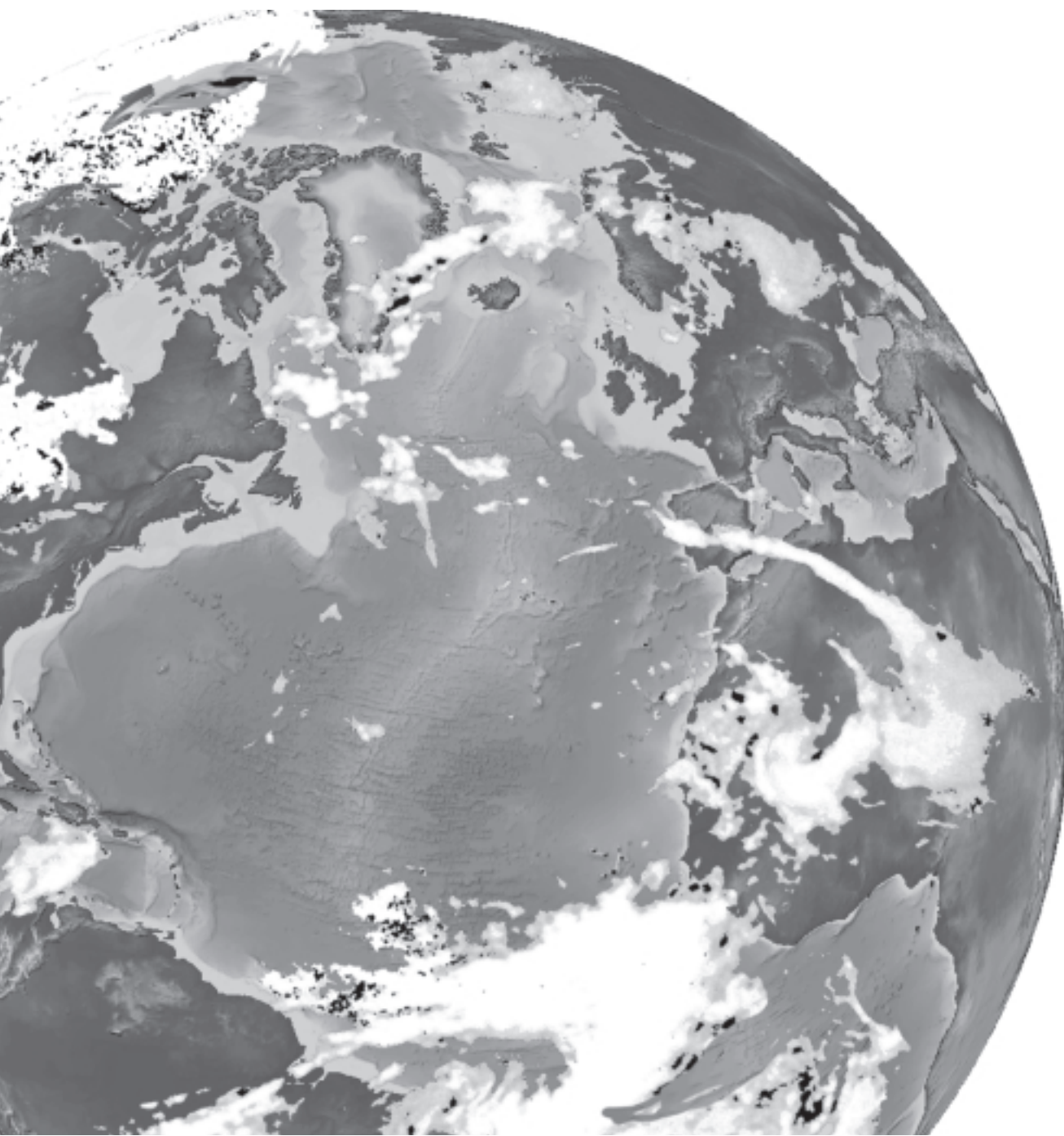# Culture, Identity, and Security: An Overview

PROJECT ON WORLD SECURITY
ROCKEFELLER BROTHERS FUND

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INTRODUCTION

Ever since the end of the Cold War, culture has made a dramatic return to the international stage.[1] The predictions are that its presence will be even more widely felt in the new millennium, as it fans old conflicts or perhaps even gains new powers of persuasion, capable of displacing military coercion as a political tool.[2] Culture has already had a hand in a wide range of developments: in the responses to dislocations brought on by global economic forces, in the goals and strategies of both new and old actors in the global arena, and in unprecedented connections among individuals around the planet.[3] To analyze these circumstances may take radical new thinking about individuals, societies, and even nature.[4]

One may ask: Where to begin? Culture and identity are broad and complex concepts; even scholars have tended to shy away from them. The term "culture" itself is problematic, for it still has a strong association with archaic attitudes about "primitive" groups, especially the sense of superiority associated with colonialism.

In its broadest sense, "culture" refers to the set of beliefs and values held in common by a group of people, reflected in their shared habits of communicating and interacting. "Identity" refers to the unit to which an individual belongs. It can take various forms: the unit can be all of humanity, a particular civilization, a specific nation, an ethnic group, a province, or portions thereof. In fact, individuals possess an array of identities—concentric circles, as it were, each representing a different sphere. The first circle would be the unique characteristics of the person; the second, the immediate family; the third, extended kin; and so on, through occupation, political affiliation, nationality, and religion. Identity therefore refers not to specific physical attributes but to one's relation to the environment in which one lives, and to all therein. That is why scholars tend to regard identity as "relational": it exists by virtue of the various relations individuals and groups have with one another, with surrounding entities, and with the natural environment.

Adding complexity, countless other spheres transect these concentric relational spheres, crossing so many boundaries that they are often said to be "international" in character. They include governmental organizations, businesses, labor, professional and scientific associations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), immigrant populations, and diasporas, to name the most obvious. Even within the borders of a single country, identities intersect in many ways. A simple example is ethnic or racial allegiances that may cut across occupation or political affiliation.

The question that has long intrigued scholars—whether culture plays a significant role in shaping human behavior or whether "natural instincts" are the controlling factors—has often arisen in discussions of the evolution of communities from tribes through empires to modern states. Were these units of human association shaped by terrain, climate, the presence of competing communities; or by ideas people had about who they were and the common objectives that bound them together? In more and more fields, ranging from neuroscience to the humanities, the old either-or view

[1] For a lucid overview of culture as "the newest fad sweeping the literature on international relations, security studies, and international economics," see Michael J. Mazarr, "Culture and International Relations: A Review Essay," *Washington Quarterly* 19:2 (Spring 1996), pp. 177–97; the quotation is on p. 177. Other prime examples are William Zimmerman and Harold K. Jacobson, eds., *Behavior, Culture, and Conflict in World Politics* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993); Yosef Y. Lapid and Friedrich Kratochwil, eds., *The Return of Culture and Identity to IR Theory* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1996); and Special Issue, Culture in International Relations, *Millennium* 22:3 (Winter 1993).

[2] See Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996); and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power* (New York: Basic Books, 1991).

