Cultural Theory as Political Science

Edited by
Michael Thompson,
Gunnar Grendstad and Per Selle

Routledge/ECPR Studies in European Political Science

CULTURAL THEORY AS POLITICAL SCIENCE

Cultural Theory as Political Science is the first major European political science book to discuss the growing interdisciplinary field of 'cultural theory'. Conventional fields of political research—for example, policy analysis, voting behaviour, and international relations—have so far relied on paradigms such as neo-institutionalism and rational choice. This book challenges and complements those paradigms. Going to the heart of political science methodology, *Cultural Theory as Political Science* proposes a coherent and viable alternative to mainstream political science.

The focus of analysis is 'social solidarity' which comprises three mutually supportive, analytically distinct features: social relations, cultural bias and behavioural strategy. The authors argue that these elements illuminate political questions at a level of analysis on any scale level: from the household to the state; the international regime to the political party.

Accessibly and entertainingly written, this book presents 'user-friendly cultural theory'. It will be a welcome alternative for political scientists as well as for those in other fields of research who are looking for an unconventional approach.

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Michael Thompson is Director of the Musgrave Institute in London: Adjunct Professor in the Department of Comparative Politics at the University of Bergen, and senior researcher at the Norwegian Centre in Organization and Management, Bergen. He is one of the 'founding fathers' of Cultural Theory. The other two editors are both at the University of Bergen; **Gunnar Grendstad** is Associate Professor in the Department of Comparative Politics and **Per Selle** is Professor at the Department of Comparative Politics, University of Bergen; and Research Director at the Norwegian Centre in Organization and Management.

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SERIES EDITOR'S PREFACE

The agonising complexity of social life can be reduced very easily by assuming that we only have to look at the individual and his or her preferences and behaviour. A social phenomenon, then, is nothing more than the aggregate of actions of these individuals. Individual preferences and motives are presumed to be self-evident and do not require further consideration or explanation. Obviously, individuals will react to and anticipate in social phenomena defined in this way, but this does not violate the basic assumption that social life can be understood only as an aggregate of more or less autonomously acting individuals. Individuals possess preferences and motives and the main task of social scientists is to show the unintended consequences of the collision of these 'possessions' when people get in touch with each other.

Critiques of this type of reductionism usually start with obligatory citations from the work of Emile Durkheim, who stressed that the causes of social facts must be sought among other social facts and not wirhin individual consciousness. This does not imply that psychologically-oriented approaches are useless for understanding social phenomena—it implies that collective life cannot be derived from individual life in a simple way. Already the selection of terms like 'individual' in antithesis to 'social' perpetuates 'the traditional fallacy that the individual is not social', as C.H.Cooley remarked many decades ago. More recently, several aspects of this debate have received new incentives with the rapid rise and remarkable spread of 'rational-choice' approaches on the one hand and 'Cultural Theory' on the other. While rational-choice approaches emphasise that social life basically consists of the sum of individual actions, Cultural Theorists stress the need to focus on the interaction between the individual and his or her social environment. And for these theorists, preferences and motives of individuals cannot be simply taken for granted. On the contrary, individual preferences and motives can be understood only as being defined by and maintained within specific social contexts.

The contributions to this volume are all based on the notion that the interaction between social contexts and individual attributes provides the key to grasp the dynamics of divergent aspects of social life. For Cultural Theory, different social contexts originate from the different ways people bind themselves to one another. Hence Cultural Theorists do not start with individual preferences and motives, but with an enumeration of the basic variants of individual contacts in terms of *social solidarity*. In line with the seminal work of Thompson, Ellis, and Wildavsky there are just four forms of social solidarity: individualism, hierarchy, fatalism, and egalitarianism. An additional fifth form—autonomy

—is defined as a lack of solidarity. This approach enables Cultural Theorists to question widely-accepted lines of distinction between private and public matters, political and non-political issues, national and international politics, trust and distrust, centralised and decentralised modes of decision-making, institutionalised and non-institutionalised processes, democratic and undemocratic societies, and so on. Instead of accepting these *a priori* distinctions, Cultural Theory aims at explaining them. In addtion, Cultural Theory rejects most of these dichotomies as being far too simplistic to be useful, and therefore embraces the obligation to offer more sophisticated conceptualisations.

The research agenda for Cultural Theory can be filled effortlessly with an unlimited list of objects and phenomena to be analysed from a virtually endless number of perspectives. The unique character of the essays collected in this volume, however, is that each of them accepts and uses the five-fold typology of social solidarity to study very different events. Moreover, the objects and themes chosen are not of marginal relevance for political science (as, say, lifestyles of urban adolescents would be), but belong to the highly-contested heartland of the discipline. The common denominator of these contributions is that they deal with aspects of what can be called a process of democratisation (preferences, organisations, political cultures, and democracies). In the first part, on preferences, attention is paid to actors in the field of international relations, postmaterialism, and party preferences. The second part, on organisations, covers themes like intraparty politics and departmental conflicts, while topics such as the consequences of new media for public debates and the question about national political cultures in the European Union can be found in the part on organisations. Finally, empirical and normative perspectives on democracy are included in the chapters which constitute the concluding part on democracies.

Originally, Cultural Theory mainly provided a highly-needed and provocative attack on many traditional approaches and canons in social and political science. By now it has much more to offer than blunt criticism. The contributors to this volume show that Cultural Theory can be applied systematically and consistently to analyse a broad range of highly interesting social phenomena. It is not the attack on common-sense notions which makes this approach interesting and valuable, but the fact that it has alternative or rival interpretations to offer. As with any other explanation, the proof of the pudding for Cultural Theory is in the eating. The stimulating contributions collected in this volume deliver much more than a well-cooked dessert or some appetising recipe.

Jan W.van Deth, *Series Editor*
Mannheim, December 1998

PREFACE

Almost all of the chapters in this volume have been developed from papers presented at the workshop on Cultural Theory which took place in Berne, Switzerland, in February/March 1997 under the auspices of the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR). The Berne workshop provided a very stimulating environment where the participants, who were mostly unfamiliar with one another, hotly debated Cultural Theory for several days. Many of the participants in the workshop were young academics whose enthusiasm and original ideas played a major role in the success of the workshop and in the bridging of Cultural Theory and political science in this volume. Thanks are due to all of the contributors to that workshop.

Later in 1997, Jouke de Vries generously initiated, organised and hosted a meeting of authors which took place in Leiden, The Netherlands. This meeting provided a fine opportunity to discuss and diligently pursue some of the finer points addressed in the various chapters in this book. The final editorial process allowed these points to be further developed. This editorial process has been based at the Norwegian Research Centre in Organization and Management, and the Department of Comparative Politics, both at the University of Bergen, Norway. Thanks are due to Maila Solheim, at the Norwegian Research Centre in Organization and Management for her efficient efforts in consolidating the references and pulling the different chapters together into a complete manuscript.

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Bergen, October 1998

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CULTURAL THEORY AS POLITICAL SCIENCE

Michael Thompson, Gunnar Grendstad and Per Selle

The boundary line between the political and the non-political, Cultural Theorists point out, is not self-evident; it is socially constructed. And, since some people are busily constructing that line in one way and others in different ways, its position is always in dispute. This is no trivial quibble. Indeed it is difficult to imagine what could be more political than getting everyone to agree to your drawing of that line (which, of course, is what those who are gathered around each of these contending positions are all the time trying to do).

Of course, it can be objected that to abandon the insistence on a single, self-evident line between the political and the non-political is to open the floodgates of an unconstrained relativism in which there are as many rival drawings of the line as there are people in the polity. This would indeed be the case, were it not for the fact that culture has to do with values and beliefs that are *shared*. Since it takes at least two people to share something, the relativism is inevitably constrained, and this means that we can attempt to make sense of this messy state of affairs by teasing out the various drawings of the line in terms of these constraints. That essentially, is what Cultural Theory does; and, in doing this, it shows us how the relativism-rejectors, in excluding 'the politics of the political', have given away something important that rightfully belongs to political science.

Cultural Theory's focus is on the various ways in which we bind ourselves to one another—*social solidarities*—integral to each of which, it argues, is a distinctive patterning of beliefs and values: a distinctive *cultural bias*. Cultural Theory's typology of cultural biases then allows us to go 'inside' any of the social units (nations, firms, churches and so on) that are conventionally characterised in terms of their distinctive cultures. Where the conventional approach zooms in on the cultural particularities that make the French different from the Germans, or Toyota different from Renault, or Protestants different from Catholics, Cultural Theorists begin by looking for the different biases that each of the contending forms of social solidarity, *within* each of these social units, imparts to that social unit's distinctive culture. These social solidarities (five in all—we will explain them in a moment) will be found, according to Cultural Theory, in differing proportions and patterns of interaction, in each of these culturally unique social units. In other words, the solidarities are universal; they take us beyond the particularities of each social unit, in much the same way that scientists, once they had gone 'inside' the atom, were able to understand the differences between the elements in terms of the different numbers of electrons, protons and neutrons that each is comprised of, and the various orbits into

which those few varieties of fundamental particle arrange themselves. Before that, all they had were 90 or so atoms, each of which was different from the others, and no way of understanding why and how they were different.

Without universals our explanations, no matter how impressively we may dress them up, are trapped in a distressingly small circle: the Chinese behave the way they do because they're Chinese! Likewise for all the other social units. And if we have no way of going inside the social units we study then we cannot avoid the idea that the French are pretty much all the same and different from the Germans, who are also pretty much all the same, and so on. This, as students of political culture now know, is simply not the case.

> There is not a British civil culture, nor a German, French or Italian one. The differences among countries are differences in degree, not of kind, differences of a few percentage points. The differences within nations appear greater than the differences among nations. There are more similarities in the beliefs of a French and German social democrat than between a French socialist and a French conservative or between a German social democrat and a German Christian democrat.
>
> (Dogan 1988:2–3)

So Cultural Theory provides a conceptual framework that comports with, rather than contradicts, the empirical evidence.[1] That, you could say, is its most immediate and practical contribution. And, in embracing social constructivism without at the same time spiralling away into totally unconstrained relativism, it allows us not to draw a single, self-evident line between the political and the non-political. This is a deeper and, on the face of it, less practical contribution. Appearances, however, can be deceptive and, in this case, they are! In allowing us to confront and analyse the endless process of contention between the different drawings of the line, Cultural Theory puts the politics of the political back where it belongs: at the very centre of political science.

The underlying theory

The basic argument is that beneath all the particularities—the luxuriant diversity of human customs and languages—there are just five viable forms of social solidarity, all of which will be found, in varying strengths and patterns of interaction, in any social system. This is Cultural Theory's *impossibility theorem* (stated in Thompson, Ellis and Wildavsky [1990] and proved, it transpired, some ten years earlier by Schmutzer and Bandler [1980, also *see* Schmutzer 1994]) and it provides the bold, explicit and rigorous foundation that supports the entire enterprise.[2] However, there is, as they say, more than one way to skin a rabbit, and Mary Douglas (the founding mother of it all) has taken a more practical course that does not concern itself too much with high-flown theorising and concentrates on the application of a heuristic device: 'grid-group analysis'. Grid and group—her two 'dimensions of sociality'—give a fourfold typology of solidarities: individualism, hierarchy, fatalism and egalitarianism (with the fifth one—autonomy, exemplified by the hermit—being acknowledged but 'taken off the social map').[3] Most applications of

Cultural Theory have relied on this grid-group analytical scheme, and together they have now built an impressive case for it to be taken seriously.

That it works, however, raises the question of why it works, and it is in this way that the practical business of applying an analytical scheme eventually leads to the need for an explicit theory. Since this logical sequence also roughly matches the historical development of Cultural Theory, we will follow it here: first showing how it works and then showing why it works.

Grid-group analysis, as originally propounded (Douglas 1978), is a way of classifying an individual's *social context:* the way in which he or she is caught up in the process of social life. Whether or not an individual can be caught up in a number of different ways in different parts of his or her life—that is, can be a vital component in more than one form of solidarity—was not of much concern to begin with. The focus was much more practical: to understand policy debates (for instance, over nuclear power, environmental clean-up, the siting of hazardous facilities, and keeping the world supplied with energy[4]) in which people (to the dismay of the proponents of incrementalism, who have to assume that there is an agreed base) are clearly arguing from different premises and, what is more, showing no tendency to converge towards consensus as the debate progresses.

The idea is to go into some specific setting—the handling of radioactive material in a Boston hospital is a nice example (Rayner 1986)—and use the analytical scheme to sort out the various actors according to how grouped and gridded they are. Of course, dimensions (which are continuous) are not really a valid way of distinguishing between social solidarities (which are discontinuous patterns of beliefs, transactions and decisions) but the practical point is that, if the patterns are there, these dimensions will sort them out for us.[5] It is in this spirit—a rough-and-ready way of taking a first cut at these crucial social discontinuities—that grid and group should be entertained, even though we can also discern much of the underlying theory in Douglas' characterisation of the four solidarities that her analytical scheme captures (especially in her *How Institutions Think* (1987) which, she explained with disarming candour, was the book she should have written first, before all the others (1978, 1982b, 1985, and [with A.Wildavsky] 1982) that those who were eager to understand Cultural Theory had been digesting for the past 15 or so years).

The *group* dimension, Douglas explains, taps the extent to which 'the individual's life is absorbed in and sustained by group membership'. A lower group score would be given to an individual who 'spends the morning in one group, the evening in another, appears on Sundays in a third, gets his livelihood in a fourth' (Douglas 1982b:202), than to a person (an Amish, say) who joins with others in 'common residence, shared work, shared resources and recreation' (ibid:192). Lowest score of all would go to the person who took care to avoid all group involvement, in the manner of Groucho Marx who wouldn't join any club that would have him as a member.

Though the *grid* dimension is less familiar to social scientists, the concept it denotes is not; it is much the same as Durkheim's notion of 'regulation' (Durkheim 1951:ch. 5). A high grid (that is, a highly regulated) social context is characterised by 'an explicit set of institutionalised classifications that keeps individuals apart and regulates their interactions' (Douglas 1982b:203). In such a setting, 'male does not compete in female spheres, and

sons do not define their relations with fathers' (ibid:192). As one moves down-grid, individuals are increasingly expected to negotiate their own relationships with others.

- Strong group involvement coupled with minimal regulation produce social relations that are *egalitarian*. With everyone transacting symmetrically with everyone else, and no one transacting with the wider world, there can be no internal authority structure. All the structure is in the group's boundary: the 'wall of virtue', as it has been called, that separates the caring and vulnerable 'us' from the harsh and rapacious 'them'. Witch-hunting and schism are endemic in the egalitarian solidarity, because individuals can exercise control over one another only by claiming to speak in the name of the group: a claim that is supported only in those situations where everyone gives their support to a decision. Active participation, with decisions based on the direct consent of everyone, is the only basis for legitimacy.
- When an individual's social environment is characterised by strong group boundaries and binding prescriptions (high grid) the resulting solidarity is *hierarchical*. Individuals are subject both to the control of their fellows and the demands of socially imposed roles. In contrast to egalitarianism, which has few means short of expulsion for controlling its members, hierarchy 'has an armoury of different solutions to internal conflicts, including upgrading, shifting sideways, downgrading, resegregating, redefining' (Douglas 1982b: 206). The exercise of authority, and inequality more generally, is justified on the grounds that different roles for different people enable them all to live together more harmoniously than do alternative arrangements.
- People who are bound neither by group incorporation nor prescribed roles constitute an *individualistic* solidarity. In such an environment all boundaries are provisional and subject to negotiation. Although the individualist is, by definition, relatively free from control by others, that does not mean that he or she is not engaged in exerting control over others. On the contrary, the individualist's success is often measured by the size of the following commanded.
- A person who finds himself or herself subject to binding prescriptions and excluded from group membership is a constituent of the *fatalistic* solidarity. The fatalist, like the hierarchist, may have few options, having little choice about how he/she spends his/her time, with whom he/she associates, what he/she wears or eats, where he/she lives and works. Unlike the hierarchist, however, the fatalist is excluded from membership of the solidarities that are responsible for making the decisions that rule his or her life.

These four solidarities that are captured by the grid-group analytical scheme possess the dual advantage of holding onto the best in previous research, thus cumulating findings, while opening up relatively unexplored, but important, avenues of cultural expression and social cohesion. Any approach to social solidarity must be able to account for the two modes of organising—hierarchies and markets—that dominate social science theories (Lindblom 1977, for instance, and Williamson 1975, but also, in various guises, the 'masters': *see* Part II of Thompson, Ellis and Wildavsky 1990). Sensing that there may be more than hierarchies and markets, some theorists occasionally mention 'clans' (Ouichi

1980) or 'clubs' (Williamson 1975) or 'collegiums' (Majone 1986), and others speak of 'alienation', 'marginalisation', 'dependencia' and 'social exclusion' (for an overview *see* O'Riordan et al. 1998:362) but only the grid-group scheme captures the egalitarian and fatalistic solidarities with the same parsimonious dimensions that also capture the more familiar hierarchy and individualism.[6]

So the grid-group analytical scheme is certainly intriguing from the theoretical perspective, nor does it tail off when we come to its applications. A scheme that can clarify and re-order fields as varied as workplace crime (Mars 1982), household consumption styles (Dake and Thompson 1993; Mars and Mars 1993), environmental concern (Grendstad and Selle 1997; Ellis and F.Thompson 1997b), fanaticism (Lockhart 1997b), the worlds energy futures (Schwarz and Thompson 1990), technological risk (Douglas and Wildavsky 1982; Wildavsky and Dake 1990), the definition of rigour in mathematics (Bloor 1982), Himalayan deforestation (Thompson, Warburton and Hatley 1986), the siting of liquefied natural gas terminals (Kunreuther *et al* 1983), cognitive styles in geology (Rudwick 1982), the different ways of being poor (Thompson and Wildavsky 1986a), the Salem witchcraft trials (Owen 1982), changing definitions of rape and of altruism (Wildavsky 1993b), the translation of the earliest known Chinese texts (McLeod 1982), attitudes towards silt in the Indian state of Bihar (Dixit 1997) and global climate change (Rayner and Malone 1998a, b, especially vol.1), to which, of course, can be added the applications set out in this volume, deserves a second glance.

A second glance from whom? From sociologists, economists, environmental scientists, security experts, engineers, policy analysts, mathematicians, foresters, risk assessors, geologists, social workers, jurists, game theorists, historians of China in the first millennium BC, [...] geomorphologists and climatologists? The list, it would seem, can be as long (and as transdisciplinary) as we care to make it, but, in every instance, the light that is being shone on these gloriously varied subjects is a political science light. Each time, the clarification and re-ordering stems from the ability of this analytical scheme to sort out the different ways in which crucial dividing lines are drawn: between acceptable and unacceptable risks, between silt that is wanted and silt that is not wanted, between fact and conjecture ('I wouldn't have seen it', as geologists ruefully admit, 'if I hadn't believed it'), between the deserving and the undeserving, between order and disorder, between glaring anomaly and judicious adjustment, between 'yes' and 'no', between insisting that someone is to blame and agreeing that it is no one's fault, between credible and incredible..., on and on. Drawing a line in such a way that it supports your solidarity, and then defending that particular drawing of the line against other drawings that appear so reasonable (self-evident, even) to the members of other solidarities, is the very stuff of politics. Yet it is all too often ignored, with all the attention being focused on how people set about getting the different things they want and no one asking why it is that different people want different things. To say that 'People act in their interests' is to say very little. It begs the question 'How do they come to *know* where the interests they act in lie?'. So here is another way of conveying the usefulness of Cultural Theory for political science: it enables us to go beyond the narrow confines of the politics of interest (Schwarz and Thompson 1985). Instead of starting at the end, by taking preferences as given, Cultural Theory focuses on the processes by which preferences are formed.

Drawing lines, strengthening solidarities

Each form of solidarity is supported by its distinctive constructions of nature: physical and human.

Individualists see physical nature as robust: able to bounce back from whatever insult we may inflict. Individuals, of course, may misjudge things and lose out to those who are more skilful in the competitive business of interrogating nature, but there is no danger of everyone losing because nature has been pushed beyond some limit. There is, therefore, no justification for external regulation: there is no need for it, and to introduce it would be to shackle the process of trial-and-error by which we discover how best to convert raw materials into resources. Man, individualists[7] insist, is essentially self-seeking, and it is only by arranging things so that a 'hidden hand' rewards those whose behaviour benefits everyone else as well as themselves that we form ourselves into a moral and ever-improving community.

Similar sociologies underlie the social constructions of physical and human nature that characterise the other solidarities.

Egalitarians see the natural environment as a fragile and intricately interconnected system: a place where the least perturbation may trigger its total collapse. Everyone, therefore, must learn to tread lightly on the earth: an impossibility if man is everywhere and always self-seeking. But man, for egalitarians, is not self- seeking. Man is caring and co-operative, until corrupted by coercive and exploitative institutions: the state, for instance, or the market.

For the heirarchist the egalitarian's construction of physical nature, however, is simply not credible, because it would not permit the sort of planned exploitation that the hierarchist needs in order to ensure that resources are sufficiently unequally distributed: to each according to his or her rank and station. Nor, on the other hand, is the individualist's construction credible: if wealth could be ensured just by unleashing an anarchic free-for-all there would be no need for all the regulation by which the hierarchy asserts and reproduces itself. A world that is robust within limits—limits that are discoverable by certified experts—is the hierarchist's world. Human nature, for the hierarchist, is neither irreducibly self-seeking nor intrinsically caring. Man, rather, is malleable: born in sin but redeemable by firm, longlasting and nurturing institutions.

Fatalists, with the decisions that rule their lives made by those who are not themselves fatalists, know that physical nature is capricious (operating without rhyme or reason) and that man is fickle (inconsistent from one transaction to the next and therefore inherently untrustworthy).

It is hardly surprising therefore that, when it comes to the drawing of the line between the political and the non-political, the members of these solidarities do not see eye-to-eye.

- Individualists strive to define politics as narrowly as possible. They are reluctant, therefore, to admit that private resources dominate public decision-making. Individualists seek to maximise behaviour that is considered private—beyond the legitimate reach of government regulation.

- Egalitarians strive to erase the distinction between the political and the nonpolitical. Committed to unmasking the inegalitarian compromises and conspiracies that are perpetuated by both the hierarchical and individualist solidarities, they insist that everything is political (even shopping: 'buying a product', declares Leslie Gottlieb of the United States Council on Economic Priorities, 'means casting an economic vote for that company'). For egalitarians, the *public sphere*—where all participate and all give their consent to collective decisions—is where the good life can best be lived.
- Whilst individualists try to push the line so that nearly everything is private, and egalitarians are hell-bent on forcing it the other way until nearly everything is political, hierarchists are concerned with clarity and balance. The careful and unambiguous differentiation of public and private spheres is what they strive for: a stance that puts them in contention with both the individualists and the egalitarians. Their expansive view of state functions, for instance, conflicts with that of the individualists, and their insistence that participation should be limited by qualification (certified experts, for instance, should be trusted to determine where statutory regulation is needed) conflicts with the egalitarians' view.
- Fatalists make no effort to discriminate between public and private spheres. Both are regarded with fear, dread and distrust. Unconcerned to expand one at the expense of the other, and displaying no interest in maintaining the clarity of the line that separates them, the fatalist strives to avoid them both by focusing on personal or familial survival. *Amoral familism* (Banfield 1958) nicely captures the fatalists' idea of the least bad life: 'It doesn't matter who you vote for, the government always gets in'!

With the form of social solidarity determining the type of behaviour that is deemed political (or whether a boundary line is drawn at all) and with each form of solidarity needing the others if it is to be viable, agreement is impossible. Approaches that assume agreement —incrementalism, for instance, and those, like rational choice theory, that entertain just one model of the person (the economically rational utility-maximiser)—are therefore non-starters. In plumping for one set of constructions, and rejecting the others, they are simply taking sides in a never-ending political struggle when what is called for (from political science, that is) is an explanation of that struggle. Consequently:

- Political science should pay special attention to the ways in which the boundary between the political and the non-political is socially negotiated: that is, to the dynamic interplay of the social solidarities.
- Political scientists must give up the notion that the distinction between politics and other spheres (whether economic, social, environmental, technological or whatever) is 'out there' in the world, ready-made to be picked up and used.
- If the boundaries between the political and the non-political are socially constructed, and inevitably contested, then the study of these social constructions (and their anchoring within contending solidarities) must assume a central place in the discipline.

These three stipulations provide the overall strategy for this volume. It is by consistently observing these that we propose to deliver on our title's promise: Cultural Theory as Political Science.

From Newtonian to Blakean social science

Cultural Theory, thanks to its focus on the forms of solidarity, enables us to sidestep the time-honoured social science distinction between micro and macro (the individual and society, for instance) in an interesting, but not easily explained, way. It takes individuals to comprise a form of solidarity, and that large pattern will persist only for as long as its constituent individuals bias their culture (by insisting, for instance, that nature—human and physical—is one possible way rather than any of the other possible ways) so as to support and defend that particular pattern. The solidarity therefore permeates its constituent individuals and, in the other direction, the entire solidarity is its constituent individual (its *social being,* as Durkheim put it) writ large. It is for this reason that we find essentially the same contentions, and essentially the same dynamical structures, at all scale levels: from discussions around the family hearth over how to make ends meet, to international negotiations over how to cope with global climate change (that this is indeed the case is demonstrated in the first volume of Rayner and Malone 1998b).

So, rather than slicing things up along the scale dimension (the individual, the household, the village, the nation-state, the international regime and so on) Cultural Theory suggests that we resist this ingrained urge and focus instead on the way in which the solidarities run all the way through social life, like the letters in a stick of Blackpool rock.[8] There is, of course, a micro and a macro end to that stick of rock, but each is animated with the self-same lettering and, no matter where we happen to break the stick, the self-same lettering is there too!

Just in case Blackpool rock does not fully convince, let us try another, slightly more scientific, line of argument. The visionary William Blake used to tease Isaac Newton with the idea of a 'universe in a grain of sand': an idea that some physical and natural scientists now find rather helpful. Fractal geometers, for instance, can generate images of 'coastlines' which, when we zoom in closer, reveal 'microcoastlines' every bit as contorted and realistic as those that they are nested within, on and on. And, though the 'big fleas have little fleas upon their backs to bite'em and little fleas have lesser fleas and so *ad infinitum*' argument does not stand up to close examination, molecular biologists find nothing strange in the elephant containing the DNA and the DNA containing the elephant: that is the foundation for the whole of modern biotechnology. What Cultural Theory is saying is that it is time the social sciences went Blakean.[9]

A social solidarity is comprised of three mutually supportive and analytically distinct features: a distinctive pattern of *social relationships,* a distinctive *cultural bias* and a distinctive *behavioural strategy*.[10] A hierarchical household, for instance, will have social relationships characterised by asymmetry and accountability, and a cultural bias in which (as we have already said) physical nature is seen as a complex but manageable system and man is seen as essentially malleable. The behavioural strategy that is justified by that cultural bias will be manifested in a consumption style that is 'traditional' (own places at

table, arms on the chairs of the mother and father, clothes sorted out by fabric and colour before they go into the washing machine, McVitie's biscuits for the family and 'dealer own brand' biscuits for the dog, and so on).[11] And much the same, if you think about it, holds for a monarchy, which is the grain of sand to the innumerable households it contains. Monarchs cannot become subjects or *vice versa,* in the way that buyers and sellers in a marketplace can swap positions. That is asymmetry. But subjects, as we have recently seen in Britain (in the days following the untimely death of Diana, Princess of Wales), can bring a deviant monarch back into line ('The Queen Bows To Her People', as one tabloid newspaper put it). That is accountability.

Cultural bias and behavioural strategy, together, support and reproduce the pattern of social relationships—both within the household and the monarchy— but no one of these three is causally prior. Each, you could say, is the cause of the other two features, and together they provide the coherence that enables that particular form of solidarity to achieve viability in an environment that contains the other four solidarities, each of which is organised in a way that all the time threatens to disorganise the others. The overall picture is of a self-organising disequilibrium system in which each of the five solidarities is acting so as to undermine the others while, at the same time, needing them to define itself against. Individuality, Cultural Theory argues, is something that, to a considerable extent, we get from our involvement with other people. Similarly with preferences; we discover what we want by establishing our social relationships. So it does not matter whether we start with the part or with the totality; like the DNA and the elephant, each is entailed in the other.

Two of the solidarities—*hierarchy* and *individualism*—correspond (as we have already mentioned) to the classic hierarchies and markets distinction, and to the economist's long-established contrast between social sanctions and market incentives. The other three—*egalitarianism, fatalism* and *autonomy*—are less familiar, which is hardly surprising, given the predilection of the masters to think in twofold, not fivefold, terms (Durkheim's mechanical and organic solidarity, Tönnies' *gemeinschaft* and *gesellschaft,* Maine's status and contract, and so on).

Change, according to the masters, is therefore deterministic and predictable (and boring): if hierarchies are gaining ground then markets will be losing ground, and *vice versa*. But bump up the plurality to three or more and change becomes indeterministic, unpredictable (and interesting): if one solidarity is on the way up, then at least one of the others will be on the way down, but you cannot say which it will be. Then, when the loser (or one of them, if there was more than one) finds its fortunes are picking up, one at least of the others (one of which, of course, is the one we started with) will find itself on the wane. And so it goes: always orderly (in the sense that the five forms of solidarity are inextinguishable) but never predictable, the sequences of aggrandisement and diminution never repeating themselves and never settling down into some steady and balanced equilibrium. Social systems, in other words, are *complex* (unpredictable, indeterministic, far-from-equilibrium, non-linear and highly sensitive to initial conditions) but so much of social science, following the Newtonian lead of the natural sciences, has assumed them to be *simple* (predictable, deterministic, equilibrating, linear and insensitive to initial conditions). That, at any rate, is what Cultural Theory is saying, and that is why its

fivefold typology—which captures the order within the endless contention and transformation but makes no predictions about the future states of the system—is its key feature.

The Complete Typology

Where the hierarchical solidarity is characterised by asymmetry and accountability, the individualist solidarity is characterised by symmetry and the absence of accountability. Buyers and sellers, bidders and bargainers, are endlessly switching roles, and no one can hold anyone else accountable. Markets work on trust (the tit-for-tat strategy that is 'uninvadeable' in the iterated Prisoner's Dilemma game[12]) and they have to rely on the hierarchy to enforce the law of contract that is so vital to their viability (Wildavsky 1992; Rapoport 1985). So the classic typology is incomplete in that it ignores the other two permutations: symmetry and accountability (which are the defining characteristics of the egalitarian solidarity) and asymmetry and the absence of accountability (which are the defining characteristics of the fatalist solidarity). 'Each counts as one, and no one more than one' is the rallying cry of the egalitarian solidarity, where all relationships are symmetrical and decisions require the direct consent of everyone. 'Get your retaliation in first'—the best strategy in the one-off Prisoner's Dilemma game—is the guiding principle in the trustless interactions that are sustained by fatalism. In other words, the rules that govern the lives of fatalists are dictated (inadvertently, as it were) by those—the hierarchists, the individualists and the egalitarians—who are not themselves fatalists.

Each of these four forms of solidarity is coercive—holding itself together by instilling certain behaviours and beliefs, and endlessly trying to chew bits off the others—and it is this fourfold fray that the fifth and final form of solidarity—autonomy—defines itself against. It is a curious sort of solidarity, its social being is the hermit, because it stabilises itself by the deliberate avoidance of all coercive involvements: 'heavy scenes', as they were called by the 1960s members of this solidarity. Many social scientists become quite angry about the hermit and his or her autonomous solidarity, arguing that in rejecting social involvement the hermit has removed himself or herself from the social stage; and political scientists readily conclude (for much the same reason) that the hermit is irrelevant to their concerns. But the Chinese do not see the Dalai Lama as irrelevant, and the United States' establishment became mightily concerned over Allen Ginsberg and William Burroughs![13]

Similarly with fatalism. A modicum of apathy may help oil democracy's wheels, but in larger doses it becomes a serious threat. 'Curvilinearity' was the word Aaron Wildavsky (1981) used to capture this idea of civic virtue turning into civic vice, with no nice threshold to prevent us from falling into the undesirable state of affairs, and curvilinearity is the norm in a dynamical system that is far from equilibrium: the sort of dynamical system that Cultural Theory gives us.[14]

The individual is a lump of misplaced concrete

We have now come to the most difficult, and most contentious, part of Cultural Theory: the counter-intuitive turning-away from the individual as the fundamental unit of attention. This is something that is not easily accepted, and it explains why this introduction does not run in the familiar social science grooves, and why those who feel that Cultural Theory should be a clip-on 'extra' that will enrich existing analyses are likely to be surprised and disappointed. This turningaway is confronted head-on in the very first section (on preferences) and it keeps on raising its head through all the others. Though not fully resolved, even by the end, this challenging idea animates the entire volume, encouraging us to see objects of study to which we have long been habituated in a new light.

The trick is to see the various forms of solidarity as the 'prime movers', each all the time trying to strengthen itself by encouraging more people to place more of their transactions, more of the time, on that pattern of social relationships and its sustaining cultural bias, while doing everything it can to put spokes in the wheels of the others. Preferences, in other words, are formed between people rather than within each of us, and values (as Rayner [personal communication, 1998] has recently pointed out) are stabilised, 'not in the hearts and minds of individuals but by the kind of solidarity that they are developing at any one time'. Individuals, however, do not disappear from the picture, nor do we have to see them as pre-programmed automata unquestioningly carrying out the actions that are specified by the solidarities of which they are the zombie-like components. Cultural Theory does not deny individuality; all it does is systematically open up the implications of the unremarkable observation that individuality (as Elster so nicely puts it) is, to a considerable extent, 'inherently relational' (Elster 1985:6).

Rayner (personal communication, 1998) argues that this will require us to 'cease and desist from methodological and epistemological individualism altogether' and to agree that we will no longer talk about individuals as 'individualists', 'hierarchists', 'egalitarians' and so on. We concur with his strictures about methodological and epistemological individualism, but not with his insistence that we discard these much relied upon labels. Rather, we would say that, in respect to an individual's transactions that constitute part of the hierarchical solidarity (say), we can refer to him or her as a hierarchist. But, in respect to his or her other transactions, he or she will be an individualist, an egalitarian and so on. The labels, in other words, *are* valid, but only within specified transactional contexts. Bizarre though this proviso may appear, it has some immediate and useful implications.

By thinking in terms of solidarities, and of their complex dynamics, we are able to zoom in on any scale level—the household, the state, the international regime, the firm, the political party or whatever. This encourages us to see that the individual is merely a physiological and biological entity: chop it up in those terms and you will do it serious, quite likely fatal, injury. But socially it is much more helpful to speak (as the indianist, McKim Marriott [1967], has long spoken) of the *dividual,* there being no reason why a person should not lead different parts of his or her life as a component of different solidarities. Indeed, Charles Lockhart (1997b) has argued that this is what most of us do,

and that the insistence on forcing every part of life onto just one solidarity is the mark of the fanatic: a nice insight that gives us five distinct kinds of fanaticism, each of which we can readily recognise among people we know (but not, of course, within ourselves).[15]

Dividuality raises some interesting problems for social survey work, because you cannot interview a form of social solidarity. All you can do is talk to the people who comprise that solidarity, and it is important that they not be hopping around from one solidarity to another while you are trying to pin down one of those solidarities by talking to them. People, in Cultural Theory, are not dense little spheres—hierarchical, individualist, egalitarian, fatalist or autonomous to the core; they are every bit as plural as any of the other scale levels. People are simply the micro end of the stick of Blackpool rock!

User-friendly Cultural Theory

So Cultural Theory, though now well developed as a way of thinking about the process of social life, does require us to unlearn some deeply-ingrained habits (rather in the way that space scientists have to rid themselves of certain common-sense convictions, such as that 'what goes up must come down'). One useful way of coping with these learning difficulties is to ask yourself, in relation to the application you are contemplating, how much of Cultural Theory you are going to need. You may not need all of the solidarities, and you may not need all three of the mutually supportive features—social relationships, cultural biases and behavioural strategies—that comprise those solidarities.

- Perhaps the most demanding of all Cultural Theory applications is the *classifying of households in terms of their consumption styles:* a necessary first step, Cultural Theorists argue, for any effective national level interventions. In climate change policy, for instance, it is not enough that the policymaker be reflexive (aware of, and respectful of, the other voices in the discourse); he or she must also get his or her interventions to mesh constructively with the plurality of responses at the household level, and to do that a policymaker needs to know what these responses are and the proportions of households with each response. To identify a household's consumption style you have to satisfy yourself that you have coherence on all three levels—social relations, cultural bias and behavioural strategy. Nor can you afford to ignore any of the five solidarities. If you did that you would not have a comprehensive qualitative and quantitative understanding of household responses, and that is what the reflexive policymaker needs.
- Much simpler is *policy discourse analysis*. All you need for that are the various cultural bias predictions for the three 'active' solidarities: hierarchy, individualism and egalitarianism. You need not bother with fatalism, because it has no voice in policy debates. Nor need you consider autonomy, because hermits are careful to steer well clear of that sort of coercive involvement.
- For *policy design,* however, you will need to take some account of the fatalist's policy input: 'Why bother!'. Every penny that is spent trying to do something about something about which nothing can be done is a penny wasted, and it is important that resources not be poured into that bottomless pit. If the cat is out of the bag (as, for

instance, it may be with the release of certain genetically-modified organisms) it cannot be put back (though Cultural Theory will quite likely point us towards policy options for improving our ability to live with that situation).

- To provide an adequate explanation for some of the *strange goings-on* within government ministries or political parties, however, it is not enough to say that this department or clique here was hierarchical (say) and was caught on the hop by this other department or clique which was egalitarian (say). One or other may have been using 'stolen rhetoric': talking egalitarian (say) for just long enough to achieve some tactical advantage (one of us once witnessed the miraculous, but short-lived, greening of Ed Teller—the Father of the H-Bomb—as he extolled the greenhouse gas virtues of nuclear power: a technology of which he, unlike egalitarians, is a staunch supporter). To be sure that the actors in each of these contrasted sets are indeed the components of a particular solidarity you need to demonstrate that their pattern of social relations and their behavioural strategy match their cultural bias. In other words, you may not need all the solidarities but you will certainly need all three levels within the solidarities you do need.
- Finally, there is the so-called Heineken Principle,[16] which tells you where and when it makes sense to use Cultural Theory. Cultural Theory is not a theory of everything; often, however, it is able to refresh the parts that other theories cannot reach, and it is in these circumstances that it has its uses. Situational logic, for instance, can tell us that most people will try to get out of the way if a wall of water is rushing down the street towards them, but only Cultural Theory can sort out the different ways in which they set about it: 'Women and children first!' (hierarchy), 'Better we all perish together than just some of us escape' (egalitarianism), 'Stick with me, I know a way out' (individualism), 'There's no point, I'm staying here' (fatalism).

'User-friendly Cultural Theory' is how we would characterise this way of setting out the whole caboodle, thus enabling people to select only as much as they need for the task they have in mind. Deeds, however, speak stronger than words, and it is time we handed over to those who, in their different ways, have been applying Cultural Theory in areas (such as democracy, international relations, violence, leadership, voting behaviour, agenda setting, democratisation, departmental conflict, political culture, party organisation and so on) that have long been central to the practice of political science.

We have assembled these chapters under four broad headings—*preferences, organisations, political cultures* and *democracies*—though, of course, most of the contributions also have relevance for headings other than those to which they have been assigned. Yet we feel that neither the way we have arranged the chapters into these sections nor the sequencing of the sections themselves is entirely arbitrary. Our feeling is that, since Cultural Theory argues that preferences are part-and-parcel of ways of organising, and that political cultures are both reflections of and unwittingly negotiated accommodations among those ways of organising, and that democracy will be possible only within a subset of those reflections-cum-accommodations, there is a fairly logical progression through these four sections, with *democratisation* as its central theme.

That this was our central theme, however, was not evident to any of us at the outset, only becoming apparent as we assembled the contributions, guided them through their various modifications and stirred them around until they fell into what we can now see are their appropriate places in the overall structure of this book. The last chapter, in which an attempt is made to pin down the normative implications of Cultural Theory, thus acts as a somewhat provisional conclusion: an intellectual resting place, as it were, where we and others can take stock of where Cultural Theory has taken us, assess whether the journey has been worth-while and, if we think it has, start to map out where we would like to go from there.

Preferences

In chapter 2, Verweij looks at the way theorists of international relations have set about handling the preferences of the large-scale actors that form their subject matter. He finds them divided into two camps: those (neorealists and neoliberals) who assume that all international actors react similarly to the absence of world government ('international anarchy', as it is called) and those (constructionists and others) who assume an endless variety of responses. Cultural Theory, he shows, circumvents this contradiction by allowing us to tread a more discerning path: more than one is not automatically infinity; there are some numbers in between! The result is a typology of preferences which allows us to handle the 'zillion of discrete opinions and actions that one comes across in empirical research', and Verweij concludes with a worked example: the clean-up of the river Rhine. Monocultural solutions (hierarchical) which dominated in the early years were remarkably ineffective, and things only picked up when individualists (mostly industrial firms) and egalitarians (environmental and citizen groups) were able to get in on the act.

Grendstad and Selle, in chapter 3, use this same typology of the 'active' solidarities for a very different purpose: the comparison of Cultural Theory and the theory of postmaterialism. Both theories focus on historical shifts in preferences, both aspire to generalisations that transcend social and cultural particularities and both, in placing conflicts centre-stage, are intent on seizing the core of politics. Yet they are remarkably different. Cultural Theory is thoroughly institutional; postmaterialism is avowedly non-institutional. The social construction of reality is thus central to Cultural Theory, but has no place in postmaterialism. These distinctions open the way for a two-level comparison: how satisfying these theories are as theories, and how well they cope with the data. On the first level, they conclude that Cultural Theory is more satisfying, in that it aspires to explain much more than does postmaterialism and is less dependent on 'retrodictive empirical knowledge'. On the second level, they put the theories to the test, using the data from a 1993 Norwegian survey. Their judicious conclusion is that 'it serves Cultural Theory well…that egalitarianism predicts environmental beliefs better than does postmaterialism'.

Olli continues in chapter 4 the tradition established by Verweij, Grendstad and Selle: muscling-in on an important field within political science, while at the same time clarifying what it is that Cultural Theory is saying and how that relates to what is being

said by those who are being muscled-in on. In his case, it is the discipline's heartland—voting behaviour and party allegiance—that is to be revealed in a fresh light, and it is the relationship between the individual and the various forms of solidarity that is to be clarified. He proposes three models: no dividuation (the *coherent individual*), effortless dividuation (the *synthetic individual*) and effort-demanding dividuation (the *sequential individual*). These models nicely span the uncertainty that, as we have seen, currently exists among Cultural Theorists, and Olli's aim is to narrow that uncertainty by testing these models against data from a 1995 Norwegian survey. At the same time, he aims to increase Cultural Theory's explanatory power by considering both the support *and* the rejection that individuals display towards the various solidarities. Intriguingly, he finds that all three models have a certain validity, though the synthetic individual does best in accounting for rejection. This suggests that more work is needed on ways of measuring cultural bias at the individual level but, even with the present measures, Olli is able to take a large step in the direction of the holy grail: the unambiguous determination of an individual's party preference.

Organisations

Where Olli confronts the dynamic processes by which individual preferences and party identities shape one another, in chapter 5 Bale goes inside *a* party—the British Parliamentary Labour Party in the 1960s—in order to expose the similarly plural processes by which it simultaneously flies apart and holds itself together. He is encouraged in this seemingly bizarre enterprise by Richard Rose, who has argued that a party's surface cohesion reflects 'an equilibrium between forces pulling in different directions, not a unity obtained by a single, united thrust', and by Cultural Theory, which insists that there is never just one organising principle, and that within any social unit we will find all five ways of organising (albeit sometimes in rather attenuated form) in dynamic interplay. Sure enough, he finds four of them (and would, no doubt, have found autonomy too if he had looked for it) and his ethnography is animated by the tensions and endlessly fluctuating interactions between them. That this is 'thick description' is evident enough, but it is thick description within what is claimed to be a universally valid frame: the Cultural Theory typology.

In chapter 6, De Vries similarly provides an ethnography within a universally valid frame: the spectacular crisis that developed, over many years, in and between the Dutch ministries of agriculture and environment. The climax came with the resignation of the minister of agriculture, and was followed by a period of institutional self-examination and reform that has led (for the moment, at least) to the disappearance of this seemingly intractable inter-departmental conflict. De Vries' starting point is also much the same as Bale's—the rejection of the formal theory argument that government policy is unitary—and his ethnography is interspersed with the implications of Cultural Theory's 'ineradicable plurality' for the theories—bureaucratic politics and public choice—that have been widely relied on by those who study these sorts of conflicts. It soon becomes clear that the trouble (for both the hapless bureaucrats and the conventional theories) is that they do not countenance the fourfold plurality (de Vries, like Bale, does not get around to

the fifth, autonomous, way of organising). Though, to be fair to the hapless bureaucrats, they do do this in the aftermath of the ministerial resignation, thereby causing the conflict to disappear in a way that is not predicted by the conventional theories. De Vries sees in this turning point the transition from unreflexive (and ultimately debilitating) learning to reflexive (and, so long as it can be kept up, constructive) learning: a theme that is taken up, one way or another, in most of the subsequent chapters.

It would be a wise precaution, given the exuberant pace and extravagant claims of these first few chapters, to have someone cast a steely and sceptical eye over the internal coherence and validity of the theory that is being relied on to do all these wonderful things. In chapter 7, Grimen—a philosopher with a particular interest in social science explanations—fits the bill perfectly. Cultural Theory is a theory of both preference formation and organisation, and its explicit claim is that it offers a functionalist explanation of these phenomena. In contrast to old-style functionalism, however, the functionalism goes with the contending ways of organising (and their supportive preference-forming processes) not with the social system as a whole. Conflict is therefore inevitable, rather than something that will eventually be squeezed out. However, with that conflict-preserving proviso, Cultural Theory boldly claims to satisfy the criteria for an adequate functional explanation that have been set out, with impressive formality, by Jon Elster. Grimen then puts the theory through its philosophical paces in a way that makes one of us wish he had taken a little more trouble over all those *Xs, Ys* and *Zs* when writing *Cultural Theory,* and his verdict is that, in seven out of the eight examples he scrutinises, the stern criteria are not fully satisfied. Full marks in just one out of eight attempts might seem like a poor result, but Grimen concedes (personal communication) that no other theory he has looked at comes anywhere near this. He also, in passing, shows that Elster himself has not fully grasped his criteria!

Though Grendstad and Selle have been able to show that Cultural Theory is more thoroughly worked out than is Inglehart's postmaterialism, and though Verweij, Olli, Bale and de Vries have shown that it refreshes many of the parts other theories cannot reach, the examiner's report is 'could do better'. Suitably chastened and encouraged, we move on now to the remaining sections: political cultures and democracies.

Political cultures

Democracy, like lavatory cleaning, is an uphill task: no sooner have we got it all clean and shiny than someone comes in and pisses all over it. With democracy, as often as not, it is some new technological development that is to blame and, since technology never stops developing, democracy has always to run just to stand still. In chapter 8, Hendriks' and Zouridis' focus is on those recent developments in information technology that are actually being harnessed to the democratic process, and their aim is to use Cultural Theory to pry political scientists and engineers away from the current framing in terms of a gloriously participatory 'Athens' versus a nightmarishly oppressive 'Orwell'.

They begin by setting up three preferred forms of democracy, one for each of the 'active' solidarities—hierarchy (*guardian* democracy), egalitarianism (*participatory* democracy) and individualism (*protective* democracy)—suggesting that democracy is an

essentially contested notion,[17] and that you risk losing it if you assume that just one of these preferred forms is valid and set about implementing teledemocracy (as these IT applications are collectively called) on that basis. Since they are soon able to show that the Athens-versus-Orwell framing is just the egalitarian utopia pitted against the egalitarian dystopia (what egalitarians believe would happen if all those hierarchists and individualists had their way), we can see that these technological developments, as currently instituted and assessed, are eroding the contested nature of democracy and therefore democracy itself. Once we discard the Athens-versus-Orwell framing, however, we can preserve the contestation by tailoring the technological applications to the prevailing strengths and patterns of interaction of the solidarities—that is, the *political cultures*—within a nation, a municipality or whatever.

Mamadouh then brings these insights to bear on current theorising, by Cultural Theorists and others, on political culture in chapter 9. Her chapter thus marks a turning point, earlier ones having restricted themselves largely to showing what Cultural Theory can do for areas of political science where it has, as yet, been little applied. Cultural Theory, she shows, has already enabled us to address political culture, not as a bunch of disembodied mental orientations towards politics, but as a coherent combination of meanings and practices. That is its great advantage, but she then points out that if we assume (as the Culture Theory pioneers *have* assumed) that a nation's political culture is simply the reflection of the numerical strengths of the solidarities among its constituent individuals then we cannot begin to answer her important and difficult question: how to grasp the similarities and differences between the political cultures of the member states of the European Union? All sorts of institutional (and constitutional) filtering, she observes, is going on as we move from the individual to the state level, and neither of these levels is ever an undistorted reflection of the other. Though the cultural styles may stay the same, social scale (and, in particular, the way it gives rise to 'nested' institutions) is not irrelevant.[18] More work—much of it typological and concerned with the patterns of interaction between included and excluded solidarities—is needed, and most of her chapter is concerned with remedying the current shortcomings of Cultural Theory (and with relating these developments to some of the more mainstream work within political culture). Only when she has done all that is she able to show, briefly and tantalisingly, how it can begin to answer the 'unity in diversity' question that is at the heart of the European Union.

Hoppe and Grin then take us, in chapter 10, into what could be called the political analysis of policy analysis, and they do this in a way that brings together Hendriks' and Zouridis' concern with technology as a social and cultural process with Mamadouh's big unity-in-diversity question. The technology of mobility (and, in particular, of the motor car) is as mixed a blessing as we near the end of the twentieth century as, in its early decades, was the technology of the microphone and the loudspeaker, without which the Nazi party rallies would have been dismal failures. It is not surprising therefore that most of the member states of the European Union, and one EU institution (the European Parliament), have carried out Technology Assessment exercises about mobility generally and about private transport in particular. All, of course, have gone to great lengths to ensure that these assessments are objective, scientific, unbiased and so on, but these precautions, as

Hoppe and Grin make abundantly clear, have been taken only *after* the problem itself has been defined. Since transportation in the 1990s is very much an unstructured (or 'wicked') problem, the scope for the politics of meaning is wide, and it is here that the political cultural differences show up. Indeed, they show up to such an extent that it is hard at times to believe that these assessments are dealing with the same technology. It is here that Cultural Theory has its contribution to make: first showing how these dramatic differences in framing arise, and then suggesting ways in which they can be anticipated and taken into some sort of account in the policy process.

Democracies

Cultural Theory encourages us to re-think the relationship between *politics* and *policies*. The study of policy has long tended to be seen as a specialised (and, so far as theory is concerned, rather subservient) sub-field within political science. Yet it is precisely in this area that we find the rival drawings of the line between the political and the non-political (and the different sets of preferences that they uphold) getting to work on new technological developments. Moreover, since democracy would not have to run just to stand still if technology did not develop, these sorts of policy processes (including the analyses they demand and are in turn shaped by) begin to assume a political centrality that is not compatible with their present sub-field status. Cultural Theory, as well as helping us sort out these status anomalies, allows us to generate all sorts of what Robert Merton (1968) called 'middle-range propositions': ways of actually testing our theories, rather than just telling one another how marvellous they are. Such propositions, we believe, are particularly desirable (and particularly hard to come by) in theori sing about democracy, which, in various ways, is what the last three chapters do.

Jensen's chapter 11, which focuses on recent attempts to 'democratise' social housing in Denmark, fairly bristles with middle-range propositions. She generates these by juxtaposing the hierarchy-dismantling reforms with the four 'images of democracy' appropriate to Cultural Theory's four ways of life (she does not consider autonomy). The reforms turn out to be remarkably biased towards egalitarianism, which would be fine if they comported with the life experiences of the tenants, if none of those tenants were looking for the guardianship of a caring hierarchy, if Denmark's private housing sector was not seducing those of them with the individualistic wherewithal, and if the public housing administrators were not all the time striving to treat their tenants as 'customers rather than social clients'. One of the most fruitful of these propositions is that egalitarianism is no more the automatic result of dismantling hierarchy than is individualism in the 'new public management'. Indeed her ethnography can be read as the tragedy that steadily engulfs those who are on the receiving end of these unreflexively conceived reforms. Small wonder, Jensen concludes, that the engineering of change is seldom a straightforward business: a conclusion that takes us from her well-tested middlerange propositions to some general and normative observations about the analysis of democracy. One of these—that, since general theories of democracy are never completely matched by the images of democracy among the people who are intended to

play democratic roles, intercultural communication, not constitutional reform, is the way forward—is a central theme in the last two chapters.

What conditions must be satisfied if a hitherto undemocratic country, like Nicaragua, is to become and remain democratic? This is Molenaers' and Thompson's question in chapter 12, its importance matched only by the current wooliness, in political science theorising, of the distinction between non-democratic and democratic. Wildavsky has already argued that a stable democracy requires all the solidarities, in the right proportions: a good start, Molenaers and Thompson concede, in that it emphasises the essentially contested nature of democracy and introduces the idea of some 'feasibility space' outside of which democracy cannot be stabilised. But, in transitional countries like Nicaragua, it is not just a matter of the numerical strengths of the solidarities: some carry more 'weight' than others. And what plausible hypothesis can we advance to explain why democracy is only stabilisable within a limited range of the possible variations in the solidarities' numerical strength-cum-weight?

Weight boils down to the confidence of some solidarities within the public sphere, compounded by the apprehensiveness of others, which means that path-dependence—history—cannot be bracketed away. Nicaraguan peasants who have learnt to steer clear of the public sphere are going to need firm evidence that it is no longer dominated by *caudillos* before they will change their behaviour. An explanation for the 'feasibility space' would be a great theoretical advance, and Molenaers and Thompson suggest that Cultural Theory may get us there by resolving the paradox of democracy requiring that we trust one another and distrust one another. Trust, Cultural Theory argues, is part-and-parcel of all the solidarities (except fatalism) but each generates a form of trust that is distrusted by the others. If overall distrust exceeds overall trust (as it will if some solidarities are excluded, if fatalism is rife, or if there are gross mismatches between the solidarities' proportions in the nation as a whole and in the public sphere) then perhaps that explains why democracy at times and in places, becomes unfeasible?

Rather than trying to say something new, Ney and Thompson in chapter 13 reconcile themselves to their tail-end position by re-stating much of what has been said in the preceding chapters: the rival drawings of the line between the political and the non-political, the essentially contested nature of democracy, the centrality of technological development and policy analysis, the advantages of multi-loop learning, and so on. This re-stating highlights an intriguing paradox: though Cultural Theory is a theory of bias it is not itself without bias, in that it would be difficult (but not impossible) for a Cultural Theorist to be against democracy. Rather than disguising this bias, or re-jigging Cultural Theory to eliminate it, Ney and Thompson flaunt it. That Cultural Theory is a normative theory, they observe, is obvious enough from the sorts of judgements—'If only they'd had Cultural Theory they would never have done such stupid things'—that pepper the preceding chapters. Their aim, therefore, is to pull these smug verdicts together and thereby set out, as explicitly as they can, Cultural Theory's normative implications. The result is a set of operationalisable 'measures of democracy' that have a certain kinship with those that were generated by classic pluralism. The difference, however, is that Cultural Theory's plurality is one of rationality, not just interest.

Notes

1 Even when we allow for those facts being 'theory-driven'.

2 We use the word 'proof' in the mathematical sense (likewise the work 'theorem'). Such usage is something of a rarity in social science, where the focus is more often on empirical proof: something that many philosophers of science argue cannot exist. Cultural Theory's impossibility theorem, it turns out, is closely related to a celebrated precedent: Arrow's impossibility theorem. Rayner and Malone (1998b: 6) explain the relationship between these two theorems in the following way.

> Arrow (1951) has famously demonstrated the impossibility of aggregating individual preferences into a collective one in a way that satisfies certain minimal conditions of rationality and transitivity. For Arrow, the dictatorial social welfare function is the only one possible. However, dictatorship is incompatible with democracy. We seem to be caught in a bind. But Arrow's analysis assumes that preferences are inherently individual. If we use another set of assumptions—for example, that preferences are inherently relational (that is, expressions of social solidarity)—we change the nature of the problem from being one of aggregating individuals to discerning the structure and dynamics of social solidarity, which in turn may open up a new solution space for the problem of collective action.

3 The hermit had to be taken 'off the social map' because there was no place for autonomy in the grid/group scheme, even though its existence was recognised. Resolving this anomaly (together with the linked anomaly that dimensions, which are continuous, are not an appropriate way of distinguishing solidarities, which are discontinuous) is one of the things the theory has to do, and has now done. In the meantime, however, much research and application, relying on the grid/group scheme, has ignored the hermit, with the result that 'now you see him, now you don't': a state of affairs that is reflected in this book. Indeed, often it is just the three 'active' solidarities—individualism, hierarchy and egalitarianism that are invoked. However, fatalism and autonomy—the two 'passive' solidarities—are far from irrelevant: a point that is made in several of the chapters, particularly the final one.

4 Though Cultural Theory certainly qualifies as 'grand theory', its development has been remarkably down-to-earth. *See,* for instance, Douglas (1985), Wildavsky (1976), Thompson (1980), Kunreuther *et al*. (1983), Schwarz and Thompson (1990), Hood (1998), Gyawali (1998).

5 When it comes to *theory,* of course, we have to address these shortcomings. And, indeed, it is *by* addressing them that we find our way to the theory. (*See* Ellis and Michael Thompson 1997.)

6 And those autononists (like the Tibetan hermit, Milarepa, and present-day proponents of reflexitivity) who actively distance themselves from all four of these normative positions, as we will see in a moment, are also captured, even though the position they then end up at—rather like Wordsworth's 'station in the clouds'—is not pin-pointed by the grid/ group scheme.

7 By 'individualists' we mean those who, in a particular transactional context, are constituents of the individualistic solidarity. In other contexts, as we explain later, they may be

constituents of other solidarities. The same, of course, holds for those we will refer to as egalitarians, hierarchists, fatalists and hermits.

8 Blackpool rock, which is everywhere for sale in the British (or perhaps we should say Lancashire) resort of that name, is a long, mint-flavoured cylinder of white candy with the word BLACKPOOL arranged into a circle and running all the way through it, thanks to a miraculous technology, in red letters.

9 For more on what this involves, for both natural and social science, *see* Thompson and Trisoglio (1997).

10 'Forms of social solidarity' is a quite recent Cultural Theory usage, stemming from a collaborative venture—the State of the Art Report on Social Science and Global Climate Change Project (Rayner and Malone 1998)—that involved a number of the theory's pioneers. 'Ways of life' have often been used as synonymous with social solidarities, and some Cultural Theorists have spoken of 'cultures' when they really mean solidarities or ways of life. Since to impose just one usage smacks too much of one solidarity/way of life/culture, we have allowed the chapter authors to retain usages with which they feel most comfortable.

11 These examples are taken from contemporary British society, from fieldwork by Gerald Mars and Valerie Mars (1993) and by Karl Dake and Michael Thompson (1993). The items and specific behaviours that characterise 'traditional' consumption (but not the overall strategy) would come out differently in other societies (and in British society at different periods in its history).

12 The tit-for-tat strategy is to trust others until they give you reason not to. When that happens, retaliate in kind. In the one-off Prisoner's dilemma game two co-conspirators have been caught by the authorities and placed in separate cells, with no possibility of communication. Each is then encouraged to confess, and incriminate the other, with the promise of being released. The dilemma, of course, stems from neither prisoner having any way of knowing whether the other will remain silent.

13 Some may argue that the Dalai Lama's social involvement means he cannot be a hermit, and perhaps they are right. However, we cannot understand the nature of his social involvement without some consideration of the autonomous solidarity (*see* section headed 'Toeing the Invisible Line' in Thompson 1982).

