foreign policy of states, what we have witnessed is the projection of essentially Western ethics, and interests, as a new global norm (Brown, 2000).

6

History's End? Francis Fukuyama's Conception of the West

In 1989, the American political analyst, Francis Fukuyama, heralded the end of the Cold War by declaring the victory of the liberal West over the communist East. He characterized the Cold War as an epic battle between two ideologies to determine the direction of man's evolution through the course of modernity. The West's victory represented the conclusion of this ideological evolution and, in this sense, the 'end of history'. While this particular thesis is highly distinctive, the concept of the West embedded in it illustrates broader trends in American liberal thought in the late twentieth century. These provide important insights into assumptions about the West and the cultural world order that can be found in this significant perspective. These assumptions stand in marked contrast to those of earlier authors such as Spengler and Toynbee in the faith they express in science and the optimistic belief in human progress. Fukuyama's image of cultural world order comprises different cultures, but nevertheless presents humanity as a whole engaged in a single, civilizing process of development and modernization. His assumptions about culture and civilization are influenced by his belief in human progress and his concept of civilizational interaction linked to levels of development and modernization.

This chapter focuses principally on the concept of the West articulated in Fukuyama's 'end of history' thesis first outlined in *The National Interest* article 'The End of History?' (1989) and later developed in his book *The End of History and the Last Man* (1992). It also refers to Fukuyama's later work on culture and economics and gender. In the 'end of history' thesis, Fukuyama presents the West as a civilizational identity at the forefront of the civilizing process. It provides not just a technical or normative framework for modern civilizational interaction, as suggested by Toynbee and the International Society school, but also the ideological model for human development. Fukuyama differs from Spengler and even Toynbee in his optimism regarding the impact of ideas transferred from the West to other cultures. Furthermore, whereas, Spengler's concept of the West focuses on German culture as the heart of this civilizational identity, Fukuyama draws

his model of the West from the ideals and institutions of the United States. Unlike Spengler, Toynbee and Bull, he appears confident that the West is no longer challenged by forces from the non-West. But like them, he demonstrates concerns about challenges to Western cohesion from within. While this qualifies his confidence in the West and its future, there is overall a strong sense of the triumph of the American way.

Fukuyama's era and influences

Fukuyama's thesis blends the influences of European philosophy with an analysis of the tumultuous post-Cold War world to produce a distinctive contribution to the debate on the role of the West in world politics. While Fukuyama is an American of Japanese descent, his work is infused with the traditions of European philosophy. Raised in New York, he studied political philosophy at Cornell University with Allan Bloom and in Paris under the post-structuralist Jacques Derrida. He obtained his Ph.D. in Political Science (National Security Studies) from Harvard University and subsequently worked with the RAND Corporation. At the time of publishing his 'End of History' article, Fukuyama was Deputy Director of the United States State Department's policy planning staff. Its publication coincided with the installation of the first Bush administration and was seen by some as representing the administration's views. This was a turbulent time in world affairs with communism crumbling in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Outside Europe, popular pressure for reform climaxed in the Chinese government crackdown of June 1989 on protesters in Tiananmen Square. Capitalism was booming in East Asia and finding new adherents in Latin America.

In this context, Fukuyama's proclamation of the victory of liberal democracy found a broad and attentive audience. His essay expressed the emergent euphoria evident particularly in the United States. In the subsequent book, Fukuyama retains a belief in the victory of the West over its ideological rivals, but the sense of triumph becomes more muted, enhancing a sense of foreboding present in the 1989 essay. This foreshadows a shift in the winds of optimism of the mid 1990s. The collapse of communist regimes and the victory of the Gulf War in 1991 had suggested to some the creation of a New World Order of liberal democracy guided by American leadership, seeming to vindicate Fukuyama's predictions. This optimism was shaken by growing instability in former socialist countries¹ and the debacle of the United States-led UN humanitarian intervention in Somalia. The United States was further shaken by riots in Los Angeles in 1992, while in Europe there was escalating tension emanating from new right movements, often targeting new immigrants. Such events clouded, though did not obscure, the broader sense of triumph. In the later 1990s, world politics was shocked

by serious economic crises in Asia and the stalling of reform in Russia, and a resurgence of ethnic and nationalist tensions most notably in the Balkans, but also in the Caucuses, Africa, Asia and the Middle East. These events however did not shake Fukuyama's confidence in the efficacy of his thesis of the broader direction of human development. The events described by some as a crisis of liberalism were viewed by Fukuyama as simply a low-point in the broader economic cycle. Indeed for Fukuyama, the greatest challenge to the efficacy of his thesis has emanated neither from nationalism nor financial crises but from developments in biotechnology that can potentially fundamentally alter human nature (Fukuyama, 1999).

Intellectually, Fukuyama's article illustrates a trend of optimism prevalent in the late 1980s that contrasted to the 'declinist' trend stimulated by the setbacks of the 1970s.² The article was 'propitious' both in articulating the American sense of triumph, and helping to explain the radical changes that were occurring (Cumings, 1999; Knutsen, 1991: 79). In particular, Fukuyama provided a sophisticated justification of the conservative policies of Western governments of the 1980s, such as those of Thatcher and Reagan, celebrating the victory of the market and small government (Held, 1993a: 257). Fukuyama sought to define what liberalism stood for in the absence of its communist antithesis (Smith, 1994: 2). However, his argument that the end of the Cold War represents the ideological victory of liberal democracy provoked extensive debate and was disputed, particularly by those who felt his ideological legitimization of the conservatives prematurely foreclosed debate on the possibility of alternative political systems in the face of the Soviet Union's demise (Miliband, 1992; Peet, 1993a). Postcolonial critics place Fukuyama's thesis in a broader Western tradition of totalizing history, subjecting the history and experience of all to that of the West (Sardar, 1992).

The sense of triumphalism that characterized debate on international affairs in the United States of the late 1980s contrasted with the tone of discussion of domestic social cohesion. Problems such as crime, drug abuse, welfare rights and race relations helped to generate a broader debate on American values, one aspect of which was the debate over multiculturalism and the rise of cultural relativism as challenging core Western, Enlightenment values.³ In the context of this debate, it is interesting to note that Fukuyama presents an image of the West that is homogeneous, essentially middle class and built around the ideals of the American constitution and its founding fathers. In his later work, he has demonstrated an interest in the causes of both the onset and apparent remission of the decline of the 'moral health' of the United States (Fukuyama, 1999). Such difficulties, however, do not undermine his overall faith in the strength of the power and efficacy of the Western liberal idea.

Fukuyama's thesis in many respects is a celebration of the triumph of the Western political system and ideals in the battle for the soul and direction

of modernity. In this sense, Fukuyama represents a particularly American, liberal concept of the West in the late twentieth century. However, it is not without its antecedents. It draws on nineteenth-century intellectual traditions of universal history, on theories of modernization and development from political science, and on an American tradition of political idealism. Fukuyama writes within a tradition of authors for whom history provides a sense of place and purpose for humanity (Rosenberg, 1989: 309). He shares with Spengler and Toynbee, an interest in the processes of history, but in contrast to them, he is concerned primarily with the triumph rather than the decline of the West. Furthermore, his historical focus is more limited, concentrating primarily on the modern era. Fukuyama places himself firmly in a tradition of linear and progressive history, along with his intellectual mentors, Hegel and Kojève.⁴ History becomes the evolution of the human consciousness and ideas, moving towards a final stage of absolute consciousness (Peet, 1993a: 66; Smith, 1994: 11).

This places Fukuyama in the modern, humanist, rationalist tradition which views the world as something not given by God, but shaped and produced by man (Burns, 1994: x). Fukuyama's reading and use of both Hegel and Kojève is variously applauded and disputed.⁵ As Anderson observes, he borrows selectively from both to create his own, distinctive interpretation of history (Anderson, 1992: 332). In addition to Hegel, Fukuyama also acknowledges his debt to the work of Plato, in forming his conception of the human psyche and De Tocqueville, whom he draws on for his reading of the role of community and emergence of democracy in the United States. Finally, like Spengler, Fukuyama has been influenced by Nietzsche, whom he once described as simultaneously the greatest philosopher of late modernity and a bad man whose ideas had evil consequences. Nietzsche's influence is most evident in relation to Fukuyama's concerns about the potential tensions between liberty and equality within liberal democracy and the possible resurgence of rebellious individualism. The blend of ideas from both Hegel and Nietzsche is interesting, given their different perspectives on the historical process. Hegel held a progressive, if dialectical view of history in contrast to Nietzsche's commitment to a cyclical view. The tension inherent in these two positions emerges in Fukuyama's final inability to totally commit to the idea that history has ended.

Despite flirtations with Nietzsche, Fukuyama stands solidly within the liberal intellectual tradition. As Gourevitch (1994: 118) notes, Fukuyama blends Anglo-Saxon liberalism with German idealism. Although he is critical of the rational materialism that he argues characterizes the work of Hobbes and Locke, one cannot ignore their importance to the liberal ideas that underpin Fukuyama's thesis and conception of the West. Within the American intellectual tradition, Fukuyama articulates the political idealism and commitment to democracy and capitalism that characterized

Woodrow Wilson and F.D. Roosevelt (Farrenkopf, 1995). This is demonstrated in his faith in the institutions of liberalism and democracy as embodied in the American way of life and his belief in the universality of these ideas to create a more peaceful and prosperous world. His optimism consciously reflects the faith in progress and in science and the spread of democracy that he finds in nineteenth-century Europe and the United States (1992: 4).

Fukuyama's faith in progress and development also echoes the works of Western, particularly postwar American, political scientists. Parallels have been drawn between his thesis and the work of Daniel Bell (1960) concerning the impact of modernization on 'the end of ideology' (Held, 1993a: 255; Knutsen, 1991: 78), but there is a different quality to Fukuyama's argument. Bell's argument is premised on an assumption that the pull of nineteenth-century ideologies has been exhausted, not that one has been victorious over the other. He implies the convergence of the West with socialism in the institutions of the welfare state. For Bell, ideologies have lost their power to rouse people, leading to 'the end of ideology'.⁶ Both authors, however, convey a sense of the *ennui* that they believe accompanies the end of ideological confrontation.

Further parallels exist between Fukuyama's work and development theorists, such as Gabriel Almond, who viewed modernization as a process of development towards institutions established in the advanced industrial societies of North America and Western Europe (Cruise O'Brien, 1972; Higgott, 1983). Fukuyama's thesis also echoes theories of convergence that assumed that industrialization and urbanization gave rise to similar political institutions and that industrialization ultimately gave rise to affluence and mass consumption (Brzezinski and Huntington, 1965: 10). Fukuyama shares their faith in industrialization as a key process that uniformly transforms and homogenizes human societies. His later work is also more direct in tracing a linkage between the promotion of democracy through economic development, and of promoting economic development through integration into the liberal capitalist trade and investment regimes (Fukuyama, 1999). Therefore, Fukuyama's work can be located within a tradition of teleological development found in American political science.

Drawing on these varied traditions, Fukuyama produces a thesis that not only seeks to explain the meaning of the end of the Cold War, but also identifies and rationalizes a special role for the West in the world and in the future development of human civilization.

Conceptions of civilization

Fukuyama's conception of the West is embedded in a broader vision of universal history of which the central tenet is progress. He is concerned less

with the details of civilizational interaction than with the broader march of development throughout the human community. The 'end of history' thesis is dominated by a belief in the existence of a universal and evolving community of mankind, with the West viewed as being at the forefront of this evolution.

Fukuyama uses the term civilization in a variety of contexts, often associating it with terms such as Western, modern, middle class or consumer. He does not engage in a detailed discussion of comparative civilizations, except to compare the way in which Western liberal democracy and Soviet communism have sought to shape civilization (1992: 35). Despite the plurality of his use of the term, Fukuyama's thesis is premised on the idea of human civilization on a progressive course, providing a strong underlying sense of a civilizing process. His thesis is strongly influenced by a belief in the potential for further homogenization of human societies, fostered by science and technology which, Fukuyama argues, inescapably link all of mankind today (1992: 88). His optimism and faith in progress consciously recalls that of nineteenth-century Europe. This optimism was grounded in faith that science would emancipate humanity from poverty and disease, belief in the spread of rational self-government in the form of democracy and confidence that the spread of trade would make war obsolete. This faith in progress, shattered by the traumas of the wars and depression of the twentieth century, is rejuvenated by Fukuyama as he applauds the death of authoritarianism. 'As we reach the 1990s', he argues 'the world as a whole has not revealed new evils, but has gotten *better* in certain, distinct ways.' (1992: 12)

Fukuyama's progressive vision of human civilization is firmly based in a concept of history that is dialectical and finite. While he acknowledges that 'History' is subject to waves and setbacks, its broad course is directional and largely irreversible (1995a). His concept of History is crucial to comprehending his ideas of civilization and civilizational interaction. In marked contrast to Spengler, he defines History as 'a single, coherent, evolutionary process, when taking into account the experience of all peoples in all times' (1992: xii). Drawing deeply on the ideas of Hegel and Kant, Fukuyama grounds his theories in the belief that all human behaviour is rooted in a prior state of consciousness (Gourevitch, 1994: 112). Mankind evolves dialectically through different stages of consciousness, finally achieving a rational form of society, expressed in the state. Ideas shape the material world; therefore History is treated as mankind's ideological evolution (1989: 4-6).

Fukuyama suggests History is driven by fundamental human needs: the satisfaction of rational and material desires; and the need for recognition, or respect for the dignity of each human being. These needs become the engines of History, stimulating processes expressed in political and ideological systems and movements. The first of these processes, the quest for the

satisfaction of material needs, is fulfilled by the application of natural science which represents cumulative knowledge with regard to the control of nature, turned to the productive requirements of mankind (1992: 72–3). Science provides a concrete expression of mankind's capacity to shape the material environment through the application of ideas. The central role that Fukuyama attributes to science places him firmly in the traditions of the Western Enlightenment. The unfolding of modern science provides a directional 'Mechanism' for explaining many aspects of historical development. It both satisfies material needs, through making possible 'the limitless accumulation of wealth' and, through technology and industrialization, serves to homogenize human society: 'All countries undergoing economic modernisation must increasingly resemble one another.' (1992: xiv) This suggests strong parallels with the modernization literature of the 1950s. Fukuyama argues further that the most efficient organization of man's productive capacity is Western capitalism. Since other forms of industrialization have proved inadequate (1992: xv), societies will ultimately converge with, or submerge into, the Western model of development. In this there are again echoes of the convergence theorists of the 1950s.

While the recognition of material needs is significant, for Fukuyama it is not a sufficient explanation of human motivation. The human character is also driven by the quest for prestige, for recognition (1992: 161). Basing his analysis on Hegel's parable of the Master–Slave relationship, he argues that the desire to be recognized as a human being, with a certain dignity and worth, is essential to all humans. Lack of recognition provides an impulse towards historical progress (1992: 192). Fukuyama equates this with the part of the soul Plato called *thymos*, the spiritedness which underlies the emotions of pride, self-esteem and shame (1992: 182). Drawing on Kojève's influence, Fukuyama identifies the struggle for recognition as the central dynamic of the historical process. Most interestingly, Fukuyama interprets political and ideological movements such as religions, imperialism and nationalism, as part of a broader process in the quest for recognition. All are presented as the product of *thymos*.

Fukuyama's conception of History is crucial to understanding his implicit assumptions about the structure and dynamics of the cultural world order. Humanity's ideological evolution is part of a quest for the most satisfying society that contains no fundamental internal contradictions. This social ideal is represented by the universal, homogeneous state that provides equal recognition to all individuals. For Hegel, the ideological evolution of humanity was completed in the victory of the ideals of the French and American revolutions. For Kojève, they were achieved in the states of Western Europe post-World War II and in 'the American way of life' (1989: 5). For Fukuyama, the end of history was achieved in the victory of Western liberal democracy and the defeat of rival ideologies in the Cold

War. This allows him to interpret the end of the Cold War as 'the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalisation of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government' (1989: 4). Fukuyama portrays the Cold War as a competition between two rival modern systems or ideologies to determine the direction and systemic shape of human civilization, progressing along the course of modernization. From this perspective, the Cold War becomes a battle for modernity.

Fukuyama, therefore, suggests that the West provides a universal and satisfying model of society. However, inequalities and dissatisfaction continue to exist in the West, particularly with regard to issues such as race and distribution of wealth. This forces Fukuyama to concede that no regime, including liberal democracy, is perfect, fully satisfying all parts of all men simultaneously (1992: 337). He concedes,

[w]hat is emerging victorious ... is not so much liberal practice, as the liberal *idea*. That is to say, for a very large part of the world, there is now no ideology with pretensions to universality that is in a position to challenge liberal democracy, and no universal principle of legitimacy other than the sovereignty of the people. (1992: 45)

This concedes that it is the *idea*, rather than the implementation of liberal democracy that has been victorious. This equates with Fukuyama's focus on history as the evolution of ideology. Nevertheless the West represents the furthest point of ideological development, its norms and institutions not just a product of a particular culture or region, but representative of cosmopolitan 'truths' about the nature of man.

However, Fukuyama's confidence in the West as representing the end of the history is accompanied by some unsettling qualifications. Perhaps his most surprising qualification comes when his 1992 book concludes on a note of uncertainty regarding man's future ideological evolution.⁷ This indicates a retreat from Fukuyama's Kojévian advocacy of the liberal democratic state as the most satisfying of all systems and without fundamental contradictions. It raises doubts about the durability and cohesion of the liberal democratic system and undermines his contention that the West constitutes the end of history.

There are then strong teleological dimensions to this thesis. It is implied that norms and institutions will develop along an established form. Furthermore, Fukuyama states that future interaction will be influenced by the stage of development that societies have reached (1992: 276). Civilizational interaction is dominated by a sense of a civilizing process. However, before considering the nature of interaction between the West and non-West, we should establish the boundaries which circumscribe Fukuyama's West.

The boundaries of Fukuyama's West

Although Fukuyama's thesis contains significant assumptions about territory, race and religion, his concept of the West is founded principally on the evolution of certain forms of development and governance. These underpin his perception of the boundaries defining the West. Nonetheless, his thesis entails important assumptions about the material dimension of the West.

Territory

Fukuyama is less concerned with a society's relationship to land or territory than Spengler, and less interested in its relationship to the environment than Toynbee. His conception of the West is grounded more on forms of governance and levels of development than on territory. However, his West is located in, though not confined to, a territorial heartland of the United States and Western Europe. These territories form 'the original beachhead' from which liberal democracy has made significant inroads in areas of the world with differing political, religious and cultural traditions (1992: 50).

Fukuyama's West is more clearly focused on the United States than are the preceding conceptions discussed; its institutions and practices appear to present the ultimate expressions of capitalism and liberal.⁸ The Western European states also form an important component of Fukuyama's West, but due to their systems of governance rather than their location. For instance, the authoritarian nature of regimes operating in Spain, Portugal and Greece until the early 1970s lead Fukuyama to treat these states as marginal to the West, until incorporated into the 'mainstream' of Western democratic development through political reform (1992: 13). In contrast to Wight and Bull, there is little ambiguity in Fukuyama's work about the Soviet Union's relationship to the West. Its communist system not only placed it firmly outside of the West, but also constitutes the prime antithesis to the West. The socialist states of Eastern Europe are also excluded. One senses, however, that in the post-Cold War environment Fukuyama sees opportunities for peoples from the more developed former communist states to move into the normative and institutional realm of Western liberal democracy.

The territories of Asia have a more ambiguous relationship with Fukuyama's West. While states such as China and North Korea are automatically seen as apart from the West due to their communist regimes, the developing states of East Asia are initially treated as a part of the victorious West due to their successful adoption of economic liberalism and progress towards more democratic political structures (1989: 10; 1992: 14). However, deeper consideration of cultural and political features of these societies sees Fukuyama painting East Asia as a region that differs from, and challenges, the West (1992: 238–44).

Fukuyama's West also maintains an ambiguous relationship with Latin America. It teeters on the fringe not because of its location but its failure to achieve economic development in a free capitalist economy, and to the prevalence of dictatorial regimes until the mid 1970s. Despite Fukuyama's optimism regarding political and economic reforms of the 1980s and early 1990s, this region remains on the margins of his West, still immersed in 'history'.⁹ This again demonstrates the significance that Fukuyama attaches to governance rather than location in his geographic conception of the West.

Religion

Fukuyama's discussion of religion is neither extensive nor profound. The limited focus of his historical interest means he is less interested in exploring the roots of the West in Christendom than are Wight and Bull. However, Fukuyama does link the emergence of the universal, homogeneous state that characterizes the West with Christianity as an ideology. He depicts Christianity as an important precursor of the ideology of universal equality subsequently articulated in the French and American Revolutions (1992: 196).

Fukuyama also treats religion as a socio-economic factor when he notes that the work ethic of Protestant societies of Europe and the United States facilitated the growth of capitalism in the West. He does not dwell on the distinctions between Protestant and Catholic societies, but implies Protestant cultures assume democratic structures more rapidly, due to their work ethic and their modernization of society through the privatization of religion (1992: 216).

The most significant aspect of Fukuyama's discussion of religion is his perception of religion as a pre-modern expression of the quest for recognition, (1992: 259, 288). As he notes, however, religion can provide a limited and exclusionary basis for community and ultimately a barrier to the achievement of 'full', meaning unqualified, recognition. Part of the ideological evolution of the West was the secularization of society, by which Fukuyama means the removal of religion from the public and political sphere to the private, (1989: 14). Religion, Fukuyama argues, was 'defanged' allowing the West to achieve a more rational and inclusive basis of social recognition (1992: 260). This confidence in secularization as a progressive force is further enhanced when Fukuyama notes elsewhere that religion may contribute to the cultural context that inhibits or facilitates development. Societies dominated in the public sphere by religion are less ideologically developed in Fukuyama's eyes. This is evident in his discussion of Hindu society (1992: 226–8) and Islamist movements which Fukuyama dismisses as a reaction, rather than a challenge, to Western values from societies that have failed to fully assimilate or resist the influence of the West (1992: 237). Therefore, for Fukuyama, it is the containment of religion as much as its practice that distinguishes the West from other societies.

Race

Like religion, race is not an overt element defining Fukuyama's West. Racial politics are treated as an element of political evolution, ethnicity and nationalism as earlier forms of the struggle for political recognition based on the group's quest for recognition. As with religion, he argues race in the form of ethnicity or nationality can constitute a barrier to democratization and to the achievement of a rational, universal society since it does not recognize universal human dignity but only dignity for the group (1992: 214, 266). A rational society, such as a liberal democracy, is based on the moral value of citizens regardless of their race.¹⁰ Therefore, overcoming racial or ethnic tensions within a community is a function of its ideological evolution.

Fukuyama treats ethnic and national identification as similar forces, but views national identification as a function of economic and political modernization. Nationalism is described as a transient rather than a permanent or natural source of identification, as a passion that is pronounced in the early stages of modernization, prior to popular acquisition of a national identity and political freedom:

...for national groups whose identity is more secure and of longer standing, the nation as a source of thymotic identification appears to decline. (1992: 270)

This evolution, he argues, has taken place in the West where the state bestows rights and recognition regardless of race or ethnicity. Indeed, the development of the liberal democratic state in the West was a product of containing ethnic or national strife. Moved by the devastation of two major wars Europe, in the form of the European Union, has moved past the peak of 'ultranationalism' represented in fascist Italy and Germany. European nationalism has been redefined, defanged and channelled out of politics and into culture (1992: 270–1). However, the experience of the Balkan Wars of the 1990s suggests that the power of nationalism continues to be potent in certain areas of Europe and entails the potential to destabilize neighbouring regions, politically and socially. Fukuyama would doubtless regard these regions as not yet fully integrated into the West's liberal democratic community, but still engaged in the processes of political evolution (Fukuyama, 1999). In this respect, he neatly side-steps one of the more troubling and challenging dimensions of late twentieth-century international relations.

The perception of the West as beyond ethnic and racial identification is further enhanced by Fukuyama's treatment of the United States, when he suggests that America is distinguished by the degree to which peoples of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds have been assimilated into a society 'without sharply defined social classes or long-standing ethnic and national

divisions' (1992: 118). Fukuyama's confidence in the degree to which racial and ethnic divisions in the West have been overcome by the liberal democratic state may carry weight in principle, but in practice is problematic given the persistence of social and economic inequalities in the heartland of the West. His views seem all the more remarkable given their publication in the year major race riots shook Los Angeles. Fukuyama dismisses persistent racial divisions in the United States as a cultural problem, the legacy of pre-modern conditions such as slavery and racism, rather than the system of liberal democracy itself (1989: 9; 1992: 118). However, we are left with a disquieting feeling that the homogeneity and equality of the West that Fukuyama celebrates is less than authentic.

Power

The discussion above suggests that the territorial, religious and racial boundaries have an implicit rather than an overt presence in Fukuyama's depiction of the West. A similar observation may be made of his treatment of power. Theodore Von Laue argues that the most crucial flaw of Fukuyama's arguments is his blindness to the centrality of power (1994: 26). Fukuyama undoubtedly believes that the pursuit of power is not the only force that drives mankind.¹¹ However, his concept of the 'victory of the Western idea' is premised on the perception of a contest between the West and the socialist East in which the West proved the stronger. The power of the West is consistently measured against that of the rival socialist system. The foundation of this power, for Fukuyama, is the viability of the West's economic and political systems. The strength of capitalism ultimately empowers the West in the economic realm. Although he recognizes that Western capitalism is not the only path to modernization, for Fukuyama it has proved the most flexible and viable. The centrally planned economies of the Eastern bloc, despite achieving rapid industrialization in the postwar period, proved too cumbersome and insufficiently innovative to compete effectively in the more complex and dynamic post-industrial, information age (1992: 93; 1999). Furthermore, he argues that market economies are becoming the preferred model of development for societies still undergoing 'modernization'.

This is the message Fukuyama draws from the failure of alternative models of development, such as the socialist model and the *dependencia* strategies of Latin America, in contrast to the success of the capitalist systems adopted by the late developers in East Asia (1992: 98, 103). The problems of Asia in 1997/98 were in turn attributed to problems of corruption and legitimacy in these regimes, rather than to the failure of the capitalist system itself (Fukuyama, 1999). Fukuyama discusses capitalism primarily as a model of development rather than as a form of power in itself. The Western economic model empowers the West in its capacity to satisfy the desire for material accumulation, but it also places the West at

the forefront of the economic evolution of human civilization, having outshone rival models of development. This leads Fukuyama to foresee the creation of a universal, consumer culture based on liberal principles, 'the ultimate victory of the VCR' in a celebration of material and consumer culture which resonates with American triumphalism (1992: 108).

A second source of Western power lies in its ability to satisfy and contain the demands of *thymos* – the desire for recognition. Liberal democracy is described by Fukuyama as a system that satisfies *isothymia* by providing equal recognition for all citizens in a universal state (1992: 201–3). However, he also argues that the liberal West has succeeded in containing *megalothymia*, the desire to be recognized as superior, channelling this desire away from outlets such as religious and nationalist war and into fields such as commerce and representative politics. Fukuyama illustrates this point by drawing examples from the American constitutional and political experience, again highlighting the American as the archetypal Western system (1992: 187, 316). Once again, the strength of the West is enhanced through contrasts with the failure of communist regimes to satisfy their populations' needs for dignity and recognition (1992: xix, 166–70, 177–80). In this respect, then, Fukuyama's work implies that the West has been empowered by the legitimacy of its political system. This is further accentuated by Fukuyama's analysis of the 1997/98 Asian financial crisis as demonstrating the hollowness and weakness of the soft authoritarian regimes in that region: a crisis of legitimacy as much as a crisis of capitalism (Fukuyama, 1999).

A noticeable absence from this thesis is an analysis of military power, despite it being a discussion of the end of the Cold War. Only passing references are made to the role of military power in the rise and victory of the West. Indeed, he emphasizes that ultimately the Cold War was won in the realms of ideas, not in the realm of the battlefield (1992: 258). Fukuyama also dwells only briefly on European imperialism. Imperialism is not discussed as a vehicle through which the liberal democratic traditions of the West were exported to the rest of the world; rather, it is treated as another manifestation of the struggle for recognition, in this case the urge to dominate at a macro-level and as a symptom of an earlier phase of development of the West (1992: 245, 259). Drawing on Joseph Schumpeter, Fukuyama suggests that imperialism was an atavism, a holdover from an earlier stage of human social evolution, a symptom of the incomplete sublimation of *megalothymia* into economic activity and the product of nationalism. Through this, he seeks to explain the perpetuation of imperialism long after Europeans had discovered the principles of liberty and equality for themselves. Furthermore, Fukuyama appears confident that imperialism is an aspect of politics that loses its legitimacy with the spread of liberal democracy (1992: 263).

Like religion and nationalism, it is portrayed as an aspect of political development, a phase through which the West has passed. He spends little

time considering the material impact of this experience on the formation of the West, for example the relationship between economic activity and imperial expansion. There is also no consideration of United States' expansion in this discussion. Fukuyama does not consider whether the spread of Western institutions and ideas that he celebrates could be considered as a form of imperialism (Peet, 1993a: 72). Consequently, Fukuyama fails to investigate a central aspect of the West's power, the shaping and control of international norms and institutions, described by Bull as the structures of international society. This may be due to Fukuyama's perception of these norms and institutions as universal rather than an aspect of Western power. In this respect, Fukuyama's conception of the West lacks the sophistication of Bull's. For Fukuyama, the power of the West emanates from the strength and viability of its economic and political systems. It is power that expands through emulation and competition rather than subjugation; it is a largely benevolent conceptualization of the power of the West.

Norms

Although Fukuyama does not specifically investigate norms and institutions as elements of the West's power, they are central to his conception of this community. Core norms include equality, individualism, freedom and reciprocal recognition, encapsulating the ideals of the French and American Revolutions. They are perceived as closely linked to techniques for satisfying society's need for recognition and are, therefore, central to the perception of the moral progress achieved by the West. The central norm of Fukuyama's Western liberal democracy is equality. He sees Western societies as based on the rational recognition of all citizens as equal in rights, opportunities and obligations, regardless of race, religion or any other qualification. In practice, Western societies do not always meet these ideals. Inequalities based, for instance, on race, wealth or gender persist. However, for Fukuyama continued inequities are not due to substantial contradictions within liberal democracy, but to its imperfect implementation (1992: 290). Once again, this presents an image of a cohesive and homogeneous West, allowing his thesis to retain theoretical cohesion, but masking existing differences and their sources.

One of the key sources of tension in Fukuyama's West is in reconciling the norm of equality with the competing demands of the norm of liberty. He fears recognition granted by a fully egalitarian society would involve no sense of genuine merit and, therefore, prove ultimately worthless. Fukuyama concurs with Nietzsche that every society needs some element of *megalothymia*, the drive for exceptionalness, in order to remain efficient, dynamic and creative (1992: 315). Although he seeks to resolve this tension between equality and liberty by arguing that the West, particularly American society, channels the drive for liberty and recognition into

politics, economics, even sport, he still concedes that the need for struggle and challenge persists in all societies, including the West (1992: 330).

Fukuyama also lends some weight to the concerns of critics from the right about the implications of the tolerance a truly democratic society would entail. For some this has led to a concern that cultural relativism will undermine the cohesion of Western society. However, Fukuyama's concern is less with the emergence of multiculturalism than with the possibility that the extreme relativism of a tolerant society could lead to moral atrophy. He clearly fears the mediocrity and the onset of *ennui* that the peace and prosperity of 'post-history' could bring (1992: 305–12). Again, these tensions raise questions that Fukuyama does not fully resolve concerning how satisfying Western society ultimately is. He argues that Western liberal democracy represents the end of history in large part because it contains no significant internal contradictions, yet cannot dispel the contradictory pull of the core values of equality and freedom. This draws us to a second key normative component of Fukuyama's West, that of freedom. For Fukuyama, freedom is not just freedom from constraints, but freedom to make moral choice (1992: 149). Freedom distinguishes and strengthens the West in Fukuyama's opinion, since lack of freedom constrains innovative thought and hobbles development. Thus for him, freedom is both a moral and material good.

Fukuyama's vision of the freedom enjoyed by the individual in the West is qualified by the reality that Western societies balance the needs and desires of the individual with those of the community. This brings us to a third key normative component of Fukuyama's West, the status of the individual. As Held observes, for Fukuyama, the individual is 'sacrosanct' (1993a: 272). It is the central component of his political philosophy. The individual's drive for recognition is identified as one of the central processes of history. The universal, rational state that represents the end of history is one that grants equal recognition to all individuals on the grounds of their status as human beings. The motivation of the individual underlies both capitalism and democracy (Fukuyama, 1992: xvi–xx, 42; Rustin, 1992: 97).