[3] Benjamin Barber, *Jihad vs. McWorld* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1996). "There is a need for new ways of perceiving the world, for a new paradigm of social change. The nation-state is primarily a way of imagining the world, and its institutions…. That it was such a powerful model is proved by the difficulty of imagining what comes after it." Matthew Horsman and Andrew Marshall, *After the Nation-State* (London: HarperCollins, 1995), p. 269, quoted in Roger Tooze, "Prologue: States, Nationalism and Identities-Thinking in IR Theory," in *Identities in International Relations*, Jill Krause and Neil Renwick, eds. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), pp. xvi.

[4] See Krause and Renwick, eds., *Identities in International Relations*; and Ronnie Lipschutz, ed., *On Security* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995).

of nature and culture is giving way to one that sees something of both at the heart of human behavior. Neuroscientists are finding that behavior guided by cultural ideas affects the physiology of the brain, while humanists are discovering physiological links to virtually all forms of cultural expression.

Perhaps the truth lies close to the original meaning of the word "culture." The term stems from the Latin verb *colere*, to till. Cultivation was an expression of the basic relationship between human groups and the natural environment from which they derived their sustenance. Culture thus came to signify basic ways in which different societies viewed their relation to nature — not only as a source of food and energy, but also as a source of experience that would help them deal with mortality and mark the milestones of the human life cycle.

In the social sciences, a fundamental question about culture is how it is connected to rationality.[5] Those economists and other social scientists inspired by economic methods would argue that the attitudes and beliefs shared by groups are calculated responses to their environment, including nature and other human collectives with which they interact.[6] By contrast, more sociologically oriented social scientists see these beliefs as imaginative inventions that cannot be understood as calculated responses to incentives without learning the meanings cultures have for people.[7] The growing consensus is that the social sciences need to better understand how actors, both individuals and collectives, acquire the interests they pursue.[8] This is a highly complex question, especially as actors change and new ones emerge. And even if one were to determine the extent to which identities may change and culture may shape their interests, one would then have to determine how public policy or private initiatives, in turn, affect identity and interest.

The task here is to assess how culture and identity affect security. This cannot be done, however, without defining the precise identities that can have such an impact, and the manner in which their cultures are thought to affect human behavior. It is also essential to examine the decisions being made to regulate or respond to the cultures that stimulate cooperation or conflict.

[5] See Bryan Wilson, ed., *Rationality* (Evanston, Ill.: Harper & Row, 1970). Also Jan Elster, *Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

[6] See Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1979). Rational choice and game theoretic perspectives have elucidated the ways in which self-interested states respond rationally to an environment of other self-interested actors, on issues ranging from nuclear deterrence to economic regimes.

[7] On the meanings actors attach to their behavior, see Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973); and Peter Winch, *The Idea of a Social Science* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958). Ethnographic research that seeks to uncover the ways actors think about their own behavior is potentially subjective and difficult to generalize. Despite the methodological controversies about what constitutes good social science, much well-regarded policy analysis does draw conclusions about states of mind. In practice, research is rather eclectic.

[8] Barry Weingast, "A Rational Choice Perspective on the Role of Ideas— Shared Belief Systems and State Sovereignty in International Cooperation," *Politics & Society* 23:4 (December 1995), pp. 449–64; Judith Goldstein and Robert O. Keohane, eds., *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions and Political Change* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1993); Albert Yee, "The Causal Effect of Ideas on Foreign Policy," *International Organization* 50:1 (Winter 1996), pp. 69–108; Daniel Phillpott, "The Possibilities of Ideas," book review, *Security Studies* 5:4 (Summer 1996).

I. THE SECURITY RATIONALE

The first point concerns who is pursuing security, and why. In most cases, especially in the context of policy analysis, it is the state. Precisely which states are the key players is normally easy to determine. With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the rash of identity-related wars in the 1990s, however, the identity of states and other actors has changed considerably, and this factor, plus the reason for the change, must be taken into immediate account in related policy matters. The violent assertion of ethnic identities, and the resulting international pandemonium, is a major reason for the renewed attention to identity in the security context. That is why analysts have again turned their attention toward understanding what makes social groups cohere and dissolve.[9]

Whether the fluidity of political identity in the aftermath of the Cold War is a temporary or transitional phenomenon, it is widely believed that the nation is not a fixed unit with definite origins in the ancient past. In fact, most nations are relatively recent creations, many of them brought into being by an inventive elite that imagined or assumed a common past and culture in order to forge a common identity out of a diverse populace. Even France, often seen as the quintessential nation, had, around 1900, a sizable population that did not speak French or identify with others who lived on the territory of the French state.[10]

Although the plasticity of national and ethnic identities remains a controversial issue, it has acquired a new relevance with the integration and disintegration of established identities that can no longer be taken for granted. Among the products of integration are the European Union and regional trading blocs such as the North America Free Trade Association (NAFTA), while the splintered entities include the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and other units emerging from regional autonomy movements, such as the Northern League in Italy, that challenge the cohesion of well-established nations. In addition, many domestic political regimes are experiencing fundamental changes in the global push toward democracy and economic liberalism. Even where countries are not joining others or falling apart, many are changing their political and economic institutions, thus altering the basic features of their public culture.

At the same time, the twentieth century has witnessed spectacular growth in the number of international organizations, non-governmental organizations, transnational businesses, and other cross-border associations, which has been accompanied by a general increase in the capacity for global communication.[11] These developments, along with the end of the Cold War, suggest that still more new identities lurk on the horizon and that they are likely to have an enormous impact on the future course of international relations.[12] Indeed, the very ways in which identities are shaped and maintained may be undergoing a profound transformation. On the other hand, some suggest that identities are reverting to earlier forms that were attenuated during the Cold War.[13]

[9] See, for example, Lars-Erik Cederman, *Emergent Actors in World Politics: How States and Nations Develop and Dissolve* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997).

[10] See Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1976).

[11] Evan Luard, *International Society* (New York: New Amsterdam Books, 1990); Harold Jacobson, *Networks of Interdependence: International Organizations and the Global Political System* (New York: Knopf, 1984).

[12] On the growth of transnational civil society, see Ronnie Lipschutz, "Reconstructing World Politics: The Emergence of Global Civil Society," *Millennium* 21:3 (Winter 1992), pp. 389–420; and Paul Wapner, "Politics Beyond the State: Environmental Activism and World Civic Politics," *World Politics* 47:3 (April 1995), pp. 311–40. On emerging forms of transnational identity, see James R. Rosenau, *Along the Domestic-Foreign Frontier: Exploring Governance in a Turbulent World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

[13] See Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations*; Robert Kaplan, *The Ends of the Earth: A Journey at the Dawn of the 21st Century* (New York: Random House, 1996); and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, *Pandaemonium: Ethnicity in International Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

In matters of security, say some observers, the emphasis on the state during the Cold War appears to have diverted attention from the well-being and security of individuals. Instead, there is a single-minded focus on the foreign dangers that states are supposed to protect against.[14] These observers would like to see cooperation rather than conflict become the salient concern of national security bureaucracies, fearing that, in their search for enemies, nations will blindly pick someone to fit the role rather than clarify priorities. The underlying assumption here is that the processes behind identity formation do not automatically create bad relations, but that policy-makers have considerable choice in shaping viable security identities.[15] Some would counter: "We know who we are only when we know who we are not and often only when we know whom we are against."[16]