14 Fatalism, of course, is an affront to individualists (because everyone is supposed to have an equal chance of participating) and to hierarchists (because their stratified whole is supposed to be all-inclusive: a caste system should have no outcastes) and to egalitarians (because their love for the oppressed is not returned) but none of them, in isolation or in various combinations, can ever eliminate fatalism. Certain configurations of solidarities, however, can avoid *high levels* of fatalism and these (as several of the chapters that follow make clear) are crucial to our understanding of democracy. But none can get rid of fatalism, any more than forest managers can get rid of the compost that their trees both generate and rely on for their renewal. Cultural Theory therefore reaches conclusions that are similar to those reached about apathy by political theorists in the 1950s, but by a completely different line of argument.

15 'O wad some power the giftie gie us', as Robert Burns put it, 'Tae see oorselves as others see us.'

16 Derived from the advertisement which claims, tongue-in-cheek, that 'Heineken refreshes the parts other beers cannot reach.'

17 In the sense that, if there is no disagreement as to what it is, then it isn't democracy! *See* Gallie (1955).

18 Cultural style, social scale and the institutional nesting they give rise to are comparatively recent concerns within Cultural Theory. *See* Thompson (1998), Prakash (1998) and Rayner and Malone (1998b).

Part 1

PREFERENCES

2
WHOSE BEHAVIOUR IS AFFECTED BY INTERNATIONAL ANARCHY?[1]

Marco Verweij

A central problem in the study of world politics has always been how the absence of world government influences organisations and persons. Within a country's border, organisations and people are usually subject to many laws and rules that can be enforced by the state, as it most often has a monopoly on the legitimate use of force. In the international system, by contrast, no overarching authority exists. In this legal sense, the international system is an anarchy, and one of the longest-running debates in the study of international relations (IR) concerns the effects of this anarchy. How, and in what way, does it influence the behaviour of actors and especially the cooperation between state actors?

During the 1970s and 1980s two major research traditions within IR attempted to answer this question: neorealism and neoliberalism. Neorealism maintains that international anarchy greatly hampers cooperation (Waltz 1979; Gilpin 1981; Walt 1987; Grieco 1990; Mearsheimer 1994). Since there is no overarching authority in the international system that is able to rein in the ambitions of states, each state has to help itself in securing its survival. This concern for security leads states to focus on the relative gains from international cooperation. A state will be wary of engaging in mutual cooperation whenever this increases the military capabilities of other states more than those of its own military forces. As many forms of international cooperation would distribute absolute gains differently, such cooperation is expected to be limited. This holds not only for military issues but also for many forms of economic coordination, since the military capabilities of a state are often thought to be dependent on its economic resources.

Neoliberalism holds that more extensive international cooperation is possible (Keohane 1984; Axelrod 1984; Oye 1985; Young 1989; Snidal 1991; Haas, Keohane and Levy 1993). It derives many arguments for this from the assumption that information is costly. It is argued that international institutions (such as international organisations, conferences of political leaders, and regular meetings between government officials) lower the information and transaction costs of governments, thereby stimulating international cooperation. For instance, international institutions can monitor the implementation of treaties by all parties, thereby making shirking more difficult. In addition, international institutions can lengthen the time-horizons of actors. Both functions make it easier for states to develop trust in each other, which in turn facilitates international cooperation.

Furthermore, international institutions can link different issue-areas, thus making trade-offs in international negotiations possible.

Both approaches assume that actors are all rational in the same way, and therefore react similarly to the absence of world government (Nye 1988; Powell 1994; Niou and Ordeshook 1994). Neorealism assumes that actors have a short time-horizon and are self-regarding; they do not have enough foresight and altruistic impulse to break out of the vicious circle of distrust and struggle for power. Neoliberalism assumes that actors have a longer time-horizon and are able to build up trust and cooperation. Recognising only one cultural logic (or at the most two, as in some versions of neoliberalism[2]) is highly limiting, making it well-nigh impossible to explain fundamental international change (Jervis 1988; Ruggie 1993). It is also rather surprising, considering the great cultural diversity of the states, nations, religions, organisations and people that make up the international system (Millennium 1993). It seems more appropriate to develop a theoretical framework that incorporates a variety of rationalities—a plurality of cultural logics—and this is where Cultural Theory can help.

Since the end of the 1980s, there has been a 'constructivist turn' in the study of international relations (Adler 1997). Its first phase consisted of trenchant epistemological and ontological criticisms of neorealism and neoliberalism (Wendt 1987; Onuf 1989; Kratochwil 1989; Dessler 1989; Kratochwil and Lapid 1995). More recently, empirical analyses based on constructivist insights have also appeared (Lipschutz and Conca 1993; Litfin 1994; Biersteker and Weber 1996; Katzenstein 1996; Finnemore 1996). The battle-cry of the constructivists has become: 'anarchy is what states make of it' (Wendt 1992). Instead of assuming that institutional and material structures are self-contained and unchangeable, constructivists argue that the political and economic structures in which we live are partly upheld (and thereby shaped and changed) by our shared perceptions, norms and values. As a consequence, constructivists have called for much more attention to the role played by perceptions, norms and values in international relations.

This is a line of reasoning with which I fully agree, yet I am dissatisfied with the way in which the constructivist approach has been applied. The tendency has been to explain specific international events in terms of the unique norms, values and beliefs of the people involved, and there is the idea (implicit and sometimes explicit[3]) that, because international processes are influenced by social construction, general propositions cannot be formulated.[4] Where the neorealists and neoliberals insist on uni-rationality, the constructivists lurch to the other extreme and insist that there is an infinitude of norms, values and beliefs that can influence the outcome of specific international processes. Cultural Theory rejects both these polarised positions. More than one, it argues, is not automatically infinity—there *are* some numbers in between—and its impossibility theorem states that there are just five socially viable frameworks (social constructions, that is) for deciding what shall count as rational and what shall count as irrational.[5] IR is therefore an appropriate test-bed for Cultural Theory.

In this chapter, I show how Cultural Theory's fourfold typology (I will not consider the autonomous solidarity) can be applied at the international level, specifically by relating it to international regime analysis. Three rationalities (those shaped by individualism, fatalism and egalitarianism), I argue, lead actors to behave similarly in international and

Table 2.1 Four approaches to regime analysis

	Neo-realism	*Neo-liberalism*	*Constructivism*	*Cultural Theory*
Number of rationalities that are distinguished	1	1 or 2	∞	4 (5 if we include the hermit)
Feasibility of cooperation	Low	Relatively high	Highly dependent on specifics of time and space	Dependent on dominant rationalities in regime; if individualist or egalitarian rationality is dominant: yes; if fatalist or hierarchical rationality is dominant: no
Are actors affected by international anarchy?	Very much	Not much	Highly dependent on specifics of time and space ('anarchy is what states make of it')	Dependent on rationalities. Individualists, egalitarians, and fatalists not affected; Hierarchists are

domestic realms; the fourth (hierarchy) induces them to conduct themselves differently as they go from domestic to trans-boundary processes (Table 2.1). I conclude with a briefcase-study—the environmental protection of the river Rhine—based on this Cultural Theory-informed regime analysis.

Four international rationalities

International regimes are usually defined as 'sets of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures around which actors' expectations converge in a given area of international relations' (Krasner 1983a:2). International regimes are the institutions that regulate specific transnational issue-areas such as the protection of the ozone layer, the ban on the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and the exploitation of the Antarctic (Krasner 1983b; Rittberger 1993; Levy, Young and Zürn 1995; Hansenclever, Mayer and Rittberger 1996).

We can combine Cultural Theory with regime analysis (Jönnson 1993) by using it to spell out four alternative sets of principles, norms, rules and procedures, each of which, we can expect, will be adhered to by some of the actors in any specific issue-area. Overall, the argument is that regime formation and development can fruitfully be seen as a struggle between actors—government delegations, non-governmental organisations, international organisations, business firms, the media and so on—who, by and large (and for predictable organisational reasons), are distributed between the hierarchical,

individualistic, fatalistic and egalitarian rationalities. The content of an international regime (and—at one extreme—whether it can even come into, and remain in, existence) will be decided by the leverage that these actors have over each other, and the extent to which they are able to find either compromises or synthetic solutions to policy problems. In other words, the actual principles, norms, rules and procedures that make up an international regime will be the outcome of a clash between organisations, each of which is striving to have its preferred set of principles, norms, rules and procedures accepted and implemented.

Principles and norms

Within regime theory, principles are usually defined as 'beliefs of fact, causation, and rectitude'. Norms are 'standards of behaviour defined in terms of rights and obligations' (Krasner 1983a:2). At least three principles and norms can be spelled out for each rationality.

The essence of international issues

In rational choice analyses, the provision of solutions to social issues and needs are dubbed 'goods'. Often, two characteristics of such goods are deemed essential: *jointness of consumption* and *exclusiveness of consumption* (Snidal 1994). Jointness of consumption denotes the degree to which use of a good by a person leaves the availability of that good to others intact. Exclusiveness of consumption stands for the extent to which it is possible to exclude other individuals from benefiting from the provision of a good. By assigning two values (high and low) to either of these properties, four types of social goods can be distinguished: collective or public goods (high jointness, low exclusiveness), private goods (low jointness, high exclusiveness), common-pool resources (low jointness, low exclusiveness), and club goods (high jointness, high exclusiveness).

In the neorealist-neoliberal debate, international issues are usually portrayed as either public goods or common-pool resources. Discussion then centres around the question of whether it is possible to produce these goods on a large scale within the anarchical international system. According to neoliberalism it is possible, especially in the long run: in the opinion of neorealists it is not possible. In this debate, the characterisation of an international issue as a collective good or common-pool resource is often treated as a purely technical exercise, based on objective criteria and the fixed properties of the issue at hand. Recently, however, it has been argued that jointness and exclusiveness should be regarded, not as the natural and immutable characteristics of the goods themselves, but as social constructs (Melkin and Wildavsky 1991; Snidal 1994). In other words, whether a societal issue can be described in terms of one of the above-mentioned 'goods' is dependent on the perceptions and actions of the actors involved in the issue. Cultural Theory allows us to postulate the affinities that the different rationalities have with alternative ways of perceiving the essence of international 'goods' or issues (*see* Table 2.2).

Hierarchists will tend to perceive many international issues as collective goods. Due to the non-excludability and jointness of collective goods, no one will want to contribute to their production, and the market will therefore 'underprovide'. Only governmental provision will be able to remedy this situation. The existence of collective goods therefore strengthens the call for governmental action and thus supports hierarchy. In the international realm, such governmental action will have to consist of extensive intergovernmental cooperation.

Individualists will tend to characterise international issues as private goods. Since no extensive intergovernmental cooperation is needed for the efficient provision of such goods, governments only need to ensure that their markets remain open and orderly. Individualists believe that organisations and firms will often be able to find ways in which to reduce jointness of consumption and increase excludability, thus turning transnational issues into private goods.

Egalitarians will warn us that many worldwide concerns should be seen as common-pool resources. The non-renewability (or slow rate of renewal) of common-pool resources, in combination with their non-excludability, will make their depletion imminent. The only solution is voluntary constraint on the part of all the domestic and foreign organisations and individuals involved. This reduced consumption will inevitably diminish the differences in wellbeing and status between people, which is the ultimate aim of egalitarians.

Fatalists feel excluded from society and regulated from without. In their view, many international issues are club goods. Such goods are characterised by a high degree of excludability and a high degree of jointness of consumption. This means that a select group of organisations and people will be able to benefit greatly from the provision of such goods, while others will be left out. Fatalists feel that they are the ones who are often left out.

Consider, in the light of these four cultural biases, a classic example: the construction of a lighthouse in a coastal region with a large port. Hierarchists will tend to argue that the proposed lighthouse constitutes a collective good: everyone who uses the coast or who lives in the coastal region will be able to benefit from it, while no one can be excluded from the benefits that it will confer. Individuals will argue against contributing to the financing of the lighthouse, the government should step in. Individualists will see ways of turning the construction of the lighthouse into a private good. For instance, they may argue that ships of countries or firms who have not contributed to the costs of the lighthouse can be refused right of passage through the territorial waters. They may also redefine the problem, arguing that the underlying need is not so much for a lighthouse as for a way of navigating ships safely through the night. A lighthouse, they will reason, is only one solution, and others may be feasible and preferable. The development of radar, for instance, and eventually, of satellite positioning technology, may provide superior solutions and, in the meantime, port-based pilots would be a satisfactory alternative to the lighthouse. Flourishing markets exist for radar equipment, satellite positioning technology and pilots, so no government regulation will be needed. Egalitarians will likely favour a communal solution—a lifeboat, maintained and crewed by the local fishermen—rather than the 'top-down' lighthouse or the market innovations. At the same time, they will warn of

Table 2.2 Constructing international regimes: four international rationalities

	Hierarchy	*Individualism*	*Egalitarianism*	*Fatalism*
1. *Likely perception of international issues (plus implied policy choice)*	Public goods (great need for governmental regulation, as private actors have to be forced to contribute)	Private goods (no need for governmental regulation; allocation through the market)	Common pool resources (constraint is necessary, either voluntary or through regulation)	Club goods (no solution; rich are getting richer)
2. *Preferred system of international governance*	Extensive official intergovernmental agreements and treaties	Allocation through transnational markets; international regulation kept at minimum	Extensive citizens' participation in decision-making procedures	Self-help (each actor fends for herself)
3. *Belief in possibility of international cooperation*	Low	High	Low with regard to intergovernmental cooperation; high regarding cooperation involving citizens' groups	Very low
4. *Favoured environmental policy*	Precautionary principles; best available technical means; detailed governmental prescription of environmental goals	Against precautionary principle; against prescribed best available technical means; in favour of technological fix; in favour of simple goals	Very strict precautionary principle; fundamental economic and political change as only lasting solution	Resignation; acceptance of environmental degradation

the many common-pool resources that will be depleted if the lighthouse is built. The lighthouse will spoil an area of outstanding natural beauty and will consume lots of energy. Oil spills and other problems related to increased shipping, and to reduced onboard vigilance, may destroy the ecosystems of the entire coastal region. Fatalists living in the region will not want to contribute to the financing of the lighthouse, believing that none of its economic benefits will come their way. These, as always, the fatalists will argue, will go to the construction companies, the shipping magnates and the bankers.

Governance of the international system and regimes

World government is the hierarchists' ideal world order, and central planning and allocation their favoured way of organising both domestic and transnational relations. However, since the establishment of strong supranational organisations seems unlikely at

present, and also because hierarchists are pessimistic about the possibility of international cooperation (*see* below, p. 37), they must settle for second-best: regulation of the international system through extensive intergovernmental cooperation and consultation.[6] Governments should, at a minimum, adhere to the time-honoured principles of international society (e.g. formal equality of states, non-interference) as well as to the established practices and rules of international public law. Ideally, international regimes should be based on explicit agreements between state authorities, which then impose these regulations on their citizens.

Individualists, in contrast, would like to keep governmental regulation to a bare minimum, both at the domestic and the international level.[7] Unfettered competition in open world markets, they are convinced, is a much more efficient allocation mechanism than regulation by governments and international organisations. Anarchy is not really a problem for individualists: it is world government—over-regulation by central authorities—that is anathema to them. Government's role, in international relations, as in the domestic sphere, is to make sure that markets function properly. Nothing more.

Egalitarians also distrust state authorities, and therefore the large-scale intergovernmental agreements that they put in place. However, they are equally distrustful of markets, especially global ones, arguing that national and international governance should be formed in an open and free dialogue in which all citizens reach agreement on the common good. Ideally, no special status should be given to representatives from central authorities or business organisations. International regimes should be voluntarily agreed on by all affected citizens, local and central authorities, and representatives of involved organisations from all countries.[8]

Fatalists do not believe that world order can come about through rational planning, nor do they have any faith in the market's ability to deliver enhanced welfare by harnessing the anarchy that rational planning would get rid of, nor are they much taken with the idea that citizens can sort it all out from the grassroots. Such solutions would require human actors to be trustworthy and predictable, and fatalists know that they are not. At the international level, as at all the others, fatalists aver, it is impossible to distinguish friends from foes. This makes them wary of engaging in extensive international cooperation. Each actor, inevitably, is on their own, trying to cope with the vagaries of the international realm as best they can.

Perceived feasibility of international cooperation[9]

Egalitarians will tend to believe that intergovernmental cooperation is not feasible. According to them, humans are born good, but are then corrupted by large-scale institutions. Relations between governments—relations at the largest scale of all—will therefore be coercive and conflict-prone. However, since egalitarians believe that humans are essentially good as long as they are not heavily regulated or dragooned by market forces, they will tend to believe in the feasibility of *transnational* cooperation, i.e. agreement, not among governments, but among non-state actors.

Fatalists, given their inclination to distrust all forms of cooperation, tend to discount the feasibility of international agreement. In their view, governments cannot trust each

other, any more than individuals can, and therefore cannot hope to establish international cooperation. In consequence, nation-states are, and always will be, trapped in a system of conflict, rivalry and self-help.

Hierarchists' confidence in the possibility of international agreement is influenced by two somewhat conflicting factors. On the one hand, their assumption that we are all born in sin but can be redeemed by firm institutional nurture will lead them to believe that cooperation between governments is both feasible and desirable. On the other hand, while hierarchies are seen by their members as being all-inclusive, that all-inclusiveness, at present, extends only to the nationstate level; beyond that, it is 'us' versus 'them'. This will tend to decrease their trust in foreign actors, as well as their confidence in the possibility of international accords (Chai and Wildavsky 1994). Overall, therefore, hierarchists will tend to be rather pessimistic with regard to the feasibility of international cooperation, and distrustful of foreign 'opponents'.

Individualists, too, are pulled both ways. Convinced that men are irredeemably self-seeking, they see little chance that actors at the international level will be suffused with altruism. This view, however, is mitigated by the individualist's inclination not to think in 'us' versus 'them' terms. Individualists are outgoing and inclined to trust others until they give them reason not to (the 'tit-for-tat' strategy, as game theorists call it) and this disposes them not to renege on contracts and promises. It also leads them to value reciprocity and to respect the transactional freedom of others (Wildavsky 1994). Overall, so long as states behave like economic individuals, individualists are fairly optimistic about the possibility of international cooperation.

Rules and procedures

Rules, in international regimes, are 'specific prescriptions or proscriptions for action'. Decision-making procedures are 'prevailing practices for making and implementing collective choice' (Krasner 1983a:2). On the basis of Cultural Theory, different preferences for rules and procedures within specific international issue-areas can be distinguished. This will be illustrated here by the case of the protection of the water quality of an international river.

Individualists, at first, will not be very concerned. To them, the waterway is primarily an asset to be used for the purposes of consumption, production and trade. They will tend to ignore, or argue against, accumulating evidence of ecological degradation. Alternatively, they may believe that the sources of environmental degradation can be swiftly dealt with. It therefore seems only common sense to individualists that protection measures will be taken only after scientific research has conclusively shown that certain consumption and production practices are indeed harmful to the environment. Being risk-takers, and keenly aware of opportunity costs, they will not be sympathetic to the precautionary principle. Once individualists have accepted the need for environmental protection of the waterway, they will insist that it be done in a cost-effective and Pareto-efficient way.[10] They will look for incremental solutions rather than disruptive and largescale interventions. Favouring instruments that work with the grain of the market, rather than extensive government regulation, they will look for ways of identifying and

encouraging changes in production processes and shipping practices that will improve environmental quality. Since they see themselves as the experts in their own fields of business, they will resist central determination of 'best available technical means' as a way to combat pollution.

Egalitarians will be the first to perceive environmental degradation, claiming that it has already become widespread and is causing great harm to animals, plants, trees and people. In many present-day agricultural and industrial production processes, substances found in nature are chemically transformed. Lots of these substances will be discharged into the water, and egalitarians will tend to perceive all of them as potentially toxic. They will therefore argue for a strict application of the precautionary principle: a chemical substance should only be discharged into the water after it has conclusively been shown that this will not be harmful to the environment. With the development of new chemical substances far outpacing the progress of measuring techniques, such a strict application of the precautionary principle might well cripple modern industry and agriculture. This is not an overriding concern for egalitarians. Quite the opposite; it enables them to broaden the issue of the environmental protection of the waterway into a general critique of existing consumption and production processes. Only a fundamental change in existing agricultural and industrial practices, as well as the profit motive that underlies those practices, will ensure the environmental restoration of the watercourse.

Hierarchists will approach environmental protection in a comprehensive and systematic way. In principle, they will be sympathetic towards the precautionary principle. However, they will not endorse its strict application, since this would entail the immediate decline of modern agriculture and industry. Instead, they will prefer to regulate a number of substances that are suspected or known to be especially harmful. Also, hierarchists would like to measure water quality, on the basis of a wide range of biological and toxicological indicators, so as to set scientifically defensible safe limits. Overall, hierarchists will believe in the efficacy of governmental prescriptions on which production processes companies should use (the so-called policy of 'best available technical means').

Fatalists will not be worried too much about the environmental degradation. They will feel that they are unable to influence either the ongoing degradation or the efforts to clean up the watercourse.

Cultural Theory's ability to distinguish between a limited set of quite different ways of reacting to anarchy transforms analysis. Where other approaches tend to assume either that all international actors react similarly to the absence of world government (especially neorealism and neoliberalism), or that there is an endless variety of different responses (especially constructivism), Cultural Theory enables us to tread a discerning path that avoids contact with both these extremes. International anarchy, we can now see, affects hierarchists much more than it affects the upholders of the other solidarities, and even these relatively unaffected solidarities are affected differently.

Egalitarians can be concerned about the absence of world government because they see the present anarchical system as a place where state monolith meets state monolith—either to quarrel or to make deals—with little regard for the common people. They take the same sceptical attitude, however, towards the domestic policies of state authorities, and therefore have similar attitudes in both the domestic and the international realms.

Individualists are intent on building up personal networks through which they can truck, barter and exchange. It does not matter to them whether these networks extend across borders or not and, since they already resist central planning at the domestic level, they are certainly not prepared to endorse it at the international. Individualists, therefore, like egalitarians (but for different reasons) hold similar views across and within borders. The same goes for fatalists. They see no opportunities for cooperation and planning in the international realm, and much the same holds when they look at things closer to home. This is hardly surprising, since, whatever the setting, they find themselves on the margin.

Hierarchists, in contrast to these three 'symmetrical' social beings, are likely to behave quite differently as they go from the domestic to the international level. A hierarchist, faced with a domestic social problem, will propose a whole battery of sophisticated methods and programmes with which to study, measure and solve it. Much the same will hold for an international issue but, because the all-inclusiveness of the hierarchy peters out at the national level, the confidence to carry through these programmes and procedures is no longer forthcoming, and relationships with representatives of 'foreign' organisations become clouded with mistrust (even though these organisations are strongly hierarchical). Consequently, hierarchists find themselves engaged in lengthy and formal international negotiations, with much emphasis on the proper rules of international law and custom, and with an elaborate concern for foolproof ways of monitoring the implementation of agreements that, in contrast to their domestic counterparts, are so extraordinarily hard to reach. I will call this counterproductive state of affairs the *hierarchical dilemma* in international relations: a dilemma that all too often results in a hierarchist 'at home' coming close to being a fatalist 'abroad'.[11]

Other crucial international issues can be sorted out in terms of the four rationalities: sovereignty, for instance. For hierarchists, sovereignty has to reside in a clearly demarcated and stratified social entity. One day, perhaps, this entity will be all of mankind but, were that day to dawn, the entity would not longer be demarcated (unless, that is, the Martians had landed). Sovereignty, therefore, has to reside in the nation-state or in a religious authority. Individualists will feel that true sovereignty resides in the individual (hence their championing of 'consumer sovereignty') whilst egalitarians will tend to view the whole of humankind (in siblinghood, not stratified, form) as the only source of legitimate authority.

Nor, Cultural Theory warns us, is it valid to use the terms 'international' and 'transboundary' (as I have been using them up to now) as if they referred to self-evident and uncontested distinctions. They do not; the adherents of the four rationalities fight endlessly about what constitutes the 'international' and what constitutes the 'domestic'. In other words, the separation of the domestic and international realms, far from framing the struggle is itself a crucial part of it. Egalitarians, for instance, will tend to dismiss the importance of state frontiers. To them, anyone's problems are everyone's concern or, as Bruce Springsteen has it, 'Nobody is happy unless everybody is happy.' Another slogan egalitarians would endorse is: 'The global is local.' Other rationalities would draw the line between the domestic and the international differently and elsewhere.

So what?

We have now reached the point where, having found fault with all the existing formulations, those we have found fault with will very likely forget their disagreements and together turn on us: the Cultural Theorists. Why, they will demand, do you need a typology? The neorealists and neoliberals are against it because (for all their differences) they are agreed that there is only one rationality, and if there is only one of something you do not need a typology! And the constructivists are against it because it is repressive: it rules out whole swathes of the infinitude of rationalities that they are determined to entertain.

We need a typology, Cultural Theorists reply, because there are usually hundreds of people and organisations involved in the decision-making process in any issuearea. Without a typology it is impossible to map the zillion of discrete opinions and actions that one comes across in empirical research, especially in case studies (Sabatier 1987). The neorealists and neoliberals get around this by collapsing all these actors onto just a single rationality, thereby reducing the whole complex process to a few state actors bumping into one another like billiard balls on a smooth baize-covered surface. Constructivists, having gone to the opposite extreme, insist that any sorting (whether it be the neorealists' and neoliberals' unirationality or the Cultural Theorists' fourfold plurality) is entirely arbitrary. Cultural Theory, therefore, aims to find a typological middle way.

The utility of a typology-derived classification (as opposed to an *ad hoc* listing) also reaches beyond the descriptive into the causal. A typology provides not just a way of sorting out the various actors but a basis for identifying causal links and formulating general propositions. Various testable hypotheses can be derived from the four rationalities, now that they have been spelt out at the international level. Here I will present just two.[12]

Proposition 1

Cooperation within an international issue-area will be:

- impossible to achieve when the international policy-makers are imbued with fatalistic thinking;
- difficult to achieve when hierarchically oriented institutions dominate the issue-area;
- more easily achieved by either individualistic or egalitarian organisations.

This proposition is largely based on the varying degrees of trust in foreign actors that adherents of the different rationalities are expected to have.

Proposition 2

International regimes which allow a wide variety of organisations (governmental, non-governmental and business) and citizens to have access to the processes of problem-definition, information-gathering, information selection and implementation of solutions

will, in the long run, be more sustainable and successful than regimes which allow only some of these to participate.

This proposition is based on the Cultural Theory argument that each rationality has important contributions to make to the political debate. Each bias, in selecting its own information and its own 'noise', sees different risks and opportunities. An open and accessible regime is therefore expected to be more resilient, and to stimulate more creative thinking (more opportunities for multi-loop learning and unlearning) than regimes that are built on views from only one or two rationalities (Hendriks 1994, 1996).

An illustration: the environmental protection of the river Rhine

Between the 8 and 10 of June 1971 one of the lowest points in the environmental history of the Rhine was reached. Several thousand tonnes of dead fish covered the surface of the river between the German cities of Koblenz and Mainz. A combination of extreme pollution and adverse weather conditions had left this 100 kilometre stretch of the river without oxygen. The Rhine had become 'Europe's open sewer'. Twenty-five years later that label is no longer valid; the Rhine has become 'the cleanest river in Europe' (*Le Monde,* 17 September 1996). To understand how this remarkable transformation has been achieved we need an analytical framework that allows us to identify all four rationalities, both domestic and international.

From the beginning of the century until the mid-1970s, the pollution of the Rhine, economically the most important river in Western Europe, went from bad to worse. Intense shipping, canalisation, urbanisation, industrialisation and modern agricultural practices had a devastating impact on the river's ecosystems, and by the early 1960s things had got so bad that the governments of the riparian countries decided that they should agree on, and implement, international treaties for its environmental protection (the river, which rises in the Alps, flows through Switzerland, France, Germany and the Netherlands into the North Sea). In 1963 the International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine against Pollution (ICPR) started to function, organising regular meetings between government officials and proposing various international agreements. At the same time, domestic water policies were developed by the ministries responsible as well as by chemical firms located on the river.

Until 1987 it appeared virtually impossible for the Rhine states to execute any international measures. Two international agreements were signed in 1976—a convention against chemical pollution and a convention against pollution by chlorides—but neither was ever implemented. This period illustrates the 'hierarchical dilemma' in IR, the delegations to the Rhine conferences displaying many of the characteristics predicted by Cultural Theory. There was much distrust between delegations, and a strong insistence on following the proper, traditional rules of diplomacy. Proposals for treaties and appendices to treaties were extensively prepared at lower governmental levels, passed on to the general meeting of the ICPR, scrutinised by legal experts, solemnly signed by the ministers involved, and then put to the national parliaments for ratification. In this process, perceived national interests were zealously defended, and the proposed measures were planned on the basis of 'best available technology'. In the end, virtually no effective

international action was taken. The treaties were neither ratified nor implemented, and negotiations remained locked in unconstructive conflict until 1987. In the meantime, starting in the mid-1970s, impressively effective domestic water protection policies were being developed in each of the riparian countries, and these resulted in a remarkable improvement of the overall environment of the Rhine. These water policies were developed by the same ministries that could not agree on the Rhine conventions. However, while these international actors remained impaled on the horns of their hierarchical dilemma, others (of a different cultural complexion) were merrily at work.

Beginning in the late 1960s, an important category of non-state actors—the chemical firms along the Rhine (at the time forming 20 per cent of the world's chemical industry)—started to make major contributions to the river's cleanup. Once these firms (especially the bigger ones) had accepted the need for environmental protection, they continually kept ahead of domestic law by making huge voluntary investments in water protection. They also developed new water treatment technologies that made possible reductions in discharges previously believed to be unattainable. Overall, their approach was much more individualistic than that of the government delegations to the ICPR, who were only willing to set goals after it has been ascertained that the means of reaching them existed (i.e. they followed the concept of 'best available technical means'). The chemical firms, however, first set the environmental targets, thereby ensuring that the 'playing field' on which they were all competing remained level, and then invented the technical means to fulfil those goals. They found the policy of applying 'best available means' too static. They also argued against the need for governmental regulation, and against what they saw as the exaggeration of the river's environmental problems.

In 1987 the intergovernmental relations also became infused with individualism. The Sandoz spill in 1986 (when, after a fire at Sandoz AG at Basel, near the Swiss-German border, 1,350 tonnes of chemical substances washed into the water) led to a marked sense of crisis among the riparian governments. The Dutch government took advantage of this crisis to get a report from a team of business consultants (McKinsey) accepted by all governments. This report advocated a completely new approach to policy-making. Ambitious goals were to be set without first making sure that the means to reach those goals existed. International agreements were to be made only in an informal, non-binding way, and their implementation was to be left to the lowest-possible governmental levels. Trust between the national delegations blossomed, and international policy-making started to lead, rather than lag behind, domestic water policies. Again, significant contributions to the restoration of the Rhine were achieved.

The Rhine's clean-up, however, has taken place largely without help from the agricultural sector, which has adhered to a more fatalistic rationality. The farmers, and the organisations representing them, have, by and large, resigned themselves to the inevitability of the river's pollution. Their discharges of nitrates (used in fertilisers) have not slowed down over the years, unlike the discharges by other economic sectors and despite increasingly stringent governmental policies. The agricultural organisations have argued that this pollution to a large degree cannot be avoided and has to be accepted as an integral part of present-day farming. They have also argued that farmers simply do not have the means to contribute to the clean-up. Indeed they have gone even further, arguing

that this situation is threatening their very existence and that this should be seen as an environmental problem, since farms are vital elements within the landscape. A fully-fledged governmental policy aimed at protecting the environment, the agricultural organisations urge, should therefore include measures that ensure the continued viability of farming. The passive attitude of the farmers along the Rhine seems to match the increasingly fatalising social environment to which European farmers have had to adapt during the last decade: the system of financial transfers to farmers instituted by the European Unions Common Agricultural Policy has eroded their individualistic solidarity, and this 'up-gridding' has been compounded by the sharp increase in environmental regulation to which they have been subjected.

Finally, the environmental citizens' groups concerned with the Rhine have been more inclined to egalitarianism. These groups have often perceived the environmental problems to be more acute than have other organisations, and they have continued to distrust both governments and firms, despite the many measures that have been taken, especially at the domestic level. Their egalitarianism has also shown through in their proposed measures: no discharge of any chemical substances into the water, the abandonment of modern agricultural practices (in favour of organic farming), and more public participation in international decisionmaking. Though both governmental and market actors may try to deny it, these groups have been the troublesome and tireless gadflies that have kept them on the move, stimulating them to efforts (and to constructive interactions with one another) that, left to their own devices, they would probably not have undertaken.[13]

Notes

1 An earlier version of this essay was presented at the workshop 'Methodological, empirical and theoretical issues involved in the study of national identities' organised by Thomas Risse and Martin Marcussen, European University Institute, Florence, November 1997, as well as at the ECPR workshop on 'Cultural Theory as political science' in Bern, March 1997. I would like to thank the participants in both workshops for their useful comments. Especially, I gratefully acknowledge the helpful 'opposition' from Janice Bialey and Per Selle.

2 In these versions of neoliberalism, actors can either behave according to neorealist assumptions or to neoliberal premises, e.g., Rosecrane (1986).

3 Kratochwil (1997), for instance, explicitly defends this almost atheoretical position.

4 Martha Finnemore, herself a proponent of the constructivist approach, states (1996:130):

> What exactly are the social norms that structure and guide contemporary politics? [...] Little theorising has been done about this. Constructivism itself only claims that social facts influence behaviour; it makes no substantive claims about what those facts are more than rational choice makes claims about the content of interests. Scholars in the American political science community whose work I would label constructivist have taken one of two directions, neither of which fills this void. Some, like Wendt and Kratochwil, have concentrated on elaborating more abstract social theory, largely setting empirical research into the content of social structure to one side. Others doing empirical work have made very narrow theoretical claims that norms

matter in this or that issue-area. There is no argument that norms in the various issue-areas might be patterned or related to one another in a coherent way.

5 Indeed Cultural Theory is sometimes called the theory of plural rationality (*see* Grauer, Thompson and Wierzbicki 1985, especially pages 4–5).

6 Also, world government might not be their first choice, since it means redefining the top of the tree in a way that will result in many of those who are at the top of the present tree finding themselves in a subsidiary position.

7 A theoretical version of this view is Conybeare (1980). The Philadelphian system of states described in Deudney (1995) can serve as an historical example of how individualists would like to structure state relationships.

8 The description of the Peace League between the Iroquois tribes offered in Crawford (1994) is an excellent historical example of how egalitarians would like to structure international relations.

9 This section is based on Wildavsky and Lockhart (1998).

10 An outcome is Pareto-efficient if the winners can compensate the losers and still be better off than they were before. What is crucial is that they can, not that they do. Indeed there may be efficiency arguments against the compensation, if that redistribution resulted in the destruction of the incentive structures that created the gain in the first place.

11 Here we should give two cheers to Max Weber (1983:128–9) for his celebrated attempt to capture the different reactions to the existence of borders by drawing on a twofold typology that is essentially the interplay of the left side of the Cultural Theory diagram (individualism and fatalism) and the right side (hierarchy and egalitarianism).

> At the start two opposing attitudes towards the pursuit of gain exist in combination. Inside the community there is attachment to tradition and pietistic relations with fellow members of tribe, clan and household which exclude unrestricted quest for gain within the circle of those bound together by religious ties; externally absolutely unrestricted pursuit of gain is permitted, as every foreigner is an enemy to whom no ethical considerations apply. Thus the ethics of internal and external relations are completely distinct. The course of development involves on the one hand the bringing of calculation into the relations of traditional brotherhood, displacing the old religious relationship. [...] At the same time, there is a tempering of the unrestricted quest for gain in relations with other foreigners.
>
> The reason he does not get his third cheer is that he has failed to distinguish between fatalism (distrust, no reciprocity and rip-offs seen as acceptable) and individualism (trust, reciprocity and rip-offs proving to be self-defeating). Nor, of course (like Tönnies with his *Gemeinschaft*), does he distinguish between egalitarianism and hierarchy, thereby allowing himself no way of explaining why the 'development' he sees as inevitable still has not happened.

12 Other propositions, derived from Cultural Theory hypotheses, can also be formulated (Ward 1998).

13 For a much more extensive treatment *see* my PhD thesis (Verweij 1998), on which this section is based.

3
THE FORMATION AND TRANSFORMATION OF PREFERENCES
Cultural Theory and postmaterialism compared

Gunnar Grendstad and Per Selle

A theory should be judged not against an impossible standard of perfection but, as Aaron Wildavsky was fond of saying, by how well it performs in comparison with rival theories. 'How's your husband, Mrs Cohen?', he used to recount. 'Compared to whom?' replies the good lady. Theories can be compared in terms of how well they fit a given set of data or cases and also in terms of how convincing they are as theories per se. For instance, most people may accept that a theory that aims to explain how we can go from A to B, but takes A and B as given, is less encompassing than one that aims to explain how A and B come to be there in the first place. The assumption would be that, if you could explain how A and B came to be there, then the business of getting from one to the other would probably be more obvious. In this chapter we compare Cultural Theory with another theory of preference formation and transformation: the theory of post-material value change developed by Ronald Inglehart (1971, 1977, 1979, 1990, 1997).

Postmaterialism, as Inglehart conceives it, is a new value system that has gained importance in Western industrialised countries since the Second World War. It reflects the post-war generations' move away from materialist values, such as political order and economic stability, and towards postmaterialist values, such as political participation and more say in government decisions. Cultural Theory posits that the cultures of fatalism, individualism, egalitarianism and hierarchy are always present in any human social system, but with their relative strengths changing across time and space. Wildavsky (1991b) in particular has emphasised the importance of the rise of egalitarianism in the post-war West. Both Inglehart's concept of postmaterialism and Wildavsky's concept of egalitarianism are invoked by the respective authors to make sense of the rise of the 'New Left', the 'New Social Movements', the 'New Politics', and environmental concern.

Postmaterialism and Cultural Theory compared as theories

First

The theory of postmaterialism rests upon two conjoined hypotheses. First, the scarcity hypothesis states that individuals tend to place high priority on whatever is in short supply. Second, the socialisation hypothesis claims that individuals tend to retain a given set of value priorities throughout adult life, that set having been established in their formative years. To these hypotheses, Inglehart adds Maslow's (1954) hierarchy of needs, which states that physiological needs (food and shelter, for instance) precede higher-order

needs (Mozart and freedom of speech, for instance), so as to provide his theory with the *direction* of value change. Thus, the formative experience of economic and political security makes it highly probable that an individual will adopt postmaterial values in adult life.

Materialism incorporates preferences for a stable economy that yields material prosperity and for a safe political system that sustains law and order. Postmaterialism broadly embodies self-actualisation, self-esteem, aesthetics, intellectual needs and a 'greater emphasis on social solidarity' (Inglehart 1987:1292). Postmaterialism redefines women's role in the society from complementing to competing with men's positions. It also entails greater political participation in new social movements, including especially environmental movements.

Inglehart's theory of postmaterialism shares with Cultural Theory an aspiration towards building a generalisable theory that transcends particular societies though Inglehart's theory is constrained, on the time dimension, to just a few decades.[2] By placing conflicts centre stage, the two theories seize the core of politics. Both theories reject as erroneous the prevalent assumption that, within a given country, we find only one culture. Both theories work at a level of abstraction that enables them to be used as a basis for cross-national studies, as well as for comparative work within nations. Indeed, Inglehart's socio-psychological theory of postmaterialism has been perhaps the most innovative empirical approach used in large-scale comparative research since the wane of functionalism in the 1960s.

Despite these similarities, however, the two theories differ markedly both in the scholarly traditions out of which they emerge and in the basis assumptions on which they rest. Most crucially, the theories differ markedly in their treatment of institutions and cognition, Cultural Theory being thoroughly institutional whilst the theory of postmaterialism is avowedly non-institutional. The social construction of reality is absolutely central to Cultural Theory, but has no place in the theory of postmaterialism. That the economy is growing and the political system stable, for instance, are taken as self-evident points of departure within the theory of postmaterialism whilst, in Cultural Theory, such certainties, being shaped by institutional involvement, are likely to be contested. Thus Cultural Theory is typological (otherwise it could not define and classify the types of institutional involvement and their associated cognitive framings) while the theory of postmaterialism is not. Although cultural change is emphasised in both theories, they differ greatly about the causes of change and its pervasiveness. Table 3.1 summarises the similarities and differences between the two theories. It is by way of this table that we organise the subsequent discussion.

Theoretical traditions

Postmaterialism is built upon the rich 'civic culture' tradition of the 1960s (Almond and Verba 1963). This socio-psychological theory emphasises political culture as subjective political competence, i.e. as 'attitudes, beliefs and feelings about politics current in a nation at a given time' (Almond and Powell 1978:25). But the 1950s and 1960s were not only a period of socio-psychological modelling; they were also the heyday of functionalism.

Table 3.1 Postmaterialism and Cultural Theory

	Postmaterialism	*Cultural Theory*
Theoretical structure	Taxonomic classification	Typological from dimensions
Theory's coverage	Universal and postwar	Universal and ahistoric
Political culture	Attitudes, beliefs and feelings	Mutually supporting social relations and biases as way of life
Major goal	Analyse post-war value shift	Match biases and social relations
Academic traditions	'Michigan school' of voting behaviour; Weberian	The micro wing of Durkheimian anthropology
Developmental	Yes	No
Comparison	Central	Central
Conflicts	New and central between materialists and postmaterialists	Enduring and central between ways of life
Conception of functionalism	Rejected	Cultural functionalism
Framing assumptions	Social psychology	Cognition
Concept of culture	Attitudes, beliefs and feelings	Cognition and way of life
Institutions	Nonexistent	Central
Unit of analysis	Individual	Individual in context
Analytical fallacy	Institutional neglect	Vertical conflation
Decisions	Central	Central
Cognition	Internalised values, norms, attitudes	i) Habits and routines; ii) Decisional calculations
Cultural change	Central; one-dimensional	Central; multi-dimensional
Primary cause of cultural change	Economical	Surprise
Values imprinted	Formative years	Continuous
Subsequent individual value change	None	Extensive
Societal change	Generational replacement	Waxing and waning ways of life
Status of environmentalism	Internalised	Coopted

In that respect, the 'civic culture' tradition used 'political culture' as the intermediate level connecting structure and action. The decline of functionalism in the 1960s, and the consequent de-emphasis of structural models, propelled social theory towards the sort of 'micro models' typified by postmaterialist theory. Inglehart anchored his theory in the 'Michigan school' of voting behaviour, which made the individual the unit of analysis. In so doing, he created a theory that could readily be tested through systematic survey research. Testability came at a cost, however, for postmaterialism neglected the institutions and structures that many social theorists see as shaping individual consciousness.

Cultural Theory is firmly rooted within the consciousness-shaping tradition (Collins 1994; Wuthnow *et al*. 1984). This tradition, in emphasising the processes by which institutions affect individuals' thought and action and *vice versa,* rejects methodological individualism in the sense of exclusive *explanans* (Wildavsky 1991c, 1994). If individuality is something that is between people, rather than within each of them, then it can no longer be pinned down to a particular social (or, rather, physiological) level. Thus, when we operationalise Cultural Theory for survey purposes, the individual in a sense also becomes a proxy for a disaggregated institution.

Along with its rejection of the individual as the exclusive unit of analysis, Cultural Theory rehabilitates functionalism, although the functions are not associated with entire societies, as they were during the 1950s and 60s, but with the ways of life (or solidarities). Old-style functionalism is a dynamic and self stabilising system which, in the absence of external shocks, brings the entire social system ever closer to equilibrium. When functionalism is associated with different ways of life within a society, however, we get a self-organising dis-equlibrium system: a system in which conflict and change, far from diminishing, are its essential and undiminishable accompaniments. Cultural Theory is thus an institutional theory of multiple equilibria, in which different cultural contexts have opposing effects upon the thought and action of the individual (Grendstad and Selle 1995).

So it is not just a matter of postmaterialism having let functionalism (and structure) drop and Cultural Theory having picked it (and institutions) up again. Individuals, in Cultural Theory, far from being little atoms that somehow have to be integrated into institutions, are inextricably bound up with institutions. Individuality, Cultural Theory insists, is, to borrow the pertinent phrase from Jon Elster, 'inherently relational' (Elster 1985:6). Postmaterialism, by contrast, has unrelated individuals and does not consider the question that has so exercised most of the theorists who have started off from that position, which is how those initially unrelated individuals become integrated into institutions. Thus postmaterialism, in a sense, assumes a situation that cultural theorists argue could never exist (a point that has been dwelt on at some length in the introductory chapter of this volume).

The theory of postmaterialism has, apart from certain macroeconomic considerations, no explicit institutional references. Since it is based on the assumption of a'universal' process in which materialism irreversibly leads to postmaterialism as the economic level increases, the theory is in no need of institutional accounts. Postmaterialism's isolation of the individual thereby becomes a means for separating structures and values. This not only

echoes the waning of functionalism in the 1960s, it also links postmaterialism with the notions of a postmodern society consisting of disconnected spheres (Lyotard 1984). This 'postmodern' turning away from the ambitions of coherence comports with the proposition that different societal spheres which used to be integrated are now unintegrated (Bell 1976). But, unlike the neoconservatives who fear that this demise of institutional integration will result in a 'new mass man', Inglehart is more optimistic. The future, thanks to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, is progressive: we used to be on the lowly (materialist) rungs and now we are climbing onto the higher (postmaterialist) ones.

Framing assumptions

Postmaterialism, thanks to its macroeconomic anchorage, and despite its rejection of institutional integration, is a theory of socialisation. Institutions are bypassed, as it were, by aggregating the actions of unintegrated individuals into the overall performance of the economy which then provides a crucially important experience that is shared by all those unintegrated individuals.[3] The values that the individual internalises in the formative years, Inglehart argues, provide value stability in the adult years. Thus the stronger the individuals internalisation of formative values, the less these values can change in adult years, and the less need there is for the theory to take account of the intervening role of institutions. Cultural Theory, in contrast, ignores an individual's early socialisation. In replacing the individual's early socialisation with his or her prevailing institutionalisation, the theory allows basic values to change in the adult years. This means that society-wide shifts in preferences can happen much faster than the process of generational substitution. The intervening role of institutions thus becomes crucial and demographic constraints are much loosened.

The underlying assumptions in postmaterialism imply that values and attitudes have a direct effect on the individual's behaviour, without operating through institutions or being affected by them. Cultural Theory's assumptions, by contrast, imply the opposite—that it is institutions that affect the individual's values, attitudes and behaviour (indeed, that it is institutional involvement that transforms the psycho-physiological entity *into* an individual). That individuals' preferences are fixed in the formative years is thus the crucial assumption in the theory of postmaterialism; that they are not is the crucial assumption in Cultural Theory.

With institutional effects assumed to be negligible, the theory of postmaterialism predicts that an individual will remain in a culture—a particular set of preferences—once he or she, together with all the other members of his or her generation, has entered it. Cultural Theory, however, predicts that such universal socialisation will never happen. At the same time, it predicts a potentially high level of individual value volatility whenever the individual-cum-institution relationship alters. Such volatility, however, is effectively ruled out in the theory of postmaterialism.

In recent works by Inglehart (1987, 1990, 1994, 1997), we observe a modification of his theory's socialisation assumptions, with Maslow's hierarchy of needs being complemented with the notion of diminishing marginal utility. The idea is that anything being added to something that is already appreciated provides less additional value (or

utility) than did that which was added previously. For example, hiring another policeman adds less security to your neighbourhood than did the preceding officer, and the final speaker adds less to the preservation of democracy than did the penultimate one. Flanagan (1987) claims that this notion provides postmaterialism with a sounder and more general theoretical basis. He points out that, in addition to explaining the present transformation of preferences from materialism to postmaterialism, it permits the reverse: the transformation from postmaterialism to materialism. However, Inglehart ignores this second option (which is not possible with Maslow's hierarchy of needs which, being developmental, is uni-directional) and only allows diminishing marginal utility to strengthen his argument for the materialist exodus (Abramson and Inglehart 1995: 121, 129). Whether fully admitted or not, diminishing marginal utility nevertheless provides the theory of postmaterialism with more flexibility, and perhaps longevity too.

Cultural change

Cultural change is central to both theories but, again, they treat it in fundamentally different ways. The theory of postmaterialism is aimed at explaining the observed shift, in post-war Western societies, from materialist values to postmaterialist values. Inglehart's argument, bountifully supported by empirical data (Abramson and Inglehart 1995; Inglehart 1997), is that societal value change has been in one direction only, from materialism to postmaterialism. Were there to be a severe economic downturn the theory would, however, lead us to expect a movement back toward materialism. A smooth and gradual movement if it is the notion of diminishing marginal utility that is providing the directionality; discontinuous and sudden (though with a one generation time-lag) if it is Maslow's hierarchy of needs that is providing the directionality. Either way, however, the theory gives us two-way change, though Inglehart does not concern himself with the possibility of reversal. The change, moreover, is deterministic: if you leave A you (or, rather, the next generation after yours) will arrive at B, and *vice versa*. In Cultural Theory change is indeterminate, there being a total of twelve possible micro-changes between the four ways of life (Thompson 1992; Thompson, Ellis and Wildavsky 1990).[4]

In the theory of postmaterialism, as we have already seen, the economy is fundamental. 'One of the most important sources of cultural variation,' Inglehart claims, 'is a given society's level of economic development' (1990:31). The cultural shift from materialist to postmaterialist priorities is described as a 'universal process' which 'should occur in any country that moves from conditions of economic insecurity to relative security' (Inglehart and Abramson 1994:347). Yet Inglehart also says that the value imprints in the formative years are subject to 'certain circumstances'; they depend 'on the relationship between one's values and the setting in which one lives' (Inglehart 1979:310, 311). Another term for 'circumstance' and 'setting' is 'institution'; how school systems, welfare systems and party systems for instance, are variously accelerating or retarding the crystallisation of postmaterial values. The theory of postmaterialism thus runs the risk of simultaneously declaring itself non-institutional and invoking institutions, in an *ad hoc* fashion, when its predictions fail. This is the thin end of a dangerous wedge, because the theory will have to abandon its 'universal application' claim if it has to invoke contingent contexts in order to

deliver on its predictions. The theory, as presently constituted, is still too dependent on retrodictive empirical knowledge, this stemming (in part, at least) from it being an inductive theory.

Where the theory of postmaterialism has the economy as something on the outside that provides the upcoming generation with the social formative experience that will result in its values being markedly different from those of the generations which were socialised under different economic conditions, Cultural Theory sees these economic ups and downs as phenomena for it to explain. Cultural Theory is therefore (or, at any rate, it aspires to be) an institutional theory of endogenous growth (and of endogenous shrinkage) (Thompson 1979: ch.6; Thompson 1996: ch. 4). Changed economic circumstances, therefore, are among a host of changes that those who constitute the whole self-organising disequilibrium system bring on themselves, thereby causing some individuals to become detached from their way of life and to become reattached elsewhere. Thereby, in all likelihood, triggering further changes…on and on.

Cognition—and, in particular, the way in which their pattern of social involvement results in people bounding their rationality in predictibly different ways—is crucial for Cultural Theory, because it is the source of the surprises that trigger the changes that are essential if the system is to self-organise. 'No change, no stability', as Thompson, Ellis and Wildavsky (1990) put it. Surprises happen, and go on and on happening, because, though our way of life tells us what is natural, nature sometimes cannot comply. It is these accumulating mismatches between expectations and observations—between institutional promises and institutional deliveries—that tip people out of one way of life and into one of the others. Because of the inherent indeterminism—when you leave A there is not just B but C and D as well, all beckoning—Cultural Theory does not predict who becomes a fatalist, a hierarchist, an individualist and so on, but it does predict what sorts of defectors will tend to arise as a result of what sorts of surprises (Thompson 1992).

At the societal level, the theory of postmaterialism has change stemming from generational replacement. When we observe the one-way direction of change at the individual level, from materialism to postmaterialism only, it follows that there will be a one-to-one relationship between individual level change and societal change. Cultural theory, by contrast, allows two-way traffic of individuals between all four cultures. Consequently, the net waxing and waning of cultures at the societal level can never exceed the gross changes between cultures at the individual level. Thus there is a discrepancy between the accumulated cultural changes at the individual level and the aggregated cultural change at the societal level (Thompson, Ellis and Wildavsky 1990:69–81).

In sum, this comparison of the theory of postmaterialism and Cultural Theory makes clear—although Cultural Theory's critics, perhaps starting from quite different assumptions, may disagree—that Cultural Theory, *as a theory,* is more comprehensive than the theory of postmaterialism. However, the crucial element in any such comparison between theories, is whether a new theory 'offers any novel, excess information compared with its predecessor and whether some of this excess information is corroborated' (Lakatos 1970:120). We argue that Cultural Theory holds novel information, which brings us to our second way of comparing these theories: in terms of

how they explain data.[5] Since our test is located at the point where the two theories converge most strongly—the rapid rise, in recent decades, of environmental concern—we must begin by clarifying the similarities and differences in the explanations they put forward for this significant reorientation in mass preferences. Only when we have done that can we proceed to a meaningful test.

Culture and environmental concern

Since the beginning of the 1970s, environmentalism has gained momentum in Western politics through expanding governmental bodies, a growth in voluntary environmental organisations and an increased public concern for the many faces of pollution (Dunlap 1992). Here we define environmental concern as a cluster of attitudes accenting environmental threats and prioritising the preservation of nature over economic growth and technological progress. Environmentalism, on the other hand, is more general than environmental concern, and it can be expressed without the clustering of attitudes, without the prioritising of nature protection over economic growth, and without any serious questioning of technological progress.[6] Environmentalism and environmental concern are domains that are central to both theories, and the proponents of both theories, when they speak of these domains are speaking of pretty much the same thing; their differences cannot be traced to their having started off from different definitions.

Industrial society is intimately connected to the concept that Inglehart labels materialism. Industrial society, according to Inglehart, passed a critical stage of material prosperity in the late 1960s when the post-war generation took economic security for granted and developed postmaterial values. At the same time, however, industrial society was generating pollution levels that increasingly disturbed and mobilised some parts of the public. Thus, environmental concern penetrated conventional politics at the same time as postmaterialists were rejecting the materialist basis that had helped generate the environmental problems to which their concern is related.

Despite this congruence between environmental concern and postmaterialism, environmental concern was hardly an integral part of the postmaterial concept at the inception of the theory; it was incorporated later, rather in the way that the notion of diminishing marginal utility was incorporated. In 1971, Inglehart footnotes a link between postmaterialism and environmental concern, in which 'concern for pollution of the environment and the despoiling of its natural beauty' is caused by a heightened sensitivity to the aesthetic defects of industrial society' (Inglehart 1971:1012, n.31). By 1981, postmaterialists 'furnish the ideologues and core support for the environmental, zero-growth and anti-nuclear movements' (Inglehart 1981:880). And in 1990, echoing the 1981 article, Inglehart holds that environmental concern is not only a postmaterialist issue (p.259) but that it concerns his entire measurement scale: 'when environmentalism raises questions of environmental quality versus economic growth, it pits Materialist priorities squarely against Postmaterialist ones' (p.267). Finally, the theoretical and empirical sides of postmaterialism are hardly distinguishable when one 'can conceive of a world in which Post-materialists favoured the development of nuclear power… This is conceivable—but

the reality is quite different' (1981:896). By that stage, environmental concern has become almost intrinsic to postmaterialism.

In Cultural Theory, by contrast, environmentalism and environmental concern have long been central to its empirical application (Douglas 1972; Douglas and Wildavsky 1982; Schwarz and Thompson 1990; Wildavsky 1991b; Ellis and Fred Thompson 1997a). On the face of it, egalitarianism's preference for equality of condition, and its strong but internally undifferentiated group relationships, might appear to have no logical or necessary connection to a commitment to environmental preservation. The connection, however, is achieved byway of two hypotheses. First, with no internal Auto Route structure to prevent individuals from leaving the group, the boundary that separates the soft, vulnerable 'us' from the nasty, predatory 'them' becomes the only organisational focus. External threats, therefore, are what are needed to keep this boundary sharply defined and to convince those on the inside to stay there. Second, the myth of physical nature as ephemeral, which tells us that resources are limited and depleting, and that the world is a terrifyingly unforgiving place where the 'least jolt may trigger its catastrophic collapse' (Schwarz and Thompson 1990:5), injects environmental concern into the egalitarian agenda. Environmental concern, you could say, is tailor-made for egalitarians. It enables them to cohere and gain support, it justifies their call for radical change now (before it is too late), and it undermines the Establishment—conceived as an unholy and exploitative alliance of individualism and hierarchy—by identifying them, through their self-centred greed and inequitable distribution of resources, as the source of the environmental crisis. If individualism and hierarchy are the problem then egalitarianism is the solution.

The hypotheses

From the theoretical connections laid out above the relationships between materialism, postmaterialism, hierarchy, egalitarianism, individualism and fatalism may now be formulated into hypotheses (in the following we consider Inglehart's two concepts as opposing poles on the same index; a positive correlation with postmaterialism thereby implies a negative correlation with materialism, or vice versa).

- We expect egalitarianism to correlate strongly with postmaterialism, because these concepts converge theoretically upon political participation and social solidarity, and empirically upon 'new left' politics and new social movements. By the same token, egalitarianism should correlate strongly and negatively with materialism because these concepts diverge over the role of authority and the need for economic growth.
- We expect individualism to correlate moderately with materialism, because these concepts converge primarily upon the issue of economic growth and consequently on its implicit endorsement of competition. We moderate this correlation because individualism also points in the direction of democratic values such as free speech and a responsible government which are characteristic of postmaterialism.

- Adherents of hierarchy and materialism accept tradition and authority, disregard political participation and repudiate the new social movements. We therefore expect hierarchy to correlate strongly with materialism.
- The theory of postmaterialism has little to say about inactive individuals at the fringes of society, which suggests no correlation with fatalism. Nevertheless, we surmise that the fatalistic myth of physical nature as capricious will incline its adherents more towards support for authority and the material yields of a growing economy than towards postmaterialism's emphasis on participation and self-actualising needs.
- It follows from our discussion above that environmental concern should correlate positively with egalitarianism and negatively with hierarchy, individualism and fatalism. But we expect Inglehart's index to correlate most strongly with environmental concern. We base this expectation upon Inglchart's theoretical claim that his construct concurs with 'questions of environmental quality versus economic growth' (1990:267).

Measuring cultures

In the spring of 1993, the International Social Science Programme (ISSP) carried out a survey of public attitudes towards the environment. The Norwegian part of this postal survey ('Values, Nature and Environmentalism') included 1414 respondents (a response rate of 63.4 per cent). The international survey contained questions designed to measure materialist and postmaterialist priorities, but only the Norwegian survey also included questions measuring cultural biases.[7] As for materialist and postmaterialist priorities, respondents were asked to choose 'Which one thing do you think should be Norway's highest priority, the most important thing it should do? maintain order in the nation; give people more say in government decisions; fight rising prices; protect freedom of speech.' Then respondents were asked to give 'the next highest priority, the second most important thing it should do' from the same list. The first and third item on the list are considered materialist, the second and fourth, postmaterialist. A postmaterialism score was created by assigning the value 5 if two postmaterialist items were selected, the value of 4 if a postmaterialist and materialist item were selected in that order, the value of 2 if the order was reversed, and a value of 1 if two materialist items were selected.[8]

As for Cultural Theory, the hierarchy items measure support for authority and respect for the past ('one of the problems with people today is that they challenge authority too often'; 'the best way to provide for future generations is to preserve our customs and heritage'). The egalitarian items measure commitment to equalising differences ('what this world needs is a fairness revolution to make the distribution of goods more equal'; 'I support a tax shift so that the burden falls more heavily on corporations and people with large incomes'). The individualist items measure support for equal opportunity and the accumulation of property ('everyone should have an equal chance to succeed and fail without government interference'; 'if people have the vision and ability to acquire property, they ought to be allowed to enjoy it'). The fatalist items measure individual inefficacy and the futility of cooperation ('cooperation with others rarely works'; 'it seems that whomever you vote for things go on pretty much the same'). A five-point Likert-

type response scale (strongly agree to strongly disagree with a midpoint of both and a 'don't know' option which was set to missing), was used for all these items. To increase the validity of the measures of cultural bias, we summed questions pairwise to create four two-item scales, each of the four sums was divided by 2 and their decimals truncated in order to restore the original five point scale. High scores are associated with agreements with the concept in question.