The importance that Fukuyama attaches to the status of the individual is accentuated by his concern with the communitarian focus of Asian societies where the stronger emphasis placed on group identity rather than individualism could inhibit the operation of democracy (Fukuyama, 1995d). However, elsewhere Fukuyama stresses the importance of community to maintaining a healthy liberal democracy. In both *The End of History* and even more emphatically in *Trust*, he acknowledges that democratic and, particularly American, society relies upon a strong communitarian tradition (1992: 326; 1995b: 50, 279). In fact, he demonstrates concern with an excess of extreme rights-centred individualism in contemporary American society, unsettling the balance between individualism and com-

munitarianism (1992: 292–96; 1995b: 277–81, 313–18; 1995d: 31). While a central plank of his thesis is that the rational recognition by the state of the individual is the most satisfying basis for society, he qualifies this by acknowledging that recognition by the state can be cold and impersonal (1992: 323). In this context, community becomes an important mediating element between the individual and the state, providing a significant source of recognition in itself, and acting as a source of moral values. Fukuyama can neither rationalize nor dismiss it. He struggles with the notion that communitarianism is an important element of moral community that is under attack from the atomization of liberal economic principles and moral relativism that accompanies the democratic principle of equality:

Liberal democracies, in other words, are not self-sufficient: the community life on which they depend must ultimately come from a source different from liberalism itself. (1992: 326)

Therefore, Fukuyama's West relies heavily upon the norm of individualism which distinguishes it from other societies, but which is qualified by the continuing importance of community. To survive, Western liberal democracy needs to support both individualism and community. Yet there is a tension between these two norms since community naturally constrains individualism. He does not resolve this tension that is one that prevails in American liberal thought and American society. A high priority is placed on the independence and freedom of the individual, but the impact of the decline of community is also desperately feared. This tension highlights the importance of both norms in even the most liberal of interpretations of the West. It also undermines simplified dichotomies that present the West as a community driven purely by individualism while other societies are driven primarily by communitarian norms.

Institutions

As for the International Society authors, institutions provide for Fukuyama the vehicle through which the norms and ideals of the West are encapsulated and pursued. He has noted that a liberal democracy is 'simply a set of political institutions' designed to secure the universal rights of recognition, rights encapsulated in the American Bill of Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Indeed the institutions that exemplify his West are American political institutions (1992: 159, 186; 1999). The principal and most prominent institution of the West is the liberal state. However, Fukuyama's state is not driven simply by the pursuit of power, but also by the quest for legitimacy. The states of the West achieve

legitimacy by satisfying the population's material and spiritual needs through liberalism and democracy (1992: 15–17). They extend recognition to their citizens through popular sovereignty and the rule of law, and protect the individual's right to material accumulation.

His discussion represents the Western state as liberal in both the political and economic sense. Economic liberalism is defined as 'the recognition of the right of free economic activity and economic exchange based on private property and markets' (1992: 44). In the economic sense then, liberalism and the West are equated with capitalist economics, a point of concern to Fukuyama's critics from the left. Political liberalism is defined as 'a rule of law that recognises certain individual rights or freedoms from government control' (1992: 42). Economic and political liberalism are treated as linked, but not in the sense of democracy emerging as a function of rational accumulation. Rather, he sees modernization leading to capitalism, in turn producing demands for a better educated population and heightening political consciousness (1992: 116). This produces dissatisfaction with traditional political structures and demands for participation in the political process: 'The desire for recognition, then, is the missing link between liberal economics and liberal politics.' (1992: 206) Therefore, the evolution of democracy is an aspect of man's broader ideological evolution.

Interaction between the West and non-West

Fukuyama's perception of the cultural world order is distinguished from the preceding authors discussed by its strong, underlying concept of a linear civilizing process. Human society is perceived as being on a journey of ideological revelation, a form of civilizing process with the West at the vanguard. The anticipated universalization of Western liberal democracy dominates Fukuyama's understanding of the West's interaction with the non-West.

The processes of progress and modernization dominate civilizational interaction. For Fukuyama, technological and industrial development leads to social, economic and political homogenization (Fukuyama, 1999). In anticipating that modernization induces homogenization, Fukuyama accentuates the implicit links between his ideas and those of development theorists of the 1950s and 1960s, such as Almond. He clearly links the quest for recognition with economic evolution. Moreover, like the early modernization theorists, Fukuyama assumes that modernization will result in development along the lines of the Western liberal democratic model. However, he does not take the course of modernization as predetermined in that he interprets twentieth-century history as dominated by ideological battles for control of the direction of modernity. His discussion of civilizational interaction prior to 1989 focuses on this battle in the context of the

Cold War. The key challenges to the West prior to 1989 that Fukuyama discusses are rival ideologies that sought to present themselves as higher forms of civilization (1992: 35). This treatment of rival ideologies as civilizational competitors is reminiscent of the language of great Cold War warriors like Winston Churchill who depicted the Cold War as a battle of civilization against barbarism.

Fukuyama describes fascism and communism as ideologies that also arose from the modernization process, offering alternative social systems, structures and institutions for development. Their failure implies that authoritarian challenges can be similarly dismissed as tried and failed. Both are presented as diseases of social development rather than ideologies representing particular qualities of Western society, despite their both originating within the West. Fascism is rapidly dismissed as a 'radical and deformed outgrowth of nineteenth century imperialism' (1989: 16; 1992: 129). The relationship between the West and the communist East plays a much more significant role in Fukuyama's discussion. The communist Soviet Union and Eastern Europe constitute the chief antitheses and rival to Fukuyama's West. He constantly draws the boundaries of the West in contrast to those of the communist world in comparisons that rarely favour Marxism–Leninism. Communism's demise is depicted as stemming from both material and spiritual sources, ultimately producing a crisis of legitimacy in various communist regimes (1992: 29–31, 177–80). China provides a further defeated rival to the West; again, it is presented as an ideological rather than a cultural rival. It is one that has also been seduced by, and submerged into, the consumer culture with the inevitable long-term political consequences of gradual homogenization (1989: 11). Consequently Fukuyama reads the death notice for Marxism–Leninism as a living, appealing ideology:

Communism, which had once portrayed itself as a higher and more advanced form of civilisation than liberal democracy, would henceforth be associated with a high degree of political and economic backwardness. While communist power persists in the world, it has ceased to reflect a dynamic and appealing idea. (1992: 35)

Given that communism forms the quintessential 'other' in Fukuyama's conceptualization of the West, it is particularly interesting to note the close relationship between Fukuyama's political ideas and Marxism. As Conor Cruise O'Brien (1995) points out, both ideologies arose from the Enlightenment, sharing a secular emphasis and a common commitment to science and reason. Furthermore, there are strong parallels between the ideas of Fukuyama and Karl Marx. Both draw heavily on Hegel to develop a philosophy that is linear, progressive, premised on stages of development that are strongly focused on material culture and the conquest and control

of nature, and both posit the 'end of history'. Some critics have suggested that Fukuyama's thesis as a 'not so subtle revival of Marxism' for non-Marxist purposes, a suggestion Fukuyama rejects (Huntington, 1989; Meštrović, 1994: 16). He argues he is rather rescuing Hegelian thought from the economic reductionism of Marxism (1994: 255).¹² Fukuyama and Marx do differ in their reading of Hegel on the stability of liberal society. For Marx, a fundamental contradiction remained in liberal society between capital and labour, implying that it did not constitute the 'end of history', but the victory of the bourgeoisie.

Fukuyama draws his reading of Hegel from Kojève for whom communism did not represent a higher stage than liberal democracy: '[I]t was part of the *same* stage of history that would eventually universalise the spread of liberty and equality to all parts of the world' (1992: 66). For Fukuyama, the class issue has been resolved in the West in 'the egalitarianism of modern America' (1989: 9). Fukuyama is keen, if not anxious, to distance himself from the Marxist perspective. Yet, in some ways, this highlights the degree to which the ideas of these scholars parallel one another, accentuating the commonalities as much as the differences between Marxist and liberal systems of thought. This illustrates that Marxism is not alien to, but actually closely integrated with, the intellectual traditions of the West. Fukuyama's East is, in a sense, a closely integrated part of the West. It is, in some ways, a mirror of the Western soul.

In focusing on history as ideological evolution, Fukuyama demonstrates most clearly the influence of Hegelian thinking on his own conceptualization of civilizational interaction. However, despite his interest in the processes of history, Fukuyama's analysis does not provide an in-depth historical perspective. There is little detailed consideration of the forms of non-Western societies that preceded modernization, nor of the actual process by which the system of Western values displaces other 'civilizations', outside of the 'battle for modernity', or the Cold War rivalry.

Ultimately, the end of the Cold War did not bring universal peace and stability. But despite the stormy international politics of the 1990s, Fukuyama has remained confident that the liberal democratic West provides the uncontested model of development for human civilization. The institutions and ideas of the liberal West, while not yet universally achieved, could not be improved upon (Fukuyama, 1992: 46; 1994: 241; 1999; Rothwell, 1995). This places the onus on other societies to respond to the West and pursue its model of development, implying that interaction between the West and non-West will become even more markedly determined by levels of development.

With the end of the Cold War, Fukuyama treats interaction as influenced no longer by ideological rivalry, but by a societies' relationship to 'history' and 'post-history'. Echoing earlier international legal theorists, and other

contemporary liberal commentators, Fukuyama's concept of the post-Cold War world is characterized by an image of the world divided into two zones.¹³ The first is the post-historical world of the established, prosperous liberal democracies that form an innately peaceable community (1992: 255, 261). The prime example of this community is the European Union. Here, the 'death of ideology' means

... the growing 'Common Marketization' of international relations, and the diminution of the likelihood of large-scale conflict between states. (Fukuyama, 1989:18)

In contrast, the 'historical' world remains dominated by power politics and riven with a variety of religious, national and ideological conflicts (1992: 276). Fukuyama's 'post-history' is normatively and institutionally synonymous with the West, implying that the zone of history and power politics chiefly comprises the non-West. While power politics would still influence interaction between the two zones, he suggests that the zone of peace will expand globally as more societies evolve to reach 'the end of history', promising a more peaceful and prosperous world (1992: 279–80). Therefore, there are clear elements of democratic peace theory entailed in the 'end of history' thesis.

Democracies do not fight each other and the spread of democracy consequently promises a more peaceful world, although for Fukuyama it is liberalism rather than democracy that is the true institutional base for 'democratic' peace (Fukuyama, 1999). His theory demonstrates substantial faith in the continued stability of liberal democracies and their capacity to spread effectively and universally without themselves provoking tension and instability. It also has significant policy implications, suggesting that the spread of Western norms and institutions to the non-West is not just ethically desirable, but imperative to a more peaceful world order. This argument focuses on the disappearance of 'large-scale' conflict between states as its principal criterion for the zone of peace, permitting its advocates to dismiss conflicts that continue in the heartland of the 'post-history' West, such as tensions in Ireland or Spain. However, these instances of conflict suggest that even in the West, 'history' has been incompletely played out. Furthermore, as noted above, the conflicts in the Balkans of the 1990s demonstrated that the habit of war persists in Europe, even if this is technically occurring on the margins of Fukuyama's West.

Fukuyama shows tremendous faith in the capacity of the Western idea to expand globally. In contrast to Bull, he anticipates and expects rather than explores in detail the mechanism of this expansion. In some respects, Fukuyama's faith in the spread of liberalism and capitalism is one aspect of his political idealism (Farrenkopf, 1995: 74). For some, however, it demon-

strates a narrow perspective that assumes the primacy of Western models and ideas, even in the non-West (Sardar, 1992). Fukuyama's historical perspective is undoubtedly Western-focused. As noted above, the 'end of history' gives little consideration to the details and conditions of non-Western societies other than communist societies. This is demonstrated by Fukuyama's much commented upon remark that for his purposes,

... it matters very little what strange thoughts occur to people in Albania or Burkina Faso, for we are interested in what one could in some sense call the common ideological heritage of mankind. (1989: 9)

He clearly sees the direction of the flow of major ideologies as moving from the First to the Third World, from the West to the 'Rest' (1989/90: 24).

Fukuyama's discussion of interaction is at a theoretical level acultural, as is his discussion of interaction at the ideological level. Political movements driven by religious, ethnic or nationalist sentiments are, therefore, not viewed by Fukuyama as major challenges to the civilizing process, but temporary features of societies still evolving through 'History'. The existence of such movements does not determine, but does condition, interaction between the West and non-West. For instance, he does not see Islamic fundamentalism as a major challenge to the West, since it does not have a universal appeal (1989/90: 26). Nationalism is treated as a more serious threat to stability, but not to the long-term appeal and spread of liberal ideas. For instance, nationalism in the societies of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union is

... a necessary concomitant to spreading democratisation, as national and ethnic groups long denied a voice to express themselves in favour of sovereignty and independent existence. (Fukuyama, 1992: 272)

Nationalism is, therefore, treated as a political movement found in countries still developing their political identities, mirroring an evolutionary phase through which the West has already proceeded (1992: 269–75). In this sense, nationalist movements do not present new challenges to the West, or represent alternative systems, but reconstitute challenges already met.

However, Fukuyama's position regarding the impact of cultural diversity on the progress of the Western idea exhibits important tensions. Having dismissed Islam and nationalism, one of the most significant challenges to the universalization of the West that he identifies is the paternalistic authoritarian regimes of East Asia. Although these regimes are capitalist and nominally democratic, Fukuyama is concerned that the strong group identification these societies derive from their culture represses individualism and may seriously undermine the institutions of liberal democracy as understood in the West (1992: 238). Furthermore, the economic success experienced by these societies in the early and mid 1990s could prompt

rejection of the Western model. It was argued by commentators such as Lee Kuan Yew and Kishore Mahbubani that Asia's success was in some measure due to the particular strengths it drew from Asian values and Confucian culture (Mahbubani, 1990: 1994; Zakaria, 1994). Although he argues that the process of systemic evolution has ended with liberal democracy and market-based capitalism, signalling the persistence of cultural but not institutional differences (1995c: 103), Fukuyama elsewhere acknowledges East Asia's success. It could provide alternative models for development, ones in which there is a different balance between individualism and communitarianism (1995d: 33). Such a challenge could undermine the proposed universality of the Western idea (McCarney, 1993: 47).

The tensions in Fukuyama's position are exacerbated by the fact that, although he establishes the ideal of universal and homogeneous recognition as the highest form of governance, he recognizes that it is not totally satisfying for the individual citizen. While Fukuyama argues that the paternalistic authoritarian societies of Asia cannot offer a universal model of governance, he acknowledges that the appeal of community that they highlight is significant and can be found even in Western society (Fukuyama, 1995). Ultimately, the challenge to the liberal model of modernization posed by the 'Asian model' was substantially undermined by the 1997/98 Asian financial crisis. The crisis demonstrated for scholars such as Fukuyama that the Asian model of development did not provide a durable and universal model (1999). Cultural differentiation might obstruct but ultimately will not inhibit institutional and, presumably, ideological convergence towards a liberal political and economic system. By the late 1990s, Fukuyama was describing this process as globalization, linking the concept of globalization firmly to the expansion of Western economic and political institutions and structures (Fukuyama, 1999).

At the same time, further tensions can be found in Fukuyama's position on culture and modernization. Although he argues that modernization encourages homogenization regardless of the pre-existing culture, he also concedes that pre-existing cultures can facilitate or inhibit the establishment of capitalism and democracy (1992: 227). Fukuyama projects the liberal democratic state as an institution that is central, but not unique, to the West. He seeks to demonstrate that barriers to democracy, such as religion, ethnic consciousness or unequal social structures, characterize societies which are at a certain level of development rather than permanently antithetical to the system (1992: 215–18). Therefore, democracy is presented as part of the common evolutionary direction of humanity, regardless of culture.¹⁴ In this context, Fukuyama argues that the liberal democratic state overrides and homogenizes pre-existing forms of community. Yet at other points he suggests that culture in the shape of pre-modern forms of association can facilitate the establishment of liberal democratic structures, and are even vital to protecting these institutions:

Successful political modernisation thus requires the preservation of something pre-modern within its framework of rights and constitutional arrangements, the survival of peoples and the incomplete victory of states. (1992: 222)

In other circumstances, pre-existing culture is a barrier to democratization and liberal development. For instance, in 1999, he observed that in post-Cold War Russia, the cultural obstacles to reform have proved insuperable, that the Russian people did not have the 'social habits' to create the modern economic institutions and market economy that would allow them to join Western Europe (1999). These qualifications suggest that culture is a significant element in the spread of democracy, and imply the development of liberal democracy is most likely in societies similar to the European-based cultures from which it emerged. This implies a tension between Fukuyama's teleological view of development in which other cultures are submerged into the West by the 'civilizing process' and his recognition of the importance of existing cultures in facilitating the 'civilizing process'. Furthermore, he acknowledges resistance to homogenization at the level of cultural identities:

While the forms of acceptable economic and political organisation have been growing steadily fewer in number over the past hundred years, the possible interpretations of the surviving forms, capitalism and liberal democracy, continue to be varied. This suggests that even as ideological differences between states fade into the background, important differences between states will remain, shifted however to the plane of culture and economics. (1992: 244)

In *Trust* (1995b), Fukuyama further acknowledges the salience of culture in the modern world, although, unlike Huntington, he does not argue that cultural difference necessarily leads to conflict (1995b: 6). Here Fukuyama explores the relationship between culture and economics, suggesting culture influences the character and industrial structure of societies. The key cultural characteristic that he identifies is the level of social capital, or trust, which exists in a society. However, this analysis is based on a discussion of national rather than broad civilizational cultures.¹⁵ Yet despite acknowledging local cultural variation, he continues to assume that the institutional models of Western liberal democracy define the parameters within which all societies will evolve (1995c; 1999). Therefore, he continues to assume a broad process of convergence towards Western institutions and values.

Therefore, there is ambiguity in Fukuyama's work on questions of whether culture is relevant to development and of whether cultures are converging in the course of a common civilizing process. Fukuyama

acknowledges the importance cultural differentiation, but maintains that it will not inhibit institutional and, presumably, ideological convergence towards a liberal political and economic system. Consequently, the impression ultimately remains of a single civilizing process with 'the West' at its forefront.

Conclusion

Despite these problems, Fukuyama's thesis is important since he articulates an important and powerful conception of the West and its role in the post-Cold War world – a voice of liberal idealism to some, a voice of Western neo-imperialism to others. His conception is shaped by his focus on the United States, which serves as his paramount model of the West. His thesis is premised on a conception of cultural world order in which humanity is perceived as a community journeying through a process of ideological evolution. The West appears not as one among many civilizations, but as an ideology at the forefront of a civilizing process. He clearly perceives interaction in the post-Cold War world to be shaped by the levels of ideological evolution and development of different societies.

Despite certain shared influences and fears, Fukuyama's predominantly optimistic concept of the West stands in stark contrast to the bleak, declinist image which Spengler invokes in his reading of late modernity. They stand as polar opposites with respect to Fukuyama's belief in human progress, his faith in science, his focus on the United States as the heartland of the West in contrast to Spengler's focus on Germany and in Fukuyama's positive assessment of the norms and institutions of the liberal democratic state. Whereas Fukuyama sees these as the culmination of man's ideological evolution, Spengler regards them as marking the West's gradual decline. Fukuyama's optimism about the spread of liberal democracy also stands in contrast to Toynbee's scepticism about the successful transfer of norms and institutions across cultures. The image of the West projected by Fukuyama is much more than a parochial and local civilization that has attained global reach. Here we see the West as representing a universal civilization. At one level, Toynbee and the international society scholars, like Fukuyama, regard the West as a universalized entity. However, in viewing the West as the theoretical model towards which other societies are evolving, Fukuyama's West provides more than a technical or normative framework for modern civilizational interaction. Furthermore, unlike Bull, Fukuyama does not ground his analysis on the global normative and institutional power of the West, but on its ideological ascendancy in the battle for modernity. Its appeal is deemed to be universal, irrespective of culture, given that culture is ultimately subsumed by modernity.

However, problems within this thesis undermine confidence in Fukuyama's conception of civilization as a singular process. His concept of the West is an idealized one. It is largely portrayed as homogeneous and united with little consideration given to the serious differences and inequalities that exist. It is as much the idea or even the ideals of the West that are celebrated as Western society itself. Ultimately, Fukuyama seems uncertain whether liberal democracy can sustain itself, given inner tensions relating to core elements of the Western ideology, such as the relationship between the individual and the community, and the balance between liberty and equality. This casts doubt on Fukuyama's assertion that Western liberal democratic society is one that contains no major contradictions. However, it also adds welcome complexity to simplified dichotomies that portray the West as driven purely by individualism and the non-West by communitarian values.

Finally, the thesis implies the relevance of Western models to other societies with insufficient exploration of the complexities of non-Western societies. Fukuyama's discussion of Asian development, however, suggests that other models of development may be possible. The extent to which these merely adapt or undermine the Western model is uncertain. This raises important questions as to whether civilizational interaction leads to greater convergence or differentiation in the cultural world order. This is a critical issue in the context of the evolution of common norm and values in the international community on issues such as human rights and humanitarian intervention. It raises important questions of how common norms of behaviour and interaction are negotiated and established, and once again raises key questions with regard to who establishes the criteria of what is acceptable behaviour among members of the community. The overall thrust of Fukuyama's thesis is to suggest convergence along the Western model. This is an argument that is strongly disputed by the next author to be considered, Samuel Huntington.

7

Civilizations in Conflict: Samuel Huntington's Conception of the West

Published in the American journal, *Foreign Affairs* in 1993, Samuel Huntington's 'The Clash of Civilisations?' had a resounding impact on intellectual and political communities world wide. It was described by some commentators as the 'X' article of the 1990s, with reference to George Kennan's path-breaking *Foreign Affairs* article of 1947 (Kennan, 1947). The essay projected issues of civilization and identity to the fore of the study of contemporary world politics, arguing that cultural identities are becoming the organizing principle of International Relations. In the light of this reconfiguration, Huntington advised the West to abandon its universalist pretensions and recognize the realities and threats of a multi-cultural world, threats that include hostile Islamic and resurgent Asian civilizations. It should consolidate its own power and solidarity and refrain from undue interference in other civilizations.

Huntington's article has been influential, in part because it provides a radical and controversial reading of post-Cold War world politics. It stimulated debate on the role of civilizations, and of the West in particular, in world politics. This chapter will focus on Huntington's publications that discuss the 'clash of civilisations' thesis, primarily his 1993 essay and his subsequent book *The Clash of Civilisations and the Remaking of World Order* (1996a), and the debate that it generated. The debate itself helps to elucidate key factors in the conceptions of the West and world order which Huntington represents. The discussion will also refer to Huntington's related publications on topics such as modernization and democratization.

Within Huntington's somewhat pessimistic reading of the future of world politics lies a conception of the West which rejects Fukuyama's assumptions of universality and harkens back to the visions of Toynbee, and even Spengler, of the West as a powerful community under threat of decline. Although his analysis lacks the complexity of Toynbee's perception of civilizational interaction, Huntington seems to share his sense that the West has an opportunity to regroup and redeem its power, though not necessarily its dominance of world politics.

Huntington's era and influences

Throughout his career, Samuel P. Huntington (1927–) has been a provocative commentator working at the heart of the American academic and policy community. Born in New York city, he studied Political Science at the universities of Yale (BA 1946), Chicago (MA 1948) and then Harvard (Ph.D. 1951) where he has spent the greater part of his academic career.¹ In addition to teaching and research, Huntington has acted as an adviser to government, serving as co-ordinator of security planning of the National Security Council from 1977 to 1978. His ideas on strategic and military affairs are highly regarded in the policy community. At the time of publishing 'The Clash of Civilisations?', he was Eaton Professor of the Science of Government and Director of the influential, conservative Olin Institute for Strategic Studies at Harvard University. If a lesser-known author had produced the thesis, it may not have received as much attention or evoked so much reaction.

Huntington commenced his career in political science during the high point of modernization and development theory in the 1950s. His work both demonstrates the impact of these ideas and developed a critical perspective on them. Huntington became critical of assumptions that modernization was inevitably a positive force that led to development in the manner of Western society, noting that the spread of modern Western forces often led to instability, even 'decay' in developing countries (Huntington, 1965, 1971). These concerns are reflected in Huntington's work of the late 1960s which focused on the conditions for the establishment of order, stability and institutions for governance, and where he declared that it was not the form, but the degree, of government that distinguished countries (Huntington, 1968: 1). Huntington's interest in order and change resonate throughout the 'clash of civilisations' thesis.

Another feature of the 'clash' thesis is Huntington's cautious pessimism. In the late 1980s, he trod the intellectual middle ground between the decline of authors such as Paul Kennedy (1988) and the triumphalism with which Francis Fukuyama greeted the end of the Cold War (Fukuyama, 1989; Huntington, 1988). Intimating views later developed in the 'clash' thesis, Huntington warned of complacency that the end of the Cold War could induce; and of the emergence of new forms of conflict (Huntington, 1989).

The politics of the early 1990s appeared to vindicate Huntington's pessimism, with a range of regional conflicts forming the important context for his thesis. There was political instability in Russia and conflict erupted in a number of the former Soviet republics. The collapse of Yugoslavia escalated into an increasingly cruel war in Bosnia from which the chilling term 'ethnic cleansing' emerged to rekindle memories of the worst forms of ethnic and racial intolerance. In India, the Ayodhya mosque was destroyed by a Hindu mob in December 1992. At the 1993 Vienna Human Rights

Conference, differences between Western and non-Western governments became more evident. Racial and ethnic identities were increasingly perceived as issues of significance, with many of these disputes involving different ethnic communities. Racial tensions and violence became more prominent in Europe, particularly in Germany and France and in the United States, which had been rocked by the 1992 Los Angeles riots.

Meanwhile, experiences in peacekeeping and peacemaking operations in Somalia and Bosnia in the early 1990s shook confidence in assertive multilateralism and the United States' willingness and capacity to lead at 'the unipolar moment'. Charles Maynes (1995) identifies a shift in attitude in some sectors of United States society away from the triumphal sense of America standing at the forefront of a 'new world order' towards a 'new pessimism'. Maynes describes Huntington's 1993 article as one of the foremost expressions of this sense of uncertainty and foreboding. Some International Relations scholars drew attention to the changing nature of security, identifying new sources of tension and instability in regional politics such as migration, resource depletion and weapons proliferation Buzan (1991). John Mearsheimer (1990), for instance, warned of the instability which nuclear proliferation could produce in a multipolar world where the superpowers no longer had the incentive and, in Russia's case, the means to exercise restraining influence.

As noted in Chapter 6, American reaction to the changed global environment in the early 1990s was also influenced by debates about domestic problems. Concerns with regard to social and economic problems including drugs, crime, unemployment, deficits and the impact of immigration were becoming more prominent. Books such as Arthur Schlesinger's *The Disuniting of America* (1991) and James Davison Hunter's *Culture Wars* (1991) focused attention on the impact of multiculturalism, the polarization of social values and on the cohesion of contemporary American society. Huntington's thesis, like Fukuyama's, attempts to understand and explain this post-Cold War world. Albert Weeks notes that Huntington, in explicitly focusing on the broad civilizational canvas, returns to the precedents of Arnold Toynbee, Oswald Spengler and Quincy Wright who explored international affairs at the macrocosmic level (Weeks, 1993: 24). The recession of the 'macro' school of thought in International Relations and the predominance of the 'microcosmic' level of analysis of interstate relations coincided with the evolution of the Cold War, an international system whose political rigidities were reflected in the rigidity of the models in International Relations thought. The conclusion of the Cold War saw a return to the 'macrocosmic' perspective, with scholars forced out of their rigid modes of thinking into contemplating in greater depth the complexities of global politics from broader geographical and temporal perspectives. While Huntington's work lacks the depth of historical analysis found in his predecessor, his thesis also explores these broader perspectives through the lens of civilizations.

Like Spengler, Huntington's focus on this broader perspective is one tinged with pessimism rather than optimism. As noted above, it represents a reaction to the end of stability the Cold War seemed to provide and the loss of an enemy that had provided a traditional focus for Western cohesion and identity. The existence of an enemy can enhance the cohesion of the group and its loss can undermine a group's sense of identity (Bigo, 1994: 14). Huntington has himself observed that the United States has always defined itself in antithesis to someone, be that European monarchy, imperialism or communism. In the post-Cold War environment he asks: 'How will we know who we are if we don't know who we are against?' (Huntington, 1993c: 37).² Such comments support the contention that Huntington's thesis endeavours to identify a new 'other' for the West within a dichotomized framework of thinking, this 'other' being primarily Islamic and Confucian civilizations. In some respects, this perpetuates an Orientalist conceptualization of the world (Ahluwalia and Meyer, 1994; Maswood, 1994).

Discussions of Huntington's Orientalist tendencies draw attention to a further important dimension of the context in which his thesis was proposed, the resurgence of growth and power in Asia. Commentators such as Kishore Mahbubani and Chandra Muzaffar highlight this. Both viewed it as a product of the West's inability to come to terms with the challenge of a dynamic Asia and what Mahbubani described as a shift in the balance of civilizational power away from the West. In many respects, the 'clash of civilisations' was propounded in the context of the 'Asian values' debate. Huntington's argument was stimulated by a more assertive presentation of non-Western values and needs by representatives from regions such as Southeast Asia.³ In Huntington's thesis, Mahbubani sees evidence of the West as a civilisation living with a 'siege mentality', failing to acknowledge the internal sources of its troubles, seeking instead external enemies (Mahbubani, 1992, 1993c; Muzzaffar, 1994).⁴

In subsequent years some of the immediate challenges that spurred Huntington's analysis abated somewhat. The economic growth of Asia was stalled by the severe economic crisis of 1997/98 and Japan's economy underwent economic stagnation while the United States experienced a period of robust and sustained economic growth. However, world events continued to fuel other concerns. In particular, the efficacy of Huntington's prescription of escalating cultural clashes appeared to be born out by conflicts in Kosovo, Chechnya and outbreaks of communitarian violence throughout multi-ethnic Indonesia during the late 1990s and early 2000s. Europe, the United States and other 'Western' societies remained concerned about the implications of arms proliferation, and the flow of migrants and refugees from South to North. In this context, despite the barrage of criticisms levelled at it, Huntington's thesis remained for many a powerful lens through which to view and interpret world politics.

The 'clash of civilisations' thesis is one which was proposed by a widely respected if controversial author with a long-standing interest in the conditions for order in political systems. It was produced at a time of great flux and uncertainty. In part, its aim was to explain these changes, but in many ways, the thesis contributed to the sense of insecurity generated by them. The thesis is not just a scholarly commentary, but also a highly political analysis with a strong prescriptive purpose, to advise on the role that the West should play in the post-Cold War world shaped by civilizational interaction.

Conceptions of civilization

Civilizations are central to Huntington's vision of the post-Cold War world. Like Toynbee, he argues, '[t]he broader reaches of human history have been the history of civilisations' (1993a: 24). He defines civilizations as cultural identities; the highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity, short of distinction from other species (1993a: 24; 1996a: 43). Huntington's civilizations are long-lived, but mortal, and vary in size and composition (1996a: 43).⁵ He focuses on interaction between eight major civilizations: Western, Sinic, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, Slavic-Orthodox, Latin-American and 'possibly African'. The most important feature of Huntington's definition is that it is pluralist; he acknowledges several civilizations coexisting at any one time rather than focusing on civilization as a single entity or linear process (1996a: 41). He acknowledges that civilizations blend and overlap, but maintains that the lines between them, while seldom sharp, are real. Finally, Huntington defines civilizations as dynamic; civilizations rise and fall, divide and merge, their identities are redefined (1993a: 24, 1996a: 43–4).

However, the overall tone of his thesis is premised upon deeply riven, irreconcilable fissures and fault lines produced by culture. What is consistent in this thesis is the belief that no universal world civilization exists. Unlike Fukuyama, Huntington does not anticipate the convergence of humanity into a homogenized culture of late modernity (1993a: 49). Although he identifies three phases of civilizational interaction, it is only in the latter, most recent one in which the non-West is perceived as having any real agency. In this context, cultural identity assumes true political relevance, with civilizational identity replacing ideology as an organizing principle in world order and the fundamental source of conflict (1993: 29, 1996a: 48–55). While the world will continue to comprise 'overlapping groupings of states', predicts Huntington, their interests will increasingly be defined by culture rather than ideology (1993b: 191, 1996a: 125–30), suggesting the state will effectively become an agent of civilizational identity.

In this thesis, Huntington highlights the importance of civilizational interaction in world politics. However, he focuses almost exclusively on

interaction as conflict. He cites only a few examples of civilizations not engaged in strife, one being the 'Confucian-Islamic connection', a relationship represented as a conspiracy against the West (1996a: 188). The source of conflict for Huntington is difference: the lines between civilizations, particularly those drawn by culture and religion, are considered to form lines of basic and often immutable difference. For Huntington, increased interactions 'intensify civilisational consciousness and awareness of differences between civilisations and commonalities within civilisations.' This in turn 'invigorates differences and animosities' (1993a: 25-6). Technology is making the world smaller, placing civilizations in greater relative proximity thus accentuating their sense of difference; while modernization accentuates alienation and anomie, weakening the authority of the nation-state and facilitating the growth of religious identity (1996a: 76). The immutability of ethnic and religious identities further accentuates difference while the indigenization of non-Western elites is causing them to turn away from Westernization (1993a: 26-7; 1996a: 9). Meanwhile, the growth of economic regionalism is contributing to the cohesion of various civilizational groups, or what Huntington later calls 'kin-country solidarity' (1993a: 28; 1996a: 102-20). Although he acknowledges that cross-civilizational alliances will continue, he anticipates that these will be weakened as cultural identity gains in importance (1996a: 128). The most successful alliances and communities, he suggests, are those based on a common culture (1996a: 130-5).