If security identities, however, are not dictated by the threats and dangers of the international milieu, important choices can clearly be made. This has already been amply demonstrated by both the range of security issues and theoretical perspectives under current debate, following the emergence of important new actors.[17] A search has also begun for a better understanding of the ways in which social, economic, and environmental processes impinge on security. In the wake of this conceptual ferment and the resulting policy innovations of the past decade, a strong push has developed for a more precise formulation of America's role in the post-Cold War era, whether this role is viewed in terms of hard interests, or values. The objective is, in effect, to gain a clearer sense of America's identity in the new global context. But the degree of choice any actor has in forging its own identity is difficult to determine, especially if it is a complex actor such as the United States, whose identity and impact on global security are not limited to the federal government and what it does. Furthermore, the awareness of newly available choices has brought to light normative issues about what priorities should be pursued and what kinds of identities should be preserved and promoted.[18]

A second point is that culture and identity can play an important role even when identities are relatively stable and their boundaries fairly well established, since "security interests are defined by actors who respond to cultural factors."[19] That is, the cultures they possess and profess, internally and among one another, may affect the ways in which they define and pursue their goals. Hence, even in stable circumstances, cultures provide a repertoire of attitudes and responses based on the beliefs and habits that prevail in a country or that have been established among countries in their mutual relations. To what extent norms and ideas can be used to explain particular outcomes remains a matter of lively debate. Nonetheless, culture remains an important candidate for explaining how the interests of actors are formed.

The interests of a newly independent country will obviously differ from those it had when it was a colony struggling for independence. But there are also less sweeping transformations when culture affects interests. Even when the physical makeup of a state—the population and territory that compose it—have not changed, it is possible for prevailing attitudes to change.[20] Furthermore, states, nations, and other actors may employ important changes in culture when engaging in their regular interactions. Whether these changes originate internally, abroad, or through some combination of both, cultural changes may affect the ways a populace and its leadership act and the way others interact with them.

[14] For a range of novel perspectives, see Michael Klare and Daniel Thomas, eds., *World Security: Challenges for a New Century* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994).

[15] See Barry Buzan, *People, States, and Fear: The Problem of National Security in International Affairs* (London: Wheatsheaf Books, 1992).

[16] Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations*, p. 21.

[17] For recent reviews of the literature, see Ann M. Florini and P. J. Simmons, *The New Security Thinking: A Review of the North American Literature* (New York: Rockefeller Brothers Fund, 1998).

[18] Ethics are often said to be irrelevant for international affairs, especially in the security realm, because there is little freedom of choice when it comes to responding to threats that endanger one's survival. This is the Realist position, which maintains that the international realm is one in which necessity dominates, severely constricting, if not altogether eliminating, the freedom needed to make moral choices. For a recent anthology, see David R. Mapel and Terry Nardin, eds., *International Society: Diverse Ethical Perspectives* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998).

[19] Peter J. Katzenstein, "Introduction: Alternative Perspectives on National Security," in *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, Peter J. Katzenstein, ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), p. 2.

[20] See Paul R. Abramson and Ronald Inglehart, *Value Change in Global Perspective* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995).

Suppose that the identity-based ferment of the post-Cold War era is indeed a historical anomaly and that people will eventually settle into fixed identities. The possibility remains that the ways in which actors employ their cultures to communicate and interact will greatly influence the course of global affairs. These might be the cultures associated with the great religious traditions or, more narrowly, those that prevail in foreign policy bureaucracies, military organizations, civil society, or even in the family. Cultures are widely thought to affect behavior and the reactions that behavior is likely to elicit from others. The military cultures in the armed forces of a state, say, may influence the state's choice of a strategic doctrine.[21] And a culture that relies heavily on familial ties at the expense of building commercial allegiances with strangers may fail to forge the widely based social trust needed to foster a vigorous civil society and sustain long-term economic growth.[22]

Also, cultures perceived to be less receptive to democratic forms of government may affect a group's response to international economic and political trends.[23] There is evidence to suggest that transnational cultural norms de-legitimize weapons of mass destruction, increase respect for human rights, and discourage racial discrimination.[24] Furthermore, the exchange of cultural ideas can lead to mutual learning and the discovery of alternative ways of conceiving both one's own identity and the identities of other actors, which leads full circle to the question of whether repeated cultural interactions give rise to new identities.

Yet a third point to consider is the effect of culture and identity on conflict and cooperation. Cultural differences, whether among civilizations or ethnic groups, are said to either cause or exacerbate conflict, although some would say these differences do not carry as much weight as the international distribution of power, the nature of political institutions, or other socioeconomic factors. And despite the continuing controversy over the effectiveness of cultural communication and interaction, many policy-makers and activists have long been using these factors to try to prevent and resolve conflicts.[25] That controversy revolves in large part around whether the benefits of fostering cultures of cooperation will eventually be dwarfed by inherently incompatible interests and identities that are bound to cause violent conflict, regardless of cultural changes.[26]

Since security is closely tied to assumptions about culture and identity, the next questions concern the identities of key actors and their attributes: What role does culture play in shaping the interests of actors? And how can culture be used to alter behavior? The purpose in exploring these questions here is not necessarily to determine what is known about these issues in themselves but to relate that information to security issues.

These questions will be examined in the context of the three main points covered in this section concerning the relevance of culture and identity to security. In the next section, the consequential actors in the context of world security are considered. Here it is necessary to look at the basic views about what makes states, nations, and other collective actors cohere and act as units. The third section focuses on culture's effects on the interests or motivations of key actors; therefore it is concerned with particular trends and conclusions, including conflicting ones, that relate to political institutions, military doctrines, policy decisions, and other factors governing the role of culture. The last section turns to the more specific issue of how culture may either cause or arrest conflict, and its usefulness as an operational tool.

[21] Elizabeth Kier, "Culture and French Military Doctrine Before World War II," in *The Culture of National Security*, Katzenstein, ed., pp. 186–215.

[22] Francis Fukuyama, *Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity* (New York: Free Press, 1995).

[23] Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, eds., *The Civic Culture Revisited: An Analytic Study* (Boston: Little Brown, 1980).

[24] Richard Price, *The Chemical Weapons Taboo* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1997); Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Across Borders* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1997); Audie Klotz, *Norms in International Relations: The Struggle against Apartheid* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1995).

[25] For a recent statement, see the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, *Preventing Deadly Conflict: Final Report* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, 1997).

[26] Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations*.

II. ACTOR IDENTITIES

Although space does not permit a philosophical discussion of the ultimate units of reality, these units should at least be mentioned because identities do not simply "exist," presenting themselves in a self-evident manner, ready for tabulation and cross-referencing. Identities are rooted in broader conceptions or theories. Social scientists would say that identities, like all facts, derive from theories that explain why only some of the innumerable events that take place should be treated as facts. These are not necessarily scientific theories; even in everyday life people use theories that are implicit and only partly articulated, if at all.