In measuring associations between cultural and 'green values', it is a strength that the five independent variables do not incorporate environmental concern. The four cultural bias indexes tap attitudes toward economic equality, authority, tradition, and cooperation. The postmaterialist variable deals with economic security and law and order (the materialist component) and individual expression and political participation (the postmaterialist component). None of these measures are coloured by environmental concern.

Correlating Cultural Theory with postmaterialism

The correlations between the five variables of materialism-postmaterialism, individualism, fatalism, hierarchy and egalitarianism are shown in Table 3.2. Postmaterialism correlates negatively with fatalism (–0.15), individualism (–0.17) and hierarchy (–0.23). In other words, materialism is positively related to fatalism, individualism and hierarchy. Postmaterialism correlates positively with egalitarianism (0.12). These results confirm the *direction* of our hypotheses, but their *strengths* are sometimes markedly less than expected. The moderate correlation between hierarchy and materialism, though stronger than any of the other three relationships, is still weaker than the theoretical affinity between the concepts led us to predict. Even more striking, egalitarianism only correlates weakly at best with postmaterialism, which is sharply at variance with our expectation of a strong positive correlation between the two. This weak association is surprising in view of the relatively strong affinities between the concepts of egalitarianism and postmaterialism.

Among the cultural bias variables, hierarchy and fatalism are the most closely associated (0.28). Fatalism's idea of individual ineptitude and hierarchy's idea of authority and tradition seem to combine into a notion of 'lowerarchy'—defencecum-resignation—which is found at the receiving end of the command line. Individualism correlates moderately with fatalism (0.19) and hierarchy (0.18). Egalitarianism correlates with neither hierarchy (0.02) nor fatalism (0.05). The negative correlation between individualism's equality of opportunity and egalitarianism's equality of result (–0.21) supports the claim that a major conflict in modern societies is taking place between egalitarianism and individualism (Ellis 1993).

Predicting environmental concern

We found above that postmaterialism and egalitarianism are only weakly related to each other. Since both Cultural Theory and postmaterialism claim to make sense of the rise of environmentalism, the question we now wish to explore is how strongly these two quite independent concepts relate to environmental concern. In this section we pit these rival

Table 3.2 Cultural Theory and materialism-postmaterialism. Pearson's correlation coefficients

	Hierarchy	*Egalitarianism*	*Individualism*	*Fatalism*
Egalitarianism	0.02			
Individualism	0.18	–0.21		
Fatalism	0.28	0.05	0.19	
Materialism–Postmaterialism	–0.23	0.12	–0.17	–0.15

Note: Correlations exceeding |.10| are two-tailed significant at the .05 level (N=982).
Data source: Norwegian Social Science Data Services, 1993: 'Values, Nature and Environmentalism'.

concepts against each other and see which of the two theories better predicts environmental concern. The reason for using a causal approach here is that we consider Cultural Theory's biases and the theory of postmaterial change to be deeper seated values and world views than the more specific environmental concern.

From the 1993 survey we used 27 variables that in different ways measure environmental concerns, including attitudes, risks and behaviours. Exploratory factor analysis (principal component) and reliability analyses identified six scales (*see* Appendix). *Progress and economic growth* (4 items) refers to the notion that environmental problems are exaggerated and, if problematic, can be solved by economic growth. *Fragility of nature* (4 items) addresses the ways in which modernisation and science severely damage pristine nature. *Environmental risks* refer to a range of human activities, e.g. air pollution by cars and industry, that can be perceived as being dangerous to the family and to the general environment, respectively. *The family* and the *general* risk scales each consist of 6 items. The correlation between the two scales is 0.78 which suggest that they for practical purposes measure the same phenomenon (but *see* Dietz, Stern and Guagnano 1998:456). Here we keep the scales separate because we think that the distinction between family and general risks is relevant to the way various risks can be framed within Cultural Theory. Whether a given cultural bias or a postmaterial priority have the potential to translate into environmental behaviour may be probed by assessing the correlation with *environmental behaviour* (4 items) and *willingness to pay* (3 items).

By regressing these six constructs on the five independent cultural variables, we are able to ascertain how well fatalism, individualism, egalitarianism, hierarchy and postmaterialism explain such constructs in a statistical sense. Table 3.3 reports the results of these analyses. Hierarchy is the best predictor of *progress and economic growth,* followed by individualism, fatalism and egalitarianism (reversed effect). Progress and growth is in a remarkably strong way related to hierarchy. It is surprising that the (reverse) effect of postmaterialism is insignificant since materialism, being partly measured by the 'fight rising prices' item, ought to correlate better with a dependent variable which contains items with references to economic growth and concern for prices.

Both egalitarianism and fatalism are significantly related to a view of *fragility of nature*. Indeed, Cultural Theory predicts an egalitarian myth of physical nature as ephemeral and this prediction is therefore supported here.[9] But the support is incomplete because fatalism also predicts this fragility in an equally strong way. Moreover, one should also

Table 3.3 Cultural Theory, postmaterialism and environmental concern. Regression analyses, beta coefficients

	Progress and growth	*Fragility of nature*	*Risks to family*	*Risks in general*	*Environmental behaviour*	*Willingness to pay*
Postmaterialism	–0.06	0.04	0.05	0.05	0.04	0.07
Hierarchy	0.30	0.05	0.01	–0.10	–0.01	–0.03
Egalitarianism	–0.15	0.21	0.23	0.26	0.20	0.20
Individualism	0.16	–0.01	–0.06	–0.08	–0.03	–0.12
Fatalism	0.17	0.21	0.13	0.11	0.02	–0.11
Adj. R^2	0.24	0.10	0.07	0.10	0.04	0.09

Note: The regression coefficients are significant at the .05 level when exceeding |.07|, (N=681).
Data source: Norwegian Social Science Data Services, 1993: 'Values, Nature and Environmentalism'.

find that adherents of individualism and hierarchy would *reject* this fragility, but this is not the empirical case. Again, postmaterialism fails to address fragility of nature empirically.

Both *risk* constructs, measuring awareness of consequences of human activities, are significantly predicted by egalitarianism and fatalism, adherents of both perceiving risks to be dangerous both to the family and the environment in general. There are no substantial differences in the way the two constructs are explained by the independent variables; the only exception is that hierarchy does not find risk to be dangerous to the environment whereas no perception exists as to risk being dangerous to oneself and the family. Again, postmaterialism fails to predict any of these risk constructs.

Egalitarianism is the only predictor that significantly explains reported *environmental behaviour*. This means that the stronger one agrees with equality of result, the more one is likely to behave in an environmentally friendly way, i.e. recycle waste and cut back on driving. No other predictor explains environmental behaviours. All independent variables except hierarchy predict a *willingness to pay* in order to protect the environment, but the predictors' patterns are not unidirectional. Egalitarianism, and less strongly postmaterialism, are associated with a willingness to sacrifice, and those who disagree with individualism and fatalism also show an inclination to sacrifice for the protection of the environment.

In general, the five predictors contribute to explaining a quarter of the variance in progress and economic growth, whereas the explained variance in the other dependent variables range between 4 and 10 per cent. The latter figures are low, but not uncommon in survey research. Across the dependent variables, egalitarianism proved to be the most efficient and consistently significant predictor. This supports the theoretical assumptions about egalitarianisms environmental saliency. The analysis also indicates that adherents of fatalism, however marginalised, significantly explain environmental concern.

It is a surprising finding that the materialism-postmaterialism index is the weakest of the five predictors. The intimate relationship between the theory itself and environmental issues should have turned out higher associations than we have detected here. Our results suggest either that Inglehart is wrong about the relationship between postmaterialist values and environmental concern, or that his measures of postmaterialism and

materialism are inadequate. Indeed, our results concur with the conclusions of Franklin and Rüdig's (1995:431) study of green party voting where they pertinently ask: If one does not have to be a postmaterialist to have generalised environmental concerns, then what does it mean to be a postmaterialist?[10]

Our general hypothesis in this chapter has been that the concepts of egalitarianism and postmaterialism converge on the basis of their being conducive to, or integrated with, the 'new left' and the new social movements. The observed correlation between egalitarianism and postmaterialism was significant, yet it was too weak to corroborate a theoretical communality between them. We also hypothesised a convergence between egalitarianism and postmaterialism on the basis of their common assessment of environmental concern. The analysis corroborated the relationship between environmental concern and egalitarianism but failed to confirm a strong relationship between environmental concern and postmaterialism. Thus, it serves Cultural Theory well, we think, that egalitarianism predicts environmental concern better than does postmaterialism.

Notes

1 We thank Richard Ellis and Mike Thompson for comments.

2 It starts immediately after the Second World War and ends, one presumes, quite soon. If it does not end quite soon—that is, if the predicted shift to postmaterial values is not completed—then the theory is in difficulties.

3 Cultural theorists, however, would be aghast at the idea that markets could function without any institutional supports; an extra-market authority, for instance, that, by enforcing the law of contract, could prevent transaction costs spiralling away to the point where all markets failed. We should add that this resolution of the paradox of a non-institutional theory being a theory of socialization is not explicit in postmaterialism theorising.

4 *See* Price and Thompson (1997) where the contrast between theories of change is set out in more detail and in relation to both societal systems and natural systems.

5 Concerning the methodological aspects of the two theories, *see* Grendstad and Selle 1997: 156–7.

6 The lack of clarity around environmentalism within Cultural Theory is partly due to Douglas and Wildavsky's (1982) collapse of individualism and hierarchy as the 'centre' culture and egalitarianism as the 'border' culture. For an updated and distinctive take on this, *see* Thompson and Rayner 1998.

7 The Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD) provided the data we use in this chapter. The cultural items specific to this survey were adapted from the 'Cultural Biases Questionnaires' developed by Karl Dake.

8 The 'can't choose' option on both priorities was set to missing.

9 Using a parallel data set in the USA, Dietz, Stern and Guagnano (1998) interpret an identical scale as the egalitarian myth of physical nature as ephemeral.

10 *See also* Brechin and Kempton (1994), and related discussions in *Social Science Quarterly* 1997, 78, 1:1–43.

Appendix Scale items and factor loadings

Progress and Economic Growth (α=0.67)	
How much do you agree or disagree with each of these statements (strongly agree, agree, neither, disagree, strongly disagree; [can't choose])[a]	
• Modern science will solve our environmental problems with little change to our way of life;	0.62
• We worry too much about the future of the environment and not enough about prices and jobs today	0.79
• People worry too much about human progress harming the environment	0.77
• In order to protect the environment, Norway needs economic growth	0.67
Fragility of nature (α=0.69)	
How much do you agree or disagree with each of these statements (strongly agree, agree, neither, disagree, strongly disagree; [cant choose])[a]	
• Any change humans cause in nature—no matter how scientific—is likely to make things worse	0.76
• Almost everything we do in modern life harms the environment	0.77
• Nature would be at peace/harmony if only human beings would leave it alone	0.63
• Economic growth always harms the environment	0.71
Environmental risks to the family (α=0.82)	
In general, do you think that…is extremely dangerous for you and your family, very dangerous, somewhat dangerous, not very dangerous, not dangerous for you and your family at all, or, can't choose.[a]	
• air pollution caused by cars	0.71
• nuclear power stations	0.71
• air pollution caused by industry	0.80
• pesticides and chemicals used in farming	0.73
• pollution of Norway's rivers, lakes and streams	0.77
• a rise in the world's temperature caused by the 'greenhouse effect'	0.68
Environmental risks in general (α=0.75)	
In general, do you think that…is extremely dangerous for the environment, very dangerous, somewhat dangerous, not very dangerous, not dangerous for the environment at all, or, can't choose.[a]	
• air pollution caused by cars	0.64
• nuclear power stations	0.58
• air pollution caused by industry	0.76
• pesticides and chemicals used in farming	0.70
• pollution of Norway's rivers, lakes and streams	0.70
• a rise in the world's temperature caused by the 'greenhouse effect'	0.64
Environmental behaviour (α=0.48)	
How often do you…, always, often, sometimes, never [or, not available where I live, don't have/cannot drive a car].[b]	
• make a special effort to sort glass or metal or plastic or paper and so on for recycling?	0.54

Appendix Scale items and factor loadings

• make a special effort to buy fruits and vegetables grown without pesticides or chemicals?	0.74
• refuse to eat meat for moral or environmental reasons?	0.53
• cut back on driving a car for environmental reasons?	0.69
Willingness to pay (α=0.84)	
How willing would you be to…in order to protect the environment (very willing, fairly willing, neither willing nor unwilling, fairly unwilling, very unwilling [can't choose])?[a]	
• pay much higher prices	0.89
• pay much higher taxes	0.88
• accept cuts in your standard of living	0.84

α=Cronbach's alpha; in no instance would the alpha increase were an item to be removed from a scale.

[a] The 'can't choose' option was set to missing; a receding of items before scaling makes high scores associated with agreement/perceived dangerousness/willingness, with the item in question.

[b] 'no availability/no car/can't drive' options were receded to a midpoint category; a receding of items before scaling makes high scores associated with an implementation of the behaviour in question.

4
REJECTION OF CULTURAL BIASES AND EFFECTS ON PARTY PREFERENCE

Eero Olli

Introduction

During the last decade several researchers have designed surveys to explore and test Cultural Theory (Dake 1991; Grendstad 1995; Grendstad and Selle 1997; Marris, Langford and O'Riordan 1996). Their aim, in part, has been to study the cultural biases of individuals so as to determine to which solidarity they adhere, or to find out which solidarity dominates a particular organisation. Common to all these approaches is the belief that individual-level information can be used to 'recreate' solidarities, yet (as is explained in the introductory chapter of this volume) cultural theorists are not entirely clear as to how individuals and solidarities are related (*see* Selle 1991a, 1991b; Wildavsky 199 la). Where earlier work often tended to assume that an individual would have just one cultural bias, more recent formulations see the social solidarities as the stabilisers of the different patterns of beliefs and values (Thompson 1996). Individuals, in this view, are no longer the carriers of particular cultural biases but the potential expressors of values and beliefs that are activated by a social context. Change the social context, and the individual's cultural bias will make the appropriate switch.

Two questions now arise. First, how can the survey researchers take adequate account of this lack of clarity about the individual/solidarity relationship? Second, what can they do to clarify that relationship? As an initial response to the first question I make explicit three *models of the individual* (*see* Olli 1995, 1996), all of which are plausible within the current unclear state of Cultural Theory. The second question, I suggest, can be addressed in terms of a hitherto somewhat neglected aspect of cultural bias—the individuals rejection of those biases that are not supportive of the solidarity of which he or she is part. An individual's support for and rejection of cultural biases, I propose, are partly independent of one another.[1] This partial independence, as well as providing some test of the relative merits of the three models of the individual, illuminates political party preferences in a new way.

Three models of the individual and their implications for bias rejection

The *coherent individual* only one internally coherent cultural bias, infused by a steady and unambiguous cultural environment. The cultural bias comes very close to being a permanent trait of the individual, almost like a personality. Independent of context, the coherent individual will by default reject all cultural biases different from the one he or she supports. Coherent individuals turn a blind eye to alternatives and have difficulty in interacting with others unless they adhere to the same solidarity.[2] Assuming that the coherent individual approach is correct, the ideal typical egalitarian, for instance, would be a person who supports only egalitarianism and who consistently rejects the other biases. This person may be expected to shun any unfamiliar cultural environment. In a survey we should expect to find that most individuals support one cultural bias and reject, or are indifferent to, the other biases. There are different degrees of coherence, and in its strictest form we find strong support for one bias and strong rejection of the three others. In its weakest form we find support for one bias and indifference about the three others. Others could describe such people as consistent, solid or single-minded. Most people are better adapted to the changing social requirements, which suggests the need for a different model that will fit those who are neither fanatical nor single-minded.

The *sequential individual* holds more than one cultural bias and also has the ability to switch between the biases as if they were roles. If the context in which sequential individuals find themselves changes, they will quickly adapt by changing their biases to a new set of values and attitudes thereby still being internally coherent. The sequential individual withstands all cultural biases other than the one that is valid within the current context. This is not a surprising assertion since individuals whose cultural settings differ at work and at home have been readily recognised (Thompson, Ellis and Wildavsky 1990: 265–267). Assuming that the sequential individual approach is correct, a rejection of one bias follows from support of another bias. Since the supported bias depends upon context, rejection becomes dependent on the context too. We would therefore expect to find individuals having roles where one culture dominates and the others are rejected by default. Thus rejection is reduced to a function of context and its accompanying bias. In a survey we should find that individuals relate differently to the cultural biases in different cultural contexts.

The *synthetic individual* learns about the different solidarities in a manner that makes cultural biases almost turn into schemes or versatile jigsaw pieces of knowledge. Synthetic individuals are not internally coherent in terms of cultural biases, but they display an individual stability and consistency across different contexts. Since synthetic individuals' cultural biases are not determined by the context, they have a greater repertoire of ways of acting (and justifying) in a given situation. Cultural Theory has also been applied in a way that fits this type (Thompson 1998). Assuming that the synthetic individual approach is correct, rejection of biases can no longer be deduced from what the individual supports. Since rejection of and support for biases are equally important, but also independent of one another, one would expect an individual to combine rejection and support in different ways. In a survey we should find that individuals are not internally

coherent, but that they display a variety of combinations of support and rejection of cultural biases.[3]

These three views of the individual suggest an empirical test of Cultural Theory and an examination of cultural biases different from those that have been carried out before.[4] The full scope of such an examination, however, falls outside the limits of present analysis. Here I will restrict the analysis to an exploration: i) of how individuals combine support for, indifference to and rejection of biases, and ii) of how these combinations of biases relate to party preferences.

Data and method

The data are taken from the 1995 Survey on Environmentalism in Norway of the general public and of organised environmentalists (Strømsnes, Grendstad and Selle 1996).[5] For the purposes of this chapter these two subsamples have been combined into one data set. The reason for this rather unusual procedure is that the present analysis refers to the universe of biases, where the exploration of the ways in which biases may be combined, and their effects on party preferences, are of key interest. Only a combined sample provides a sufficiently large number of cases to carry out such analyses.

A five-point Likert-type response scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree, with a midpoint of 'both' and a 'don't know' option which was set to missing value) was used for all eight cultural biases items.[6] It was also required that a respondent gave valid answers to pairs of cultural biases to be included in the analysis. On the basis of factor analysis and content validity analysis (Olli 1995: 41) two items have been chosen for each cultural bias scale.[7] When forming the scale each question was standardised into Z-scores from which pairwise means were calculated to indicate the bias in question. This procedure gives four scales indicating the cultural biases with averages close to zero and standard deviations somewhat below one.[8] The reason for this standardisation is twofold. First, since cultural biases can be related to one another it is useful to keep them on a similar scale. Second, the original questions have different means, because they have different degrees of difficulty. For instance, if the egalitarian items were too moderate, which we suspect, the majority of respondents will have agreed with them. Had the items been formulated more strongly, we would have been better able to separate between degrees of support for egalitarianism. The standardisation procedure has compensated for these problems.

Support and rejection of cultural biases

The four cultural bias scales are not statistically independent of one other, although the correlations between them are not alarmingly high (*see* Table 4.1). The strongest correlation is between egalitarianism and individualism (–0.30) and the weakest between egalitarianism and fatalism (0.03). Hierarchy and individualism show a weak but positive correlation (0.25). Fatalism has a positive correlation with all the other biases. This is unfortunate because it might reduce this scale's ability to measure fatalism correctly.[9] In general, scale statistics and intercorrelations are acceptable.

Table 4.1 Cultural biases. Correlation coefficients

	Fatalism	*Egalitarianism*	*Individualism*
Hierarchy	0.16	–0.07	0.25
Individualism	0.20	–0.30	
Egalitarianism	0.03		

Note: All correlations are two-tail significant at the 0.000 level, except for 0.03 which is significant at 0.08 level. N=2932. Listwise deletion of missing values.

The questionnaire format allowed the respondents to support, reject, or be indifferent to any of the eight cultural items. When items are transformed into scales, corresponding cutpoints are approximately set to the 30th and the 70th percentile; the top 30 per cent are classified as supporters, the bottom 30 per cent are classified as rejectors, and the intermediate 40 per cent are classified as being indifferent to the bias in question. To facilitate identification in tables and text, support of a culture is shown in uppercase initials, rejection is shown in lowercase initials, and indifference is shown in lowercase within parentheses.

Identifying combinations of cultural biases

If individuals combine the three options for each of the four biases randomly, there would be 81 possible combinations each of which would have an expected frequency of 12 per thousand (‰). In Table 4.2, the cells where one finds exclusive support of one cultural bias only and a rejection of all the other three biases, are shown in bold. Here the frequencies are: egalitarians 32‰ (Ehif); individualists 11‰ (eIhf); hierarchists 6‰ (eHif); and fatalists 4‰ (ehiF). By this definition, egalitarians are therefore more frequent whereas hierarchists and fatalists are less frequent.

An adherent of a culture can also be defined less strictly as one who supports that bias only and rejects or is indifferent to any of the other three biases. These types, or categories, have been identified in Table 4.2 by bars and shades. By this definition the egalitarians total 147‰, but they are not a uniform group. Only a small proportion is indifferent to all the other cultural biases (12‰) whereas the remainder reject one or more of the other biases. Those who support egalitarianism and combine this position with rejection of both hierarchy and individualism and either reject (33‰) or are indifferent (32‰) to fatalism, are potentially strong egalitarians because they reject the other active biases. The hierarchists total 108‰ and their pattern of rejection differs from that of the egalitarians. The largest group of hierarchists consist of those who are indifferent to the other biases (25‰). Only a minority are strong hierarchists in that they reject both egalitarianism and individualism and are indifferent to (6‰) or reject fatalism (6‰). This is only a quarter of the relative frequency of strong egalitarians.

The individualists total 85‰ and a minority is indifferent to the other three cultures (14‰). A total of 25‰ are strong individualists, who reject both egalitarianism and hierarchy. A majority of individualists reject egalitarianism, hierarchy or both. This pattern seems to be quite similar to the one found for egalitarians. The fatalists total 57‰

Table 4.2 Combining cultural biases (per thousand)

‰		Supports hierarchy H			Indifferent to hierarchy (h)			Rejects hierarchy h			
		F	(f)	f	F	(f)	f	F	(f)	f	N
Supports egalitarianism E	I	20	10	5	7	5	1	6	6	5	
	(i)	19	13	6	4	12	8	11	23	13	
	i	8	13	7	8	13	13	20	33	32	
Indifferent to egalitarianism (e)	I	25	20	9	10	14	3	9	10	6	
	(i)	23	25	14	8	22	13	11	24	21	
	i	8	11	10	5	13	13	9	21	21	
Rejects egalitarianism e	I	22	18	13	10	17	10	13	14	11	
	(i)	17	23	13	8	15	14	9	13	13	
	i	4	6	6	3	5	4	4	7	9	
Total number											2932

A pure type A mixed type Hierarchs Individualists Fatalists Egalitarians

Table 4.3 Cultural support and rejection (per cent)

		The only supported bias			
	%	*H*	*I*	*E*	*F*
Rejected bias	h		48	69	58
	i	31		62	38
	e	45	61		42
	f	40	36	45	
	N	319	249	426	168

Note: Only respondents who support only one bias are included (i.e. the cells that are marked in Table 4.2).
The sum in each column is different from 100% because some people reject several of the biases.

and only a minority of them are indifferent to the other cultural biases (8‰). This is relatively less indifference than what is displayed by individualists and more than egalitarians (who quite actively reject the other cultures). Almost half of fatalists reject one other cultural bias. Only a few pure fatalists (4‰) reject all three 'active' cultural biases.

Each of these four cultural categories can also be analysed in terms of how they reject, if at all, the other three biases. Table 4.3 summarises the frequency of support and rejection and permits four conclusions to be drawn. First, egalitarians seem to reject the other biases more actively than do any of the others. Second, hierarchists are more indifferent to the other cultures. Third, egalitarians and individualists reject each other more than they reject fatalism. Fourth, and above all, it is evident that support for any of the four cultural biases can go together with rejection of any of the other three.

In addition to detecting cultural rejections from the position of a given cultural bias, one should also ascertain the relative pattern of cultural support and rejection in order to explore the three views of the individual within Cultural Theory. The coherent individual approach claims that individuals support one culture and reject the others. The sequential individual approach claims that individuals sequentially support one bias only while rejecting the others.[10] The synthetic individual approach accepts rejection and support in any combination. Table 4.4 shows the results of the analysis.

40 per cent of the respondents support one culture, and the majority of them reject one or two of the other cultural biases (15 per cent and 14 per cent, respectively). This means that two out of five respondents fit the description of the coherent individual. 25 per cent of the respondents support two cultures and a majority of them reject one (12 per cent) or more cultures (six per cent). Only 10 per cent support three cultures.[11] 77 per cent of all respondents, ranging from those who support only one bias to those who support all four, thus fit the description given by the sequential individual approach. A challenge to Cultural Theory lies in the 23 per cent of individuals who do not support any culture, yet still reject one or several biases. They cannot be ignored. The synthetic individual approach can accept any individual level combinations of support and rejection. Consequently, 100 per cent of the sample fits the assumptions of this approach.[12]

Table 4.4 Supporting and rejecting biases (per cent)

Total %		*The number of supported biases*						
		0	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*N*	*%*
Number of rejected biases	0	2	6	8	6	2	692	2
	1	7	15	12	4		1076	37
	2	9	14	6			851	29
	3	5	5				287	10
	4	1					26	1
	N	671	1162	742	297	60	2932	100
	%	23	40	25	10	2	100	

Biases and party preferences

Even if individuals relate to all four cultural biases simultaneously these findings will not make any real difference if the combinations of biases are ineffective. Preference for a political party can be viewed as a distinct expression of a political value. Party preference will therefore be the dependent variable.[13] In the subsequent analyses, fatalism has been dropped from the analysis for three reasons. First, fatalism has effects on parties and groups that are excluded from the present analysis.[14] Second, fatalism is the weakest of the four scales. Third, eliminating one of the solidarities reduces the number of cultural combinations from 81 to 27 thereby facilitating analysis. The analyses of effects of biases on party preferences will be limited to four Norwegian parties, each of which embodies a distinct history as well as different policies.

The *Conservative party* (Høyre, H) represents a modernised version of the 'the old right'. Founded in 1884, the party advocates a combination of value-conservatism and economic liberalism. The *Labour party* (Arbeiderpartiet, DNA) represents traditional social democracy and is identified with 'the old left'. Founded in 1887, it is the largest party in Norway and has maintained single party majority and minority governments for substantial periods since the Second World War. The party was in office when the survey was conducted. *The Christian Peoples' party* (Kristelig Folkeparti, KrF) was founded in 1933 and is an evangelical, value-conservative party. Its policies are based on family values and what the party identifies as their 'social conscience.' The *Socialist-Left party* (Sosialistisk Venstreparti, SV) represents 'the new left'. Founded in 1960, it advocates a modern version of socialism with a touch of environmentalism, despite still having some hard-core labour unionists among its ranks.

The test of the hypothesis that biases have effect follows two methodological approaches: the additive approach of OLS (ordinary least squares) regression, and the combinatory approach (*see* Ragin 1987). Survey-based social science frequently relies on additive techniques like multiple regression, one of the basic assumptions of which is that the effects across independent variables can be'added together to form the prediction (or the likelihood of) an outcome on the dependent variable. One feature of this technique is that

Table 4.5 Cultural biases and party preference (regression analysis)

	Preferred party (dummies)			
	SV	*DNA*	*Krf*	*H*
Hierarchy	–0.19 (.00)	0.12 (.00)	0.10 (.00)	0.02 (.38)
Egalitarianism	0.19 (.00)	–0.03 (.12)	0.05 (.01)	–0.32 (.00)
Individualism	–0.15 (.00)	0.03 (.14)	–0.04 (.08)	0.12 (.00)
F (p-value)	145,7 (.00)	19,8 (.00)	12,6 (.00)	161,1 (.00)
R^2	0.13	0.02	0.01	0.14

Regression coefficients are given in Beta-weights with their p-values in parentheses. Listwise deletion of missing cases. N for all analyses is 2873.

opposite effects of independent variables may cancel each other out, thereby reducing the overall effect measured by deviation from the grand mean. The proportion of variance in the dependent variable accounted for by the independent variables are referred to as explained variance (i.e. R^2). Whereas the additive approach studies *deviations* from a grand mean by summarising deviations across explanatory variables, the combinatory approach studies the ways in which individuals *combine* variables (e.g. values or properties) regardless of how deviant they may be. Juxtaposing the additive and the combinatory approaches allows a closer study of the effects of biases and allows us to assess which of the two methodological approaches is more fruitful.

Accounting for party preference

The four regression analyses are presented in Table 4.5. The beta-weights (i.e. standardised regression coefficients) show the relative importance of each bias on the preference for a particular party.[15] The additive effect of biases on preferences for Arbeiderpartiet (DNA) and Kristelig Folkeparti (KrF) is negligible since explained variance is very low (R^2=0.02–0.01). The analysis shows that support for egalitarianism and rejection of hierarchy and individualism are conducive to a preference for the Sosialistisk Venstreparti (SV), as one could expect. The analysis also shows that a rejection of egalitarianism and support for individualism is conducive to a preference for Høyre (H). Together, the biases explain 13 and 14 per cent in the preference for Sosialistisk Venstreparti and Høyre respectively.

The unconditional party preferences are 19 per cent for The Socialist Left party; 21 per cent for the Labour party; 5 per cent for the Christian Peoples party; and 11 per cent for the Conservative party. In the absence of fatalism, there are now 27 possible combination of biases. For each of these parties, each cell in Table 4.6 represents one of the 27 possible combination of biases. For each party, each of these cells shows the proportion in per cent of individuals who would vote for that party.[16] The cells that display support considerably beyond the unconditional preference for each party are of special interest and have been shaded.

Initially there are two combinations of biases that would make individuals prone to vote for the Socialist Left party: rejection of individualism only (third column) or rejection of hierarchy only (bottom row). When individuals reject individualism and hierarchy and also support egalitarianism (cell Ehi), an impressive 47 per cent say they would vote for SV. The lowest support can be found in the segments where a person supports individualism and hierarchy and rejects or is indifferent to egalitarianism. The difference between lowest and highest support is a substantial 47 per cent points.

There are three combinations which increase the probability of voting for the Labour party (DNA). First, support for hierarchy seems to have a general effect regardless of attitudes towards egalitarianism or individualism (top row). Second, the combination of rejecting egalitarianism and being indifferent to or rejecting individualism (the two far right columns) leads to a high support for DNA, regardless of attitude towards hierarchy. Third, there are four cells where individuals are indifferent to hierarchy, not supporting individualism and independent of the relation to egalitarianism, where DNA gathers much of its support. This pattern is indicative of a party which has manoeuvred itself into the middle of the political landscape (*see* Strøm and Leipart 1989; Grendstad 1995). The difference between lowest and highest support for this party is 32 percentage points.

There are three combinations that lead to increased support for the Christian People's party (KrF). First, support for egalitarianism combined with support for hierarchy is conducive to vote for KrF, regardless of attitudes towards individualism. Second, even stronger support can be found among individuals who reject both individualism and egalitarianism and support hierarchy. Support for hierarchy could thus have been the common denominator for KrF, had it not been for the third combination, that is, those who are indifferent to both egalitarianism and hierarchy regardless of their view of individualism. If egalitarianism and hierarchy are equally important to individuals, then KrF is the solution. But some of this party's supporters also reject both egalitarianism and individualism but support or are indifferent to hierarchy. So, even if they are only indifferent to hierarchy, it is still their most preferred bias.

The combination of support for individualism and rejection of egalitarianism provides the key support for the Conservative party (H). If we add rejection of hierarchy to this combination, this party reaches a support of 41 per cent. This figure also represents the range of support for this party, and it is quite significant for an ideological pattern. This support exceeds the expected value among those who both support and reject hierarchy while rejecting egalitarianism.

These results bring out several interesting patterns. First, the core areas of support for each of these parties hardly overlap. Second, the conventional left-right dimension polarises the positions of SV and H, and it has been suggested that a combination of high value on individualism and a low value on egalitarianism is similar to a conventional 'right' (i.e. conservative) political position (Grendstad and Selle 1997; Grendstad and Rommetvedt 1996). To these observations we can now add the importance of hierarchy which is rejected by the adherents of SV and remains unsettled among the adherents of H as long as egalitarianism is rejected. It remains unclear whether hierarchy is a non-issue for the Conservative party or whether it is an issue that produces factions within the party. Third, the individuals who reject all three cultures do not find a party that would

Table 4.6 Cultural biases and party preferences: a combinatory approach (per cent)

	Supports egalitarianism E			Indifferent to egalitarianism (e)			Rejects egalitarianism e		
	I	(i)	i	I	(i)	i	I	(i)	i
% support for the Socialist-Left party, SV, (baseline 19%)									
Supports Hierarchy H	4	9	21	4	12	16	3	2	
Indifferent (h)	18	22	41	0	2	8	2	8	15
Rejects hierarchy h	31	46	47	18	28	34	7	6	25
% support for the Social-Democratic party, DNA, (baseline 21%)									
Supports hierarchy H	25	19	27	37	28	28	16	26	28
Indifferent (h)	15	29	10	7	22	32	17	24	29
Rejects hierarchy h	10	5	8	25	14	13	19	32	25
% support for the Christian People's party, KrF, (baseline 5%)									
Supports hierarchy H	13	11	12	5	6	9	1	5	15
Indifferent (h)	5	9	7	13	10	13	0	2	12
Rejects hierarchy h	0	1	2	3	6	3	5	3	2
% support for the Conservative party, H, (baseline 11%)									
Supports hierarchy H	10	4	3	11	7	1	35	25	11
Indifferent (h)	3	5	0	5	2	8	23	15	9
Rejects hierarchy h	6	2	0	10	3	2	41	13	18

be close to their own ideological position; they show support for SV, DNA, and H, thus covering a large range of ideological options.

In short, the additive approach detected next to no effects of cultural biases on the preferences for the Labour party or the Christian People's party. The combinatory approach revealed that the two parties were increasingly favoured when hierarchy was supported, whereas the two parties' adherents diverge through different combinations of support for and rejection of egalitarianism and individualism.

The additive approach detected modest effects of cultural biases on the preferences for the Socialist Left party and the Conservative party. The combinatory approach uncovered significant support for the former party when individuals reject individualism and hierarchy in combination with support for egalitarianism. This approach also uncovered significant support for the latter party only when support for individualism is combined with a rejection of egalitarianism.

Discussion

The fact that individuals can reject a culture in much the same way that they can support it, has not received due attention by cultural theorists. The degree to which individuals combine rejections and support has consequences both for empirical research and for the ways in which Cultural Theory understands the individual within its theoretical framework. The use of party preference as the dependent variable provides an opportunity to indicate the ways in which Cultural Theory has affinities with theories of political behaviour.

The role of rejection

The analyses showed that rejection of a cultural bias seems to operate quite independently of support for other biases: individuals combined support, indifference and rejection with relative ease. The first conclusion is therefore that individual-level support for a culture does not by default entail rejection of the three other biases.

Another conclusion is that the majority of individuals do not have a coherent attitude towards cultural biases. One possible reason is that most of the individuals probably do not have what Converse (1964) has called a consistent ideology. Another explanation is that individuals do not need to be consistent. Cultural Theory's notion of what it means to be an egalitarian, hierarchical, individualistic or fatalistic has been advanced without giving sufficient attention to what kind of attitudes and biases individuals in fact entertain, and in what ways they combine them.

The analysis has also established that rejection of a bias is an important determinant of an individual's party preference. Knowing what individuals reject, in addition to what they support, considerably improved predictions of party preferences. When it comes to the effect of rejection of a cultural bias, it seems clear that rejection does not have any more effect than support for a bias on its own. The analysis also indicated that a combinatory approach provides the most fruitful way of handling individuals' cultural

biases. It is the *combination,* and not the summation, of cultural biases that affects party preference.

If one thinks of cultural biases as constituting a four-dimensional system, it seems that the parties have different salient bias dimensions.[17]The analysis indicated that parties draw support from different cultural segments, and that these segments overlap only to a limited extent. However, the relation between biases and party preferences is not straightforward—the Conservative and the Christian People's parties get least votes among those who reject hierarchy and support egalitarianism, but each still has a separate cultural segment from which it attracts voters.

Consequences for empirical analysis

The findings indicate some consequences for individual-level analysis. First, some popular techniques for estimating individual-level effects, such as multiple regression, may be less suited for the task than previously believed. Further, the biases' effects cannot simply be added together at the individual-level, because different combinations have different effects, and an additive technique assumes that each of the biases always has the same effect.[18] This may account for the low explained variance of the cultural biases in several studies (Marris, Langford and O'Riordan 1996; Stenvold 1996:242).

Second, the findings suggest that the categorisation of individuals should be based on combinations of cultural biases. Unfortunately, many categories/combinations need large samples; data from almost 3000 respondents were used in this chapter. Three biases required 27 combinations to be analysed whereas all four biases would require 81 combinations.

Third, the results suggest that researchers should use more of the information in the data by including rejection of, as well as support for, biases. The explanatory power of Cultural Theory would thereby increase. However, a considerable number of individuals support only one culture and reject one or several cultures (40 per cent in Table 4.4). This indicates that, in many cases, one may still obtain satisfactory results without accounting for the different combinations of support and rejection.

Fourth, given that the synthetic individual approach has merit, one should in future surveys examine the alleged coherence between peoples cultural bias, behavioural strategy and social relations. This is a key proposition within Cultural Theory. Surveys that until now have mainly collected information about people's biases would do better by including questions about behavioural strategies and social relations thereby allowing a more complete description of an individual's cultural makeup.

Consequences for Cultural Theory

Since combinations of cultures matter at the individual level, the synthetic individual approach seems to be more accurate than the coherent or sequential individual approach when analysing individuals' biases. Alternatively, one can stick to the coherent individual approach and claim that there is a problem with the measurement of biases. However, the weakness of the coherent individual approach lies in its failure to account for the large

variations in rejection, whereas its strength lies in its simplicity. Do cultural theorists prefer realism or parsimony?

Within Cultural Theory we find the theory of surprise, which aims to explain individual change. When the discrepancy between expectations and experience becomes too large, the theory hypothesises that an individual will exit the present culture disillusioned. But Cultural Theory does not predict in which of the three remaining cultures the individual will land. However, if we include knowledge about the individuals degree of support for, indifference to and rejection of the other cultures, then our predictions may improve, in that it is more likely that the individual will end up in, or transfer their support to, a culture he or she is indifferent to rather than one that he or she rejects.

Complementing approaches to political behaviour

The present application of Cultural Theory to political behaviour connects to all three of the main traditions explaining an individual's party preference. The *structural cleavage approach* takes cleavages in the political system as its starting point: an individual's party preference is a function of his or her place in the society (Rokkan 1967; Valen and Rokkan 1974). By contrast, Cultural Theory describes how ones cultural bias is influenced by ones context, i.e. the social relations and structures. Thus suggesting a study of how structural cleavages are translated into votes.

The Michigan model uses a wide set of factors that affect voting, spanning from long-term forces such as class, ideology, party identification and social position to short-term forces such as various political issues and candidates' personal characteristics (Campbell *et al.* 1960). This chapter can be interpreted as an exploratory attempt to redefine how the ideological aspects of the long-term forces can be categorised and analysed. Like the proximity model, this chapter assumes that individuals try to minimise the political distance between themselves and their party or candidate (Miller 1976), but claims in addition that the effects of ideological factors, defined as the cultural biases, are neither simple nor additive.[19]

Rational choice models claim that individuals calculate before they vote for the party that is most capable of fulfilling their preferences (Rabinowitz and Macdonald 1989). Rational choice models have, however, been criticised for the lack of distance between preference and voting, i.e. *explanans* and *explanandum*. The use of cultural biases in this chapter suggests a way of permitting a theory to prescribe the ideological ground so that there will then be a sufficient distance between a general set of preferences and party preferences. On the other hand, Cultural Theory criticises rational choice models for including only one type of rationality, whereas at least four are needed to account for the social variations. Or, more correctly, four frameworks for deciding what shall count as rational and what shall count as irrational. Since rational people defend their solidarity, then what is rational depends on their social context (Wildavsky 1994).

Cultural Theory can also be related to the critics of rational choice who emphasise frames, schemas and the processing and interpretation of information (Lau and Sears 1986; Brady and Sniderman 1985; Kulinski, Luskin and Bolland 1991). Cultural Theory is thus a framework that allows us to combine cognitive aspects (such as world views,

understandings of human and physical natures, and styles of information rejection) and affective aspects (such as evaluation of a policy or attitude towards a group in society). Thus Cultural Theory may bridge aspects which previously have been applied within two quite different theoretical traditions (Conover and Feldman 1991).

Cultural Theory may also fill the gap between the structural cleavages and Michigan models by explaining how social structures and positions get translated into ideological positions. Moreover, it may fill the gap between the rational choice and Michigan models, by explaining where the preferences come from, why individuals have biased perceptions and how different preferences (cultural biases) allow for different forms of rationality.

Above all, this analysis has shown that applying the combinatory approach to existing theories may have a significant potential for understanding individuals' voting behaviour. Whether this significance applies to Cultural Theory too can only be answered once researchers have resolved how cultural biases can be properly measured at the individual-level.

Notes

1 To distinguish between the cultural and the individual level, I use 'opposition' about relations between solidarities/biases and 'rejection' about people's relation to biases. The four biases as social constructs are by definition in opposition to each other, but there is no apparent reason why the situation must be the same on the individual level. People must relate to all four solidarities, but it is not given *how* they relate to them.

2 This argument can be extended to include the theory of surprise. This theory states that if the one cultural bias upon which the individual has based his life is no longer compatible with the individual's actual experiences of the world, he or she would give up the disproved cultural bias for one which is more compatible with the present conditions.

3 One may also find individuals who first and foremost are in opposition to others and have few, if any, positively defined solutions to problems at hand. Contrary to supraindividual social units, it is conceivable that an individual can make rejection of a bias their exclusive social strategy, although their social life may become disappointing.

4 In another sense, these views are ways of modelling the individual empirically.

5 Technically, the organised environmentalist sample is based on twelve different subsamples of environmental organisations. However, one can consider these subsamples as one sample drawn randomly from the members of environmental organisations.

6 The wording of the questions used to measure cultural biases are: *Hierarchy*: One of the problems with people today is that they challenge authority too often; the best way to provide for future generations is to preserve our customs and heritage. *Egalitarianism:* What this world needs is a fairness revolution to make the distribution of goods more equal; I support a tax shift so that the burden falls more heavily on corporations and people with large incomes. *Individualism:* If people have the vision and ability to acquire property, they ought to be allowed to enjoy it; everyone should have an equal chance to succeed and fail without government interference. *Fatalism:* Cooperation with others rarely works; it seems that whatever party you vote for things go on pretty much the same.

7 Two items may be scant since it will restrict the reliability of the scale when measured by Cronbach's alpha.

8 The general population sample served as the basis for standardisation and was obtained by the *Descriptives* procedure in SPSS. The organised environmentalists' cultural biases were calculated on the basis of the means and standard deviations from the general population sample.

9 A factor analysis (not shown) indicated that one fatalist item also loaded strongly on the factor identified as hierarchy. Although not strictly comparable because of item selection and sample procedures, the scales used by Dake (1991) correlated with one another from 0.28 to 0.54 in absolute terms. Both Dake (1991) and Marris, Langford and O'Riordan (1996) reported strong correlations between the hierarchy and individualism scales.

10 A complete empirical test of the sequential individual approach would require samples from different contexts. Since it is not possible to assert from which context the present survey is drawn (a private, non-socially controlled context?) consistent interpretation remains difficult.

11 Two per cent of the repondents are found in 'the autonomous culture' in that they support all four biases (Thompson, Ellis and Wildavsky 1990:8). By default they cannot reject any of the other biases.

12 The three models of the individual rely on different ways of testing. Therefore the proportion of individuals that are correctly described exceeds 100 per cent.

13 In the questionnaire the respondents were asked what party they would vote for if there were a parliamentary election tomorrow. *See* e.g. Heidar and Svåsand (1994), Strøm and Svåsand (1997) for a discussion of the Norwegian party system.

14 Fatalism correlates well (not shown) with a preference for The Progress party (Fremskritts-partiet, FrP), the Agrarian party (Senterpartiet, Sp) and small parties, as well as with those without a party preference.

15 Listwise deletions of missing values for each of the parties are used. OLS-regression is questionable when the dependent variable is a dummy-variable (Aldrich and Nelson 1984). Logit-analysis can therefore be appropriate, but also much less accessible (Franklin et al. 1992:424, 436). The present models have also been submitted to logit-analysis but the results do not alter the present conclusion.

16 If one included all party preferences and missing values each cell would add up to 100 per cent. A complete table can be obtained from the author.

17 There have been some attempts to describe parties consisting of coalitions of cultural biases; e.g. social-democratic parties have been described as regimes consisting of hierarchists and egalitarians (Thompson, Ellis and Wildavsky 1990:89).

18 This kind of causal conjuncture can be tested with the use of interaction models in multivariate regression, although restrictions apply (*see* Ragin 1987:65).

19 A LISREL analysis could help us test the number of predicitons of how social experiences influence party preference and party identification through cultural biases (*see* Franklin and Jackson 1983).

Part 2

ORGANISATIONS

5
BROAD CHURCHES, BIG THEORY AND ONE SMALL EXAMPLE
Cultural Theory and intra-party politics

Tim Bale

Cultural Theory and political parties: the possibilities

Political parties are particularly interesting because they are almost archetypal examples of the interaction between ideology and institutional structure that we call culture. They are not simply vote-getting machines, nor are they transparent translators of ideas into action. They are complex negotiators of contemporary terrain and past constraints. Their members strive for shared interpretations and concerted action, but are visibly riven by disputes, prone to different levels of commitment, and often change positions over time. Parties therefore have to be seen not only as wholes, but also in terms of the parts, and even the individuals, that make them up. Like all cultures, they need to be accorded their full complexity without losing the sense of their being an entity capable of being understood—a difficult but nevertheless fascinating task, and one which Cultural Theory should be keen and able to take on. It is therefore somewhat surprising that, with only one or two recent exceptions (Grendstad 1995; Bale 1997, 1999), it has not yet done so.

If it is true that, as Richard Rose observed in a classic treatment of the contrasting internal lives of Britain's main parties (1964:46), their 'surface cohesion [...] reflects an equilibrium between forces pulling in different directions, not a unity obtained by a single, united thrust', then Cultural Theory should, on the face of it, be well-placed to explain why. One of its key features, after all, is its insistence that in all social units each of its *ways of life* (egalitarianism, hierarchy, individualism, fatalism and autonomy) continue—even in attenuated form—to co-exist in a more or less dynamic interplay.

If Cultural Theory did nothing more than focus on the inevitability of systematic differences between the factions or tendencies in a party, it would still be helpful. It would possess considerable advantages over other approaches— which simply assert differences based on exogenous, pre-existing ideological preferences among members rather than explaining how the variations in those preferences are structured by and in turn help to structure variations in institutional location. It would also have the edge over recent rational choice approaches to intra-party struggles. Agreed, these are now advanced enough to argue that various actors within parties 'interact and quite frequently clash because they are motivated by different rationalities for action' depending on their position in the organisation (Koelble 1992:52; and *see* Tsebelis 1990). But they tend—as

indeed do even the most creative approaches based on organisational theory (e.g. Panebianco 1988)—to get hung up on the ultimately false dichotomy of 'de-ideologised', power-seeking leaders and 'over-ideologised' naive followers. They are also likely to work less well when considering only, say, the parliamentary representation of a party—a group of people who are, to a much greater extent, 'in the same boat' in terms of their social/institutional context. Since in many party systems the party in parliament is what really counts, we need a theory that illuminates and possibly predicts differences at this vital level.

Cultural Theory, however, does more than merely point to the predictability of conflict between sub-groups within a party. It also specifies, within the same model, the characteristic cultural biases of those sub-groups. And, as well as relating those biases to the positions of the sub-groups within the overall structure, Cultural Theory emphasises that those biases involve the linking of views on what each sub-group should stand for and how it should be organised. This is perhaps where it is most interesting to analysts of political parties. It has long been assumed, for example, that 'right-wingers' on policy will be 'authoritarian' when it comes to party management, while 'left-wingers' will tend to be more 'relaxed' about such matters. Cultural Theory does not so much challenge this assumed correlation as suggest an explanation for it.

A detailed examination of the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP) in the 1960s, using a combination of mainly qualitative methods, indicates the presence of all four ways of life (I will not consider autonomy) each with more or less distinct and (to Cultural Theorists) predictable views on both party management and leadership on the one hand and party policy (in our case welfare/social policy) on the other. Such a tightly focused single-case study may, of course, have limitations—though, even in comparative politics, these can be exaggerated (*see* Yin 1994)—but it is in keeping with the methodological recommendations not only of those trying to 'recreate political culture as a working research tradition' (Lane 1992), but also of those students of party, like Alan Ware, Kay Lawson and Peter Mair, who continually call for more 'in-depth historically informed studies of particular regimes' (Ware 1987:110). Moreover, a tight chronological and spatial span provides a good opportunity and a tough test for Cultural Theory, which, like any other theory initially pitched at a high level of abstraction and aggregation, is open to accusations that its putative capacity to cope with both small-scale institutional contexts and entire societies comes unstuck when subjected to the pressure of particular circumstances.

The 'particular circumstances' in this case are re-created through interviews and historical 'soaking and poking' in the archives of the PLP, its various subgroups and the highly informative (though predictably slanted) reports of intraparty activity carried in the press.[1] The aim is, first, to plot the position of various strains or sections (self-identified or not) of the PLP according to how they 'score' on the sort of predicates and indices of grid and group produced by Rayner (1979) and Gross and Rayner (1985), and second, to see whether the way they do (or do not) organise 'matches' the expected cultural bias. In determining 'group', then, we are, like Gross and Rayner (1985:64), trying to establish 'the strength and closeness of the interactive network' formed by a particular part of the PLP by looking at, for example, how frequently it meets, the range of its activities, and

the extent to which it excludes others. In determining 'grid', we are, again like Gross and Rayner (1985:67–8), concerned, for instance, with the extent to which internal 'differentiation is extensive and strongly enforced' with access to certain activities and roles confined to certain people. In capturing 'cultural bias' we try to isolate, as a proxy, the characteristic attitudes displayed in parts of the PLP to party management and a highly symbolic policy issue—welfare.

The Parliamentary Labour Party, 1964–70

The egalitarians

The egalitarian section of the PLP in the 1960s was located in what became known as the Tribune Group, those twenty to forty members (including a future Labour leader, Michael Foot) who regularly rebelled against the policies and the management techniques of a party leadership that, between 1964 and 1970, was also in government. Whether seated 'below the gangway' in the chamber of the House of Commons, or in its 'smoking-' (as opposed to its 'tea-') room, they considered themselves part of a collective enterprise insulated from the rest of the PLP to such an extent that they became the 'unofficial opposition' to the government (*see* Piper 1974:389–90). With that distinct identity went a distinctive outlook—one which Cultural Theorists would recognise as an egalitarian cultural bias typical of an organisation which was high on group and low on grid.

Though Tribune Group members did not associate exclusively with one another (rather than, say, with other backbenchers of 'progressive' views on the so-called 'social' or 'moral' issues) they did so for the most part. Indeed some were in touch with the more experienced members of the Group before they themselves became MPs. They were not necessarily politically (and certainly not necessarily personally) hostile to all other sections of the PLP—indeed they recognised the utility of, and actively sought alliances on, particular issues (*see* Brand 1992:96). But they nonetheless preserved their distinct group identity, not least by controlling entry: much thought was given, for example, as to whether a potential recruit really was 'one of us' before asking them to come along to supposedly open meetings. And, even where trade union consciousness served to soften the hostility between Tribunites and other MPs (*see* Brand 1989:150, 162), as arguably it did in the battle over *In Place of Strife* (the Labour government's doomed attempt to reform industrial relations), it is difficult to observe the emergence of any long-term, cross-cutting relationship between the separate sections that for a while were united against the leadership. Certainly many—though not all—in the Group were highly reluctant to become involved in that leadership, since this would involve co-option into what in their eyes was a discredited, compromised establishment.

As for grid, the Tribune Group was even more typically egalitarian, consciously resisting the sort of habits and assumptions that in other organisations are seen as essential to their ability to function effectively. Whatever the suspicions of those outside the Group —and indeed partly to counter such accusations—the Tribune Group did not enforce a

'party line' on its members. The emphasis was always on an absence of compulsion; any consensus and resultant cohesion was to arise naturally from more-or-less spontaneous agreement. It was not even a case of reaching majority decisions to which any minority could be bound, at least not by anything other than by their own guilty conscience. As one Tribunite recalls:

> We very rarely took a vote and we never felt that anybody should feel, as it were, obligated to follow a line they didn't believe in. [...] I once on one occasion decided not to abstain—I regretted it later, felt rather upset about it—and one or two people were a bit reproving of me; it so happened that I rebelled on almost every occasion thereafter.
>
> (from confidential interview)

However, as this extract illustrates, to stress the Voluntarism' at the root of the collective action of the Tribune Group should not lead us to deny that there were pressures to conform. Nor is it to say that the Group never counted heads. It had to do the latter, if only in order to know who stood where in order that it could avoid two possibilities, both of which, as the minutes of the Group's meetings show, were constant worries. The first of these was that those who did want to register a protest against the government did so in such low numbers that they would either be vulnerable to disciplinary action from the PLP or easily written off as an isolated minority. The second possibility to be avoided (in the days before the myth that a government defeat meant an automatic dissolution and calling of a general election) was that of members voting, in combination with other backbenchers, who felt strongly on a particular issue, to 'bring down the government and let in a Tory administration that would be far worse' (Mikardo 1988:175). This involved the Tribunites in fairly open canvassing of the opinion of MPs outside the group in order to minimise the risk of an accident—an exercise which earned the contempt rather than the gratitude of more loyal backbenchers since Tribunites openly admitted that they continued to support the government not just out of respect for the wishes of supporters (who expected them to urge a different course rather than to tear the party apart) but also because, as Foot put it in an interview with the *New Left Review* in the spring of 1968:

> If the Labour government appears to be destroyed by the actions of the Left, even though you can argue with great conviction and plausibility that the true cause of the government's destruction is its own folly and its own crime, then for years—perhaps generations—there would be bitter sectarian arguments as to who was responsible. [...] If the government is destroyed, I want to see the Labour movement taken over by those who have drawn the proper conclusions from the failure of this government. I do not think that that would be assisted by any doubts as to where the responsibilities for the *dénouement* lay.
>
> (*New Left Review* May–June 1968)

The Tribune Group, then, was not uninterested in power, especially if the failings of the current leadership seemed likely to deliver the party into its lap in the long run. It was not

some sort of Simon-pure collective on the model of some of those catalogued by Steve Rayner in 1970s London (Rayner 1979). Nevertheless it was relatively egalitarian. It had no internal rules and regulations: action taken collectively was based on consent and its stance on policy, while not immune from the temptations of tactical opportunism, was largely dictated by its interpretation of how near or far such policy was from supposedly timeless socialist principle and party conference decisions.

Tribune's stance was certainly not decided by a leader—because the Group did not believe in leaders. Indeed the very idea—like the idea that members should accept 'decisions handed down from above'—would have been obnoxious to many members such as Eric Heffer, smacking as it did of the Communist party that he had left as a younger man (*see* Heffer 1991:19, 38, 57). The Left', Heffer and his fellow Tribunite, Ian Mikardo, told the authors of the Nuffield study of the 1970 general election, 'doesn't need one' because it 'should be a democracy'. Tribune certainly had no leader in the way that the term is commonly understood—indeed, as its minutes in 1966 show, it took long enough to decide, after experimenting with the notion that each of its meetings should be chaired by a different member in alphabetical order, that it would be advantageous to have an elected and therefore temporarily entrenched chairman! True, Michael Foot was looked up to by many in the Group, but only in the sense that he was believed to be the inspirational embodiment of its values and the most trustworthy, as well as the most articulate, interpreter of its various oracles: he 'wasn't exactly a leader, just someone who commanded respect', who 'when he spoke, [...] was expressing your view'—not an organiser more 'a guru'.[2]

This brings us to the fact that there were, of course, tensions among the Tribunites, just as there have always been in the Labour Left in general (Seyd 1987:9). Cultural Theory would lead us to expect, for example, that while there would be some within the Group who would resist or ignore any efforts to organise more conventionally, there would be some who were keener to do so, particularly with regard, for instance, to division of function. This is indeed what we find. The story of the Group in the late 1960s is in some respects the story of Mikardo's attempts to 'organise' it, to overcome, for instance, members' reluctance to produce papers and agendas etc. in order to make it more 'businesslike' and supposedly therefore more efficient and effective—attempts which, given what he sadly concluded was the almost instinctive antipathy to such things amongst left-wingers, were unsurprisingly in vain (Mikardo 1988:107–9). It is also obvious that some members were more receptive than others to the idea that members should specialise in certain areas, the better to produce a series of considered alternatives to official policy.

Interestingly, social policy was not one of these. This was because the Tribune Group's view—unlike, to their dismay, that of the government—was taken as read. Universal welfare, symbolised in particular by a National Health Service providing public care free at the point of use, was a central tenet of the essentially egalitarian socialism of the Tribunites. Free provision stood for a view of human nature which was both benign and status-blind: people should be trusted to take from the resources of the community only what was sufficient to meet their genuine needs and from a service which was no respecter of rank, but of such quality that all classes would use it. Treatment had to be

based only on need, not on a test of means. Such a test would involve the drawing of invidious distinctions between individuals of inherently equal worth, stigmatising those in receipt of benefits as burdensome individual failures who were somehow personally at fault. The universal welfare state, in addition to being redistributionary, was proof positive of the capacity and willingness of socialist society to provide for the most basic needs of its citizens from cradle to grave. It was one of the arks of the Labour covenant, combining effective delivery with everlasting principle. As such, it was as relevant as ever it had been and should remain inviolate, unbetrayed.[3]

However, the Tribunites were not always agreed on all policy issues, economic or otherwise. There were divisions—for instance, over Europe and the Arab-Israeli conflict. Individual members also felt more strongly about some issues than others, and pursued them to an extent and in a manner that sometimes irritated others. For instance, one member's pursuit of the campaign against the government's refusal to condemn the war in Vietnam, to the point where she wore badges proclaiming *Victory to the Vietcong,* incurred the anger of fellow members, who regarded such a response as both over-emotional and tactically mistaken. The Tribunites were also divided in their attitude to Harold Wilson, the Labour leader. Many regarded him as a two-faced betrayer, others as a basically decent man who was at least better than anyone else in the running to replace him.

It is also interesting to note that the Tribune Group was not exactly egalitarian when it came to relations with the Labour left outside parliament. Though it bore the same name as Britain's left-wing weekly newspaper, it did not control or coordinate the activities of its readers and sympathisers throughout the extraparliamentary party. But this was not through want of trying: while someone like Eric Heffer objected to elitism, 'the need for a vanguard in the struggle' was for him, as it was for his heroes Rosa Luxemburg and Eugène Debs, 'a different matter' (Heffer 1991:59). Nor was there any lack of awareness on the part of the Group that its claim to such a role depended partly on demonstrating in parliamentary votes against the government the courage of its convictions—something which was being called increasingly into question by the extra-parliamentary left, either because of its frustration at the lack of practical action at Westminster or because it provided more 'proof of the inevitable and inherent bankruptcy of the Labour Party as a vehicle for socialism. It is clear from the Groups minutes that, by the summer of 1967, its members were concerned that they were losing credibility with, and their control over, sympathisers outside parliament—even, God forbid, to the extent that in elections to the party's National Executive they were daring to nominate and vote for ordinary constituency members rather than MPs! There was nothing for it but to create more problems for the government than ever and hope that the attendant notoriety would rescue their reputation with the rank and file.