Despite acknowledging that '[d]ifferences do not necessarily mean conflict, and conflict does not necessarily mean violence' (1993a: 25), Huntington gives little consideration to any form of interaction other than conflict. This allows little space for consideration of how civilizational identities may reach across frontiers to shape values, norms and ideas, or how the interaction of civilizations can also produce positive and dynamic effects. There is only a fleeting sense of similarities, shared concerns or perspectives between civilizations (Huntington, 1996a: 318-21; Muzaffar, 1994: 11; McNeill, 1997b). As Alker notes, one of the causes of this confrontational focus is that Huntington's analysis lacks a sense of a broader level of human interaction and identification described in Bull's concept of international society. Huntington's essay, Alker argues, attempts to decapitate civilization at the global level since it

... virtually ignores global political, technological and economic developments, their global/civilisational implications, and their dialectic with more local cultural unities. (Alker, 1995: 553)

In fact, Huntington treats the global level of interaction as involving only an elite culture, the 'Davos Culture' – named after the annual World Economic Forum – rather than one that encompasses humanity in an inter-

national society (1996a: 57). Huntington does not totally ignore the dialectics of global developments with local cultures, but focuses primarily on their role in accentuating difference (1996a: 67, 76). In his belief that increased interaction invigorates difference and animosities, Huntington rejects the view that technology and communication are forces which will reduce difference and conflict in the world. The process of modernization, he argues, produces a new consciousness of identity that can result in conflict (1968: 37–9). His views here are consistent with his earlier work on modernization in which he argued that transitional societies are more unstable and violent than either traditional or modernized. In the 'clash of civilisations' thesis he continues to emphasize that modernization and increased interaction does not produce homogeneity, but sustains and ultimately accentuates civilizational identity and assertiveness, exacerbating cultural differences (1996a: 67, 78).

The main conflicts that Huntington foresees in the post-Cold War world are those on the 'fault-lines' between civilizations. (1996a: 252–4). Although he acknowledges that conflicts will occur within civilizations, he assumes that these will be less intense and less likely to spread (1993a: 38). This is a remarkable assumption given the intensity of many civil wars, and of intra-Western conflicts during the course of the twentieth century.⁶ This suggests an assumed cohesion to the West, and to other civilizations, underlying Huntington's thesis that becomes a central component in his forecast for future world politics.

Finally, Huntington perceives that a certain degree of order will be maintained in the post-Cold War world through the influence exercised by 'core states' within civilizations. 'Core states' are the most powerful and culturally central states within a civilization. The role envisaged for them is strongly reminiscent of that of great powers in a classical realist analysis of nation-state politics. Core states provide leadership, authority and discipline within a civilization, attributes which are legitimized by their cultural commonality with less powerful states. 'A world in which core states play a leading or dominating role' acknowledges Huntington 'is a sphere-of-influence world' (1996a: 156). This suggests that the structure of world order he envisages has some parallels with the preceding one.

In this thesis, Huntington demonstrates clear concerns with the loss of the Cold War's 'long peace', and the violence and instability that may evolve in a world of cultural confrontation.⁷ As in his earlier work, he maintains a strong interest in the maintenance of order in the political system. However, his primary concern is with the interaction between the West and non-West in this environment. 'The central axis of world politics in the future' he anticipates, 'is likely to be ... the conflict between "the West and the Rest"' (1993a: 41). Having discussed the historical and intellectual context into which this thesis was born, we now turn to a more in-depth analysis of the conception of the West that emerges from it.

The boundaries of Huntington's West

Commenting on Huntington's original 1993 essay, Fouad Ajami notes that the West itself remains unexamined in Huntington's essay (Ajami, 1993: 3, fn.1). In a sense, the composition of the West is taken for granted. However, we can deduce from Huntington's discussion thesis important conceptual assumptions about the boundaries and nature of the West.

Territory

Huntington has a strong sense of the physical location of the West and a strong territorial conception of the 'fault lines' between civilizations. However, his concept of civilizations is built upon culture rather than location. 'Divorced from culture, propinquity does not yield commonality and may foster just the reverse.' (1996a: 130) Although Huntington's concept of the West exhibits a territorial cohesion based around Western Europe and North America, its foundations lie not in the objective attributes of geography, but in the histories, religions and cultures of the societies in these territories.

A graphic illustration of his territorial conception of the West is the division that he marks between Western and Eastern Europe. Using the perimeter of Western Christendom in 1500 AD, Huntington maps a boundary running from Finland and the Baltic states, through Transylvania into the Balkans, which sunders the former Yugoslavia, placing Croatia and Slovenia on the Western side of the divide (1996a: 158). This physical division is based on shared histories, cultures and religions that differentiate the peoples of these lands. It marginalizes Greece, placing this society in the eastern Slavic-Orthodox civilization (Huntington, 1996a: 162; Voll, 1994). Poland, and Czechoslovakia, part of the Cold War East, in contrast, lie firmly in the Western ambit. On the territorial margins of Huntington's West are 'torn countries' such as Turkey and Mexico, whose leadership seek to join the West, but whose ambitions are constricted by their differing history, cultures and traditions (1993a: 42, 1996a: 139–54). Japan maintains a curious relationship with Huntington's West. It is regarded as clearly modernized, but not necessarily Westernized. Although treated at points as a distinct civilization and a challenge to the West, at other points Huntington suggests it is an 'associate member' of the West (1993a: 45).

Religion

For Huntington, religion is a 'central defining characteristic of civilisations' (1996a: 47). 'Faith and family, blood and belief, are what people identify with and what they will fight and die for.' (1993b: 194) The major civilizations are associated with major religions, although he does not clearly define the point at which religious and civilizational identity become synonymous. He treats religion as a powerful transnational force capable of motivating

and mobilizing people (1996a: 66). It is a force which can unite peoples, but which also creates intractable barriers. Its revitalization in response to the pressures of modernization, he suggests, reinforces perceptions of cultural difference and of irreconcilable opposites (1996a: 28, 97, 267):

Even more than ethnicity, religion discriminates sharply and exclusively among people. A person can be half-French and half-Arab ... It is more difficult to be half-Catholic and half-Muslim. (1993a: 27)

Predictably, then, religion plays an important part in defining Huntington's West, although he does not identify the West primarily through its religious affiliation, as he does with Islamic or Hindu civilizations (1996a: 47). However, Western Christianity is for him 'historically the single most important characteristic of Western civilisation' (1996a: 70). As for Wight, for Huntington Christianity provided the West with the foundations of a sense of community, in addition to constructing the boundary marking Western Christendom from Orthodox and Muslim communities (1993a: 30, 1996a: 70), boundaries that remain highly pertinent to Huntington's conception of the contemporary West.

However, the privatization of religion and secularization of public life is also a significant dimension of Huntington's West. In earlier work, Huntington explored links between religion and the democratic institutions of the West (1991a). Although rejecting the idea that culture presents an irrevocable barrier to democratic progress, he has suggested that other faiths and philosophies, such as Confucianism, might impede the spread and interpretation of democratic institutions. Islam presents fewer barriers to democracy, with the central exception of its rejection of the separation of the religious and the political community (1991a). In highlighting the lack of separation between religion and politics in Islam, we see the significance of the secular nature of the state in Huntington's conceptualization of the West.

While acknowledging the importance of the secular/sacred division in public life, Huntington's key contention is that Christian concepts, values and practices pervade Western civilization. However, perhaps the most significant way in which religion forms a boundary to his West is that its chief antitheses are civilizations conceived primarily in religious terms. Islam, Confucianism and fundamentalist religion, particularly fundamentalist Islam, are among Huntington's chief concerns (Ahluwalia and Meyer 1994: 23). Fundamentalism is treated as a reaction to modernization, perceived as continuing premodern rivalry and enmity between Islam and the Christian West. While the West may have moved on from Christendom, its enemy remains the traditional, premodern foe of Islam. Hence, the secular and modern West is constructed in antithesis to premodern religiously defined civilizations. Again, we find an image of a West that draws unity

from the legacy of a common Christian identity, but is characterized as comprising societies in which religion has been privatized.

Race

The distinction drawn by Huntington between race and ethnicity is not always clear. He describes race as a division based on peoples' physical characteristics in contrast to civilization, which is based on cultural characteristics, and clearly states that the cultural distinctions are the most critical. However, he also acknowledges the importance of family and bloodlines as an element of identity and difference (1996a: 126):

As people define their identity in ethnic and religious terms, they are likely to see an 'us' versus 'them' relation existing between themselves and people of different ethnicity and religion. (1993a: 29)

With the demise of ideology, such forms of identification will become more pronounced, argues Huntington: 'With the decline in the need for external unity, internal differences reassert themselves' (Huntington, 1995b: 144-5). Ethnicity appears to become compounded with civilization, with major ethnic conflicts discussed as occurring on the fault lines between civilizations. These include conflicts that erupted from the collapse of multi-ethnic states and empires, such as Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. Ethnicity, along with religion, acts as a major signifier of civilizational identity in his discussion (1996a: 42).

The growth of ethnic identification and the proximity of peoples of different ethnic identities present, Huntington suggests, threatens the West's cohesion. This perception is emphasized by the threats that he identifies as emanating from immigration and multiculturalism. Huntington is not opposed to immigration in principle. In fact, he has acknowledged it as a potential source of strength and energy for the West (1988: 89, 1996a: 304). However, in the 'clash of civilisations' thesis and subsequently, he has expressed strong concerns about the West becoming swamped by migrants from the non-West; Muslim migrants in the case of Europe, and Hispanic and Asian in the United States. His primary concern is with the capacity of the West to assimilate the latest wave of migrants leading to the prospect of Europe and America becoming 'cleft societies', containing more than one civilization (1996a: 204-6). This is an issue that Huntington continues to express concerns with (2000). Again, civilizational divisions here are framed in terms of ethnic and racial differences. This conveys a sense of homogeneity under threat which is compounded in his mind by the politics of multiculturalism in the United States; a policy that supports the distinctness of different ethnic groups, rather than encouraging their assimilation (1996a: 305). The sense of threat from these sources seems as

ominous as the external threat posed by the alleged Confucian–Islamic conspiracy. Although the basis of such social tensions for Huntington may be different cultural values rather than physical attributes, it is manifested, or at least described, along the lines of ethnicity.

Power

In contrast to Fukuyama, power features prominently in Huntington's consideration of the contemporary West. The post-Cold War West is described as at the very peak of its power, but simultaneously in a process of retreat or decline, a process to which he wishes to alert the West (1996a: 302–8). Huntington distinguishes between 'hard power', based on economic and military capabilities, and 'soft power' relating to the influence of culture and ideology. Soft power, he suggests, is only power when based on hard power (1996a: 92). Both are significant to the West's interaction with other civilizations. As in earlier work (Huntington, 1988), Huntington emphasizes the multifaceted nature of the West's power presenting it as an unrivalled military power which largely directs global political issues and is dominant in international economic affairs (1993a: 39, 1996a: 81). International institutions like the United Nations and the IMF provide a conduit for Western power but also provide the West with a form of global legitimacy for the pursuit of its own interests (1993a: 40).

In acknowledging the importance of institutional power, Huntington shares something with Hedley Bull. But in contrast to Bull and as noted above, he rejects the existence of a developed, global international society at anything other than an elite level (Alker, 1995: 552; Huntington, 1996a 54, 58). Huntington's reluctance to acknowledge an international society may stem in part from his political realism in which the anarchy of the international system is not moderated by a supranational form of community; and in part from his pessimism as to the depth of West's 'soft' power, Huntington viewing the penetration of Western ideas and values into the rest of the world as 'superficial' (1993a: 40).

However, like Spengler and Toynbee, Huntington's image of the West presents it as at its peak, but also in the process of retreat. This may be one of the thesis' primary attractions for those of a more pessimistic disposition: the West is perceived to be powerful, yet remains insecure. Exhausted by the Cold War, Huntington suggests both the West's capacity and will to dominate is gradually receding as other civilizations experience economic growth and a revival of cultural assertiveness (1996a: 82–91, 102–9):

European colonialism is over; American hegemony is receding. The erosion of Western culture follows, as indigenous, historically rooted mores, languages, beliefs and institutions reassert themselves. (1993b: 192)

This analysis seems at odds with his earlier criticism of the prophets of United States declinism (Huntington, 1988), but in keeping with the mood

of pessimism that permeates the 'clash of civilisations' thesis. There are strong echoes of Spengler and Toynbee in the sense of the West's dominance and power being transient phenomena on the cusp of a gradual decline.

In 1989, Huntington warned of the complacency that the 'end of history' argument could breed, placing the West off-guard and ill prepared for new military threats (Huntington, 1989). These fears are reiterated and expanded in the 'clash of civilisations' thesis in an effort to lobby for moderation in the reduction of military capabilities, and for the maintenance of Western military superiority in East and Southwest Asia (1993a: 46, 49, 1996a: 192). This led to the observations that the true aim of this thesis may have been to provide a rationale for maintaining military budgets in the face of pressure for the reduction of defence spending in the United States (Muzaffar, 1994: 13).

Huntington's treatment of Western imperial power is brief, but interesting. Expansion and colonialism are accepted as a natural consequence of rapid economic and industrial growth, although again the dominance of the West is treated as unprecedented in scale (1996a: 50-2, 229). Huntington does not delve into the history and meaning of Western imperialism in the manner of Edward Said, but he is conscious of, and interested in, the legacy of imperialism, both in the illusion of universality and omnipotence that it gave to the West, and of the resentment it generated in other civilizations. This is implicit in Huntington's discussion of the human rights debate, particularly in Asia (1996a: 192-8); and percolates throughout his discussion of the relationship between Islam and the West.

Ultimately, the conception of power that dominates this conception of the West is that of material or 'hard' power. Huntington acknowledges the West's capacity to expand was based on social, institutional, political and technological developments, but argues it was also facilitated by the superiority of Western military organization and capacity: 'The West won the world not by the superiority of its ideas or values or religion ... but rather by its superiority in applying organised violence'. (1996a: 51) From the perspective of the mid 1990s, the decline in Western imperial power was interpreted as coinciding with the commencement of a broader decline (1996a: 83). However, this is not just perceived as a function of external challenge, but also of internal factors, such as problems of economic productivity and social disintegration. Here again Huntington's concerns echo those of Spengler who also feared that the West was being weakened by economic competition and social decline. Again there is a sense of threat to the West's internal cohesion.

Although economic power is implicit throughout, it is only lightly touched upon in this thesis. Apart from identifying free markets as a central Western concept, there is little discussion of economic power structures, or the phenomenon of global capitalism. This is a significant omission for commentators who view the West's capitalist system as the heart

of its structural power (Jin Junhui, 1995). This lack of attention to the economic dimensions of power may in part stem from Huntington's scepticism as to the depth of globalization of Western institutions and ideas, or from an unwillingness to equate the expansion of capitalism with the continued expansion of Western power, in the light of the distinctions drawn between modernization and Westernization, and his perception of the retreat of Western power.

Power is, then, a central component of Huntington's West, both in terms of capabilities and of institutional power. The power of the West to project its cultural and normative ideas is intimately linked to its power in terms of economic and military capabilities. His thesis is, however, strongly pessimistic about the West retaining this power. It is almost as if the thesis is proposed to combat complacency and retreat which Huntington felt was undermining the power of the West, and the United States in particular. While Huntington was not alone in these concerns, they are perhaps more pronounced in his treatment of the West than in the work of his contemporaries discussed here. The pessimism was not born out in the light of the booming US economy of the 1990s and the weakening of Asian economies in the Asian financial crisis of the late 1990s. However, this crisis, while in some respects reasserting the strength of the US and European economies, also underlined the increasing interdependence of world economies, an interdependence that for Huntington brings with it new forms of vulnerability and sources of tension as much as opportunities.

Norms

Huntington's conception of the West as a powerful entity is premised on its deployment of material capacity. In this respect, his conception of the West is very much a realist one. At the same time, his perception of the West's identity is ultimately a normative one, in that it is liberal norms, values and forms of governance that define the West. Common values and beliefs lie at the very heart of Huntington's conception of civilizations, providing the foundations for cohesion, but also a significant source of conflict between civilizations. Their significance is accentuated by Huntington's suggestion that the crucial distinctions between human groups concern their values, beliefs, institutions and structures (1993a: 25, 1996a: 42).

In his earlier work, Huntington had observed the importance of political culture, defined as ideas, values, attitudes and expectations dominant in a society (1971: 317). Similarly, in the 'clash of civilisations' thesis, Huntington turns to norms, and the institutions that these generate, to distinguish the West from other civilizations. The norms he identifies as distinguishing the West include individualism, 'a distinguishing mark of the West among twentieth century civilizations' (1996a: 71). It is underwritten by the principles of liberty and equality, which are exercised through the

processes and institutions of the rule of law, providing the basis for constitutionalism and individual rights, and by the existence of social pluralism, which has limited absolutism. Democracy and secularism are also critical components of Huntington's West (1993a: 40, 1996a: 69–72). These norms also form the foundations of the 'American Creed', the civic ethos that forms the core of American cultural identity for Huntington (1996a: 305). Two critical assumptions, which are central to Huntington's prescriptions for the West, arise from these values. First, the persistence of these values is perceived as unique to the West, distinguishing it from other civilizations (1996a: 311). Second, since they help define the West, their integrity must be protected if the cohesion of the West's identity is to be maintained.

Norms are critical to defining the West and its relations with other civilizational identities. One of the most significant assertions that Huntington makes in his discussion of the West is that core Western norms have little resonance in other civilizations: '[T]he values that are most important in the West are the least important worldwide'.⁸ In this, Huntington rejects any suggestion that the West provides a universal normative framework. On the contrary, he argues that the spread of Western cultural values was a consequence of the colonial and imperial expansion of the West, 'culture almost always follows power' (1996a: 91). Therefore, a retreat of Western power implies a retreat of Western norms. Furthermore, attempts to propagate Western norms have been a source of conflict. His thesis entails a strong sense of the incommensurability of norms across civilizations; and an assumption of their commensurability within civilizations. This is illustrated further by concepts such as 'civilisational rallying' and the 'kin-country syndrome'.

These assumptions, if accepted as accurate, have major implications for how international relations might be viewed and for the prospects for the evolution of global society. They suggest that universal norms may be difficult to achieve given that they lack firm acceptance outside of the culture in which they originally evolved. They further suggest that what are currently perceived to be universal norms are norms of particular cultures projected under the guise of imperialism or hegemony. This raises the question: can universal norms be developed outside the context of imperialism or hegemony? This has implications, for example, for the projection of norms such as universal human rights that in fact evolved from the social and cultural context of Europe and America (Brown, 2000). If one adopts the perspective advocated by Huntington, then policies that promote such rights as universal are little more than the continued projection of Western norms and values. Huntington's perspective suggests strongly that the projection of norms is ultimately a function of power and, ultimately, should be predicated on interests.

The importance Huntington attaches to cultural norms in defining the West is further highlighted by his concerns with immigration and multiculturalism as a threat to Western cohesion. The unity of the United States,

he argues, rests on the bedrock of European culture and political democracy, on the 'American Creed'. Previous migrants were absorbed because they embraced these norms. His concern with contemporary migration and ethnic diversity is that the lack of assimilation of migrant and minority cultures threatens the normative cohesion of American society (1993b: 190, 1996a: 304). Huntington accuses multiculturalists of further undermining Western cohesion by challenging Western norms, highlighting in particular the substituting of the rights of the individual with the rights of the group (1996a: 306). Multiculturalism he argues threatens to 'de-Westernise' the United States, and presents the prospect of a 'clash of civilisations' within the United States, between the multiculturalists and the defenders of Western civilization. A key assumption here is that maintaining the cohesion of the United States is critical to maintaining the cohesion of the West. It is not so much the multi-ethnic or multiracial composition of American society *per se* which concerns Huntington, but the threat to normative heterogeneity. This leads Huntington to strongly invoke the West, and the United States in particular, to protect and preserve those distinctive values and institutions that are unique to the West (1996a: 311). Huntington was not alone in these concerns with regard to the potential normative fragmentation of the West under the pressure of multicultural policies and critical intellectual and political movements.⁹

Again, the political and social implications of such a stance are substantial. Huntington's analysis suggests that differences within societies should be dealt with either through assimilation or through the 'domestication' of difference, so that it does not challenge or undermine the already established civic code. This raises important and topical questions of the degree to which cultural pluralism can be accommodated in the interests of civic cohesion. It also raises important questions about who defines and authorizes what the acceptable civic code is, and the extent to which this civic code is itself subject to change and evolution. These questions are particularly pertinent to Western societies in Europe and the United States dealing with not only the introduction of peoples from different cultural background, but also the increased assertiveness of extant minority groups whose voices were less prominent in the past. However, this is not a new issue for European, American and other 'Western societies' that have evolved through response to, and incorporation of, new social, political and economic influences. Indeed the culture of what is typically seen as the West is in its very essence cosmopolitan (Dasenbrock, 1991).

Institutions

What are the ramifications of Huntington's treatment of norms for his understanding of the institutions of the West? In his earlier work, Huntington attached great importance to the role of institutions in political systems, arguing that the degree and complexity of institutions indicate

the true level of political development in a given society (1965). Huntington identifies several distinct institutions which evolved in the West but have little resonance in other civilizations. They encompass political democracy and a strong tradition of representative institutions, a free market economy, and the secular, constitutional state governed by the rule of law. Not only do these institutions distinguish the West, their incommensurability with other cultures, he suggests, means that efforts to spread them can be provocative.

This is most vividly illustrated by his discussion of democracy, perhaps the core institution of Huntington's West. He sees democratic institutions as a vital part of the West's, and particularly the United States', identity defining that society's *raison d'être*, arguing that US identity is inseparable from its commitment to liberal and democratic institutions (1991b: 28–9). Although Huntington does not argue that democracy is the only form of government that will provide order, he is unequivocal in his belief that it is the best form of government when applied in the right circumstances, promoting economic growth and enhancing international peace (Brzezinski and Huntington, 1965; Huntington, 1991b; Pei, 1991: 70). However in contrast to Fukuyama's clear confidence in the capacity of democracy to become a universal institution, Huntington's work is ambiguous regarding its capacity to spread globally. In his study of the wave of democratization from the mid-1970s to the late-1980s, Huntington concludes that democracy evolved most easily from the culture and history of Western Europe (1991b: 298–9). He also notes a coincidence of democratic institutions with Western culture and values, including Western Christianity. Democratization is not impossible for the non-West, but it is more difficult because other cultures are less hospitable to Western liberal concepts (1996a: 114, 1996b: 5). These observations imply that, in practice, culture presents serious obstacles to democratization. However, he suggests elsewhere that, theoretically, the barriers which culture presents to democratization are surmountable. As a dynamic force, culture can adapt and change to new circumstances, such as those brought about by economic growth. The central factors that facilitate the growth of democracy are economic growth and political leadership:

[E]conomic development should create the conditions for the progressive replacement of authoritarian political systems by democratic ones. Time is on the side of democracy. (Huntington, 1991b: 316)

There is here an implicit sense of historicism in Huntington's analysis of the spread of democracy (Munroe, 1994: 218).

In the 'clash of civilisations' thesis, Huntington appears more circumspect with regard to the universalizing of democratic institutions. Here Huntington argues that democracy is a distinct product of Western

culture. Where modern democratic governments have occurred outside of the West, he argues, they have been the product of Western colonialism or imposition (1993a: 41). The spread of democracy in the 1970s and 1980s derived from the efforts of non-Western societies to emulate the West in order to achieve its success. This produced the impression of a global democratic revolution that was reinforced by the collapse of communism. However, as the power of the West declines, so too does the appeal of its values and institutions. For Huntington, therefore, the appeal of democracy is waning as other, increasingly dynamic, civilizations look to their own traditions for political institutions and legitimacy (1996a: 93, 193, 224–5).

This pessimistic analysis of the prospects for the spread of this Western institution is compounded when Huntington argues that attempts to promote democracy can lead to the strengthening of anti-Western forces. In some respects, this argument echoes Toynbee's scepticism about the export of Western institutions to non-Western environments. Democratization, argues Huntington, can promote communalism and ethnic conflict, creating the 'democracy paradox' of facilitating the empowerment of anti-Western and even anti-democratic groups (1993a: 32, 1996b: 6): 'Democratisation conflicts with Westernisation, and democracy is inherently a parochialising not a cosmopolitanising process'. (1996a: 94) Huntington's comments were coloured by his studies of political developments in decolonized societies in the 1960s and 1970s, but also by his perception of popular mobilization against Westernized elites and the rise of communitarian politics in Algeria and India in the 1990s. However, his observations might also be perceived as having relevance in the light of the instability of fledgling democracies in Indonesia, Central Asia and even Russia in the late 1990s. Huntington's concern reiterates that also expressed by Fukuyama that the promotion of democratic institutions in divided societies can exacerbate rather than heal divisions. However, in Huntington's analysis, the divisions of culture appear to play a strong role, setting up a 'West versus the Rest' scenario not really contemplated by Fukuyama.¹⁰

The position adopted here with regard to democracy again has major policy implications, particularly in the context of the promotion of democratization in foreign policy, a position with strong advocates in the US in recent years. Huntington's arguments presents democratic institutions as distinctively, if not uniquely, Western. The overall tenor of his argument raises important questions as to whether the promotion of democratization is feasible or, in some respects, desirable. Huntington is himself an advocate of the theory that established democracies as more peaceful. However, his work also suggests that the process of democratization can in itself be destabilizing.¹¹ In the context of the West's interaction with non-Western societies and states, it can even be provocative.

Throughout his career, Huntington has attached importance to the role of institutions in underpinning order. In his civilizational thesis, institutions and the norms upon which they are based, form a crucial element to his concept of the West. In contrast to Wight, Bull and Fukuyama, Huntington's pessimism with regard to the commensurability of norms between civilizations compromises the West's ability to provide a universal normative and institutional framework. However, there is little doubt that he values these institutions as providing the best form of governance and is keen to see them preserved.

Interaction between the West and non-West

Analysis of the boundaries of Huntington's West brings to the fore issues of Western interaction with the non-West. The nature and likely course of interaction between West and non-West stand at the very heart of Huntington's work on civilizational identity. Fukuyama's thesis implies that, in the long-term, interaction will lead to convergence of the West and non-West. In contrast, Huntington suggests that increased interaction will increase the sense of differentiation between these societies. His thesis is premised on viewing the West as one of a number of contemporary civilizations, not the leading representative of a broader human civilization, categorically rejecting suggestions that mankind forms one community: 'History has not ended. The world is not one. Civilisations unite and divide humankind.' (1993b: 194)

Huntington does not discuss in depth the nature of the West's relationship with the non-West in the past, other than to indicate that Western dominance meant intra-civilizational interaction within the West determined the course of world politics. Until recently, he suggests, non-Western civilizations were merely the objects of history, not its movers or shapers. The decline of Western dominance has led to a more complex, multi-directional flow of interaction (1993a: 23). Therefore, despite observing that relations between civilizations have always formed the broader reaches of human history, Huntington implies that international politics until recently has been devoid of inter-civilizational relations given its focus on intra-Western relations. Unlike in Toynbee's work, we receive little sense of the course of world history outside of the history of the West and, primarily, the modern West at that.

The concept of difference, so crucial to his concept of 'civilizations', is also critical to Huntington's perception of civilizational interaction. Cultural difference is seen to foster conflict, interaction is portrayed as primarily conflictual in the past and forecast as primarily conflictual in the future. The main axis of difference and conflict that he identifies is the post-Cold War world is 'the West versus the Rest', anticipating: '[t]he dangerous

clashes of the future are likely to arise from the interaction of Western arrogance, Islamic intolerance, and Sinic assertiveness' (1996a: 183).

Two important sources of conflict between the West and other civilizations are identified. The first is the predictable issue of the struggle for power (1993a: 40). But this is further aggravated by the tendency of the West to promote its ideas as universal (1996a: 183), a tactic that helps justify Western cultural domination of other societies (1996a: 66): '[w]hat is universalism to the West is imperialism to the rest' (1996a: 184). Huntington presents the spread of Western culture as superficial and a function of Western power rather than a demonstration of universal progress (1996a: 58). Western universalism is consequently perceived as false and provocative, engendering countering responses from other civilizations (1993a: 29). Huntington further characterizes Western universalism as immoral and dangerous. It is immoral since culture follows power, therefore, a universal culture would require a universal power, implying the reinstigation of imperialism. It is dangerous, he suggests, since it could lead to a major inter-civilizational war, in which the West could well be defeated (1996a: 310–11).

Consequently, unlike more liberal commentators, Huntington firmly rejects the idea that the end of the Cold War will produce the universalization of liberal democracy, or broad cultural homogenization through increased communications and modernization. Huntington points out that this argument suffers from the 'single alternative fallacy' in failing to acknowledge the persistence of other secular and religious challenges to Western liberal democracy (1993b: 191; 1996a: 66). Although acknowledging the West as the sources of modernization, he rejects the equation of modernization with Westernization as 'a totally false identification' (1996a: 69, 310):

The presumption of Westerners that other peoples who modernise must become 'like us' is a bit of Western arrogance that in itself illustrates the clash of civilisations. (1993b: 192)

In earlier work, Huntington had rejected the view that modernization was a unilinear process, necessarily leading to the adoption of Western values and institutions.¹² In the 'clash of civilisations' thesis, he again argues that although modern societies have commonalities, they remain culturally distinct. He goes further, suggesting that modernization can accentuate such differences, not only through increasing contact, but also through the confidence generated by prosperity and by creating the need for stronger local identities to respond to the social problems caused by modernization (1996a: 78). For Huntington the 'revolt against the West' increasingly has meant the promotion of non-Western values. These views distinguish Huntington clearly from contemporary liberals as his views on

political development differentiated him from certain modernization theorists in the 1970s. They also highlight the significance of the cultures, structures and histories of different civilizations in forthcoming international relations, significantly complicating relations between West and non-West.

Although Huntington identifies West/non-West interaction as a central axis of world politics, and a potentially volatile one, he does not represent the West's relationship with all non-Western societies as identical, nor the non-West as homogeneous. However, his thesis presents the non-West as largely reacting to the challenges of modernization and Westernization presented to it by the West. The non-West is given three options: rejection of the West, an option dismissed as unviable in today's deeply interconnected world; 'band-wagoning' – attempts to embrace Western values and join the West; and reformism or 'balancing' the West, in other words, efforts 'to modernise but not to Westernise' (1993a: 41, 1996a: 72–4). This analysis places countries that wish to 'band-wagon' in a difficult position. 'Joining the West' suggests not only modernization, but also the adoption of Western values and institutions, producing 'torn countries' (1993a: 42). In the context of this discussion, the most interesting 'torn-country' is undoubtedly Russia. During the Cold War, the Soviet Union constituted the quintessential East. In 1989, Huntington was slow to accept that communism was truly defeated (1989: 5); he was even more cautious about dismissing Russia as a threat to the West. Whereas Fukuyama sees the end of the Cold War as leading to the convergence of the systems of Russia and the West, Huntington sees them as becoming more distinct. For Huntington, the Marxism of the Soviet Union provided a point of commonality between Russia and the West. Both Marxism and liberal democracy are modern secular ideologies, aimed at achieving freedom and material well being:

A Western democrat could carry on an intellectual debate with a Soviet Marxist. It would be impossible for him to do that with a Russian Orthodox Nationalist. (1996a: 142)

Huntington's analysis pivots on the perception of traditional Russia as a member of a distinct Slavic-Orthodox civilization. He sees the post-Cold War Russia as a torn country, riven by a resurgence of the debate on whether its identity belongs to the Slavic East or to the West. Consequently, a swing towards traditionalism suggests to Huntington a potentially more conflictual and distant relationship between Russia and the West in the post-Cold War era (1996a: 142–4). Indeed, Huntington's analysis in itself further fuelled an ongoing debate within Russia about that state's identity and role in the post-Cold War world (Tsygankov and Tsygankov, 2000). However for Huntington the greatest challenge to the

West was coming not from Russia, but from other civilizations that have responded to the West through 'reformist' policies, seeking to modernize, but not Westernize; not to join but to compete with the West through internal development and co-operation with other non-Western powers (1993a: 45; 1996a: 74). Japan may appear the most obvious example of such a society, but as noted above, Japan is tolerated as an 'associate member' of the West – a rival, but not a conspirator. Instead the main rivals were members of the 'Confucian-Islamic connection', challenging Western interests, values and power through their dynamism and their sense of cultural superiority (1996a: 102). He anticipated growing hostility and the strengthening of an emergent alliance between key states within these civilizations, identifying as areas of likely tension, weapons proliferation, human rights and immigration (1996a: 185–207, 239). While the image of 'conspiracy' perhaps seems overdrawn, Huntington did identify serious issues of tension that persisted throughout the late 1990s with respect to tensions between the US and Europe and China and with certain Islamic states on issues such as human rights and the flow of migrants to wealthier Western economies.

As noted above, presenting Islam as an enemy of the West and the site of the next cultural confrontation Huntington draws on a lengthy tradition of thought and deeply rooted perceptions. Islam here is represented as an inherently violent civilization with 'bloody borders' (1993a: 35; 1996a: 254–8). Huntington's broad-brush treatment of the history of Islam's relationship with the West sweeps across 1300 years of history to provide a neat, linear continuum between the Crusades, the resistance to European colonialism and the Gulf War, only briefly touching upon nuances or contextual details which might illuminate the complexities of the relationship between these close civilizational cousins. There have, of course, been constructive and co-operative dimensions to the relationship between the West and Islam (Muzaffar, 1994: 11; Puchala, 1997). However, there is little sense of affinity in Huntington's reading of history. Instead, the relationship is presented as one in which Islam poses a continual and growing threat to the West, a relationship of long-standing rivalry and hostility based upon theological differences, further aggravated by qualities such as monotheism, universalism and evangelical natures of both cultures. The rivalry of the past is for Huntington further stimulated by a resurgence of Islam in the late twentieth century, a resurgence viewed as a product of, and an effort to come to terms with, modernization stimulated by the West (1996a: 116). Although Huntington identifies its causes in social mobilization and population growth, the impact of this resurgence, he suggests, has been to feed conflict that has manifested itself in a quasi-war between Islam and the West in progress since 1980 (1996a: 216).