Of course, impatience with "theory" is common in the realm of policy and activist responses to immediate problems. Yet broader conceptual and theoretical issues seem unavoidable, if only because of identity. Even in pragmatic policy debates, unsettled identities lead to questions about the appropriateness of paradigms, quests for "new thinking," and reappraisals of causal relations previously taken for granted. This has certainly been the case since the end of the Cold War, a period in which an established adversary has transformed itself, the United States armed forces are struggling with "asymmetrical" responses from actors who do not fit the profile of a professionally organized armed force, and security analysts are concerned about the potential proliferation of actors who might imperil the information networks on which both civilian and military infrastructures increasingly depend. Even in this narrower context, the "who" or "what" behind these dangers needs to be examined for its capabilities, its intentions (or animating mechanism), and the range of possible responses.

In short, identities are not simply "out there." Because they describe the most basic elements of what the world "out there" is made of, identities cannot be explained without understanding other basic aspects of how the world works. Consequently, when thoughts about identity first surface, they do not simply relate to a new problem or issue, but to some of the fundamental ways in which one has habitually framed not only problems of policy but also one's own thoughts. Though policy analysts are wise to avoid endless debates about unearthing the foundations of knowledge and reality, it is important to emphasize that, for better or worse, thinking about identity inevitably draws people in that direction.

Fortunately, there are guides to help one avoid the quagmire of "ultimate reality," with its uncertainties about what questions should be asked. One such guide condenses the varieties of thinking about identities into three basic conceptions of identity: constructivism, instrumentalism, and primordialism.[27]

In the constructivist perspective, an identity is a shared set of ever-changing meanings or cultures relating to togetherness that are continually made and remade in the public sphere. Although there may be periods when shared meanings are stable, people continually maintain and alter collectively created myths of togetherness.[28] This view treats with skepticism any explanation or policy that assumes cultures do

[27] This typology taken from Paul C. Stern, "Why Do People Sacrifice for Their Nations," in *New Perspectives on Nationalism and War,* John L. Comaroff and Paul C. Stern, eds. (Amsterdam: Gordon and Breach, 1995). Stern used his typology to organize perspectives on nations and nationalism. Here it is employed to include other forms of identity.

[28] See Benedict R. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983); and Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

not change or that cultures are simply ideological tools used by elites to manipulate the masses.

From the instrumentalist perspective, cultures are symbolic tools of the powerful elements of society. These elites are said to manipulate images, symbols, and words of togetherness in order to mobilize the masses for military conscription, war, a larger pool of wage labor, or for other purposes that serve their particular interests. However plastic identities may be, instrumentalists argue, their prime importance lies in the way they can be exploited by powerful elites. Hence cultures and identities are simply instruments of power.[29]

In the primordialist view, certain identities tend to be particularly robust and highly stable over long periods of time. Nationalism and ethnicity fall into this category. Elites may engage in vigorous propaganda to exploit symbolic power, but their efforts are thwarted by deep and ancient loyalties, which can only be manipulated at the margin.[30] In response to the constructivist, then, the primordialist would say that, yes, ancient symbols can be modified and new ways of communicating can emerge but only as a veneer over established ties of blood and affection, which remain unaltered.

Constructivist thinking is apparent in the argument that newly independent Third World states seek modern weapons not to meet defense needs but to attain the status of a full-fledged nation-state, inasmuch as such weapons are now an accepted mark of that status in international society. The thesis is that these states acquire missiles and advanced jet fighters because they are important symbols of statehood that are recognized as such in the international system.[31] Through such signals, the club of states tells newly independent states how to win the same regard accorded other states.[32]

The constructivist sees identities and the interests they pursue emerging from a complex interplay of communication and interaction. In contrast, the instrumentalist assumes that actors already have innate interests, such as power or wealth. These interests are pursued by using identity as a symbolic resource. Napoleon, for one, relied on the spirit of nationalism to create the French nation and man his army; in much the same way, Milosevic mobilized ethnic hatred to seize and secure power in Serbia.[33] A primordialist might counter that their ancient culture encourages Serbs to be fierce fighters, so they are not likely to respond to military-diplomatic threats or promises, as some other less bellicose cultures would.[34] This is because, for the primordialist, core qualities in cultural identities are difficult if not impossible to alter.

In most cases, of course, all three views of the role of identity in social life can be invoked to account for particular circumstances. As the constructivist points out, culture is highly significant. The beliefs and ideas people hold and exchange are the seedbed of the goals actors value and strive to achieve. The processes used to communicate these beliefs help explain how identities form and are maintained; the identities, in turn, account for the interests actors pursue. Thus the likelihood of cooperation or conflict depends on how actors think of themselves and those with whom they interact. Although instrumentalists do not see culture as the driving force of social life, they do think it legitimizes political and economic arrangements, bolsters social cohesion through its ideologies, and provides useful rules of thumb for

[29] See Barry R. Posen, "Nationalism, the Mass Army, and Military Power," *International Security* 18:2 (Fall 1993), pp. 80–124. See also Stephen Van Evera, "Hypotheses on Nationalism and War," *International Security* 18:4 (Spring 1994), pp. 5–39. For a general functionalist account of how nationalism emerges to serve the integrative needs of a modern industrial society, see Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1983).

[30] See Walker Connor, *Ethnonationalism: A Quest for Understanding* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994).

[31] Dana P. Eyre and Mark C. Suchman, "Status, Norms, and the Proliferation of Conventional Weapons: An Institutional Theory Approach," in *The Culture of National Security*, Katzenstein, ed., pp. 79–113.

[32] For a general argument, with case studies, on the ways in which the international context helps shape the identities of states, see Martha Finnemore, *National Interests and International Society* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1996).

[33] See V. P. Gagnon, "Ethnic Nationalism and International Conflict: The Case of Serbia," *International Security* 19:3 (Winter 1994/95), pp. 130–66.

[34] See, for example, Richard Cohen, "Send in the Troops," *Washington Post* (November 28, 1995), p. A17.

cognitively complex situations. Nevertheless, culture is not at the heart of human behavior; rather, other socioeconomic or political factors are, and culture is a consequence of them. Furthermore, cultures do not form interests; cultures follow from the pursuit of interests. Conflict and cooperation are the result of those interests and the strategic calculations made in pursuing them.

At times, however, there may also be some substance to the primordialist argument: whatever their origins, cultures may have features that have become so deeply entrenched in the ways individual personalities are formed, that talk of change is not very meaningful within one lifetime.[35] Cultures do unite and divide humanity. Significant cultural change may be a thing of the past, and it may actually be affected by biology and genetic difference. Whatever the reasons for the remarkable consistency of core identities, say the primordialists, change occurs at a glacial pace, belying the appearances of today's world, saturated as it is with rapidly changing symbols and messages. Thus, primordialists find that culture limits what is achievable through political and economic means. Culture, they conclude, is not a tool for change, but it does indicate where the deepest differences lie and thus where conflict is more likely.