The hierarchs

The calculating aspect of the Tribune Group's behaviour was predictably most offensive to those in the PLP who were most hierarchical.[4] Their objections to dissent *per se* were reinforced by a widespread feeling that the dissenters were playing to the gallery (i.e. the party outside parliament). This stored up trouble in the constituencies for those who did

not appear to be defending party principles so strongly, whether out of choice or, as most claimed, out of a sense of loyalty to the leadership. For some this resentment was reinforced by the social (and to some extent generational) tensions in the PLP that were due in part to the influx of younger, better educated Labour MP's borne into parliament on the tide of the party's impressive general election victory of 1966. But it was also bound up with a genuinely held belief that those at the top had the right to lead. As one Tribunite interviewed remembered of his non-Tribunite colleagues in the PLP:

> They were all for discipline. They were all for—having taken a vote—everybody then solidly agreeing with it and never expressing any public opposition to anything and, if you did, you were out. The attitude to me was more or less 'who do you think you are? These men are cabinet ministers; they must know best.'
>
> (from confidential interview)

Despite the force of this 'backwoodsmen's backlash' against egalitarian troublemaking on the part of Labour's 'social democratic centralists' (*see* Shaw 1988), it is not really possible, without doing violence to reality, to identify a precise counterpart to the Tribune Group on the right of the PLP. The Trade Union Group of Labour MPs, for example, was often cast as the bastion of all things hierarchical; but it was by no means as solid or influential as some imagined, not least because its rules of membership meant that it included some MPs who had only the most tenuous connections with the union movement, while others who had a far better claim to such connections were not able to attend. Especially after 1966, when ranks were swelled by Labour's near-landslide victory and as Wilson conscientiously maintained his policy of promoting trade unionists to minor government posts on the 'Buggins turn principle, its importance and cohesion (ideological and otherwise) began to wane—even to the extent that it played only a secondary role in the parliamentary campaign against *In Place of Strife*.

Nor is it really possible (though *see* Piper 1974:390) to maintain that the intellectual, so-called 'revisionist' right formed a consistent, countervailing faction—even if many of them did continue to meet monthly (much to the concern of Wilson) under the auspices of the sixty to seventy strong '1963 Club' set up to commemorate the death of Wilsons predecessor, Hugh Gaitskell. In fact that event had helped to create a division (though by no means a simple or consistent one) between that part of the PLP right who were generally regarded as more pragmatic and more deeply rooted in the Labour movement, and that part which was considered less so. And at a lower level the formation of a factional bloc of hierarchs was obstructed by the sort of persistent anti-intellectualism and class-consciousness of many MPs that Desai (1994), for example, holds partly responsible for the failure of Labour's 'Social Democrats' to establish complete cultural hegemony in the party. If hierarchs in the PLP shared a cultural bias, then, it was not (at least not to the extent that it was among the egalitarians) reinforced by their membership of a single sub-group. In any case sub-groups would have undermined the prior claim on an MP's loyalty by the PLP as a whole.

But this is not to suggest that the hierarchs were not important. The point is that they were so predominant that they not only disapproved of so-called faction, they had no need

of it: to a large extent they *were* the PLP. At the top were the hundred and twenty or so Labour MPs 'in' the government, a status which not only limited the opportunity to express independent or dissident views in public, but which also (at least on the evidence of personal diaries of former 'left-wingers' brought into the government) actually made it less likely over time that they were held in private. Ministerial and even lower-ranking office, especially in a system which clung to the notion of collective responsibility, created a small world dominated by watertight divisions of responsibility which must be widely respected and distinctions based on the 'rank' associated with each post occupied. At the bottom were those for whom party discipline was an almost subconscious article of faith and for whom support for the leadership and its prerogatives was regarded almost as a *raison d'être*. Anyone who reads through the transcripts of the interviews with (mainly backbench) Labour MPs carried out in the spring of 1967 for Robert Putnam's classic study of élite political culture (Putnam 1973) is struck by the premium placed on loyalty to leaders by the overwhelming majority of respondents.[5]

True, many of the loyalists in Putnam's sample mentioned the fact that loyalty was 'reciprocal', 'a two-way street' and that it could not be 'blind'—a stress on ultimate mutual obligation which one would expect from hierarchs and which for some was reinforced by the belief that letting down the party and its voters outside parliament too often would threaten morale, activism and, ultimately, electoral success. But the same MPs nonetheless insisted that there were occasions, particularly if the party were under severe external attack, when what would normally have been regarded as more or less healthy criticism had to stop, times when the benefit of the doubt simply had to be given to a government that, by and large, tried to be sensitive to its supporters, but which in the end knew more about the situation and therefore about what was and was not 'realistic'—in short, a classically hierarchical insistence that 'the government must govern'. This is in stark contrast with the understandably small number of egalitarian MPs in Putnam's sample for whom loyalty was contingent on the government living up to the legitimate expectations and lasting ideals of its extra-parliamentary supporters, not simply coming up with excuses sufficient to persuade its rank and file in the House of Commons of its allegedly good intentions.

Hierarchs were distinguishable from egalitarians in terms of their views on policy as well as party management. Again a clear example is provided by views on welfare, or more specifically by the drift toward 'selective' rather than universal welfare which in practice occurred under the Labour government of 1964–70. This had the tacit (and in some cases explicit) support of the hierarchical majority in the PLP, despite the fact that it appeared to run contrary to Labour tradition, the views of its extra-parliamentary membership, and even personal experience on the part of some Labour MPs of the indignities of the household means test of the 1930s. Such support was forthcoming because targeting welfare, rather than providing it irrespective of a test of means, dovetailed with a belief that treating all equally refused to recognise the inevitable differences between people. By insisting on a high standard for everyone universal welfare was expensive at a time when resources were tight. Savings had to be made. Those not in real need should go without for the greater good, leaving enough for those who really were deserving cases and who could be exempted and picked out from the undeserving using complex administrative

distinctions policed by experts. Times had moved on and both principles and practice had to adjust accordingly.

The individualists

Many of the hierarchical arguments against universal welfare struck a chord with the PLP's handful of individualists. To them the egalitarians' clinging to universalism was a mark of their characteristic combination of innocence and a willingness to pursue the policies of the past even where they were failing to deliver results for those in need, stifling incentives for those who weren't, and causing the government to live beyond its means. Universal welfare, according to this line of reasoning, stood for a view of human nature that was hopelessly naive and yet also morally corrupting—giving something for nothing not only meant that you would sooner or later run out of it, but also actively discouraged those who could and should stand on their own two feet. In short, universalism, to use the terms employed by Hirschmann (1991:7), was considered both 'perverse' and 'futile'.

Perversity and futility were also concepts used by the PLP's individualists when it came to questions of party management and especially party leadership. Harold Wilson, Labours Prime Minister, had at first proved useful to the party. Now, however, he was a liability—not least because he seemed unable to provide convincingly 'the smack of firm government' which the markets, the country (and a fair few hierarchs within the PLP) appeared to be crying out for. The obvious answer was to ditch him and get someone who could. The PLP's individualists were not in favour of strict discipline *per se:* indeed they rather admired the way Wilson, in the early years, had managed to pull the party together by performing well, keeping everyone busy, playing all sides off against each other and constructing elaborate personal networks. They also prided themselves on their ability to kick against the pricks, speak their mind and—as famously occurred over the nationalisation of steel where two maverick members of the PLP managed to blackmail the government into a climbdown—get results. On the other hand, if strict discipline (particularly of the egalitarian section) was what was called for, then the government should go for it. The bottom line was a Labour administration seen to be capable of delivering rising prosperity and keeping its own house in order. Whatever preserved the bottom line simply had to be done—the battle slogans that may have proved useful in the past could not be allowed to constrain room for manoeuvre in the present and the future.

The fatalists

So much for the three 'active ways of life'. What of Cultural Theory's infamous fatalists, those who are done to rather than those who do? We are used to assuming that they make up a large part of the population at large, having little sense of their own potential or efficacy, individual or collective. Surely they could not have enjoyed much of a presence among the parliamentary representation of a party whose very origins lay in a rejection of such impotence? On the other hand, of course, we are used, in parliamentary terms, to the idea of 'lobby-fodder'—representatives whose loyalty to the wider group is so taken

for granted that they no longer really feel it, people whose limited talents prevent them from standing out against convention, but who are unlikely to seek (or indeed be offered) insulation from the demands of the dominant majority by membership of a subgroup. Evidence from the PLP seems to indicate, perhaps unsurprisingly, that such people did exist and in very great numbers, but that for all but a small minority fatalism was a contingent rather than a permanent condition, and one which was associated with an absence of views, rather than any particular view, on policy matters.

Undoubtedly there were those Labour MPs who joined forever the ranks of 'the drop-outs [...] the drifting political flotsam of Westminster' who 'lapse into lobby fodder, depression and a wide range of psychosomatic illnesses' (Abse 1973: 71). But fatalism was a condition which many seemed to fall into and out of, depending more than anything else on the perceived electoral chances of the party. For example, many of the PLP's new intake borne into parliament by Labour's victory in 1966 were perceived (fairly accurately) as being younger, better-educated, more impatient and more assertive than previous cohorts. They were therefore vulnerable, once they discovered how little real influence they actually had in the PLP or the government, to rapid disillusionment—unless of course they could be persuaded that, however frustrating the wait, their time would come. The problem after 1967 was that it became common wisdom that Labour could not win the next election and therefore that they—or at least the majority who had not been elected to 'safe' (i.e. impregnable) seats—had no future. The result was that many just began to go through the motions, turning up for roll-call votes when required, but feeling little or no loyalty to colleagues or the leadership. The time of those who could be bothered was spent securing work outside the House for when the inevitable defeat finally occurred, the only alternatives being to join the frantic (but ultimately feeble) efforts to get a fresh start by deposing Wilson as leader or to move toward the egalitarian Tribune Group in order to make a name for themselves and thereby, it was hoped, boost their chances of selection for a safer seat next time around.

Those who had fallen into fatalism were therefore a potential resource for the other ways of life. Few, however, were persuaded of the wisdom (or more often of the point) of joining the egalitarians or the alliance of individualists and extreme hierarchs who plotted to overthrow what they regarded as the flabby leadership. This scepticism did not, of course, rule out the odd instance of spiteful defiance carried out in order to 'teach the leadership' a lesson—indeed that, in part at least, was the object of resistance to *In Place of Strife*. But activity in such institutions as the regular party meetings or the party's specialist subject committees declined precipitously, much to the dismay of party managers who regarded them quite explicitly as potential means of incorporating those for whom no place could yet be found in the government 'payroll vote'. However, though those institutions never really recovered before 1970, there was a palpable sense in which, once the government (recognising the ultimate power of its backbench supporters) backed down over trade union reform and began once again to look capable of winning the next election, many of those who had fallen into fatalism began to come back in from the cold. The revival (however reluctantly arrived at) of mutual obligation, and the fact that (apparently as a direct result of its somewhat masochistic, longtermist economic policies beginning to pay off) the leadership was now offering backbenchers a fighting chance of

survival, served to reinvigorate group consciousness, thereby reincorporating many into the hierarchy.

Conclusion

Britain's Parliamentary Labour party in the 1960s contained within in it all four of Cultural Theory's ways of life. It was predominantly hierarchical, but also had a significant minority of egalitarians who, in return for providing a useful reminder of the essential ideals of the party and evidence that they were not utterly ignored within its parliamentary delegation, were able to 'contract out' from the dispiriting responsibility for compromise and accommodation with the wider world. But while the PLP was to a large extent an alliance, however conflictual, between these two ways of life, there were a handful of maverick individualists, some of whom—cabinet diarist Dick Crossman being the most famous example—were in the leadership, others of whom were straight-talking thorns in the leadership's side. Fatalism, although a permanent condition for very few, was a temporary state of mind for many. Whether its cultural bias had much substantive meaning beyond bitterness, despair and disengagement is a moot point. For the other three, so-called active' ways of life, however, it appears that organisational practices were correlated with disciplinary and policy attitudes, allowing us to predict why and how fights about what the party should stand for almost inevitably turn into fights about how it should run itself.

The main purpose of this chapter was to show that Cultural Theory's seemingly abstract typology may have some relevance—and therefore some explanatory and predictive potential—in one of the 'real worlds' with which political science routinely concerns itself. However, it is also incumbent on anyone making even the *prima facie* case for the use of a novel approach to suggest how it 'adds value' to current approaches. The following is an initial attempt to do just that, using, for the sake of convenience, the example of the egalitarians who have—for reasons both of authorial interest and clear comparative advantage in terms of available sources—already occupied most of our attention.

First, when it comes to value added, Cultural Theory teaches us that the organisational style of groups such as Tribune, even if judged ineffectual and even comic by conventional (i.e. hierarchical) standards, both made sense to and worked for very many of those involved: what Tribunites did was 'culturally rational'.

Second, if the links between cultural bias and ways of organising are as robust as they have been portrayed here, then we are now in a better position to specify the ideology and the institutional structure of a particular subsection of a particular party in a manner that facilitates prediction, retrodiction and comparison across time and space. When it comes to the Tribune Group, we would have been able to explain, for instance, the dilution in the 1970s of its left-wing politics as in part a function of its decision to open up its membership (*see* Brand 1992). We should also be in a good position to explain parallels or contrasts with superficially similar groups in other socialist/social democratic parties—something denied us by previous 'culturalist' studies of the Labour party, which, in addition to overstressing both the shared quality and the stability of its 'ethos' (Drucker

1979), see it as something so unique that only those steeped in 'Labour lore' can hope to understand it.

Moreover because a cultural bias like egalitarianism can encompass stances which we normally call 'left-wing' but is not, unlike such stances, ultimately the sum of various essentially time-bound issue positions, it should prevent us from rushing headlong into declaring 'the end of ideology'. In other words, Cultural Theory's typology is basically unaffected by the fact that the issues traditionally used to define political positions change over time. This is valuable analytically but also historically, in that it encourages a healthy scepticism: for instance, Cultural Theory encourages us to take with a large pinch of salt claims by party leaders that they have 'modernised' their parties and 'transcended' the divisions of the past.

Third, and related, is the fact that Cultural Theory provides a fivefold typology rather than a two-winged continuum forces the analyst to account for the position and behaviour of that significant minority in any party who are not easy to pigeonhole, unless of course one is happy to file and forget them in the convenient (but arguably unrealistic) no-man's land that is the so-called centre.

Notes

1 References to original sources are heavily restricted here but available in full, in Bale 1999.

2 Foot perhaps had the potential to exercise what Cultural Theory sees as the 'charismatic' leadership that is often needed to facilitate collective action in egalitarian groups (*see* Ellis 1991 and Grimen, this volume). Interestingly, the main alternative to this 'substitute for authority in anti-authority organisations' (ibid.: 314) is schism, which, of course, is what occurred on the Left of the PLP in the early 1980s when it became clear that no mutually acceptable, charismatic leader would appear to hold together the Tribune and Campaign Groups (*see Seyd* 1987:165, 170).

3 Steve Rayner (1979) observed that the 'shrunken world' of extreme egalitarian groups compressed notions not just of space but of time: in so doing the heroes and deeds of old seemed as relevant as the challenges of the present and the future—in part because they provided guides for action that the groups, eschewing leadership, found it hard to provide themselves. Henry Drucker (1979:35) observed something very similar—though less extreme—in the Labour party.

4 Interestingly, there was often more tolerance among hierarchical MPs for those Tribunites whom they thought of as naive romantics—those who were 'Footish'—than for those like Ian Mikardo who were seen as clever, calculating and even a little sinister: ethical socialism', then, was irritating but acceptable; if it showed signs of organisation it became 'marxist' and therefore beyond the pale.

5 The author would like to thank Robert Putnam for giving him the chance to examine the manuscripts at Harvard in the summer of 1994.

6
A TROJAN HORSE IN THE DUTCH MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE
A cultural theory explanation of intra- and inter-departmental conflicts (and of why they sometimes disappear)

Jouke de Vries

Conflicts both within and between government departments are quite common, giving the lie to the formal theoretical argument that government policy is unitary. Most political and administrative scientists now agree that the state, in the conflictfree and smoothly integrated form promoted by formal theory, does not exist. Rather, we should speak of a complex network of government organisations; a network that, in turn, is related to numerous and varied organisations that are not formally part of government. These state organisations, which vary greatly in terms of size and means, certainly co-operate with one another, but these variations between them, together with the forces exerted through their relations with nongovernmental organisations, mean that long-term bureaucratic conflict—both within and between departments—is possible, if not inevitable.

This chapter focuses on an intra-departmental conflict which originated in the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Fisheries and which eventually gave rise to a much-publicised inter-departmental conflict between that ministry and the Department of the Environment (part of the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment).[1] After many years of severe difficulties—the Minister of Agriculture was eventually forced to resign—these conflicts have now disappeared. Those who lived through those troubled years are now amazed to see former enemies working together constructively, both within and between departments, on problems that are much the same as those which, a few years earlier, had had them at each other's throats.

There is, of course, no shortage of explanations for intra- and inter-departmental conflict—the bureaucratic and political model (Allison 1971; Rosati 1981; Gray and Jenkins 1985; Rosenthal 1988), for instance, and numerous public choice models (Downs 1967; Niskanen 1971; Dunleavy 1991)—but Cultural Theory, I will argue, does better than these. In particular, it accounts not just for the 'turf wars' themselves, but also for the learning process that those wars give rise to; a learning process that sometimes results in the disappearance of the conflict.

Fifteen years of conflict and its disappearance

Throughout the three or four decades following the end of the Second World War the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries was known as a well-organised ministry, and as one of the central actors within a solid policy community. There was an 'iron triangle', based

on the close relations between political specialists in the parliament, the ministry's civil servants and the representatives of various important interest groups (de Vries 1989). This triangular pattern has been labelled the 'neocorporatist model' (Schmitter 1974); nowadays the favoured term is policy community'. A policy community is comprised of a number of central participants and a number of more peripheral ones, all with the same interest in a functional area of governmental policy (Smith 1993). When there is consensus between the core executives of a policy community about policy goals and instruments there is a 'closed policy paradigm'. One consequence of a closed policy paradigm (though, as we will see, not necessarily a desirable consequence) is that the policy community's agenda is stable.[2]

This was the state of affairs that, by and large, prevailed in the Netherlands during the post-war decades. There was a broad consensus about policy goals and instruments, and this made the task of coordinating staff relatively easy. Ideas, ideologies and cultures generally, though little remarked upon (because they were so much shared and so little challenged), provided the crucial basis for coordination within and between the various government organisations. Even civil servants in remote parts of the country somehow knew what was expected of them (nicely described by Herbert Kaufman [1960] in his study of forest managers). Because of this closed policy paradigm, and its associated closely-knit policy community, intra- and inter-departmental conflicts were rare in this post-war period.

A closer look at the Ministry of Agriculture reveals a large and complex organisation, and it is helpful to distinguish between its top executives, its staff organisations, its policy divisions, and its various implementation agencies, as well as between its different departments. The policy divisions within the Ministry of Agriculture's departments prepared and implemented policy in cooperation with other agencies. They listened more closely to agricultural and fishing organisations than to politicians, who were often by-passed, doing little more than ratifying what had been agreed between the policy-makers and the representatives of the influential industry organisations. These bureaus, in effect, reflected the agricultural and fisheries sectors with which they dealt; 'regulatory capture', as it is sometimes called. In the process, the department's legal division amassed considerable power, with many of the central figures within the organisation coming from this division.

The first problems for the policy community—and for the department as a central actor within that community—appeared in the early 1980s when some serious environmental consequences of what had been seen until then as successful policies became evident; over-fishing, for instance, and over-production (leading, in turn, to what became known as 'the manure problem'). Budgetary constraints, which were imposed around that time, helped focus attention elsewhere, as did the homogenous cultural climate that accompanied the community's closed policy paradigm. Had that paradigm not been so closed the policy community could have been much more aware of these environmental problems (pro-active, even), and of the increased attention they were receiving in the wider Dutch society, where the environment was being pushed ever higher up the political agenda. The result was that activist 'single-issue' movements increasingly criticised the closed agricultural community, while the negative consequences of

previously uncontested policies, unattended to by those whose responsibility they were, became ever more clear and ever more politicised. In other words, the neocorporatist system, undermined by the lack of openness of the policy paradigm that sustained it, was breaking down.

The tension that had been ignored for so long by the policy community was a very general one; the value-clash between economic growth (in this case, agricultural and fisheries production) and environmental protection. However, within another ministry—the Ministry of Culture, Recreation and Social Work—this tension had not been ignored, because environmental protection was absolutely central to one of the departments within that ministry: Natural Resources. Indeed, there was a long history of inter-departmental conflict within the Ministry of Culture that was clearly recognised as having its origins in this value-clash with Natural Resources taking the environmental protection side, and the other departments the economic growth side. As environmental concern in Holland mounted, so the embattled position of the Ministry of Agriculture worsened and the internal difficulties at the Ministry of Culture were compounded. In 1982 the newly formed government decided that something would have to be done. It hit on the ingenious solution of killing both birds with a single stone by transferring the Department of Natural Resources from the Ministry of Culture to the Ministry of Agriculture.

It was not, on the face of it, a major re-organisation. It involved the transfer of just 270 civil servants (into a ministry that totalled 12,000) and the top executives of the Ministry of Agriculture decided that integration would be best served by dispersing the newcomers between its existing departments, rather than by creating a new one. They would, however, include 'Natural Resources' in the ministry's name. In the event, a number of Natural Resources 'units' were created across the ministry, and Mr Prillevitz (who had been the head of Natural Resources in the Ministry of Culture) protested that his people were being 'housed by the enemy (*NRC Handelsblad,* 1 August 1990).

The 'enemy', as might be expected, did everything they could to neutralise this tiny (and now dispersed) band of environmental protectors. They were subjected to almost continuous re-organisation and transfer over a seven-year period, and direct contact between their senior employees and those in lower positions was strictly forbidden. Yet, despite these measures (indeed, to a considerable extent, because of them) Natural Resources turned out to be the Trojan horse. Their treatment within the Ministry of Agriculture served only to confirm Mr Prillevitz's ominous prediction, forcing them to rely on one another even more than had been the case when they were in the Ministry of Culture, and accentuating the already discernible divide between the soft, vulnerable 'us' and the nasty predatory 'them'. In Cultural Theory terms, they found themselves moved sharply 'up-group' and 'down-grid'. And, like their Greek counterparts, they enjoyed strong support from those outside the city walls: the active and the not-so-active members of the civil society who were becoming increasingly aware of the parlous state of the environment and of the contributions that agricultural and fisheries policies were making to that parlous state.

Culturally cohesive and, in effect, concealed from those in whose midst they had been placed, they easily overcame the obstacles that had been put in their way and set about what they clearly saw to be their task, mobilising their contacts with the media and encouraging

members of parliament to question their political bosses. But, though this was what was going on, it was not apparent, any more than the Trojans could see what was going on inside that wooden horse that they had wheeled into their central square. When it *did* become apparent it was in just one rather special agency of the Ministry of Agriculture, the General Inspection Agency.

The General Inspection Agency is a cross-cutting agency whose task is to monitor regulations instituted by the ministry. Its divisions monitor policy in fisheries, agriculture, livestock and the environment. The environmental division, for instance, has focused on the importation of endangered plants and animal species—a task that takes staff away from their desks and into the outside world. Their inspectors and controllers, therefore, are 'street-level bureaucrats' (Lipsky 1980) and most of them have come from the sectors they were subsequently given the task of monitoring. During the 'successful' era of agricultural and fisheries policies these inspectors sometimes, and with the knowledge of their ministry heads, looked the other way. Had they not looked the other way, the iron triangle would have been placed under serious strain.

Since 'success' and strain-avoidance are two sides of the policy community coin, strain can only be imposed from the outside, and this is what happened. The General Inspection Agency first ran into problems when it was forced, as a consequence of European Union policy, to monitor Dutch fishermen more closely. The inspectors, who up until then had had an excellent (read 'cosy') relationship with the fishermen, found that they could no longer look away at the right moment, and this disturbed their hitherto unruffled dealings with the fishermen, and put them in a police role that they found uncomfortable.

Not long after this, a second crisis emerged, in the Environmental Division. The members of this division—newly created, following the arrival of Natural Resources in the ministry—had the impression that they were not being taken seriously within the General Investigation Agency. Time and again, this small group of civil servants ignored bureaucratic rules in their efforts to achieve their goal—the apprehension of dealers in endangered plants and animals—and they carried these activities further than the directors of the General Investigation Agency wished them to go. These senior figures, long-immersed in the procedural and rule-respecting culture of the Ministry of Agriculture, were not used to this sort of behaviour—behaviour that was so out of line with the ways of doing things that were part-and-parcel of that Ministry's post-war 'success'. These 'street-level' civil servants collected information and assembled dossiers for journalists, they approached academics to write accounts of the situation, they mobilised the World Wildlife Fund (by approaching its chairman, Prince Bernard) and they leaked much of this sensitive material to the media. The legitimacy of the system of which they were but one small part declined steeply when a major Dutch news programme presented an extensive report.

This, however, was only the beginning, and the trouble soon spread from the General Inspection Agency to the very centre of the ministry. News coverage of fisheries policy, which was highly critical of the cosy relationship between the ministry and the industry it was supposed to be regulating, precipitated a political crisis. Parliament instigated a fisheries investigation (in 1987) and the minister promised better conduct. When, three years later, after a second fisheries investigation, it became clear that fishing quotas were

still not being enforced, the minister, Mr G Braks, lost his parliamentary support and was forced to resign.

Mr Braks' resignation was a profound shock to the ministry and forced a major review at the highest levels. For as long as the various crises were not taken seriously, the ministry had been split into two warring camps, each hell-bent on getting rid of the other; but, after the resignation, this unconstructive polarisation changed, and the long period of strife gave way to a process of mutual understanding. That there have been profound changes is now quite clear—one civil servant, who had worked in the Veterinary Agency since shortly after the war, told us that he barely recognised it—both he and the department 'had made a somersault'. What these changes *are,* however, is less clear.

After the resignation, different solutions had been chosen in dealing with intra-and inter-departmental problems. An ambitious general reorganisation—called Operation Swallow, aimed at transforming relations between the ministry and rural areas—was initiated at the highest level. The crux of Operation Swallow was that the ministry would now take serious account of critical signals it had in the past ignored. Civil servants were required to co-operate with other ministries, and the question of how to reconcile economic growth and environmental protection was moved centre-stage. There was a clear perception that the very existence of the Ministry of Agriculture was at stake, and that senior executives needed to develop a new style (both within their own ministry and in their relations with others) if it was to survive. One consequence of this was that a new Inter Departmental Bureau (between Agriculture and the Environment) was formed, with the express task of solving 'the manure problem' in the south of the country.

Another solution was the setting up of an exchange programme for senior civil servants between the two ministries. One of the explicit aims of this programme was that the civil servants learn about one another's cultures. Employees of the Department of the Environment, it emerged, considered Agriculture to be a closed organisation with relatively few responsibilities. Employees of the Department of Agriculture, for their part, saw Environment as an open organisation with all kinds of autonomous bureaus. Seventy civil servants took part in this exchange programme, each learning about ways of doing things that were different from those with which they were familiar. By the time the programme was eventually discontinued, a great many structural adjustments had been put in place. It was on these new foundations that the traditional bureaucracy was re-erected.

Traditional explanations and their shortcomings

Existing explanations for departmental conflict are of two types: those that focus on changes in the departmental environment and those that focus on the self-interest of the civil servants within the departments.

- *Environmental* explanations are often based on the contingency argument: when there is societal conflict that conflict will also be found within and between departments. Alternatively, a departments failure to reflect wider conflicts may eventually result in disruptive internal strife. This latter is the sort of explanation we have, to some

extent, adopted. For decades the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture was part of a close-knit policy community, in which the central actors formed an 'iron triangle' that rendered it impervious to external changes. By the 1980s, however, the external changes had built up to such a level that they could no longer be ignored and, once they had got inside the department, the policy community was transformed into a disharmonious network with a culture that was no longer homogenous.

- *Self-interest* explanations see conflicts as resulting, not from outside turbulence, but from civil servants' efforts to maximise their budgets and to secure for themselves (or, rather, for their administrative units) as much authority and autonomy as they can. In this way, administrative divisions inevitably, and regardless of what might be happening in the wider environment, come into conflict in 'turf wars'. The bureaucratic politics model (Rosenthal 1988) pins down the consequence of this pervasive ego-centred behaviour within an organisational structure that, if it is to work in accordance with its design principles, will have to be staffed by people who will subordinate themselves to the demands of the structure of which they are the selfless parts.

Environmental explanations make an explicit place for ideology and culture; the profound value-conflict, for instance, between economic growth and environ mental protection that caused such havoc once the Trojan horse had got inside the Ministry of Agriculture. Self-interest explanations are, on the face of it, non-ideological and acultural—people act rationally in the pursuit of their self-evident interests and, as long as certain structural conditions are satisfied,[3] the result is intra- and inter-departmental conflict. However, by not asking how it is that people who act in their interest come to *know* where the interest they act in lies, these explanations themselves become deeply imbued with the ideological and cultural factors that they appear to have excluded. These explanations, in insisting that man is irredeemably self-seeking, are imposing just one social construction of human nature—the individualist construction—and then trying to explain the plurality from one position within it. In other words, these forms of explanation are themselves in need of explanation!

- If man is incurably self-seeking, which the self-interest explanations insist (but which would be bitterly resisted by those who speak from the egalitarian or hierarchical solidarities), then how come all those bureaucrats find themselves operating in a structure that is designed on the assumption that man is not everywhere and always self-seeking?
- And, if value-conflicts are part-and-parcel of the wider society, how is it that they are absent (except for the occasional infection from outside) from the administrative organisations that are embedded within that wider society?

These shortcomings of the traditional explanations are most evident when it comes to the sort of learning that, as we have seen with the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, sometimes results in the disappearance of intra- and inter-departmental conflict. If man, regardless of the organisational setting he has built for himself, is incapable of selflessness then turf wars

will go on and on breaking out, and none of them will ever be resolved in the way those within the Ministry of Agriculture (and between it and the Ministry of the Environment) were resolved. And, if value-conflicts always wing their way in from outside, then the sort of inter-cultural learning that was achieved by the Dutch exchange programme (which, of course, required that the cultural differences that generate value-conflicts be present *within* these administrative structures) would not be possible. My argument, of course, is that Cultural Theory allows us to make good these shortcomings of the traditional approaches.

The learning problem

Cultural Theory warns us to expect that, though some voices may be muted and others loud, all the types of solidarity will be found within any of the set-ups we call organisations. Within a ministry, with all its departments and levels, all its fine distinctions of rank and all its complex rulings as to who has the right to do what and to whom, we may expect the hierarchical solidarity to be dominant, and the others to have less legitimacy but making their presence felt nevertheless. That turf wars break out from time to time, in pretty much the way predicted by public choice theory, shows us that individualism is not absent. Fatalism, too, can never be eliminated; indeed the minister himself, having promised the earth and delivered nothing for three years, and finding himself with neither the support of his personal network in Parliament nor the loyalty of his civil servants, provides a textbook example. However, the emphasis on group within administrative organisations means that the strongest challenger to hierarchy is likely to be egalitarianism —not the fully-fledged egalitarianism that gives us 'rejectionist fronts' but the moderating version (like the periodic invocation of the early Christian church by hair-shirt clerics) that seeks to bring an over-indulgent and over-complex whole back into line. We can summarise this sort of value-tension, and its associated divergences in behaviour, in Table 6.1.

These distinctions give us a nice handle on the various conflicts within the Ministry of Agriculture (and between it and the Ministry of the Environment) and they encourage us to make a number of Cultural Theory propositions.

1 Intra-and inter-departmental conflicts can be clashes, not just of interests, but also of cultural biases.
2 The different solidarities within a bureaucracy lead to different myths of nature and different policy proposals.
3 A dominant hierarchical solidarity, faced with an egalitarian challenge, will seek to eliminate the challenge through reorganisations and personnel procedures.
4 Egalitarian challengers will seek to undermine the hierarchical solidarity by working with politicians and leaking to the media.
5 The relative numerical strengths of the solidarities is not decisive; it is the size of the surprise that matters.

Table 6.1 Value-tensions between solidarities and associated divergences in behaviour

Hierarchical solidarity	*Egalitarian solidarity*
• Bureaucrats subscribe to the primacy of politics	• Bureaucrats are political
• Bureaucrats do not maintain contacts with politicians	• Bureaucrats maintain (and use) contacts with politicians
• Bureaucrats' actions should not create political problems for the minister	• The goals to be achieved are paramount and the minister must accept that
• Problems are solved through the line	• Problems are solved through political strife
• Bureaucrats don't wash their dirty linen in public	• Bureaucrats will foul their own nest
• Only 'authorised' media leaks occur	• Unauthorised media leaks also possible

6 Conflicts, and their attendant surprises, can lead to mutual awareness, mutual respect and learning through inter-solidarity dialogue.

I will conclude by briefly revisiting the case in terms of these six propositions.

Proposition 1

That the Ministry of Agriculture was interested in economic growth whilst the Ministry of the Environment was interested in environmental protection was clear enough in the early stages of the conflict, but the Ministry of Agriculture is now interested in the reconciliation of what used to be its exclusive interest with what used to be the Ministry of the Environment 's exclusive interest. In other words, there is nothing self-evident about an organisations interests, and when it *looks* as if there is it is because one solidarity has (for a time) become dominant within that organisation. What this means is that the prevalent assumption—one organisation, one culture—is not valid. Nor is it safe to assume that, though things will be culturally plural within a bureaucracy, the hierarchical solidarity will always predominate. Many policy directorates within the Ministry of Agriculture, for instance, had an individualistic cultural bias that was pretty much the same as that which was dominant within the industrial sectors they were representing at the governmental level.

These individualistic civil servants subscribed to the myth of Nature Benign: economic growth and technological innovation, they were convinced, would take care of environmental problems. Their expression of this cultural bias, however, was limited by the hierarchical leanings of some very influential staff divisions: Legal Affairs, for instance. Where the policy divisions were drawn into the market relationships that characterised the sectors they were responsible for, Legal Affairs was close to political office holders and higher-level civil servants. Its staff, having been trained in state and administrative law, were particularly well equipped for operating in a hierarchical setting, which probably

explains why they were so successful, as many of the leading bureaucrats within these close-to-government units having begun their careers in Legal Affairs. These civil servants subscribed to the primacy of politics and spared no effort in keeping their minister out of difficulties. Problems, they insisted, were to be solved internally, and the unauthorised leaking of information to the media was unacceptable.

As one moves away from this hierarchical core, other patterns of social relations become possible. In the case of the policy divisions, their closeness to the sectors they were charged with representing, together with the high level of discretion that they enjoyed during the post-war decades, encouraged an individualist pattern, but their counterparts within the Ministry of the Environment moved away from hierarchy in a more egalitarian direction. For instance, the civil servants in Natural Resources (whose eventual transfer to the Ministry of Agriculture caused such havoc) were not dealing with respectable, self-employed farmers and fishermen; they were dealing with criminals! Enjoying a high degree of autonomy within the ministry, and drawing a sharp boundary between a virtuous 'us' and a criminal 'them', they were probably pretty egalitarian in their relationships, culture and behaviour even before they were transferred to the Ministry of Agriculture. Certainly, they wore different (more informal) clothes—which marked them out, once they found themselves in the Ministry of Agriculture, and made it easier for their new hosts to 'ghettoize' them—and they were already accustomed to bending the rules in order to achieve their enforcement goals. In other words, they were egalitarian before they got into their Trojan horse. Had they not been, and had had to unlearn one way of behaving and learn another, they might not have been so effective in mobilising influential political figures and in leaking sensitive information to the media.

Proposition 2

That different solidarities within a bureaucracy give rise to different perceptions and to different policy proposals is evident in the ways in which the individualists and hierarchists within the Ministry of Agriculture came to grips with the issue of environmental protection. Within the individualistic policy division, their myth of Nature Benign disposed them against recognising an environmental problem, and even when they did get round to recognising it they saw its solution as built into the sorts of market activities they were already promoting. For hierarchists to admit that there is a problem that is not being attended to is to admit to lessthan-total control, and this, according to Cultural Theorists, is something hierarchists will be reluctant to do. Their initial reaction is likely to be denial. Then, if the issue does not go away, they will claim that it is in fact under control, all the while quietly making the changes needed to actually bring it under control (like swans: all smooth and serene on the surface and all hell going on underneath). This is pretty much what those in the hierarchical core of the Ministry of Agriculture did. At first they denied the problem and then, when the issue became polarised to the point of causing serious difficulties for their minister, they 'adjusted' it into their existing concerns by proposing an integration of the environment with agriculture: sustainable development, as it is now called. This did require them to change their perceptions and policy proposals, and in this they were ahead of their individualistic colleagues.

Until the transfer of Natural Resources, and the introduction of Operation Swallow, there had been very little contact between the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of the Environment, and so it is not surprising that, as the Smit-Kroes Committee (the committee that investigated the whole affair) concluded, the cultures of the two ministries were very different. Agriculture thought in terms of numbers and production targets; Environment in terms of concepts and visions. Communication, in consequence, was difficult and the struggle between agri-business and nature conservation had a long history, culminating in open conflict of the early 1980s. The decision to transfer Natural Resources, so far as these ministries were concerned, came out of the blue. The reaction within Environment was one of anger and disappointment: everything they had built up over the years was seen as being destroyed by this decision. So there was aversion between the employees of Agriculture and the members of Natural Resources from the start, and this aversion led to daily friction, often of a very petty kind. For instance, the Natural Resources people (who had been dispersed between divisions) were forbidden to have coffee-making machines and refrigerators in their offices, and Ministry of the Environment officials placed a preservation order on a tree in the Ministry of Agriculture's inner-courtyard that was about to be cut down.

Proposition 3

That the dominant hierarchical solidarity would attempt to eliminate the minority egalitarian solidarity appears to be true, with the proviso that it was both hierarchists and individualists who initially tried to do this. The official report of the Smit-Kroes Committee (1992) reveals that there were at least seven reorganisations of Natural Resources over a seven-year period. Both hierarchical and individualist actors saw these reorganisations as necessary to improve the integration of traditional agricultural policy with environmental and natural resource policy. The egalitarian actors told the committee that the reorganisations were aimed at destroying their culture and policy stance, their director, Mr Prillevitz, saying outright that they had been subsumed by the enemy. But these reorganisations did nothing to cool the hot water that was lapping around the responsible politicians' feet—indeed, the single-issue organisations turned up the heat with their increasingly strident criticisms of the agricultural policy community. Nor did these reorganisations succeed in breaking up the egalitarian solidarity of this troublesome minority whose Trojan horse was now firmly inside the city gates!

Proposition 4

That the egalitarian solidarity will readily engage in unauthorised leaking of information, while the hierarchical solidarity will not, is certainly true. Had the Natural Resources people not had the means and the will to leak sensitive information they would never have been able to climb out of their Trojan horse. They clearly had important and extensive contacts, and the endless reorganisations they were subjected to had the unforeseen consequence of making it almost impossible for those, the hierarchists, who were trying to plug the leaks to distinguish between whistleblowers and troublemakers (the latter of

course, if identified, could be drastically disciplined). One journalist who investigated the crisis at the department has since revealed that Natural Resources civil servants were continually trying to raise the political temperature by leaking information to him. That they were successful in this, and that the hierarchists were not able to plug the leaks or discipline the leakers, is clear enough, which brings us to the fifth proposition: that it is not numerical strength but the scale of the surprise that matters.

Proposition 5

The Cultural Theory argument is that interest explanations, and explanations that rely on external value-conflicts 'infecting' governmental organisations, fail to identify the prime mover behind the phenomena they are striving to make sense of. That prime mover is the dynamic interplay of the various solidarities, both within and outside the governmental organisations, and the power that these solidarities are able to exercise is rooted not just in their interests but in the cultural biases that they both sustain and are themselves upheld by. If traditional explanations can take no account of this important source of power then they should give way to Cultural Theory.

The Natural Resources civil servants numbered just 270, whilst the ministry into which they were transferred was more than 12,000 strong. This egalitarian minority, moreover, was dispersed throughout the various units of the Ministry of Agriculture and then continually reorganised over a seven-year period. Nor, unlike so many of the units in which they found themselves housed and harassed, did they represent any economic interests in the wider world. Yet, against all those odds, they won the cultural battle! Solidarities, and the cultural biases that are so central to them, are the switchmen of history, tipping things this way or that, not by brute strength, but by harnessing the momentum of their opponents. The Ministry of Agriculture's 'iron triangle'—based, we can now see, on the alliance of the hierarchical and individualistic solidarities and the exclusion of the egalitarian solidarity—had for decades insulated itself from many of the cultural changes within the wider society and, in the process, locked itself into policies that were increasingly piling up more problems (manure, for instance) than they solved. A little unexpected push, from the egalitarian solidarity that it had for so long ignored, was all that was needed to topple this 'iron triangle', and that is exactly what happened. In the space of a few months the Ministry of Agricul ture was changed from a producers' department to a consumers' department.

Proposition 6

Can organisations learn from their mistakes? Better still, can they make themselves reflexive enough to identify the surprises that are brewing and thereby make the changes that are needed before they are so disruptively forced upon them? Traditional explanations say, to both questions, 'No, they can't'; Cultural Theory says 'Yes, they can' in answer to the first question and 'yes, they could' in answer to the second. The Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of the Environment certainly learnt from the surprising events that swept over them, and it is possible, that, thanks to that learning, they will now

be able to change themselves before they are themselves changed. How this surprise-anticipating form of learning can be institutionalised is the main theme of the final chapter in this volume; here, since it was most certainly not institutionalised in these Dutch ministries, I must restrict myself to just the first kind of learning.

In the early stages of the conflict the cultural plurality was certainly there, but the dominant alliance of hierarchy and individualism refused to recognise it. Only when things got so bad that the minister was forced to resign did the dialogue with the hitherto excluded egalitarian culture begin. By then the crisis was so deep that we cannot say that the decision to engage in dialogue emerged from within the effected ministries; it was, to some extent, forced on them (in the case of the Ministry of Agriculture, with an unspoken threat of being done away with). But the crucial point is that the dialogue *did* happen: a mutual understanding that until then had not existed came into existence. There have been changes—massive changes—as a result of this learning process. Policy directorates have now acquired many characteristics that hitherto were found only in the egalitarian solidarity, and the ministry itself has disengaged from producers and opened itself up to the concerns of consumers (prominent among which, of course, is environ-mental protection). Whether the organisation has succeeded in 'internalising' the egalitarian cultural bias without, in the process, 'externalising' one or other of the biases that sustain the individualistic and hierarchical solidarities—the necessary conditions, Cultural Theorists argue, for reflexive learning—remains to be seen.

Notes

1 In this chapter I can only sketch the main features of this complicated and lengthy conflict. For a more detailed account *see* de Vries (1989) and Bekke, de Vries and Neelen (1994).
2 The neocorporatist model and the policy community, clearly, are not one and the same, but they are closely related. The policy community enables us to define the structural and cultural conditions that underpin the neocorporatist model (and, in so doing, opens the way for Cultural Theory which is a general theory of viable structural and cultural conditions).
3 These conditions are: a) Government (in the unitary, formal theory sense) does not exist; b) None of the groups has absolute power (otherwise there could not be a political struggle between them); c) There is severe competition between the groups. There is an implementation gap: implementation does not follow automatically from policy formation (as, for instance, was evident in the fisheries inspectors 'looking the other way').
4 Which, of course, is a direct expression of the hierarchical myth of Nature Perverse/Tolerant.

7
SOCIOCULTURAL FUNCTIONALISM[1]

Harald Grimen

Cultural Theory is intended to provide what Elster's criticism of the use of functional explanations in the social sciences demands: 'our theory of sociocultural viability can generate functional explanations [...] that meet Elster's five criteria (in doing this, it has provided the "sociological analogue to the theory of natural selection")' (Thompson, Ellis and Wildavsky 1990:203).[2] The theory contains elements of constructivism and functionalism,[3] Distinctive to the theory, but absent in common constructivism, is the concept of *constrained relativism,* just five (or, in some versions of the theory, four) ways of life (social solidarities) are viable. Constrained relativism depends on functional explanations: only patterns of social relations and cultural biases which mutually support each other, are viable. The theory loses its capacity to explain and predict if functionalism fails.

I will first discuss Elster's criteria. Then I will briefly outline the theory of sociocultural viability, and discuss examples of functional explanations. I will finish with some thoughts about what happens to the theory if such explanations cannot be attained.

Elster's Criteria

According to Elster an institution or a behavioural pattern *X* is explained by its function *Y* for a group *Z* if and only if:

1 *Y* is an effect of *X;*
2 *Y* is beneficial for *Z;*
3 *Y* is unintended by the actors producing *X;*
4 *Y*—or at least the causal relationship between *X* and *Y*—is unrecognised by the actors in *Z;*
5 *Y* maintains *X* by a causal feedback loop passing through *Z* (Elster 1979:28–35).[4]

Douglas says that though these criteria 'sound abstruse at first, they greatly clarify the issues'. They allow for a discussion of the conditions that 'a correctly argued functional analysis must meet' (Douglas 1987:33). I examine the criteria from different viewpoints.

1 For Elster functions are *consequences:* 'To say that an institution "has a function" must imply that it *does* something, i.e. generates some effect' (Elster 1979:29). The

consequences we refer to when explaining the reproduction of a behavioural pattern, occur *after* it. Functionalists will explain stable patterns, whose reproduction cannot be explained by intended consequences or previous events. Elster's criteria are requirements for explanations that explain via *latent functions*.

2 Such explanations are causal. Causality requires that the effect must come after, or simultaneously with the cause. The cause can conceivably exist without the effects. Critics have claimed that Elster operates with *reversed causality*—the effects occur before the cause.[5] This is incorrect, but 'feedback loop' is an unfortunate term.[6] Such explanations demand *two* causal mechanisms, and not just one, as ordinary causal explanations do. Criterion 1 expresses the first mechanism: *X* must cause something. Otherwise its reproduction cannot be explained functionally. Criterion 5 expresses the second mechanism. *In the next round Y* must have consequences. Otherwise *Y* cannot explain *X's* reproduction. This mechanism differs from the first. The causal direction is from *Y* to *X*. The mechanisms pertain to the same phenomena, where one of them must work *before* the other one can work. The second mechanism distinguishes such explanations from ordinary causal explanations.

3 For Elster (1990) such explanations *logically* imply two groups of actors: those who perform *X,* and those for whom *Y* is beneficial. They can *in practice* be identical, partially overlapping, or different. If they are identical, *Y* is beneficial for those who perform *X*. If they are different, one group performs a behavioural pattern, and another group reaps unintended and unrecognised advantages from it. Criteria 3 and 4 will tighten the dividing line towards intentional explanations. *Y* must not be a *reason* why the actors perform *X*. If *Y* is such a reason, the explanation is intentional. And *X* must not be a *goal* for the actors in *Z,* which *Y* is a means to attain. If *X* is a goal, the second mechanism is intentional.

4 The criteria pose justification demands that those who wish to use such explanations must take into account. Why must it be proven that *each* criterion is satisfied? Why not assume that when some criteria are satisfied, then so are the other ones? But the criteria are not logically connected in such a way that such conclusions are justified. Horses are mammals by definition. When I see a horse, I can conclude that I am looking at a mammal. I do not need to probe further into the subject. But when a behavioural pattern has beneficial consequences which are unintended by the actors who perform it (1–3), it is not certain that they are unrecognised by those for whom they are beneficial (4), or that they maintain the pattern (5).

5 A functional explanation builds on data about different phenomena: Causal mechanisms, intentions, recognition, and what is beneficial or unbeneficial. Such explanations can fail in different ways, dependent on which criteria are not satisfied.

A According to the first criterion an explanation fails if *X* does not cause *Y,* or if it is unproven that *X* causes *Y*. This can mean three things:

i *Y* is one of *X's* conceptual characteristics. Then the connection is *definitional*. The explanandum is defined by the beneficial consequence *Y*. But it must be an empirical, not a definitional, question whether *X* causes *Y*. This is a weakness of

functional definitions of religion. A debate is going on in sociology over whether to define religion substantially or functionally.[7] A substantial definition defines religion via the contents of beliefs, or the structure of organisations—to have a religion is to believe in a transcendent god or to be organised into a church or sect. Such definitions are often ethnocentric. Not everywhere where people have religion do they believe in a transcendent god or are organised in such a way. Ethnocentrism is difficult to avoid without emptying the definitions content.

Functional definitions avoid ethnocentrism by omitting contents. Religion satisfies certain functions, e.g. creating unity. What satisfies the functions is by definition religion; what does not satisfy them, is not.[8] A political group can be seen as a religious phenomenon if it satisfies the functions. A common criticism is that such definitions make everything into religion. Such criticism is not always valid, since the definitions should be so broad as to avoid ethnocentrism. There is a more important criticism in the light of Elster's first criterion: Religion is *defined by* its beneficial consequences. Thus the criterion is not satisfied.

If the *explanandum* is defined via the consequences that we explain it with, the explanation is tautologous—we explain that an institution is reproduced by referring to its conceptual characteristics. This is like explaining that horses are four-legged hoofed animals by referring to the fact that they have four legs. A functional explanation of *X* cannot build upon a functional definition of *X*. Such definitions are also open to a type of immunising.[9] Assume that we define religion as something which creates unity, and we see that a sect is full of internal strife. One can then say that since the sect does not have the beneficial consequences that the definition lays down, it is not a religious sect. Counter-examples can be rejected like this, and the claim that religion creates unity becomes unfalsifiable.

ii An explanation also fails in the light of criterion 1 if *X* and *Y* belong to the same belief or value system, so that one cannot consistently believe in *X* without believing in *Y*. One of TEW 's examples is plagued by this: '*Y* (the belief that regulations of transactions should be kept to a minimum) is an effect of *X* (attributing personal failure to bad performance)' (TEW 1990:204). They will show that an ethics of self-reliance is beneficial for individualists; the norm of self-reliance twists the blame for fiasco away from the exchange system. But why is not the belief that the regulation of transactions ought to be minimal the cause of blaming oneself for failure? *Y* is hardly a consequence of *X*. *X* and *Y* belong to the same value system, 'the ethics of self-reliance'. If someone believes that failures occur because of their own bad performance, then they can hardly believe that transactions must be regulated to avoid failure, or to compensate for bad performance. If they believe in regulations, then what is left of 'the ethics of self-reliance?' This concerns the consistency of a value system, and not causality, as Douglas has seen in another context: 'Though it [the enterprise culture, H.G.] needs to include the rising generation, and tries to incorporate them into the competitive network, the claims of older failures and the demands for safety nets

for the weak are incompatible with the doctrine of undiminished personal responsibility' (Douglas 1992b: 56).

iii An explanation also fails if it is unproven that *X* causes *Y,* i.e. where empirical proof is lacking. Data are then deficient, not the logic.

B According to the second criterion, an explanation fails if *Y* is not (or if it is unproven that it is) beneficial for *Z*. One can separate different cases.

i *Z* can be so broadly defined that the claim that *Y* is beneficial must be unprovable. This is a weakness of explanations that build upon the concept of 'the functional unity of society'. Here *Z* is an entire society. But what is beneficial for one group is not always beneficial for the entire society. This is why Merton, Elster and TEW emphasise that it must be clearly stated for whom *Y* is beneficial.

ii One can have vague ideas about what 'beneficial' means. Functionalists disagree about this. Elster—a methodological individualist—claims that *Y* is beneficial must mean that '*Y* is a local maximum of some state variable of which the actors in *Z* always want more rather than less' (Elster 1979:29). This ties it to the actors' desires. But is this meaningful in the light of the criteria? If actors normally know what they want, then 2 and 4 cannot be satisfied simultaneously, if those who perform *X* and those for whom *Y* is beneficial are identical. Criterion 4 claims that *Y,* or the causal relationship between *X* and *Y,* should be unrecognised by the actors in *Z*. But can *Y* be unrecognised, if *Y* is a maximum of a variable which the actors *want* more rather than less of ? Should the consequence be unrecognised, then 'beneficial' must be defined by something which *can* be unrecognised. Then we are back to conditions for group survival, which are hard to combine with individualism.

C According to the third criterion an explanation fails if Y is intended, or if it is unproven that *Y* is unintended. Stinchcombe, for example, does not clearly distinguish between intended and unintended consequences. When we say that a person wants a car, that generals want to win a war, or that people do not want to be sick, we are saying that the consequences of a behaviour are 'its principal cause'. If one type of behaviour does not have these effects, the actor will try something else. But here we are explaining behaviour with *intended* consequences. Changes in behaviour are explained by the deviation between intended and actual consequences. Stinchcombe says that 'Whenever we find *uniformity of the consequences* of action *but great variety of the behaviour causing those consequences,* a functional explanation [...] is suggested' (1987: 80).[10] But uniformity of consequences and variation in behaviour can be the result of using different means to accomplish the same goal in different situations. If this is characteristic of equifinality, then equifinality can be found by realised intended consequences, like when a general wins a battle by using different means. Equifinality points towards functional explanations only when actual, unintended consequences occur.[11]

D According to criterion 4 an explanation fails if For the causal relationship between *X* and *Y* is recognised. Elster calls explanations that satisfy 1, 2, 3, and 5, but not 4, *filter explanations*. This is a questionable category which I will leave here.[12]

E Criterion 5 demands that *Y* must maintain *X* via a causal mechanism which goes through the group for whom *Y* is beneficial. The fact that the first four criteria are fulfilled means that *X* has consequences which are beneficial, unintended by those who perform *X,* and unrecognised by those for whom they are beneficial. But this *alone does* not demonstrate that these consequences *maintain X*. *X* can be maintained by other causes. A functional explanation fails if it is unproven that there is such a mechanism, if the mechanism is of the wrong kind, or does not function in the right group. Elster calls explanations where 1, 2, 3, and 4, but not 5, are fulfilled, *hidden hand explanations*. They have one causal mechanism ($X \rightarrow F$), but lack the other one ($Y \rightarrow X$). They are ordinary causal explanations with additional requirements. Elster's main criticism goes via criterion 5. It is seldom satisfied because the social sciences lack a causal theory on level with the theory of natural selection. Mechanisms must then be found in every single case. That is rarely done. One can react to this criticism by finding mechanisms in every single case, or by creating a theory on the same level as the theory of natural selection.[13] TEW will do the latter. This is an ambitious project.

Essential features of cultural theory

I shall outline as much of the theory as necessary to understand the use of functional explanations.

1 The concept of viable ways of life is essential. A way of life combines patterns of social relations and cultural biases, i.e. 'patterns of interpersonal relations', and 'shared values and beliefs' (TEW 1990:1). Neither of these have causal priority, 'adherence to a certain pattern of social relationships generates a distinctive way of looking at the world; adherence to a certain worldview legitimises a corresponding type of social relations' (TEW 1990:1). A pattern of relations can be viewed as a way of organising things (TEW 1990:187), which takes up central problems in all interaction. Who should be included and who left out? Who should decide and who listen? How should resources be divided? We can draw sharp borders between 'us' and 'them', or let them fluctuate. We can let competent actors decide, or require agreement between all the partners. We can divide resources according to effort or status, or equally among everyone. A solution to an organisational problem creates a pattern of social relations. If only competent persons can decide, resources are divided according to status, and the border between 'us' and 'them' is sharp, then we have a hierarchy. If decisions require agreement between all the partners, resources are divided equally, and the border between 'us' and 'them' is sharp, then we have egalitarianism.

Beliefs and values deal with what we think is true, and how we arrange things in order of importance. To think that there are strict limits to how much pollution nature

can tolerate without falling out of balance, is an opinion. To judge that everyone should have the same tax burden relative to their income, is a value. Beliefs and values constitute socially formed world-views, which can be more or less adequate to the situations actors face in everyday life.

The theory asks how worldviews cohere with different solutions to organisational problems. How can an actor justify, to himself and others, that he lives in a context which solves organisational problems in a certain way? What does a certain way of solving organisational problems require for the actors' values and beliefs? Are there combinations of worldviews and patterns of relations which are stable, while others never can be? The claim is that only five such combinations are viable (the impossibility theorem', TEW 1990:3): hierarchy, egalitarianism, fatalism, individualism and autonomy.[14] Each way of life is viable only if the other ones are too ('the requisite variety condition', TEW 1990:4). But how is this claim justified?

2 TEW will explain how ways of life 'maintain (and fail to maintain) themselves' (TEW 1990:1). The problem is sociocultural stability and change. An important point is *the compatibility condition:* 'These biases and relations cannot be mixed and matched' (TEW 1990:2).[15] Not all solutions to organisational problems can be combined with all worldviews. Justification is the important point. Worldviews are not passive playthings, but are used to justify how to live and act. An actor living in a context based on egalitarian solutions, must justify it with specific beliefs and values, e.g. equal treatment. He cannot justify it with beliefs and values which support other ways of life, without causing a deviation between what he believes and how he lives. Changes in values and beliefs must lead to changes in the actions the actors can justify doing, and with that change the types of relations they can justifiably live in. Conversely changes in relations must lead to a change in worldview, if the actor is to be able to justify how he lives. A way of life is viable only if it 'inculcates in its constituent individuals the cultural bias that justifies it. [...] individuals, [...] must negotiate a set of values and beliefs capable of supporting that way of life' (TEW 1990:2). If worldviews and patterns of social relation can be mixed in any fashion, TEW cannot say that some combinations are viable, and others are not.

3 Values and opinions 'come in packages' (TEW 1990:264). The theory has a *holistic* view on worldviews, and could hardly function without such holism. The reason is the view of change, and the thought that 'having ordered the way of live, the way of life then orders for the individual' (TEW: 208). A worldview is always only partially adequate for how the world is. It functions better in certain situations than in others. Actors can be surprised when the world does not behave as they expected. If an opinion becomes problematical, it can carry others with it, perhaps the entire package. This could lead the actor to change the package and go over to another way of life. The size of the difficulties problematic opinions or values create correlates with how central they are to the actors' worldview. If opinions do not form coherent packages, then there is no reason why a problematic opinion should carry others with it, or why a way of life should select for the actor, when he has chosen it.[16]

4 The theory must claim that actors normally are not opportunists. Opportunists have no problems with justification, and hardly ever experience strong moral conflicts.

There must be a connection between living and learning. Actors must believe in their opinions and values, or there is no reason to be surprised when the world is not how one expected it to be. And there is no reason to experience a moral conflict if one's worldview does not justify the relations one lives in. Opportunism must be secondary, and there must be different types of opportunism, depending on what relations the actor lives in (Douglas 1992a).

5 The theory must explain why 'people want what they want and why people perceive the world the way they do' (TEW 1990:2). The actors' values and beliefs are decisive for how a way of life coheres. Without an explanation of why people want what they want, or see the world the way they do, one could not explain this.[17] TEW want to explain it by showing that certain values and beliefs have beneficial consequences for certain patterns of social relation. That demands functional explanations. Were such explanations defective in principle 'our theory would collapse' (TEW 1990:3). To explain stability one must show how biases and patterns of social relation mutually support each other: 'our theory provides a theory about how different ways of life cohere' (TEW 1990:207). Functions must be tied to contexts, understood as ways of solving organisational problems. Values and beliefs which are functional for one type of context may be dysfunctional for another: 'Perhaps the most debilitating error made by past practitioners of functional explanation was to look for functions that went with entire societies' (TEW 1990: 106). This way of understanding functions can handle conflicts. The question of who benefits from a mode of thinking or a value system is raised.

6 The basis for the mechanisms that Elster demands is the theory of viable ways of life. A viable way of life resembles an evolutionarily stable strategy: 'Cultural Theory and the theory of natural selection come together [...] around the notion of evolutionarily stable strategies [...]. Cultural Theory [...] points to the same kind of dynamics that underlie both systems' (TEW 1990:211, n. 28). Roughly stated, they hope to defeat a difficulty in functionalism *via* a discussion of a difficulty in the theory of games.

The theory of games claims that different results of actions must be judged on the same scale, the utility scale, which is used to obtain the criterion for rational behaviour. Rational behaviour maximises subjective desires. Utility-scales encounter difficulties when used to describe desires. *Prima facie* not all human behaviour is utility-oriented. The idea of utility has always swung between presupposing too much uniformity in human desires and making utility-concepts so broad that they are meaningless. Classical utilitarianism was in danger of the first scenario by saying that all desires could be interpreted as searching for utility. At a deeper level we have only one type of desire. Modern preference utilitarianism stands in danger of the second scenario by making utility an umbrella concept for everything which satisfies some subjective preference. The first view does not save the phenomena, the second view can be immune towards the facts.