This representation of Islam has been widely criticized as providing an extremist and undifferentiated image of Islamic civilization, exaggerating

the degree to which 'fundamentalist' forces represent Islamic societies, underestimating the degree of disunity in the Muslim world and overestimating the strength of the position of Muslim communities in many of the conflicts cited.¹³ Huntington does discuss divisions within Islam, suggesting that its lack of political cohesion is a source of instability, but he goes on to argue that conflict with the West, such as during the Gulf War, can provide a focus for unity within Islam replenishing the perception of Islam as a threat (1996a: 174–8, 248–52). This is further enhanced by his disturbing suggestion that Islam's hostility to the West is not limited to fundamentalists, but can be found in many sectors of Muslim societies (1996a: 214).

Some commentators view Huntington's depiction of Islam as creating a new monolithic enemy to replace the Soviet Union in order to encourage Western unity and vigilance, as fears of the Soviet Union had done in the 1940 (Klein, 1990; Maswood, 1994). As Maswood notes, it also demonstrates the continuance of the Orientalist mind set in the late twentieth century, which

... refuses to understand the diversity within Islam for the convenience of simple explanation It is Orientalist scholarship that has invested Islam both with an internal unity and an external political ambition. (Maswood, 1994: 19)

As Ahluwalia and Meyer note, this construction of an identity juxtaposed to an essentialized 'other' is a feature of International Relations and, particularly, realist discourse (1994: 25). In this context Huntington's analysis of civilizational interaction continues the preoccupation of the discipline with Western concerns, within an established framework of assumptions about the nature of interaction, rather than introducing radically new perspectives on a multicultural system of world politics.

What distinguished Huntington's discussion of the Islamic threat is his tying it to a conspiratorial connection with Confucian civilizations (Bigo, 1994: 12). The Confucian challenge to the West was evident to Huntington in a number of areas, one of the most concrete being arms transfers between China and the Middle East, particularly, Iran and Pakistan (1993a: 47, 1996a: 190). Many critics regard evidence for this conspiracy as somewhat thin. The argument mystifies what might otherwise be regarded as self-interested transactions of states in the name of cultural alliance (Goldsworthy, 1994: 7). However, for Huntington, this is one aspect of the broader challenge that Asia was presenting to the West. One aspect of this challenge was manifested by the rise of China, as a military and economic power. It seemed as if China was reassuming its traditional role as a regional hegemon (1996a: 169–74, 230). This was occurring in the broader context of rapid economic growth experienced in East Asia during the 1980s and 1990s. Huntington sensed that relations between the West and

Asia were becoming increasingly antagonistic, with Asia increasingly less accepting of Western global leadership, particularly in areas such as the human rights debate (1996a: 222).¹⁴ Huntington's concern with China can be understood within fairly traditional geostrategic perceptions of power politics. However, his broader concern with regard to the challenge of Asia is founded on broader perceptions of a rivalry that was both economic and cultural.

For some critics, Huntington's warnings represented an effort 'to preserve, protect and perpetuate Western dominance' by conjuring up spectres such as the Confucian-Islamic connection (Muzaffar, 1994: 13). Huntington's goal here, Muzaffar argues, was to persuade the United States that it should not reduce its military capability by presenting Islam and Asia as direct physical threats demanding readiness and cohesion of the West. Muzaffar's criticisms were written in response to Huntington's original 1993 essay. His concerns appear to be born out by the 1996 book where Huntington acknowledged more fully the challenge he saw emanating from Asia; its rapid economic growth producing a shift in the balance of power between Asia and the West bringing to the fore fundamental differences between Asian and American values (1996a: 103, 225). Here Huntington is conscious of the pride and confidence this growth engendered, noting arguments that this growth is founded on the strengths of Asian and Confucian rather than Western values (1996a: 107-9). This permits him to depict Asia's challenge to the West as cultural and civilizational, as well as economic.

As Huntington's vision of interaction between the West and non-West develops, the political character of his thesis becomes increasingly evident. The thesis provides not just a scholarly analysis of world politics, but explicit prescriptions for containing inter-civilizational conflict and minimizing threats to the West and the United States. This advice was based on a perception of the cultural world order premised on civilizational spheres of influence. He advised consolidation of civilizational identity at home and non-interference abroad: 'Those who do not recognise fundamental divides ... are doomed to be frustrated by them.' (1996a: 309) In essence, Huntington recommended universalism at home and multiculturalism abroad, reversing the trend of the current United States' policies of multiculturalism at home, and universalism abroad.

This has major implications for his perception of the West. Huntington calls upon the West to consolidate its own identity, resisting domestic multiculturalism and strengthening traditional cultural ties in foreign policy by, for instance, rejuvenating the Atlantic Alliance, an alliance that other commentators in addition to Huntington saw as waning in the 1990s (Coker, 1998). The maintenance of Western unity, he argued, was essential to slowing its decline in world affairs (1996a: 307-8), invoking and amending the old dictum '[i]n the clash of civilizations, Europe and America will

hang together or hang separately' (1996a: 321). Equally significantly, he advised that the United States and the West in general abstain from interfering in other cultures to promote Western values and norms. The abstention of core states from interference in other civilizations is one of Huntington's key rules for peace in a multi-civilizational world (1996a: 316). The United States, he subsequently argues, should refrain from playing the 'world policeman' encouraging instead 'community policing of major powers of their own regions'. (Huntington, 1999) This implies some measure of withdrawal by the West in recognition of the new balance of power, and has enormous implications for the normative foundations of interaction in the international system and in particular for policies of intervention by international organizations. It suggests a level of restraint that again reminds us that this analysis is based on a very sceptical view of the existence of international society.

Does Huntington's position advocate the West's retreat in international politics? Huntington aims not so much at sanctioning the West's retreat, but at enhancing and even renewing the West's power. In his 1993 essay, he suggests that in the short term, the West should pursue a policy

... to support in other civilizations groups sympathetic to Western values and interests; to strengthen international institutions that reflect and legitimate Western interests and values and to promote the involvement of the non-Western states in those institutions. (1993a: 49)

This suggests, then, a form of civilizational tactical engagement. However, given his analysis of the problems of transferring Western values and concepts, this would appear to be a provocative and not necessarily productive set of policies.

Huntington's prescription for the West's interaction with other civilizations are a blend of co-option, co-operation, and containment: co-option in encouraging the 'Westernization' of Latin-America; co-operation in seeking to improve relations with civilizations he perceives as less hostile, such as Japan and Russia; and containment of Sinic and Islamic civilizations through restraining their military development. But in addition, he recommended the maintenance of Western technical and military superiority over other civilizations, despite having acknowledged that such policies could be provocative (1993a: 29, 1996a: 312). His recommendations are clearly aimed at retaining the West as a powerful, if more contained, actor in world affairs. They provide a useful rationale for policies of selective engagement defined on cultural grounds. Huntington somewhat belatedly suggests that in addition to containment and co-option, the West should strive to achieve a better understanding of the perceptions and interests of other civilizations, to identify commonalities between cultures (1996a: 318–21); but the overall tone of his thesis is pessimistic. As with the con-

clusion of other great conflicts in the twentieth century, the initial euphoria has been shattered by new conflicts.

A single dominating ideological conflict has given way to a multiplicity of ethnic conflicts, the stability of a bipolar world to the confusion and instability of a multipolar and multicivilizational world, and the potential horror of global nuclear war to the daily horror of ethnic cleansing. (1996b: 4)

As noted, Huntington's thesis reflects a wave of pessimism in the American and European intellectual communities in the early 1990s, signalling disillusionment with the post-Cold War world. In 'The Coming Anarchy', Robert Kaplan (1994) also painted a picture of rising tensions, conflict and challenges to modern political institutions and structures. However, Kaplan explored a range of forces, such as population growth, migration and ecological degradation, which contribute to social dislocation and the collapse of authority structures, particularly in post-colonial states. Huntington's analysis is more narrowly focused. Although he recognizes the pressures which modernization places on local and global politics, he concluded that instability primarily derives from differences, accentuated by proximity. The West should, therefore, support those that resemble it and reduce the effectiveness of those that threaten it. Hence Huntington's main recommendation for meeting the challenges of the late twentieth century was a policy of containment, both internally and externally. Huntington's thesis may have more in common with Kennan's 'X' article than its radical analysis of a fluid postwar situation and the spectacular impact that it has made on intellectual and policy communities.

Conclusion

Huntington presents the contemporary world as one in flux stimulated by the release of the constraints of the Cold War, and by the pressures of modernization, a force which he long ago identified as volatile and destabilizing. In contrast to more liberal authors such as Fukuyama, Huntington chose to concentrate on the forces of fragmentation rather than those of unification in the contemporary world. In this context, his concept of civilizations and of the West directly challenges liberal concepts that see the West as a universal civilization. Instead, Huntington presents a pluralist conception of civilizations within which the West is unique, possibly even superior, but categorically not universal (1996a: 311). In this, Huntington finds common ground with Spengler and, to some extent with Toynbee. However, his argument lacks the depth of historical analysis found in his predecessors. While Huntington's discussion is littered with references to the modern histories of a variety of peoples and states, the thesis lacks a

considered historical discussion of important issues, such as the impact of modernization or relations between Islamic and Western peoples. Furthermore, unlike Spengler and Toynbee, Huntington does not locate the history of the West in a broader world history since world history is treated as Western history until the current era.

Huntington suggests that his thesis on civilizational interaction offers a new paradigm to understand the cultural world order (1993b). However, his hypotheses have a familiar ring of a civilizational 'war of all against all'. In his 'new' paradigm, the significant units of the international system may be civilizations rather than states, but the structure of the international system continues to be defined primarily by conflict between self-regarding units. His world view is informed by the concept of power politics leading to a vision of the world dominated by conflict and the assumption that power continues to be contested in an anarchical environment. In effect, Huntington's thesis seeks to capture the concept of inter-civilizational relations and co-opt it into realism, casting some doubt on the novelty of the paradigm.

Huntington's thesis appears as one engaged in 'looking for enemies', replacing the West's old adversary, the Soviet Union, with a new one to sustain the traditional structures of International Relations as perceived by conflict theorists. While defining civilizations as dynamic, interactive entities, he has portrayed them as immutable communities whose differences are compounded and confirmed by conflict on the local and global levels. While briefly he appeals for understanding and toleration among cultures, the thrust of his thesis advocates the promotion and protection of Western values. We sense that Huntington was seeking to shake the West, and particularly the United States, out of complacency. This is achieved by portraying it as under imminent threat from an external enemy, the Confucian-Islamic connection and an internal enemy, the loss of Western normative homogeneity. The constitution of enemies is, therefore, a critical element in Huntington's conception of the West, but as for Spengler, Toynbee and Fukuyama, the threats faced by the West are as much internal as external.

Like his predecessors Spengler and Toynbee, Huntington represents the West as a major power, on the cusp of decline, threatened with disintegration within and diminution without. Like Toynbee, Huntington warns his community of potential degeneration, but suggests that the West has the capacity to avoid this. This contrasts with the presentations of Spengler and of Fukuyama, which, while differing in their tone and readings of the future, leave a strong sense of the West, swept along by the forces of history, rather than as an agent determining history's course. Huntington has a well-developed sense of territorial links, and of ethnic and religious affinities as characterizing cultures; but the critical factors that distinguish civilizations for him are norms and values. In this respect, he portrays the

West as a resilient culture that, although heterogeneous, has been strong enough to absorb incoming cultures. It is this quality that is perceived by Huntington as under threat in the era of late modernity. Issues such as racial and cultural integration present a much stronger sense of threat to the cohesion of Huntington's West than they do in Fukuyama's.

Huntington obviously values the norms and institutions of Western society as the best, if not the only, way to provide order and governance. However, like Toynbee, he is extremely sceptical of the feasibility and desirability of transferring norms and institutions across cultures. But whereas Toynbee was concerned about the destructive impact of Western norms and institutions on non-Western society, Huntington tends to focus on how such transfers feed tensions between the West and non-West, empowering anti-Western forces. His scepticism with regard to the transfer of norms and institutions derives from his sense of civilizations as ultimately distinguished by a unique blend of norms and values, and by his sense of the West as unique rather than universal. Like Bull, Huntington acknowledges the normative and institutional dimensions of Western power, but although he recognizes that the West has exercised global power and influence, he ties this firmly to its capacity to project military and economic power, rather than seeing the West as constructing a lasting, universal normative framework for global political interaction.

The implications of Huntington's thesis and the prescriptions that it entails are substantial. Expectations of cross-cultural co-operation are not eliminated but are substantially weakened. The thesis suggests a system in which order is maintained through an ethos of non-intervention that substantially undermines the concept of an evolving cosmopolitan framework, replacing this with an ethos of cultural relativism. If accepted, it has substantial implications for perceptions of multiculturalism, both within states and societies and more broadly in international relations. It casts doubt upon the potential for the evolution of a genuinely multicultural world order, except under the ambit of an imperial cultural hegemony.

Huntington's work suggests that the West needs to consolidate its own identity and prepare to defend this in an anarchical world of inter-civilizational power politics, rather than seeing itself engaged in processes of progress or cultural convergence through globalization as suggested in Fukuyama. As in Toynbee and Bull, this entails acknowledging the diminution of Western power in the face of the resurgence of non-Western civilizations. How the West continues to promote its own interests and project power, yet maintain a policy of non-intervention is unclear, but it does imply a policy of constructive interaction, particularly among the core states of particular civilizations.

Huntington's thesis has been criticized for its reduction of complex events and patterns to a simple but ominous structure. Yet as David Welch (1997)

notes, part of the power and appeal of Huntington's analysis of civilizational interaction lies in its bold simplicity and consequent accessibility as a tool to understand a complex environment. Yet this is also where its weaknesses lie, since the thesis reduces the complexities of world politics and civilizational interaction to the dynamics of cultural rivalry and suspicion.

8

The Occident and its Significant 'Other': Edward Said's West

Some of the most vigorous debate in recent decades on the relationship between the West and non-West has been stimulated by ideas produced not in the disciplines of history or political science, but in literary criticism. Although his major works focus primarily on the analysis of literary texts, Edward Said's work is deeply informed by, and engaged in commenting upon, the dynamics of political and cultural interaction in world politics and the relationship of the West to the non-West. His book *Orientalism* (1978) was one of the founding texts of post-colonial studies, a movement that, through the examination of literature, art and history, provides a critical reassessment of the West's interaction with the non-West from the perspective of the non-West. His perspective is a critical one that draws deeply from influences outside, as well as within, the West.

The conception of the West that he presents is complex and operates at two levels. On the first level, Said represents how the West saw itself, drawing on a range of literature from Europe and the United States. On the second, he provides his own critical representation of the West that portrays it primarily as an imperialist entity. This dual approach, which reflects upon how the West constructs in own identity, contrasts with the preceding authors.

Key themes in Said's constitution of the West further distinguish it. First, as noted above, Said focuses strongly on the West as an imperialist entity. Of the preceding authors, only Bull, and to a more limited extent Wight, reflect in any depth on this dimension. However, empire stands at the very heart of Said's modern West (1993: 10–12). For him, 'the principle of domination and resistance based on the division between the West and the rest of the world ... runs like a fissure throughout' (1993: 60). Empire is not viewed simply as a form of political or economic association, constituted by elites, but as a system that penetrates all levels of the metropole and the colonies. Its durability is supported by its reconstitution at all levels of society and by popular acceptance in the metropole of the necessity of empire. Second, Said suggests that knowledge and information are central

elements of Western power. While all the preceding authors recognized intellectual and technical capacity as critical features of the West, again, only Bull reflects more deeply on the significance of knowledge structures to the West's interaction in the cultural world order. Said goes deeper again, to consider how the deployment of knowledge helps constitute the West. Third, in his conception of civilizational interaction, Said occupies a position between the universalist assumptions of Fukuyama and the segregated and incommensurable vision of civilizations found in Huntington and Spengler. He believes in cultural pluralism, but has an underlying sense of a shared humanity that can often be obscured by cultural differentiation. There are some parallels here with the concepts of cultural world order found in Toynbee and, again, in the International Society authors. Said's civilizational identities and cultures are plural, but interactive, dynamic and constantly in the process of reconstitution. His work raises questions about how we recognize the plurality of cultures without obscuring this underlying human community. Finally, Said presents the West as an identity developed and represented in antithesis, to the East or the Orient.

This discussion draws primarily on two of his most significant works, *Orientalism* (1978) and *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), both of which are deeply concerned about the politics of representation. In *Orientalism*, he discusses the creation and reiteration of the Orient in Western scholarly and institutional texts of the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This theme is developed in *Culture and Imperialism* in discussing relations between the 'metropolitan' West and its overseas territories. In both works, Said argues that essentialized representations of the non-West reinforced the West's sense of its own identity as a superior culture.

In a 1995 review of *Orientalism*, Said described the intention of this work as a 'multicultural critique of power using knowledge to advance itself', arguing that this is a work which is anti-essentialist in its discussions of cultures and civilizations (1995: 4). That is to say, Said strives to dissect the images of cultures as organic, homogeneous, natural entities in order to reveal the way in which images of one's own and of other cultures are constructed through the deployment of representations and of knowledge. This approach is particularly relevant to understanding representations of civilizational identity as one manifestation of cultural identity.

Said's era and influences

Said's background provides a strong basis for an interest in inter-civilizational relations and the role of the West. He was born in west Jerusalem in 1935, but left Palestine for Egypt in 1947 as it became engulfed in the war that followed the withdrawal of the British mandate. He completed his secondary education in the United States and subsequently studied at

Princeton and Harvard. He currently holds a chair in English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University, New York. Said did not return to Palestine/Israel until 1992.

Although Said grew up in a relatively affluent and secure home and has pursued a successful career in the United States, a sense of exile permeates his work. The displacement experienced by Said and the Palestinian people in general critically shapes his perceptions of power and of geography.¹ Although an Anglican who has lived most of his life in the West, there is little sense that his identity as a Christian has mitigated his sense of displacement. In fact, his discussion of his background heightens the sense of Palestine as a location which was/is integral to Christianity, Judaism and Islam, challenging automatic associations of Christianity with the West. However, ultimately, it is not his religious identity, but Said's identity as a secular scholar which is most significant for him; secularism providing a 'space for discussion' uninhibited by essentializations of theological identities (1994b: 24). He is critical of essentialized images of Islamic society often found in Western literature and commentary, but also critical of equally reductionist Islamist perspectives (1995: 3).

Said is a renowned advocate of the Arab and Palestinian positions in the international and American communities, representing a voice often less heard or discredited in the United States (Thomas, 1994: 26–7). He has written extensively on Palestine, Middle East politics and American foreign policy, and demonstrates a strong personal identification with the plight of Arab, and particularly Palestinian, peoples.² His own consciousness of being an 'Oriental' goes back to his youth in Palestine and Egypt, to the heady atmosphere of postwar independence, of Arab nationalism and the experience of Nasserism (Said, 1985a: 15–16; 1999). Since the 1960s, the Middle East region has undergone the upheavals of war and revolution, becoming a focus of both regional and global conflicts. These were linked both to the processes of decolonization and construction of post-colonial societies, and to the Cold War. During the 1970s, the Oil Crisis, the Iranian Revolution and the resurgence of 'Islamic fundamentalism' enhanced in the West a sense of Islamic societies as different and threatening. As Turner notes, it was in this atmosphere of regional and global conflict that the debate about Orientalism arose (Turner, 1989: 630).

Said's writings range from literature and philology across anthropology and philosophy to history and politics. They exhibit a fusion of intellectual interests and political commentary drawn from his own experiences and the influence of radical developments in the intellectual environment. The postwar era saw the development of, for instance, feminism, neo-Marxism, social protest movements and post-structuralism. Said's work demonstrates the influence of these discursive developments, but has also itself been a major stimulus to the development of critical thinking. As Radhakrishnan (1994) notes, Said's work reflects complexity: he cannot be regarded as

simply a Palestinian activist or conversely as a Professor of Literature; his agenda is more complex. Similarly, he is not simply a Foucauldian nor a Gramscian, but draws on an intricate variety of influences. For instance, Said's sense of geography is influenced by his own experience of displacement and the inadequacy of conventional geography to express the experiences of the dispossessed, but is also influenced by the 'spatialisation of cultural and social theory' found in Gramsci and Foucault (Gregory, 1995).

A second instance of the fusion of influences is Said's interest in concepts of power; this is influenced both by his experience of Middle East politics, and by Michel Foucault (Said, 1978: 3). He shares with Foucault interests in the links between power, knowledge and representation; in discourse; and in the impact of location on scholars and authors. Like Foucault, Said highlights the political character of knowledge (Thomas, 1994: 24). Foucault's method 'dethrones' the primacy of the 'knowing subject', so central to much of Western thinking, arguing instead that knowledge of the object is always contextual (Dalby, 1980: 492).³ Similarly, Said argues that the individual author is influenced and constrained by the discourses through which knowledge is received and expressed (Said, 1978: 92–4; 1983). Said is also influenced by Foucault, and Nietzsche, in the genealogical methodology he employs in *Orientalism* and *Culture and Imperialism* (Clifford, 1988: 266). Both works discuss the degree to which individual texts are products of an established discourse within influential social and political contexts.⁴

Said's ideas of power are also influenced by Gramsci's concept of hegemony.⁵ Hegemony is an important dimension of the West's power for Said, providing consensus on Western superiority within the West, and a facility for maintaining that power overseas in the post-colonial era. Like Huntington, Said challenges assumptions that Western cultural hegemony is a natural evolution of a universal culture, suggesting instead that it projects Western values, ideas and culture under the guise of universalism.

Yet, although Said challenges Western cultural hegemony, he also rejects suggestions that an authentic non-Western culture can be posited in contrast to the negative representations produced by Western culture. His rejection of essentialism and of the construction of rigid cultural categories draws deeply on liberal humanist concepts that form an important part of European thought. As Clifford notes, although a radical critic of Western cultural traditions, Said derives most of his standards from these traditions (Clifford, 1988: 275). Said's humanist ideas distinguish him from Foucault and are problematic for some critics who view humanism as an intellectual and ethical dimension of Western colonialism (Clifford, 1988; Kennedy, 2000; Young, 1990). Despite this, Said clearly associates himself with a belief in 'a common humanity', maintaining a sense of a shared human reality which is complex and heterodox, but often obscured by essentialized and monolithic representations of cultures (Said, 1993: 377, 1995: 3). Said's work seeks to traverse cultural barriers, such as those between Orient

and West, and dismantle, not reinforce, cultural monoliths and essentializations. For Said, cultures are interdependent, interactive and non-exclusive 'Beethoven' he notes, 'belongs as much to the West Indians as he does to Germans, since his music is now part of the human heritage.' (Said, 1993: xxviii)

Said's humanism is also evident in his commitment to the goals of emancipation and enlightenment, goals which he stresses remain a high priority to the peoples of the developing world (1993: 399, 1994b). Said wants to sustain the 'liberating energies released by the great decolonising resistance movements, and the mass uprisings of the 1980s' (1993: 401). He fears these liberating energies could be strangled by narrow or chauvinist forms of nationalism, or 'nativism', which themselves reinforce the divisions imposed by nineteenth-century Western imperialism and can lead to fundamentalism and despotism rather than true liberation. For Said true liberation requires movement onward from national to social consciousness (1993: 276, 323),⁶ rejecting nationalist separatism and triumphalism in favour of seeking a community among cultures and peoples. Thus, although Said draws on the influence of critics of the Enlightenment, he himself retains a commitment to humanism, enlightenment and emancipation.

Said's humanism has proven controversial, particularly with those who see humanism as inextricably bound to Euro-centrism and assumptions of Western cultural superiority.⁷ What Said suggests is that a common culture of humanity critically underpins cultural diversity and that goals such as emancipation are universal norms that supersede the Western culture that has articulated them most prominently. It is from this basis that we must proceed if we seek to actually improve the lives of those who have suffered under domination. However, this presents a significant dilemma for Said or anyone concerned with this issue: how to represent the plurality of humanity and of human perspectives while at the same time acknowledging significant points of commonality and shared interests, but to do so in a non-hegemonic manner? Said's references to the common heritage of humanity imply a sense of an evolutionary human culture in which he draws on the influence of the British critic, Raymond Williams (Said, 1993: xxxi, 1990). Williams, a 'cultural materialist', was one of the main inspirations for *Orientalism* (Gregory, 1995: 466).⁸ Said draws on Williams' notion of 'structures of feeling' in developing his own sense of the connections between the literature and art of the West and its broader imperial culture in *Culture and Imperialism*. Said engages the influence of both Williams and Foucault in exploring the relationship between the West and those over whom it exercised empire and hegemony. However, he criticized both for their Euro-centrism (Said, 1988: 9, 1990). Said's own work exceeds that of these influential figures in its geographic and cultural scope.⁹

As noted above, Said, displaced from Palestine, came of age during the era of decolonization. In some respects, his work is an aspect of the broader

process of dismantling empire. One of the consequences of imperialism is to deprive the colonized of the right to represent themselves. His work on Palestine is in part an effort to return to the Palestinian people the right to tell their own story and represent themselves (Arac, 1994: 13; Said, 1985b). Said was influenced by earlier post-colonial writers such as Anwer Abdel Malek, C. L. R. James, Frantz Fanon and particularly the *Subaltern Studies* group who revolutionized Indian historiography (Said, 1985a, 1995).¹⁰ The post-colonial studies movement, which they and he helped to generate, challenges Western history and scholarship, highlighting the centrality of empire and colonialism to Europe's constitution (Prakash, 1995: 205).

Prakash notes that post-colonialism is part of a discursive shift that casts doubts on the idea of subjects and origins authorized by Western humanism, and highlights the hierarchical identities and knowledge instituted by binary oppositions. In this respect, there is convergence between post-colonial criticism and post-structuralist interrogation of the universal subject (Prakash, 1995: 205). However, as noted above, Said goes only so far along the post-structuralist and postmodernist road. His work demonstrates a certain disillusionment with the abstractness of some postmodernist writing (Said, 1993, 1994b). For him, post-colonialism is crucially distinguished from postmodernism by its continued commitment to the goals of emancipation and enlightenment (Said, 1995: 6), goals, he argues, that the imperial West has failed to live up to. Said wants to turn the 'artificial sentinel' of Western humanism into real humanism, a consciousness of social and political needs which is colour blind and has no regard for the divisions constructed by imperialism (Said, 1993: 324–5). As Driver observes, Said is postmodern in the sense that he is critical of 'the worldly role of the humanities'. However, 'his insistence on the need to make political choices provides a powerful counterpoint to current drifts within postmodernist writing' (Driver, 1992: 37).

The combination of Said's personal experiences and intellectual influences has composed a perspective that is fervently anti-imperialist, but simultaneously committed to the humanist goals of enlightenment and emancipation. Said, therefore, straddles the boundaries between West and non-West, modern and postmodern. In many respects, this reflects the way his life and work straddles boundaries, of faiths, of cultures, of locations, of disciplines. Most of his life has been spent in the United States, the heartland of 'the West', a multicultural society founded on immigrant communities. Said's main standards and intellectual influences are drawn from European literature and philosophy (Clifford, 1988: 275). Yet in many respects, he still writes as an exile. He is both inside and outside 'the West', representing and presenting perspectives frequently not associated with the West. Consequently, Said brings a healthy, but for many disturbing, complexity to the West.

Civilizations, cultures and interaction

Said's conception of civilizations is pluralist, but underwritten by a belief in a broader community of humanity. Although he does not define civilizations explicitly, and speaks more often of culture than civilization, his work implies a deep concern for the course of civilizational interaction and for West/non-West interaction in particular. His understanding of the significance of culture is linked to his understanding of the role that representations play in society:

We live of course in a world not only of commodities but also of representation, and representations – their production, circulation, history, and interpretation – are the very element of culture. (Said, 1993: 66)

Like Williams, his analysis focuses methodologically on 'documentary' culture, that is on literature and the arts. Williams stressed the interconnectedness of all categories of culture, documentary, social, ideal (Williams, 1961: 41–7). Similarly, Said relates literature and the arts to the broader social and political trends of the society. This has produced the criticism that his work focuses too narrowly on 'high culture' (Clifford 1988; Young, 1990: 133). However, Said seeks to justify this focus by demonstrating not only the connectedness between culture and its political and social context, but also the function which 'high culture' fulfils in reinforcing the 'structures of feeling' underlying political and social structures. Culture is for Said a source of identity, a 'theatre where various political and ideological causes engage one another' (Said, 1993: xiii–xiv).

Said does not view cultures as spontaneous, but as social constructions (1993: 408). Furthermore, they are selective constructions produced by particular representations of self and other.¹¹ The tendency to think of cultures as homogeneous, he suggests, obscures this selectivity. Furthermore, acceptance of particular representations or traditions as authentic often marginalizes others. In reality, Said argues 'No one today is purely *one* thing', no one has a single identity. (1993: 407) In contrast, he sees cultures as 'hybrid, heterogeneous, extraordinarily differentiated, and unmonolithic' (1993: xxix):

Culture is never just a matter of ownership, of borrowing and lending with absolute debtors and creditors, but rather appropriations, common experiences, and interdependencies of all kinds, among different cultures. This is a universal norm. (1993: 261–2)

Therefore, although Said's view of cultures and civilizations is a pluralist one, his pluralism is less segregated than Huntington's or Spengler's.

Said's conception of cultures is also dynamic in that he perceives them as constantly in the process of reconstitution, influenced by contemporary needs. As he notes, the development and maintenance of culture requires the existence of an alter ego:

The construction of identity ... involves establishing opposites and 'others' whose actuality is always subject to the continuous interpretation and reinterpretation of their differences from 'us'. Each age and society recreates its 'others'. (1995: 3)

James Carrier describes this as a contextual or dialectical definition: 'To tell what a thing is, you place it in terms of something else.'¹² There is an inherent danger that the relativity of this perception of difference can be lost from view; the model becoming detached from the dialectic, distinguishing characteristics becoming defining characteristics and the sense of difference becoming absolute in the light of essentialized representations of the other (Carrier, 1992). Said's conception of the West critically investigates the employment of dialectical definition. The West is conceived of as generating its self-image in antithesis to colonial peoples. In *Orientalism*, for instance, he notes that shared experiences of history, politics, economics are qualified by this sense of difference, the belief that 'Islam is Islam and the Orient is the Orient' (1978: 107). All emotions and experiences 'are necessarily subordinate to the sheer, unadorned, and persistent fact of being an Arab' (1978: 230).

His criticism of practices of differentiation focuses not on the formation of cultural identities, but on the tendencies to venerate one's own cultures at the expense of respect for others and to essentialize cultural identities (1993: 21, 382). Clifford notes in Said, as in Foucault, 'a restless suspicion of totality' (Clifford, 1988: 273; Foucault, 1976).¹³ This underlies Said's discomfort with procedures that create and enclose entities such as culture or 'the Orient'. As Clifford notes, Said suggests that

... the notion that there are geographical spaces with indigenous, radically 'different' inhabitants who can be defined on the basis of some religion, culture or racial essence proper to that geographical space is equally a highly debatable idea. (Quoted in Clifford, 1988: 274)

Said has himself, however, also been criticized for resorting to 'alternate totalities' in positing humanist cosmopolitan essences and human common denominators (Clifford, 1988: 274). This suggests a certain tension within Said's position. There is resentment at Western cultural hegemony that rejects the plurality of equal cultures. Simultaneously, there is resistance to cultural reductionism that produces stereotypical images of the other. Said wishes to emancipate the non-West from the stereotypes of

weakness and inferiority that facilitated Western control and power of colonized peoples. However, he does not want to emancipate the popular imagination from Western cultural imperialism only to deliver it into the 'tyranny' of an equally essentialized sense of homogeneous and authentic traditions.

In rejecting Western cultural hegemony conveyed in the West's self-representations, Said challenges assumptions that civilizational interaction occurs within a framework of an authentic civilizational hierarchy, or necessarily leads to convergence with the most powerful culture. However, his rejection of cultural essentialism also challenges assumptions that civilizations interact in a framework of segregated and hostile communities. He directly challenges the assumption that difference means hostility. His aim in *Orientalism*, he has argued,

... was not so much to dissipate difference itself ... but to challenge the notion that difference implies hostility, a frozen reified set of opposed essences, and a whole adversarial knowledge built out of those things. (1995: 6)

He appears to seek a middle way between perceiving civilizational interaction as hierarchical or convergent, as suggested by Fukuyama, and as segregated and hostile, as suggested by Huntington. This presents two important challenges that Said articulates in *Orientalism*. First, how does one *represent* other cultures? (1978: 325). Second:

Can one divide human reality, as indeed human reality seems to be genuinely divided, into clearly different cultures, histories, traditions, societies, even races, and survive the consequences humanely? (1978: 45)

In other words, how do we represent other cultures fairly, respectfully and equally?

The boundaries of Said's West

Said's work accentuates the existence of contending perspectives on the framework of cultural world order. It also suggests that the texts that set out these perspectives not only reflect but help to constitute these frameworks. His work critically reflects on how the West perceived itself projected through its images of the non-West. The self-image which he describes encompasses a strongly hierarchical sense of cultural world order which privileges the West's position, viewing the non-Western civilizations as dead or decaying and, therefore, in need of restoration by the West, the prime representative of modern civilization (1978: 7, 87, 99). This is an

image that Said implicitly critiques in his own more egalitarian conception of cultural world order and the West.