Where these several views converge and often collide is on the identity of the key actors in international affairs, usually, states and nations. In reviewing the important trends in thinking about the behavior of these actors, the emphasis in this discussion naturally falls on the constructivist approach, not because it is superior but because it is the one that relates the features of actors most closely to culture. Constructivist explanations, it should be mentioned, are a relatively recent arrival to the field of international relations, though they have longer standing in anthropology, sociology, and the humanities.

NATIONS AND THEIR RELATIONS

In a prescient essay of 1972, Isaiah Berlin remarked that nationalism is the one great social force neglected by the two dominant social theories of the past century.[36] Neither the liberal tradition going back to John Locke, Adam Smith, and John Stuart Mill, nor the socialist tradition most prominently associated with Marx paid much attention to the lasting emotional and psychological power of the nation. For all these thinkers, nationalism was an archaic way of providing the glue for society, bound to be replaced by more rational principles of organization as societies modernized. The two world wars and the rash of ethnic and nationalist conflicts of the decade since 1987 have shown all too well that nationalism cannot yet be relegated to the dustbin of history.[37]

Both constructivists and instrumentalists agree that nations emerged as important identities only about two hundred years ago. In the constructivist view, however, the key factor influencing international relations was not states and state-based elites but the interplay between the visions of the nation crafted not only by state-based actors but also by actors from society at large. Of course, primordialists would argue that existing collective identities and the visceral loyalties they represented preceded the emergence of the state as a legal capsule for the nation. The state simply served to formalize and legalize allegiances that were already there.

[35] See William Bloom, *Personal Identity, National Identity and International Relations* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

[36] Isaiah Berlin, "The Bent Twig: A Note on Nationalism," *Foreign Affairs* (October 1972), pp. 11–30.

[37] This observation has recently been echoed by David Callahan in *Unwinnable Wars: American Power and Ethnic Conflict* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1997), pp. 6–13.

By and large, however, most analysts have assumed that each nation should be considered as an identity separate from others. In spite of comparative studies of nationalism, the kind of relational emphasis Berlin suggested was not common.[38] Berlin held the view, recently echoed by other scholars, that nationalism is rooted in dignity: it denotes a relation among peoples who want their collective identities to be recognized and respected by others.[39] The growing emphasis on this relational aspect of nationalism is not so surprising when one looks at the recent reconstitution of new states along nationalist lines and the influence of the global context on the current ferment over identity.[40] Hence scholars are paying more and more attention to the role of cultural interactions in forming nations instead of the internal dynamics of a circumscribed people and territory. Since their studies tend to be concerned with exchanged meanings, they see cultural communication and interaction as an independent force with considerably more influence on the formation of nations than other socioeconomic pressures or a primordial identity.[41]

Whatever basic assumptions are adopted in analyzing national identity and its significance, the consensus seems to be that the state is an important institution. Whether the state came into being as a result of a nation's desire to rule itself, whether it used or even created the culture of the nation to legitimate its rule, or whether more complex processes combining the state, civil society, and the international system gave rise to the cultural complex called the nation, it is difficult to find nations mentioned without states.[42] Though nations are often thought to provide the cultural content of the nation-state, states have also been said to be carriers of a distinctive culture.

STATES AND SOVEREIGNTY

Although the primordialists would say otherwise, most other scholars agree that states preceded and played an important role in the formation of modern nations. The state is the administrative, legislative, and adjudicative entity that exercises authority over a population and territory.[43] Being a complex of legal institutions and procedural mechanisms, the state is not normally associated with the hot passions surrounding an emotional attachment to a nation. Nonetheless, both the identity and the institutional culture of the state have come under close scrutiny.

The resulting studies fall into several categories, beginning with broad investigations of the features that distinguish the state from its functionally similar subcomponents, such as the states in federal systems or provinces and administrative units in unitary states. One such feature is sovereignty: the claim to final authority over a population and territory. Considerable information has been compiled on the actual capacity of the state to control what takes place in its jurisdiction, especially in light of increasing traffic across borders; the formal, legal indefeasibility of this jurisdiction, especially by outsiders; the evolution of the state's responsibilities; and the different ways in which it has been connected to its own society and to other states.

Sovereignty, it seems, is being eroded throughout the world. One sign of this is its unprecedented pooling in the European Union. Another is the growing number of failed states, in which sovereignty has disappeared entirely. Yet another is the international community's increasing interventions for humanitarian purposes. Perhaps the most widely perceived evidence of sovereignty's decline is the state's

38 Hans Kohn's work is the exception. See his *Nationalism: Its Meaning and History* (Princeton, N.J.: Van Nostrand, 1971).

39 For a critique of the ways in which the West constructed the Orient as a negative mirror image of its own identity, see Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalisms: Five Roads to Modernity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994); Yael Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993); and Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York, Vintage Books, 1979).

40 On Japan's search for dignity through full participation in the international system at the beginning of the twentieth century, see Dorothy Jones, *Code of Peace: Ethics and Security in a World of Warlord States* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), chap. 1.

41 Primordialists propose the "sleeping beauty" thesis, that the removal of external constraints leads to the awakening of dormant loyalties, while instrumentalists suggest that this is due to opportunistic uses of national or ethnic identities as instruments for mobilizing and organizing political support.

42 See Ted Robert Gurr and Barbara Harff, *Ethnic Conflict in World Politics* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1994).

43 General overviews appear in Charles Tilly, ed., *The Formation of National States in Western Europe* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1975); and Gianfranco Poggi, *The State: Its Nature, Development, and Prospects* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1990).

waning capacity to exercise final authority in the face of powerful global economic forces.

The apparent transformation of sovereignty need not be seen as a cultural phenomenon. Naturally, sovereignty pertains to the state's capacity to control other actors or outcomes. Sovereignty then becomes a synonym for state control.[44] From a legal perspective, sovereignty refers to the legal character of the state in an international context. A leading concern of international legal scholars is the extent to which states have ceded their legal authority to international organizations in various areas. The culture shift that may be influencing this apparent decline in sovereignty is best understood by examining the constructivist literature.

The institution of sovereignty, constructivists argue, is not disappearing; it is merely being redefined. It remains a basic aspect of the state's identity, not merely its legal status.[45] This has been the case since 1648, when the Peace of Westphalia established a culture of non-intervention among the European society of states along with the associated paraphernalia that have come to constitute the basics of regular diplomatic intercourse still in use today. Each state became supreme in its own realm and only in its own realm, and states agreed to no longer go to war over religion, which had incited the bloody Thirty Years War, just concluded.