TEW attempt to solve the problem via a concept from biology. They will have *one* scale, and limited variation in rationality. They refer to Maynard Smith (1982), who thought that 'only certain ways of behaving are likely to be successful in the long run'

(TEW 1990:49). Such behavioural patterns are evolutionarily stable, and can be selected regardless of their goal. TEW move rationality from satisfying desires *to* the satisfaction of the requirements of *social* con texts. Do the actor's desires correspond to the context in which he lives? Rationality depends primarily upon variations in context, secondarily upon variations in desires. Their solution uses a formal concept of rationality tied to the separation between substantially different *types* of contexts. The central axiom—'that an act is rational if it strengthens the way of life of the actor' (TEW 1990:211, no. 28) obtains both *one* scale ('support for a way of life') and a view of rationality 'as plural'—'there are five and just five social contexts in which the definitions of what is rational and irrational can interact with those contexts in an evolutionarily stable way (TEW 1990:211, no. 28). The scale neither demands that rational action always supports *one type* of context, nor that the contexts are unendingly varied. One does not presuppose too much unity, simultaneously as the theory is falsifiable.

This opens up a way of defining 'beneficial'. That which is 'rational', corresponds to that which in early functionalism was called 'needs' or 'functional requirements'. But it is tied to the distinction between different types of social contexts, not to entire societies or concrete groups. This moves rationality from maximising desires to conformity between desires and context, which makes selection mechanisms possible. One can then say something about the consequences of values and beliefs on the actors' environment. Mechanisms in all contexts are *formally* similar. They select biases which support one way of organising, and eliminate others. In all instances they concern one way in which a definition of what is rational or irrational interacts with a context. Since there are different ways of organising, mechanisms are *substantially* different. The same mechanisms cannot function in individualistic as in egalitarian contexts. A market eliminates certain kinds of risk aversion. The same risk aversion may be selected by an egalitarian group because it has beneficial consequences.

7 The theory must classify patterns of social relations, viz. contexts which definitions of rationality and irrationality can interact with. This is done with Douglas's grid/group-typology. This gives five (or sometimes four) different kinds of social contexts.[18]

To exist in one type of context, an actor must hold biases which correspond to it. An actor in an egalitarian group who believes that authority must be tied to social position, cannot justify why he lives in this way. Those who have biases which accord with the context, get selected; those who have biases in opposition to the context must or will change their way of life. An egalitarian group that does not get its members to believe in what is necessary to maintain itself *as* an egalitarian group, disappears.

An analysis of some examples

TEW have formulated some examples in Elster's scheme. They *almost* get it how they want it. But each example has certain weaknesses. *Cultural Theory* is a theoretical work, so

one cannot expect that all the examples are equally well-grounded empirically. But some difficulties have a theoretical and not an empirical ground.

They formulate these examples in Elster's scheme (the way of life is in parenthesis):[19] (A) conspicuous consumption (individualism); (B) mutual accusations of betrayal of the founding principles of the society (egalitarianism); (C) blame oneself for the lack of success (individualism); (D) disclaim all responsibility when something goes wrong (hierarchy); (E) stigmatise and punish deviants (hierarchy); (F) place the blame on fate (fatalism); (G) ascribe charismatic qualities to a leader (egalitarianism); (H) weak leadership (unclear which way of life this is functional for).[20]

1 One problem appears throughout *all* examples: It is poorly substantiated that Y is unintended by those who produced, and that the connection between x and Y is unrecognised. The question is whether the type of consequences observed can be or normally is unintended and unrecognised.
Example A concerns why conspicuous consumption is functional for individualists. Since such consumption gives the impression of unlimited resources, 'Big Men' gain adherents into their networks. Those who lack the finances or will to such consumption, become peripheral. 'The result is selected survival of those members who engage in conspicuous consumption. In Elster 's succinct formula:

    1 *Y* (gaining adherents for ones network) is an effect of *X* (conspicuous consumption).
    2 *Y* benefits *Z* (Big Men).
    3 *Y* is unintended by the actors producing *X*.
    4 *Y* (or the causal connection between *X* and *Y*) is unrecognised.
    5 *Y* (gaining adherents) maintains *X* (conspicuous consumption) through *Z,* for those who are able to expand their networks will thrive, while those who don't, wont' (TEW: 202–3).

It is difficult to see that 3 and 4 are satisfied. For them to be so, those who engage in such consumption must not intend to gain adherents *via* consumption, and they must not know that consumption gains them adherents. But it is more reasonable to think that those who engage in such consumption often do it to gain adherents. The two criteria can in certain instances be satisfied, but it is hardly normal by such consumption.

In example E the stigmatisation and punishment of deviants is functional for a hierarchy. It strengthens the awareness of the borders of acceptable behaviour, which lead to well-defined rules of behaviour. Members strengthen their desire to punish deviants via public admonitions of the borders of acceptable behaviour:

1 *Y* (maintaining well-defined rules of behaviour) is an effect of *X* (punishment of deviants).
2 *Y* is beneficial for adherents of hierarchy *(Z),* who want it well defined who can do what to whom.
3 *Y* is unintended by actors producing *X*.

4 The causal connection between *X* and *Y* is not perceived by members of *Z*.
5 *Y* maintains *X*, for a heightened sense of what is unacceptable behaviour reinforces the will to punish transgressors. (TEW: 204–5).

But can 2, 3, and 5 consistently be claimed simultaneously? 2 says that adherents of hierarchy want 'who can do what to whom' to be well-defined. Desires are usually something one is aware of. Therefore well-defined rules are hardly unintended. As Douglas says in another context: 'It is difficult to contend that clarified norms were not part of the intended result' (Douglas 1987:35). 5 is consistent with this understanding of 2, because *Y* is 'a heightened sense of what is unacceptable behaviour'. But if *Y* increases awareness of something, can it be an unintended consequence of *X*?

The problem is caused by TEW's unclear relation to Merton. They bring in the concept of intended functions, which 'play an important role as do latent functions in sociocultural viability' (TEW 1990:2–3). Later they say that: 'When the consequences are intended, the feedback loop is unproblematic: Action *X* furthers system *Y*, and actor *Z* takes action *X* in order to further system *Y*' (TEW 1990:199). They also say that:

> Our attempt to show that functional explanations can be valid in the absence of individuals being aware of, or intending, the cultural consequences of their action should not be taken as an endorsement of the proposition that all (or even most) people are unaware of the functions they are performing.
>
> (TEW 1990:208)

These quotes open the way for three remarks.

First, intended functions are important, but they are manifest in Merton's terminology. To explain via manifest functions creates an intentional, not a functional explanation: The actors maintained *X* because they know that *X* leads to *Y*, and they want *Y*.

Secondly, feedback mechanisms are unproblematical for intended functions. But they are not causal: The actors maintained *X* because *X* led to *Y*, which they want. These are not mechanisms which function behind their backs.

Thirdly, it is a distorted starting point to attempt to show that functional explanations can be valid in spite of the actor not recognising or intending the beneficial consequences. This is the point of such explanations.

2 It is often unclear whether the connection in the first premise is causal or logical. Example C deals with why unsuccessful actors blame themselves, which is functional for individualism: the norm of self-reliance diverts the blame away from the market. If the economy sours, the idea that the activity of the actor is self-directed serves to resist those who will regulate transactions, or create safety nets. But the connection here is hardly causal. *X* and *Y* belong to the same value system. One can hardly consistently perform *X* without believing in *Y*, and vice versa. Example F, why blaming fate is functional for fatalists, is plagued by the same problem.

Example B deals with why accusations of betrayal of the founding principles of society is functional for egalitarian groups. Such accusations lead to a shared belief in an outer conspiracy, which is beneficial, because it unites disputing fractions against an outer enemy: '*Y* (shared belief in an evil conspiracy) is an effect of *X* (mutual accusations of betrayal of the founding principles of society)' (TEW: 204). This points towards a causal connection, but not the only one imaginable. It is unclear why mutual accusations lead to a shared belief in an *outer* conspiracy. Why could they not lead to different actors thinking that there are *many* conspiracies, and that some of them are not outer, but *internal* in the group? If this were so, then divisions in, and not unification of the group, would be equally probable.

This problem has its basis in the thought that when an actor has selected a way of life, then the way of life selects for him. This can be interpreted in two ways, if we separate logical and causal connections.

A When an actor has explicitly selected certain values and beliefs, then he has usually implicitly selected many beliefs and values which are either presuppositions of or follow logically from that which he has explicitly selected. But he must not have thought about these. In this sense he could have selected them unintendedly, and become surprised when he realises what he presupposed, or what follows logically from his way of thinking and assessing. Beliefs and values come in 'packages', and we do not have a full overview of the entire package'. I believe that my parents lived before I was born. I then presuppose that the world existed before I was born. The first belief does not cause the last one. They form a system: believing that the world existed before I was born is a presupposition for my belief that my parents lived before I was born. An actor does not need to know the connection, but can come to it by thinking over what he presupposes when he believes that someone lived before he was born.

B When actors have explicitly chosen a set of beliefs and values, then effects occur which they do not need to intend. When an egalitarian groups central value is that authority should not be tied to social position, and it acts in accordance with this value, this could be the reason why they cannot reach collective decisions, without them seeing that the former causes the latter. A worldview causes decision paralysis. This should be distinguished from the type of phenomenon mentioned in A.

TEW tend to mix logic and causality so that logical connections get interpreted as causal. By selecting a way of life, the actors obligate themselves *unintendedly*. 'to a much larger set of beliefs and behaviour, including ideas of physical and human nature, perceptions of risk, notions of responsibility, conceptions of desirable leadership, and so on' (TEW 1990:208). But this does not need to imply that the *effects* of the beliefs are unintended and unrecognised. A logical presupposition which one had not thought of could have made the choice difficult if one had known it.

Elster's first criterion requires that *X* causes *Y*. It is insufficient to just show that an actor neither knew about nor intended *Y*. That *Y* is unintended and unrecognised can mean two things: First, that *Y* is a logical presupposition or implication of *X,* which the actors are unaware of, and would not have intended if they had known it.

Second, *Y* is an effect of *X,* which the actors neither intended nor knew about. Only in the last case do we have the basis for a functional explanation.

3 The third difficulty concerns the second causal mechanism. In a theory which is analogous to the theory of natural selection, the mechanisms must be implied by the theory. They cannot be invented from case to case. For each type of context one must specify mechanisms which follow from the relations the context consists of, viz. specify a type of social context, show how mechanisms follow from it, show that they select biases which support that context and eliminate others, and do it in the right way. One way to reply to Elster is to find mechanisms in every single case, i.e. a kind of casuistry. But a theory which is analogous with the theory of natural selection does not result from this procedure. TEW are often unclear about what the mechanisms are, if they are of the correct type, and how they follow from the theory. I will show some variants of this.

   In example A, conspicuous consumption, the mechanism is of the right type (a selection mechanism), but it is unclear if it selects the right phenomenon.

   Those who cannot build networks become peripheral. But do they go over to another way of life, e.g. fatalism,[21] or do they become individualists who blame themselves for the failure? The theory must claim that in general the first thing happens. If this is not so, then one does not explain why a way of life survives, but only why one type of actor ('Big Men') within the way of life becomes network central. One explains an internal way of life selection, but not the selection of a way of life among others. But perhaps the connection is more complicated. TEW separate two types of relations, groups and networks: 'The dimensions of grid and group ultimately derive from the recognition, first, that both groups and networks are patterns, and, second, that they can intersect with one another to create networks of groups (hierarchies) and groups of networks (markets)' (TEW 1990:11–2). In pure individualistic contexts social relations must consist of networks. One can assert that the 'Big Men's' lifestyle best expresses this way of life. When conspicuous consumption contributes to building networks, it also contributes to the reproduction of the type of social relations which best expresses this way of life: 'the individualist's success is often measured by the size of the following the person can command' (TEW 1990:7).

This way of explaining conspicuous consumption should entail an escalation in the use of resources, the more resources one can use, the larger the network one gets. Those who cannot build networks are eliminated first, afterwards those with smaller networks, and so on. Without a strong input of actors, there would be fewer individualists, if the peripherals go over to another way of life. Now input is not the problem. TEW counts on actors wandering between ways of life. But in an established individualistic context, with few, but strong 'Big Men', the costs of the

consumption which can build large networks must become higher and higher. Those who came to the way of life, came from hierarchy, fatalism and egalitarianism. But individualism is the basis for the activity which creates economic resources. The born-again fatalists, hierarchists and egalitarians hardly have enough resources to compete with the 'Big Men'.

It is often unclear whether the mechanisms are of the correct type. In example E, the punishment of deviants, an increased awareness of unacceptable behaviour strengthens the will to punish those who break the rules. This can be interpreted causally, but also intentionally: hierarchists (because of high 'group') want a clear distinction between themselves and those on the outside, and see the punishment of deviants as a means to achieve this goal. The mechanism in example H is plagued by the same problem: 'Having a credible threat to withdraw *(Y)* maintains weak leadership *(X)* because leaders who try to make demands on their followers will lose their followers via exit from the group' (TEW 211, n. 31). But a threat of pulling out can be strategically used to weaken the leadership, or to keep weak leadership weak. That is clear from Hirschmann's (1972) analysis of the exit option. It is not a given that we have a causal mechanism here.

I will end with a mechanism which works. Why is it functional for egalitarian groups to bestow charisma on leaders? Charisma creates unity without rules. Egalitarian groups have problems with decision-making. The antipathy against authority makes it illegitimate to decide for others. Unanimous consent is an element of collective decisions. If strife occurs, such groups often cannot make decisions. This constantly threatens their existence. To bestow charisma on the leader solves this by having him make the decisions: 'Following a charismatic leader is not perceived as coercion, because the charismatic leader is following the right path' (TEW 1990:206). But charisma hinders routines for conflict solving because such leaders overlook written laws and standard practice. With that it encourages the conditions needed to flourish, since authority is not tied to formal positions. Such leadership then furthers the conditions which it needs to be sustained.

Summary

There is much work left, if Elster is the standard: (1) It must be better distinguished between intended and unintended consequences. Unintended consequences are what is important. (2) It must be better distinguished between logical and causal connections. The first premise in functional explanations cannot have logical connections between X and Y. (3) Adequate mechanisms of the type $Y \rightarrow X$ must be developed for a theory which is to be analogous with the theory of natural selection. One must show how mechanisms of the correct type follow from types of social contexts.

What will happen to the theory if this is not accomplished? What remains is its *social constructivism*. TEW are 'interested in how individuals confer meaning upon situations, events, objects, relationships' (TEW 1990: xiii). This is also an essential trait of social constructivism, such as Berger's and Luckmann's (1994) type, something they know (TEW 1990:xiii). But classical constructivists do not maintain that there are only a few

viable ways of life. They emphasise a potentially unlimited amount of social constructions, where all can function in their contexts. It is not constrained relativism. If TEW are unable to make functional explanations (which at present, is the case with 7 out of their 8 examples—they already have some success) then they must say the same thing. The theory will then become an ordinary constructivist theory, with unconstrained relativism as a result. But then it will lose its distinctive capacity to explain and predict: 'to make statements of regularities that help in explaining and even predicting (or retrodicting) the human construction of meaning' (TEW 1990:xiii).

Notes

1 Thanks to Per Selle, Gunnar Grendstad, Simon Innvær and Michael Thompson for comments. Universität Konstanz provided ideal working conditions.
2 Hereafter shortened to TEW, 1990. Also *see* Douglas 1987:31–43.
3 The combination is not uncommon. Another example is Luckmann's (1993) theory of religion, and Luhmann's functionalism (Rusch and Schmidt 1994). It is often difficult to discern how functionalism and constructivism cohere. I do not know of other constructivists who take the demands of functional explanations as seriously as TEW and Douglas do.
4 Cf. also Elster 1982, 1983, 1985, 1990. Elster will summarise the discussions, especially in Merton and Stinchcombe, by formalising their core. He rejects the notion that society is a system, and attempts to formulate criteria which are consistent with methodological individualism. But one must not be an individualist to see the relevance of the criteria.
5 Lunden 1991, among others.
6 Stinchcombe (1987:99) mentions 'chains of reverse caution' which can select behavioral patterns via their consequences. This is an unfortunate terminology.
7 *See* Knoblauch 1993.
8 A leading spokesman for this mode of defining religion is Luckmann (1993:165, 166).
9 The concept 'immunising' was made by Hans Albert (1993 [1969]:199 on).
10 Stinchcombe calls this, in line with Fritz Heider (1958), 'equifmality'. A goal can often be reached by different means. If one means does not work, then one can find other, more adequate means. Purposive rational behaviour directed towards a definite goal will often demonstrate large situationally determined variations. This can be used as a sign of what an actor really wants, viz. if expressed and true desires cohere. If he varies his behaviour until he has achieved his goal, and afterwards no longer varies it, it can be seen as a sign that he wanted this goal.
11 This explains why Stinchcombe's proposed feedback mechanisms are so unclear.
12 In Grimen (1994) I attempted to show that filter explanations are either genuinely functional or genuinely intentional.
13 One can also question the criteria. But this is hardly recommended when it concerns criterion 5, in any sense other than to discuss the formulation of it. One doesn't get a functional explanation without a causal mechanism of type 2.
14 The autonomous way of life is often ignored, and sometimes disputed, among Cultural Theorists.
15 They think that the theory would be falsified if it is wrong. *See* TEW (1990:273).
16 This can be interpreted in another way. *See* below.
17 Accordingly the theory depends on endogenising preference development.

18 The grid/group typology is unclear and is found in different versions. For a description of the ways of life, see the editors' introduction to this book.
19 I am ignoring Douglas's examples. Of special interest is her discussion of Mancur Olson. *See* Douglas (1987:38–41).
20 The example is found in a slightly different form in Douglas (1987:38). She is probably thinking about egalitarianism.
21 Fatalists are by definition network peripheral.

Part 3

POLITICAL CULTURES

8
CULTURAL BIASES AND NEW MEDIA FOR THE PUBLIC DOMAIN: CUI BONO?

Frank Hendriks and Stavros Zouridis

A major theme in the study of organisations has long been built around the question: *'cui bono?'* Which stakeholders, Blau and Scott (1962) ask, are served by the way in which an organisation works? Framed like this, the *cui bono* question focuses our attention on the self-evident interests of self-evidently different categories of people who self-evidendy have a stake in an organisation. The Cultural Theory interpretation—the interpretation we will be setting out in this chapter—is quite different. It deliberately avoids the politics-of-interest approach and focuses, not on stakeholders in organisations, but on a technological cluster (we have chosen information and communication technology) and its relation to the values, norms and practices associated with the various forms of social solidarity.

New media make possible new ways of gathering, processing, conveying and storing information. Satellites and glass-fibre cable networks, computer hardware and software, and other interactive communication and information devices support things like electronic mail, on-line databases, teletext, interactive television, tele-conferencing and instant polling (Van de Donk and Tops 1995). These new media, according to Abramson, Arterton and Orren (1988), have at least six features that make them of special interest to politics and to democratic decision-making:

1 new media increase the quantity and the accessibility of information for politicians, bureaucrats and citizens;
2 new media accelerate the gathering, distribution and storing of information, thereby diminishing the constraints of time and place;
3 new media enable the receivers of information to exert more control over that information;
4 new media enable 'narrowcasting' as well as broadcasting on the part of the sender of information;
5 new media enable decentralisation;
6 new media enable interaction between sender and receiver and between applier and application; this is the feature that most distinguishes these new media from the old media, such as radio, newspapers and one-way television.

These characteristics are deduced from what are seen to be the inherent properties of these new media, but Cultural Theory insists that technology can never be fully separated from us in this way; technology is always, to some considerable extent, socially and culturally constructed (Schwarz and Thompson 1990). The new media, for instance, can also enable centralisation. They can globalise as well as localise, and what they actually end up doing is crucially dependent on the way in which they and the different solidarities are bound up with one another. This, in turn, will likely have a major influence on the way in which these technologies evolve, since each solidarity, left to its own devices, would lock us into a distinctive development path.

In this chapter we will 'open up' three of these social and cultural constructions—those associated with the three 'active' solidarities: hierarchy, egalitarianism and individualism. We will pay little attention to fatalism, but this neglect is not justified by the standard argument that fatalism, being essentially passive, is irrelevant. Fatalism, in our view, gives rise to a social and cultural construction of information and communication technology that is highly relevant. The old media—one-way television, in particular (*see* Putnam 1995 and Schmutzer 1994)—have already been shown to be closely bound up with fatalism, and some see much the same happening with the new media. Teledemocratic reform, they argue, with its couch-based push-button applications, is 'just another sop for Joe Sixpack, bored with baseball and too broke for video gambling' (Broder 1987). If this is indeed the case, and if these new media end up substituting fatalism for all the vibrant and social capital-rich interactions that animate the lives of so many of us, then we had better stop talking about tele*democracy*!

However, since the rules that determine the fatalist's way of life are imposed (inadvertently, as it were) by those who are not themselves fatalists, we must first of all look at the three active solidarities and their interactions, because it is these that will determine whether the level of the fatalistic reservoir rises or falls, and by how much (this, the final chapter of this volume argues, is a crucial measure of democracy). Since we will not be taking this second step, this chapter is far from complete. Its modest aim is to spell out some of the changes that occur in our understanding of technology generally, and of the new media in particular, when we move beyond the politics of interest.

Communication and information bias

The field that concerns us here is the public domain in which authorities and citizens handle information and develop communicative relations. In this process, some evaluations of reality are accepted and communicated while other evaluations of reality are neglected and not communicated. To understand this process, Thompson and Wildavsky (1986b) have argued, we need to look into the cultural backgrounds of those who strive to handle the daily avalanche of information. In other words, we need a Cultural Theory of information bias, and Thompson and Wildavsky have set about providing that theory in terms of the different styles of information-rejection that are 'bred' by the different solidarities. Here we will flesh out these styles in terms of the different kinds of learning they encourage (and discourage) and show how they dispose their holders to define information in very different ways. In other words, it is no use talking about information

as if it is 'out there': something that is defined for all of us by its inherent properties and that we then relate to in different ways. Rather, we need to recognise that people draw the line between information and 'noise' in a way that, so far as they can judge, will help strengthen their solidarity and weaken the others. Were information not socially constructed in this way there would be no such things as *information rejection:* the active (and inherently political) putting into the noise category of something that is already information to someone else: a phenomenon so common it has given rise to a host of stock phrases: 'There's none so blind as those that will not see', 'Never argue with someone who *knows*', 'I don't wish to know that' and so on. Information handling styles, therefore, have a two-way character: they vary in the way we construct the information and they vary in the way we relate to the information we have constructed.

- The hierarchical culture breeds a style of information handling characterised by a focus on normality and appropriateness. Hierarchists tend to process information in a reductionist way, following a 'logic of appropriateness' (March and Olsen 1989). Inappropriate information is information that cannot be classified into standard categories following from normal science and organisational routine.

  Referring to a dichotomy designed by van Gunsteren (1985), who distinguishes learning based on analysis and instruction (A & I learning) from learning based on variety and selection (V & S learning), one could say that hierarchists tend towards the first type of learning. Hierarchists tend to detect and correct error in a process of meticulous analysis and detailed instruction. In a perfectly informaticised hierarchy, the process of detecting and correcting error would be completely automated. The boundary between normality and perversity would be under permanent electronic surveillance, and information signalling the crossing of this boundary would automatically lead to corrective instructions.
- The individualistic way of handling information is highly pragmatic and utilitarian. Information, for individualists, is a potential resource, selected or rejected on the basis of its expected return. In terms of van Gunsteren's dichotomy, one could say that the individualistic culture tends to detect and correct error in a process of variety and selection. V & S-learning requires, on the one hand, a broad network tapping into many different sources and, on the other hand, a set of adequate desk-clearing principles. The individualist is accustomed to 'shift the less important data onto those who are towards the periphery of his network so as to leave himself the time and space to listen to the most important information', as Thompson and Wildavsky argue (1986b:280). This way of handling information can be found among successful entrepreneurs, who are often masters in combining different bits of information into profitable undertakings.
- In order to describe the typical way in which egalitarians handle and use information for culturally correct purposes, we need to introduce a third type of learning: learning by Exposure and Revelation (E & R-learning). While hierarchists prefer information signalling the extent to which their world is still under control, egalitarians prefer information signalling the degree to which the world is getting out of control. This type of information supports their claim for radical change according to egalitarian

principles. Egalitarians are particularly focused on the perverse effects of choices made by The Establishment, usually described as an ominous coalition of individualists and hierarchists. Instead of giving corrective instructions, which goes against the grain of a low-grid culture, egalitarians would rather spread a gospel in which good and bad are painted in bright colours. Egalitarians prefer to convince rather than force, awake rather than negotiate. Conviction is the coin that egalitarians exchange in communicative processes.

Democratising teledemocracy

Different cultures breed different types of information bias and information handling. So much is clear by now. It is, however, not yet clear how different cultures relate to the various technological applications that have been designed to improve and sustain democratic processes. To clarify this relationship we need to consider the various ways in which democracy itself can be defined.

The trouble with the notion of teledemocracy is its singularity; it fails to take account of the fact that different people have different criteria in mind when talking about democracy. A technological application that has been designed to support just one of these constructions of democracy—and that, as we will see in a moment, has been the case with most proposals so far—is therefore likely to be bitterly resisted by those who adhere to different constructions. Teledemocracy in the singular is therefore a futile goal, because different people prefer different teledemocracies. Worse still, if a single teledemocracy was somehow pushed through, democracy would no longer be a contested notion and, since contestation is one of democracy's essential features, the technological application would simply destroy that which it was supposed to be supporting!

The only way in which these technological applications can be kept democratic, therefore, is by somehow keeping them plural and contentious. And if we are to do that we must start by pinning down which teledemocracies would be supportive of which notions of democracy. Then, having done that, we would need to find some institutional arrangements that (a) kept all the contending applications in contention and (b) sought out ways in which these various preferred solutions could be negotiated with one another. In other words, teledemocracy at present, like so much of our technological decision-making (*see* the final chapter of this volume), is not sufficiently democratised.

- The hierarchical culture is closest to what has been called the *guardian* approach to collective choice: an approach that has been described by Dahl (1989) and Jacobs (1992) and defended, in various forms, by thinkers such as Burke (1790), Hobbes (1651), Hamilton (number 69 of *The Federalist*), Skinner (1962) and Sartori (1987). Indeed, the guardian approach goes back to Plato who, in *The Republic,* argued that rulership should be entrusted to a minority of persons who, by reason of their superior insight and virtue, are specially qualified to govern. An autocracy of leaders, according to Sartori, is still indispensable for any political system, and in his theory of democracy political equality is defined in a typically hierarchical (i.e. stratified by prior qualities) way: 'each according to his merit'. Skinner, in *Walden Two,* takes a similar line,

replacing Plato's philosopher-king with a psychologist-king whose rule would be hierarchical in a gentle and enlightened sort of way.

Democracy, in the guardian model, is both indirect and representative in nature. The polity is seen as an indivisible whole that can be governed by a political class that is given primacy over public affairs on the basis of popular elections once every few years. Burke's Bristol speech, in which he urged the assembled councillors to act as 'trustees', focusing on the long-term general interest rather than on short-term individual or factional claims and interests, is a powerful defence of this model. The guardian democracy is majoritarian as well as indirect and representative, in that individuals and political minorities are expected to defer to decisions that are deemed to be in the general interest. Loyalty and complaisance[1] are the crucial virtues in a guardian democracy.

- The egalitarian culture has no place for deference, nor is it supportive of indirect and majoritarian modes of decision-making. Egalitarians favour direct and broad participation in collective choice. They strongly believe that all concerned should have an equal say in public decision-making, and they vehemently reject the idea that a privileged minority can decide what is best for all. What is best for all, they insist, has to be agreed on *by all,* in a consensual and participatory way. That people are sometimes reluctant to participate (and sometimes unco-operative when they do participate) is explained by the malign effects of bureaucratic, technocratic and ego-centred institutions. Egalitarians, echoing the political philosophy of Rousseau, favour radical institutional change, in the low grid/high group direction.

  The practical egalitarian ideal is small-scale (preferably face-to-face) democracy, in which leadership is avoided and all decisions are arrived at by consensus on just a single level—that of the grassroots. This model is closest to the *participatory* democracy described by Held (1987) and defended (it goes way back to the ancient Greeks) by Pateman (1970), Poulantzas (1980), Macpherson (1977), Gould (1988), Dryzek (1990) and, away from The Academy, by the tireless activists within the 'new social movements' that have been so prominent a feature of political life since the 1960s. Political equality, in this participatory model, is defined as an equal right to self-development' (Held 1987:262).
- The democratic ideal associated with the individualistic culture is somewhat ambiguous, which is hardly surprising in view of the fact that individualism, being low on both grid and group, is the least socially constrained of the three active' solidarities. One idea, however, is indisputable among individualists: self-determination. If they were to let go of that they would soon find themselves shifted up-grid or up-group, or up both! Paternalism is therefore anathema to individualists, and in this respect plebiscitary democracy has many advantages: each person has one vote and each, through that vote, can speak for his or her self. One serious problem, however, is that plebiscitary democracy tends to work in a majoritarian way, and this means that individual citizens (and even large minorities) can be overruled by a majority of just 50 per cent plus one. This, however, can be corrected by introducing qualitative majority rules and other measures that will protect individual and minority rights and interests ('One man one veto', as those who are not individualists see it). When this is done,

Table 8.1 The cultural framework for the analysis of teledemocracies

	Individualism	*Egalitarianism*	*Hierarchy*
Preferred social relations	Low grid/low group	Low grid/high group	High grid/high group
Valued and justified action	Self-determination	Voluntary co-operation	Disciplined regulation
Dominant myth of nature	Nature Benign	Nature Ephemeral	Nature Perverse/tolerant
Bias in information handling	Utility/bottom-line	Perversity/establishment critique	Normality/logic of appropriateness
Types of information handling/learning	Variety & Selection (V & S)	Exposure & Revelation (E & R)	Analysis & Instruction (A & I)
Preferred type of (tele)democracy	Protective	Participatory	Guardian

we come close to the *protective* democracy inspired by Locke's famous dictum: No one can be 'subjected to the Political Power of another without his Own Consent' (cited in Dahl 1989). Government's *raison d'etre,* according to Locke, is 'the protection of individual rights, life, liberty and estate' (Held 1987:51). Madison, another champion of protective democracy, stressed the need for constitutional arrangements to check the 'tyranny of the majority' and argued that popular government was justified only as long as there was no risk that the majority could turn the instruments of state against a minority's privilege (Held 1987:66).

The protective democracy model has little time for complaisance or civic participation; its focus is on the possibility of individuals getting what they want and, equally importantly, refusing what they don't want. The neoliberal version of this model has recently been highly influential. Nozick (1974), for instance, makes the case for the minimal state commensurate with the defence of individual rights, while Hayek (1976) connects this minimal state with the effective functioning of the free-market society. Nozick argues that there is no social or political entity other than the individual; Hayek makes the case that there are no social ends. Both, therefore, see freedom as the right to be the ultimate judge of one's own ends, and both, in consequence, insist that there should be effective arrangements to constrain the actions of majorities and governments.

We now have the framework—summarised in Table 8.1—we need if we are to approach teledemocracy in a way that does not guarantee that it will be profoundly undemocratic.

Orwell or Athens? The wrong question

Current discussion of information and communication technology, and of its implications for democracy, is framed in terms of two polarised outcomes—Orwell or Athens—the expectation being that eventually it will become clear which of these futures we are headed for (van de Donk and Tops 1995). By then, of course, it will be too late to do anything about it. Hence the present anticipatory concern—a concern that does not fit comfortably with the more general practice of technology assessment, where the emphasis is now shifting away from predicting how things will turn out and towards doing what we can in the here-and-now to ensure that we keep our technologies as flexible as possible.

- On the one hand, there are those who discern, just over the horizon, the contours of an electronic Athens-style democracy. They argue that the electronic revolution will bring about a fundamental renewal of political culture and structure which, in turn, will usher in a better and more democratic society. Information and communication technology, by enhancing citizens' ability to participate in public decision-making, and by making it easier for citizens to hold both politics and politicians accountable, will support their democratic rights and help ensure that the processes of decision-making become fully transparent and responsive.
- On the other hand, there are those who see the shadow of Big Brother falling over electronically supported democracy. The electronic revolution, they argue, is primarily a technocratic revolution: a revolution that will put the reins in the hands of a skilled and knowledgeable élite. Such a state of affairs, they conclude, will inevitably result in Orwellian surveillance and the ruthless control of those on its receiving end. Government, supported by this new technology, will be able to tighten its control over individual citizens, thereby seriously eroding their freedom (as, for instance, would happen once each citizen's digital 'footprint' had been recorded and analysed, on the pretext that this would help in the detection of social security fraud).

Both sets of protagonists, our Cultural Theory framework shows us, take a dim view of guardian democracy (whose defenders, of course, would deem it only right and proper that the reins of government be in the hands of a skilled and knowledgeable élite). The Athenians, clearly, are united around the participatory model and see the new technology, with its two-way flow of information and its decentralising effects, as supporting that model, provided every citizen is and remains fully committed. The Orwellians are also locked into the participatory model (or perhaps, in some cases, the protective model) but they take a more Luddite line. The dark forces of hierarchy and individualism, they know, are always there, ready to take advantage of any circumstances that might enable them to increase inequality and hamstring participation. New technologies, they tell themselves, always provide the enemies of egalitarianism with those opportunities, and they therefore fear the worst. Egalitarians, however, are not opposed to *all* technological developments; they support those that, so far as they can judge, will decentralise, empower, equalise, and shift undertakings of all kinds from large

to small scale. Thus the Athenian and Orwellian futures are simply two sides of the same coin: an egalitarian utopia supported by an egalitarian dystopia. Individualists, too, can readily share this dystopia because their aim is to roll back the state, not have it roll over them.

Paradoxically, there is now considerable evidence about this new technology, and it points in both directions (as, we should note, did and does the old technology[2]). The new technology simultaneously brings about 'surveillance *and* transparency, control *and* interactive communication' (van de Donk and Tops 1995:31). It looks, on the face of it, as if we have the classic catastrophe theory situation, analogous to a dog that is simultaneously being made more and more frightened and more and more angry. It may run away or it may attack us, but we cannot say which. All we can say with certainty is that it will not just sit there doing nothing! But, in the dog's case, there are only two possible outcomes—flight or fight—while, in this case, Athens and Orwell are most certainly not the only possible outcomes. Indeed it is more than likely that neither the idyllically discursive Athens nor the nightmarishly bureaucratic Orwell figures in the list of outcomes that *are* possible.

Patterns of inspiration and support: answering the right question

Applications of information and communication technology, like applications of any technology, are inspired by cultural patterns of thought and action. These patterns in turn, are supported by the technological applications, thanks to their having sunk costs into one particular path of technological development, thereby inhibiting the lines of development inspired by other, rival cultural patterns (Figure 8.1).

Empirically, this simple scheme allows us to connect Cultural Theory with the variety of design choices that have been discerned by students of information and communication technology applications (cf Arterton 1987:65; Guthrie and Dutton 1992) and, on the theoretical front, it ties in nicely with the fourfold typology (in terms of information flows and information relations) that has been developed by Bordewijk and van Kaam (1982). They derive this typology from two pairwise distinctions: two answers to the question 'Who decides on the topic, timing and pace of receipt of the information?' and two answers to the question 'From whose databases are the data retrieved?' (Figure 8.2).

- Where there is simultaneous transmission of centrally constructed information to a number of destinations, with the timing and pace of receipt being determined centrally, we have *allocution* (more familiarly, broadcasting). Oneway television is an example of this type of information flow.
- When there is the central collection of information from a number of sources, with the topic, timing and pace of receipt being determined by the centre, we have *registration*. Elections and consumer surveys are examples of this type of information flow.
- In what is the opposite of registration, the 'destinations' retrieve from the centre information about a topic which is selected by each destination, with each destination determining the timing and pace of receipt. This is *consultation* (more familiarly, data-

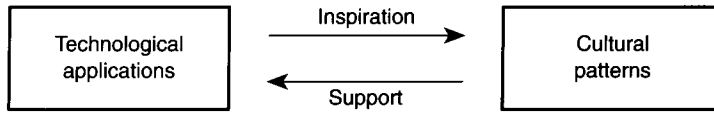

Figure 8.1 The cultural embedding of technology and *vice versa*

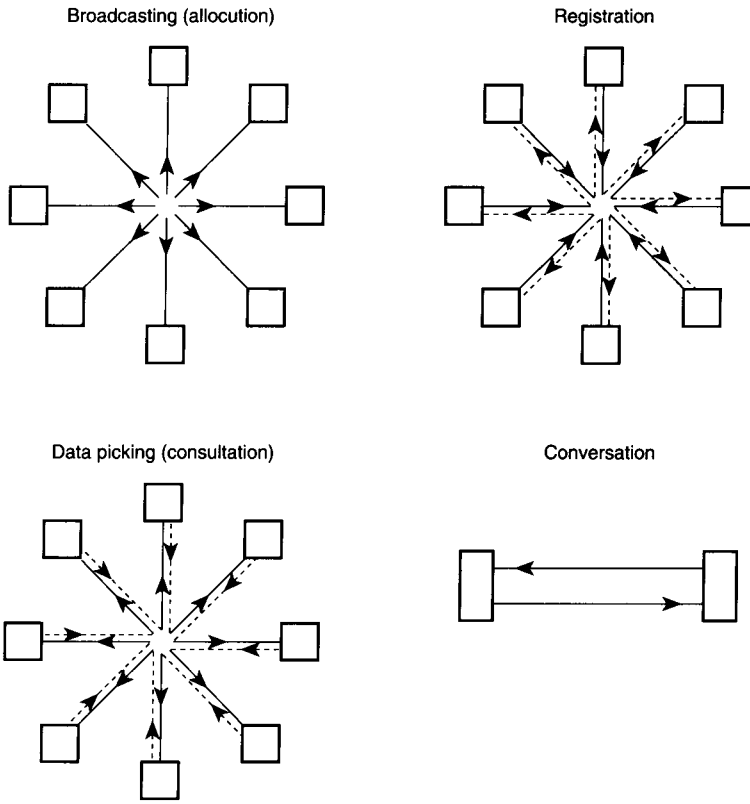

Figure 8.2 Four types of information flow

picking). Examples of this type of information flow would be citizens and others (politicians, for instance) consulting newspapers and magazines (and perhaps cutting out or highlighting items of particular interest).

- In *conversation* we have the exchange of information between two or more sources-cum-destinations, with a mutually agreed pace and timing. Correspondence, by letter, e-mail or fax, between two or more friends is an example of this kind of information flow.

In Figure 8.2 we have arranged these four kinds of information flow so as best to depict their affinities with the four solidarities (as they are conventionally depicted). It is not, as

we will see, a perfect fit, but broadcasting (as we have already suggested) is supportive of fatalism, registration of hierarchy, conversation of egalitarianism and data-picking of individualism. The fit is not perfect because, except in the symmetrical case of conversation, we can expect different solidarities to be supported by the centres and the peripheries: fatalists at the periphery of broadcasting, for instance, and hierarchists and individualists at the centre (as the impressively egocentric pundit, Malcolm Muggeridge, shrewdly observed, many years ago, 'the whole point of television is not to watch it but to get on it!').

We will conclude by presenting a small number of mini-case studies, using this fourfold scheme and its mapping onto our Cultural Theory framework (Table 8.2), to reveal the cultural biases that are built into them. All are intended to support and facilitate public decision-making processes, but with no appreciation of the cultural inspirations that lie behind them, and with no reflexivity *vis-à-vis* the particular models of democracy they are designed variously to support and undermine. All have been designed to be used by citizens, politicians and/or government organisations; we have not looked at applications with a purely intraorganisational function.

Applications inspired by and supportive of hierarchy

Hierarchists, being committed to the guardian model of democracy, will tend to inspire technological applications that support indirect government. They therefore favour an asymmetric pattern of communication between citizens and elected (or would-be elected) representatives. On the one hand, these elected (or would-be elected) representatives have to legitimise their opinions and actions, which means that they must make themselves accountable (in a *noblesse oblige* sort of way) to the citizenry. On the other hand (and this perhaps is often the stronger hand), they have to communicate their opinions and actions so that every citizen is able to cast a well-considered vote. Registration is the appropriate type of information flow for taking care of hierarchical accountability but, since hierarchicallyminded politicians often see accountability as being best taken care of by more diffuse and non-technologised processes ('pressing the flesh', for instance, and constituency 'surgeries'), and since the other hand is often stronger, broadcasting tends to be seen as the obvious technological way of doing things.

- The Electoral Programme Diskette of the CDA—the main Christian Democratic party in the Netherlands—aims to support the development of local election programmes. Dutch political parties routinely construct 'model programmes', in which the various political issues and the parties' opinions on them are summarised, and, in 1994, the CDA set about making things easier for its local branches in the local elections by putting its model programme on a diskette. All the local organisation has to do, to compose its local programme, is insert the name of its municipality and the diskette does the rest of the work. Using a central political programme as a guideline guarantees that the local party organisations do not deviate from the regular, 'normalised' Christian-Democratic ideology. The centre communicates its programme

Table 8.2 Cultural biases and new media for the public domain

	Hierarchy	*Egalitarianism*	*Individualism*
Informatisation utopia	Computer-supported politics	Virtual community-building	Informed market-place
Informatisation dystopia	The electronic brave new world (Huxley)	Virtual colonisation of the life world (Habermas)	Computerised Big Brother (Orwell)
Preferred information flow	Broadcasting/ registration	Conversation	Data-picking/ registration
Illustration	CDA Electoral Program Diskette	Digital debates on the Internet	Citizen survey in Alkmaar
	CPB-calculations	Global Eco-village Network	PIGA-system in Amsterdam

one-way, and the diskette offers no possibilities for interactive two-way communication.

Hierarchically-inspired applications of information and communication technology display a specific pattern of information handling: broadcasting, with sometimes a dash of registration. Politics tends to be viewed as a rather mechanical and dispassionate process of decision-making: a process that can be supported by automated systems in which the emphasis is on optimisation. Such a decision-making style needs what is perceived as being objective information, so that the decisions too have the appearance of objectivity, and this is a major source of technological inspiration.

- The CPB computer models—produced by the Dutch Central Planning Bureau: an organisation for economic planning and forecasting—have the authoritative and objective appearance that is so sought-after by hierarchy. It is customary for political parties to send their electoral programmes to this bureau, which then feeds them into its models and is thereby able to calculate (in terms of economic growth, employment, budget deficit, income distribution and so on) the social and economic effects of those programmes.

  The complexity of the models themselves, together with the technological and mathematical sophistication required to produce the 'objective' information, tends to draw attention away from the assumptions—emphatically hierarchical assumptions, about economic processes *and* about government and democracy—that underlie it all. In this way, citizens are kept at a proper distance and politics becomes a professional discourse between objectively qualified actors. The CPB models thus function as decision rules that are based in what are purported to be objective economic data. The Bureau, claiming superior insight and knowledge, is thus able to guard the boundaries of normalcy, defined in terms of political economy.

Applications inspired by and supportive of egalitarianism

Egalitarians are not prepared to allow the definition of the public interest to be entrusted to a select group of representatives. Everyone, egalitarians insist, is an 'experience expert' and therefore must not be distanced from the decision-making process. Interactive collective discourse is what egalitarians seek, and they therefore inspire technological applications that promise to move things in that direction, and they resist those that they see as working against it. Applications that will usher in a virtual community or, better still, an electronically-supported *Gemeinschaft* are. the fruits of their inspiration. Their information handling style is therefore the only symmetrical one: conversation.

- The Internet is often described as a high-tech anarchy—a network of networks with no real centre—and, in this form, it is the natural habitat of the individualist. However, it is a flexible medium and can also be used in a way that is congenial to egalitarians. An example is the public policy debate known as BIOS-3.

  The Dutch Ministry of the Interior presented a draft of its proposal for the 'Digital City of Amsterdam' and invited its virtual citizens to discuss it. The result was a digital debate on several of the issues in the proposal. The debate was moderated, which meant that each participant could only contribute through the organiser of the debate: a gatekeeper role that, depending on how it was exercised, could tip things towards individualism or hierarchy. However, the moderator restricted himself to the even-handed distribution of the participants' contributions, thereby preserving the conditions needed for conversation rather than for registration, data-picking or broadcasting. The debate, moderated in this way, was essentially egalitarian. There was the assumption that consensus should be reached through discussion among equal members of the virtual community and through the two-way exchange of arguments, and the moderator, by taking care not to make himself a centre, ensured that every viewpoint could be expressed and discussed.

The BIOS-3 digital debate was initiated by an actor that is not itself egalitarian, and it resulted (for a time) in a virtual community only because of the way in which the virtual citizens were invited to participate and the way in which the moderator carried out his role. Community-building in a broader and longerlasting sense, however, can come about by a kind of spontaneous initiation by actors that are themselves egalitarian (Rheingold 1994; Friedland 1996).

- The Global Eco-village Network (GEN) links into a virtual community a number of real communities that are much concerned with education and with the desire to integrate ecology, sustainability and community development. Each 'project' within GEN can function as an eco-village training centre, and the range of skills represented by the projects (and in the settlements they link) cover 'all aspects of community living' (http:// www.gaia.org/thegen/index.html). The network was founded in 1994 in order to support the development of sustainable human settlements and, since anyone (individual or settlement) interested in ecology and sustainability can join, it

has grown in size whilst still retaining its 'horizontal' character and its conversational style. The network is explicitly committed to the dictum 'think global, act local' and enables local communities to maintain their small scale interactions while, at the same time, achieving (in virtual terms) global solidarity and commitment.

- Other environmental groups use the Internet in a more combative way, exchanging information not just for community-building, but for the mobilisation of support for action to undermine the other solidarities (Green-peace's electronic alarm system, for instance). Such activities can sometimes carry their practitioners across the thin line that separates egalitarian groups from simple (and simplifying) hierarchies, leading, on occasions, to acrimonious schisms and accusations of eco-fascism (as, for instance, happened within the American organisation, Earth First!).[3]

The Internet has opened up new avenues of political activism: sometimes called 'cyberactivism'. Electronic mail, for instance, is well-suited for the quick and effective mobilisation of large numbers of sympathisers. It can be used for electronic petitions, which can be signed by a simple mouse-click, and, with massive e-mail 'bombing', it is even possible to sabotage the Internet sites of companies that resist the demands of environmental organisations or refuse to communicate with them.

Though the various solidarities currently co-exist on the Internet, it could be that it will eventually end up supportive of just one of them, with the others having been bombed out of existence. Here, then, is a possible peace-keeping role for hierarchy: the solidarity that most observers see as being least supported by this technology.[4]

Applications inspired by and supportive of individualism

Individualists see citizens as bearers of rights that need to be protected, and as bearers of consumer preferences that need to be satisfied. They therefore tend to resist technological applications that threaten the former (the one-way broadcasting of the hierarchists, and the subsuming of the individual by the community that is promoted by the egalitarians' conversation) and to support those that strengthen the latter. In consequence, they embrace data-picking: dispersed actors using information and communication technology to get what they want. But registration (which hierarchists are only lukewarm about) can also be supportive of this consumerist view of the citizen, since it pushes through the demand signal that traditional (i.e. hierarchist) government is often said to lack. Discussion of preferences (which, of course, is what egalitarians see as so essential) is neither necessary nor desirable. Mature individuals, individualists are convinced, can make up their own minds and should be encouraged to do so. The *informed marketplace* is the individualists' utopia: a teeming bazaar where information signalling the demands of individual citizens is continually matched with information signalling the supply of goods and services. A necessary condition for this is that preferences and needs not be defined in a hierarchical or communal way.

- Schalken (1993) describes a 'citizen survey' of the Dutch municipality of Alkmaar. This survey, which canvassed the views of a representative sample of the population on

a limited number of issues relating to the municipality's delivery of services, is a good example of market research in public administration. The questionnaire was delivered by post and, after a judicious lapse of time, collected by people who were able to help those citizens who were having difficulties filling in their forms. The response rate (roughly 70 per cent) was gratifyingly high, and the questionnaires were then processed by information and communication technology applications that had been developed specifically for market research.

Citizens, for instance, were asked whether they were interested in public service delivery by cable, and which services by cable (video on demand, for instance) they preferred. They were also asked how satisfied, or dissatisfied, they were with the service provided by the local police department. The information flow in these surveys (they are carried out on a yearly basis) is of the registration pattern. The centre (the municipality) collects information from distributed citizens, and both the information and the ends to which it is applied relate to utilitarian values (the police providing a service' rather than 'enforcing the law', for instance). The interests of citizens are regarded as consumer interests and, once the centre has a clear view of these preferences, public services can be better adjusted to them.

- Much the same inspiration lies behind the PIGA system: the Public Information Municipality of Amsterdam. Data-picking, however, is the information-handling style within this system, which can be accessed via the Internet and which has the 16 sub-municipalities in Amsterdam co-operating in helping citizens find the right data, the right 'pigeon-holes' and the right addresses. A vast amount of information—addresses, phone numbers, hours of business, the various municipal organisations and their areas of responsibility together with schedules of their meetings, the non-municipal organisations operating in the areas of social work, culture and education, and so on—can be retrieved, on demand, by means of a keyword which is itself included in a thesaurus.

These few examples show how the simple scheme of inspiration and support between technological applications and cultural patterns allows us to sort out what is happening within what is uncritically called teledemocracy in a way that subsumes the Athens-or-Orwell framing into just one of its four corners. We can now see how it is that each solidarity conjures up a particular kind of technological application, which then lends support to the particular idea of democracy that it also conjures up. It is never an evenly balanced process; sometimes one solidarity and its supporting applications charges ahead, while the other kinds find themselves undermined. Nor do the solidarities always get it right; sometimes they misjudge the cultural affinities of a particular technological development, and sometimes the technological development itself is somewhat ambivalent.

- In 1997, the London Borough of Brent embarked on a 'budgetary consultation' that inadvertently combined individualistic and hierarchical inspirations. It opened an online facility on the Internet and invited residents to comment on the budget, to indicate their choices, and also to enter into debate over the underlying issues. The

results were not binding on Brent's councillors, but the explicit intention was that they would help guide the councillors in their setting of the levels of taxation and spending for the next year.

The individualistic inspiration of this budgetary consultation seems obvious: residents—one person, one vote—canvassed for their opinions and preferences on a one-to-one basis: registration. The preferences were aggregated by simply counting them, instead of being integrated through a process of discussion and consensus (*see* March and Olsen 1989), which clearly rules out conversation: the pattern of information flow inspired by and supportive of the egalitarian solidarity. But there was nothing binding about these aggregated preferences. From the start, Brent made it clear that this was just an experiment and that the way in which its results guided decisions (indeed, whether they guided them at all) was entirely up to the elected councillors. The system therefore ended up supporting the indirect relationship between the ruling élite and the complaisant residents that is characteristic of guardian democracy, whilst attempting to pursue that goal by means of a technological application that is supportive of protective democracy!

So the cultural analysis of ambiguous applications is not fundamentally different from the analysis of clearly biased applications. It takes more time, and produces more layers and nuances, but the categories used in the analysis—the various varieties of democracy and the four information-handling styles—remain the same. Cultural Theory thus enables us to stop thinking in terms of simple Athens-or-Orwell-type outcomes and helps us to grasp an erratic and never-ending process: a process that is continually being pulled this way and that between a plurality of 'attractors', never settling down, never repeating itself, and never arriving at an outcome (Snellen 1994). We can never predict where this complex process will go, but we can understand enough about it (about its 'attractors', in particular) to be able to discourage it from straying away from the contested terrain where all the preferred forms of democracy—guardian, participatory and protective—are in health rude enough for them to be able to square up to one another and slog it out.

Expressed in slightly more scholarly terms, the approach we have developed encourages us to see that cultural pluralism can be harnessed in such a way as to stimulate the process that Sabatier (1987) has called 'policy-oriented learning'. Each solidarity, on its own, is vulnerable because of its selective attention. Institutional arrangements ('clumsy institutions', as they are sometimes called; see the final chapter in this volume), that somehow prevent any of the solidarities from being excluded and, at the same time, stimulate argument between them, reduce the risk of cultural entrapment and increase the possibilities for multi-loop learning. Viewed in this light, the cultural pluralism that currently pervades the design and use of new media for public policy-making is an encouraging sign.

Notes

1 A now little-used word meaning 'obliging civility'.

2 Orwellian surveillance and control, as East Germany's Stasi shows, does not have to wait for the new technology. A large building, a well-organised network of informants, and an archaic card index system are all that is needed! Conversely, the revolution that overthrew the Shah's regime in Iran, where the Shah controlled the press, radio and television, was achieved by the disgruntled merchants and artisans in the bazaars, supported by the technology of the tape recorder.
3 The nature of this thin line, and the organisational dynamics that carry groups across it, is, at present, a largely unresearched topic: one that might well repay investigation in the Internet context. In focusing on the democratic potential of the Internet we should not lose sight of the sensationally anti-democratic activities that it also supports.
4 This argument also gains support from those individualists who see 'off-planet' banking, and even more routine commercial transactions, not developing if the Internet remains unregulated.

9
NATIONAL POLITICAL CULTURES IN THE EUROPEAN UNION[1]

Virginie Mamadouh

How do we grasp the similarities and differences between the national political cultures of the member states of the European Union? Cultural Theory, we will argue, helps us to do this, but first it needs to be developed beyond the stage that has been reached by those we will call 'the pioneers'.[2] Cultural Theory, in offering an understanding of the way preferences, interpersonal relationships and strategies for action are interrelated, enables us to address political culture, not as a bunch of disembodied mental orientations towards politics, but as a coherent combination of meanings and practices. This is a great improvement on other approaches to political culture, but there are some serious confusions in the way: in particular, the pioneers' failure to consistently carry through their rejection of the conventional definition of political culture.

These confusions are confronted in the first section. The second section deals with the link between political culture and what the pioneers refer to as ways of life, arguing that political culture should be understood as the *specific pattern of relations between ways of life in a community that shape its political domain,* rather than as orientations to politics (the conventional definition) or as a synonym for ways of life (the pioneers' definition). The third section presents a typology of political cultures (in terms of this new definition) that is grounded in Cultural Theory, and the final section offers an application of this typology to the member states of the European Union.

Confusion amid the clarification

In contrast to conventional usage, in which the term 'political culture' refers to preferences and values as manifested at the national level,[3] Cultural Theory focuses on the way specific cultural biases are associated with specific patterns of interpersonal relations and specific strategies for action. Political culture, therefore, is much more than values and attitudes, because values and attitudes are always closely linked both to the various ways in which we bind ourselves to others and to the different ways of behaving that these combinations of cultural bias and social organisation render reasonable and morally justifiable. Only when all three are mutually supportive, the argument runs, will the resulting *way of life* (or *form of social solidarity,* to use the more recently favoured terminology) be able to achieve viability. Cultural Theory, as the pioneers point out, is, properly speaking, a theory of socio-cultural viability. Culture, in consequence, is no longer a

residual variable to be dragged in when other explanations—economic, organisational, demographic and so on—fail; it is at the very core of politics.

In the conventional approach, the cultural variety is *between* countries; in Cultural Theory it is *within* each of them, and the differences between countries are to be understood in terms of the differing proportions and patterns of interaction of these ways of life that are common to them all. Cultural Theorists, in consequence, have been largely preoccupied with opening up that which the conventional students of political culture have lumped together, and they have not yet devoted much time and effort to what might be called 'Step 2': comparing countries by contrasting their combinations of ways of life[4] (which, of course, is what we wish to do in this chapter).

From ways of life to political culture: The Cultural Theory two-step

Yet, the pioneers have continued to use the term 'political culture' while rejecting its conventional meaning. Schwarz and Thompson (1990), for instance, argue that the ways of life are *cultural* (because they are cognitive) and *political* (because they organise actions). In consequence, they are political cultures, and Thompson, Ellis and Wildavsky (1992) similarly insist on speaking of political cultures (in the plural) when they are referring to the contending ways of life that, in different proportions and patterns of interaction, give rise to what are conventionally called political cultures. There are two ways of resolving this confusion. In the first, we continue to use political culture as a synonym for way of life (or form of social solidarity) and coin a new term (the pioneers sometimes speak of 'regimes') when we move to Step 2. In the second (and this is the one we propose to take), we use ways of life (or forms of social solidarity) when talking about Step 1 and reserve political culture for Step 2. This retains the usage established by the conventional approach, but it does require some redefinition in order to take account of Step 1. The political culture of a country, we suggest, is best understood as the pattern of relations between the ways of life that shapes its political domain.

Such an approach comports with Ágh's (1996:127) definition of political culture as 'a set of competitive sub-cultures' (with Cultural Theory providing the universally valid typology of the sub-cultures in terms of its ways of life) and it focuses our attention on the interactions within that set. Relations, for instance, can be hegemonic (when one way of life dominates the entire political domain), co-operative, conflictual or non-existent (when each way of life dominates a segregated section of the political domain). Over time, these interactions generate the political domain and shape the political institutions. Political culture, defined in this way, is not just about orientations towards politics (the conventional definition), nor is it equated just with the ways of life (as the pioneers have argued); it is, rather, one step on from the ways of life, and much more animated than are orientations. It is the political manifestation of culture in a community.

By defining political culture as a study object, not a theoretical concept, we can use Cultural Theory to clarify the two-stepped nature of what is going on. We can accept the uniqueness of each political culture (Step 2) whilst using Cultural Theory's universally valid tool—the typology of ways of life (Step 1)—to understand that uniqueness.

Requisite plurality

Cultural Theory argues that the fivefold plurality is essential, because each way of life needs the others to define itself against. It also argues that decision-making (at the national and other levels) that encompasses this plurality will be more effective, though messier, than when one or more of the Voices' is excluded. The claim, we should note, is that the five ways of life exist everywhere, not that they contribute equally to social life. One or two may dominate the political domain and exclude the others from the sphere of social activities. Indeed, political institutions often neglect cultural pluralism, and some Cultural Theorists make a living (not a very good one, we hasten to add) telling policy makers that they should make themselves less tidy (for example, the reflexive policy maker and the responsive citizen in Schwarz and Thompson 1997, *see also* Thompson, Rayner and Ney 1998). The political arena, clearly, is not simply a one-to-one reproduction of the cultural plurality that exists within the community. Nor, conversely, is it uninfluenced by that plurality. In other words, there is always some selection; the political arena, far from merely juxtaposing the ways of life, is itself shaped by their interactions. How, then, does this selection happen?

The pioneers argue that a way of life, on its own, is vulnerable: it has to fight on more than one front. The 'active' ways of life[5] (hierarchy, individualism and egalitarianism) are able to lessen their vulnerability by reaching out for cultural allies. Such alliances, the theory predicts, will sooner or later become unstable (because of their inability to draw on the wisdom and experience that is contained in the ways of life they have excluded) and Ellis and Wildavsky (1989) have drawn on this dynamic of alliance formation and destruction in their detailed study of presidential leadership in the United States up to the Civil War.[6] However, the pioneers have been less clear about who is really voicing a cultural bias. Is it individuals or is it groups? And at what level do these adherents of the ways of life join forces: in discourses or in actions, in organisations such as political parties (for instance, Realos and Fundis in the German Green Party or hierarchists and individualists in the pre-Civil War Whig party), in parliament or in office (as in the presidency for James Monroe), or at the level of the whole society (for example Swedish Social Democracy)?[7] All of the above, and more, Cultural Theorists maintain.

So Cultural Theory is saying that cultural dynamics are independent of social scale. But, of course, the cultural dynamics at one scale level (the household, say) will quite likely be rather different from those at another scale level (the nation state, say). Another way of putting this is to say that there are cultural dynamics *at* each scale level and *between* scale levels, and this, of course, is the complex process that we need to be aware of in moving from ways of life to political cultures.

Varieties of pluralism

It is important to distinguish cultural pluralism from the conventional idea of political pluralism. The distinction between cultural dynamics and social scale enables us to discern the cultural plurality within any political actor. In the arena of national politics, for instance, a party may be understood as an adherent of a certain way of life interacting with

another in a specific alliance; but if the party itself is the arena under study, it will appear to be an alliance of adherents of different ways of life, which in turn, …and so on. And even the individual participant, if we zoom in further, may shelter an alliance of ways of life.[8]

Ellis and Wildavsky (1989), to take a specific example, focus on two extremes of scale —an individual (the president) and a national arena (the pre-Civil War United States). They conceive leadership as the 'art of building and sustaining cultural coalitions', and then assess the performance of presidents—from Washington to Lincoln—in terms of the cultural dilemmas they had to resolve. Such dilemmas are not fully separable from the presidency (any more than leaders are fully separable from followers). They are therefore shaped by what Ellis and Wildavsky call *cultural propensity* (a president's identification with one or more of the ways of life), *cultural context* (the relative strengths of the contending ways of life) and *historical situation* (the path-dependence inherent in the legacy of the former president, together with contemporary events which are perceived as threatening one or more ways of life and strengthening others).