Territory

Said's conception of the West is strongly influenced by his perception of territory as land imbued with political meaning. His writings demonstrate a strong interest in, and radical sense of, geography and space that he calls 'imaginary geography'. This challenges concepts of geography as a science that is neutral and apolitical and accentuates its relationship to knowledge and power. Geography and boundaries are understood not simply as empirical givens but constituted through the meaning attributed to a particular space or location (1978: 54–5, 1994b: 21). This meaning may be influenced by the exercise of power.¹⁴ Therefore, in Said's work, inscriptions of territory become overtly associated with the distribution of power.

A strong sense of spatiality is particularly noticeable in *Culture and Imperialism* that includes frequent references to locating, mapping and the utility of space, particularly the space of empire. Imperialism is described as 'an act of geographical violence through which virtually every space in the world is explored, charted and finally brought under control' (1993: 271). The geographical underpinnings of empire underlie its social space: 'The actual geographical possession of land is what empire in the final analysis is all about.' (Said, 1993: 93)

Said's conception of the territory of the West is shaped by his interest in the political and intellectual dimensions of space. We receive a stronger sense of the meaning of locations than of the boundaries of a specific territory. The West is primarily constituted by imperial Europe and the United States; his analyses focus on the texts and experiences of Britain, France and the United States, although his territorial conception of the West is not limited to them. However, these countries play for him a leading role in generating ideas and representations of the Orient (1978: 17).¹⁵ Their ideas are discussed as the ideas of the West. Said's map of the West in this respect is as much an intellectual as a territorial map. Ideas imbue space with meaning and support the construction of boundaries between territories.

The non-West plays an important role in mapping the location of the West in Said's analyses. In *Orientalism*, the East helps to provide the location of the West with meaning. His work traces associations that gathered around the notion of the Orient in the literature of classical Greece, identifying a bold sense of division between East and West in the work of authors such as Aeschylus and even Homer. He selects texts that present Asia as defeated and distant in contrast to a powerful and articulate West, or an Orient that threatens the values and stability of the West (1978: 55–7). These are motifs of the Orient that Said points to throughout his work. They provide the geographical location of the West with a meaning and a

sense of difference, which are confirmed through their reiteration (Said, 1978: 201). The Orient is a location, he suggests, which was always familiar, but different to the West; always *like* the West in some respects, but consistently represented as lying outside the boundaries of that community (1978: 67). In this respect, the Orient is perceived as marking a significant boundary of the West.

As in the work for all other authors discussed, there emerges from both *Orientalism* and *Culture and Imperialism* a sense that the geographic expansion of the West was facilitated by Western technology, reducing the distance between the West and other civilizations. However, Said does not suggest that this has brought about convergence between East and West. Rather it is perceived as accentuating the sense of separation between European and non-European peoples. For instance, he describes the Suez Canal (1869) as 'dragging' the Orient into the West's geographical ambit and making it part of one world (1978: 92). Here, the Orient is brought into the West's geographical sphere, but not as an equal. Rather it was 'penetrated, worked over, taken hold of'; formerly alien space was domesticated into colonial space (Driver, 1992: 30; Said, 1978: 211).

Religion

Said has clearly and repeatedly identified himself as a secular scholar. However, this does not lead him to underestimate the powerful role which religion plays as a marker of identity. However, unlike Spengler, he focuses on religion as an agent of differentiation rather than as an institution that bestowed specific values or qualities on Western civilization. The central axis of difference that defines the West for him is that between Christianity and Islam. His remarks reveal more about how the history and tradition of this conflict helped define the West than about the moral and institutional characteristics that Christianity contributed to the West. Like Wight and Huntington, Said's account of the West's attitude towards Islam is one steeped in a sense of confrontation rather than coexistence. It acknowledges the threat felt by Christian Europe as Islam expanded through Asia, North Africa and Europe between the seventh and seventeenth centuries:

Not for nothing did Islam come to symbolise terror, devastation, the demonic, hordes of hated barbarians. For Europe, Islam was a lasting trauma. ... [I]n time, European civilisation incorporated that peril and its lore, its great events, figures, virtues, and vices, as something woven into the fabric of life. (1978: 59)

On the one hand, the encounter with Islam was internalized by the West, coming to represent a broad sense of disruption and danger. However, Said

also suggests that the West strengthened its self-image by diminutive representations of Islam; that the West 'domesticated' Islam through its representations of that faith. For example, Islam was often represented by Orientalist scholarship as a form of heresy, the prophet Mohammed as an imposter (1978: 62–6). This suggests that the West's sense of its own identity was enhanced by its perception of Oriental people as both threatening and inferior in the religious context. Assumptions of threat and degeneracy innate in Islam are prominent in Said's discussion of the West's self-image, the proximity of Islam and Christianity – geographically and spiritually – perceived to produce not deeper knowledge or understanding of each other but essentialized images which reinforced the sense of a distinct Western identity. Over the centuries, it was not knowledge but ignorance of Islam and its beliefs that were systematically refined by Orientalists (Said, 1978: 62).¹⁶

While acknowledging that Enlightenment thought 'loosened the biblical framework', Said argues that secular modes of thought in the West redeployed assumptions of difference and superiority inherited from the religious era (Hart 2000; Said, 1978: 121). He argues that the scientific thinking of Europe's secular age that displaced religion continued to project representations of the Orient that further legitimized and empowered the West as rational and advanced. Philology, and later anthropology, archaeology and biology served to decipher, to reveal and to reconstruct the ancient cultures of the Orient (1978: 135–46). In a sense, therefore, Said suggests secular science itself became creator or re-creator of the Orient, perpetuating the perception of a subservient Orient and a superior West. The sense of differentiation founded on religious identities thus forms a significant boundary to Said's West.

Race

A strong sense of racial distinction also permeates Said's conception of the West. The superiority of the white or Aryan races becomes an implicit and often explicit feature of the imperialist and Orientalist perspectives he describes. A sense of racial difference is presented as part of the common intellectual equipment employed by Western scholars and administrators. The sense of race forming a boundary of the West is most pronounced in Said's discussion of nineteenth-century texts where he identifies assumptions about racial hierarchy in a wide range of fields such as anthropology, legal history, utilitarianism and idealism (Said 1978: 99, 1993: 130). There was, he argues, no significant dissent from the theories of the inferiority of black races and the superiority and unchallenged authority of whites (1993: 121). Said links the tendency to think in collective generalizations with contemporary ideas of racial theory to show how linguistic and racial theories became easily equated with biologically based notions of inequality and a sense of determinism. This suggested unbreachable barriers between different races, nations and civilizations. Notions of difference, therefore,

overwhelmed common and plural human realities (1978: 206, 233). In this context, race becomes a primary marker of difference, of inferiority, or to paraphrase Frantz Fanon, race became an ineradicable sign of negative difference in colonial discourses (cited in Bhabha, 1983: 28). For instance, Said suggests that the West, examining the world through the Orientalist prism, equates the Arab with the weaker or more alien elements of contemporary society, the poor, women, the insane (1978: 207). The Arab is deprived of equal recognition as a fellow human being, and is consistently dehumanized, considered first and foremost to be an Arab and only secondly as a human being.

Said represents the racial boundary as not only delineating the West, but also serving to rationalize its imperialism. Hence, his work suggests that the West's perception of the weaker Orient, as transmitted through the lens of Orientalism, justified the white race's expansion into the 'uncivilized' world (1978: 207). This is illustrated in Said's references to Kipling's vision of the white man's superiority, endowing him with a duty to 'clean up' the world (1978: 226, 1993: 162, 182), or Ruskin's vision of England's right *and duty* to bring governance to the wider world, based on the purity of its race (1993: 123–5). As with territory, it is the meanings and assumptions with which skin colour is linked which are significant. These make race a boundary of the West and help to justify its domination of the non-West.

Said's perception of the West as defined by race is not lessened by the rise to prominence of the United States in the twentieth century, itself a multi-racial society but one whose foreign policy he regards as informed by racial prejudice towards Asia and towards Arab peoples (1993: 350). Racist caricatures, he suggests, continue to inform American perceptions of Arabs and Islam (1993: 364).

Power

The boundaries of the West in Said's work are crucially influenced by his complex conception of power that entails both material dimensions, and ideas and representations. He emphasizes the importance of discourse as a form of power through which social reality is constituted. Knowledge and representations not only justify power, they underlie and shape the structures and institutions of power (1978: 12). Although it is informed by consciousness of the West's political, economic and military capacity, Said's discussion of the West's power focuses primarily on how the deployment of knowledge underwrites and reinforces its material power. Imperialism is the discourse that frames the structures and institutions of Western power for him.

As with the work of all preceding authors, underlying Said's references to the West is an awareness of the extensive and unprecedented physical power that Europe and the United States exercised in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. There is a strong sense of the West relentlessly accumulating and exercising power through the establishment of interests in

new regions, and through the accumulation of peoples in addition to territories (1978: 123): 'No other associated set of colonies in history was as large, none so totally dominated, none so unequal in power to the Western metropolis' (1993: 6). This produced an imbalance of power that, for Said, continues in the twentieth century. The Gulf War, for instance, illustrated for him the continued potency of the ideas that great powers had the right to safeguard distant interests to the point of military intervention and, 'that lesser powers were also lesser people, with lesser rights, morals and claims' (1993: 41). Like Bull and Watson, Said suggests that the imbalance of power supported a sense of civilizational hierarchy, with the West at its peak.

Said's analysis is premised on the view that differentiation and deployment of images of other cultures is an exercise of power. Therefore, he depicts the imbalance of power between West and non-West during the era of imperialism reflected in the construction and deployment of images of colonized people (1993: 127). Central to this analysis is a consciousness of the link between power and the way in which knowledge is *produced*. For Said, writes Clifford, pure scholarship does not exist: 'Knowledge in his view is inextricably tied to power.' (Clifford, 1988: 256) In both *Orientalism* and *Culture and Imperialism*, Said traces links between knowledge and power in a wide assortment of literature and art, identifying undertones of imperialist ideology that are continued in the popular culture of the later twentieth-century West. In these texts, Said identifies 'structures of attitudes and reference' which encompass views such as racial superiority and Western political authority that support and consolidate the West's material power at the cultural level (1993: 134).¹⁷ In the contemporary context, he identifies a correspondence between the 'imperialist' perspectives of influential media-managers and official American policy on the non-Western world. Therefore, for Said, scholarship and art contribute to the discourse of imperial power that is a defining element of the West.¹⁸

Within these discourses, Said identifies the hegemony of ideas that assert European superiority. It could be argued that all cultures represent others in a way that empowers themselves. What is distinctive about Said's West is its capacity to successfully project its representations and to have these accepted by other peoples (1993: 120). Like Huntington, Said associates the West's cultural hegemony with the scale, scope and longevity of Western material power (1993: 267). However, Said's treatment of the West's cultural hegemony interweaves culture more deeply into the substance of the West's power than Huntington, for whom cultural power is more a manifestation of material capacity. Both, however, agree that the West's cultural hegemony is Euro-centric, Said noting that at the heart of European culture during the era of imperial expansion lay 'an undeterred and unrelenting Euro-centrism' (1993: 267). For him, this is manifested in the West placing itself at the centre of the world, as the source of all significant action. Overseas territories were perceived as 'outlying estates' to the Western

metropole, not communities with an independent existence. Consequently, Said sees the West according the non-West no significant meaning outside its relationship to the West. Even in many liberal Western works, as he argues,

... the source of the world's significant action and life is the West. ... In this view, the outlying regions of the world have no life, history, or culture to speak of, no independence or integrity worth representing without the West. (1993: xxi)

Fundamental to this process is the sense that the West had the ability and the right to articulate the non-West, which could not speak for itself (1978: 121, 140); or in Marx's words, '*Sie können sich nicht vertreten sie müssen vertreten werden.*' (cited in Said, 1978: 21).

As Ernest Wilson comments, '[d]omination like liberation tends to be a total phenomenon' which touches upon all aspects of society (Wilson, 1981: 59). For Said, the West's power was also expressed in its ability to reach into all aspects of the lives of the dominated society to catalogue, enumerate and define its subjects. These textual and schematic attitudes represent for him a process through which the West made the Orient available to it, and in doing this, to domesticate the mystery and hostility of the East and Islam (1978: 87). The process of knowing the Orient was a part of learning to control the Orient (Schaar, 1979: 69). For example, Said discusses the massive *Description de l'Égypte* (1809–28), published as part of Napoleon's project to dominate Egypt. Part of this project, argues Said, was to render Egypt completely open, 'to make it totally accessible to European scrutiny' (1978: 83). Furthermore, its purposes were '[t]o restore a region from its present barbarism to its former classical greatness; to instruct [for its own benefit] the Orient in the ways of the modern West' through the formulation and systemization of knowledge about the region. This would, 'formulate the Orient, to give it shape, identity, definition with full recognition of its place in memory, its importance to imperial strategy, and its 'natural' role as an appendage of Europe'. In describing it in modern Occidental terms, the Orient is lifted from the 'realms of silent obscurity' and brought into the 'clarity of modern European science' (1978: 86). Processes of representation are, therefore, shown by Said as empowering the West, first in allowing it to articulate the East in the context of a hierarchy of cultures dominated by the West. Second, they served to highlight the 'sobriety and rationality of Occidental habits' contrasted with the 'bizarre jouissances' of the Orientals (1978: 87). Thus, Said presents the material power of the West supported by, and interwoven with, the power to project cultural representations presenting the West as a superior civilization.

Norms

As the discussion of representation and power suggests, normative qualities feature prominently in Said's conception of the West. He represents the deployment of norms by Western discourses as providing the grounds for a hierarchy in civilizational interaction. However, Said's discussion also highlights significant tensions between the norms of Western liberal humanism and Western imperialism. The significance that Said attaches to norms in constituting Western self-images is evident in both his discussions of Orientalism and imperialism. For instance, he describes Orientalism as 'a family of ideas' and a set of unifying values (1978: 41–2). The representations of the Orient that he discusses are loaded with normative assumptions that juxtapose inferior East to the West (1978: 46). For example, Lord Cromer (1908) is cited as characterizing Orientals as lethargic, suspicious, liars who 'in everything oppose the clarity, directness, and nobility of the Anglo-Saxon race' (1978: 39). Such 'essential knowledge', argues Said, reiterated over time acquired the status of scientific truth.

His observations suggest that through normative differentiation, the West constructed a positive self-image, but furthermore, normative differentiation helped justify Western power towards that region. For instance, Orientalism projected the East as irrational.¹⁹ In contrast, the West appears rational and capable of objective, ordered and scientific thought. The Orient is perceived as childlike, implying that the West is more mature and advanced. The Orient and Islam are perceived to be depraved, bloodthirsty and deceitful.²⁰ In contrast, the West represented through the Orientalist lens, sees itself to be virtuous and capable of subjugating emotions. Furthermore, the Orient's perceived lack of honesty implies a limited capacity to exercise the rule of law, producing traditionalist or despotic, rather than modern, liberal structures of government. The non-Western 'native' is perceived as indolent, therefore, needing the overlordship of the vigorous Westerner (Said, 1978: 40; 1993: 202–4, 307). All of these representations have strong normative overtones that both place the West on the moral high ground and, equally significantly, justify the exercise of Western power over the East on the grounds of the East's moral weakness.

Said also suggests that the West was further empowered through normative differentiation in representing the East as not only primitive, but incapable of self-driven change (Said, 1978: 298): 'The very possibility of development, transformation, human movement – in the deepest sense of the word – is denied the Orient and the Oriental.' (1978: 208) As Said notes, change, is often unilaterally equated with modernization, which in the twentieth century in particular, has frequently been associated with Westernization (1978: 304). Again, this places the West in a powerful position. It implies that the Orient can only change or develop under the guidance and tuition of the West (1978: 253, 298). Even in the work of

contemporary Oriental scholars, like Bernard Lewis, Said detects the view that the Orient can never improve itself or converge with the West until it comes to accept the Western way. If Said is correct, this places the East in a difficult position; it must come to terms with the West, yet is placed at a permanent disadvantage by its perceived lack of capacity to change. This effectively casts the asymmetrical relationship between East and West in stone, placing the West in permanent ascendancy.

Said's presentation of a Western self-image which encompasses normative differentiation is not limited to the imperial era, nor to Europe. He maintains that the perception that the East lacked the capacity for self-driven development continues in modern politics to bolster Western claims to global leadership. This is demonstrated as much by Henry Kissinger's conception of the need for more advanced societies to construct world order within these structures of thought as by American interventionism in the Gulf War and in Kosovo, where involvement is justified upon moral grounds (Said, 1978: 47; 1993: 357).²¹ In Kosovo, the grounds for intervention were the prevention of ethnic cleansing, however for Said, NATO's campaign was primarily a vehicle for a display of US power and military might (Said, 1998).

At the same time, his work highlights dichotomies in Western norms relating to perceptions and treatment of the non-West. These derive primarily from the converse pulls of liberal humanism and imperialism. One such dichotomy relates to respect for the individual that lies at the heart of Western liberal humanism. For many of the authors discussed in previous chapters, the norm of individualism is central to the West. Yet, as Frantz Fanon has commented, colonial discourses tended to conceive of the 'native' as part of a mass, a multitude, effectively dehumanizing, deindividuating the non-Westerner (Fanon, 1963: 43). Said similarly implies that the capacity of the West to view the Orient as inferior was facilitated by the tendency to always see the Arab as a collective entity (1978: 230, 252), depriving non-Westerners of the quality of individualism which is central to the Western normative framework.

His discussion of the nineteenth century emphasizes that Western colonial and imperial practices led to the domination rather than the emancipation of non-Western peoples. Although acknowledging some opposition to imperialism within Europe, for instance, from the Abolitionists, this is outweighed for him by a more powerful pro-imperial culture (1993: 201). Acceptance of empire and of racial superiority are perceived as components of 'structures of attitude and reference' underlying Western culture of this period (1993: 62):

If there was cultural resistance to the notion of an imperial mission, there was not much support for that resistance in the main departments of cultural thought. (1993: 96)

Furthermore, he suggests that 'structures of feeling' which accepted the need for empire could be found even among Western liberals, with Western humanism accepting and even rationalizing colonialism on the basis of 'the idea of Western salvation and redemption through its "civilising mission"' (1993: 158), echoing Kipling's image of the Indian as a poor creature needing British tutelage to save it from its own corruption and underdevelopment (1993: 202). Even progressive elements of society, such as intellectuals, workers and women's movements, argues Said, were penetrated by Euro-centrism and even an enthusiasm for empire (1993: 268). Despite recognizing movements in the nineteenth century which opposed the practices of empire, Said argues that there was little deeper questioning of the ontological status of European domination and no overall condemnation of imperialism until after uprisings in the imperial domains had become too significant to be ignored (1993: 289–91). Therefore, Said's own conception of the West presents humanist norms and institutions as not only failing to impede, but also coexisting with, imperial processes – a point that obviously troubles the author (1993: 97).

The failings of imperialism demonstrate one of Said's key criticisms of the West: its failure to live up to the Enlightenment norms of emancipation and equality. In Said's view, many Western cultural theories that aspire to universalism assume and incorporate racial inequality, the subordination of inferior cultures and the acquiescence of those who cannot represent themselves (1993: 335). He finds hidden imperialist assumptions and liberal paternalism in even the most radical of the Western intellectual movements. Western Marxism, the Frankfurt School and French theoreticians of the mid twentieth century, all are criticized for continuing to produce theories that aspire to universality but fail to see their own Eurocentricity (Said, 1993: 336). It is only recently, observes Said, that Westerners have realized that what they have to say about history and culture of 'subordinate' people is under challenge from those people themselves (1993: 235). In this context, Said shares something with Huntington who is also critical of the West's false universalism. Like Huntington, Said seeks from the West acknowledgement and, for Said, respect for other cultural norms. However, he stops short of complete cultural relativism in that he maintains a commitment to the underlying liberal humanist goals of equality and emancipation, despite the perceived failure of the West to uphold these values.

For Said, the deployment of norms in Western discourses is significant in both defining the West's self-image and providing the grounds for hierarchy in its relationship with the non-West. However, he also identifies important dichotomies in the norms of Western imperialism and Western liberal humanism, meaning the West applied different normative standards to itself and the non-West. This normative differentiation was facilitated by both spatial separation and essentialized images of the non-West.

Nevertheless, although Said is critical of the West's failure to pursue the normative traditions of liberal humanism in the context of the non-West, this does not lead him to dismiss these traditions

Institutions

As with norms, Said's discussion of the institutions of the West highlights his perception of the close relationship between power and representation. Throughout *Orientalism*, he argues the close intertwining of the ideas of Orientalism and the institutions of power: political, economic and social. Orientalism, he suggests, provided a framework for, not just a rationalization of, Western governance (1978: 6). Orientalism thus provided core assumptions, the 'furniture of empire', around which institutions of European governance formed as the West expanded its involvement in the East in the nineteenth century (Curzon quoted in Said 1978: 214). The 'institutional forms' of Western superiority included colonial governments, consular corps and commercial establishments (1978: 227). Therefore, unlike the preceding authors, Said identifies colonial institutions as characterizing the West. He closely links assumptions and representations of the non-West and the Orient with the formation of these institutions. However, these institutions themselves act to confirm the shape and character of the non-West as it became known to the West through discourses such as Orientalism. In this sense, for Said, the boundaries of the West and non-West are constantly enforced and reinforced through the interplay of discourse and interaction in these institutions.

While Said does not dwell on institutions such as the state, or law, he does refer to government as an indicator of significant difference, an institutional boundary between West and non-West. The West is represented as characterizing itself by liberal institutions, in particular by self-government, in contrast to the despotism and stagnation of Oriental government (Turner, 1989: 631). These assumptions are widespread, ranging from the conservative Chateaubriand proposing that Europe should teach the Orient about liberty: 'Of liberty they know nothing; of propriety they have none; force is their God' (1978: 172); to Marx's assumption that the replacement of Oriental despotism by British governance in India was a necessary stage in social revolution (1978: 153); to administrators such as Cromer and Balfour, suggesting that the Orient is unused to, and effectively incapable of, self-government (1978: 32–3, 228). Said's work suggests that the West's low opinion of non-Western governmental institutions rests upon a sense of differentiation which permits it to apply different standards and norms to the non-West to those applied within the West, facilitating the toleration of colonial and imperial institutions (1978: 33). It is founded on perceptions of the normative inferiority of the non-West. This further demonstrates the tensions perceived in Said's discussion of the normative

dimensions of the West, between the ideals of liberal humanism and the practices of imperialism.

Interaction between the West and non-West

The interaction between West and non-West that Said sketches entails two key features noted above: the employment of dialectical difference and the imperial strength of the West. The West's perception of difference acts as both a rationale and a normative element of its imperial power. Said portrays a relationship between West and non-West which is not fixed, but changes in response to the level of the West's involvement with the non-West and with the intellectual climate within the West. His West is not necessarily homogeneous, but it *is* consistent in maintaining a hierarchical relationship with the non-West (1993: 127).

Difference

Said's work highlights the employment of dialectical difference in constituting both non-West and West. The way in which the non-West is constituted is not constant, but varies according to relations between the societies and to shifts in intellectual trends in the West. Therefore, shifts in perceptions of difference appear driven as much, if not more, by trends within the West as the non-West.

Said portrays the West as differentiating itself through a variety of images of the non-West. These encompass images of the non-West as a romantic alternative to the modern West; as a threat to the West; and as inferior to the West. The Orient, argues Said, represents 'the other' close to hand, personifying for the West 'its cultural contestant and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other' (1978: 1). In the late eighteenth century, an image of the mysterious and beautiful but distant East inspired many Europeans. Under the influence of the Romantic movement, the Orient was looked upon as a source of regeneration for Europe, providing ways to overcome the materialism and mechanism of Occidental culture (Said, 1978: 115). The tendency to romantize the East as the exotic Other is for other commentators an important aspect of the West's relationship to the non-West, but it is not an aspect of Orientalism on which Said dwells (Fox, 1992; Kiernan, 1979). For him, this romanticism illustrates a recurrent tendency to view the Orient, not on its own terms, but in terms of what it could do for Europe. In this context, the East acts as 'therapy' for a spiritually depleted West, a tendency that continues today (Thomas, 1994).

Said's West is also differentiated through the recurrent image of the non-West, particularly the Orient, as a threat. Although the immediate threat posed by the Orient to the West receded, if not reversed, in the eighteenth century and nineteenth century, Said sees its legacy continuing to shape

European attitudes through to the present. He notes its revival this century with concerns regarding challenges posed by the Arab Revolts and demands for self-government, and by the 'yellow peril'; the apprehension that Europe might be overwhelmed by an unstable or expansionist Asia (1978: 251).²²

In *Orientalism*, he is conscious of the renewed sense of menace with which the West viewed the contemporary Arab world, heightened by the 1973 Arab–Israeli Wars and the Oil Crisis (1978: 286). American popular images of the Orient are perceived as sustaining essentialized, threatening representations; the sense that behind the dehumanized images of the scoundrel or the villain lurks the menace of *jihad*, the fear that Arabs or Muslims will take over the world (1978: 287). Much of *Culture and Imperialism* was written during the Gulf War. The text is permeated by Said's perception of this conflict sustaining the representations of threat and hostility that have characterized the West's relationship with the Arab world (1993: 42). Therefore, despite the West's sense of power, Said identifies a perception of vulnerability as an important part of its sense of identity.

At the same time, a third powerful and perhaps predominant sense of difference that appears in Said's analysis is that based on Western superiority. In both *Orientalism* and *Culture and Imperialism*, Said describes a West that assumes itself to be a superior culture and civilization (Said, 1978: 231; 1993: 96). The sense that the Orient is primitive and capable only of 'arrested development', rather than convergence with the West, confirms the Orient's continued inferiority and conversely Western superiority (1978: 234–5). Thus, the employment of dialectical difference in the West creates a non-West that is simultaneously threatening and inferior, providing an illustration perhaps of what Bhabha describes as the ambivalence of colonial discourse (1983: 18).

The integrity of the West

Despite identifying important continuities in discourse and interaction, Said's sense of the West's relationship with the non-West is not static. He marks changes in the nature of interaction, while reiterating an underlying sense of Western difference and superiority. These changes in the relationship stemmed both from differences in the degree and nature of Western involvement in the non-West and from shifting trends within the West.

Said's West is not homogeneous in respect of its involvement in the non-West with differences evident in both capabilities and attitudes within the West. For instance, he identifies significant variations between British and French perspectives on the Orient, attributed to the different imperial relationship that these countries maintained with the region. The British are described as having a stronger, territorial and proprietorial sense of the Orient, rooted in its extensive colonial possessions, particularly in the Near East. The French, with fewer possessions, are characterized as engaged in

'intellectual imperialism' whose most significant manifestation was the sense of the *mission civilisatrice* (1993: 205–6). In contrast to both, the United States had no direct colonial involvement in the Middle East, but has had substantial political, economic and military involvement with this region since the World War II.

Said's work also suggests that the grounds for rationalization of Western interaction with the non-West reflect changing political and intellectual currents within the West. As noted above, these shifted from the Romantic perception of the restorative nature of the Orient, to the 'scientific' perspective that justified the appropriation of one culture by a stronger one, as characterized by Napoleon's invasion of Egypt (1978: 42).²³ In the nineteenth century, Orientalism was influenced by trends ranging from positivism, Darwinism, Freudianism, Marxism to Spenglerism (1978: 43); and in the twentieth century, by a renewed humanism (1978: 256; 1993: 228). The West is perceived as constantly constructing and reconstructing the non-West in the context of competing views and varying societal conditions within the West. Yet, despite acknowledging the differing nature and shifting intellectual rationalizations of Western involvement in the non-West, Said argues that there were continuities in perceptions of self and other which provide cohesion to Western identity. However, there is a question as to the extent to which Said's West is a real and cohesive community.

Young (1990) raises the question of whether the Orient actually exists for Said. Although at times his criticism suggests that there is out there a more authentic Orient that Orientalism fails to represent, Said clearly argues that the Orient is a creation of the West, a projection of Western needs on the people of the Arab and Islamic worlds. It is not an empirical reality, 'an inert fact of nature'. If the Orient does not exist as an authentic community, what does this imply for its alter ego, the West? Does it exist as an authentic community? Said has at times described the West in highly abstract terms – 'a play of projections, doublings, idealisations and rejections of a complex, shifting otherness' (Clifford, 1988: 272).²⁴ It is undoubtedly perceived as a social construction:

... as both geographical and cultural entities – to say nothing of historical entities – such locales, regions, geographical sectors as 'Orient' and 'Occident' are man-made. (Said, 1978: 5)

However, to view the West as a social construction does not mitigate its authenticity, nor weaken its significance as a locale of power and domination, a site for producing and projecting representations such as the Orient. As Gregory comments, Said's world is one of both materialism and representations that are at once abstractions and densely concrete fabrications (Gregory, 1995: 476).

A second problem is Said's tendency to represent the West through generalizations that obscure complexities and contradictions within that imagined community. Although he rejects suggestions that the Orientalist perspective should be taken to represent the West as a whole (Said, 1995: 3), he does draw from it fundamental assumptions, concepts and practices which distinguish the West. Consequently, his work has been criticized for itself slipping into the practice of essentialization in articulating an all-inclusive 'Occidentalism' (Clifford, 1988: 271; Kennedy, 2000). Said has also been criticized for failing to convey any real sense of heterogeneity in the field of Orientalism (Driver, 1992).²⁵ Not all Orientalists shared the same visions and ideals. For instance, in the context of the British in India, Kopf (1980) identifies differences between Orientalists sympathetic to Indian culture, and Anglicists who sought to undermine it. From Said's perspective, these differences would be mitigated by both parties basically seeking the same ends via different means – the modernization of India (1993: 180). Furthermore, it could be argued that exceptions and points of difference can always be found within any generalized concept or category. However, as Driver points out, to ignore such differences limits our awareness of tensions and contradictions within Orientalism and, therefore, within the West (Driver 1992: 32–3; MacKenzie 1993). Consequently, despite the heterogeneity Said acknowledges in Western interests and involvement in the non-West, we are often left with a monolithic sense of the West. Admittedly, describing the West is not Said's primary goal, but his projection of a monolithic West is at odds with his declared intentions of dismantling such representations.

However, does the existence of differences within the West undermine Said's sense of an underlying Western imperial culture, or alter his perception of interaction? In the colonial and post-colonial contexts, the differences within the West appear as of less consequence than the gulf of power and expectations which separated the colonizer from the colonized, particularly when viewed through the eyes of the colonized. As noted above, for Said the West is fundamentally imperial, its primary relationship to the non-West is one of dominance, both in colonial and post-colonial eras. At this level, Said's West is united by its domination of the non-West.

Imperialism

The imperial relationship is the principal focus of Said's discussion of interaction between West and non-West and imperialism the principal lens through which Western writers viewed societies such as the Orient in his opinion (Said, 1978: 11, 204; 1993). In Said's West, perceptions of difference and superiority helped to rationalize and to constitute imperial power and were reinforced by increased involvement with the non-West in the late nineteenth century. What Said notes in *Orientalism* is a persistent sense of Europe's right to suzerainty over the weaker and weakening Orient

(1978: 179, 213), rationalized by the 'civilizing mission', which is itself fed by Western growth. Geographic expansion increased knowledge about other peoples and provided opportunities to employ that knowledge in their governance, producing in turn the rhetoric of the 'civilizing mission' (1993: 130).

While his analysis links discourses of difference to Europe's physical colonial expansion, Said sees little alteration in the underlying attitudes of inequality towards the non-West resulting from the West's withdrawal from empire. The non-West continues to be articulated by the West; the West continues to be seen as the central focus of history (Said, 1978: 238). However, he acknowledges a reassessment of the relationship, induced in part by challenges to Western authority brought on calls for self-government and the reduction in Western global suzerainty generated by World War I. This reassessment is also induced by a new humanism, generated in part, by the perceived weakening of the West's power. For instance, justification of Oriental studies shifted from the need for better management of the Orient, to the need to help the East recover 'its rightful place' in humanity. However, it was further justified as helping the West come to know itself better through knowledge of the East (1978: 256–7). Once again, this suggests for Said that the West's attitude to the non-West is shaped primarily by its own needs, the non-West remaining essentially a passive object of study. Furthermore, he suggests that the reassessment of West/non-West relations and even decolonization did not alter the underlying hegemonic assumptions. For Said, the West has been persistently unable or unwilling to acknowledge the rights of non-Western peoples to function outside Western tutelage (1993).

Furthermore, despite the decline of formal empire, Said perceives the West's enduring cultural hegemony as sustaining influence over the non-West. Here, Said is not only referring to elements of structural power that Bull and Watson also acknowledge. He also suggests that the West retains the capacity and disposition to intervene in the affairs of the non-West. This implies that interaction continues to be shaped by imperial discourses. The medium for these discourses, however, has shifted, with a less formal but no less powerful American imperium supplementing, then succeeding, European empire (1978: 285; 1993: 7). Despite its limited colonial possessions, Said places United States' foreign policy clearly into the tradition of imperialism, expressed through intervention (1993: xxvi, 64, 357). As Said suggests, its sense of manifest destiny can be perceived as a civilizing mission, projected in the form of the rule of law and the maintenance of order rather than a standard of civilization (1993: 344–67). Despite its limited colonial experience, Said suggests the United States employed Orientalist assumptions in its growing involvement in that region in the twentieth century (1978: 285–328). Through this medium, Said suggests that Orientalist perception have been perpetuated in the post-colonial era.