Sovereignty came into being as a relational concept, signifying how states would perceive each other. A sovereign claim only made sense if others made similar claims, so it became necessary to define and defend a claim to a limited territory. Sovereignty spelled out the manner in which claimants to a final authority, beyond any superior earthly power, would attempt to manage their mutual relations.[46]

Constructivists looking at the contemporary context attempt to evaluate changes in the ways states interact and in their effectiveness in exercising their final authority. For example, weak Third World states are said to enjoy a purely jurisdictional form of sovereignty without possessing the underlying de facto sovereignty — effective control over a population and territory — that used to be a precondition for entering the club of sovereigns before the era of decolonization.[47] Others argue that the language of sovereignty is now used primarily by powerful states to reaffirm their own identities by projecting negative attributes onto others.[48] In addition, the culture of super-power mistrust that crippled the collective security mechanisms in the Charter of the United Nations has disappeared in the aftermath of the Cold War. And a universal culture of human rights and perhaps humanitarian responsibility appears to be eroding the prerogative of states in matters purely within their domestic jurisdiction.[49]

For instrumentalists, the culture of sovereignty is only important to the extent that states or other actors can use it effectively. Some say that states use (that is, violate or defend) sovereignty only when it suits their interests. Furthermore, there is nothing special about the agreement reached at Westphalia. It was a pragmatic deal, like others reached before and after 1648, which were effective as long as they served state interests. In the end, states emerged and became sovereign because they exercised control over their own people and territory. This allowed them to continue extracting the resources they needed to wage war and survive. Being recognized as a sovereign by other states was largely a rhetorical nicety, comparable to what makes today's

[44] See Janice E. Thomson and Stephen D. Krasner, "Global Transactions and the Consolidation of Sovereignty," in *Global Changes and Theoretical Challenges: Approaches to World Politics for the 1990s,* Ernst-Otto Czempiel and James N. Rosenau, eds. (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1989).

[45] See Thomas Biersteker and Cynthia Weber, eds., *Sovereignty as Social Construct* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

[46] Examples of scholarship that sees international law as a useful lens through which to view world politics are found in Thomas Franck, *The Power of Legitimacy Among Nations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

[47] Robert H. Jackson, *Quasi-States: Sovereignty, International Relations and the Third World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

[48] Cynthia Weber, *Simulating Sovereignty* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994); David Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992).

[49] See, for example, Louis Henkin and L. J. Hargrove, eds., *Human Rights: An Agenda for the Next Century* (Washington, D.C.: American Society of International Law, 1994).

Germany and Albania sovereign equals under international law.[50] Primordialists find sovereignty more or less irrelevant because loyalties existed before the European state system emerged, and if sovereign entities are to survive, they need to be in concert with these primordial loyalties.

A second strand of research has followed the shifting functions and responsibilities of states, the effect of which in many cases has been to link domestic and international activities. Over the twentieth century, the state expanded its domestic economic role, and welfare became a prominent concern. The state therefore took on the responsibility of both ensuring economic growth and redistributing wealth. In its international dealings, the state promoted trade and expanded the institutions needed to facilitate it. As a result, it gained a new identity, the "trading state," alongside the older identity of the "warrior state."[51] Recognizing the importance of maintaining balanced economic growth at home, the advanced industrialized countries thought it would be prudent to plan at least loosely how they would adjust to perturbations in international trade and finance. They agreed to embrace liberalism and economic openness but to share the costs of adjustment so that these would not fall disproportionately on any one country or any one segment of society. John Ruggie, who developed this notion of "embedded liberalism," now believes that the compromise is unraveling. This is not because of the resurgence of nationalist protectionism, as was widely feared, but because groups within societies are less willing to share the costs of adjustment.[52]

The overriding point is that states can forge a new identity when the functions they perform undergo a marked change. To what extent such changes in function are a response to international and social pressures or to new cultures of expertise among state leaders and policy-makers is uncertain. Overlooking important nuances, one can say the question boils down to whether a state's identity is a product of the changing bureaucratic and leadership cultures that inform its functions, or whether it is a less plastic entity—marked by political independence and territorial integrity—that is unaffected by changes in state function due to socioeconomic pressures.

Scholars have long been interested in yet another feature of the state: its association with the exercise of citizenship. To participate in deliberations that would set the course of the state was, in Aristotle's view, the highest of human endeavors. A growing concern among many countries today is a decline in the quality of citizenship and public participation. Migration and transnational economic trends make it difficult for individuals to participate in public affairs and thereby exercise greater control over their lives.[53] To complicate matters, industrial and technological interests appear to be undermining the capacity of average citizens to participate in collective decision-making, most notably on questions of security. As a result, say some commentators, a new kind of state is evolving: a national security state, which is imbued with a culture of secrecy, is dominated by experts, and is subservient to a hierarchy that impedes democracy at home and promotes mistrust abroad. Similar criticisms have long been leveled against militarism, whether it was thought to be sparked by the greed of arms-makers or by warrior cultures rooted in aristocracies of the past.[54]

[50] Stephen Krasner, "Westphalia and All That," in *Ideas and Foreign Policy*, Goldstein and Keohane, eds., pp. 111–38.

[51] See Richard Rosecrance, *The Rise of the Trading State: Conquest and Commerce in the Modern World* (New York: Basic Books, 1986). Related to this theme is the proposition that democracies do not go to war against each other. As this theme is largely seen as a political and economic constraint on conflict among states, it was not emphasized in this essay. Nonetheless, there is occasionally a cultural component to arguments regarding the democratic peace thesis. See, for example, Bruce M. Russett et al., *Grasping the Democratic Peace: Principles for a Post-Cold War World* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993).

[52] See John G. Ruggie, "International Regimes, Transactions, and Change: Embedded Liberalism in the Postwar Economic Order," *International Organization* 36:2 (Spring 1982), pp. 379–416; and *Winning the Peace* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).

[53] See Saskia Sassen, *Losing Control? Sovereignty in an Age of Globalization* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996); and United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), *Globalization and Citizenship: A Report of the UNRISD International Conference, Geneva, 9–11 December 1996* (Geneva: UNRISD, September 1997).

[54] Recent attempts to place militarism in context include Robert Latham, *The Liberal Moment: Modernity, Security, and the Making of Postwar International Order* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997). On aristocratic warrior cultures, see Joseph Schumpeter, *Imperialism and Social Class* (New York: A. M. Kelly, 1951).

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COMPETING IDENTITIES

As should be clear by now, states do not coincide perfectly with nations. Furthermore, many other kinds of social identities exist, often in competition with nations and states. At times, this competition forces states and nations to adapt and remain flexible and thus helps sustain them. At other times, competing identities displace the state by impeding state functions or making nations less distinctive or cohesive. The light in which these competing identities are viewed depends more or less on whether one considers states and nations to be "normal" identities, which have usually been seen as the main actors in world politics.