We can now begin to see how it is that a national political culture is much more than an alliance, on a specific policy issue, between protagonists of different ways of life. Rather, it is the pattern of successive alliances embedded in a specific cultural context. It should therefore be seen as a dialogue, or conversation, between ways of life (and alliances of ways of life)—a dialogue in which some cultural biases are loudly voiced and others are muted, either because they are scarcely present (and so have few interpreters) or because they have no access to the political arena (their interpreters have no voice). The first reason is related to cultural context (the proportions of the adherents of the ways of life); the second involves selection: the filtering effects of the political arrangements.

If we wanted to analyse the evolution of the political culture of a specific community, we could infer the typical responses to political issues regarding the shape of the political domain for each way of life and then use these to appraise the arrangements in that community (as has been done for types of leadership in Wildavsky 1984, for budgetary cultures in Webber and Wildavsky 1986, for models of democracies in Wildavsky 199 la, 1993a, and for policy preferences in Schwarz and Thompson 1990:66–7). But to compare national political cultures we are going to need some 'fixed points': some patterns of relations between ways of life that are in some way 'typical' or 'pure'.

Identifying typical political cultures

Rather in the way that a triangle (indeed, any polygon) can be characterised either by reference to its apices or its sides, we can generate a typology of modes of regulation of the political domain in terms of exclusion by just one way of life (the apices) or by an alliance of two ways (the sides).[9] Since these are typologies of dominance, we have a problem with one apex: the fatalistic way of life. Fatalism cannot dominate—indeed, it is often stabilised by the domination of other ways of life—but, when it is present in large quantities, it does generate some typical political cultures. We will come to these after we have considered those that are typical of the various forms of dominance.

Political cultures dominated by just one way of life

Cultural Theory's main contribution to political science (as is explained in the introductory chapter of this volume) is in its treatment of the various socially viable ways in which the line between the political and the non-political can be drawn. It therefore allows us to consider, in rather extreme terms (the apices and sides of the polygon, as it were), the range of outcomes of the never-ending struggle between these different drawings of this crucial line.

- A political culture entirely dominated by individualism (and therefore successfully rejecting the other two active ways of life) would imply a political domain reduced to nothing. Such an *anarchist* political culture—'I decide what I want to do', as Jensen (this volume) has characterised it—is only conceivable in a cultural context where the individualist way of life has (for a time) succeeded in marginalising the others. Its success, however, is its downfall; unable to police conflicts (internal and external), or even to enforce the law of contract that is so vital to the market relations of its adherents, it is unlikely to endure. The individualist way of life will therefore have to seek cultural allies to perform these vital tasks that it itself is incapable of; if it does not loosen its stranglehold on the political domain it risks losing it completely.
- A political culture entirely dominated by egalitarianism would imply a political domain so expanded as to encompass all social life. Such an *enclavist* political culture decide 'we decide what we want to do'—is only conceivable in a cultural context where the egalitarian way of life has (for the moment) outweighed all the others. It may be able to cope with internal conflict (if only through schism, with the dissidents being expelled and then forming a new enclave), but its schism-proneness, combined with the difficulties of achieving direct consent and universal participation within large populations and territories, make it more viable at the local level than at that of the state. If there is an external enemy, however, or if it can conjure one up, then it may become more durable than the anarchist political culture. Nevertheless, the egalitarian way of life, like the individualist, is likely to seek cultural allies to compensate for its blindspots. Otherwise the political domain will be taken over by others, and reduced in its scope in the process.
- A political culture entirely dominated by hierarchy is likely to be *totalitarian*: 'they decide what we should do'. The hierarchical way of life can impose its authority in the political domain (by capturing the 'commanding heights of the economy', for instance) even if it is not prevalent within the cultural context. But, if it then succeeds in excluding the other ways of life, it is no longer responsive to criticism (from the egalitarian way of life) or to competition (from the individualist way of life). As it becomes more and more authoritarian so it becomes less and less able to accommodate change. Total system collapse, sooner or later, is inevitable.

Indeed, the pioneers (Wildavsky 1987:18; Thompson, Ellis and Wildavsky 1990: 87–8) point to 'bleeding Kansas' (individualism), the Red Khmers in Cambodia (egalitarianism) and the Soviet Union (hierarchy) as illustrations of how destructive even an approach to a

unicultural state of affairs is likely to be. These three forms of dominance, clearly, are not easily achieved. Moreover, it is likely that, in each of the above cases, pockets of fatalism will expand as the single active way of life drives out the other two. We will consider these 'hybrid' outcomes presently. Indeed, what with the instabilities inherent in each unicultural type, and the probability that if it does manage not to collapse it will hybridise with fatalism, there is little chance of our ever seeing one. But this does not render this typology worthless. We do not come across much elemental sodium or chlorine in our daily lives (fortunately) but without an understanding of those elements we could make little sense of the sodium chloride (common salt) without which our daily lives would not be possible![10] It is in this sense—as the basis for the more stable combinations that they give rise to—that this first part of our typology is of value.

Political cultures dominated by alliances

That a unicultural state of affairs is unattainable does not stop it being passionately desired. Utopias spring eternal, their unattainability ensuring that we always end up with some sort of 'resultant' of these forces, each of which is trying all the time to push the line between the political and the non-political to the position where it wishes it to be.

- A political culture dominated by an alliance between hierarchy and individualism is a political market assisted by a bureaucracy that creates optimal market conditions. It is close to what Elazar (1970, 1984, 1994) has described as the 'individualistic sub-culture' but which, because of the unicultural connotations, we have renamed the *entrepreneurial* political culture (Mamadouh 1997). A lot, of course, depends on just how much bureaucratic intervention the two parties to the alliance agree is needed to achieve optimal market conditions. Very little, gives us classic liberalism (in the US sense of the term); rather a lot, gives us *the establishment* (in the UK sense of the term).

  This alliance, in combining the two manipulative ways of life, seems to promise stability, but it does exclude egalitarianism which it needs to keep itself honest and equitable. Where this alliance *is* stable we usually find that the egalitarian way of life is quite strong and active, but unacknowledged.
- A political culture dominated by an alliance between hierarchy and egalitarianism is a commonwealth administered by a bureaucracy. It is close to what Elazar has described as the *moralistic* political culture. The public domain will likely take in much of social life, with the egalitarian component keeping the hierarchical component accountable and responsive, and all the time watching for interventions that threaten individual or local community empowerment. The hierarchy, for its part, can help ensure equality of condition in those larger-scale settings where direct consent runs into difficulties. Such an alliance is probably less easily stabilised than that between individualism and hierarchy, because only one of the partners is manipulative, the other holding itself together by criticising the inequalities that hierarchies (and markets) inevitably institute. Both partners, of course, can find it easier to live together if there is some individualistic pragmatism to take the sharp edges off their antagonistic moralities, but

they also come together in refusing to acknowledge the distinctive morality that underlies that pragmatism.

- The alliance of egalitarianism and individualism is more problematic. Where the other two alliances can deal with internal surprise (providing the challenge can be expressed as a new market or a new moral, respectively) and with external threats (thanks to the hierarchy which can conscript all those self-seekers, in the first case, and avert the Masada-like mass suicides, in the second) the partners to this alliance have diametrically opposed ambitions for the scope of the political domain, and can agree only on the desirability of empowering the individual by repelling the hierarchy. However, this alliance can be viable in situations where people are so spread out and self-sufficient that internal surprises seldom arise, and where there are no enemies at the gate. So this is a *frontier* political culture: families of citizens, each beavering away in and around its little house on the prairie, and coming together only for a barn-raising, a posse or a lynching.
- Finally, what about the triple alliance that, on the face of it, would get round all the problems that beset the three pairwise alliances? The trouble, however, is that each pairwise alliance is based on the partner ways of life foregrounding what they have in common and backgrounding what sets them apart, but a three-way alliance would have to background everything: there is *nothing* that all three active ways of life have in common! This, as Wildavsky (1993a) was always at pains to point out, is the great paradox, and challenge, of democracy.

  The key to stability in such a *pluralistic* political culture is the ability of constituents of the three rationalities to convince themselves that they are living in one or other of the three pairwise political cultures. Therefore the pluralistic political culture can be conceived as one of the alliances distinguished above where the third active way of life is well represented in the cultural context and never excluded from the political arena. Indeed, a specific label may well be redundant. This triangular pattern can be conceived (as we have already conceived it) as a moralistic political culture with a well represented individualistic component, or an entrepreneurial political culture with a strong egalitarian undercurrent, or a frontier political culture with enough latent hierarchy to be able to survive once the frontier begins to close. It is therefore probably more useful to distinguish between these possible combinations, while at the same time bearing in mind the paradoxes that each contains, than to try to merge them into a single pluralistic type that can have nothing explicit with which to hold itself together. All of this, of course, leads us to ask whether fatalism might make a difference.

Political cultures characterised by high levels of fatalism

Fatalism, though of no use as an ally, is nevertheless important to the active ways of life because it is a resource—a reservoir of potential supporters—that they compete over. Though fatalism itself is voiceless, each of the active ways of life has its distinctive interpretation of the fatalists' predicament, which it draws on in its attempts to recruit them to its camp, and which enables it to claim to be speaking on their behalf. It is,

however, a two-way flow, because each way of life is also producing fatalists: markets setting entry fees so high that those who have difficulty scraping them together see little point in competing, hierarchies treating the lower orders as 'cannon fodder', and egalitarian groups demanding levels of commitment that some of their members cannot muster. So the fatalists are always with us, sometimes in considerable numbers.

- A hegemonic hierarchy, combined with fatalism, gives an arrogant-cum-resigned political culture—'We pretend to work and they pretend to pay us', to quote the old Soviet joke. With the apathy of the fatalistic way of life limiting the political domain, and with the lack of dynamism that is so characteristic of a complacent élite and an unrebellious underclass, we have something close to (if not one and the same as) Elazar's *traditionalist* political culture. Such a political culture is never indifferent to individualism and egalitarianism because, no matter how ill-represented these ways of life may be, they threaten to set things in motion, thereby endangering the control of the hierarchy over its fatalistic 'partner'.
- Large doses of fatalism, in combination with each of the other two active ways of life, similarly limit the political domain, though political scientists will probably have to look outside their usual fields of study for examples. New Guinea Highlands societies, with their boom-and-bust cycles of ceremonial pig-giving, and the highland Burma cycles of *gumsa* and *gumlao,* alternate between individualism-cum-fatalism on the upturn ('Big Men' and 'Rubbish Men') and egalitarianism-cum-fatalism on the downturn (when people look to their kin-groups rather than to the Big Man for support [Thompson, Ellis and Wildavsky 1990:122–3]). Exotic though these examples may sound, they do have relevance for one of the major features of Western economies: the business cycle (Thompson 1979:ch. 9) which has long been recognised as a powerful engine of political cultural change.
- A consideration of the various limitations of the political domain when each of the three pairwise alliances is accompanied by large doses of fatalism similarly sheds an interesting new light on some political cultural differences that have long been familiar to political scientists. A *clientelistic* political culture, for instance, arises when we have fatalism combined with an alliance of hierarchy and individualism. Such a political culture is more dynamic than the traditionalist political culture (just hierarchy and fatalism) because its elites are organised into networks that compete with one another to incorporate the fatalists. It differs from the entrepreneurial political culture (just hierarchy and individualism), whose politicians and civil servants are professional (tied by a contract to their constituencies), in that the ties between the members of the élite and their followers are personal: the patron *knows* his clients. Such a political culture can be stable over quite long periods, and can also act as a transitional stage between a traditionalist and an entrepreneurial political culture.

  Similar lines of reasoning can be applied to the other pairwise alliances, when combined with large doses of fatalism. We got a *paternalistic* political culture when a moralistic political culture is altered by a large influx of fatalists, and an *obstructive* political culture when a frontier political culture is transmuted by similar inflow.[11] In the latter case, egalitarianism and/or individualism are the most prevalent rationalities within

the fatalist-rich cultural context, but the political domain will be shaped by the strategic choices of the hierarchists. In such a political culture, the active solidarities are likely to be highly competitive and exclusive because each is struggling to incorporate the fatalists. We use the label 'obstructive' because of the lack of trust and the unwillingness to accept political institutions. With highly conflictual relations between its constituent ways of life, and with any alliances subjected to loudly voiced rejection, this political culture is characterised by abrupt (revolutionary and conter-revolutionary) changes.

The point we wish to make from all of the above is that Cultural Theory helps us to understand just how complex and subtle political cultural patterns and transitions are. Returning to our chemical analogy, we can usefully see this Cultural Theory typology as the political science equivalent of the periodic table (*see also* Eckstein 1997:29). Chemists, before they understood the elements and their combinatory logic, had recognised all sorts of substances—some of which were elements (like sodium and chlorine) some simple compounds (like salt) and some foul-smelling potions that would baffle even today's organic chemists. But, once they had the periodic table, they could make sense of what they had: putting like with like, identifying elements and compounds that should be there but that they had not yet identified, and tipping the foul-smelling potions down the sink. The Cultural Theory typology, we are suggesting, does much the same for us.

National political cultures in the European Union

All of the member states[12] in the European Union are presently Western European democracies, in that there is at least some hierarchy (all maintain quite large state bureaucracies), some individualism (all organise general and regular elections) and some egalitarianism (all have some kind of welfare state). The political cultures are in Wildavsky's terms (Wildavsky 1985, 199la, 1993a; Webber and Wildavsky-1986:27–8), pluralistic, as opposed to those of countries where the political domain does not allow for so much cultural plurality (nations with the word 'democratic' in their titles, for instance). Nevertheless, these political cultures are not necessarily 'balanced', in the sense that all the ways of life are represented in equivalent proportions. The typology outlined above can therefore be used to differentiate meaningfully between them: to sort them out according to the different ways in which these pluralistic political cultures are 'off-balance'.

Our method focuses on the manifestations of political culture (as opposed to measures of cultural context, or detailed accounts of the ongoing 'conversation between ways of life and alliances in each national political arena). Working on the assumption that no single indicator is likely to be a sufficient marker, we find variations in electoral systems, in the roles of political parties, in the roles of political representatives, and in the proportions of different categories of person in parliamentary politics (women, for instance, and members of ethnic minorities) particularly interesting and, most importantly, accessible in terms of data.[13] In taking this methodological approach we need to guard against two pitfalls.

- Similar cultural preferences may produce very different outcomes under different historical conditions. Conversely, countries may share look-alike institutions but for different reasons, and political actors in different settings may use different moral justifications for essentially the same actions. Also, 'stolen rhetoric'—using the arguments of a rival way of life (for instance, when nuclear power is justified by ecological arguments) for short-term strategic gain—can muddy the waters.[14]
- Since political culture is always a process, rather than a state, we need to be aware of the period during which our characterisation of a national political culture is fairly valid. When, in other words, did the current 'conversation' start? The date is likely to be different for each country. Some, obviously, have more sinuous histories than others regarding the delimitation—both territorial and institutional—of their political domains. Is the reunification of Germany a transformation so full of consequences that we should draw a line between the political cultures before and after 1990? If so, then what about the partition in 1949? And is the establishment of a constitutional monarchy in Spain a change so radical that we have to discern two Spanish political cultures? These, of course, are questions that lend themselves to resolution by the sorts of empirical approaches that Cultural Theory makes available. So they do not invalidate the approach, but we do need not to forget about them.

In our political cultural panorama of the European Union, the member states are clustered into groups that correspond to some of the political cultural types we have described above. All, as it were, are off-balance, and the countries in each grouping are off-balance in much the same way.

- The political culture of the United Kingdom fits well with the entrepreneurial type. Though it is the only state without a written constitution (some, like Burke, would replace 'though' with 'because') it has the longest record of political stability. Parliamentarism was introduced very early, but universal suffrage was achieved rather late; it was the last country to abolish plural voting, and its Upper House still includes a hereditary peerage. The British Parliament is a deliberative assembly that is renowned for its tumultuous debates, and the electoral system expresses fully this entrepreneurial spirit. The United Kingdom is the only country in the European Union to organise its elections along the lines of a race meeting: first past the post, winner takes all.[15] Even the preliminary selection of candidates is a 'no holds barred' competition inside each constituency organisation. The legitimacy of representatives is based on a single, knock-out principle: they have won the most votes.

  Despite the existence of smaller parties, it tends to be a 'two horse race', with the Conservative and Labour Parties as the front runners for the past 50 or so years. Political careers are specialised, and there are very few women in parliament. Group cohesion in parliament is strong, and the polarity between government and opposition is exemplary in that its clear-cut yet civilised nature and the quality of the debates it gives rise to, is often much admired by those who look on Westminster as the 'mother of parliaments'. Representatives have strong ties with their constituents, in the sense that constituency work is seen as important, with much time being spent in

constituency 'surgeries' (many of the 'patients', of course, not having voted for their MP). Turnout at general elections is middling and political participation is moderate. In the British 'conversation, the individualist voice is much quieter than in the American political culture, and the egalitarian almost speechless.

- The political cultures of the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, and to some extent Germany, fit the moralistic type, but each with its own characteristics. What they have in common is the early introduction of universal suffrage and the use of a proportional system to elect political representatives. Their parliaments are working parliaments where much of the legislative work is done in standing committees. They have multi-party systems, with strongly organised and disciplined parties. Representatives are professional politicians, in the sense that they often pursue a career in politics, and there is a high percentage of women in parliament. Governments are formed by coalitions of parties, and group cohesion in parliament is strong. Clientelism is limited, and the turnout in elections is rather high. Other forms of political participation–'*Bürgerinitiative,* for instance—are well represented, and new social movements (especially the environmental, peace and women's movements) have little difficulty in making themselves heard.

  The hierarchical voice seems louder in Sweden and Finland than in the Netherlands and Denmark where, over the last two centuries, individualism has been an occasional ally of egalitarianism (both have had successful antiauthoritarian social movements in the 1970s, and both have two electorally relatively strong liberal parties). It may well be that The Netherlands' and Denmark's experience of an externally imposed authoritarian regime, during the Second World War, has discredited the hierarchical bias.[16]

  Germany, as we might expect given its tormented political history, is less easily typed. The German electoral system is mixed, with proportional representation (which we expect in a moralist political culture) being used to elect only half the representatives (and with a high threshold [5 per cent] to keep anti-systemic parties out of parliament) and the others being elected by straight majority. In consequence, it is often a 'two horse race', with 'third parties' in the Federal or the Länder coalitions (traditionally the Liberal FDP and, for a decade, the Greens) sometimes failing to pass the threshold. Indeed, the German political culture seems to have a fairly strong individualistic voice and may be more adequately described as a mix between the moralistic and the entrepreneurial culture types. It might even be more appropriate to label it 'pluralistic', in that it seems to be the least 'off-balance' political culture in Europe.
- Ireland, Belgium, Luxembourg and Austria have shifted during the past decades from a traditionalistic political culture towards a more dynamic and competitive clientelistic one. Again there are substantial differences. The Irish party system is not polarised at all. The two principal parties are both Catholic and nationalist, divided on the issue of the partition of the island at the time Eire gained independence, and the Labour party is very small—a situation sometimes referred to as 'politics without social basis'. Also unique in Europe is the 'single transferable vote',[17] a device that maximises competition between candidates of the same party, and therefore encourages

clientelism. Representatives do a lot of casework for their constituents, but turnout (and political participation generally) is rather low. There are few women MPs.

In Belgium, Luxembourg and Austria, political parties are much more important than in Ireland and the party system is polarised. Universal franchise was achieved early in Austria and Luxembourg, but Belgian women were granted voting rights only after the Second World War. The electoral systems are based on proportional representation and, with voting being compulsory,[18] turnout is high. Multipartyism is the rule and, since political parties are patronage organisations, political participation is rather high. These countries have a middling percentage of women in parliament, but Belgium scores lower than the other two. Until the late 1960s, these societies were segregated into Catholic and secular blocks, each being represented in the political arena by its political party, and each party providing patronage for its adherents. With the growing secularisation of politics, however, party allegiances have become more volatile and clientelistic relations have developed around individual politicians. In Belgium, this process has been amplified by the division of the political arena (all parties split into a Walloon and a Flemish one) and the federalisation of the state.

- France and Italy display a political culture that can be typed either as a clientelistic political culture with loud egalitarian critiques, or as an obstructive political culture that is dominated by an alliance between hierarchy and individualism. France is one of the oldest states in Western Europe, but its history is marked by revolutions, counter-revolutions, and authoritarian episodes. The institutionalisation of parliament necessitated many steps, including many reversals, as did the enlargement of franchise (women being granted suffrage only after the Second World War). The electoral system also underwent numerous reforms, even very recently with the introduction of a majority system with two ballots in 1958, then a PR system in 1985, followed by a return to the majority system in 1986. France has a multi-party system, polarised into a right and a left camp, with anti-systemic parties (both communists and nationalists) electorally quite strong. Parties are poorly organised and marked by factionalism, splits and mergers. Group cohesion in parliament is mediocre. French governments are coalitions, not so much of parties, as of politicians from different political backgrounds coming together to support the Prime Minister and, except in periods of *cohabitation,*[19] the directly elected President. There are very few women in parliament. Consequently, clientelism, localism and personalism are the dominant traits, with fatalism evident in poorish turnouts and a rather low level of political participation.

  Italy was not united until late in the nineteenth century and has experienced an authoritarian regime in the early decades of this century. Nevertheless, Italian political history since 1945 has much in common with that of France, especially since the end of the 1980s, as a result of the disintegration of the hegemonic party in Italian politics, *Democrazia Cristiana*. The current reforms of Italian institutions, (including a new electoral system and the strengthened position of the President) are both instances and instruments of this rapprochement. Both France and Italy have been enlivened (convulsed even) by new social movements, but these have been resisted, not co-opted, as tends to happen in countries with a moralistic political culture.

- It is not surprising that Spain, Portugal and Greece find themselves in the same cluster. All three were in the grip of authoritarian regimes until very recently (even after the EEC had been established). They have long records of political instability, revolutionary and counter-revolutionary setbacks, and authoritarian rule. Women, as might be expected, were enfranchised very late. The electoral systems are based on proportional representation, multipartyism is the rule, and clientelism and patronage are widespread. Their present political cultures, however, seem to be developing in different directions. Spain seems to be moving towards the German model, with the two main parties firmly established and well organised (although the regional party systems are more diversified and unstable than in Germany, especially in the Basque country). Another indication of this move is the rapidly rising number of women in elected positions in Spain. The Greek and the Portuguese political cultures, by contrast, have more in common with the French and the Italian: political parties are vulnerable to factionalism, splits and mergers, and there are very few women in parliament.

Our classification, we need hardly point out, is more hypothetical than conclusive. Since a pluralist political culture (in the Wildavskian sense) is a condition for membership of the European Union, we find among its member states very little of the variation that is encompassed by our Cultural Theory typology. With no despotisms, no bleeding Kansases, no Khmer Rouges and no New Guinea Highlands excesses able to get through the doors of this highly respectable club, we have been reduced to mapping the ways in which the different member states are ever so slightly off-balance—some inclining just a smidgen towards one of these unclubbable extremes, others leaning a little towards some alliance of two of them, and so on. That they *do* lean, and lean in different directions, is clear enough. But to pin down what these different directions are, and to then tease out the different inclinations of each of the member states, is a formidable challenge for political science. Cultural Theory—its two-step and its typology of political cultures—has, we would claim, allowed us to make a start.

Notes

1 I would like to thank the participants to the ECPR Workshop in Bern in February 1997 and the subsequent meeting in Leiden in November 1997 for their helpful comments on two previous papers addressing the issue of Cultural Theory and national political cultures. I am indebted to Michael Thompson for his editorial assistance to condense the presentation of the theoretical argument in the present paper.

2 The pioneering works establishing Cultural Theory as political science are Wildavsky 1987; Ellis and Wildavsky 1989; Thompson, Ellis and Wildavsky 1990, and Schwarz and Thompson 1990.

3 E.g. *The Civic Culture* (Almond and Verba 1963, 1980) and values survey (especially Inglehart 1977, 1988, 1990, 1995; Abramson and Inglehart 1995; or the five volumes of *Beliefs in Government,* Kaase and Newton 1995).

4 An exception is Grendstad 1990.

5 Fatalism is an inactive way of life, also called 'the controlled culture' because fatalists feel controlled by prescriptions from the outside. For the other ways of life, fatalism is not a potential ally, it is not able to alleviate their own weaknesses. Nevertheless fatalism is very important because it is a resource for the competing ways of life (Thompson, Ellis and Wildavsky 1990:93–6).

6 Or, as Southerners still insist, the War Between the States. *See also* Ellis and Wildavsky 1990.

7 These examples are all provided in Thompson, Ellis and Wildavsky 1990 (on pp. 89, 100, 93 and 89).

8 *See* Tim Bale's contribution in this volume on the cultural divisions within the British Labour Party; Jouke de Vries' account of the settlement of a cultural 'war' within the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture; Lotte Jensen's discussion of the two biases in the discourse on Danish housing corporations; or, when it comes to individual political actors, the examination of the 'synthetic individual' in the analysis of environmental activists by Eero Olli (all in this volume) as well as the introductory chapter.

9 There is nothing arbitrary about such a typology, as there would be if we were just selecting points around, or segments from, a circle. Of course, Cultural Theory may be wrong; but it is wrong to argue that Cultural Theory's typologies are arbitrary!

10 The chemical analogy is Michael Thompson's.

11 For details, *see* Mamadouh (forthcoming).

12 There are currently 15 member states. Six were founding members of the European Coal and Steel Community in 1952 (France, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg), three joined in 1973 (the United Kingdom, Ireland and Denmark), three joined in the eighties (Greece in 1981, Spain and Portugal in 1986), and three joined in 1995 (Austria, Finland and Sweden).

13 *See* Mamadouh (1997) for expected scores on these indicators for some of the political cultures. These data are not necessarily framed in an interesting way from the Cultural Theory perspective. Our purpose is to assess how political culture is materialised by political institutions (formal rules and less formal norms) that regulate access to the political decision-making process, therefore data on electoral systems, political parties and political representatives are especially interesting. Comparative handbooks and readers provide numerous data on politics in general (Lane and Ersson 1994, 1996; Lane, McKay and Newton 1991; Cook and Paxton 1992; Rose 1996; Wilson 1990; Quermonne 1986; de Baecque 1991; Duhamel 1993; Mény 1993) or more specifically on elections (Mackie and Rose 1991), electoral systems (Zwager 1958; Lijphart 1994; Carstairs 1980; Parlement européen 1992), political parties (Katz and Mair 1992, 1994; Mair 1990; von Beyme 1985; Wolinetz 1988; Parlement européen 1991), parliaments (Herman and Mendel 1976; International Centre for Parliamentary Documentation of the Inter-Parliamentary Union 1986; Liebert and Cotta 1990), electoral behaviour, women's participation (InterParliamentary Union 1995; European Parliament 1997), political representatives (Bogdanor 1985; Suleiman 1986), political corruption (Della Porta and Mény 1995), and political identity (Eatwell 1997).

14 In the long term, and used consistently, stolen rhetoric inevitably undermines the way of life of its user.

15 Racing, of course, is the sport of kings (hierarchy), an activity in which skill and risktaking bring rewards (individualism), and a setting in which a fool and his money are soon parted (fatalism). Only egalitarianism, with its distaste for the polarisation between winners and losers, is excluded.

16 *See* Lockhart 1997a for this notion of discredit.

17 It is however applied to the elections of the three representatives from Northern Ireland to the European Parliament.
18 In Austria only in some Länder.
19 When the parliamentary and the presidential majority oppose each other, such as it was the case in 1986–88, 1993–95 and since 1997.

10
POLLUTION THROUGH TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT
The *praxis* of cultural pluralism in parliamentarian technology assessment

Robert Hoppe and John Grin

Introduction[1]

In the 1990s, car mobility in Western Europe has turned out not to be the unmixed blessing promised in the 1940s and 1950s. To be sure, the car has been widely adopted, and it has had a tremendous impact on public infrastructures, but at the same time, it presents clearly tangible irritations (congestion problems), threats (safety problems) and risks (environmental problems) to a majority of citizens.

Transportation in the 1990s represents an unstructured or 'wicked' problem (Rittel and Webber 1973; Mason and Mitroff 1981; Hisschemöller and Hoppe 1996) in that normative dissensus and scientific uncertainty deeply affect the description and explanation of the problem as a gap between some ideal state and present conditions. Unstructured problems easily lend themselves to the politics of meaning (Hoppe 1993) and its rhetoric of naming and framing (Rein and Schön 1993; Schön and Rein 1994). In the hope of dealing effectively with these sorts of problem, policymakers often try to train the public's attention on aspects and dimensions that, through generative metaphors, can easily be named. Such story-telling simultaneously creates a problem frame: a cluster of inextricably intertwined causal and normative beliefs 'on which people and institutions draw in order to give meaning, sense, and normative direction to their thinking and action' (Schön and Rein 1994:xiii). In mild policy disagreements, frames are shared, or overlap sufficiently for orthodox policy analysis to work. But controversies around messy and unstructurable problems invoke clear cultural biases, which are manifested in the 'contradictory certainties' of conflicting policy frames (Schwarz and Thompson 1990). They bring out the contrasts and limits of a country's political culture, and challenge its institutions and its tolerance for cultural pluralism. It is precisely for this reason that unstructured problems are so interesting from the viewpoint of cultural pluralism.

In this chapter we discuss how 'the' transportation problem was structured in recent traffic and transportation studies by the parliamentarian technology assessment (PTA) agencies of Germany *(Technikfolgenabschätzungsbüro der Bundestag, TAB),* Denmark *(Teknologi Naevnet)* and the European Union *(Scientific and Technological Options Assessment, STOA)*. Regarding the biases that are allowed or expected in their studies, these agencies, more than others in Europe (Hoppe and Grin 1998), are guided by potentially contradictory considerations. Their interest in institutional survival requires that the data,

ideas, and arguments presented in their TA studies be useable for current policy debate, as well as being absolutely impartial. In addition, there is a strong tendency among TA professionals to contribute to 'broadening' policy making through including problem aspects and stakeholders that normally get less attention.

We will apply Cultural Theory to accurately uncover how the various biases are represented in the TA studies. Although combining Cultural Theory with literature on the structure of policy belief systems (section 2) certainly improved the accuracy of our analysis of the substance of TA reports (section 3), one might argue that, essentially, we are not in need at this point of anything more than Cultural Theory *per se*. However, as we will argue in section 2, to understand *why* the biases are distributed the way they are, we need insights from political science, especially the study of policy change (Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith 1993). We provide a tentative causal model that guides our explanation (in section 4) of the 'mix of biases' in the three TA studies.[2]

Theoretical framework

Policymaking is frequently organised in *policy domains* or policy subsystems (Parsons 1995: 184–92). These are sets of interdependent policy actors from a variety of both public and private organisations, and usually spanning multiple levels of government. These actors frequently address and process a cluster of related issues (like 'traffic and transport'), and share expert knowledge in dealing with them. In their battles over problem definitions and solutions, policy actors advance normative, causal and final (goals-means) claims in more or less coherent and systematic ways. Their convictions can be conceptualised as policy frames (Schön and Rein 1994) and *policy belief systems* (Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith 1993), or coherently ordered structures of shared values, attitudes and opinions (Parsons 1995:374–9). In Sabatier's layered depiction, *deep core beliefs* involve fundamental normative and ontological beliefs, which apply to all policy domains without exception. Deep core beliefs constrain, but do not determine *policy core belief,* which are about fundamental problem definitions, policy positions and strategies for achieving core values within a specific policy domain. In their turn, policy core beliefs constrain but do not determine *secondary aspect belief,* which primarily concern preferred instrumental decisions and information searches necessary for implementing the policy strategies chosen at policy core level.

Another finding is that policy elites active in the same policy domain frequently politically mobilise and organise into two or more advocacy coalitions on the basis of sharply different belief systems. Such advocacy coalitions compete to influence governmental agencies to adopt their views in the design and implementation of public policies (Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith 1993; Sabatier and Zafonte 1999). Cultural Theory's three publicly active ideal-typical biases allow us to derive three ideal-typical policy beliefs systems, ordered in the way proposed by Sabatier (*see* Table 10.1). Since core beliefs apply to all policy domains, we have included here Cultural Theory's gut convictions concerning the organisation of society, as well as the various positions on mobility. Policy core and secondary beliefs correspond to, respectively, dominant problem definitions and preferred policy instruments. The content of the various layers has been based upon

previous work on Cultural Theory and the geographical dimension in public administration (Hoppe 1992), on Cultural Theory and car mobility (Hendriks 1994, 1996: 1–35, 66–75), and on a careful reading of all the TA-studies in our sample.

This typology will guide us in uncovering the biases in the TA studies below. What we still need is a framework for understanding why different PTA agencies display different patterns of cultural biases in their TA studies—which factors, causes, or mechanisms contribute to the mobilisation of cultural bias in the TA outputs of the PTA agencies? In general, the mobilisation of cultural bias can be conceptualised as the activation of constrained decision spaces or *opportunity structures* (cf. Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith 1993; Sabatier and Zafonte 1999; Rockman and Weaver 1993; Hendriks 1996). Policy actors' decisions and actions are either enabled through resources, or limited through constraints. Resources and constraints impact on decisions and actions through, for example, the nature of the party system,[3] routinely prescribed decision-making and implementation channels, or media-generated attention structures, political taboos and non-decision areas. Given the cultural predilections or biases of policy actors in a given policy domain, the decision space or opportunity structure obviously affects the probability of, say, an egalitarian bias being effectively represented in a TA study; the probability of one bias's dominance over others; or the probability of one or other of the possible alliances between biases.

However, opportunity structures constitute only an intermediate variable, itself affected by two kinds of independent variables (*see* Figure 10.1). *External events* influence the situational opportunity structure, much like suddenly appearing 'windows of opportunity' (Kingdon) open to policy actors who cleverly exploit them. *Cultural-institutional parameters,* on the other hand, have a long term, and potentially more lasting impact on opportunity structures. They include national political culture, which we conceive as the typical mixture and relative influence of the four ideal-typical cultures on the population within the boundaries of a national political territory. Such a cultural mix results from cultural biases' historical sequence of appearance and the dynamics of the state-formation process of a particular country (Eberg 1997; van Est 1999).

Tales of technology assessment on transportation

We use the same descriptive format for each case. First, we look into the proceeding (possibly iterative) of the extended translation (cf. Callon 1980) from societal problem into TA problem, depicted in the process/output/use box in Figure 10.1. Then we discuss how, after the TA problem has been processed by applying methods and techniques of research and analysis, the conclusions and recommendations are reached.

Teknologi Naevnet and 'The Future of Private (Car) Transport'

In January 1991 the Danish Ministry of Transport published the Danish Transport Action Plan for Environment and Development. This plan was strongly criticised for refraining from firm measures to adapt traffic plans to sustainability constraints. In October 1991, TN's staff called an expert meeting on its report. The report, 'We can't catch up.

Table 10.1 A cultural typology of transport policy belief systems

	Hierarchist/ Étatiste	*Individualist/ Market*	*Egalitarian/ Public*
Policy core values			
• re. spatial organisation	Stable, predictable part-whole pattern; preference of society preference for larger scale	Location/distance in horizontal space for vertical relationships; task performance; indifference to scale	Equally strong = equal size = rather small; preference for geared to efficient smaller scale
• re. mobility	Orderly and controlled mobility	Self-determination, individual mobility, accessibility	Equal access by all – residents, pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, public transport users – to a livable, sustainable public space
Dominant problem definition	*Chaos or stagnation*; too little, inefficiently used capacity; how to keep transport 'stream' in the 'bed' of existing transport infrastructure; *supply problem* (unless demand stretches technical possibilities)	*Shortage of space*, passable roads, useful transport information; loss of valuable time and opportunities; *supply problem* (demand is always a given)	*Excessive demand for (car) mobility*; oversized infra-structure; erosion of public space; deterioration of environment and residential areas; *demand problem* (too much supply, anyway)
Preferred policy instruments	Regulation > market	Market > regulation	Inner conviction > regulation > market
• external costs	Public acceptance of external transport costs; if unavoidable, private imposition of external transport costs	Disregard; if, unavoidable, private acceptance of, or compensation for external transport costs	Public prevention, or (as second best alternative) private imposition of external transport costs
• supply-oriented	Production of adequate supply, according to expert views	Increase supply of all possible transport modes, preferably through public funding	Resist all possible supply increases
• demand-oriented	External, administrative demand regulation through (physical, technological, legal) prohibitions, mandates	Pay for supply shortages through market regulation, i.e. individually focused pricing systems	Manage demand downward through education/persuasion (preferably) or (if need be) through administrative or market demand regulation
• favourite technology	Love of high-tech, large scale transport technologies, technical fix	Love of cars, foremost; technical fixes	Love of low-tech, small-scale transport technologies; resist technical fixes

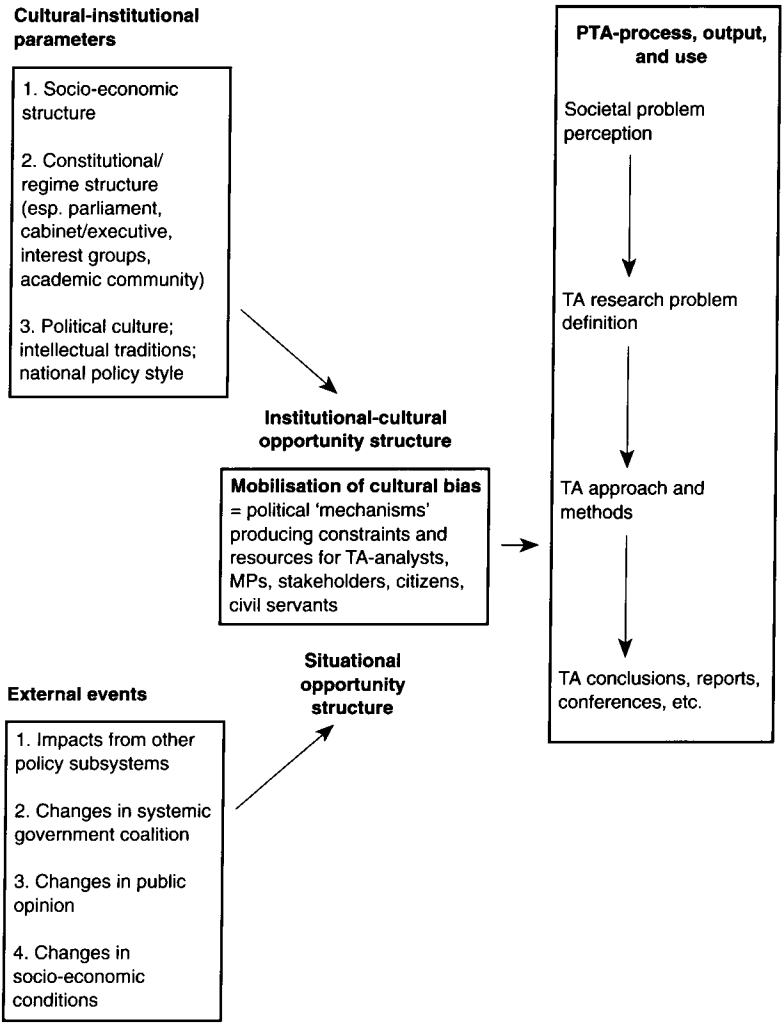

Figure 10.1 Linking institutional-cultural variables and external events to PTA-processes/ outputs

Sustainability and development on collision course in the traffic sector', was a summary and background of all the criticisms of the governments plan. After this expert meeting, TN soon decided to deal with the issue further through its well-known 'consensus conference' approach (Agersnap 1992; Grundahl 1995). It was convinced of both the urgency and the unstructured nature of the societal problem, and aware of the incompatibilities between existing traffic policy, and energy and environmental concerns. Moreover, the small expert meeting served to focus on private transport and 'green' taxes as promising venues for solutions.

In August 1992 preparations for the consensus conference started in earnest, with a project manager (Ms. Bodil Harder) who had developed a substantial interest in the topic. She became more and more convinced that 'the future of traffic' was too broad a theme in the time-span of one consensus conference. Therefore, the general question to be addressed was formulated as 'how can the Danish parliament influence private car use through transport prices?'. Four topics were proposed: (1) Would a different taxation system for passenger cars redirect car sales toward more energy efficient, environmentally friendly and safer cars?; (2) Given the strong relation between wealth and car use, is it feasible (as a public policy goal) to reduce passenger car transport?; (3) Does car mileage depend on gasoline prices? If yes, where is the balance between mobility and negative external effects?; (4) How can a different taxation system for cars be accepted, and will it be effective in encouraging a shift towards collective means of transport?

Unusually for a consensus conference, the field of discourse was largely predefined. For instance, four scenarios were going to be discussed: (1) More expensive car ownership and car travel; (2) Cheaper ownership, but more expensive car travel; (3) Making people pay for better collective transport; and, finally, a comparison of these three scenarios with (4) a business as usual scenario. Also, criteria were specified for judging the scenarios: traffic safety (in numbers of deaths and accidents), air pollution (CO_2, NO_x), energy use, traffic jams, social distribution of mobility, time use, spatial use, barrier and visual effects.

The consensus conference itself followed standard operating procedures as far as possible. The lay panel discarded most of the issues proposed by an expert panel (intelligent roads and cars; specifications for 'clean' cars) during a meeting between the two panels. The lay panel did discuss the scenarios seriously, in spite of their own and the facilitator's inclinations to go beyond, or even to disregard them. This was entirely due to the conference manager's influence, 'I really wanted them to work with the scenarios. They should write diaries about their transport habits and decisions this week, and think about the consequences if some scenario would be enforced. [...] for themselves, but also for those in entirely different traffic positions. [...] The results were then compared to the price elasticities incorporated in the quantitative scenario outputs. The conclusion was that the consequences of gasoline price variations were probably bigger than predicted by estimated price elasticities.'

After having heard experts' and stakeholders' opinions once more, the lay panel wrote the final document. It began by laying down traffic development policy goals for the Danish government: reduction of energy consumption, pollution, and car accidents; reduction of total mileage of cars; installation of a spatial planning system which would diminish the need for car transport; creation of more favourable conditions for cyclists and pedestrians; support for and improvement of public transport modes; and the strengthening of the mobility of vulnerable groups. (Teknologi Naevnet report 1993/3: 11) In order for these goals to be achieved, the lay panel opted for a 'medium proposal' which combines several elements from several scenarios: increase or double gasoline prices (over a number of years) to 12 crowns per litre; simultaneously redesign motor vehicle taxation by weight and introduce registration so as to reflect pollution effects; and introduce toll roads in the most heavily affected urban areas. However, the lay panel's

concern was not to allow an increase in total expenses for 'environmentally friendly' car owners. It is obvious that the lay panel had embraced the tax/price instrument as a result of the TA exercise. But there were also recommendations for improving public transport, stricter enforcement of stricter emission thresholds, more coordinated traffic and physical/regional planning, improved traffic safety, and supportive EU regulation.

The TAB Project 'Options for reducing the road system burden and for substitution of road traffic by more environmentally friendly traffic systems'

In March 1993, the Bundestag Committee on Research, Technology and Technology Assessment (hereafter the Committee) charged TAB with a study on mobility. The suggestion came especially from its Christian-Democrat (CDU/ CSU) members. That the Transportation Committee was not involved, added to the controversial nature of the study. Controversy focused on the issue, especially put on the agenda by the Greens and the Social Democrats (SPD), of whether or not *Verkehrsvermeidung* (traffic prevention) should be an integral part of the study.

In late 1993, after some preliminary work, TAB submitted a research outline to the Committee. This brief and rather open proposal was accepted. TAB commissioned the German Aerospace Laboratory (GAL) to perform a pre-study. GAL defined the societal problem as the controversy over measures for traffic prevention and displacement. The research questions were: What technologies and measures are conceivable, and how can these be realised in specific areas? What infrastructure efforts are needed to make people and firms switch to alternative means of transportation, such as train, ship and urban and regional public transport? What combination of measures will give the best results, optimally taking into account economic, ecological and social factors?

These questions were answered by an interdisciplinary team. The findings were organised into a common 'pedestal' of absolutely indispensable measures, to be connected, depending on political preference, to three pure' or ideal-typical strategies. The 'pedestal' included a higher fuel price, stricter enforcement of traffic rules and higher penalties for traffic violations, more attractive public transportation, and technological improvements of cars. The first 'pure' strategy concerned pricing policy: road pricing, additional increases of fuel price, differentiating road taxes according to environmental effects of cars, and so on. The underlying conviction was that in transportation the market does not take into account external costs. The second 'pure' strategy, regulation, was based on the premise that governmental intervention was necessary to allow no more traffic than deemed compatible with an agreeable living environment. The third 'pure' strategy encouraged *Umdenken* (mindshift) by the public through increasing the weight of environmental considerations in transportation decisions and stimulating the use of public transport through lower prices and better service. GAL suggested that the main study should focus on elaborating this scheme, dealing with the following central questions: What conditions are needed to realise these strategies; what opportunities do they offer, and what effects will they have on reducing the burden on the traffic network and

converting to different means of transportation? What would be an optimal mix of these three strategies?

By and large following these recommendations, Professor Herbert Passchen wrote a first design for the main study ('TAB1', hereafter), submitted to the Committee in 1994. The societal problem definition was as follows: the traffic system has become an essential part of the social and economic structure of society. Simultaneously there are adverse effects that are expected to increase with increasing traffic density. Countermeasures are gaining relevance and acceptance. It seems plausible that this approach—which differed somewhat from GAL's proposal—was chosen to anticipate the proposal's reception by the Committee.

But, although the Committee formally adopted it in September 1994, the proposal drew increasing criticism after the election of the thirteenth Bundestag, in November 1994. The new Committee considered the proposal too complex and too academic, and thus too politikfern (remote from political realities). Given these criticisms, TAB decided that it would be better to focus on a single strategy, resting on a politically appropriate mix of each of the three 'pure' strategies distinguished in the prestudy. From January 1995, it appointed Dr. Günther Halbritter to elaborate this baseline strategy *(Ausgangsstrategie)* and to co-direct the rest of the project. When the new draft was discussed, on the Committee's insistence, with its sister committee on transportation, the dispute over traffic prevention re-emerged.

In the consequent reformulation of the societal problem, traffic prevention was no longer explicitly mentioned, and individual mobility was stressed. Responding to criticism that traffic prevention had now altogether disappeared, TAB explained that the project still contained solutions that could lead to prevention. The main research questions were listed as: What is the implementability of various measures? What is their effectiveness?, and, What are their costs and side effects? Depending on the answers, the baseline strategy would eventually be amended.

Subsequently, TAB commissioned GAL and the German Institute for Economic Research to do part of the necessary research. Three scenarios were outlined in order to estimate the responses of target groups. In the first two scenarios, three types of measures were included: electronic road pricing on highways and on selected main roads; cordon pricing in urban agglomerations; and a moderate fuel tax increase. In the third scenario, road pricing was left out and replaced by a'considerable' increase in fuel tax, while cordon pricing was given the form of stronger paid parking measures and access limitations at specific times of the day. As mentioned before, at the time of writing, the TAB study is still underway, thus nothing more can be said about its final contents.

STOA and 'The Technological City. Ideas and Experiments in Urban Organisation of Mobility, Transport, Production and Services (June 1994)

The idea for the 'Technological City' (TC) project of STOA originated from Bruno Speciale. A former Italian Communist, city councillor, and civil servant of the city of Genoa, Speciale had later come to represent the party of European Social Democrats in

the European Parliament. The image of numerous motor vehicles clogging and polluting the arteries of Italy's ancient urban centres was definitely on his mind when he proposed the TC project. It is also clear that Speciale served two political career interests simultaneously: he showed that he had not forgotten his political roots, and he advanced his (successful) bid to become the next term's chair of the EP's Committee for Regional Policy. But it should not be overlooked that the EP's attitude to regional issues was, in principle, a favourable one (Westermeyer 1994:60).

For Speciale, the problem was one of finding better ways of city government. This was to be done by making an inventory of the technological and methodological options that might be employed to upgrade situations of urban degradation and to redirect the development of European cities in accordance with an environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable model (STOA 1994:1). In this respect, it was also clear from the outset that the STOA project was not about finding definitive and exhaustive solutions. Rather, the STOA study was conceived by Speciale to be a sort of 'kickoff' project. These rather modest project goals fitted the STOA Panel's procedural and budgetary constraints well. The project was awarded' a total sum of 75,000 ECUs (approximately US$ 90, 000).

In the subsequent tender procedure, EUROS, a Genoa-based institute for operations and systems analysis for urban ecotechnology, came out first. It adopted the research method selected by Speciale: making a compilation of technological and administrative experiments implemented in European cities, to illustrate that the sustainable development model of fighting urban deterioration could work.

In order to collect these 'best practice' examples, EUROS relied on its extensive network of 32 'most qualified experts'. In a set of papers written at very short notice, the following research questions were covered: What are the causes of urban unsustainability?, What new technologies can help decrease demand for mobility?, What policies can contain motorised private mobility? What 'clean' transport technologies exist?, How can the transport system as a whole be redesigned in order to improve sustainability?, What new ways of living/working and emerging organisational forms of urban service and other nonmaterial production can be observed?, How can we prevent urban pollution and the exhaustion of nonrenewable resources?, What does a model for sustainable urban development look like?, and What are the major obstacles in the sustainable development of urban systems?

The array and sequencing of these questions betray the haste in which EUROS had to work. To the extent that a central message can be distilled from the plethora of suggestions contained in the EUROS study, it is the following: innovative traffic management, making full use of 'clean(er)' transport and mobility technologies, is the key to sustainable urban development (STOA 1994:39). 'Econological' modernisation for global competitiveness is the major ideological packaging of this message to the EP.

On the basis of this study, EUROS developed some strategic conclusions regarding both the policy suggestions for the EP and the followup proposals for collaborative projects between European cities. On the basis of the policy debate in the conclusive stages of a workshop on these conclusions, EUROS listed several policy options for consideration by MEPs. The main ones were: imposition of clean urban transport

technologies (electrical, low emission vehicles) in certain parts of cities; mandatory urban energy production and consumption planning; development of EU environmental standards and certification procedures for production processes, products and urban service systems; mandatory environmental audits for large urban projects; financial support for disseminating telematics and information technologies; and use of market mechanisms to internalise external costs of environmental damage to humans, animals, the ecosystem, and property.

One recommendation, prudently labelled as 'alternative', was to use traffic planning and management systems to contain and possibly decrease (car) mobility. Finally, there were recommendations to foster efforts between European cities to jointly develop standardised indicators, methods, and instruments for urban sustainability auditing, and, generally, to systematically exchange technological and administrative knowledge about developing sustainable urban systems.

Comparing the contents of the TAs

To compare the TA contents in Table 10.2, we operationalise 'content' as: (a) the way in which the social problem was defined and translated into research questions *(p & q);* and (b) the conclusions drawn from the TA and the recommendations presented *(c & r)*. We indicate items by H, I and E when we consider a particular notion to be typically hierarchical, individualist or egalitarian, respectively. Sometimes, we indicate a mix of ideal-typical cultures; if, in such instances, a score is put in brackets, it indicates moderate weight only.

That a quarter of the cells remains empty should not come as a surprise. First, once core beliefs have been considered in the context of defining the social problem, they normally need not be restated when discussing recommendations to solve that problem (STOA). Otherwise, this may lead to a different set of assertions. This is what happened in the TAB studies; a taken for granted preference for an egalitarian core concerning traffic prevention was suddenly replaced by a strong emphasis on mobility rights. In the Danish case the lay panel emphasised egalitarian core values more than the TN staff who prepared the consensus conference.

Second, in some cases more than others, there is coupling of problems and solutions. TAB-2 is a clear case of loose coupling; TAB-1, STOA, and to a lesser extent TN, show strong couplings. It would seem that problem—solution couplings vary with analysts' perceptions of the political environment, influenced by external events (*see* Figure 10.1). Strong couplings occur either where TA analysts construct the political environment as having stable, clear-cut, well known preferences (TN), or where it is seen as unstable, with fragmented preferences over the entire political spectrum, so that TA analysts feel they have to 'give everybody his due' (TAB-1, STOA). The transition from TAB-1 to TAB-2 illuminates how TA analysts shift from strong to loose couplings in responding to a change in the political landscape by stressing their strictly neutral position and service function. Neutrality translates into not explicitly anticipating solutions when constructing the problem.

Table 10.2 Cultural biases in the contents of TA studies

Element in policy belief systems/ TA study	*Policy core: spatial organi-sation*	*Policy core: mobi-lity*	*Problem defi-nition*	*Policy instru-ments: external costs*	*Policy instru-ments: supply oriented*	*Policy instru-ments: demand oriented*	*Policy instru-ments: favourite technology*
TAB-1							
p & q	H	H	H (E)[a]	H, E[b]	H, I	H, E	H, E
c & r		H	H (E)[c]	H, E[d]	H, I, E	H, I, E	H, I, E
TAB-2							
p & q	H	H	H, I				
c & r[e]				H, E	H, I	H, I, E	H, E
TN							
p & q[f]		H	H, E	H, E		H, I, E	
c & r	H, E	H, E	H, E	H, E	H, E	H, I, E	H, E
STOA							
p & q	E	H	H, E	I	H, I (E)	H (E)	H, I, E
c & r				I	H, I	H, I	H, E

a) Problem definition by TAB and research questions in the GAL pre-study.
b) Solutions implied in the research questions of the GAL pre-study.
c) Main research question as recommended in the GAL pre-study, and problem definition in the first design as envisaged by TAB.
d) The three pure' strategies are interpreted as indicators for possible solution types.
e) The baseline strategy as indicating types of recommendations foreseen by TAB.
f) Considered here are TN's social problem definition in the broad sense (from which eco-taxation is a derivative), and topics identified for the consensus conference.

The single most striking feature in Table 10.2 is that, in *all* cases, the policy cores show strong hierarchical inclinations. The most plausible explanation is that the position of PTA institutes is tied to those of parliaments in the constitutional and governmental structure. Parliaments are the embodiment of the 'primacy of politics'; checking the executive branch, but also, somehow, 'steering' the course of societal forces, both in market relationships and purely social and private associations. In this way only options plausibly available to national parliaments and national governments are seriously considered. TA analysts working in PTA agencies are thus inherently inclined to take a helicopter's view of all relevant technological aspects concerning a transport and traffic issue, and to define problems in a balanced way from this 'elevated' position. Moreover, being comprehensive and balanced, with a niche for everything, is the political strength of the hierarchical point of view. To be sure, stressing *étatiste* preferences regarding the spatial organisation of society and mobility is far from stressing market- or public-oriented values; but the former does not *per se* exclude the latter.

In the Danish and the EU case, policy core values on transport and traffic are not strictly hierarchical. In the Danish case national political culture competes with political structure and political expediency in expressing a different value set, especially in the

transport policy domain. In Denmark a pragmatic type of egalitarianism permeates society in almost any respect (Borish 1991; Fuglsang 1993). Bridging the gap between rural regions and cities has been a traditionally salient issue in spatial and physical planning. Thus, it is not surprising that TN had to complement *étatiste* transport preferences with egalitarian ones.

Although 'national' political culture, of course, cannot explain STOA's stress on egalitarian values, *EU* political culture can, reinforced by the political inclinations of its political initiator, Bruno Speciale. Speciale, as an Italian Eurocommunist-turned-social democrat, belongs to what Wildavsky has labelled the typical West-European creed of socialism using hierarchy (state bureaucracy) to achieve egalitarian ideals. His egalitarianism was backed up, in the STOA case, by official EU policies to boost regionalism as a political and administrative force in the Community. As an essentially intergovernmental organisation, lacking supranational authority, the EU cannot but evoke egalitarian principles in justification of its regional policy initiatives (Shackleton 1991).

Looking at policy instrument preferences in Table 10.2, some interesting features stand out. First, overall, hierarchical instruments predominate. This may come as a surprise to those who believe that the neo-liberal reforms sweeping over West-European politics have deeper footprints. However, never throw away old shoes before you have new ones, appears to describe the present situation better. Yet, and second, this is not to say that instrument choice is fully compatible with hierarchical core value and problem definition preferences. Far from it; all three cases (TAB, TN, STOA) show a more or less balanced presence of all three biases in instrument choice.[4]

How can we explain the presence of all three active cultural biases in instrument choice, in spite of (strong) hierarchical core value articulation and (moderate) egalitarian elements in problem definition? STOA is an example of political expediency rooted in political regime structure, and reflects STOA's paradoxical position as simultaneously serving the European Parliament and being part of the EU bureaucracy. Its mix of biases at the instrument level reflects an institutional survival strategy to somehow serve, with very limited resources (Westermayer 1994), every party's political desires in a weak parliament where seats are allocated by an election system based on proportional representation.

Political expediency also lies at the heart of TN's selection of individualistic pricing instruments to regulate and possibly reduce private car transport. Here the explanatory factor is external events. First, there was an impact from Danish foreign policy, particularly concerning EU policies. At the time, the Danish government was lobbying on the EU level for the eco-tax. Second, it is not unlikely that anticipated changes in socio-economic conditions made the Danish government keen on prodding the European Commission in the direction of EU-wide ecotaxation. After all, the Copenhagen region and northern Jutland are bound to become the transport and traffic arteries between Scandinavia and Central and South Europe. The need to finance infrastructure and to regulate swelling transport streams requires the Danish government to expand its 'toolkit' of traffic policy instruments. In this interpretation of events, it is also understandable why TN's Board later accused its own conference manager of acting too much as a political instrument; and even told her to find another employer.

Concerning TAB, our first observation is that the methodology of the three ideal-typical strategies implied treating the policy-cultural biases on an equal footing. GAL may have proposed this strategy merely from an academic and professional point of view. Academically speaking, it is proper procedure and interesting to trace, in a logical way, the policy-instrumental implications of the three 'pure' strategies. And professionally, given the intellectual roots of TA in not taking for granted technological fixes, it is only logical to keep alive the egalitarian notion of traffic prevention. Even when these routines flew in the face of political reflexes, GAL, while formally giving in, still tacitly kept alive options which only make sense in connection with traffic prevention. Their professional and academic policy-cultural bias, of course, was tacitly supported by Greens and Social-Democrats. It is plausible[5] that PTA institutes, given the professional experience and convictions of their staff, reject technical solutions *per se* and *therefore* emphasise the need for prevention and feel comfortable in working with egalitarian instrumental assumptions, even without political support.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have described how three parliamentary TA agencies have structured 'the' problem of car mobility's threats to sustainable development. In this description we have applied Cultural Theory's typology of basic value orientations and the theory of layered belief systems (*see* Table 10.1) in discovering the degree of pluralism manifest in TA studies on traffic and transport. This combination offered us a powerful tool for mapping the distribution of cultural biases over the layers of a belief system. Without Cultural Theory, (policy) belief system theory has only one-dimensional theories like the orthodox left-right schema or Inglehart's materialism-postmaterialism schema to look for core values (*see also* Grendstad and Selle in this volume). Although these two schemata may still be of interest in voting studies, they are surely insufficient to gain insights in policy belief systems. Without belief system theory, Cultural Theory lacks precision in assessing the consistency or hybridity of belief systems, because it simply disregards the distribution of cultural biases over different layers. Thus, Cultural Theory and belief system theory jointly yield a more precise observation instrument for taking 'snapshots' of belief systems than each theory on its own.

But the combination proves theoretically powerful as well. Table 10.2 shows increasing cultural pluralism in TA reports' belief systems as we go from policy core to instrument choice. Cultural Theory appears to have difficulties in explaining this phenomenon. The compatibility condition would predict, in the long run, the elimination of non-hierarchic biases in a bureaucracy's standard operating procedures. But combining the requisite variety condition and the theory of surprises—and assuming they are applicable to our unit of analysis, i.e. one particular institution—Cultural Theory also predicts the non-viability of such a situation. Except for the statement that more biases somehow have to be present, Cultural Theory cannot generate more precise expectations. However, the theory of layered belief systems and policy-oriented learning expects both the presence of a (policy) core layer dominated by one cultural bias (say, hierarchy), and simultaneously predicts the presence of competing cultural biases in the secondary aspect layer of the

dominant belief system, because in this protective belt between-belief systems learning processes are tolerated (Majone 1989; Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith 1993).