A second medium through which he suggests these images have been perpetuated is through their internalization by the Arab world itself. He portrays the East as deeply implicated in the Western Orientalist system, through its attachment to the market system and to Western ideas about modernization, progress and culture: 'the modern Orient, in short, participates in its own Orientalising' (Said, 1978: 325). Therefore, Said's discussion suggests that, while direct Western power has declined, imperialist discourses that project Western cultural hegemony continue to dominate interaction in the post-colonial world. This implies that interaction is still shaped by discourses that entail a hierarchical view of cultural world order, with the West at its peak, despite the appearance of equality that the institutions of modern world politics provide.

Conclusion

Said's conception of the West stands in marked contrast to those previously discussed. As noted above, it is a conception that operates at two levels. The first entails Said's representation of how the West saw itself, as illustrated by the discourses of Orientalism and imperialism. At a second level, Said himself represents the West, focusing on it primarily as an imperialist entity. Imperialism is only lightly touched upon by most of the preceding scholars. It is incorporated into the International Society perspective, but it lies at the very heart of Said's conception. This does not mean that Said does not acknowledge liberal dimensions of the West, but these are perceived as coexisting in tension with imperialism. The liberal West, therefore, fundamentally lacks integrity in Said's conception.

Similarly, assumptions about the cultural world order emerge at two levels. That which emerges from the West's own representations, as seen by Said, is characterized by civilizational hierarchy with the West at the apex. On a second level, however, Said's own perspective rejects the efficacy of hierarchy, seeing instead multiple civilizations existing within a broader community of humanity. Therefore, while Said's own perspective is a pluralist one, it differs from Spengler's in seeing humanity as ultimately forming a single community. However, at another extreme, it also contrasts with that of Fukuyama in that Said rejects the idea of the West as a universal civilization. Curiously, Said's suggestion that the universalism of the West masks its dominance of other civilizations resonates strongly with Huntington's position on this issue.

Finally, the history of interaction within the cultural world order is seen to emerge differently at these two levels. The West's self-representation implies that interaction between West and non-West has been a positive process of development and enlightenment. Said's own perspective suggests, in contrast, a history of domination of the non-West, facilitated by and reflected in, Western practices of designating space, and of representing

other races and religions as inferior. Interaction is critical to Said's conception of the West. The West's impact on other societies is not incidental as in Spengler, or a challenge as in Toynbee, or developmental as in Fukuyama. Like Bull, Said understands the interaction between the expanding West and other societies as a process that helped to constitute the West. But whereas Bull considers how the institutions and structures are produced by this process, Said focuses on its constitution of the intellectual and representational dimensions of Western identity and power. Said's West is an imagined community which is constituted through the reiteration of assumptions of self and other which acquire the status of truth over time.

The use of genealogical methods and historical perspectives are critical to his presentation of conceptions of the West. He places the contemporary West in a historical context to identify continuities in assumptions and perceptions. However, unlike Toynbee, his is not a broad macrohistory, either of the West or of cultural interaction. Said selectively focuses on texts and instances of civilizational encounter in the context of European imperialism and its aftermath. Said's discussion of the West does not dwell on the details of the material society; these are assumed. Instead it focuses on the ideas, assumptions and knowledge constructions that constitute its material or 'objective' boundaries. He attaches great importance to the norms and values that differentiate the West from other civilizations. However, while all authors discussed have identified important normative and institutional boundaries for the West, Said's interpretation of these boundaries is infinitely more critical. He does not see these as the symptoms or agents of progress or spiritual growth, but as tools used to reinforce the West's image of its own superiority and legitimate its dominance of the non-West. These normative and material boundaries are perceived, not just as phenomena of the imperial past, but as remaining part of the popular culture and politics of the twentieth century, unconsciously replicated in many aspects of Western society. In this, Said highlights the role of ideas and norms as important vehicles for perpetuation and reproduction of civilizational identities.

Ultimately, Said's representation and conception of the West are dominated by a sense of its power. Interaction is perceived as shaped by inequalities of power. In contrast to Spengler, Toynbee, Huntington and even Bull, he does not regard the West's power as under serious threat. In fact, his analysis of the West's self-image suggests that perceptions of threat have significantly enhanced the West's sense of cohesion and identity. In contrast, his conception presents a community that retains a huge capacity to dominate other civilizations.

Although his work is critical of Western domination, it does not reject the influences of the West wholesale. Instead, he draws on core Enlightenment ideas, such as emancipation and equality, in criticizing the West's engagement with the non-West. One aspect of this criticism per-

tains to the Euro-centricity of Western perspectives, a quality this study has observed in the work of many of the preceding authors. In contrast, Said turns Euro/Western-centricism on its head and makes it an object of investigation.

Said does not present as clear a framework for the future as that found in the work of Huntington or Fukuyama. However, he does suggest a way of understanding world politics from the perspective of those outside the West that accentuates the significance of knowledge and representation to relationships. Furthermore, placing contemporary interaction into an imperialist historical framework, his work suggests that, despite institutions such as sovereign equality, significant inequalities and assumptions of hierarchy remain in world politics. He also identifies features that could enhance future interaction, such as mutual respect between cultures, while maintaining an underlying respect for broad human goals. In this respect, Said advocates a form of multiculturalism in world politics that respects rather than domesticates difference under the rubric of a broader cultural hegemony. Here Said is evidently more optimistic than many of his critics in his belief that non-hegemonic universal norms can be negotiated. The conduct of such a dialogue implicitly requires not only the recognition of the equality of all parties in their current relationships, but an acknowledgement of the traumas and suspicions that relationships of inequality in the past have created. Perhaps Said himself best articulates the balance he seeks in this cultural world order:

No one can deny the persisting continuities of long traditions, sustained habitations, national languages, and cultural geographies, but there seems no reason except fear and prejudice to keep insisting on their separation and distinctiveness, as if that was all human life was about. Survival in fact is about the connections between things. (Said, 1993: 408)

Conclusion: Continuities and Difference: Conceptions of the West and Cultural World Order Compared

At the outset, this study recognized a growing interest in the role of civilizational and cultural identities among International Relations scholars. Assessing the role of such identities presents tremendous challenges. This is in no small part due to their complex nature. Civilizational and cultural identities are a blend of perceptions of history and tradition, of representation and normative commitments, all subject to interpretation. The breadth of scope and ethereal qualities of these identities can incline us towards reducing their complexity through simplified representations. However, this study does not dismiss but explores the complexity of civilizational identity and its implications. It has focused on one, critical civilizational identity in world politics – the West, a conception widely employed to refer to a group of societies and states that has dominated world politics and whose ideas and experiences have shaped International Relations.

The study has not sought to identify a single, authentic representation of this entity, nor to portray the West as a static or homogeneous community. As is true of discussions of culture in general, there is no one account of what constitutes the West. Through examining a variety of conceptions, the study has demonstrated complexity, contingency and dynamism entailed in these conceptions. It has also identified significant relationships between these conceptions and broader perceptions about the nature of the cultural world order. These, it suggests, have significant implications for considering the possibilities for interaction in world politics.

Civilizational frameworks

The study demonstrates that the West is not conceived of simply as a territory or a racial community, or defined purely through distinctive political institutions. These factors contribute to the identity of the West, but it is generally conceived of as a broad cultural and normative community. Conceptions of the West are not formed in isolation, but in the context of

assumptions about the composition and nature of interaction between different civilizational identities in world politics which are defined here as 'the cultural world order'. Our understanding of International Relations theory can be enriched by reflection on how our perceptions of world politics are framed by assumptions about the cultural world order, in particular, the way in which we conceive of the West and its role in relation to other civilizational identities. These assumptions are not uniform, but reflect a variety of historical and intellectual influences. They help to shape an image of the world and frame perceptions of what is feasible and desirable in interaction with other peoples.

The study has examined conceptions represented in the work of a variety of scholars drawn from different periods of the twentieth century and from different schools of thought. These illustrate a range of important perspectives on what critical qualities constitute the West, and of the role of the West in world politics. Comparison of these conceptions has produced interesting differences and parallels. Important differences are evident regarding perceptions of the nature of civilizations and of the course of human development that contribute to perceptions of the cultural world order and of the role of the West within it. Surprising parallels have been identified between particular authors of the early era and certain contemporary authors, and radical differences between authors from the same era. For instance, one of the most radical perspectives which rejects conceptions of progress and the unity of mankind, and presents the West as a late or postmodern civilization in a culturally fragmented world comes not from the radical critic Edward Said, but from the early twentieth-century historian, Oswald Spengler. Moreover, strong parallels can be drawn between the perhaps postmodern conception of cultural world order found in Spengler with that found in the work of the conservative American scholar, Samuel Huntington. This suggests that conceptions of the West are not simply shaped by the influence of the era in which they are framed, but are also significantly shaped by the intellectual and normative concerns of the particular author.

Two significant threads can be identified in these perceptions of civilization. The first is the perception of civilization as a process, a movement towards an ideal that encompasses all humanity in a process of progressive historical development. The second perceives civilizations as a plurality of separate communities pursuing independent histories. Francis Fukuyama's conception of the West, for instance, is strongly influenced by the perception of the West as at the forefront of a universal, civilizing process. In contrast, both Spengler and Huntington analyse the West as a distinct community within a cultural world order characterized by separate and largely incommensurable civilizations. Other scholars, such as Wight, Bull and, ultimately, Toynbee engage elements of both perspectives in their analysis of the West, blending a sense of universal progress with the interaction of a plurality of civilizations, resulting in a cultural world order

which implies a hierarchy of civilizations. Said's personal perspective, as distinct from his representation of Western perspectives, recognizes a plurality of civilizations, but also acknowledges the importance of their existing within a broader human community. There is a marked tendency in all the texts to conceive of the West, or argue it conceives of itself, at the apex of a technical and normative hierarchy.

The perception of the nature of interaction between civilizations within the cultural world order is significant, since it can lead to expectations that civilizations will remain independent, or suggest that they may ultimately converge. Interaction can be perceived of as primarily conflictual or cooperative. These contrasting expectations are most marked in the work of Fukuyama and Huntington. For Fukuyama, there is a sense of humanity gradually converging on a model of modernization. For Huntington, differences between civilizations are becoming more marked as the sense of cohesion within them develops. In contrast to both, Said appears to reject both the sense of civilizational hierarchy or convergence and the representation of civilizations as necessarily segregated, hostile and incommensurable. These expectations have important implications for analysis of the role of the West and the future of interaction in world politics.

The authors' varying conceptions of the nature of civilizations are related in part to their conceptions of history. For Fukuyama, history is clearly directional and progressive, for Spengler, it is cyclical, as is the growth and decline of civilizations. Toynbee understands human history and, therefore, the history of civilizations, as moving in waves. However, within the history of individual civilizations, he identifies patterns of growth and decay. The International Society authors have a mixed view – Wight identifies ineluctable patterns in the conflictual history of humanity, yet simultaneously senses progress in the evolution of the structures of International Society. A sense of broader human progress is more evident in Bull's work, although this progress continues to be perceived within the constraints of power politics. Conceptions of cultural world order, therefore, are related in a significant way, to conceptions of whether world history is progressive or cyclical, whether it can be seen as a unified or integrated process in any meaningful way.

The authors also vary in the scope and depth of their historical analysis, Toynbee painting a broad and detailed historical canvas of which the West was an important, but fairly recent component. Spengler's discussion of the West also ranges over an extensive historical period. Neither viewed the history of the West as synonymous with that of mankind, both placed it in a broader historical and cultural context which challenged the optimistic assumptions of many contemporaries and predecessors, particularly assumptions about the West as engaged in infinite progress. In contrast, Fukuyama and Huntington's conceptions of the West are cast largely within the context of modern European and American history. Their con-

temptation of other, non-Western cultures lacks depth. The International Society authors focus primarily on the evolution of the West and its expansion. While their historical analysis is deeper than that of Huntington or Fukuyama, their histories of other civilizations are also constructed primarily in relation to that of the West. The Western-centricity of these perspectives is highlighted by Said's approach which accentuates a tradition of imperialism in Western culture, using a history of this discourse to show how representations supporting domination of the West over the non-West evolve over time.

The historical perspectives of the various scholars are significantly linked to their assumptions about the possibility for progress and change in world politics. Fukuyama's Hegelian view of history clearly suggests the possibility of not only change, but also progress. This is a possibility which Spengler emphatically rejects at the level of human community. Civilizations may achieve a measure of progress within the context of their own evolution but, much like any organic entity, their progress is finite and bound to lead to decay. Toynbee views progress within civilizations as possible, but usually finite, although he holds out some hope for reversing the process of decay. Ultimately, he suggests true progress can be achieved, but at the transcendental rather than the temporal level. Huntington's perception of the cultural world order implies change though not progress, but his discussion of Western political institutions implies the possibility of political progress.

We can identify two dimensions to progress appearing throughout this literature. There is material progress which all the authors recognize as a major feature of the West. For Fukuyama, this is a significant element in modernization and the achievement of the universal, rational state. However, material progress is not uniformly viewed as positive or infinite. Both Spengler and Toynbee are pessimistic about the long-term impact of technological progress both on the physical environment, on the human spirit. They, therefore, view material progress as a source of strength but also as a potential source of Western destruction. These concerns, voiced in an earlier era, sound strangely prescient in the late twentieth century. The second dimension of progress is that of moral or normative progress. Here, only Spengler is totally negative regarding the potential for human progress, the other scholars all acknowledging the potential for progress at some level and the seeds of normative or spiritual progress in Western society or thought. For Toynbee, the most significant aspect of a civilization's growth is the spiritual process of self-realization. Fukuyama also highlights the central role of moral and ideological growth in civilizational evolution. Wight and Bull's work suggests that the Western-based international society has achieved some measure of progress in mediating the impact of conflict in world politics. Even Said implies some faith in the potential for progress in the broader human community based on the ideals articulated in the European Enlightenment.

Perceptions of the nature of civilizations, of history and of progress provide the foundations for the construction of a cultural world order, the crucial context for civilizational interaction. The authors' understandings of the sources of civilizational interaction also vary greatly. Spengler views civilizations as organic entities, their internal life forces and characters providing the source of action and interaction. Toynbee views the impetus for change and growth emanating from responses to challenges thrown up by other civilizations, the environment or by processes of development within a civilization. The International Society scholars describe the interdependent evolution of a system, with structures that stem from within civilizations and evolve historically; these structures become part of civilizational evolution and interaction and, eventually, the framework for inter-civilizational interaction. For Fukuyama, ideas are the source of action which shapes the material world; the drive to achieve the perfect, rational society is the force for change. In contrast, Huntington conveys a more 'Hobbesian' image of civilizational interaction, the units within the cultural world order being independent and aggressively seeking security and power. Said's own cultural world order encompasses a singular human community, with the interaction between smaller units deeply affected by frequency of interaction and by power differentials. Assumptions about the dynamics of interaction therefore vary widely across different conceptions, as does the degree of conflict or co-operation envisaged.

The significance attached to civilizational interaction also varies across perspectives. For Spengler and Huntington, for instance, interaction is significant and challenging, but not a process which defines or drives the West. Yet to others, interaction is critical in shaping the West's identity. Toynbee sees the challenges which interaction with other more powerful civilizations posed as formative in the West's evolution. For Bull and Watson, interaction with other civilizations was one of the processes through which the West internationalized its structures and institutions and enhanced its power and status. From a very different perspective, Said also sees the West defining its own identity on an ongoing basis through interaction with, and representation of, non-Western peoples.

Therefore, each of these authors presents a distinct image of cultural world order. The most significant areas of difference and commonality perhaps lie in perceptions of human progress, and regarding levels of human diversity. These images of the cultural world order provide the context within which conceptions of the West can be understood. But at the same time, it should be recognized that in each of these bodies of work, the West plays a central role, such that assumptions about the West may in turn help to shape perceptions of both the desired and the possible cultural world order.

Conceptions of the West

In many respects, a sense of the West as a clearly identified entity emerges from this survey, with many points of commonality in the way its identity and history are perceived. This provides some sense of continuity regarding who and what constitutes the West within the different perspectives. However, each presents a complex and multilayered conception of the West which provides a distinct interpretation of objective features of the West. Each conception also entails a strong, normative dimension which again demonstrates variation in emphasis and interpretation. While objective, material criteria are utilized by all in their conceptions, it is the various meanings with which these are inscribed that gives substance to the identity of this imagined community. The essential features each conception reflects are the different contexts in which these representations were produced. However, the variation in conceptions of the West produced in the same era, such as that between Bull and Said, or between Huntington and Fukuyama, suggest that intellectual and normative influences also significantly shape these conceptions.

Territorial boundaries

When we begin to reflect on who and what constitutes the West, the conception of the West as a location is possibly the first quality that springs to mind. Yet, as noted in the introduction, opinions on the physical location of the boundaries of the West vary widely. Each of these texts views Western Europe and the United States as constituting the territorial heartland of the West. Russia is generally, but not always, excluded. For instance, Said appears to treat nineteenth-century Russia as part of the imperial West, but it is clearly excluded from the West by Spengler, Toynbee, Fukuyama and Huntington. An implicit sense of the territorial expansion of the West emerges from all the texts, but this is linked, not just to the spread of European peoples or even ideas, but also to the deep inculcation of European norms and institutions into the structures of societies outside of Europe. For instance, the International Society authors equate the expansion of the West, prior to the creation of a global International Society, with the expansion, not so much of the European state system, but of European international society to colonies such as North America.

The authors vary in their interpretation of the role of the United States as the territorial focus of the West. For the American authors it is very much the focus; for the others, the focus shifts over time from Europe, or in Spengler's case, Germany, to the United States as the balance of material power shifts in the twentieth century or, for Spengler, as the civilization begins to decay. There is also an interesting variation in the perception of

the relationship between the community and the geography of the West. For Spengler and Toynbee, land and environment critically shape the West's character. For other authors, the occupation and inscription of territory and boundaries is more significant, particularly Said for whom geography and power are intrinsically linked. In this respect, the perception of geography found in Said, and even in Huntington, is strongly political; the relationship of community to land more socially and historically constituted than organic. Therefore, in none of these conceptions is the West perceived as purely a location, but in each, locating the West is profoundly political.

For each, the geography of the West is, in important respects, historically and socially constituted, but interpretations of these processes of constitution vary across interpretations and across time. This raises interesting questions with regard to what conceptions of the West exist today in the post Cold War environment. For instance, it raises questions about conceptions of the relationship between the West and Europe which is progressively reestablishing broader geographical boundaries.

Religious boundaries

There is a clear sense in all of these conceptions of religion playing a critical but complex role in defining the West. The legacy of religious identity is commonly perceived as both differentiating the West and providing a source of normative cohesion. However, interpretations of the role and nature of religion vary. For instance, for Spengler, religion is not a universal force, but particular to each culture, whereas for Toynbee, religion becomes a progressive force which has the capacity to save the West and mankind in general.

Religion, and Christianity in particular, are broadly perceived as providing the political and normative foundations for the West as a community. First and foremost, Christianity differentiated members of this community from neighbouring people of other faiths, primarily Islam. The confrontational relationship with Islam is widely perceived as a defining one for the West. Toynbee, however, also highlights the importance of the growing rift between Western Christendom and the Eastern Orthodox community as enhancing the sense of a distinct Western community. Differentiation from the outside is based on a sense of common interests and values within, and Huntington stresses the significance of common Christian values as fundamental to the modern West. Wight and Toynbee, however, further highlight the foundations provided for the modern Western states-system in the political institutions of the society of Christian states which evolved under the papacy.

Christianity is also widely perceived as helping to shape the character of the West. Spengler emphasizes the strength of individualism which characterizes Christianity, and in particular, early Catholicism which for him pro-

vides the quintessence of Western religion. Wight links the universalism and missionary spirit of the Christian faith with European expansion. Fukuyama and Huntington accentuate the socio-economic dimension of religious influence, noting the relationship between Christianity and the institutions of democracy and capitalism, but in marked contrast to Spengler, they treat the character of the Protestant rather than the Catholic faith as the most significant influence. The conceptions of the West found in Bull and Watson, and which Said critiques, provide a further slant on the role of religion, accentuating the perception of Christianity as not only distinguishing the West, but also providing a superior faith. From this perspective, religion both distinguishes and normatively empowers the West. It not only differentiates the West, but also contributes to perceptions of a hierarchical cultural world order.

However, the West is widely perceived as being distinguished, not only by the qualities of Christianity, but also by its treatment of religion. Secularism, or the removal of religion from the public sphere, is variously applauded and criticized by the authors under review, but all recognize its role in distinguishing the West. For Toynbee, the rise of secularism marks the West's transition from the medieval to the modern. Whereas Spengler treats the rise of secularism as a sign of the spiritual atrophy of the West, for Huntington and Fukuyama it marks the political progressiveness of the West in comparison to other civilizations. Said, however, accentuates the continuities between the secular and religious West in his argument that the secular culture continued to employ the perceptions of superiority towards Islam and the non-Christian world developed within the religious culture. For all these authors, therefore, the religious identity of the West provides crucial foundations for modern Western civilization, but in different ways.

Racial boundaries

The American theorists and activist, William Edward Du Bois famously argued: 'The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the colour line.' (Quoted in Vitalis, 2000) However, consideration of the impact and role of race is often absent from reflection in International Relations (Doty, 1993; Vincent, 1984b; Vitalis, 2000). In reflecting on the conceptions of the West in world politics surveyed here, it is interesting to note that none of the scholars discussed perceives the West primarily as a racial community, or employs notions of racial superiority based on biological factors. However, all implicitly recognize or employ race as an important source of differentiation. This is most explicit in Spengler and Toynbee who both discuss racial differences between the West and other peoples as of importance. This is strongest in Spengler who identifies an organic link between 'blood', land and community, defining Western peoples as members of the 'Faustian' race. Bull and Said, however, bring to light the politics of race;

that is the way in which during the nineteenth century, as Western economic and imperial power became more pronounced, race was increasingly perceived as accentuating difference and hierarchy between West and non-West. In Bull and Watson's work, race provides a barrier, first between members of European international society and those outside, and then within the multiracial international society, separating West from non-West. For Said, assumptions of racial superiority helped legitimize the practices of imperialism. Here again then, as with perceptions of religious boundaries, racial boundaries help constitute a conception of a hierarchical cultural world order.

The role of race is least explicit in Fukuyama and Huntington, but it is not absent. Racial differentiation appears as something of an anomaly in Fukuyama's West, an anachronistic legacy of the past which should pass once Western society perfects the implementation of its ideology of equality. In Huntington, there is little discussion or approval of racial differentiation. However, he stresses the importance of blood ties, defined as ethnicity, in forming identity and generating conflict. He demonstrates serious concerns about threats to the cultural homogeneity of the West emanating primarily from the influx but non-integration of different ethnic groups. His concerns about challenges to the West from other civilizational groups also echo those expressed by Spengler and Toynbee regarding the threats the 'coloured' races of the world present to the West. This raises the question of whether race is a latent element in his conception of the West. Therefore, although it is often implicit, racial boundaries contribute both to a sense of the West's identity and to its powerful position in each of these conceptions.

Power

The role which power plays in these conceptions is also complex. All perceive the West as a civilization of unprecedented power with Western technical ingenuity underlying its capacity to expand geographically, and to project military force, economic enterprise and political institutions. The components of power, however, are variously perceived. For most, they encompass technical and material capability based on the scientific and industrial revolutions of Europe which Toynbee and Bull discuss as allowing the West to unite the world within a single technical framework. Although none of the conceptions canvassed here focus on the West constituted fundamentally as an economic entity, Fukuyama, more than the others, emphasizes the economic dimension of the West's power. It is its material capability enhanced by the development of capitalism which for him has provided the most efficient model for development and modernization. In marked contrast, Spengler treats capitalism and the materialism of which it is a symptom as a sign of atrophy in Western civilization. Huntington shifts the focus on material capabilities elsewhere. He acknowl-

edges, but does not explore the economic dimensions of Western power. Rather he suggests that the core of Western power *vis à vis* other civilizations is based on its capacity for organized violence. Military capability is perceived as the foundation of the West's 'hard power'.

However, there is a further dimension to the West's power which permeates all the texts, this is what Huntington describes as 'soft power' and what others would describe as cultural hegemony (Cox, 1983), that is power derived from culture or ideology. This includes the institutional resources which play such a significant role in Wight and Bull's conception of the power of the West: that is, the West is perceived as deriving influence from the globalization of structures and institutions developed in Western Europe. These, while global in scope, reflect and therefore privilege Western interests, since underlying these institutional structures are Western ideas and values. But it is Said who accentuates the cultural hegemony of Western ideas as critical. For Huntington, this hegemony is simply correlated to the West's military and economic capabilities, 'soft power' built upon 'hard power'. But for Said, cultural hegemony is deeply interwoven with the construction and projection of Western authority over the non-West. Western power, perceived as imperial in nature, is not only supported but also constructed by the deployment of favourable representations of the West in contrast to the non-West. Hard power is, therefore, perceived as interwoven with 'soft power'.

Therefore, we sense throughout this survey the West deriving power from the strength of its inner resources as well as its external capacity. In Spengler's work, this entails a sense that Western power is based on a questing and inquiring spirit; for Toynbee, on the West's ability to meet challenges; for Fukuyama on perceptions of the moral legitimacy of the Western system of governance.

Although all the scholars discussed view the West's power as unprecedented, all except Said discuss it as under threat of diminution. Most interesting is that while the West is perceived as threatened by encroachment from without by, for instance, Spengler and Huntington, nearly all seem equally concerned about threats to Western cohesion and stability emanating from within. Spengler's organic conceptualization of the West presents it as approaching exhaustion in its life-cycle. Features which to others represent Western progress, such as technology and capitalism, are viewed as symptomatic of decline. Toynbee is also concerned that the material capacity of the West masks its spiritual depletion. In some respects, Spengler and Toynbee echo the fear of earlier authors such as John Stuart Mill on the debilitating effects of cultural atrophy, of *ennui* and complacency, which can weaken a developed civilization. As noted above, both also demonstrate fear of the negative physical and spiritual consequences of the spread of technology.

Fukuyama also identifies potential internal sources of Western decline, but for him these are the destructive tendencies which the mediocrity of a

system of perfect equality and recognition of all citizens could engender. Huntington fears Western complacency and weakening normative cohesion, calling upon the West to consolidate its existing power. Although Bull and Watson also observe the weakening of the West's capacity to directly control the affairs of non-Western societies, their discussion of institutional structures implies that the West retains a large degree of indirect global influence. This, however, is also perceived as under challenge from increasingly assertive non-Western societies, threatening to undermine the institutions and norms of the Western-based international society. Said stands out in his representation of Western power as neither benign nor fading, but still capable of threatening and dominating other peoples. Therefore, the West's power is perceived as finite, although as Said's work implies, it remains substantial.

It is interesting to reflect, therefore, that the spirit of declinism became more evident in the late twentieth century, permeating even the most optimistic of conceptions of the West. This spirit was not new, but reflects an ongoing anxiety, evident in earlier conceptions, about the excess and complacency that strength and superiority can breed. At the same time, Said's perspective reminds us that perceptions of diminishment are relative and very much conditioned by where the commentator stands in the international system.

Norms

While all the factors discussed above have a significant role in each of the conceptions discussed, it is also evident that it is the meaning attributed to material and objective factors that give substance to each of these conceptions of the West. The conceptions examined all entail a strong normative dimension. For most, norms are fundamental in distinguishing the West from others and providing it with a sense of commonality within. Furthermore, norms contribute substantially to establishing an implicit sense of hierarchy, with Western norms and values perceived, not only as different, but also often as superior to those of other societies. The identification and interpretation of the West's key norms reveals points of commonality between authors from very different eras and perspectives, such as between Toynbee and Huntington, and points of difference between contemporaries such as Fukuyama and Huntington.

A number of fundamental qualities are identified with the West across the broad spectrum of these conceptions. These include individualism, rationality, freedom and equality. These norms reflect the ideals of the European Enlightenment and the French and American Revolutions, which symbolize for most of the authors the degree of normative development achieved by the West. However, the interpretation of their significance varies. For Fukuyama, they are elements of man's broader moral progress, a belief also implicit in Bull; for Huntington, in contrast, these qualities dis-

tinguish Western, but not necessarily human progress. However, his work still suggests these demonstrate the West to be the most advanced civilization. For Spengler, however, the norms of the Enlightenment are neither permanent nor universal, but symptomatic of the West's ebbing spirituality and gradual decline.

Spengler's position reminds us that conceptions of the West are not based solely on norms derived from Enlightenment thought, that 'the West' draws upon a broader range of traditions and thought, that include non-liberal as well as liberal traditions. This raises the question as to whether there are certain norms that are essential to the constitution of the West? Or are norms primarily expressions of societal values preminent at particular points in time? While norms are critical to the conception of the West found in both Spengler and Toynbee, these are represented as aspects of the West's deeper spiritual identity which are subject to adaptation as the civilization meets the challenges of its evolution. For authors such as Fukuyama, Huntington and Wight, the norms noted above appear more deeply ingrained in the evolved identity of the modern West.

Therefore, significant points of tension between different conceptions add complexity to our sense of the normative coherence of the West. This complexity is further enhanced by tensions *within* a number of these conceptions. In Spengler and Fukuyama, both of whom were influenced by Nietzsche, there is a consciousness of tension between commitments to respect for the individual and commitments to the community. Fukuyama further grapples with the constraints which the norm of equality can place on that of individual freedom. However, it is Said who points most clearly to tensions and ambiguities between the liberal norms outlined above and the history and traditions of domination found in his own conception of the West. In this, liberal norms coexisted with those that legitimated imperialism, a coexistence facilitated by the spatial separation between the metropolitan West and its empires.

A further significant factor facilitating the coexistence of liberal and imperialist norms is the assumption of a normative and civilizational hierarchy which is implicit in many of these conceptions. Bull and Watson, along with Said, suggest that the West increasingly saw itself as not only different from, but as more advanced than, non-Western peoples. For Said, the West's perception of itself as normatively superior empowered it, helping to legitimate policies and attitudes of imperialism which are central to his conception of the West. However, the perception of Western normative superiority is not confined to readings of nineteenth-century history. There is an implicit sense of a normative hierarchy evident within the work of a number of the authors discussed. For Wight, for instance, the norms which characterize Western constitutional government present a *via media* between the extremes of *realpolitik* and revolution. For Huntington and Fukuyama, the West's victory over the communist system is one achieved in the moral as much as the material arena.

Therefore, norms both distinguish and empower the West. Norms are further viewed as providing a platform for cohesion within the West. Wight and Bull suggest normative consensus was foundational to European international society, the institutional framework for the evolution of the West. It is clearly evident in Fukuyama's discussion of the moral and ideological evolution of the West in contrast to communism; but it is particularly well emphasized in Huntington's work. The importance which he attaches to norms as a source of Western cohesion is accentuated by his concern with the diminution of Western normative cohesion, a threat emanating from sources such as unassimilated migrants and the advocates of multiculturalism. However, this position may be a little deceptive since it elides the tensions in Western normative traditions alluded to above. Huntington's perception of normative cohesion might be achieved by selecting only certain norms and values and representing those as the authentic West at the expense of others.

Therefore, Western norms are perceived by all as a crucial element of the West's identity, and by some as suggesting the West is a more progressive and advanced civilization. However, Western norms are not uniformly perceived as positive, nor as providing the foundation for global norms. This is perhaps one of the more surprising findings from this survey, given the global expansion and promotion of Western political norms. Central to Huntington's argument is the perception that the norms and values of the West are what make it unique, not universal. He, like Spengler and Toynbee, demonstrates scepticism about the possibility of transferring norms evolved in one cultural context to another in anything other than a superficial manner. Toynbee suggests the practice can have results which are both unpredictable and potentially damaging for the new host, weakening its own cohesion. These concerns stand in contrast to Fukuyama's more positive perspective which clearly suggests that the West has evolved norms which are universal, representing the moral progress of humanity as a whole, and to the International Society authors who suggest that Western norms have achieved some measure of successful universalization, providing a normative framework for modern world politics. At one level, Said clearly rejects that the West provides a universal and egalitarian world model. Like Spengler, Toynbee and Huntington, his work reflects a deep suspicion that the projection of Western norms as universal is misleading. Yet at another level, he is committed to the norms of emancipation and enlightenment. However, we receive from him a sense that these norms transcend the West and are not synonymous with it. This is made clear by his argument that the West has failed to live up to these ideals due to its imperialist traditions.

Although essential normative qualities may be commonly identified across this range of perspectives, variations in their interpretations are

significantly linked to perceptions of the West as a civilizational identity and to its perceived role in the cultural world order.

Institutions

In its discussion of perceptions of institutions which characterize the West, this study has focused primarily on perceptions of political institutions. Most of the conceptions discussed focus on liberal institutions, such as constitutional and democratic institutions and those of the rule of law, as most characteristic of the West, but again, interpretations of their role and nature varies. For Fukuyama, Wight and Huntington, Western institutions imply a more advanced system of governance. In contrast, Spengler recognizes that institutions of representative government characterize the West, but he treats these as symptomatic of the degeneration of leadership rather than as evidence of progress. He also recognizes the state as the central institution of the West, but perceives it as an organic rather than constitutional entity. For Toynbee, the sovereign state and parliamentary democracy are central to the West's identity and success; but their value is treated as something transitory and there is a strong sense that, as parochial institutions in an increasingly interconnected world, they are becoming redundant and inhibiting future growth. Said also acknowledges the value placed by the West on liberal institutions of governance, but again highlights that these coexisted with institutions of colonialism and imperialism which were equally important aspects of the West.