Of course, other actors have made their presence felt on the international stage as well. Commercial enterprises, for one, have exercised power in international affairs, dating back to the time when merchants first traversed unknown terrains and contacted unfamiliar societies, in search of fortune and adventure. But the enduring economic growth that the world has become accustomed to is a relatively new phenomenon in human history, fueled perhaps by particular cultural forces, as suggested in Max Weber's well-known thesis. The Protestant ethic, he argued, encouraged people to accumulate wealth during their time on earth, and this gave rise to capitalism and economic growth.[55] Whether capitalism is linked to a specific cultural identity remains a subject of heated debate, especially since many non-Protestant societies have successfully instituted capitalist economies.[56] One of the most widely accepted ideas along the lines of the cultural thesis was formulated by Joseph Schumpeter, who suggested that it is the entrepreneurial culture of a stable middle class that precipitates the kind of sustained risk-taking investment needed for continual economic growth.[57]

Since the end of World War II, one manifestation of that entrepreneurial spirit has been the growing power of multinational corporations, which are now said to be eroding the sovereignty of states.[58] Transnational business interests have become particularly powerful in developing countries, especially those willing to trade some of their control in exchange for the investments and new technologies multinational corporations can bring.[59] In addition, with the protectionist mode of industrialization rapidly giving way to liberalizing export-led strategies, the economic philosophy underlying multilateral economic institutions and being taught in the economics departments of Western universities and business schools is triumphing over the alternatives.[60] Some observers now see a universal business culture taking hold, in which private firms are exercising a form of private authority over many aspects of global commerce.[61] Others maintain that certain cultural identities — those that are highly kin-focused and suspicious of associations with strangers — are resisting the openness, transparency, and public-spiritedness that allow a liberal capitalist political economy to thrive.[62]

Despite the importance of global economic trends and their impact on various cultures, few would agree that cultural identity is primarily a product of economic forces.[63] This view has gained ascendancy with the decline in Marxist explanations of identity, which are anchored in a person's or group's relation to the economic mode of production, whether they are aware of it or not. Although wholesale economic determinism, Marxist or not, has fallen out of favor, most analysts today attribute at least some degree of identity to an actor's economic position.

[55] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism,* translated by Talcott Parsons (New York: Charles Scribner's Son's, 1958).

[56] There is a vast literature on the conditions that led to capitalism and the liberal enlightenment philosophy that accompanied it. The various factors that led Europe's economic take-off are discussed in E. L. Jones, *The European Miracle* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

[57] See Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism , Socialism and Democracy* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1954).

[58] Raymond Vernon, *Sovereignty at Bay: The Multinational Spread of U.S. Enterprises* (New York: Basic Books, 1971).

[59] Richard E. Caves, *Multinational Enterprise and Economic Analysis* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

[60] See Thomas Biersteker, "The 'Triumph' of Neoclassical Economics in the Developing World: Policy Convergence and the Bases of Convergence in the International Economic Order," in *Governance without Government: Order and Change in World Politics,* James N. Rosenau and Ernst-Otto Czempiel, eds. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

[61] Virginia Haufler*, Dangerous Commerce: Insurance and the Management of International Risk* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1997).

[62] Robert D. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993).

[63] Barber, *Jihad vs. McWorld.*

Aside from business, another prominent actor in international affairs is the non-governmental organization. These nonprofit organizations are multiplying in response to the triumph of liberalism and the spread of new technologies and infrastructures.[64] Their activities are said to be making a key contribution to building vibrant civil societies; aggregating, organizing, and articulating citizens' interests; providing a locus for self-governing deliberations among citizens; gathering important social knowledge; and delivering social services. Non-governmental organizations also span international borders. Their unique culture is said to be spawning a transnational civil society.[65] Although non-governmental organizations vary greatly in size, function, and age, they do seem to share a culture that is fiercely independent, flexible, and impatient with hierarchy. The extent to which non-governmental organizations are directly challenging the state, by assuming some of its functions or providing a full-fledged alternative, is another matter of lively debate. The state is, however, clearly the focus of much of their attention, in that non-governmental organizations often apply pressure to states, implement state-funded policies, or deliver services that are not forthcoming from the state or the market.[66]

The state is also what gives non-governmental organizations legitimacy and protection under its laws and regulations. Human rights non-governmental organizations, which have assumed the role of humanity's conscience in monitoring and reporting human rights violations and protecting victims of abuse, draw their license from international legal covenants to which states have bound themselves. And environmental non-governmental organizations have assumed an even more formalized role in environmental treaties, the enforcement of which nonetheless remains largely in the hands of states.

One of the missions of international organizations and the underlying body of international law has been to build a transnational culture dedicated to the rule of law. Non-governmental organizations and labor organizations have been particularly active in this regard in the twentieth century's movement toward multilateralism. They have sought to put a stop to both military and economic warfare, because the disadvantaged working class normally pays the highest price for state conflicts.[67] They have also sought to end the prerogative of each sovereign to wage war or to engage in other actions that can damage the human community. In international law, war is now illegal, and force is sanctioned only when necessary for self-defense or when given multilateral authorization. What remains uncertain, however, is to what extent international law is effective in shaping state behavior, and to what extent international law is used by states as a rhetorical device to adorn their interests. Whichever case is more convincing, it is undeniable that the United Nations is now home to a culture that respects the rule of law, and most states obey international rules and norms most of the time.[68]

According to some scholars, the rules and procedures established by the tradition of international law have paved the way for the spread of international regimes by regulating issues ranging from fisheries to central bank settlements to the proliferation of nuclear technology.[69] The implication is that a culture of rule-based cooperation, treating international relations as a positive-sum game, wherein one side's gain does not come at the expense of another side's loss, has socialized or softened the hard edge of sovereignty. Though it is difficult to evaluate the consequences, there is strong evidence that states have become embedded in networks of international

[64] See Lester Salamon and Helmut Anheier, *The Emerging Sector: An Overview* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins Institute for Policy Studies, 1994); and Thomas G. Weiss and Leon Gordenker, eds., *NGOs, the UN and Global Governance* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1996). The latter includes a useful annotated bibliography.

[65] See Ronnie Lipschutz, "Reconstructing World Politics: The Emergence of Global Civil Society," in *International Society after the Cold War: Anarchy and Order Reconsidered*, Rick Fawn and Jeremy Larkins, eds. (New York, St. Martin's Press, 1996); and Paul Wapner, *Environmental Activism and World Civic Politics* (Albany, N.Y.: State University Press, 1996).

[66] NGOs have also played an important role as partners to the welfare state, delivering a wide range of social services funded by the state. See Lester Salamon, *Partners in Public Service: Government-Nonprofit Relations in the Modern Welfare State* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995).

[67] See Akira Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism and World Order* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997); Jones, *Code of Peace*; and Micheline Ishay, *Internationalism and Its Betrayal* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995).

[68] See William D. Coplin, "International Law and Assumptions about the State System," *World Politics* 17 (July 1965), pp. 615–35.

[69] Anne-Marie Slaughter Burley, "International Law and International Relations Theory," *American Journal of International Law* 87:2 (April 1993), pp. 205–39.