Thus, if we let Cultural Theory's requisite variety condition and its theory of surprises be refined by the theory of layered belief systems and policy-oriented learning, we arrive at a situation more akin to our empirical findings. We would expect to find all the biases within a bureaucratic institution like a PTA agency, though with the hierarchical one usually dominant (*see* de Vries' chapter in this volume). Its TA reports, then, would reflect this in that the policy core is strongly biased towards hierarchy while instrument choice, which can be interpreted as the tangible results of the negotiations between the hierachical core and the much more plural world that it has to contract with, will display some preferences that clearly are shaped by other biases. In this way we come to understand why a bureaucratic institution displays a sustainable coexistence of hierarchical core beliefs and relations and more pluralist beliefs and implementation practices.

We have also shown how the particular mix of cultural biases comes about as a result of 'stable' factors such as the institutional locus and focus of parliaments, the national political culture, and the analytical routines and normative preferences of TA analysts (all cases), as well as more dynamic ones, such as the distribution of power between parties represented in parliament (especially TAB), and politically expedient interpretations of external events (all cases). The manner in which these factors combined in the TA studies reflects a largely 'unconscious' (Schwarz and Thompson 1990:134–5), institutionalised pattern of welding the insights from different political and policy belief systems into a particular closure of the problem. Yet, the empirical study of long-term developments in policy-oriented learning is still relatively young (Hall 1993; Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith 1993; Sabatier and Zafonte 1999; Hoppe and Peterse 1993; Eberg 1997; van Est 1999). The theory predicts the breakdown of a coherent belief system in case of random learning or too overwhelming an 'invasion' of alien biases. This may happen either in the case of massive surprises which trigger, not so much learning between antagonistic belief systems, but rapid mass conversions; or, more slowly, when external events, shifts in the distribution of resources and constraints, and long-term societal trends gradually accumulate to policy paradigm shifts (cf. Figure 10.1). None of these hypotheses is well enough theorised and researched as to offer adequate explanations for shifts in the particular mixes of cultural biases.

Yet this, we believe, is precisely the direction in which we need to go. Combining Cultural Theory and the theory of layered belief systems and policy-oriented learning as we have done here, is a first step. Instead of isolated snapshots, a series of snapshots of belief systems in one or several policy domains could yield the data for qualitative and quantitative time series analyses which might test and refine existing theories of policy-oriented learning or policy dynamics, or lead to theoretical innovations. At the same time, advances in empirically grounded theory on long-term developments in belief systems could also lend more precision and support to Cultural Theory's normative claims for cultural pluralism.

Notes

1 We would like to acknowledge our gratitude to two (then) doctoral students, René Gouwens and Joost Tennekes, for their assistance in the preliminary stages of research. Special thanks go to Emily Leyer who interviewed the STOA-coordinator, and generously allowed us to use materials originally collected for her MA thesis.

2 This analysis is based on a more comprehensive study (Hoppe and Grin 1998), which includes more PTA agencies, and also focuses on cultural biases in TA methods. In addition, the reader will find more detailed descriptions of the three cases presented below, as well as an account of our approach to data collection and analysis.

3 E.g., consider the prospects of a Green political party in the British two-party system with a first-past-the-post rule with the German multi-party system with a rule of (constrained) proportional representation.

4 In this respect, two of the other cases discussed in our comprehensive study (the French and the Dutch ones) were different in that instrument choice was fully consistent with hierarchical deep and policy core elements.

5 In our comprehensive study, it is shown that something similar happened in the British case, while our hypothesis is also able to explain some particularities of the French case.

Part 4

DEMOCRACIES

11
IMAGES OF DEMOCRACY IN DANISH SOCIAL HOUSING[1]

Lotte Jensen

In the debate on governance of public institutions, the breaking down of hierarchies is a long-standing theme, both analytically and normatively. *Analytically*', governance systems are nowadays seen as differentiated systems of mutually dependent networks, rather than as smoothly meshing arrangements of linked and nested bodies. Public service provision is viewed as being fragmented into a variety of loosely coupled functional domains (for example childcare, elderly care, town planning, housing) involving many actors linked by their various interests in that specific political sub-field and by their resources and strategies for defining and influencing it (Rhodes 1997; Kooiman 1993). Hierarchical steering is increasingly seen as an analytically ideal type rather than an empirical fact, and the image of the parliamentary chain of accountability is increasingly being questioned (Jørgensen and Melander 1992:46). *Normatively,* it is argued that hierarchical steering should give way to alternative models of governance. Two major strands dominate this normative debate. The first argues that central state regulation must be replaced by extended individual choice and exit options on a market basis (Hood 1994:2). The second argues that central steering must give way to more bottom-up democratic control and extended voice options for users and participants in functional domains (Rhodes 1997: ch. 5, and Sørensen and Torfing 1993).

Normative preferences must be scrutinised through analytical lenses. Hood (1994) criticises proponents of New Public Management (NPM) for employing a dualistic perspective that leads them to conclude that, if bureaucratic hierarchies are dismantled, individualist entrepreneurship will blossom (*see also* Thompson, Ellis and Wildavsky 1990: 79). In the same vein, this chapter addresses the normative aspect of democratic theory that implicitly assumes an inherent democratic potential in the citizenry, ready to unfold once the systemic constraints are removed. Within democratic theory, 'democratic hopes', as March and Olsen put it, 'presume that capabilities follow obligations' (1995: 121). Such hopes—that, when adequate channels for participation are created, citizens' inherent democratic potential will unfold—also underlie much legislative thinking about democracy, and the example I will focus on here is social housing in Denmark.[2]

In-depth qualitative case studies conducted in the Danish social housing sector (Jensen 1996, 1997a) suggest that the constitutional image of social housing as a participatory democratic governance system presupposes identities and skills among actors which cannot be taken for granted. Rather, these identities have to be actively constructed and

Table 11.1 Ideal-typical perceptions of political decision-making

Fatalism	*They* decide what *I* must do
Individualism	*I* decide what *I* want to do
Hierarchy	*We* are entitled to decide what *they* must do *They* are entitled to decide what *we* must do
Egalitarianism	*We* decide what *we* want to do

defended. An increasing proportion of actors in social housing have formative life experiences which do not fit the participative democratic ideals embedded in the system and promoted by its architects. This mismatch—between current democratic hopes' for that specific functional domain and the activity and understanding among the actors within it—can be explored with Cultural Theory, which provides a useful framework for clarifying why it is difficult to transform social housing estates into small democratic communities by breaking down the formal hierarchical structures of governance through legislation.

Ways of life as ways of learning about decisions

Table 11.1 constructs ideal-typical world views based on experiences, within each of Cultural Theory's four ways of life (I will not be considering the hermit), on *who makes significant decisions, on whose behalf*.

Ways of life socially structure subjective experiences of self and environment and the relationship between the two. Each way provides a distinctive patterning of experiences that makes sense for its inhabitants and, in the process, is institutionalised as taken-for-granted perceptions (March and Olsen 1989: ch. 3). Experiencing a specific way of life is at the same time learning its techniques and mastering the skills needed to cope with particular social interactions and situations. Mapping down these four world views reveals that political decision-making within each way of life provides individuals with very different experiences, as well as demanding and providing very different skills, because each structures action and social relations differently. Hierarchy, individualism and egalitarianism, in different ways, provide *active* experiences where actors make decisions, relate to others, make and break alliances and, in this process, achieve suitable skills to deal with the challenges that each of these ways of life presents (Thompson, Ellis and Wildavsky 1990:86, 98). In contrast, fatalism is a *passive* way of life: an experience of involuntary exclusion where 'they decide what I must do' and where social and political skills might as well be left unlearnt.

Hierarchy and egalitarianism are ways of *collective* action, both demanding and providing skills for dealing with other people to whom individuals are directly exposed and for whom, in different ways, they are responsible. The two ways of life differ in their internal regulatory mechanisms. For hierarchy, the internal positions and roles of members are externally defined; the group is knit together by rules and regulation. Conflict-solving mechanisms are legion because there are rules for every purpose

(Douglas 1982a: 206). The hierarchist experience is related to entitlement, and the required skills are concerned with knowledge of rules and positions. Decisions are made by those individuals in the appropriate hierarchic positions, following the relevant rules. So, 'we are entitled to decide what they must do' and, depending on the rules and circumstances, 'they are entitled to decide what we must do'.[3]

Egalitarianism is characterised by the absence of externally defined mechanisms for conflict mediation. Since there are no externally imposed rules to justify preferring one perspective over others, or to define one role as more authoritative than another, the only road to group coherence is negotiation. When consensus cannot be achieved, either the group breaks down into sub-groups or dissent is driven underground. Egalitarianism is thus a demanding form of social coordination because 'we decide what we must do'. The egalitarian experience is one of shared fate and communal responsibility. The skills needed are the ability to adopt the attitudes of others and to negotiate, grasp and organise vast amounts of information, since all have equal right to all information.

Fatalism and individualism are forms of *individualised* action. Individualism builds on the active choice of personal alliances. Fatalism, by contrast, builds on the absence of choice, the absence of alliances, and hence the absence of supportive networks. The experience of individualism is one of open options and exit opportunities to alternative bargaining arenas: 'I decide what I want to do'. The skills needed are self-reliance and the ability to bear individual risk. In contrast, fatalised experience is marked by the absence of options and the absence of support, be it through personal networks or group involvements. Neither the entrepreneurial skills connected to individualism, nor the ability to negotiate and to manoeuvre within the norms of collective action which characterise egalitarianism and hierarchism, are demanded or learned within the fatalist way of life.

How, then, do these different ways of life relate to images of democracy?

Images of democracy

As a first step we define democratising a functional domain as politicising it: we make it an arena for collective and public, rather than individual and private, decision-making. Within the four ways of life this manoeuvre will be interpreted in four ideal-typical ways (Thompson, Ellis and Wildavsky 1990:216–17).

- Within the *fatalist* way of life, democratisation will not make much difference. If there are any important decisions to be made, the fatalist experience and expectation is that they will be made by 'others', be it stronger individuals in the market, the hierarchical 'system', or a strong egalitarian group, from all of which they are involuntarily excluded.
- Within the *individualist* way of life, democratisation means diminished personal autonomy. However, if certain things have to be collectively decided, the individualist expectation is that democracy is a free political market. The political process is about bargaining among actors with their various preferences and resources. Democratic decision-making does not imply any communal obligations beyond a commitment to follow the rules of the game.

- In *hierarchy,* democracy is about leadership exercised by politicians entitled to decide for the community as a whole because they are formally elected. The role of the leaders is to decide; the role of citizens is to exert retrospective control embedded in their rights to elect a different leadership.
- In *egalitarianism,* democracy is a way of shaping common preferences and ideas about the community by integrating the views of all participants.

In sum, the rules and scope of the game, and the different actors' roles, are interpreted differently by each perspective (Table 11.2).

Any democratic constitution formalises a certain image of democracy. No matter which image of democracy the constitution builds on, it will meet reallife actors with different images of it. Following the requisite variety condition (Thompson 1996:16) any social system will contain all ways of life, so inevitably there will be actors who will interpret the scope, game and roles differently given their life experiences. The rest of this paper explores the relationship between the constitutional intentions behind democratising Danish social housing and the dynamics of ways of life in social housing estates.

The governance of Danish social housing

Social housing in Denmark covers 17 per cent of the housing stock and about 20 per cent of the population. It is organised into some 650 housing associations, divided into 7,500 economically and politically autonomous estate departments. Tenants collectively own the estate properties, but no individual tenant can sell his or her apartment for individual profit. Though formally subordinate to the governing body of the association, which is legally and economically responsible, each estate is governed by a democratically elected body which take care of its day-to-day running. The social housing sector is publicly regulated and economically subsidised at a general, but not an estate-specific, level. Danish social housing typifies a functional domain on the edge of public control where the state regulates indirectly by providing authoritative ground rules about the scope, the rules and the roles of players.

Social housing is a typically Danish compromise between the Social Democratic movement, with its flair for hierarchical organisation, and the rural social liberal tradition, which has always stressed self-governance. Danish social housing never became council housing; it was always organised into self-governing housing associations. During the post-war consensus, these housing associations became integrated in the overall welfare strategy. Housing was among the top welfare priorities, and the associations became ever stronger players because they had a leading role in rationalising building processes. The state supported this rationalisation financially by funding building programmes that kept out the private housing sector and, in turn, strengthened the associations. This cooperation led to a definition of the scope of the functional domain as housing *provision,* and of the tenants' role as that of 'supportive clients'. Tenants were no longer to be left in a fatalist position of never knowing whether they had a roof over their heads. They were cuddled into a *high-group* position, but not expected to decide anything. In effect they

Table 11.2 Images of democracy in the four ways of life[4]

Fatalism	
Scope of democratic game	As limited as possible to minimise influence of others
Rules of game	No rules better than others. No rights ensured
Actor role	Waiting for decision of others
Capabilities required	Obedience, indifference
Motto	'Keep your head down'
Individualism	
Scope of democratic game	As limited as possible to maximise individual influence
Rules of the game	Equal opportunity to bargain. Rights tied to resources
Actor role	Make individual decision, alliances or exit
Capabilities required	Entry fee, self-confidence, bargaining skills
Motto	'You can get it if you really want it'
Hierarchy	
Scope of democratic game	As encompassing as possible to ensure maximum control
Rules of the game	Loyalty towards rules. Rights tied to position
Actor role	Rule-based decision-maker
Capabilities required	Formal authority, knowledge of roles and rules and their appropriate interpretation
Motto	'Look it up in the book'
Egalitarianism	
Scope of democratic game	As encompassing as possible to minimise influence of others
Rules of the game	Negotiation until consent. Rights tied to membership
Actor role	Participate in collective decisions. Mediate individual ideas and communal purposes. Create a communal spirit
Capabilities required	Empathy, ability to grasp complex information, formulate views and negotiate
Motto	'Are you for or against us?'

moved from: 'They decide what I must do' to 'They decide what we must do (but it's okay)'.

In the early 1970s the functional domain underwent a redefinition of scope, rules and roles. Two major changes occurred: the market position and political legitimacy of the social housing associations weakened, and groups of tenants protested against the culture of hierarchical governance. The Housing Provision Act (1970), where tenants were allowed to run their estates themselves through elected tenant boards, was the breakthrough to a new definition of the functional domain and a new definition of the tenants' formal relationship to decision-making. This transition was fought for by active tenant groups and adopted by the housing associations in their search of a new political *raison d'être*. The 1970 legislation aimed at a transition from the hierarchical motto: 'They decide what we must do' to the egalitarian one of: 'We decide what we want to do'. Since the 1970 law, two trends have predominated. First, the functional domain has broadened from semi-public service provision (good housing) to community governance with a still more encompassing scope (good living). Second, formal decision-making competence has become ever more decentralised from associations to estate boards, and

from estate boards directly to tenants (Ministry of Housing 1995:2). Here, I explore the January 1997 revision to the 1970 law.[5]

The Ministry of Housing's (1995) report, *Extending Tenants' Democracy in Social Housing,* provides the ideological rationale for recent legislation by stressing 'that tenants' democracy is a continuing process, that presumably never ends' (Ministry of Housing, 1995:12–3). The report recommends decentralising budgeting from estate board level to tenant assembly, and extending formal decentralisation from estate boards to tenant groups. The ideological thrust of the report is explicit: to increase tenant involvement in estate governance, and to enhance tenants' responsibility for communal estate matters, both physical maintenance and social integration. In Cultural Theory terms, the new legislation represents yet another step towards estate-level egalitarianism. At the same time, the *scope* of the democratic game has been broadened to cover community governance. Decisions concern not just the use of individual apartments but also a range of significant communal matters:

- the estate budget, and, as a result, the rent level;
- code of conduct on the estate (e.g. animals, noisy behaviour);
- number of professional staff employed;
- principles for distribution of water and heating expenses (i.e. individual or collective measuring);
- building and running communal houses;
- setting up different communal activities for groups (e.g. young mothers, elderly, youngsters);
- maintenance, improvement and changes to the physical environment (turning parking-lots into gardens, creating organic garbage systems and glazing balconies to save heat) (Høilund 1995).

In short, tenants lack only one key function: they cannot decide waiting-lists and so act as gatekeepers by excluding unwanted members of the intended group.

This expanded scope of the game has important implications for the game itself. The tenants now design the life conditions of their co-tenants. The *game* is formally defined as a mix of aggregative and integrative processes: elections and leadership on the one hand, and maximum tenants' participation on the other. It is open to each estate to stress one or other (or to try to combine them). The hope is that more formal decentralisation of influence will create a genuinely collective responsibility among tenants—make each of them feel a part of a *group,* for which they all feel jointly responsible.

Legislation fixes the *rules* of the game in social housing and follows the normal principles of a liberal representative democracy. Each estate is entitled to elect an estate board using normal democratic voting principles. Tenants decide the overall guidelines for estate management at compulsory annual tenant meetings.[6] Agendas must be sent out in advance, all participants have a right to speak, to put an item on the agenda and to demand a vote; collective decisions are binding. If decisions result in rent increases above 15 per cent, a ballot can be demanded by 25 per cent of tenants present at the annual assembly. Accounts must be drawn up on fixed principles. If the estate fails to provide decent physical

maintenance of the properties (for example to avoid rent increases) the local authority can compel action. A professional administrator scrutinises the estate decisions and guarantees that they are economically defensible (i.e. covered by matching income) and legal. In sum the *formal* tenant role has been empowered. In addition to their right to elect an estate board, tenants now directly decide the part of the budget not fixed by mortgage payments and taxes. The tenant role, as well as being politically important, is now also demanding socially, because the scope of the democratic game encompasses key issues in other people's everyday lives.

The thrust of the reform is to strengthen the egalitarian element of social housing governance, guided by the motto: 'We decide what we want to do'. However, these egalitarian ambitions are not fuelled from 'below', by the estates and their tenants, but from 'above', by legislators who send down their hopes and expectations: 'You decide what you want to do (please!!)' in the belief that when formal hierarchy is yet again diminished, self-governance processes will fill the available space. But the task handed over to local estate groups is very demanding. They are told to create an internal *group feeling,* in an *externally defined* group, whose members are *highly exposed* to one another's decisions, on still more *important everyday life topics,* with *no external enemy* to define the group against, and with still *less formal differentiation* among group members.

Hence, considerable (impossible, even) tasks of internal coordination, conflict mediation and integration are handed down to tenants. Removing the external regulation of internal affairs, and reducing the formal role differentiation among group members, increases the demand for specific skills and role interpretations. Yet more information, on still more complex matters, must be distributed, grasped and interpreted. The broadening scope of the game opens more questions to communal debate, thus increasing the opportunities for disagreement and conflict without, at the same time, doing anything to increase the capacity for negotiation and diplomacy. As for roles, the formal legislation clearly places a significant communal responsibility on the shoulders of tenants. They must feel jointly responsible for governing their estate and they must be able to fill out the role of an active participant.

If there were only two possible states—hierarchy and egalitarianism—then these very considerable reforms might well succeed in tipping the system of governance into the desired state. Change, on this view, is simple: if there's only A and B, and you're tipped out of one, you'll end up in the other! But, in Cultural Theory, change is complex: if you're tipped out of A, say, you can end up at any one of three destinations—B, C or D—only one of which is the transition that is predicted by those theories that assume just A and B (Thompson, Ellis and Wildavsky 1990:75). Cultural Theory thus directs our attention to the likely consequences of reforms that simultaneously make it very difficult for people to remain at A and almost impossible for them to arrive at B. How, in other words, do culturally rational tenants meet the challenge with which they are faced?

Meeting the challenge

There are two major obstacles on the path to the intended goal. First, social market segregation and the government's social policy increase the number of tenants with

fatalistic life experiences and expectations. Second, the associations' strategic focus on individualising housing services increases the individualist ethos in the sector.[7] Together, these two obstacles lessen the likelihood that people will end up at B (egalitarianism); separately, the first obstacle will divert people towards C (fatalism) and the second obstacle will divert them towards D (individualism). So who goes which way, and why?

Since 1970 the housing market has become increasingly socially segregated. Today the proportion of low income groups, low education groups, single parents, single male households, immigrants and pensioners in the social housing sector is way above average. The 'average' families—in terms of income, education, marital status and so on—have moved into private ownership (Ministry of Housing 1988; Christoffersen and Rasmussen 1995). However, the original vision of Danish social housing always was 'alms for all'. The perceived target group of the sector has always been 'the average Dane'; indeed, welfare state ideology always aimed at turning all Danes into average Danes'.[8] There are two possible responses to the challenges of market segregation: enhanced social orientation and increased consumer orientation.[9]

The *social orientation* arises from an increasing recognition that the segregation problems afflicting the social housing sector are created through market mechanisms, whether or not they are welcome. 'We are back where we started', one administrative director said in a speech headed: 'From social philanthropy to social philanthropy'. Another added in a recent paper: 'The dream is over, as John Lennon said in 1971, the dream of housing provision for all' (Møller 1996: 10). Such consequences are conceived as a 'decreasing standard of political recruitment opportunities in tenants' democracy' (Demsitz *et al*. 1995:30). Hence, another administrative executive concludes:

> Our most significant challenge in the future is to develop new ways of dealing with our working partners [the tenants]. What is happening at the moment is that we professionals get too clever. Coping with us is getting more demanding. And just look at the tenant composition: it is getting still weaker.
>
> (Jensen 1997a:169)

Nevertheless, the current government has great social policy ambitions for the social housing associations. Indeed, Danish housing policy after the Social Democrat coalition government took office in 1993 has become more linked to social policy. The social housing sector is being integrated with, and held accountable for, various projects and programmes that aim to solve social problems in the locality where they are present, namely on the social housing estates. In sum, there is a clear increase in tenants whose life experiences are marked by a lack of choice in housing, education and employment: in short, people with fatalised experiences. As one tenant puts it in an interview:

> We are talking about socially deprived people; people sitting on their arse, day in day out, in those flats with the kids without ever coming out; well perhaps they go to the playground because the kids do, then they go up again to have a row with the kids and so on [...] Many of these people were always taught that whatever they had to say and whatever opinions they held, it did not mean a shit to anybody. It is

> people who never experienced influence on anything, so why the hell go to a tenants meeting in the common house and waste their time listening to a bunch of idiots?
>
> (Jensen 1997a:342–3)

On top of that, the state increasingly assumes that the associations are obliged and committed to solving many social problems in their natural environment.

The heightened *consumer orientation* arises, first, from the fact that the associations, being non-public economic entities, have a bottom-line to contemplate and, second, from their having lost a considerable proportion of their original target group to the private ownership sector.[10] The housing associations therefore fight for their lost market share. They struggle to keep and attract the 'average' families—the families that have the option of private ownership. As this tenants reflections about her housing choice makes clear, it is an uphill struggle.

> We chose it because of the physical environment. It is nice and tidy, but it is only a preliminary choice. We want to buy our own house. Communal space and activities are okay, but we prefer to be on our own. I am glad our part of the estate is not so socially demanding.
>
> (Jensen 1997a:459)

The housing associations seek to minimise the differences between home ownership and social housing by strengthening individual freedom of choice and loosening all sorts of constraints on individual lifestyles in social housing.

A lesson was learnt (or, rather, mislearnt) from the British 'Right to buy' housing policy. 'What did the English tenants do as soon as they bought their own apartment?', the national leader of the social housing associations asked at a conference, 'They changed the front door to signal individuality.' In this vein, housing associations now try to create a mock ownership ethos by providing more choices and options in the individual use of the flats. But, of course, there is not much point in your having a front door that would fool a passing Brit into thinking that your apartment is privately owned when every Dane knows that it is not! The associations also try to stimulate a more individualistic service spirit among their staff members, and there has been an enormous stress on 'service' as the key reason for choosing social housing: 'It is very important for tenants', one administrative director said, 'to be treated as customers rather than social clients' (Jensen l997a:217).

In this way, tenants' democracy, which inevitably implies a non-voluntary component —communal responsibility (evident, for instance, in the compulsory annual meetings)— has been re-packaged as a 'shopping democracy'. Tenants are increasingly being turned away from communal obligation and towards consumer satisfaction. As one housing director put it in a conference speech:

> Because of the hard competition on the housing market, the focal point of future campaigns must be our customers. Previously the tenants said 'thank you' when they got one of our flats. Today we are the ones to thank people for choosing social

> housing. Therefore our attention must be focused on the tenant as an individual consumer.
>
> (Jensen 1997a:172)

In sum, the functional domain of social housing is constitutionally restructured to approach an egalitarian way of life, but increasingly inhabited by tenants with fatalist experiences. At the same time, its organisations are pursuing a strategy aimed almost exclusively at keeping and attracting tenants with individualist life expectations. While the constitutional intention is to ensure the breaking down of hierarchy as the dominant form of organisation in the social housing sector, the formal hierarchy has long ceased to be the prime challenge to egalitarian hopes. The problem with enhancing an egalitarian style of decision-making is no longer the lack of formal influence for tenants. The problem, rather, is that the chief emerging ways of life are fatalism and individualism, both of which are opposed to egalitarianism. We therefore need to do something that is inconceivable to those who take the simple, two-destination view of things. We need to look at the possible interactions between egalitarianism—the goal of the reforms—and the three ways of life—hierarchy, fatalism and individualism—that, as we have seen, can all too easily frustrate those reforms.

- *Hierarchy* can facilitate egalitarian group feeling. Hierarchy's great virtue in the 1970s was that, in forming a bulwark against decentralisation, it made the fight for it all the more meaningful and heroic. Fighting for tenants democracy, in the early days, was a glorious struggle: for 'us below' against 'those above'. Today, however, the association level has little formal power left over local estates and, for all practical purposes, hierarchy has been dismantled. Estates no longer have to confront an external enemy and have turned to their own inner coordination games and conflicts. Evidence indicates, however, that local democratic games are still facilitated by the *myth* of hierarchy (Jensen 1997a:293). Internal differences and conflicts can be driven underground by reference to an external threat: the 'others', 'the system' etc. To be able to run democratic games without this external threat demands more organisational skills, political flair, courage and readiness to debate internal matters: resources which, as we have seen, are not always available.
- *Fatalism,* according to Thompson, Ellis and Wildavsky (1990:93–4), is the compost of society—a source of renewal for the 'active' ways of life—and egalitarians especially are always on the look out for fatalists to rescue. But it is one thing to mobilise the deprived masses against the system; quite another to empower those deprived masses by persuading them to participate in egalitarian coordination processes. If egalitarian ground rules are followed, then nobody in the group is entitled to stand on a chair and give the others a quick bout of consciousness-raising about rights and duties. To some extent this is true for social housing, and perhaps even for Denmark as a whole. Few people feel entitled to lecture others about how they should behave, and thereby indicate that they know better.
- However, information, education and socialisation are inescapable preconditions for success in the *egalitarian* model of democracy. In practice, therefore, the professional

administrative staff get to keep the game running. The more the tenant population lack basic skills, the greater the demands on the professional staff to inform, instruct, educate and monitor. And the greater the risk that, despite the best professional intentions, tenants never get to make sense of democracy (Jensen 1997a:ch. 5). Fatalism can thrive on *any* polarity, so there is always the risk that even the most well-meaning of professionals will be ascribed the systemic role of 'those who decide'. As Cultural Theory rightly underlines, it takes two poles to create a changing relationship, and fatalist behaviour may be just as resistant to change as any

- *Individualism* and egalitarianism, Cultural Theory shows, share an antipathy other (Thompson, Ellis and Wildavsky 1990:153–4). towards external systemic bounds on action. They happily skate down-grid together, but what is celebrated in the individualist way of life—competition and lack of communal responsibility—is loathed in the egalitarian. A longterm alliance between the two ways of life is therefore not easily achieved (Thompson, Ellis and Wildavsky 1990:90). This insight is worth noting because the preferred strategy of the housing associations is to combine these two ways of life. Housing associations 'sell' democracy as an opportunity for self-realisation, rather than pointing out that it is a way of making collective decisions on behalf of the community and thereby enabling the tenants to feel a communal responsibility for them.

  Moreover, tenants' democracy, packaged in this way, *does* attract individualists, who see it as a brilliant platform for project making' (*see* Jensen 1997a:chs 7, 8). Running a housing estate and exercising leadership attract many individualists, but only short-term and often for personal reasons. 'It is challenging,' one tenants' representative said, 'and I get off on challenges' (Jensen 1997a:377). Or, as another put it: 'I do it because it is fun. The day it becomes non-fun, I'm off' (Jensen 1997a: 319).

Consequently, the challenge to egalitarian democratic systems is not to provide still more formal opportunities for egalitarian membership. Breaking down formal hierarchies even further will not *automatically* enhance egalitarianism as a way of life. In Cultural Theory terms, the formal breaking down of hierarchies serves only to detach people from A and propel them towards either B, C or D. Though just one of the trio of possible destinations —egalitarianism—is the explicit goal of the reforms, these reforms actually operate in a way that ensures that most tenants end up at one or other of the other two destinations: either exiting into privately owned housing or sinking into fatalism. If the reforms were to work as intended, the fatalists would have to be 'surprised' into using their voice and the individualists would have to be 'surprised' out of exercising their exit option. Since it is not easy to see how either of these surprises, on its own, could be achieved without re-building hierarchy (the second surprise, for instance, would probably require the nationalisation of all private housing), and since it is even harder to see how they could be achieved together, there is much to be said for questioning the goal.

Perspectives for democracy

Returning to my opening question—to what extent can hierarchy be replaced by democratic functional domains?—this case study suggests that egalitarianism in social housing governance is no more the automatic result of dismantling hierarchy than, as Hood has shown, is individualism in the New Public Management. Both studies confirm the debilitating inadequacy of dualistic interpretations of social organisation. The virtue of Cultural Theory is that it opens up a two-dimensional scenario: a scenario that admits of several endlessly interacting ways of life, rather than a one-way journey from A to B. My empirical analysis highlights the importance of the fatalist life experience: the unlearning of social and political competences that results from lack of choices and responsibilities, as well as from a lack of experience with collective decision-making. It takes time to learn the skills needed for participation in collective decision-making, especially when you have never been listened to or counted on. An important lesson from Cultural Theory is that fatalism can thrive as a response to *any* of the active solidarities. Liberals decry the 'nanny state', arguing that it produces fatalists marked by those affronts to individualist morality: irresponsibility and passivity (so we need 'less grid'). Radicals hold that it is competitive market forces that fuel fatalism by driving the caring and the sharing into marginality (so we need 'more group'). But it is important to understand that even egalitarianism does not necessarily provide a warm and cosy refuge for people with fatalist life experiences. Egalitarianism is a socially demanding way of life: one that is prone to excluding incapable members, or at least to not automatically integrating them. Small wonder, then, that the engineering of change is seldom a straightforward business.

Cultural Theory thus provides a useful lens for analysing democracy. Because it allows for multiple ways of making sense of the world, it draws attention to the lack of congruence between institutional design and actor identities and skills. It explains why general theories of democracy are never completely matched by images of democracy among the people who are intended to play democratic roles. If ways of life, images of democracy and practical governance are to become congruent then intercultural communication, not constitutional reform, is the way forward.

Notes

1 This chapter draws on Jensen 1997a and 1998.1 would like to thank *Public Administration* for giving me permission to draw on this material. I am indebted to Rod Rhodes for comments and editorial advice, to Mike Thompson for scrutiny of an earlier draft of this version and to the Leiden Group for discussion.

2 The evidence is drawn from one specific functional domain: Danish social housing, which is widely recognised for its extensive tenant involvement (Power 1993; Harloe 1995). However, the aspiration to democratise functional domains is much broader. In Denmark, it also applies, for example, to public schools and daycare, services for the elderly or local community council (*see* for example Sørensen 1995; Dreyer Hansen 1996; Smed 1997). In the rest of Europe, equivalent democratic experiments are taking place in, for example, urban renewal in Vienna (Førster 1996), tenant participation schemes in Scotland (Goodlad

1996) and Sweden (Liedholm and Lindberg 1996) and housing partnerships in Moscow (Shomina and Clark 1996).

3 Hence the defining characteristics of the hierarchical form of solidarity are *asymmetry* and *accountability* (Gross and Rayner 1985).

4 Based on Jensen (1997a:chs 6–8).

5 For a more detailed account of the evolution of Danish social housing *see* Jensen 1997a:ch. 2.

6 Compulsoriness, of course, is not such a normal feature of liberal representative democracy!

7 For a role theoretical approach to tenant participation, *see* Jensen 1995.

8 For an analysis of Danish welfare ideology, equality and modernism in housing, *see* Jensen 1990.

9 For an organisation theoretical analysis of the contemporary strategic dilemmas of Danish housing associations, *see* Jensen 1997b.

10 For developments in the socio-economic compositions of housing submarkets 1971–91, *see* Christoffersen and Rasmussen 1995:26.

12
THE CULTURAL CONDITIONS FOR DEMOCRACY AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR TRANSITIONAL SOCIETIES

Nadia Molenaers and Michael Thompson

Wildavsky (1991 d, 1992, 1993a) has argued that a stable democracy is a coalition of all the cultures,[1] in the right proportions. But is it just a matter of their correct *proportional* representation? Two other considerations, we will argue, are also important. First, we need to pay attention to how the cultures relate to, and interact with, one another. Second, the idea of correct proportions implies that it is the number of adherents of each solidarity that matters, whilst students of Latin American politics (and others) would argue that the 'weight' of certain groupings is often more important than their numerical strength.

Weight, in this usage, is a way of taking some account of the ability of some actors (by virtue, for instance, of their persuasive skills, their differential control over resources or their being able credibly to threaten others) to somehow count as more than one.[2] The way weight is evaluated will, of course, vary with the cultural affiliation of the evaluator. Egalitarians will be the most concerned, because of their insistence that 'each counts as one, and no one more than one'. Hierarchists will feel it is only right that those with the appropriate qualities should count as more than one (in Britain, until quite recently, graduates of Oxford and Cambridge universities had two votes in general elections), individualists will see nothing wrong in private resources easing public decisions one way rather than another, and fatalists will see it as confirmation that life's dice are loaded against them. Yet, in spite of these evaluative reservations, weight, together with the mode of interaction of the differently weighted cultures, does seem to be a crucial consideration when we try to understand why some countries' transitions to democracy are smoother than others.

Such transitions are not easily defined because of the lack of agreement as to what democracy is, and because of the vagueness of the terms 'stable' and 'fragile' when they are applied to democracy. Nor, to make things worse, do transitional societies all set off from the same starting point; there are many different ways of being undemocratic. Transitional societies are therefore societies that used definitely to not be democratic and are now perceived as being on their way to this not entirely clear destination. They are defined as not yet consolidated democracies where the democratic game is 'not the only game in town'. In other words antidemocratic (and, in all probability, authoritarian) enclaves persist, in both processes and structures, and this results in instability and the undermining of consolidation (Sorensen 1993:40). Yet, for all these definitional difficulties, the questions of what democracy is, and of how countries that are not

democracies can become democracies, are immensely important, and political scientists would be falling down on the job if they did not attempt to answer them.

In this chapter we will try to do this and, at the same time, reduce the enveloping vagueness by following Wildavsky's lead while, again at the same time, trying to re-jig Cultural Theory so as better to take account of these crucial things—the mode of interaction of the cultures and their different tippings of the scale at the weigh-in—that he has largely ignored. A case, some might say, of fools rushing in where angels fear to tread. But then, as others might say, its a rotten job but someone's got to do it!

A Cultural Theory recipe for stable democracy

The stabilisation and destabilisation of democracy has long been a delicate discussion theme, because (as many of the chapters in this volume point out) there is little agreement among scholars on what democracy *is*. On the one hand, there are those who define democracy as a set of procedures and methods based on the idea that the individual should be able to carry out his or her plans (for example, the contemporanean school: Schumpeter, Sartori, Berelson, Dahl, etc). On the other hand, there are those who argue that procedures and methods are necessary but not sufficient conditions (for example, Held, Pateman, Lijphart, etc). Democracy, they insist, has to realise certain substantive purposes; procedures and methods have to deliver results: law and order, for instance, or more equality, less civil strife, the protection of the weak and so on.

When theorists disagree, we need a theory that will explain the divergence of the theories they are relying on, and Cultural Theory, Wildavsky (1993a: 80) shows, meets that need. Individualists are in favour of procedures and methods that will ensure that citizens are able to bring government into line with their preferences. The results of these procedures and methods ought to be diverse and distributed: each individual getting more of what he or she wants and less of what he or she does not want. Solidarities characterised by high group—hierarchy and egalitarianism—will want a more substantive model of democracy: one in which results are not diverse and distributed. They will be looking for results, like more equality, that can be apprehended by everyone rather than just by each individual recipient on his or her own. Cultural Theory then goes on to point out that there are two varieties of substantivism, in that hierarchists will want procedures and methods that deliver results very different from those delivered by the procedures and methods favoured by egalitarians. And, of course, none of these models are of much interest to those who constitute the fatalistic solidarity.

However, despite all these disagreements, there *is* agreement on some of the basic conditions of democracy. Most scholars agree that democracy is about free elections, that the willingness to leave office when electorally defeated is crucially important, and that the opposition has to be loyal to the rules of the game. Wildavsky concurs and argues that, when these basic conditions are met, the road is open for virtually any democratic model. If we imagine a square, with each corner representing 100 per cent dominance by one of the four cultures, and the centre an equal mixture of them all, then there will be a square-ish 'feasibility space' around this centre. Outside that space, democracy will not be possible; within it, it will, with different varieties of democracy being discernible towards

the square-ish corners of the space (or, if these varieties are characterised by a fairly equal alliance of two rather strongly represented cultures, along the sides).[3] Here, then, is a way of accommodating both the agreements and the disagreements among theorists of democracy. Elections, we are suggesting, provide the essential channel by which the cultures obtain their political translation, and different models of democracy result from the different mixes of those translations.

Wildavsky (1991d, 1993a) then goes on to deduce the different varieties of democracy that will be found at each of the square-ish corners of this feasibility space, and along each of the sides that connect those square-ish corners, thereby subsuming a host of seemingly incompatible typologies and pairwise distinctions into a gratifyingly simple and contradiction-free scheme. However, we can move swiftly through this stage of our argument, because these different 'images of democracy' (and the various ways in which they can be negotiated with one another) have been set out in various ways in several of the preceding chapters (in particular, Verweij, Hendriks and Zourides, Jensen and Mamadouh). The most appropriate of these, given that we will be considering the modes of interaction of the cultures, is the typology of models of democracy that is arrived at by considering the socially shaped preferences that are found at the three square-ish corners that point towards the three active solidarities: *guardian* (hierarchy), *participatory* (egalitarianism) and *protective* (individualist).

Wildavsky's conclusion from all of this is that, although different models of democracy can result from differently proportioned mixes of cultures, a necessary condition for democracy is that all four cultures (not just the three 'active' ones) be present. In other words, you cannot get democracy outside of the feasibility space, and pluralism has to be understood as *pluri-culturalism*. Presence, of course, is not enough, and the underlying assumption is that the cultures be represented within the public sphere. The exclusion from the public sphere of one or more cultures, which is most certainly not ruled out by classic pluralism (*see* the final chapter in this volume), is against the whole Cultural Theory idea of pluralist democracy (*see also* Thompson, Ellis and Wildavsky 1990:90).

To this we will now add a couple of propositions that, as will become apparent, are rather crucial when it comes to assessing how well or badly transitional societies are doing.

- First, if the cultures are interacting in a way that results in one or more of them not subscribing to the rules of the game, even though their proportions are such that the whole is within the feasibility space, then such democracy as has been consolidated will be subject to destabilisation.
- Second, if the weights of some of the actors within one or more of the solidarities are such that they distort the mix to the point where it passes beyond the feasibility space, then we will get de-stabilisation even though, in unweighted terms, the totality is within the feasibility space.

This pluri-cultural notion of democracy, together with these two propositions (propositions which enable us to think of stabilisation and destabilisation, not as the absence of one another, but as co-existing processes that can pull the totality this way or that across the line that encloses the feasibility space) enables us to think of democracy, of

the different varieties of democracy, of the absence of democracy, and of the different varieties of the absence of democracy, within a single conceptual frame. Before doing this, however, we should explain a little more about the theory that gives us this conceptual frame, and about how it differs from and does not differ from existing and more familiar approaches to democracy. 'New, not true; true, not new!', Wildavsky used to say, is the response that innovative souls should expect from their colleagues: colleagues whom they wish to persuade and carry with them.

What's new in Cultural Theory?

Cultural Theory distinguishes itself from both general political theory and the political cultural tradition by conceiving fatalism and egalitarianism as social solidarities—viable and mutually supportive comings-together of particular cultural biases, patterns of social relations and behavioural strategies—no different, in that respect, from the markets and hierarchies that have long been central to social science theorising. Conventional theorising, by contrast, has (when it has noticed them, that is) treated these two solidarities as attitudes: fatalism as an apathetic, uninterested attitude towards politics: egalitarianism as a general shared sense of equality—horizontalism—among citizens (e.g. de Tocqueville 1971; Almond and Verba 1963, 1989; Putnam 1993; Wiebe 1995).

Had they been seen as solidarities, rather than as just attitudes that were somehow generated within the classic dualistic framings—for example, Maine's status and contract, Durkheim's mechanical and organic solidarity, and Tönnies' *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*[4] —it would not have been possible for theorists to go on thinking in simple, either/or terms: trust/distrust, centralisation/decentralisation, social capital/no social capital, traditional/modern, co-operative/competitive, weak ontology/strong ontology, altruistic/selfish, and so on. Take, for example, Dahl's (1966) celebrated distinction between 'System I'—stable democracy—and 'System II'—authoritarian rule. How does that dualistic scheme look when offered up to the Cultural Theory framing?

Dahl, of course, was simply attempting to categorise systems, and the characteristics of systems, without claiming to have found an explanation for them. His dualistic scheme, if invoked as an explanation, would be on a par with Molière's doctor ascribing opium's effects to its 'dormitive properties': democracy is stable in System I and unstable in System II. Cultural Theory's dynamical fourfold system, however, holds out the possibility of explanation, provided we can come up with a plausible hypothesis for the feasibility space. But, if we cannot do that, then all we have done is show how Cultural Theory provides a nice way of representing the wide range of starting points of transitional societies (all those on the outside of the feasibility space) and the non-uniqueness of the destination (all those points within the feasibility space): an improvement on the dualistic representation, certainly, but not an explanation.

Explaining stability and instability

System I, it is widely agreed (e.g. Inglehart 1997:163), is different from System II because of its dependence on trust and legitimacy. One has to trust and support System I's

institutions in order to legitimise them. A loyal opposition is therefore a necessary condition for trust and legitimacy, as too is openness to participation (which implies trust between participants and a willingness to tolerate the views of others). Deeply-rooted and diffuse mass support is therefore a necessary condition for the long-term survival of democracy.[5] However, at the same time that it is insisting that trust is crucial, this line of reasoning asserts the opposite: that *distrust* is crucial. Politics, all agree, is about conflict—about divergent views, opposed interests, contending advocacies and so on—and such conflict would disappear if there was no distrust. If you cannot have politics without distrust, and you cannot have democracy without politics, then distrust is a necessary condition for System I. Since distrust is also a defining characteristic of System II, democracy is going to require a distinctive *kind* of distrust: a kind that is lacking in System II. Hook (cited in Diamond 1993:12) describes this democracy-supporting kind of distrust as 'an intelligent distrust of leaders, a scepticism stubborn but not blind of all demands for the enlargement of power'.

Hook, of course, is an eloquent and staunch defender of protective democracy, and we should therefore expect defenders of the guardian and participatory varieties of democracy to have rather different notions of the desirable distrust, and to be distrustful of the notion of distrust that Hook sees as so essential. The trouble, however, is that in current political theory there are no varieties. There is just trust and its inverse, distrust, and some theorists have rightly ended up saying we need one whilst others have rightly ended up saying we need the other!

Cultural Theory extricates us from this debilitating paradox. Only in the fatalist solidarity, it points out, is trust absent. In the other three solidarities trust is an emergent property, with each solidarity generating its distinctive *kind* of trust: a kind of trust that will dispose the adherents of that solidarity to *distrust* the kinds of trust that are generated in the other two. If the whole world was fatalist there would be no trust and, since such a state of affairs would be way outside the feasibility space, no democracy either. If the whole world was any one of the other three ways there would be trust but no distrust and, since such states of affairs would also be way outside the feasibility space, no democracy either. Within the feasibility space, however, there would be a vibrant, dynamic and pluri-cultural interplay of trust and distrust, and therefore the possibility of democracy. So what are these different kinds of trust and distrust?

- Individualists trust others until they give them reason not to: the 'tit-for-tat' strategy that is uninvadeable in the iterated Prisoner's Dilemma game (Rapoport 1985). They are therefore great cooperators (when each party judges he or she will do better than by going it along) which makes a nonsense of the idea that there is a polarity between competition and cooperation. In consequence, individualists are inclined to distrust the state when it is perceived as an intervening, freedom-limiting force. Indeed, they distrust all forces (they can be egalitarian as well as hierarchical) that tend to solve problems through extensive regulation and control. Individualists will trust experts on the basis of their 'track-records' rather than their diplomas, degrees and certificates and, most of all, they will trust those arrangements that seek to harness man's self-seeking nature for the benefit of all: markets. The hidden hand, rather than the all-too-

visible hands of hierarchy and egalitarianism, is the guidance they are happiest with. However, *some* non-market institutions are trusted by individualists: those that enforce the law of contract, without which transaction costs would spiral to the point where their beloved markets failed. An alliance between individualism and hierarchy is therefore quite workable, provided the hierarchical solidarity confines itself to this law-enforcing role (which, of course, it won't!).

- Hierarchists trust authority. They trust the wisdom and knowledge of those who fill the clearly demarcated positions within the stratified whole, confident that they will do all they can not to disgrace those positions (and that they will get their well-deserved come-uppances if they do). Scientific expertise, especially the sort of 'bench science' (changing just one thing at a time) that gets people elected to Royal Societies and National Academies, is trusted, while those who are questioning established paradigms are treated with some reserve. Trust is thus primarily directed upwards, thereby generating its downward counterpart: deference. Institutions, rules and procedures that work with this vertical grain—maintaining status distinctions, order and stability, and thereby shaping citizens into responsible and loyal subjects—are trusted, and those that work across this grain—those that seek to institute equality of opportunity (individualism) or equality of outcome (egalitarianism)—are distrusted.

  Change is always a threat, yet there is often a realisation that a failure to respond to change may lead to even worse trouble: loss of control. Confident hierarchies ('inclusive' hierarchies, as they are sometimes called) will therefore work hard to accommodate those changes that they judge cannot be ignored, but in a way that does not require structural alterations that are too major, too rapid or too visible: 'monster adjustment'. Less confident hierarchies ('exclusive' hierarchies, as they are sometimes called) will fail to rearrange themselves, thereby piling up trouble for themselves in the future, and quite likely taking the totality out of the feasibility space. Challenge and dissidence, in small and gradual doses, act as a sort of tonic for a confident hierarchy, in that they keep the distribution of trust and distrust under constant review.
- Egalitarians trust those who have not been corrupted by inequitable and power-hungry institutions: markets and hierarchies. Convinced that humans are essentially caring and sharing, they strive to promote the conditions where these qualities can blossom: equality of condition, decentralisation, symmetrical exchanges, small-scale enterprises and so on. Anything that is seen as horizontalising is trusted; anything that is seen as working against that horizontal grain—markets, top-down structures, concentrations of wealth and power, and 'bench science' (you can never change just one thing' is the founding assumption in the holistic science that upholds egalitarianism)—are distrusted.
- Fatalists are 'fickle isolates', convinced that people are not to be trusted and that nature operates without rhyme or reason. 'Defect first'—the winning strategy in the one-off Prisoner's Dilemma game—makes perfect sense in the fatalist's social context. 'It doesn't matter who you vote for', they tell themselves, to the never-ending dismay of those who belong to the other three solidarities, 'the government always gets in'.

Intra-cultural trust, therefore, is not a problem; even fatalists can trust other fatalists not to trust anyone! But how is inter-cultural trust—the sort of trust that Cultural Theory is suggesting is so essential for democracy—possible? The answer, of course, is that, for all their evident antagonisms, each one of the solidarities needs at least one of the others to do something vital for it that it cannot do for itself. Individualists, as we have seen, need hierarchy to enforce the law of contract, and egalitarians need markets and hierarchies or they would have nothing to criticise (and if there wasn't an enemy at the gate they would have nothing to hold themselves together). Hierarchies need markets to make sure that the pie they are distributing so carefully and unequally does not get so small that loyalty and respect are eroded and those who hitherto have been content with their stations in life start leaving in droves. And all three active cultures find it easier to keep themselves up-and-running when there is a risk-absorbent bunch of fatalists near at hand, cheerfully assuring one another that what you don't know can't harm you.

Students of dynamical systems (Eigen and Schuster 1977; Sigmund and Hofbauer 1984) call such circular arrangements, in which each divergent component is kept going by something that one of the others inadvertently does for it, a *hypercycle*—like that children's game where they all manage to sit on one another's knees—and it is this hypercyclicity, Cultural Theory argues, that, in giving us inter-cultural trust, makes democracy possible. Of course, if some children won't bend round enough, or insist on bending in the wrong direction, their hypercycle will be broken, or never formed in the first place, and much the same holds for inter-cultural trust.[6]

Democracy as institutionalised pluri-culturality

When the hypercycle is complete, and there is therefore inter-cultural trust as well as intra-cultural trust, we have the conditions under which there can be general agreement within the pluralistic community on the rules of the game. Scholars from both the contemporanean and substantivist schools are agreed that this willingness, among all players, to play by the rules is fundamental to democracy. They also agree that such willingness requires general and mass acceptance of certain ultimate values within a society's belief system (Sartori 1987: 90; Held 1990:225–6; Uslaner 1996:7). Only this general consensus prevents winning parties from making radical changes (like the National Socialists in Weimer Germany) and installing a System II-type regime (Leftwich 1993:615). The trouble, however, is that, in the absence of any theory that can explain why there are different *kinds* of trust and distrust, where they come from and how they interact, we are left in the unsatisfactory position of saying that when this general agreement is there it's there, and when it isn't it isn't! Cultural Theory, in providing a typology of the different varieties of trust and distrust, and in putting forward some hypotheses about the conditions under which their complex interactions can go from centripetal to centrifugal and *vice versa,* gets us out of redescription and into explanation.

Only if the hypercycle is unbroken, Cultural Theory suggests, will there be the possibility for representation of the values and beliefs that are central to all three 'active' solidarities. From that recognition other institutional arrangements can follow: the guaranteed protection of each solidarity's rights and spaces, the openness of the political

community, and the rules of the democratic game that are designed to keep these essentials in place and to promote the constructive interaction of that plurality. Conversely, the squeezing out of just one culture will trigger the breakdown of democracy; cultural exclusion is lethal. Indeed, it only needs an over-representation (through numbers and/or weight) of one or two solidarities (and that includes fatalism), or some glaring mismatches in representation as we move up or down the various institutional levels (village, district, state and so on), for the dynamic balancings of the different varieties of trust and distrust to be pushed to the point where imbalance and centrifugal forces take over and the hypercycle breaks open.

The core idea in democracy is that conflicts do not lead to cultural exclusion but are dealt with in a non-violent way (and without other less obvious withdrawals of legitimacy) through mechanisms of negotiation and argumentation and the building-up of checks and balances. So long as these institutional features are in place, the cultures' movements within the system will be centripetal, with each achieving a dynamic stability *vis-à-vis* the others. Western democracies are generally believed to have, and to have consolidated, these essentials; transitional nations (such as Nicaragua) are seen as having instituted reforms that will bring them towards that state. But to assess how effective those reforms are, and to suggest ways in which they might be made more effective, we need to understand the centrifugal forces and the varieties of authoritarianism that they can give rise to.

Authoritarianism as institutionalised cultural exclusion

In authoritarian regimes, opposition is neither legitimate nor loyal. At best, opposition is marginalised; quite often it is eliminated, imprisoned, executed…disappeared. The rulers see their political opponents as traitors, conspiring to overthrow the government and the system; the opposition sees the government and the system over which it presides as illegitimate and suppressive forces. In the same way that Wildavsky proposed that different democratic models can come to life when a dominant but 'tolerant' culture wins the elections, different authoritarian models can come to life whenever a 'fundamentalist' culture succeeds in grabbing the reins of power.[7]

- Whenever crude individualism succeeds in dominating the political forum, we can expect a system based on radical rules: *unfettered competition and crude major itarianism* (augmented by the considerable weight of some of the players). Citizens will be viewed as sovereign: all equal before the law and each having the right to defend his or her interests as active participants in the political arena. Supra-individual expressions of preferences—ethnic, religious and political minorities, for instance—will get no protection, because checks and balances will not be among the rules of this game.
- An omnipotent hierarchy will lead to *totalitarianism,* where a conservative elite rules over the heads of the largely fatalised masses. Those who are not fatalised will be those who are able to find an appropriate niche within the hierarchy (the members of the Soviet Unions *nomenklatura,* for instance). So long as they comply with the expectations that define that niche they can look forward to certain carefully graduated rights and privileges. Paternalism is thus the vertical organiser, with compliance

bringing appropriately scaled rewards and non-compliance being met with harsh and appropriately scaled punishments.[8]

- With fundamentalist egalitarianism in the driving seat we can expect *radical socialism:* Pol Pot's Cambodia or Mao's cultural revolution, rather than the hierarchical variety of communism that came to prevail in Eastern Europe. There will be a continual redistribution of goods and services (and of people: urban intellectuals into the rice-fields, for instance) and an obsessive focus on achieving equality of condition.

If these authoritarian regimes are to remain stable two main conditions will have to be met.

- First, the rulers will have to have the resources and skills needed to maintain control. Internally, a loyal army and/or police force and, externally, a supportive nation (or bloc of nations, or one or more non-state actors with impressive resources) will be needed if these rulers are to have the weight to dominate the political forum and suppress their political opponents. Colombian drug cartels and the charitable efforts of certain wealthy industrialists in the United States are non-state examples (often, but not exclusively, active in promoting the individualistic regimes, often in micro-states such as are found in the Caribbean) but the Cold War has, until recently, been the main provider of external support. For a dominant culture in most Third World countries, prior to the disappearance of the Second World, there was no incentive for it to include political opponents. Why waste time trying to work towards peaceful conflict resolution when your foreign ally is providing you with huge amounts of financial and military support? Force could be used to eliminate cultural enemies who, for their part, sought support from the other superpower in bringing about the violent overthrow of their oppressors. Dictators did not have to make themselves accountable to their people since exclusionary justification poured out of the Cold War context.
- Second, a sufficiently large proportion of citizens must be passive and fatalistic about the political situation. Horizontal trust that might result in dissident collective action (as happened, for instance, in the Shah's Iran) is not welcomed by authoritarian rulers; a distrusting, unorganised and uncooperative mass is much more easily coped with. Many authoritarian regimes, (and this is especially the case with Latin American dictatorships) have worked hard to push people down-group (by violently confronting collective action) while pumping them up-grid (by rewarding compliance and harshly punishing non-compliance). In this way, trust in state institutions and élites is increasingly replaced by powerlessness, fear and distrust. The institutions become unresponsive instruments in the hands of mono-cultural rulers, and those over whom they rule flood into the fatalistic quadrant. As the regimes migrate to one or other of these three destinations—the exclusionary culture plus fatalism—so they take themselves ever further away from the feasibility space, thereby making the reverse journey longer, more difficult and more diversion-prone. Moreover, instructions that would be effective for getting from one of these destinations to the feasibility space would likely be disastrous if applied in the other two situations.

Many Third World countries have been taken all or much of the way to one or other of these three authoritarian destinations. The ideas of alternation in office and loyal opposition have been unimaginable, with the state being seen as war booty for the cultural elite that manages to exclude the others. The result has been a spiral of destructive—that is, trust-destroying (and healthy Hookian distrust-destroying)—interactions between cultures: interactions that make it impossible for those cultures to move *within* the system. And, if things have become as centrifugal as this, how can they be made centripetal?

Transition strategies

It is one thing to get from authoritarianism to democracy; another to remain there. Scholars, being scholars, have tended to specialise, with the discussion of transition being dominated by the 'process' school (e.g. Linz and Stepan, O'Donnell and Schmitter, Karl and Schmitter, Di Palme, Levine and Ozbudun) and the discussion of consolidation being dominated by the 'structure' school (e.g. Lipset, Almond and Verba, Dahl, and Huntington) (Ruhl 1996:3–5). However, since you cannot consolidate democracy if you have not made the transition to it, we will focus mainly on the former.

Two of the leading 'process' school scholars, Karl and Schmitter (1991), distinguish four transitional strategies.

- *Revolution* is usually brought about by a unilateral force: it starts from below and is directed against the élites. A revolution aims to radically alter the society, dismantling it in one place, as it were, and reconstructing it somewhere else.
- *A pact* is a compromise between different élites and is top-down so far as the mass of society is concerned, but horizontal at the élite level.
- *Imposition* is also top-down but lacks the horizontal element, because it is implemented by just one elite force.
- *Reform* is a compromise between a number of actors that is stimulated by those at the bottom pressuring the élites to negotiate in order to gradually change the current state of affairs.

Edvardsen (1997) links Cultural Theory to these modes of transition and reaches the conclusion that reform is probably the most successful strategy, because only in reform are all the 'active' cultures involved (Table 12.1). Revolution, she argues, is the egalitarian strategy: from below and sometimes in a short-lived alliance with individualism. Pact, she argues, is a strategy around which hierarchical and individualistic élites can come together, while imposition is the unilateral strategy of a hierarchical élite. If Edvardsen's mapping is valid then her conclusion is supported by the argument we have been developing: only reform is non-exclusionary; the others, being exclusionary, will inevitably generate centrifugal forces.

However, there are a couple of problems. First, the negotiation of a pact could include a third cultural actor: an egalitarian élite. An egalitarian élite, of course, is a contradiction in terms (which, perhaps, is why Edvardsen has not considered this possibility) but

Table 12.1 Modes of transition by ways of life

Strategy actors	*Multilateral compromise*	*Unilateral force*
Élites	*Pact* (hierarchy & individualism)	*Imposition* (hierarchy)
Masses	*Reform* (hierarchy, individualism & egalitarianism)	*Revolution* (egalitarianism and maybe individualism)

Source: Edvardsen 1997:215

egalitarian élites are common enough in practice: members of Greenpeace, for instance, stand little chance of becoming crew members on the *Rainbow Warrior!*[9] Second, the socio-economic and power relations also have to be considered because the weightings, at some starting points (Nicaragua is a possible instance), may be so polarising that reform is simply not possible. If reform is the *only* way then there is no way in which countries that find themselves in this condition can get to democracy (which many Nicaraguans and their friends fervently hope is not the case). Yet, even if that *is* the case, there is always the possibility of strategy-switching: a revolution, for instance, could overnight redress the disparities in weighting that render a present starting point unresponsive to reform to such an extent that reform becomes possible.

Nicaragua's predicament

Nicaragua, in common with many Third World countries, has seen much violence. Looking at Edvardsen's criteria, we might well conclude that Nicaragua's impressive weighting disparities have prevented the chosen strategy- reform—from working and that the country has not been able to get onto the path that offers the best chance of it arriving at democracy. Wildavsky, however, would say that Nicaragua is already there, because it satisfies the most important conditions: open and free elections have taken place (in 1990 and 1996) and the party in power peacefully left office each time. Could it be that both these assessments are correct, in the sense that Nicaragua is going through the democratic motions without actually being democratic? To look into that question we need to enquire whether there is pluri-cultural representation, consensus on the rules of the game, inter-cultural trust and legitimacy, and constructive interaction between the cultures. And, if these features are indeed discernible, are they getting stronger?

The 1990 elections: a missed chance?