The International Society authors in particular emphasize the role of institutions in both the West's evolution and in the constitution of its power. The sovereign state, international law, diplomacy and the balance of power are treated as institutions that distinguished the West, but also became vehicles for its universalization. However, in other conceptions we find concerns raised, particularly by Toynbee and then by Huntington, about the feasibility of the successful transfer of Western institutions to other civilizations. To Toynbee, the transfer of the modern Western state and parliamentary democracy has had a disastrous and divisive impact on non-Western societies. Fukuyama and Huntington find a rare point of agreement in their mutual respect for democracy, particularly as expressed through American institutions, as the form of government which best protects the rights of the individual, promotes economic growth and enhances the prospects for international peace. Yet both worry about the destabilizing impact of the introduction of democracy to societies which have not evolved social structures which parallel the West's. However, they differ in their conclusions, with Huntington suggesting that the spread of democracy can accentuate conflict and encourage anti-Westernism rather than encourage global cultural homogeneity, while Fukuyama maintains his faith in democracy as a global model for political development. Their interpretation of the role in civilizational interaction of this core institution

therefore varies in relation to their perception of the nature of the West's role in the broader cultural world order, an observation which can be made of the perception of Western institutions in all these conceptions. This raises significant political issues regarding if and how institutions evolved in Western societies should be promoted elsewhere.

Norms and institutions may, then, be perceived as empowering the West in its interaction with other civilizations. If culture is seen as forming a barrier between civilizations, as implied in Toynbee and Huntington, the transmission of norms and institutions is unlikely to be successful. However, as this does not mitigate the assumed superiority of Western norms, the West may remain ensconced in a position of superiority. If Western norms and institutions are seen as forming the basis of international society, as suggested by Wight and Bull, then the West is advantaged by having its cultural rules privileged since other societies must adjust to the West, not vice versa. But if these norms and institutions are untransmittable, they can still add to the sense of cohesion within the West by conjuring up the enemy without. Either way, it seems, the West stands to gain.

Conceptions of boundaries: continuities and difference

The boundaries perceived to define the West in these conceptions demonstrate interesting points of continuity and variation. The objective boundaries are variously interpreted, but each conception places importance on norms and values in defining their imagined communities. The norms perceived to characterize the West imbue the more tangible objective boundaries with meaning and are critical to framing perceptions of identity and hierarchy among civilizations.

Although the conceptions share a great deal in terms of basic perceptions of whom the West is and how it has related to other peoples, they also differ substantially in their interpretation of the essential qualities which define the West, and the nature of its interaction with the non-West. Such variation indicates the complexity and contingency in these conceptions, and the tensions which exist within this complexity. Key tensions include those between the norms and practices of the 'ideologies' of liberalism and imperialism which permitted both norms and practices of emancipation and domination by societies and states seen to constitute the West in their interaction with the non-West. It cannot be argued that the West is simply represented by one or other of these 'ideologies'; the development and unprecedented influence of the West which all of these authors acknowledge is premised on both.

Perceptions of interaction between the West and non-West

Discussion of the norms and institutions perceived to characterize the West focuses attention on questions concerning the transferability of ideas

between civilizations, an important aspect of civilizational interaction. The transfer of ideas is viewed by some as difficult and dangerous, but by others as a natural and positive process that enhances the growth of human community. These views relate to assumptions about the role of the West in the cultural world order, and of the nature of, and possibilities for, interaction.

Cultural power politics

All the authors conceptualize the relationship between the West and non-West within the context of Western dominance of inter-civilizational relations. The West is perceived as the preminent power in world politics and an agent of significant global change. However, there are major variations in the interpretation of the relationship of West to non-West. For instance, both Spengler and Toynbee accredit the West's powerful position to its being the only civilization in a stage of growth. Spengler views the West as having maintained a position of dominance, but not leadership, of a broader world order, whereas Fukuyama clearly views the West as achieving a position of leadership within a world order structured around the processes of modernization and development. Whereas Spengler's world order is perhaps analogous to a forest of competing and coexisting but distinct organic civilizations, Fukuyama projects an image of a two-tiered world, with the West having completed the processes of ideological development which the rest of the world is still struggling to attain. The International Society authors represent the relationship as one of Western hegemony expressed and maintained through the norms and institutions of International Society. Through this structure, other civilizations came to operate within the context of Western civilization even when no longer directly dominated by Western powers. For Said, in contrast, the relationship is one of dominance and imperialism, the non-West always in some way subject to the West's influence or needs, but simultaneously providing the critical alter ego through which the West constructs itself.

As noted in our discussion of power, norms and institutions, imperialism is a critical feature of Said's conception of the West's relationship with the non-West. His interest in imperialism highlights the relative lack of attention paid to this phenomenon among the other conceptions considered. Imperialism is noted and accepted by Spengler, Toynbee and Huntington as an aspect of the West's expansion, although for Spengler, it represents an expression of civilizational decline. In contrast, Fukuyama treats it as symptomatic of a phase of development, perceiving the spread of Western ideas as a process whereby the world catches up with Western developments, rather than as processes of domination. Imperialism is more fully integrated into the conception of the West found in Bull, Watson and some of Wight's work¹ as a relationship which conditioned interaction between the West and non-West. But it is only in Said that imperialism becomes the very core of the West's identity. Where the other authors perceive imperialism to be an aspect of the West's past, Said

perceives it to be a relationship which conditioned its attitudes in the past and continues to do so. His concept of imperialism is not limited to the activities of nineteenth-century European powers, but extends to the post-colonial period and incorporates the United States. The West is perceived as maintaining a strong cultural hegemony in post-colonial world politics. For Said, imperialism remains a defining element of the West's identity and of its relationship with the non-West.

Interaction

Just as we find differing interpretations of the nature of the West's relationship with the non-West, so we find varying interpretations of the impact of interaction, in particular, of Westernization or modernization. Spengler sees the absorption of modern Western ideas by non-Western peoples as essentially superficial, his perception of the cultural world order emphasizing competition rather than cross-fertilization between cultures; Toynbee views it as potentially disastrous, particularly in relation to the absorption by other civilizations of powerful Western ideas such as nationalism. Huntington, however, makes a careful distinction between modernization and Westernization. While acknowledging that the processes of modernization were 'invented' in the West, he argues that modernization does not necessarily mean Westernization, and denies that modernization will lead to cultural convergence. If anything, it exacerbates existing cultural differences. In marked contrast, Fukuyama views modernization as leading to homogenization. He perceives the West as winning the battle with Soviet communism to direct the shape of modernity. Consequently, modernizing trends will lead to the concepts or ideas found in the Western system with other modernizing paths seen as either dead-ends or unable to deliver a universally acceptable culture.

A global framework or false premisses?

Perceptions of the nature of interaction and the impact of the West on other civilizations in each of these conceptions are framed by assumptions about the cultural world order. These also influence perceptions of the extent to which the West provides a model or framework of civilization. Such suggestions are clearly rejected by Spengler, but supported by Fukuyama whose work implies that the West provides the preeminent theoretical model for political and economic development. Toynbee and the International Society authors appear to provide a *via media* between perceptions of the West as universal or particular. Toynbee notes that the West has provided a framework for a global multicultural society, uniting the world at a political and economic level, but this appears to be primarily a technical framework since, as noted, he is sceptical of the secular West pro-

viding a successful normative or institutional model for other civilizations and, at the cultural level, he suggests the West has exacerbated division rather than enhanced homogeneity.

Wight and Bull also suggest the West provides a framework for interaction, but theirs is a normative and institutional framework, defined as that of international society. In fact, they suggest that the West has succeeded in uniting the world in a single, global political system. Wight's work demonstrates confidence in the framework of international society as durable. Bull, however, is clearly uncertain as to whether consensus on norms and institutions can be maintained indefinitely as the composition of international society broadens. But at another level, he appears optimistic that there is a link between the spread of Western ideas and the broader development of mankind. Huntington, in contrast, accepts that the West has provided an institutional framework for interaction in the form of the international system yet denies that this can be construed as a normative community, rejecting the existence of a global international society. For Said, the West provides not so much a framework for interaction, but a hierarchical framework of representations which shape and legitimize the policies of the West, and are deeply inculcated into Western and even non-Western cultures.

Deep divisions are evident among these conceptions as to whether the West is universal or unique. These do not simply divide early conceptions from later, or American from European perspectives, but create strange bedfellows. For instance, both the liberal Fukuyama and the author of *Power Politics*, Martin Wight, appear to share the conviction that the West provides a universally relevant model for political development, although Wight views this as a model for managing rather than eliminating conflicts in world politics. For the post-colonial critic Said, the conservative Huntington and the late-modern pessimist Spengler, there is a widespread but misleading perception of the West as a universal civilization. All reject this 'false universalism' viewing it as a consequence of the West's extensive power which allowed it to exercise cultural hegemony. For Huntington, the belief that Western ideas are universal is misleading, provocative to other civilizations and, consequently, dangerous for the West. For Said, however, it is the danger to the non-West which is most evident, with the West's projection of false universalism forming one aspect of its power and dominance. In some respects, this concern for the non-West brings Said and Toynbee closer in their perspectives.

By presenting a perspective which critically reviews the West's identity as constructed through its relations with the non-West, Said's work accentuates the Western-centricity of the other conceptions. Although all consider in varying depth the relationship of the West to the non-West, this is done primarily from the perspective of the Western interests and history. This is despite the fact that both Spengler and Toynbee were themselves highly

critical of the Euro-centric focus of their own colleagues. Both challenged this by exploring the development of other civilizations, but both were themselves ultimately drawn to focus on the history and role of the West. Wight discusses non-Western political systems, but primarily with reference to Western-based models of international society. The interests of Huntington and Fukuyama clearly focus on the West and, within this, largely on American society. The possible exception to this Western-centric trend is the work of Bull and Watson, although they too appear most interested in the impact of the West and the Western system on non-Western people rather than canvassing the reverse.²

Interaction and cultural world order

This study argues, therefore, that conceptions of the West are framed in terms of broader assumptions about the nature of cultural world order and that conceptions of the cultural world order are in turn constituted in relation to assumptions about the role of the West. These assumptions have significant and differing implications for the way in which the possibilities for interaction in world politics are perceived. Huntington, for example, presents something close to a 'Hobbesian' image of a cultural world order comprising civilizational spheres of influence which confront one another in a struggle for power and security. Within such a context, the universalist normative aspirations of the West appear ludicrous and misguided, while policies of consolidation and self-defence appear sensible and desirable. Universalism at home and multiculturalism abroad characterize Huntington's prescriptions for the West.

In contrast, Fukuyama's cultural world order is one of different societies moving inexorably towards the perfect society, the model of which has been achieved in the ideas of the West. Levels of development, or progress in the 'civilising process', shape interaction. His image of current world politics is a two-tiered one, with the prescriptions of power politics still applying to the less developed struggling through the processes of history, while relations among the post-historical societies appear peaceable and ordered. This suggests that the West should have a degree of pride in the achievements of its system and encourage the broader spread of Western norms, ideas and institutions.

Said provides us with a questioning attitude to approach the structures and institutions of contemporary world politics. This attitude implies that the cultural world order includes a multitude of cultures and civilizational identities, but that relations between them are shaped by inequalities in power. It probes the appearance of universality and of irreconcilable differences in order to understand the power structures which influence perceptions of self and other in world politics. However, the divisions which Said suggests exist between cultures and civilizational identities do not irretrievably divide them or ultimately undermine the common human identity

which all people share at a deep normative level. Said's conception of the cultural world order, therefore, neither suggests the West as a universal civilization, nor the irreconcilable fragmentation of humanity. However, it does suggest that significant inequalities between the West and non-West continue to exist in the post-colonial world.

This discussion of conceptions of the West highlights important points of continuity and difference, indicating that conceptions of the West are not monolithic but complex and contingent. This implies that the West as a civilizational identity and imagined community is dynamic; its identity shifting across context and era enabling it to retain relevance in diverse locations. Awareness of these qualities is crucial to any examination of the role of civilizational and cultural identities in world politics. But once we have appreciated these points, how does this impact upon how we proceed in our inquiries into International Relations?

Implications for future research

This enquiry has explored how the civilizational identity of the West has been conceptualized by a range of thinkers. At the outset, we noted that the Robert Cox has defined the concept of civilizations as a fit between material conditions of existence and intersubjective meanings (Cox, 1999). Our investigation here has sought to marry such conceptions of civilization with questions of identity, questions in which a community or individual asks: who are we? And how should we act? This survey has examined a range of responses to this question with respect to the West, each of these responses provides a slightly different representation of the 'fit' between the material conditions and intersubjective understandings that constitute the West as an imagined community. Each of these authors has also provided a unique interpretation of the relationship between this identity and other civilizational identities in the context of world history and world politics. This in itself, I believe, is a valuable exercise since it focuses our attention on a concept that is much used but little analysed in the discipline of International Relations. In doing this, we become more aware of the complexity of this concept. However, in addition to being an interesting exercise and exploration of the history of ideas, what more can we learn? What do we do with the insights we gain from this exploration? What further questions does it raise? And where does it bring us in terms of further research into world politics? I would argue that this is perhaps but a first step, but one that can take us in several research directions. In concluding, I would like to suggest a few of the questions and research directions it might inspire.

At a fundamental level, this is a study concerned with the relationships between culture, and cultural identity, and world politics. Analysis of culture presents several challenges that emanate from the complexity and

dynamism of culture as a concept. While we are becoming increasingly sensitive to the significance of culture to analysis and conduct of world politics, we are also increasingly sensitive to the complexity of culture as a concept. This complexity derives in some respects from the multiple and sometimes contending definitions of what culture is. In addition to this complexity in definitions of culture there is the complexity derived from the fluidity of particular cultures themselves. There is growing dissatisfaction with definitions that portray cultures as highly patterned, cohesive, homogeneous and static representations of people's beliefs and perceptions.

We are becoming increasingly conscious of culture as something that is fluid and evolutionary, yet which retains some sense of cohesion and continuity with the past. A further challenge lies in the elusiveness of culture. Culture is often associated with explicit manifestations that distinguish a particular community, expressed, for instance in language, dress or music. But it is also implicit in the sense that it contributes to the norms and mores of a particular community. These norms and mores may be so deeply engrained in a community that they are not viewed as distinctive, but simply seen as 'common sense', or representing the world as it really is or ought to be (Goff and O'Hagan, 2001). Therefore, the student of culture in world politics is faced with several challenges: how do we study something whose very definition is so deeply contested? How do we study something so fluid and elusive? In order to analyse the concept of culture, or the conception of a particular culture, we may be driven to abstract that which best characterizes it, yet how do we do this without essentialization and reductionism that may mask dynamism? And how do we uncover and articulate that which is often implicit?

A major challenge that we confront, therefore, is how do we apply our appreciation of the complexity of culture to our analysis of particular issues in world politics to produce insights and conclusions that are meaningful yet nuanced (Goff and O'Hagan, 2001)? What methods do we employ to explore how culture frames perceptions or guides actions and behaviour in a manner that is not reductionist? This methodological challenge is further exacerbated by the ongoing tensions and debate within the disciplines as to what constitutes legitimate knowledge and legitimate modes of enquiry, referred to in Chapter 1. One important issue for further research is what resources and methods are available to us, and what resources and methods can we further develop in order to better meet the challenges posed by studying culture in International Relations?

It is important to recognize that we do have a variety of resources available to us for studying issues relating to culture in world politics, including for instance analysis of policy and rhetoric, archival research or contemporary surveys of attitudes, and the analysis of contending narratives. Our choice of resources and methods will be guided in no small part by the types of questions we seek to answer. The questions I have sought to

answer here relate to how we constitute a particular cultural identity and how these conceptions of a particular cultural identity relate to perceptions of interaction with others. What points of difference and continuity can we identify across different representations of this identity? What contextual factors can we identify that might contribute to these differences and commonalities? Therefore the method employed here has been that of comparing and contrasting different representations and narratives of the West. In this study, I have not sought to provide fixed meanings and essentialized definitions of who or what constitutes an 'authentic' West. It is rather an exploration of how knowledge and ideas about the West are generated, of perceptions of the key elements that constitute the identity and how these might influence relationships between societies. In some respects, therefore, this study is more a selective genealogy of the West than a history or description of the West. This approach allows us to both demonstrate and explore the complexity, contextuality and contingency of conceptions of the West. It demonstrates that conceptions of civilizational identity are not fixed, even though they may be rooted in perceptions of history and tradition, but vary across time and context.

In this study we have focused our efforts on examining contending conceptions of the West and the implications of these conceptions. One of the goals has been to alert us to the complexity and contention contained in these conceptions that is often masked by our assumed familiarity with the West as a powerful political entity. However, this approach of exploring how knowledge and ideas about a particular civilizational identity are constituted could also usefully be applied to other civilizational identities. In addition to asking the question 'who and what is the West?', we might ask 'who and what is Asia or Islam?' for instance. Like the West, conceptions of Asia and of Islam are frequently and powerfully deployed in political discourse and analysis, often projecting a sense of a homogeneous and cohesive political and cultural community. Yet, like the West, interpretations of who and what constitutes these entities varies markedly across time and context. Therefore a further direction for future research might be the expansion of a genealogical approach to the exploration of different civilizational identities in world politics, to demonstrate, as for the West, the complexity, contingency and contextuality of conceptions of a range of civilizational identities.

However, this still leaves us with the critical question of what benefits can we derive from such explorations? How does an awareness of the complexity and contingency of conceptions of civilizational identity enhance our understanding of world politics? And how may we integrate analysis of civilizational identities more fully into our analysis of world politics in a meaningful way? With respect to the first question, it is important to recall that, as argued in Chapter 2, the representation of identity is not just an abstract exercise, but can be intensely political and has significant political

consequences. Representations of community may guide us in our assumptions about who we assume to be a friend and ally, and who might be an enemy. In this respect, representations of community are deeply implicated in the politics of differentiation. Representations of community in the past facilitated policies of conquest, exploitation and eradication. As the politics of the late twentieth century have shown, representations of community that employ civilizational identity, as a central criteria can have immediate and tangible of effects. Civilizational identities translated into local identities in Bosnia, Indonesia and India in some cases became the determinant of life or death, rape or rescue, expulsion or protection. Therefore, understanding what representations of civilizational identity are being called upon and deployed in particular situations can be critical to understanding how political identities are being constructed in a particular context. Revealing that conceptions of civilizational identities are not innate or fixed may be crucial in seeking to diffuse situations where conflict is seen as innate, or to facilitate the elimination of discrimination. Therefore, a critical issue that requires further investigation is that relating to how civilizational identities are constituted and deployed in particular political contexts, how they gain or lose meaning and the assumptions and prescriptions attached to them in different contexts.

This then leads us to ask how may we integrate the analysis of civilizational identities more fully into research on world politics? In relation to this particular study, how do we integrate a more complex understanding of the West into our studies of world politics? The growing interest in culture and civilizations has produced a number of examples in contemporary International Relations scholarship of studies that examine the relevance of civilizational identity and in particular the West, in contemporary political contexts. These suggest that we might further explore issues such as the role of civilizational identity in relation to issues such as the constitution of political community and of institutions, in examining processes of dialogue, and in understanding the dynamics of world order.

One obvious area is to examine the invocation of civilizational identities in processes of state creation, building and fragmentation. A further site of enquiry might be the creation and maintenance of political institutions. An example of this can be found in the work by Michael Williams and Iver Neumann that examines perceptions and articulations of civilizational identity in relation to the reconceptualization of NATO in the post-Cold War era (Williams and Neumann 2000). They argue that in the post-Cold War era, a sense of common civilizational structures and cultural purpose has been accentuated in the rhetoric surrounding the consolidation and expansion of NATO following the collapse of the threat of the Soviet bloc. In this new context, they suggest, the emphasis is less on presenting NATO as a geopolitical strategic entity and more on it as a democratic security community based on a common Western culture, norms and values.

A second area of research that has recently been explored is the relationship between civilizational identity and transnational dialogue. Marc Lynch has examined the idea of a 'dialogue among civilizations', articulated by the Iranian President Khatami and promoted in the United Nation's designation of 2001 as 'The United Nations Year of Dialogue Among Civilizations' (Lynch, 2000; UN, 1998). As Lynch notes, the proposed dialogue endeavours to provide a forum for communication at a transnational level that will enhance understanding between diverse cultures by building knowledge of other civilizational identities. The dialogue has been promoted as a means of enhancing world order by improving communications and trust while respecting differences and building tolerance. The dialogue has been promoted in realms such as international organizations, the global media, the Internet and in international scholarly conferences. It is envisaged as broader than the political dialogue conducted between states, yet it provides a tentative mechanism for enhancing relations between states by reducing levels of antipathy and mistrust based on cultural misconceptions and deeply embedded hostility (Lynch, 2000). In promotion of the dialogue, Iran appears keen to enhance understanding and trust between Christian or Western and Islamic societies in general, and between Iran and the United States in particular. In this context then, civilizational identity is explicitly addressed as a potential source of tension in world politics, but also as an avenue for the alleviation of tension and antipathy, both at a societal and at a political level through communication in what Lynch (2000) calls the international public sphere, or transnational civil society.

A third example of research that seeks to integrate civilizational identity into analysis of world politics is as a way of helping to understand change. Robert Cox, for instance, has employed conceptions of civilizational identity in his examination of globalization as a significant dimension of historical transformation (Cox, 1998; 1999). He notes that processes of globalization can be interpreted as the projection of a single, hegemonic civilization – a business civilization. For some this is primarily Western civilization, promoting a particular corporate and consumer culture. Cox's work suggests that this may be too simplistic an understanding of globalization in several respects, but in particular in equating globalization with Westernization and suggesting that globalization simply promotes cultural convergence. Cox's work suggests that globalization generates forms of response and resistance that demonstrate the current world order is constituted by multiple civilizational identities, and that also demonstrate the diversity and tensions within Western civilization itself (Cox, 1998, 1999).

Finally, perhaps the most prominent area of study where analysis of civilizational identity can be integrated into the study of world politics is in examining further the relationship between conceptions civilizational identity and world order. This is a theme that has permeated this study as a whole.

However, it warrants reiteration given the prominence of this issue in contemporary debates. Of course the best known example of research into this area is probably Samuel Huntington's work on the clash of civilizations, a thesis already discussed in some detail. However, Huntington has not been alone in his concern with this issue. One area in which the debate has been animated is in relation to the questions and concerns surrounding humanitarian intervention in contemporary politics. Again, this is an issue canvassed by Robert Cox in his discussion of the significance of civilizational identities in world politics. Cox has described the intervention of NATO in Kosovo in 1999 as presenting two contending visions of world order. In a discussion that resonates with observations about cultural world order made in this study, Cox depicts the first vision of world order as one dominated by a singular civilization, that of the United States and NATO, providing a form of political, economic and normative hegemony that was demonstrated in the Kosovo intervention. The second vision is that of a multicivilizational world order, in which common understanding is sought in the arena of civil society to facilitate coexistence among diverse civilizations. This was demonstrated in the apprehension about the intervention found at both the level of government and public opinion in a number of states. The work of Cox, Huntington and others suggest that further investigation of the perceived relationship between civilizational identity and world order, particularly as it relates to the establishment of international norms and practices, is an area of immediate and indeed vital interest.

Each of these areas of research call upon themes broadly canvassed in this study, applying them to particular contexts in contemporary political debates. What the analysis provided in this study might add to research into these particular issues is an enhanced awareness that the civilizational identities under discussion are not innately given, but are socially and politically constituted and often contested. The debate with regard to the identity of NATO, for instance, often presents a particular conception of who and what constitutes the West. An enhanced awareness of the genealogy of civilizational identities facilitates greater reflectivity regarding what conceptions and positions are being represented in particular discourses, and what the implications of these representations might be for the perceived viability of political interactions. In the case of the dialogue between civilizations, for instance, it might be useful to investigate what conceptions of the West and Islam are being projected, by whom and with a view to what normative and material goals. Finally, as has been argued throughout this study, a more nuanced understanding of conceptions of civilizational identity can usefully supplement our analysis of perceptions and dynamics of world order. For instance, in what context and in what respects are civilizational identities seen as a factor facilitating greater integration or fragmentation in world politics today? In what contexts are they seen as legitimating or delegitimizing certain practices or norms?

Finally, the question of the unique position that the West as civilizational identity is seen to hold, is also a topic that warrants further examination. Cox's discussion of the relationship of the West to processes of globalization highlights the widely assumed centrality of the West to processes of political and economic modernization. The rapidity of globalization in recent decades has once again raised the question of the relationship between Westernization, modernization and globalization in world politics today. This in turn can be further related to the debate concerning the nature of the West: in what respects can it be viewed as a universal civilization or as a local civilization with global reach?

Therefore, there are several areas of immediate concern and interest in which analysis of civilizational identity can and is being used to better understand world politics. However, while it is important to explore the areas where civilizational identity and indeed analysis of cultural identity can be usefully integrated into International Relations, it is perhaps equally important to acknowledge the limitations of such inquiries. While this study advocates the greater integration of analysis of civilizational identity in International Relations, it does not posit a new grand theory of International Relations premised on civilizational identity. It does not propose that civilizational identity or culture more generally is the organizing principle of world politics. To do this may be to invest too much in culture as a dimension of world politics, ultimately leading to inflated claims that undermine rather than enhance scholarly interest in this realm of inquiry. There is also the risk that such approaches may tend towards representing civilizational identity as simply a fixed set of variables and more generally of treating culture as something that different communities possess in the same way as they possess mineral resources or populations. What the approach taken in this study has sought to do is to explore how conceptions of civilizational identity relate to the meanings with which material and social conditions are infused and how these meanings and interpretations ebb and flow over time, space and context. This is to advocate not so much the quest for the essence of a civilizational identity itself, but to probe civilizational identity as an expression of the way in which people perceive themselves or other communities to be and as a guide to how they should behave.

This study has focused on contending conceptions of the West as an experimental exploration of civilizational identity. A lingering but significant question that we should return to is whose ideas about the West are these? How representative are they of broader views? Here we have examined the conceptions projected by a small selection of twentieth-century authors, but the methods adopted here could be adapted to include a much broader selection of authors from a range of disciplines and cultural and intellectual backgrounds. This would permit us to extend further our understanding of the complex genealogy of the concept of the West. In

addition, the ideas analysed in this study are largely those of intellectuals and political commentators. These conceptions of the West are, therefore, primarily formulated at an elite level, published in books and journals that are largely read and commented upon at an elite level rather than in the broader public domain. This raises the question of the extent to which these ideas permeate into the community or, conversely, the extent to which they reflect views and conceptions held in different sectors of societies. Therefore another issue for further investigation is the extent to which the conceptions of the West discussed in this study can be traced in the broader intellectual and public environment. To what extent are these ideas reflected in the views, the ideas, the rhetoric or choices of politicians, officials, the media, international institutions, social movements and other organs of civil society?

What these and earlier questions raised by this study point to is further investigation of the relationship between conceptions of civilizational identity and politics. Drawing on Ronald Beiner, Chris Reus-Smit describes politics as a blend of instrumental and moral considerations. He suggests that this conception of politics can be clarified by deriving from it a series of key questions: questions of identity: who am I? Questions of purpose: what do I want? And instrumental questions: how do I get what I want (Reus-Smit, 2001: 575)? In seeking to investigate the relationship between civilizational identity and politics, we can investigate how varying conceptions such as that of the West are related to the formulation and pursuit of the considerations of identity, purpose and instrumentalism.

In many respects and as noted above, this study has focused on academic conceptions of the identity, purpose and instrumentalism of the West. A further avenue of research would be to canvass alternative sources to examine different conceptions of who and what is/was the West in the various political contexts. This might be explored in the rhetoric and actions of governments, political groups, transnational organizations or social movements. What actions have been taken, and what ideas and norms pursued in the name of the West? How have these been linked to the enactment of laws, the establishment of boundaries, to the politics of inclusion and exclusion?

A further related avenue of inquiry would be into how public conceptions of the West have shifted at key points of transition? For instance, how were conceptions of the West redefined politically and institutionally in the period following World War II in the context of the emergence of the Cold War, and in the context of decolonization? A further key point of transition in the twentieth century is the conclusion of the Cold War. Here we might investigate evolving conceptions of the West in the context an increasingly multipolar world in which a new European identity is being formulated as the conception of Europe reaches eastward – rhetorically and institutionally – to reincorporate the societies of central and eastern

Europe. This raises again the question of the extent to which there is perceived to be a synergy between Europe and the West that the Cold War had led many to assume? Again, we might ask how has the identity of the West been articulated politically at these points of transition? What norms and goals have been associated with it? What actions and interventions have been pursued under the ambit of this civilizational identity?

However, in seeking to examine further the relationship between conceptions of civilizational identity and politics, it is important to acknowledge that civilizational identity does not necessarily provide a guide to political action. This study does not set out to demonstrate direct causal linkages between conceptions of civilizational identity and policy. However, I believe that it is an important first step in investigating ideas that help to constitute the intellectual and political environment in which politics occur.

Examination of the relationship between civilizational identity and politics leads us towards the thorny issue of agency. Throughout this study, and indeed permeating political discourses more generally, are allusions to the West as a central actor in world politics. We refer to the expansion and contraction of the West, to the exercise of power, influence and hegemony by the West, to the intervention of the West. Yet, as noted earlier in this study, the nature of the West's agency is problematic. Who or what is perceived as acting on behalf of the West varies greatly across time, context and interpretation. At some points, the behaviour of certain states is categorized as the action of the West. At other points it is particular institutions, such as the European Union or NATO. At other points again, it is the actions of private actors, societal influences or even certain forces – such as the dynamics of capitalism – that are attributed to the agency of the West. In some cases, the attribution of agency to the West may be used in relation to the instrumental actions of certain decision makers, while in other cases it may refer to processes or forces generated by more diffuse sources such as material or ideational change.

While a handy device, this attribution of agency to the West can often mask the actions and influence of a complex array of actors, forces and processes. This is often for convenience but may be by design. Using the label of the West may help to associate certain actions or processes with particular normative or material positions that can assist in justifying, legitimizing or alternatively delegitimizing particular actions. However, it raises the question can we, and should we, be more precise about who or what is acting and whose interests are being served through particular actions or processes? This study suggests that it may be useful to unpack the shorthand of the West as agent to examine in more depth who or what exercises agency in particular conditions, and what the normative and political implications of this agency might be. For instance, what are the implications of designating certain humanitarian interventions undertaken by NATO as the actions of the West? To what extent and in what sense are actions under-

taken by the US government or by US companies the actions of the West? What are the implications of arguing that the West dominates the contemporary human rights regime? The questions surrounding the nature and implications of conceptualizing the West as having agency in world politics is again one that requires further thought and more detailed research.

This study, therefore, raises several important questions and points to areas for further research including how we grapple with the challenges of studying in culture world politics, how we integrate analysis of civilizational identity into International Relations, and the relationship between cultural identity and politics. It has also sought to reflect on the question of why developing a more nuanced understanding of conceptions of the West might provide a first step in approaching some of the broader questions raised. A final set of questions raised by the study relates to the broad issue of how we understand the role of culture in relation to perceptions of world order. This study has analysed how assumptions about the West are interwoven with the theories of International Relations and assumptions about the nature of the cultural world order found in these texts. Recognition of a significant range of conceptions of cultural world order raises several more questions. What other conceptions of cultural world order can we identify? How do these relate to concepts of hierarchy and to political and economic order? In what context do we see a shift in conceptions of cultural world order? What are political implications of these conceptions?

Recognition of a significant relationship between conceptions of civilizational identities and broader assumptions about the nature of the cultural world order is significant for studies of world politics. It suggests we need further consideration of the extent to which these conceptions and assumptions frame perceptions of the possibilities for global political interaction. A variety of assumptions about the possibility for interaction can influence our analysis of world politics. For instance, assumptions of incommensurability in relations between civilizations, as found in Huntington's analysis, could lead to policies of consolidation and homogenization within broad cultural communities, and the pursuit of self-regarding rather than cosmopolitan policies and behaviour without. Conversely, assumptions of strong universalist tendencies in civilizational interaction, as found in Fukuyama's work, could lead to policies which accentuate and promote perceived commonalities or potential for these, but which perhaps disregard important areas of cultural, social and political difference.

Therefore, while this study provides perhaps only a first tentative step towards more thorough analysis and deeper reflection on conceptions of civilizational identity in world politics, there are compelling reasons to pursue such research further. This may assist us in achieving a more nuanced understanding of what we mean by the West, and of the significance and role of civilizational identity and, more broadly, of culture in world politics.

Notes

Introduction

1. The thesis in Huntington's original 1993 essay in *Foreign Affairs* was elaborated upon most fully in his 1996 book *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*.
2. The term 'International Relations' in capitals will be used to refer to the academic discipline, whereas the term 'international relations' in lower case will be used to refer more generally to the realm of world politics.
3. See, for instance, Deudney and Ikenberry (1993/94), Fukuyama (1989) and Mahhubani (1992) and their respondents, and more recently Coker (1998), Gress (1997), and McNeill (1997a).
4. See Walker (1984a) for a discussion of universalist and pluralist dialectic in discussions of culture and world politics. See also Eagleton (2000) and Parekh (2000). For discussions of the evolution of civilization as a concept, see Braudel (1980), Elias (1978), Febvre, (1973), Robinson (1969), Springborg (1993) and Williams (1983).
5. See, for example, Brown (1992; 1995; 2000), Cochrane (1999) Linklater (1998) and Morrice (2000).
6. There is one further sense in which the West appears in the OED definitions, the 'wild West' as in the United States. Interestingly, used in this sense, the West is represented as a territory lacking in order and civilization. Note also Springborg's observation that in Arabic, the term the West – *Gharb* – also connotes darkness, the incomprehensible, a frightening place (Springborg, 1994).
7. See Gress (1997) for a discussion of contending traditions that contribute to the civilizational identity of the West.