Nicaragua was ruled by authoritarian regimes until 1990. Some (those of the Somoza dynasty, 1936–79, for instance) were extremely harsh and brutal, whilst the Sandinist decade (1979–90) provided a more inclusive hierarchical-egalitarian model. Nevertheless, the exclusion (often accompanied by violent rejection) of one or more cultures was the

political tradition up until 1990. The 1990 elections were therefore a breakthrough in Nicaraguan history; for the first time social conflicts were taken into the political arena instead of being dealt with through military action.

Many circumstances were conducive to this fresh start. The end of the Cold War had lowered the international pressure to 'pick sides', the international community had linked aid to democratising reforms, and there were calls for a joint effort to get the economy back on track after all the setbacks of the 'lost decade'. Dialogue between all the cultures, in order to negotiate the future rules of the game, seemed feasible and did indeed happen. At the élite level, negotiation led to several pacts between the government and the Sandinists (Berntzen 1993: 599) and (contra Edvardsen) egalitarian groups seem not to have been excluded from that process. Nevertheless, what we see today in Nicaragua (and in other Central American countries) is a rather grim picture.

First of all, the only basic consensus is that around the ideas of free and open elections and alternation in office: a consensus which, in the absence of certain checks and balances, still favours those weighty actors who had constituted the reactionary-despotic coalitions of the pre-1990 era (Karl 1995:76). This has led to the parties accusing one another of fraud, and to their making democracy-sapping threats: that they will refuse to recognise election results, for instance, or even take up arms. Fragmentation, in both the political arena and the public realm, is quite pronounced throughout Latin America, especially among the 'liberation movements' which were left disarmed and internally divided after the end of the Cold War. Legislative processes are paralysed and such stability as has been achieved is continually endangered by outbursts of violence. On top of all this, the economic crisis in Central America has impacted disproportionately on the poorest sector of the population (except in Costa Rica, where weight is rather differently distributed: a state of affairs that is not unconnected with it having no armed forces). Nicaragua, in the estimation of some (e.g. Karl 1995:75), has become ungovernable.

The heaviness of the caudillos

In 1990, those who looked only at the newly created conditions were quite optimistic, but countries are seldom blank sheets. The past is not always easily forgotten, and deeply-rooted traditions, if they are not rooted out, can all too often linger on. One such unrooted-out tradition, in Nicaragua's case, is the *caudillo*. Caudillos are 'strong men': in the past they were regional warlords, chiefs of hierarchically organised (and usually armed) clans whose aim was to exercise control over a certain territory so as to maximise the realisation of their clans' interests. The caudillo strategy, therefore, is individualistic, with hierarchy harnessed into the subsidiary role of providing a command structure and thereby linking the obedience of its various levels to the graduated distribution of the booty that that obedience to the caudillo delivers. State formation eventually cramped the style of these warlords, across Latin America, but it did not eliminate the sorts of structures that upheld them. Even today, political power tends to be perceived as indivisible, unquestionable, absolutist and personal. A 'winner takes all' ethos still pervades the élite level, while the masses still keep their heads down. The result is a shrunken public space that can readily be ignored by those weighty actors who have shrunk it.

Caudillism, in this sense, is still alive and well. The past, in Nicaragua, is not a foreign country because it is also the present. Since independence (in 1821) the constant power struggles—often armed struggles—between the liberal (broadly speaking, individualist) and conservative (broadly speaking, hierarchical) élites have threatened the survival of Nicaragua's peasants who, for their part, have learnt to stay out of politics in order to stay alive. Villagers, it is said, used to keep portraits of both the liberal and conservative caudillos, hanging the appropriate one on the wall whenever the respective army was expected. This chameleon-like pattern of learned behaviour—the '*gueguense*-tradition', as it is called (Anderson 1995:84–6)—still persists, and this Central American heritage of authoritarian rule and strong military structures has resulted in a fear-laden environment where suspicion, distrust and insecurity are rife, especially in the rural areas. In addition, the liberal-versus-conservative struggles, by excluding egalitarianism, have led many in Latin America to the conclusion that public institutions are inevitably part of the problem, never part of the solution (Shifter 1997:121).

That this heritage is still active in Nicaragua is evident in various ways.

- In the run-up to the 1990 elections there was massive and public support (also in the opinion polls) for the party in power: the Sandinists. On election day, however, most Nicaraguans acted as *gueguenses* and voted for the opposition (Anderson 1995).
- In the 1996 elections the populist leader, Aleman, having come out ahead in the first round, consolidated that success by cruising around the country in a long and noisy convoy of large and expensive motor cars: not the sort of behaviour that would guarantee a politician's election in Norway, say!
- Interviews, with skilled and educated professionals, reveal that preferences are put to one side when dealing with politics. Making oneself agreeable to the most powerful is seen as the best warranty for job security and an expanding support network. Outside of this formal political context, however, many of these people are active in grassroots organisations—neighbourhood, educational, environmental, human rights and so on—that are working to expand the public sphere that they themselves duck out of, a la chameleon, at what they judge to be the right moment.[10]

In today's Nicaragua, two caudillos lock horns in the political forum. Aleman—a liberal populist with strong and powerful links to the United States—is best known for what he is against: the Sandinists. Ortega—the former Sandinist president—similarly misses no opportunity to delegitimise his opponent, regularly threatening to take up arms if Aleman does not moderate his authoritarian style of government. The powerful economic entrepreneurs side with Aleman; the mass movements that seek to represent the poor incline towards the Sandinists. Weights, rather than numbers, make sense of what is going on, and not going on, here.

The heaviness of the external caudillos

Though the Cold War has ended, not all the habits and alliances that have their roots in that era have disappeared. Certain well-funded groups in the United States still have

strong bonds with traditionally anti-democratic forces in Central America, and US development assistance, aid conditionalities, and economic and commercial relations are still much more influential in Central America than elsewhere on the continent (Karl 1995:77). Nicaragua's export economy (like those of most Central American countries) leaves it particularly vulnerable to worldwide recessions, and the poor state of health of its internal market only serves to enhance that vulnerability. Unsurprisingly, like many other transitional democracies, it has run into economic difficulties and, as a condition of assistance, has had a Structural Adjustment Programme imposed on it.

Such programmes are explicitly designed to provide development by strengthening a particular solidarity—individualism—but (as Karl and Schmitter's typology suggests) the *imposition* of these programmes also aims at strengthening hierarchy, which has to create the context and rules within which the market can flourish. If there only *were* markets and hierarchies (and that is the assumption on which these plans have been devised) then, provided they got the interactions of these two solidarities right, they could not fail. But, if there are other solidarities besides individualism and hierarchy, there will be knock-on effects that may take things dramatically away from this happy and seemingly assured outcome.

- It is now well documented that these Structural Adjustment Programmes hit the poorest hardest: an outcome that inevitably stimulates resistance from egalitarian groups and parties, who are keenly interested in decreasing the burdens that are borne by those at the bottom of the pile. At the same time, this regressive redistribution seriously transgresses the moralities of both the individualist and hierarchist solidarities (individualists can no longer point to the universal benefits that have been delivered by their beloved hidden hand; hierarchists have broken faith with their 'deserving poor'). Such programmes thus end up strengthening fatalism and egalitarianism and undermining individualism and hierarchy: pretty much the opposite of what is intended.

  In Nicaragua's case these effects are doubly pernicious because democratic consolidation depends on the sorts of grassroots, confidence-building efforts that will persuade people out of fatalism and into the public space, and the last thing that is needed is a swingeing reversal of this tentative trend. Yet the long-standing cleavage between egalitarianism and individualism-cum-hierarchy, which is the legacy of the caudillos, makes it even more likely that this is what will happen.
- A related obstacle in the way of these Structural Adjustment Programmes is the so-called 'dual society' (Boron 1995:199). Most of the countries that are now stable democracies have, over the years, experienced periods of economic growth that were accompanied by fundamental social change. Disparities of wealth were diminished: the rich did not get even richer than the poor, and the middle ground filled up with a vigorous middle class. In dual societies this does not happen; the weights of certain actors preventing (not necessarily intentionally) the mobilisation of the political will to bring about the social change that the economic growth has made feasible (H.Weber 1983; Crawley 1979). Economic growth in Nicaragua during the 1970s, for example, led to a widespread demand for social change, but these demands were disregarded

because numbers did not really count. The Somoza clan and its foreign ally, the United States, had the weight and that was what mattered. Now, with democratisation on the march all across the continent, the pressure for social change goes hand-in-hand with the idea of equity-enhancing policies. Coming to a consensus, however, will not be easy.

The lightness of poverty

The extreme social and economic inequalities in Latin America, some argue (Shifter 1997: 124), are incompatible with the continuation of democratic rule. This implies that an equity-enhancing policy consensus has to be reached in the relatively near future if democracy is not to disappear. The problem is not so much how far equity-enhancement has to go, but how to start things going in that direction. If current weightings are such that the powerful and wealthy élites are not able to negotiate themselves to a re-distributive position (pact), and the masses are so confirmed in their fatalism by past *and* present experience that they cannot enter the public space and pressure the élites into doing that which they cannot bring themselves to do (reform), then democracy has no future.

However, it is not poverty *per se* that is the obstacle: it is the one huge cleavage that it and the caudillos—home-grown and foreign—have created throughout the continent: the cleavage that has individualism and hierarchy on one side and egalitarianism on the other. Pointing that out does not, of course, solve the problem, but it does focus our attention on a whole range of do-able things that are not at present being done, or that are unnecessarily being undone, or not being done as hard as they could be, or not being undone as hard as they could be. It is our argument that Cultural Theory, especially when it has been brought together with schemes such as those of Karl and Schmitter, helps us achieve this change of focus. But we have still not got a really effective handle on weight.

Strategies for mass mobilisation that take account of both weight and numbers

Weyland (1995) begins by distinguishing two broad strategies for mass mobilisation: top-down and bottom-up. He then contrasts the idea (prevalent in stable and long-established democracies) that numbers are the decisive factor with the idea of weights (which has proved so relevant in Latin America, and elsewhere) (Table 12.2).

Since the élites do not want to lose weight, they exclude (or, rather, continue to exclude) the egalitarian solidarity: *concertation*. The egalitarians, seeking to put on weight, try to mobilise the downtrodden masses: *basismo*.[11] This strategy, however, does not work; for it to work the masses would have to be organised, and in Nicaragua the masses, on the whole and for all the reasons we have seen, are not organised. Indeed it can be argued that they have learnt to stay disorganised and know that this is an effective survival strategy in the face of caudillism. Weyland's conclusion is that there is little immediate chance of their being mobilised. Reform (which requires all three active cultures, acting from the bottom up) seems impossible, and liberalism—numbers not weight—is

Table 12.2 Latin American democratic models

	Numbers	*Special weight or intensities*
Top-down	Populism (leader and mass)	Concertation (interest organisations)
Bottom-up	Liberalism (individual citizens)	Basismo (social movements)

Source: Weyland 1995:129

therefore unattainable. Worse still, as Weyland argues and Cultural Theory explains, the fatalised masses are readily attracted towards clientelist relations: a predilection that is particularly painful for the egalitarians who are devoting so much time and energy to trying to organise them into collective self-help groups. It is thus quite easy for élites to 'buy' their loyalty, thereby undermining both kinds of horizontal solidarity: egalitarianism and individualism (hence, Cultural Theory suggests, the poor performance of Nicaragua's 'homegrown' economy).

This inability to develop organisations that might construct a stronger civil society is exactly what a populist needs. More than that, it is a positive force that can actually move politicians who are strongly reform-minded across to populism: a bottom-up mechanism, but of an unconstructive type.[12] Populists, like the caudillos of old, use highly individualistic and personalistic strategies (Entrena Duran 1995), promising radical change and buying the loyalty and votes of the unorganised masses through networks of clientelistic relations that are relentlessly vertical. Nicaragua thus goes through the democratic motions—open and free elections, alternation in office—but the political translation of egalitarianism, in a way that would enable reforms to be demanded from the bottom up (rather than just promised top-down), remains firmly blocked (even within the Sandinist party which is considered to be the channel for this political translation). Unable to get to liberalism, and with basismo blocked-off by the weight of the latter-day caudillos, top-down strategies seem to be the only recourse for Nicaragua (and for most of Latin America).

Nicaragua, in consequence, is trapped in a top-down oscillation. With the election of President Aleman, the country has lurched into populism. However, the well-organised interest associations (a legacy of the Sandinist era) do have the power to immobilise the country and thereby force the government to sit around the table: concertation. But the 53 per cent of unemployed urban and rural dwellers remain unorganised and unrepresented: sitting ducks for those political entrepreneurs who are prepared to promise heaven on earth in the shortest of time-spans. Nicaragua, it seems, is destined to be torn back and forth between populism (at election times) and concertation (in daily political practice) for as long as the interest organisations can keep on pressurising the political elite, and for as long as the egalitarians love of the downtrodden masses remains unrequited. So the questions are: 'For how long can these two things go on?' and 'What

could be done to weaken the forces that keep these two things going and to strengthen those forces that would bring them to a halt?'.

It is that 53 per cent of Nicaraguans who are fatalised and almost weightless that is the key: kept in that condition by the blandishments of the populists and by the paucity of the horizontal relationships of trust that they will need if they are to heed the egalitarians' exhortations and enter the public space they have long known is best steered clear of. All it needs, therefore, is the blandishments to become a little less attractive, and the public space to become a little less terrifying, and the whole oscillatory dynamic will change. So if we take a page out of the Monty Python book, and look on the bright side of Nicaraguan life, what do we see?

- People who go on promising heaven on earth, and consistently fail to deliver, tend to lose credibility, even among the credulous. So populism has *usure de pouvoir* problems even when nothing else is happening to undermine it.
- Going through the democratic motions—open and free elections and alternation in office—does provide a pattern of experience consistent enough for people to suspect that things are not quite so frightening as they used to be (violence and armed conflict, however, would quickly reverse this trend). It is this fear, combined with the rewards of clientelism, that keeps people away from the public sphere. Open and free elections and alternation in office, if they diminish this incentive structure, are therefore not just window-dressing: they are creating the conditions conducive to the unlearning of the survival lessons that worked so well in the authoritarian past.
- Caudillos are not the great figures they used to be. Now, instead of warlording it over all and sundry, they are reduced to buying people's votes. And the external caudillos (some of them, anyway) are capable of realising that their Structural Adjustment Plans (and other aid conditionalities) are taking things further away from the liberal democratic goal they wish Nicaragua to reach. There are, we should also note, many egalitarian actors in the territories of these external warlords who are most emphatically not excluded from the political sphere in the way that the homegrown egalitarians are excluded. The World Bank, for instance, has recently been hauled over the coals (in relation to one of its major projects in India) by a BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) television documentary.

None of these, of course, is a particularly new or original suggestion, nor do they constitute a complete and systematic set of prescriptions for the completion of the transition to democracy in Nicaragua. But Cultural Theory draws our attention to these sorts of suggestions by showing them in a new light. Cultural Theory, in providing some plausible hypotheses about the dynamics that underlie the interactions of the various solidarities and the differential weighting of certain actors, encourages us to see that these suggestions are not just naive hopes that stand no chance in the face of the harsh realities of the world we find ourselves in. Rather, Cultural Theory helps bring us to a new and more discriminating (four solidarities, not just two) understanding of what that world *is*.

Notes

1 Wildavsky uses 'cultures' as synonymous with 'ways of life', which is a little sloppy, since ways of life (or 'forms of solidarity', to use the more recently favoured terminology) are viable comings-together of cultural bias, pattern of social relations, and behavioural strategy. 'Culture', properly speaking, has to do with only the first of these three analytically distinct levels (*see* the introductory chapter to this volume) but we will retain Wildavsky's usage in this chapter.

2 Weight is thus quite close to Bertrand Russell's definition of power: the ability or supposed ability to influence people and events.

3 To actually draw this picture of all the proportional possibilities, and the subset of those where democracy is feasible, we would need to go into three dimensions: a tetrahedron, with each of its apices depicting 100 per cent of one of the four cultures. There would then be a smaller space—tetrahedron-ish perhaps, but possibly not, and perhaps even composed of two or more separate 'globules'—contained within that tetrahedron. Whether there is any point in actually drawing this picture, whether it might be possible to generate feasibility spaces using some sets of specific assumptions about the interplay of intercultural trust and distrust, and whether it might then be possible to operationalise all this and test these hypotheses empirically, are intriguing questions for future research. For now, it is no more than a handy conceptual device, made simpler and handier by being collapsed onto just two dimensions.

4 These dualisms, Thompson and Rayner (1998) show, cannot be mapped onto one another, but can all be accommodated within Cultural Theory's fourfold scheme.

5 Long-term survival requires that the diffuse mass support be directed to the democratic system itself, not (or, rather, not just) to its immediate performance: the short-term outputs of the institutions. Otherwise, as Luhmann (1988:95–9) points out, there would be the likelihood of democracy being voted away whenever it, for a time, underperformed ('Vote for us', Hitler's National Socialists told the electorate, 'and we will get rid of the other 31 parties'; they did and they did). Stable support therefore requires that, regardless of certain failings and problems, democratic institutions are perceived and evaluated as better than any others (Lipset 1959:77) or, as Churchill put it, 'The worst system of government there is, except for all the rest'.

   The requirement for things to get better in the long-run, and for reversals to be rare, slight and short-lived, has led many scholars to see economic growth and social reform as important legitimising and stabilising factors for democracy (Almond and Verba 1963; Dahl 1971). This leads to the conclusion that poor countries, and especially those whose economies are largely agrarian, will not easily achieve democracy. This is not a well-supported prediction, empirically, and, on the theory front, it requires that economic growth and social reform be factors external to democratic government, rather than consequences of it. There are countries with meteoric and sustained economic growth (Chile under Pinochet, for instance, and Nicaragua under Somoza) that remained undemocratic, and there are countries (Nepal is perhaps the most spectacular example) that are so poverty-stricken, and so sunk in subsistence agriculture, that they have dropped off the end of the United Nations' list of the world 's most deprived countries, and yet have had their Velvet revolutions' and now display all the indicators of democratic consolidation.

6 That the hypercycle provides an explanation, rather than just a Molière-esque redescription, may not be immediately obvious, especially in view of the disciplinary gulf between

dynamical systems theorists (whose work is largely in molecular biology) and political scientists. Thompson, Ellis and Wildavsky (1990:50–1) bridge this gulf in the following way:

> The model for this sort of system—a system that is driven by the competition and the interdependence of its parts—is now well understood by students of prebiotic evolution; it is called the *hypercycle*. A great many amino acids can be formed by the interactions of the simpler molecules that constitute the 'primordial soup', but since these reactions are reversible, the animo acids can just as quickly break up. Since these amino acids are in competition with one another for the simpler molecules, the result is a zero-sum game in which none of the competitors ever gets permanently ahead of the rest. Or, at least, it would be a zero-sum game were it not for the fortuitous fact that some of the amino acids act as catalysts for the formation of some of the others. When one of these catalytic sequences happens to join up with its other end, its properties alter dramatically because it is now doing more to hold itself together than the amino acids on the outside are doing to pull it apart. Its game, in other words, has become positive-sum and this gives its components an advantage over all those amino acids that are not a part of such a cycle.
>
> It is by this sort of mechanism, so the theory of prebiotic evolution has it, that strong patterns emerge from within an initially patternless soup. The same sort of thing, we are arguing, is happening with viable ways of life.

7 These models are inspired by Pinkney (1993:8–12). Though he speaks of these as democratic models, he immediately acknowledges that they all tend towards authoritarianism. Cultures, of course, do not win elections or grab the reins of power; it is institutional actors that successfully harness the various solidarities that do these things. The typology of solidarities, however, provides us with a way of thinking about these institutional actors without jumping straight away to the essentially tautological argument that they are doing these various things in the pursuit of their interests.

8 Nepal's now revoked penal code, The Muluki Ain of 1854, is a nice example. The punishment for each offence is read off a 4×4 matrix, the rows being the caste of the offender and the columns the caste of the victim.

9 Indeed, the whole idea of co-sociational democracy assumes that élites of different political currents can arrive at consensus and thereby heal a deeply divided society.

10 Based on interviews, by Nadia Molenaers, in Managua in the summer of 1996.

11 Basismo, since it aims to recruit fatalists and to organise them out of their fatalism, is, properly speaking, a strategy for increasing both weight and numbers.

12 This idea that leadership is a function of followership, and *vice versa,* has been quite well developed by Cultural Theorists, Aaron Wildavsky (1984, 1989), for instance, and Gunnar Grendstad (1995).

13
CONSULTING THE FROGS
The normative implications of Cultural Theory

Stephen Ney and Michael Thompson

Several years ago, one of us, along with a number of social constructionist colleagues from Britain and the Netherlands, was invited to a large and very official meeting in France. 'Les Experts Sont Formels' was the meetings title, but it soon became apparent that there was an unstated sub-title: 'What Do We Do About All These Environmental Activists Now That We Can No Longer Get Away With Blowing Them Up in Auckland Harbour?'. Things came to a head on the morning of the first day when a senior French civil servant, exasperated by all our talk of participation, plural rationality, reflexivity, contradictory certainties and the like, could contain himself no longer. 'You do not consult the frogs', he thundered, 'when you decide to drain the marsh.'

His outburst, far from silencing us, was greeted with gales of laughter ('frog' is the Brit's politically incorrect term of endearment for his French neighbour) interspersed with cries of 'You would if the frogs all had the vote!'. We, clearly, were not prepared to go along with his Grande École orthodoxy. Too few consulted frogs, and too many drained marshes (metaphorically and literally), was our judgement on the élitist style of which he was so committed a protagonist. Cultural theorists would now rephrase our defiant response, a little more formally, as a call for the democratisation of decision-making processes in all those areas which, because of their high scientific, technological, actuarial or economistic content, have tended to be treated as merely technical. Topical examples would include biotechnology, global climate change, the reform of national pension schemes, 'development' aid to poor countries and Europe's fusion energy research programme, all of which involve the draining of metaphorical marshes that might better be treated in some less drastic way, or left alone, or made even wetter. Better, that is, not just for the unconsulted frogs, but for everyone else as well: that is the constructive insight that comes from Cultural Theory. It is also a rather counter-intuitive insight and requires some explanation.

Circles of improvement

The classic example of the benefits of frog-consultation concerns the Frish lavatory rim-blocks that are manufactured by the Anglo-Dutch multinational, Unilever.[1] These, to begin with, were moulded pieces of a waxy substance, paradichlorobenzene, that were impregnated with perfumes and coloured detergents. Clipped to the rim of the lavatory

bowl, they dissolved a little each time the chain was pulled, thereby imparting a pleasing smell and a hygienic appearance to that lowly but essential fitment.

They were selling like hot cakes all across Europe when, to Unilever's dismay, the German Greens started a campaign against them, arguing that they were both toxic and non-biodegradable. Unilever was convinced that they were innocuous but, fearful of the harm such a campaign might do to its reputation, withdrew the rim-blocks from sale and initiated a crash programme to find an alternative that could not be accused of these environmental shortcomings. Within six weeks they had it, which of course means that they had had it all along, but had been operating on 'automatic pilot' and had not bothered to search through their stock of technologies to find it (the alternative was hidden among the soaps, while the original came out of the shoe-polish stable). It was the German Greens' rude intrusion, therefore, that supplied the impetus that Unilever itself, thanks to the absence of green activists within its decision-making ranks, had failed to deliver.

The alternative, as well as getting around the German Greens' objections, turned out to have a longer shelf-life (unlike the original, it did not evaporate in store). It also released its odours and sky-blue foam more effectively, and it could be produced by continuous extrusion instead of by the batch-moulding method that had been demanded by the paradichlorobenzene base. It was therefore cheaper to make and more profitable to sell. In other words, it was a much better product in terms of both the hierarchical and individualistic criteria: the criteria that are generated in any organisation that is large enough to have become internally differentiated while still outwardly exposed to the marketplace. It was also a much less objectionable product by the stern egalitarian criteria of the German Greens. So, in just six weeks, the rim-block had gone all the way round its circle of improvement, and in so doing had been transferred to a completely different path of technological development. But it could not have gone round that circle, or made that dramatic path-jump, if any one of the three segments that constituted that circle had been missing, and the egalitarian one nearly was!

Unilever has now learnt its lesson from this narrow escape (removing a product from the market, and re-launching it in radically different form, is a massively expensive business) and takes care to consider those design criteria which, though they do not exist within it, it knows to be increasingly present in its environment. Greens are now seen as 'dissatisfied customers', rather than as 'the enemy', and Unilever executives pride themselves on being 'pro-active' (we would say 'reflexive') and routinely bend over backwards to criticise one another's proposals from this position that is so alien to them.

Circles of improvement, however, are conspicuously lacking in all those decision-making processes that do not entail frog-consultation. If the circle is broken then improvement is not possible, and there is now a vast literature that chronicles these missed opportunities across all those areas—technology, environment, pensions, development—that, for a variety of identifiable reasons, are insufficiently democratised (Collingridge 1980; Leach and Mearns 1996; Linnerooth-Bayer and Ney 1997; Ives and Messerli 1989). On a more positive note, there is also a growing literature on how to identify incomplete circles and make them complete: no easy matter, given the dense technical overlay in policy areas such as global and regional environmental change, or the development of the world's poorest nations (*see* Rotmans and de Vries 1997; Dixit and

Gyawali 1997; Rayner and Malone 1998a). Of course, it could be objected that there is nothing political about lavatory rim-blocks (or about the fertilisation effects of increased concentrations of atmospheric carbon dioxide, or about ageing populations, or about high dams in remote Himalayan valleys) and that you cannot expect political scientists to immerse themselves in all the details of engineering design, ecosystem dynamics, actuarial computations, project appraisals and so on. Cultural Theorists, however, would argue that political scientists will have fallen down on the job if they fail to discern the political within the supposedly technical, and if they do not then equip themselves with the expertise needed to separate the one from the other (worse still, if they don't do this others will). Circles of improvement are what Cultural Theory directs our attention towards, and we should attend to them, especially if they are broken, no matter where they are located.

All this, however, is somewhat beside our present point, which is simply to show how Cultural Theory, thanks to the understanding it provides of how these circles of improvement become broken or complete, is able to put the normative into political science theory. Discerning the political within the technical is the precondition for that understanding (which means that the political scientist *will* have to get in there among the molecules, the creepy-crawlies, the life expectancies and the integrated rural development schemes) but it is the understanding itself- its implications for political science—that is our main focus in this chapter.

The masking of the political by the technical

Advanced capitalist states have swollen, the scope of their responsibility now reaching far beyond the classical liberal prescriptions of Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau or Paine. Inevitably, with this growth of the state's role as a provider of social services (health, occupational safety, pensions, environmental protection, the regulation of markets, the assessment of technologies, on and on), decision-makers have come to depend more and more on those who wield technical expertise. As social problems become more complex, and as the institutions that deal with those problems match that complexity, policy-making becomes more opaque to the citizen. Even without the attentions of Grande École civil servants, the likelihood is that the citizen will become ever more remote from actual decision-making and policy formulation. In the absence of any countervailing measures, the citizen is programmed, by the ever-increasing complexity of that which he or she is embedded in, to become a passive consumer of policy outputs, rather than an active participant in the democratic process. The trend, in other words, is towards more broken (and therefore unimprovable) circles and fewer complete ones. Advanced capitalist 'development' is increasingly a grand trade-off between active citizen participation and the provision of social services (Habermas 1973): a trade-off in which democracy is all set to be the loser (in a new housing 'development' in Amsterdam all public space has been eliminated, the architect insisting that there could be no possible use for it).

To say that advanced capitalist states are in danger of becoming profoundly undemocratic, however, is to beg the question: what does democracy *mean* in heterogeneous, post-industrial societies? When, in other words, do we *know* that a particular

decision or policy process is democratic or undemocratic? While political philosophy provides the abstract ethical framework at the level of the polity as a whole, these ideas have to be translated into norms governing political life as it is lived at the institutional and individual levels. Yet it is precisely here, in the breathing of life into the body politic, that political theory has become detached from the realities of advanced capitalist policy-making.

To demonstrate that detachment we will now take one small but rather central part of political theory—pluralism as originally propounded in the 1960s. Other 'isms', of course, were propounded around that time (corporatism, for instance), and pluralism itself did not remain exactly as it was first set out, but we will not go into all that here. A valid and constructive 'point of entry' is what we need and classic pluralism provides precisely that. (Schwarz and Thompson [1990], however, have provided a detailed treatment of a closely related theme: the politics of interest.)

Putting the plurality into pluralist theory

Democracy, the pluralists argued, is a function of the distribution of power in a given polity. A system is democratic if:

1 political power is sufficiently diffused so that no single group or individual can exercise systematic and pervasive power over more than one issue,
2 the state is the neutral arbiter of social conflict,
3 individuals can voice their views through interest groups,
4 decision-making is limited to small, incremental steps because decisions depend on consent from a plurality of policy actors.

The image evoked is of a marketplace in which political groups compete for the attention of policy-makers and politicians compete for votes. No one says that perfect competition prevails, but fairness would seem to be the outcome, in the same way that a fair price emerges from market competition. Since some distributions of power, on this formulation, are fairer than others, pluralism offered a way of evaluating the degree of democracy in a given political system. Robert Dahl (1961), for instance, assessed the distribution of political power by focusing on what he called 'key issues'. These are policy problems where political actors'—interest groups and politicians—are in open and observable conflict. The relative power of these policy actors was then gauged by the proportion of actual policy decisions that went in their various favours.

Political groups, it was assumed, acted and interacted as coherent entities. The pressure groups that constituted the political system were seen as analogous to the rational individuals in the civil society of classic liberal philosophy. Unsurprisingly, the same epistemological scepticism that liberal theory had applied to individuals, and that realist theory had applied to nation states, was applied to the actors—the political groups—at this in-between level. Only the political group could know its specific needs, and it would pursue these by articulating its preferences and interests on policy issues. Pluralism, therefore, made no attempt to break out of the 'politics of interest' tautology: actors act

the way they do because of their interests, and if we want to know what their interests are we have to look at the way they act. The question of origins—how actors who act in their interests come to know where the interests they act in lie—went unposed (*see* Schwarz and Thompson 1990:ch. 4).

How each of these actors came to cohere, similarly, elicited little interest among the pluralists: a 'hidden hand'—the inevitable consequence of myriad acts of maximising, within an overall setting that contained just one equilibrium—could be counted on to see to that. That the political actors *were* there, and coherent, was proof of that! The pluralist model was thus methodologically committed to an abstract and stylised concept of the person: the rational actor. Where, the sceptic might well ask, is the plurality in that?

Though pluralism claimed to provide three crucial *desiderata*—an accurate description of Western democracies, a prescription for less democratic systems, and a method by which to assess the level of pluralism in the policy process—it has not lived up to expectations on any of them.

- Changes in the role and nature of the advanced capitalist state have carried it further and further from the pluralists account. The state's increasing remit during the post-war era has resulted in policy-making becoming ever more disaggregated into specialist areas of competence. Policy now emerges from a web of interconnected and interdependent organisations. And, rather than acting as the neutral arbiter of social conflict, the state has itself become a social actor following its own agenda. Diverse state agencies now operate in different policy networks and policy communities (Richardson and Jordan 1979; Jordan 1990; Marsh and Rhodes 1990) and it has been argued (Smith 1993) that the state *has* to depend on these involvements if it is to act at all. Without the exchange of information and other resources that these networks and communities make possible, the state would be unable to effectively formulate and implement policies.
- Civil society, for its part, has become distinctly heterogeneous. Globalisation, and the socio-economic transformations that accompany it, have generated new 'total system' stresses which, in many instances, have exacerbated differences of national identity, life-style and religion that had previously been muted. Not only are the established stocks of cultural truths applicable to fewer and fewer people in any given polity, but that stock of cultural certainties is itself in a state of flux. 'Les rosbifs' (to use the frogs' term of endearment for their British neighbours) now tend to eat curry, or kebabs, and to steer clear of their mad cows. As a result, the pluralist interest group model is becoming increasingly irrelevant as new policy issues (in particular, the environment, animal welfare and gender) enter the public sphere.
- Nor, amid all these changes within the state and civil society, have the problems they address remained the same. Where policy problems used to be so clearcut that it was not difficult for all the actors to arrive at agreed definitions of what those problems *were* (their differences emerging only in relation to their preferred solutions) many issues now are so intangible, so complex and so inherently uncertain that agreement on the base—the pre-requisite for incrementalism—is no longer attainable. The uncertainties that are inherent to issues such as global climate change, biotechnology, pensions

provision, or even the disposal of redundant North Sea oil storage structures, have undermined the efficacy of conventional policy tools: tools (such as cost-benefit analysis, general equilibrium modelling, and quantitative risk assessment) that insist on the clear and undisputed separation of facts and values (Thompson 1996; Rayner 1991). At the same time, policy problems have become more systemic (inextricably entwined with other issues), and more transnational or even global in their scope. Environmental issues, for instance, are rarely confined within the borders of a nation state, and issues such as transport planning, waste management and energy provision can no longer be considered separately from one another, or without consideration for what is happening elsewhere in the world. The Kyoto agreement on carbon emissions (in 1997) has seen to that! All this makes it difficult for policy makers to ascertain where an issue begins and where it ends, let alone to determine whether or not it is key.

Nor should we assume that, because things have got worse for pluralist theory over the years, it was working well to begin with. It was beset with methodological problems from the very beginning (Bachrach and Baratz 1963; Wolfinger 1971; Galbraith 1969; Lukes 1974; Polsby 1963).

- In focusing on the overt exercise of power in the decision-making process, the pluralists were unable to recognise the more subtle, more perfidious, and quite possibly more important ways in which policy actors can set about getting what they want. Power, the critics of pluralist theory pointed out, can be exercised by ensuring that only certain issues get onto the policy agenda. On top of that, the way in which a problem is defined, before it even reaches the agenda, may foreclose certain policy solutions from the outset. In short, the method could not say very much about the distribution of power in a polity because it was capable of analysing only one sort of power.
- Pluralism's blindness to other, less overt, forms of power meant that it could not distinguish between those situations in which there was full agreement on the base and those in which those who did not agree with a particular framing of the problem had been excluded. If the frogs were not being consulted then, according to the pluralists, there *were* no frogs! Without an agreed base, of course, there could be no incrementalism and, since incrementalism is so central to the whole approach, we can begin to see that pluralism's blindness was not just accidental. Consult the frogs and, as we have seen with the lavatory rim-blocks, we get a sudden and dramatic switch from one path of technological development to another. Incrementalism (along with the gradual changes at the margin that neo-classical economists are so committed to) is simply the political science version of the dubious doctrine *natura non fecit saltum*. So dubious, in fact, that many scientists (Gleik 1987, for instance, and Waldrop 1992; Zeeman 1977 and Gell-Mann 1994) now argue that nature consists of little else but leaps; it's the last straw that breaks the camel's back, it is the small historical events (the qwerty keyboard, for instance) that lock us into what often turn out to be inefficient paths of technological development (Arthur 1989), and it was Greenpeace's

helicopter-landing on the Brent Spar that virtually overnight transformed European policy on ocean dumping.

- That incrementalism was antithetical to pluralism soon became clear (Aaron Wildavsky, for instance, had to write an entirely new version (1988) of his classic *The Politics of the Budgetary Process* (1964), once he realised that the 'radical egalitarians' were never going to agree to the base the hierarchists and the individualists had negotiated for themselves) but pluralism's most debilitating defect—its unrelenting singularity—surfaced more slowly (Wildavsky 1976). Like Henry Ford and his all-black cars, pluralism, said 'you can have any rationality you like so long as it's that of the atomised utility maximiser.' But if pluralism is all about the different ways in which we want to live together (*one* of which is in the sort of market solidarity which is supported by the idea of the person as a freely choosing maximiser of his or her unique set of preferences) then it must cast its net wide enough to take in all these different ways. We can now see that this is something pluralism did not do.

Yet, despite all these shortcomings, pluralism brought with it a normative dimension that cannot easily be discarded. Democracies, pluralism tells us, *ought* to value concepts such as effective citizen input, consensual policy-making and power-sharing, and even the most vociferous of its critics would think twice before turning their backs on these sorts of commitments. So, rather than just throwing it away, we should ask ourselves whether pluralist theory can be re-stated in such a way that it retains (strengthens, even) its normative dimension, while providing a method that is better suited to the task of evaluating advanced capitalist democracies. No easy undertaking, we concede, but one that, we believe, can be achieved by way of Cultural Theory.

Refreshing the parts old-style pluralism cannot reach

To realign pluralist theory with the realities of policy-making, we have to shift its methodological focus so as to purge it of its singularities: the assumption that people are all rational in the same way, and the assumption that there is just one base 'out there'—nature, both physical and humanon which we can all agree. In place of the WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) approach, where all knowable reality is gleaned from interrogating nature and observing individual behaviour, we need a constructionist perspective: the idea that our convictions as to how the world is (and people are) are shaped, this way and that, by the various ways in which we find ourselves caught up in the process of social life. Rather than uncritically taking preferences as given—characteristics that, like their finger-prints, are inherent to individuals—we need to think of them as the emergent properties of human transactions. On our own, we do not know what we want; we discover our preferences by establishing our social relations.

The outlandishness of these social constructionist ideas, among the various social science disciplines, is directly related to the perceived usefulness of those disciplines. In anthropology and sociology, for instance, they are now quite commonplace; in economics and political science they are often bitterly resisted. Nevertheless, they have a toehold, even in the utilitarian heartlands of decision theory and policy analysis: in Simon's (1978)

insistence that rationality is always 'bounded', for instance, and in Allison's (1971) demonstration that policy issues, far from being self-evident, are inevitably filtered through different 'perceptual lenses'. Generate a few hypotheses about different patterns of social relations inducing their constituent individuals to bound their rationality in different ways (and *vice versa*), or come up with some predictions about the sorts of transactions that are promoted by different kinds of perceptual filters (and *vice versa*), and you will have effected the shift of methodological focus we are calling for. This, of course, is precisely what Cultural Theory does.

- It is not some objective reality 'out there' that determines what is political and what is not political, that separates fact from value, or that sorts out the key issues from the non-issues. Rather, the way in which these crucial lines are drawn is a function of a policy actor's interpretation of reality, and much of what is going on stems from the fact that different policy actors are drawing these lines in different places. Policy actors, in other words, *socially construct* the world in which they operate: building the maze *and* running it (in contrast to the behaviourists rats, which simply run the maze they are put in).
- Policy-making, in consequence, is an inherently *communicative* endeavour that follows a different logic to that which drives the rational actor model. Where rational choice theory has actors strategically manipulating other actors in pursuit of their clearly perceived goals, this communicative approach insists that the goals emerge from (or, at the very least, are clarified by) the interactions of the policy actors. Attention therefore shifts from the strategising behaviour of policy actors to the ways in which they are able to establish the shared understandings on which they act (Habermas 1987; Eriksen and Weigård 1997; MacIntyre 1988). This approach gives us policy actors cohering, through their communicative efforts, around different sets of values and norms which then enable them to discern their goals. These goals, of course, will likely be very different from those that are arrived at by other policy actors, which leads to the question of how communication between these various 'traditions' is possible.
- The answer, in part,[2] is that these traditions, though they are arguing from different premises, do agree on certain rules of argumentation. These are, of course, insufficient to resolve disagreements between them (otherwise they would all end up re-grouped around the single rationality that is assumed by rational choice theory and by old-style pluralism) but that agreement on the basis for 'reasoned argument' at least enables them to communicate over what is being disagreed about.
- So the communicative approach certainly makes room for rationality to beplural; the trouble is it sets no limits on the proliferation of that plurality: it cannot tell us when and why we get convergence around a set of values and norms and when and why we get divergence over values and norms. Cultural Theory's impossibility theorem[3]—that there are five and just five forms of solidarity, each of which is stabilised around a particular set of values and norms—resolves that theoretical difficulty. And its requisite variety condition[4]—each of these five needing the others to define itself against—resolves the other theoretical difficulty: the diminution of plurality that

would occur if one (or some) of these solidarities succeeded in driving one or more of the others into permanent extinction.

- Attention now has to focus on *discourse*—on the different ways in which thepolicy problem is being defined—rather than directly on decisions and policy outputs. Power, we can acknowledge, is also being exercised by the deployment of communicative resources: by the manipulation of symbols so that alternative policy solutions are foreclosed from the very beginning. For instance, if things are framed in such a way that frog-consultation is unthinkable then none of the solutions that frog-consultation would give rise to (those, to take a literal example, that address the issue of wetland loss rather than that of malaria control or agricultural expansion) will never get onto the agenda. A recent example is the US governments decision to 're-hydrate' 50,000 acres of drained land around the edges of the Everglades Park, in Florida. Four billion dollars have now been allocated to reversing the engineering efforts, over the last 40 or so years, of the US Corps of Engineers. What was once the solution is now the problem (Vulliamy 1997).
- Policy formulation, policy planning, and even policy implementation, we can now see, emerge from *argumentative* processes that conventional policy analysis has so far ignored (Dryzek 1990; Jennings 1993; Fischer and Forester 1993). Rather than seeing policy-makers as problem-solvers applying value-neutral scientific methods to cure society of its universally acknowledged ills (the view that held uncritical sway during the decades when the US Corps of Engineers was digging its drainage ditches), theorists of the 'argumentative turn' suggest we think of policy-makers as performers who are seeking to
- A policy argument tells a story; what it leaves out is every bit as important as persuade an audience. what it includes. This story provides protagonists and antagonists, follows a plot, suggests a solution and, most importantly, is guided by a *moral*. Since they are designed to persuade, policy arguments are never value-neutral (Adler and Haas 1992; Rein and Schön 1994). This does not mean that policy arguments are mere opinion. Indeed, a policy argument that had no recourse to rational methodology—logic, consistency and objectivity—would not be very persuasive. Those policy actors who have now succeeded in reversing the US's marsh-draining policies did not turn their backs on established truths and on scientific reasoning; they marshalled these resources in such a way as to tell a more persuasive story.

  How many tellable stories there are, which policy actors are likely to tell which, and who in the audience is likely to be persuaded by which, however, are questions that are raised but not really answered by those who have pioneered the policy argument approach. Cultural Theory, as we will show in a moment, does suggest some answers.
- By rooting policy in discourse and in moral commitments, the policy argument approach introduces *reflexivity* and *criticism* into the analysis. Reality can be interpreted in different ways without requiring us to insist that water flows uphill or that the moon is made of green cheese. The scientific uncertainty that currently surrounds 'mad cow disease', for instance, is such that all that can be said with certainty (as Adrian Smith, the president of Britain's Royal Statistical Society, recently said) is that the number of

deaths from new variant' Creutzfeld-Jakob disease will be somewhere between 21 (the number of deaths we know have already happened) and 50 million (the population of Britain). Policy actors can, and do, take up very different positions within this sort of uncertainty, and it is important that the policy analyst not exclude those that diverge from the position he or she happens to find credible.

All these policy arguments, each built on a particular objectively valid interpretation, are credible to the policy actors who propound them and, in all likelihood, to some within the audiences they are addressing. What is crucial, therefore, is the complex process by which credibility is variously conferred and withdrawn, won over and lost. Only by bending over backwards to compensate for his or her own bias can the policy analyst reach some understanding of why certain types of policy argument, at certain times, are marginalised and others achieve dominance.

- The explanation for the various ways in which policy stories are anchored in particular interpretations of the 'facts' lies in the rightness of each of those anchorages in relation to particular visions of the world. These visions are usually unquestioned by those who hold to them, and each of them defines a moral agenda. Those who invariably precede the word 'ecosystem' with the word 'fragile', for instance, are not just asserting their convictions about stability and change in nature; they are pointing their fingers at all those who have not yet learnt to tread lightly on the earth. *Advocacy coalitions* (Sabatier 1987; Hajer 1993) capture this crucial idea of policy arguments emerging from social relations in the policy process.

  Advocacy coalitions form around 'policy belief systems': coherent sets of ideas that define policy objectives and specify the means for attaining them. While some elements of a policy belief system (the 'secondary elements') are open to scientific scrutiny, others are not. These are the 'deep core' values, made up of axiomatic ontological principles, that are beyond empirical verification. Policy belief systems, therefore, amount to visions of the world, and they function like (indeed, are) ideologies. Advocacy coalitions are the agents of policy beliefs: they adopt strategies to translate core policy beliefs into policy by constructing policy arguments.

The above 'bullet points' set out the key components in the line of political science thinking that takes as its point of departure the shortcomings of the approach embodied in old-style pluralist theory. Yet, though it reaches 'closure' with the proposition that core policy beliefs—the normative orientations in policy arguments—emerge from social relations in the policy process, it does not specify how the structures of advocacy coalitions are related to their respective policy belief systems. In other words, there is an unfortunate void (unfortunate, at any rate, if you are not a postmodernist) at the centre of this seemingly impressive argument. Unable to say anything about how many policy cores there are, where they come from, what patterns of social relations are associated with each, or how they relate to one another in the public sphere, the entire constructionist approach is in danger of spiralling away into a totally unconstrained relativism in which anything goes and in which anything that goes can go with anything else that goes.

Cultural Theory fills this void. Its five distinctive ways of organising (each of which is a way of disorganising the other four) give rise to, and are supported by, five distinctive

perceptual filters and five distinctive ways of knowing (Thompson 1996). The normative orientation of a policy belief system now depends on the organisational form of the advocacy coalition that is centred around that policy belief system. And the various pairwise alliances that can be formed (by partner coalitions foregrounding what they have in common and backgrounding what sets them apart) and then undermined (by the increasingly persuasive arguments of the coalitions they have excluded) provides a conceptual and readily operationalised basis for understanding the sorts of dynamics that, at their most spectacular, result in policy reversals such as we have recently seen with the Brent Spar oil storage structure and the re-hydration of Florida's labouriously drained wetlands (Schwarz and Thompson 1990:ch. 6, traces out those dynamics in the context of energy policy, and Thompson and Rayner 1998 does the same for global climate change).

Filling the void

The cultural biases inherent to each of Cultural Theory's five forms of social solidarity provide the normative orientations and discursive foci for policy arguments. The three 'active' solidarities—hierarchy, individualism and egalitarianism (fatalists cannot gain access to the policy debate, and hermits are at pains to steer clear of it)—establish the 'meta-narratives' that their constituent individuals use to interpret the world. These meta-narratives then act as a stock of cultural truths which impart historically and contextually specific story-lines to policy arguments. The postmodernist mantra—'There are no meta-narratives' (Lyotard 1979)—is, of course, itself a meta-narrative (the meta-narrative that fuels the critical rationality of the egalitarian solidarity) and is therefore readily subsumed within the Cultural Theory scheme.

The three meta-narratives mark the extremes of a triangular policy space—a 'contested terrain', if you like—which, in effect, is the public sphere. Geometrical nonsense apart (who ever heard of a triangular sphere?), these three positions bound and define the arena within which the policy debate takes place (not that it always fills this space, of course; sometimes it may be confined to just one of the sides of the triangle, sometimes to just one of its apices). The meta-narratives determine what counts as a credible argument and what is to be excluded from deliberation, what arguments are legitimate, and what is to count as a fact. In this way, different policy solutions are associated with different policy problems in terms of the normative orientations provided by the different forms of social solidarity.

This is not the public sphere of classical liberal philosophy, where public opinion miraculously crystallises from the unstructured interactions of atomised individuals, each with his or her unique preference set. Policy arguments always reflect the structured social contexts from which they emerge, the norms and aspirations implicit in those policy arguments providing the basis for policy conflict. 'Sphere' is the appropriate image for the classical liberal view, because it provides an infinitude of points on its surface, no one of which is in any way privileged over any of the others. But our triangular policy space has three singularities—three points that are equivalent to one another and altogether different from the other points that define the outline—and these help us to locate the policy arguments, to pinpoint the social settings in which each of them is

produced, and to appreciate how they are pitted against each other. It is within these symbolic and discursive limits—triangular and spiky, not spherical and smooth—that policy arguments vie for legitimacy. Nor, though they are not part of this triangle, should we completely ignore the other two solidarities: fatalism and autonomy. The fatalist's policy input—'Why bother?'—alerts us to the wastefulness of crying over spilt milk, shutting stable doors after the horses have bolted and similar pathological responses. And, as John Adams (1995) has observed, the hermit's detached position is a surprisingly useful vantage-point from which to view the policy fray.

The more the policy debate fills the triangular public sphere, according to Cultural Theory, the better. Circles of improvement, we can now see, cannot be completed if one or more of the three apices have been excluded, and many a wasteful policy reversal could have been avoided if the dissenting voices had been able to make themselves heard to begin with. Cultural Theory, in following through this line of reasoning, has three major normative implications for pluralist democracies: implications that are very much in the spirit of (but much stronger than) those that derive from old-style pluralist theory.

- Cultural Theory's typology, together with its impossibility theorem and its insistence that each of its ways of organising needs the others to organise itself against, provides a means of *scrutinising the democratic nature* of any given policy process. If the social body itself is irreducibly plural, with its contending forms of solidarity in constant and often unsmooth interaction, then, by Ashby's law of requisite variety (Ashby 1968), the policy debate should include policy arguments in each of these cultural hues. Not only must they all be present; each must be given a full hearing and taken seriously. A policy debate that is dominated by just one or two of these basic dispositions cannot be considered fair or democratic. Nor, since a circle of improvement cannot operate if part of it is not there, will politics with such impoverished policy processes be able to match the flexibility, the multi-loop learning, and the avoidance of costly policy reversals that accrue to those that have succeeded in institutionalising the requisite plurality. Cultural Theory thus underwrites the pluralist notion that every citizen ought to have his or her voice heard. Citizens, however, are no longer atomised utility-maximisers; they are the active cognising and transacting components of the various forms of social solidarity.
- The other two solidarities, though absent from the policy debate, are not irrelevant to it. The fatalistic solidarity does for social systems what compost does for natural systems: provides a source of renewal. It is here, for instance, that the 'product life cycle' gets its initial shot-in-the-arm: a random experiment, or lucky accident, that quickly carries those associated with it into the individualist solidarity and then, more slowly, to the cost-minimisation that characterises hierarchy and, eventually, to the formation of cartels (a closed group whose members do not compete with one another) that goes with the egalitarian solidarity (*see* Thompson 1996; Schmutzer 1994). Autonomy provides a transitional jumping on-and-off platform by means of which actors can, under certain circumstances, detach themselves from the product life cycle's relentless round and hop across from one of its four stages to one of the others without having to go all the way round. Without this 'waiting room of history'

(Schmutzer 1994) we would all become locked into our technologies in a way that would confirm the neo-Luddite's worst nightmares (history, too, would be much less interesting). Both fatalism and autonomy, in their different ways, are therefore sources of flexibility and unlearning that need to be appreciated and conserved.

But, like all good things, it is important not to have too much of them. Isolation goes hand-in-hand with loss of civic input (Habermas 1962, 1973; Putnam 1993), and our alarm bells should start ringing if the memberships of these solidarities become too large or too static. Banfields (1958) 'amoral familism' and Habermas's (1973) 'civic privatism' *(statsbürgerlicher Privatismus)* nicely capture this transition from just enough to too much, and the Rowntree Inquiry into Income and Wealth (1995) has recently demonstrated what this means in practice: '[...] groups of disaffected young men with no role in and no stake in an economy for which they have no skills which are valued.' Crime, drug abuse and political extremism, the report shows, can be traced to the increasing size of this permanently excluded and involuntarily isolated population.

A cultural analysis of the policy process that is careful to *measure the changing strengths of the solidarities that play no part* in that process allows us to think about the health of a democracy in terms of the functions—lubricative in small doses, destructive in large—of those who are excluded (or exclude themselves) from public debate and social interaction. A system that forces many into social, economic and political isolation is failing in the stated ideals of pluralist democracy.

- Cultural Theory, in showing that the line between the political and the non-political is socially constructed, rather than 'out there' in some objective reality that we must all defer to, makes us suspicious of 'uncontested terrains'—areas of decision-making that are uncritically devolved to specialised agencies and their certified experts. The *ratio of contested to uncontested terrains*-the extent to which claims that matters such as pension reform, ocean dumping and fusion energy research are merely technical are effectively challenged-therefore provides a measure of both flexibility and democracy.

Of course, there is nothing particularly new in this; the consequences of mono-cultural and exclusionary decision-making have been widely discussed in the policy sciences (Janis 1982, for instance, and Morgan 1986). But saying that more than one frame of reference is better than just one, whilst valid enough, is a poor basis for prescription. What we need is a reasoned stopping- place, somewhere between unity and infinity, and that is what Cultural Theory gives us: a precise description of the five viable patterns of social relations, together with their distinctive ways of knowing and their preferred ways of acting, that, when they are all present and all impinging on one another constructively, result in decisions that are less inflexible than they otherwise would have been.

We can never eradicate lock-in and entrenchment—students of complex evolutionary systems (such as ecosystems, climates and technologies) can tell us that (Zeeman 1977; Arthur 1989)—but we *can* minimise them. Whether it be autodestructive high-rise systems-built housing schemes, the Space Shuttle explosion, Himalayan dams that fill up with silt just a few years after they are built, or misanthropic urban traffic schemes, the reason for disastrous decision-making is usually that the policy process is not plural enough. Those who protest that it is easy to be wise after

the event can usually be silenced by pointing to those who were wise before the event but were given no place at the table.

Civic responsiveness and the democratisation of the public sphere

If a political system is to meet the criteria set by this genuinely pluralist theory, no single one of its contending solidarities may be dominant and none of them may be systematically excluded from the policy process. A pluralist public sphere is one in which the reflexive policy-maker is in continuous and constructive interaction with a plurally responsive citizenry. In general, we will find that some policy debates are very vibrant, everyone chimes in, a variety of voices is heard, and the adopted policy is high on consent because it is careful not to ride roughshod over any of the concerns that loom large, this way or that, among those participants. In other cases, one booming voice drowns out everything, and the adopted policy is tailored only to that one set of concerns. If we use the term 'civic responsiveness' for the first kind (and 'unresponsive monologue' for the second) then the more civic responsiveness there is (and the less unresponsive monologue) the more democratic things will be.

Civic responsiveness thus provides a handy gauge by which to measure the extent to which the public sphere is democratised. Discourse analysis in terms of the 'conceptual map of human values' that has now been generated from Cultural Theory's typology (Thompson and Rayner 1998) is one practical method; another is the set of 'indicators of inflexibility' that can be applied to any proposed technological development (Collingridge 1980, 1992; Thompson 1994). And Robert Putnam (1993) has assembled a host of simple measures: whether citizens can expect prompt replies from authorities when they lodge a complaint, whether the forms for filing benefit or health claims are in the languages spoken by those likely to apply, whether individuals can get answers from their members of parliament, and so on. Yet what is civic responsiveness based on?

Putnam (1993) traces the difference in performance of Italian regional governments back to what he calls 'civic virtues': norms of reciprocity, trust, solidarity and tolerance that facilitate the consensus-seeking democratic process. Civic virtues form a stock of moral resources from which citizens can draw (and at the same time, paradoxically it would seem, add to) in their everyday interaction with others; they provide the social capital that is the prerequisite for effective and democratic political involvement. The word 'stock', however, is misleading in that it encourages us to think that social capital is just there. So, also, is the notion that social capital can be relied on to increase with use, in that it blots out the other possibility: its diminution with misuse.

The dynamic understanding that Cultural Theory provides extricates us from these difficulties. All interactions between the solidarities, it suggests, are curvilinear: constructive at first and then, if pushed too far or not adequately reflected upon, becoming destructive (Wildavsky 1981). Civic virtues, therefore, do not exist except as an integral part of a dynamic policy process, and they cannot be relied on always to multiply with use. It is better to think of them as the norms that regulate an essentially complex (i.e. non-linear and indeterministic) process of interaction between contending

solidarities, rather than as a self-replenishing larder that citizens can resort to whenever they need to resolve a policy conflict.[5]

- Urban traffic policy, in Birmingham and Munich, provides a clear example of the contrast between unresponsive monologue and civic responsiveness. In Birmingham the planning authorities were able to reject all criticism, establishing what Hendriks (1994) calls 'monocultural hegemony. In Munich it was the mayor's proud boast that his door was always open—perhaps because he could not shut it—but, either way, the result was 'multicultural pluralism'. Birmingham's road system (in particular, its infamous Bull Ring) has become one of the great planning disasters, its inflexibility defeating all attempts to make it more tractable. Munich's, having been designed so that all its main features were reversible, has been much more successful. Indeed its inner ring-road—the Altstadtring—is now largely grassed over.
- The international debate over global climate change has followed Birmingham's example, and norms of civic responsiveness are virtually absent. Agreement can only be reached on the lowest of common denominators: that the Earth is at risk from carbon dioxide emissions. With reductions in national carbon dioxide emissions the only solution on the table (no talk of strategies for adapting to the predicted consequences of global warming, no consideration of actions at levels other than that of the nation state —the region, for instance, or the household) the solidarities have entrenched themselves in their extreme positions and no middle-ground can be found. The egalitarians (who see it all as stemming from excessive consumption, especially in the affluent West) accuse the individualists (who see it as essentially a pricing problem) of greed and ideological obfuscation, and the hierarchists (who pin the blame on population growth) of imperial neglect.

  The individualists dismiss all debate by insisting that the egalitarian diagnosis and prescription are naïvely Utopian, and that the hierarchists' schemes for rational management are actually the source of atmospheric pollution. The hierarchists, for their part, accuse the egalitarians of political radicalism (demanding the demise of capitalism, no less) and the individualists of dangerous and short-sighted adventurism (Thompson and Rayner 1998). Deadlock, with carbon emissions continuing to increase despite agreement that they should be reduced, tells us that civic responsiveness is low. Unlike the Birmingham situation, however, all the active solidarities are present; the trouble is they are not interacting constructively. Look again, and you will see that those who are failing to interact constructively are all high-level professionals in the field of science-for-public-policy, driven apart by their laboriously inculcated inability to make themselves reflexive. Political science, as currently conceived and promulgated, must take much of the blame for that!
- Both exclusion (as in Birmingham) and deadlock (as in global climate change), as recent events in the Himalayas have shown, can be overcome. The Arun 3 dam, a major 'development' project in Nepal, after years of careful and expensive planning, was all ready to go in the early 1990s when, out of the blue, it was cancelled. This cancellation can be traced directly to the outbreak of democracy in Nepal in 1990. Before democracy, decision-making took place on an uncontested terrain where

culturally similar actors (the World Bank, His Majesty's Government, and various national aid donors and their expert advisors) quietly reached agreement on what best to do. After democracy, other voices—those, you could say, of the hitherto unconsulted frogs—were able to make themselves heard, the terrain became contested, and Arun 3 was cancelled: deadlock, or so it might seem.

The pluralised actors on this contested terrain, however, did not fly apart like their global climate change counterparts. Rather, they entered into what Dipak Gyawali (1997) has called 'a constructive engagement between procedural fetishists [the hierarchical solidarity], egocentric individualists [the individualist solidarity] and environmental alarmists [the egalitarian solidarity]'. The engagement was constructive because the egocentric individualists were able to show that the procedural fetishists had got their sums wrong and that a set of six much smaller projects (projects that the environmental alarmists had to concede were far less objectionable) would produce more electricity than Arun 3, much sooner, nicely spread across the country (rather than stuck out at one end of it) and for considerably less money. A circle of improvement, in other words, and a reminder that democratisation is not just a one-way flow from North to South.

Conclusion

Pluralisms afflictions, we have argued, though serious, are not fatal. They stem, essentially, from the assumption that plurality is somehow connected with there being lots of policy actors. Cultural Theory, however, insists that there is nothing plural about a multiplicity of actors all of whom are rationally maximising their utility within the constraints that are provided by a single reality that is external to them all, and that they all interrogate and learn about in the same way. Plurality, rather, requires a plurality of rationality among this multiplicity of actors. Making pluralism plural, therefore, is the enterprise we are engaged in when we set out to treat Cultural Theory as political science.

Notes

1 For a fuller account *see* ch. 1 of Schwarz and Thompson (1990).
2 Another part is simply that difference is a necessary condition for communication.
3 Stated by Thompson, Ellis and Wildavsky (1990) and proved by Schmutzer and Bandler (1980). It is not uncommon for theories to be proved before they are stated (just as it is possible to do something without knowing what it is you have done).
4 The plausibility of this condition has been demonstrated, by computer simulation (Thompson and Tayler 1985).
5 We therefore prefer the system property *resilience* (Holling 1986) to the mechanistic and substantive notion of *capital*.

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