1 The West, civilizations and International Relations theory

1. Although Gilpin does demonstrate some concern for a possible revolt against the hegemony of Western values resulting in a return to a pre-modern clash of civilization in world politics (Gilpin, 1979: 225).
2. One obvious exception here is Martin Wight who, in *Systems of States* (1977) considered Chinese and Hellenic states-systems in addition to his analysis of the evolution of the European states-system, on which he primarily focused. Wight's work, which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5, demonstrates the broader historical focus of the British school of International Relations scholars.
3. For analysis and discussion of the various strands of liberalism, see Dunne (1997), Keohane (1989), Richardson (1995) and Zacher and Matthew (1995).
4. See, for instance, works by Ernst Haas on the possibilities of learning by states, David Mitrany on processes of integration, Karl Deutsch on transnational communities and Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye on transnational actors and interdependence evolving from increased interaction. See also Zacher and Matthew (1995) for a discussion of these trends in liberal international thought.

5. See, for instance, Dunne (1997), Kausikan (1993), Mahbubani (1993a), and Zakaria (1994).
6. In principle, Western theorists and states acknowledge that human rights are indivisible, with social and economic rights deemed as important as political and civil. There is, however, greater debate on the role of community over individual rights. For discussion of these issues, see, for instance, Bauer and Bell (1999), Chua (1992), Donnelly (1989; 1998), Milner and Quilty (1996), Parekh (1999), Tang (1995), Van Ness (1999), Vervoorn (1998), Yash Gai (1995).
7. See Halliday (1994) and Maclean (1988) for a discussion of historical materialism and the limited engagement of Marxist analysis in International Relations.
8. The influence of Marx's methodological approach on developments in the area of Critical Theory is of great to importance to recent developments in International Relations theory, but will not be discussed in detail in here. See Cox (1981) and Linklater (1996).
9. In addition to Huntington's work, referred to above, see Jackson (1999), Linklater (1998), Lynch (2000) and Williamson and Neumann (2000).
10. See, for instance, Gilpin (1979).
11. See here William Sewell's discussion of the treatment of culture in anthropology and cultural history. For critical anthropologists, Sewell argues, 'culture tends to essentialize, exoticize, and stereotype those whose ways of life are being described and to naturalize their differences from white middle-class Euro-Americans.' (Sewell, 1998: 38).
12. See, for instance, Goldstein and Keohane (1993) and Keohane (1988). See also Cox and Sjolander (1994) and Jacquin *et al.* (1993).
13. This is not to argue that an interest in history has been totally absent from the discipline. The most obvious example would be the work of the British school of authors. More recently it has been evident in the work of scholars drawing on the work of historical sociologists, such as Charles Tilly (1975) and in institutionalist approaches, such as G. John Ikenberry (2000). As noted below, strong interest in the use of history as a critical tool is most clearly evident today among constructivist scholars.
14. See for example, Bierstecker and Weber (1996), Hall (1999), Rae (forthcoming), Reus-Smit (1998), Ruggie (1998), Weldes (1999).
15. For a discussion of the expansion of international society, see Bull and Watson (1984), Gong (1984) and Watson (1992).
16. See, for example Katzenstein (1996), Krause and Renwick (1996), Lapid and Kratochwil (1996), Neumann (1998), Reus-Smit (1998), Ruggie (1998), Shapiro and Alker (1996), Weldes (1999).
17. See, for example, the work of Kier (1996) on the organizational cultures of the British and French military, or the work of Barnett (1996; 1999) or Katzenstein (1996) on the role of culture in foreign policy.

2 Towards a framework for conceptualizing the West

1. This is not to argue that these forces were not important influences during the Cold War, but that their impact often tended to be overshadowed or absorbed into the ideologically structured system. See, for instance, essays in Alker and Shapiro (1996), Krause and Renwick (1996), Linklater and Macmillan (1995) for discussions of some of the challenges to concepts of community and identity.
2. Neumann (1996) identifies four main strands in social theorizing on collective identity. They vary in their conception of the constitution and relationship

between self and other, but the process of differentiation and conceptualizing an other is central to all.

3. See also Bernard McGrane's (1989) discussion of the shifting grounds on which the West differentiated itself from the other. In the sixteenth century, the other was distinguished on the basis of religion; the revolution in scientific and humanist thought then saw the other as chiefly constituted by their degree of enlightenment or ignorance; in the nineteenth century, the criteria of differentiation shifted to degrees of evolution and progress.
4. For instance, ethnic, racial and religious identities may become paramount in dividing communities that had previously coexisted with heterogeneity when other forms of political identity held primacy, such as in Rwanda in 1994 or during the Bosnian conflict of the 1990s. This is not to deny the prior presence of difference, but difference then did not lead to the violent exclusion of the other from the polity. See Campbell (1998b), Gourevitch (1998), Ignatieff (1997).
5. For discussion of further examples in which the deployment of history, or myth, has been a critical element in the escalation of violence and the fragmentation of community, see Peter Gourevitch's account of Rwanda, or Noel Malcolm's discussion of the history of Kosovo (1999). See also Ignatieff (1997) and Rae (forthcoming). As Lawson has pointed out, the political deployment of culture in processes of differentiation can lead to a reductionist, static representation of cultures as incommensurable (Lawson, 1996).
6. The term institutions is used here in the sense in which it was defined by Hedley Bull as 'a set of habits or practices shaped towards the realisation of a common goal' (Bull, 1977a: 74).

3 Faust in the twilight: conceptions of the West in Oswald Spengler

1. The first volume of *The Decline of the West* was completed in 1917; the second, although substantially drafted, was not published until 1922. A revised and definitive version of Volume 1 was published in 1923.
2. The capitalization of Culture and Civilization is used in this chapter to conform to Spengler's usage of the terms, as translated by Atkinson.
3. Dannhauser describes Hegel as Spengler's 'silent enemy' (Dannhauser, 1995: 123).
4. In the 1923 Preface of *The Decline*, Spengler acknowledged those scholars 'to whom I owe practically everything: Goethe and Nietzsche: Goethe gave me method, Nietzsche the questioning faculty' (*Decline*: xxxi; Dannhauser, 1995: 127).
5. In the *Decline of the West*, Spengler identifies eight High Cultures: the Egyptian, Indian, Chinese, Classical or Hellenic, Magian or Arabian, Mexican, Western and Russian.
6. The edition referred to in this chapter is the abridged edition of *The Decline of the West* listed in the bibliography except in the cases where the actual volume number is cited.
7. The concept of *Kultur*, Elias argued, refers essentially to intellectual, artistic and philosophical facts. It relates more to the achievements or accomplishments of an individual. In broader terms, he argued that *Zivilization* tends to emphasize common qualities between human beings and minimize differences. In contrast, the concept of *Kultur* stresses the particular identities of groups. Elias noted that the term *Kultur* took on a new meaning in Germany in 1919 and the preceding years, partly because a war was waged against Germany in the name of civilization. Spengler's use of this distinction reflects his attachment to the term *Kultur*

- which Elias saw as part of Germany's rebuilding of its self-image in the postwar world (Elias, 1978: 5–8).
8. A morphological approach may be defined as the application to history of the biologist's concept of living form (*Decline*: 72).
 9. Spengler depicts Hellenic, Magian and Western Civilizations as three distinct Cultures. Magian culture is a term devised by Spengler to delineate a culture of the southern Mediterranean and Arabic worlds that combined elements of Judaism, Byzantium and Islam. It had links with both the Hellenic and Western world.
 10. Spengler may have been influenced here by the work of the pan-Slavists who were advocating the viewing of Russia as a society distinct from Europe. For instance, in 1869 Nikolai Danilevsky had published a series of articles entitled *Russia and Europe: A Viewpoint on the Political Relations between the Slavic and Germano-Roman Worlds* in which he argued that European and Russian civilizations were inimical. Sketching out a thesis that preceded Spengler in describing the history of civilizations as organic and cyclical, he argued that European civilization was on the decline and Russian in the ascendancy (De Beus, 1953: 11–16). It is unlikely that Spengler had read Danilevsky's work prior to writing the first volume of the *Decline*. (It was not released in German translation until 1920.) However, it is likely that he was familiar with the ideas of the pan-Slavists (Hughes, 1952: 53).
 11. In fact, he once remarked that only racial inferiors preach racism; racial inferiors meaning mental inferiors, a remark allegedly aimed at the National Socialist Party. (Quoted in Fischer, 1989: 76.) Spengler may have 'flirted' with various right wing political factions and even with Hitler and the National Socialists, but his relationship with this party and government was ultimately a rocky one, with the Hitler government finally banning *The Decline if the West* which, argues McInnes, was too reactionary for them (McInnes, 1997).
 12. For instance, the ideals of the French revolution: liberty, equality and fraternity, often taken as central to the modern West, are described by Spengler as represented in three distinct political programmes propounded by three Western revolutions; the English representing the ideal of liberal parliamentarianism; the French representing the ideal of social democracy; and the German representing authoritarian socialism (Spengler, 1967: 16).
 13. In his essay 'Prussianism and Socialism', Spengler detailed his ideas of what true socialism represents. He identifies 'ethical socialism' as a constant element of the West's political make-up. This he defined as a desire to mould and change the world. However, he was hostile to socialism as described by Marx. He viewed it as an ideology of the late period of a Culture. In 'Prussianism and Socialism', he advocated a strong but benevolent state around which a classless society could rally (Fischer, 1989: 46; Spengler, 1967).
 14. Spengler did demonstrate his admiration for Graeco-Roman culture. However, in contrasting it to the West, Apollonian Culture was portrayed as stereo-scopic in its conceptualization of the world; parochial, pantheistic, ahistorical and lacking a strong sense of the individual.

4 The parochial civilization: Arnold Toynbee's conception of the West

1. Volumes I–III were published in 1934; vols IV–VI in 1939; and vols VII–X in 1954. The references in this chapter refer to D.C. Somervell's abridged version of *A Study of History* (2 volumes). The first number refers to the volume, the second to the page number.

2. These included the trauma of his son Tony's suicide in March 1939 and his wife Rosalind's conversion to Catholicism (McNeill, 1989).
3. See, for instance, 'Christianity and Civilisation' (1958a).
4. See, for example, his ongoing discussion of Eastern Orthodox Christendom, Islam as it transformed into the Ottoman empire, and references to Sinic culture. The Roman Empire was seen to be the final, universal state of the Hellenic civilization.
5. Toynbee defined 'affiliation' as contact in time between successive civilizations; whereas 'renaissance' refers to a relation between 'a grown up civilisation and the ghost of its long-dead predecessor' (*A Study*: 2/146).
6. In his essay 'The Present Point in History' (1958a: 32), Toynbee also distinguishes between civilizations, which have come and gone over the course of human history, and Civilization which has successfully reincarnated itself in fresh civilizations as old ones pass. He does not, however, elaborate on what constitutes the spirit of Civilization in this context.
7. In *A Study* (1/8), he identifies these as the Orthodox Christian Society in south-eastern Europe and Russia; Islamic society; Hindu society and Far Eastern society in addition to the West. In his later volume (*Reconsiderations*) he amended this schema to distinguish between independent and satellite civilizations, resulting in the identification of fourteen independent and fifteen satellite civilizations (Navari, 2000: 292).
8. See Toynbee's chapter on 'The Prospects for Western Civilisation' in *A Study*. See also 'Christianity and Civilisation' and 'The Present Point in History' (1958a) for an insight into Toynbee's tone.
9. Toynbee described the Renaissance as an encounter between a grown-up civilization and the 'ghost' of its long dead parent (*A Study*: 2: 2/242). He noted that the West had the advantage of receiving Hellenic culture in the provinces of art and literature through the medium of a live civilization, that is through contacts with Byzantine scholars (*A Study*: 2: 2/241). Classical philosophy and mathematics were retrieved via Arabic translations. It is also interesting to note his observation that the philosophical works of Hellenic culture such as Aristotle were available to the West in the sixth century, but that in this earlier period, comprehension was beyond Western Christian thinkers. This implies that the 'dark ages' of the West were as much a loss of the ability to comprehend as a loss of the material elements of Hellenic culture (*A Study*: 2/253).
10. See in particular Toynbee's discussion in 'Encounters with the Modern Western Civilisation' (1958a), *A Study* (2/151–188) and his essays in *The World and the West* (1958b).
11. See also 'Islam and the West' (1958b: 255) on the division of India.
12. As Brewin (1992: 117) points out, Toynbee was firmly opposed to the idea of the 'self-determined republic as the unit of history', valuing order over liberty where self-determination could lead to conflict. This is somewhat ironic given that self-determination is a quality which in the spiritual arena he saw as essential to a civilization, but consistent with his critical attitude to nationalism.

5 Universalizing the West? The conception of the West in the work of the 'International Society' school

1. For an excellent discussion of the history and composition of the 'English School', see Dunne (1998).

2. The British Committee on the Theory of International Politics that was based at Cambridge and met from 1959–84. It was funded by the Rockefeller Foundation. The committee was first chaired by the historian Herbert Butterfield, then Martin Wight, followed by Adam Watson and finally Hedley Bull (Butterfield and Wight, 1966: Preface; Dunne, 1998; Watson, 1992: 2)
3. As Dunne and Epp note, Wight did not describe three traditions of thought as incommensurable paradigms, but as ‘a medium for interrogating theory and practice.’ (Dunne cited in Epp, 1998: 54). They form ‘threads interwoven in the tapestry of Western civilization.’ (Wight, 1991: 266) See also Little (2000) for a discussion of the pluralism of thought in the ‘English school’.
4. Bull also held Visiting Professorships at Columbia University, New York (1970–71) and Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi (1974–75). In addition, in 1965, he was also appointed Director of the Arms Control Research Unit in the British Foreign Office, a position he held until 1977.
5. Wight worked with Toynbee at Chatham House (1936–38, 1946–49) on both the *Survey of International Affairs* and *A Study of History*. Both shared an interest in Christianity and sacred history.
6. See Bull’s discussion of Wight where he notes: ‘Theoretical inquiry into International Relations is therefore philosophical in character. It does not lead to cumulative knowledge after the manner of natural science.’ (Bull, 1991: xxi)
7. Bull also criticizes the realists for their fixed appeal to permanent laws and patterns that could not explain the drastic changes that had recently occurred in international life (Bull, 1972b: 39). See Bull’s critique of Carr in his essay ‘*The Twenty Years Crisis Thirty Years On*’ (1969). See also Bull (1972b: 39), Bull and Holbraad (1979: 18), Dunne (1998), Richardson (1990: 146).
8. See ‘International Theory: A Case for a Classical Approach’ (1966c). For examples of criticism of Wight and Bull’s methodology see Jones (1981) and Nicholson (1981).
9. Wight, Bull and Watson all note the importance of cultural and/or civilizational foundations to the development of international society. However, none provide a clear definition of these terms. We might deduce that a civilization is taken to be a broadly-based community which has reached a certain level of technical, political and intellectual development.
10. In *Power Politics*, Wight notes that international society has been variously called the family of nations, the states-systems, the society of states and the international community (Wight, 1979: 105).
11. See also Neumann (1998) for a discussion of Turkey’s relationship with European international society. In his discussion of the ‘English school’, Barry Buzan (1993) argues that an international society can develop as a civilizational community, a *Gemeinschaft*, stemming from a sense of common sentiment, experience and identity; or as a functional community, a *Gesellschaft*, a community constructed without pre-existing cultural bonds through, for instance, the processes of intense interaction. Buzan suggests that Wight’s conception of international society leans towards the *Gemeinschaft* model with Bull leaning towards the functional, *Gesellschaft* line. Bull, he suggests, neglects to discuss common identity as an element of international society. Buzan’s analysis appears to neglect Bull’s comments with regard to the significance of pre-existing cultural links to the foundation of international society. However, Buzan’s identification of the two sources of international society is useful in understanding how the homogeneous European international society could expand to form a heterogeneous international society.

12. As Shapcott (1994) notes, Bull identifies emerging common concerns, such as nuclear war, global environmental and population problems, that could form the basis for discussion on the notion of 'world common goods', founded on an interest in the needs of human society as a whole (Bull, 1984c: 14).
13. Although Watson describes Hellenic culture as a synthesis between Greek, Persian, Jewish and other near eastern elements (Watson, 1992: 97).
14. He goes on to note that the lofty language of the Monroe Doctrine echoes ideas of the right of peaceful penetration into the infidel world and the right of interference to protect Christians or rectify misgovernment.
15. See also Bull's (1982: 265) discussion of the West's position with regard to South Africa in which he suggests that the South African situation presented a microcosm of the West's relationship with the non-Western world. In both cases, a privileged minority faced coming to terms with the non-white people who form the majority of the world's population.
16. He argues that the realist tradition views international society as a fiction and the revolutionists view it only as a precursor for a cosmopolis, a world community of mankind. See Wight (1991: 30–49).
17. However, as Little (2000) points out, it would be misleading to view the thinkers of the 'English school' as synonymous with the rationalist tradition. Elements of all three traditions can be found in the work of these scholars.
18. Bull defines institutions as 'a set of habits and practices shaped towards the realisation of common goals' (1977a: 74).
19. The list of central institutions identified by Bull and Wight varies a little from text to text. These four are most consistently identified as core institutions. In *The Anarchical Society*, Bull also adds the conventions of war. See Bull (1977a: 13), Wight (1966a; 1979).
20. The development of international law was not unique to Western-based international society, but the global scope of this law was unprecedented. Bull also distinguishes international law from other normative codes suggesting that the central rules of international society have the status of law, rather than just of morality (1977a: 142).
21. See A. Claire Cutler for a discussion of Wight's and Bull's concepts of positive and natural law (1991: 59).
22. By the early twentieth century, legal doctrine came to insist that political entities were entitled to recognition as sovereign states if they met the formal criteria for statehood, that is, there must be a government, a territory, a population, and a capacity to enter into international relations or fulfil legal obligations (Bull, 1984a: 121). See Gong (1984) for a discussion of the evolution of the concept and articulation of the 'standard' in association with the evolution of international law among Western legal publicists of the nineteenth century.
23. Bull lists the representation of the Ottoman Empire at the Congress of Paris (1856) and the attendance of the United States and Mexico, in addition to China, Japan, Persia and Siam at the Hague Conference as signalling the process of expansion (Bull, 1984a: 123). See also Reus-Smit (1998) for a discussion of the interplay between the evolution of international law and international institutions in modern international society.
24. Furthermore, he notes that non-Western societies adopted the conventions of states, law and diplomacy, not only in their dealings with Western states, but also in their dealings with each other (Bull, 1984c: 33).

6 History's end? Francis Fukuyama's conception of the West

1. Conflicts broke out in Georgia, Tajikistan, Azerbaijan and the former Yugoslavia. Czechoslovakia dissolved, although peacefully, into two states. In Russia, Gorbachev's leadership was finally undermined by a hard-line coup.
2. These include the outcome of the Vietnam War, the oil crisis and the trade deficit with Japan. Paul Kennedy's *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* (1988) might be seen as a classic statement of the more pessimistic attitude of the 1970s to mid 1980s (Held, 1993a: 254). See Huntington (1989: 3) for a discussion of the optimistic spirit of 'endism' demonstrated in the 'end of history' thesis.
3. In 1987, one of Fukuyama's mentors, Allan Bloom, published *The Closing of the American Mind* in which he criticized the dominance of cultural relativism and upheld the importance of core Enlightenment values of truth, inquiry and natural rights as crucial elements of the American education system and the American way of life.
4. Alexander Kojève was a French-Russian philosopher who taught at the École Pratique des Hautes Études in Paris in the 1930s. It is Kojève's interpretation of Hegel, as presented in the *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel* (1969) on which Fukuyama essentially bases his thesis. Alan Bloom introduced Fukuyama to Kojève's work.
5. See Anderson (1992), Lawler (1994), Knutsen (1991), McCarney (1993), Gourevitch (1994), Peet (1993a; 1993b). See also Cumings (1999) for a critique of Fukuyama's treatment of Nietzsche.
6. Bell also differs from Fukuyama in arguing that the new ideologies appearing in Asia and Africa were distinctly different from those that had arisen in nineteenth-century Europe. The old ideologies, he argues, were universalistic, humanistic, fashioned by intellectuals and driven by forces such as social equality and freedom. He saw the new ideologies of Asia and Africa as mass ideologies that were parochial and instrumental, driven by economic development and national power (Bell, 1960: 373). For Fukuyama, the forces of nationalism and ideology being experienced in the developing world were similar to those experienced by the West in its process of development.
7. Comparing the progress of mankind to a wagon train winding across the prairie, he concludes that the evidence concerning the direction of the wagons remain provisionally inconclusive: 'Nor can we in the final analysis know, provided the majority of wagons reach the same town, whether their occupants, having looked around a bit at their surroundings, will not find them inadequate and set their eyes on a new and more distant journey.' (1992: 339)
8. See, for example, Fukuyama's discussion of the American entrepreneurial system, the US electoral system in relation to managing *thymos*, or the United States constitution as an expression of Lockean liberalism (1992: 187, 315–18).
9. See Fukuyama (1992: 13–14) for discussion of the political transformation of Latin America and Fukuyama (1992: 41, 103–6) for discussion of the economic changes.
10. However, he acknowledges that there must be some degree of homogeneity for a stable democracy to develop. In a state too deeply divided on ethnic grounds, democracy can aggravate rather than help overcome tensions (1992: 119, 216).
11. See, for instance, his discussion of realism (1992: 245–53).
12. In 1989 Fukuyama wrote: 'We are still living with the consequences of Marx's attempt to confront Hegel: ... The total and manifest failure of communism forces us to ask whether Marx's entire experiment was not a 150-year detour and

- whether we need to reconsider whether Hegel was not in fact right in seeing the end of history in the liberal democratic states of the French and American Revolutions' (1989/90: 22). Fukuyama's attachment to Kojève's reading of Hegel as opposed to Marx's seems somewhat ironic given Kojève's earlier support of communist society as promising the end of history.
13. Earlier international legal theorists had envisaged the world as divided between those within the civilized normative and legal community of international society and those less civilized societies lying outside this community, see Chapter 5 for further discussion and also Gong (1984). For contemporary commentators with a similar vision of a two-zone world, see Goldgeier and McFaul (1992) and Singer and Wildavsky (1993).
 14. See, for instance, 'Confucianism and Democracy' (Fukuyama, 1995d).
 15. In fact, Fukuyama rejects such simplified notions as a single Asian culture. While Asian societies share common cultural characteristics, he argues, there is no single Asian model of development or unified challenge to the West (Fukuyama, 1995c: 97).

7 Civilizations in conflict: Samuel Huntington's conception of the West

1. Huntington also held appointments at the Brookings Institution, Washington DC (1952–53), Columbia University, New York (1958–63) and was a visiting fellow at All Souls College, Oxford University, England in 1973. He has held several research affiliations, joining the influential Social Science Research Council (Committee on Comparative Politics) in 1967. He is a Fellow of the American Academy, Member of the Council on Foreign Relations and of the International Institute for Strategic Studies, to indentify but a few affiliations. Huntington's writings span American politics, civil–military relations, political development and democratization.
2. Huntington further comments: 'It is human to hate. For self-definition and motivation people need enemies.' (1996a: 130)
3. Other prominent contributors to the 'Asian values' debate include former Singapore prime minister, Lee Kuan Yew, Malaysian prime minister Mohamad bin Mahathir and Bilahari Kausikan from the Singaporean foreign ministry.
4. Mahbubani argues that the West is the cause of its own downfall, firstly in failing to come to terms with the shifting balance of power between the developed and developing world, and secondly due to the 'hubris' of Western society, promoting, for instance, individual freedom to the detriment of the broader interests of the integrity and health of the community (1993c; 1994). See also Jin Junhui (1995).
5. Huntington's selection of civilizations and criteria used has been widely discussed and criticized. See for instance Ahluwalia and Meyer (1994: 22, fn.1), Kirkpatrick (1993), Voll (1994), Welch (1997).
6. See Welch (1997: 206) for a discussion of the incidence of conflicts within civilizations.
7. See also Huntington (1989, 1995b).
8. Quoted from Harry Triandis, *The New York Times*, 25 December (Huntington, 1993a: 41).
9. See, for instance Kurth (1994). See also Gress (1998) for a discussion of tensions between the traditions of the 'grand narrative' and of critical, deconstructionist

- trends, that Gress argues both go to constitute important dimensions of Western civilizational identity and history.
10. For Mahbubani, it is the democratic institutions which characterize the West which are also a source of its current problems. Mahbubani argues that democratic institutions induce gridlock and inhibit political leadership, thus the ability of the West to respond to the new challenges of the later twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. It inhibits the West from dealing with the serious social and economic problems (Mahbubani, 1993c: 14). See also Goldsworthy (1994: 7–8). In many respects, Mahbubani's analysis shares much with that of Huntington's. Both see radical change under way, both see Western culture in retreat, both place great priority on good governance, accepting that in the interim this may require authoritarian government, both see economic development as fundamental to political development and both recognize a weakness in the United States' political system deriving from its pluralism and diffusion of authority, the checks and balances system. Where they differ is in their prescriptions for the West and the extent to which the West's difficulties arise from internal tensions rather than external threats.
 11. His concerns with regard to the destabilizing impact of democratization as a process resonate with those of other commentators, such as Edward Mansfield and Jack Snyder. They also resonate with his own observations that societies in transition to modernization are likely to be less stable and more prone to violence (Huntington, 1968).
 12. Huntington was particularly critical of the failure of modernization theory to produce a model of Western society, 'meaning late twentieth century Western European and North American society', which could be compared and contrasted with the model of modern society. 'Implicitly, the two are assumed to be virtually identical. Modern society has been Western society writ abstractly and polysyllabically. But to non-modern, non-Western society, the process of modernisation and Westernisation may appear to be very different indeed' (1971: 295).
 13. See for instance, Ajami (1993: 5), Camroux (1996: 741), Kirkpatrick (1993: 23), (Mahbubani, 1993c: 12).
 14. For Huntington, a prime example of this is the human rights debate and, in particular, the course of the 1993 UN Conference on Human Rights where Asian states clearly articulated a distinct perspective (1996a: 192–8).

8 The Occident and its significant 'other': Edward Said's West

1. For an account of Said's sense of displacement, see 'Return to Palestine–Israel' in Said (1994a), Said's text in his collaboration with photographer Jean Mohr in *After the Last Sky* (Said, 1985b) and his 1999 memoir *Out of Place*. See also Hovsepian (1992: 7) on how this experience undermined his sense of the 'stability of geography and the continuity of land'.
2. His personal involvement in the politics of the region include his membership of the Palestinian National Council (1977–91), on which he sat as an independent intellectual, and consultant to the UN International Conference on the Question of Palestine (1983). Said has never been a member of any political party. For discussion of his role in the PNC see Hovsepian (1992).
3. For a critical discussion of Said's Foucauldian method, see for example, Garre (1995: 315) and Kennedy (2000). As Hart points out, Said 'deviates' from Foucault's genealogical method in the interests he takes in certain authors, as

- not merely the vehicles or enunciators of a particular discourse, but as formative influences on the discourse (Hart, 2000: 67).
4. *Orientalism* traces the discourse of Orientalism through a variety of texts, placing these texts within historical and intellectual contexts. Similarly, *Culture and Imperialism* seeks to demonstrate the embeddedness of the power structures of imperialism in the culture and the subconsciousness of the West.
 5. Gramsci's concept of hegemony is interpreted by Said as the operation of culture within civil society where the influence of ideas, of institutions and of persons works through consent rather than domination (Said, 1978: 6–7). Kennedy (2000: 24) argues that Said's use of both Foucault and Gramsci creates tensions in his work given their fundamentally different conceptions of power and the importance of historical process.
 6. See his discussion of Fanon (Said, 1993: 323–6) and of Curtius and Auerbach (Said, 1993: 51).
 7. For instance, he draws on one of the great humanist scholars, Vico, in his discussion of history as made by man. Said's humanism has been criticized or queried by some such as Young (1990) and Kennedy (2000) who point to the associations between humanism and European imperialism, and Clifford who suggests that Said is himself presenting a grand totality in the form of a presumed human culture (Clifford, 1988: 274). In contrast, Rogers criticizes Young for finding Said 'guilty by association' with hegemonic Western culture. Humanism, he suggests, has always been an ambiguous discourse on human rights. For others, it is yet a further demonstration of the complexity of humanism and of Said (Rogers, 1992; Thomas, 1994).
 8. See Williams (1958, 1961), and Young (1990: 88–9) for a brief discussion of cultural materialism.
 9. For instance, Clifford argues that Said goes beyond Foucault in seeking to extend his concept of discourse into the area of cultural constructions, looking at ways in which the cultural order is defined externally with respect to the exotic 'other', thus expanding on Foucault's ethnocentric focus on European thought (Clifford, 1988: 264–5).
 10. In *Culture and Imperialism*, Said identifies three topics emerging from 'decolonising cultural resistance': the insistence on the right to see the community's history as a whole; the idea of resistance being an alternative way of conceiving human history rather than merely a reaction to imperialism; and the pull away from nationalism to a more integrative view of human community and liberation (1993: 259–61).
 11. Here, Said draws on the work of Martin Bernal (1987) and Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (1983) on the 'invention' of traditions and history.
 12. Here Carrier quotes Kenneth Burke (Carrier, 1995: 2).
 13. He argues that the human experience is 'finely textured, dense and accessible', but accessible through studying intertwined histories and overlapping spaces rather than through grand systems or ahistorical theories which tend to freeze highly contested orthodox or institutional versions of history into official identities. See Said (1993: 377).
 14. For instance, for Said, the land that was once his home has become an alien place. The Palestine into which he was born effectively no longer exists, it is now the territory of Israel. This was a change effected not by cultural evolution, but by the exercise of power. See Said's essay 'Return to Palestine-Israel' in Said (1994a).
 15. This is due, in part, to the depth and extent of their involvement in the Middle East region. In *Orientalism*, Said was criticized by other scholars for his failure to include the works of scholars from other European countries, particularly Germany, and

- from Russia (Kerr, 1980; Lewis, 1993). However, Said has argued that these scholars lacked the sustained national interests in the Orient which he identifies in Anglo-French and later American authors. They worked within a *Weltanschauung* established by French and British predecessors (Said/Lewis, 1982; Said, 1985b: 14).
16. See Hart (2000) for a critical discussion of Said's conflation of the Islam/Christian–East/West dichotomy. Hart stresses that the religious discourse precedes the Orientalist, constituting a dichotomy between Islam and Christendom that itself contributed to the formulation of the idea of Europe (Hart, 2000: 85).
 17. See, for instance, his discussion of the way in which Conrad in *Heart of Darkness* confirms a sense of European, white authority in the way in which he narrates and represents the strangeness of Africa (Said, 1993: 198–200). Africa's meaning and history are constituted principally with reference to Europe.
 18. For critiques of Said's linkage of scholarship and power see, for instance Butterworth (1980), Duncanson (1980), Garre (1995), Kerr (1980), and Lewis (1993). See Prakesh for a discussion of this division between Said and his critics (Prakash, 1995: 203) and Hart (2000: 72).
 19. See also Turner's essay (1989) for a discussion of categories of differentiation employed in constituting Orientalism.
 20. See Said's discussion of Islam (1978: 62) and Said (1978: 286–7) for twentieth-century American representation of this image.
 21. Said draws his illustration from modern scholars of Islam such as von Grunebaum (Said, 1978: 298). However, similar opinions have been voiced with respect to other areas of the non-West, both in the past and recently. Notions of the East, this time Asia, as incapable of innovation have also been common. For instance, among the consistent assumptions, which Richard Minear (1980) identifies in his discussion of Western scholarship on Japan, is the belief that Japanese culture lacks creativity and originality. In contrast, a restless and creative spirit typifies Western culture. These ideas were reiterated in discussions of Japan's role of potential hegemon in the global political economy (Nye: 1990).
 22. Interestingly, it was not so much the fear of destruction, but the fear of the removal of the barrier between East and West that so disturbed some Orientalist (Said, 1978: 263).
 23. See Dalby (1980: 489) and Said (1978: 116–23, 127) for a discussion of different intellectual trends within Orientalism.
 24. For instance, in a 1995 article, Said asked: 'How can one today speak of "Western civilisation" except as in large measure an ideological fiction, implying a sort of detached superiority for a handful of values and ideas, none of which has much meaning outside the history of conquest, immigration, travel and the mingling of peoples that gave the Western nations their present mixed identities?' (1995: 5)
 25. Said's *Orientalism* was criticized by many reviewers who felt that his portrayal of Oriental scholars was too selective, his treatment of their work reductionist (Hourani 1979; Kerr 1980; Lewis 1993) or inaccurate (Greene 1979; Lewis 1993). Mani and Frankenberg (1985) are also critical of the monolithic, undifferentiated and uncontested image of Orientalism as a form of knowledge that Said presents.

Conclusion

1. See in particular Wight's essay 'The Theory of Mankind' (in Wight, 1991).
2. Watson (1992) looks at other forms of international society from a slightly broader perspective than that of Martin Wight in *Systems of States*.

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Note: Cross reference to *authors* covers Francis Fukuyama, Samuel P. Huntington, the International Society school, Edward Said, Oswald Spengler and Arnold Toynbee.

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