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organizations, making state behavior ever more anchored in a culture of international organization and law.[70] Still, a great deal of skepticism surrounds the effectiveness of law in fostering multilateral cooperation, especially when security is at stake.[71]

Since states and nations both imply territorial boundaries, their identities appear to be fixed in space. However, the movement of masses of people across the boundaries of states and nations has added a new dimension to this concept. Diasporas, migrants, and refugees who become disassociated from their homelands and who mix with other cultures bring about vast changes to nations and states, both through the stresses they create and the contributions they make. Though an international regime was created to deal with the refugees from World War II, the identities of nations and states continue to be destabilized by the refugee migration and internal displacement caused by the violent conflict.[72]

Migration is far from a new phenomenon; what is new is the idea of a fixed association between a group of people and a territory, which took hold only in the past few centuries with the establishment of nation-states.[73] Moreover, the capacity for communication and travel across long distances is making it easier for migrants to preserve their original cultures and resist assimilation by their host cultures. This is said to be transforming the exercise of citizenship, which has conventionally been interpreted as the full rights of participation conditional on exclusive allegiance to the state in which one resides.[74] Where migrant populations without the full rights of citizenship have flooded host countries and where diasporas maintain allegiances to their country of origin, politics are bound to be affected; the position of those who are not accepted as full citizens may even be put in jeopardy.[75] Some also see diasporic identities, with their competing allegiances to foreign peoples and places, as a threat to the coherence of states, in that they make it more difficult to articulate a "national interest."[76]

Movement and home country connections across borders make the boundaries of states and nations more nebulous. They can also have an adverse impact on indigenous peoples with close ties to the land, especially tribal populations. Their security has become an issue of international concern, as indigenous peoples normally reside in states dominated by alien cultures. Their ways of life are particularly vulnerable to the incursion of modern social forces, and efforts are being made to secure special protection for these peoples.[77] They are different from conventional minorities whose cultural identity is relatively secure but who need to be protected from the political tyranny of the majority. In contrast, indigenous cultures are at risk because their identity is being overtaken by the culture that surrounds them. They require explicit, formal recognition as a coherent and separate society. In addition, they require formal guarantees that their characteristic way of life will be respected by the state that continues to represent them at the international level.

Religion is another identity that crosses the territorial bounds of any one state or nation. It, too, has returned to prominence in the international arena, through its impact on people's loyalties.[78] This trend parallels the recent revival of nationalism and, like it, was mistakenly thought to be losing strength as a cultural force in the face of modernization. Despite its strong influence on human behavior and perceptions of the world, religion is seldom considered the primary identity of major actors in the international arena. Though religious leaders are often prominent players, entire

70 Martha Finnemore, "Constructing Norms of Humanitarian Intervention," in *The Culture of National Security,* Katzenstein, ed.

71 See Richard N. Haas, *The Reluctant Sheriff: The United States After the Cold War* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Books, Brookings Institute Press, 1997). The view that discounts the relevance of law is not limited to international issues. To what extent national security justifications can be used by the executive branch in the United States to trump normal constitutional procedures remains a matter of some controversy.

72 See, for example, Myron Weiner, "Security Stability and International Migration," *International Security* 17:3 (Winter 1992/93), pp. 91–126.

73 See John G. Ruggie, "Territoriality and Beyond: Problematizing Modernity in International Relations," *International Organization* 47:1 (Winter 1993), pp. 139–74.

74 See Saskia Sassen, *Losing Control?* esp. pp. 59–98; and Yasemin Soysal, *The Limits of Citizenship: Postnational Membership in Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

75 Francis Deng and Roberta Cohen, eds., *Dealing with Displacement* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1998).

76 Samuel Huntington, "The Erosion of American National Interests," *Foreign Affairs* 76:6 (September/October 1997), pp. 28–49.

77 Franke Wilmer, *The Indigenous Voice in World Politics: Since Time Immemorial* (Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage, 1993).

78 Susanne Hoeber Rudolph and James Piscatori, eds., *Transnational Religions and Fading States* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1997). See also the volumes edited by Martin A. Mary and Scott R. Appleby that emerged from the Fundamentalisms Project: *Accounting for Fundamentalisms: The Dynamic Character of Movement* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994); *Fundamentalisms and the State: Remaking Politics, Economics, and Militance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993); and *Fundamentalisms Observed* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

religions rarely have the kind of organizational cohesion that would qualify them as actors. Nonetheless, religion is often seen as a deeply held culture that not only defines people's view of themselves in relation to the universe but also puts moral constraints on states and nations.

There are still other identities competing with established nations and states. Criminal syndicates, terrorists, and revolutionaries all seek either to evade or supplant state authority. These and a host of other social groups in the world cohere across the international landscape through their cultural connections. An examination of the concept of culture itself, especially its relation to nature and to gender, follows.

COLLECTIVE IDENTITIES AND NATURE

Social collective identity is said to spring in part from sharing a common relationship with nature, which makes people feel that they are part of a coherent "whole." The simplest forms of social organization, such as tribes, develop cultures directly related to their experience of and beliefs about nature.[79] However, the culture-nature connection may play a role even in modern societies, for example, in their national parks, natural "monuments" celebrated in anthems and national folklore, legends of conquering the wilderness, and general pride in the special beauty or other significance of the parcel of planetary nature that is encompassed by one's nation. Research on the ties between nature and nation has emerged as an interesting interdisciplinary trend, linking natural history, the history of science, ecology, and the humanities.[80] Going beyond the state's legal claim to territory and the nation's political claim to land, this research tries to decipher the underlying cultural attitudes toward nature that make attachments to land and claims to territory so important. Its findings are gaining the attention of security scholars.[81]

One proposition of particular interest is that the concept of the state in relation to nature is undergoing a profound change: the state, once considered the embodiment of an ethic that sees nature as a repository of resources to be exploited for the sake of social improvements, is being reshaped by an array of social movements that view nature in different ways.[82] Some see nature as the common heritage of a collective identity, occasionally humanity itself, or as a wondrous presence that is being despoiled by human hubris, for some, epitomized by the modernizing state. These and other concerns are now a recurring theme in global policy thinking, fortified in part by the spread of a "green" culture. Although states still appear to play the leading role in addressing global environmental issues, their policy decisions are often made in response to pressures from non-governmental organizations and social movements.[83] All this attention to nature may be fostering a global awareness of the value and vulnerability of nature, a culture that has already been dubbed "Earth Nationalism."[84]

GENDER

With more and more women entering the monetized workforce and assuming positions of public leadership, it seems inevitable that they should be given increasing attention in public policy. Security is one area in which this trend has not been evident. Some would say that this exclusion of women and women's concerns is anchoring knowledge about security in a confrontational culture, and that a culture

[79] Mary Douglas, *Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1970).

[80] For a general account that emphasizes the manifestation of collective identities in the visual arts, see Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995). According to Schama the field of cultural geography has been exploring this connection. Works cited include W. J. T. Mitchell, ed., *Landscape and Power* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994); Stephen Daniels, *Fields of Vision: Landscape Imagery and National Identity in England and the United States* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press,1993); and Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels, eds., *The Iconography of Landscape: Essays on the Symbolic Representation, Design and Use of Past Environments* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

[81] Ronnie D. Lipschutz and Ken Conca, eds., *The State and Social Power in Global Environmental Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

[82] See Steve Rayner, "A Cultural Perspective on the Structure and Implementation of Global Environmental Agreements," *Evaluation Review* 15:1 (February 1991), pp. 75–102.

[83] Karen Litfin, "Ecoregimes: Playing Tug of War with the Nation-State," in *The State and Social Power in Global Environmental Politics*, Lipschutz and Conca, eds.

[84] Daniel Deudney, "Ground Identity: Nature, Place, and Space in Nationalism," in *The Return of Culture and Identity,* Lapid and Kratochwil, eds., pp. 129–45.

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85 For the notion that the canon of international security is based on a world view rooted in the experiences of a minority of men, see J. Ann Tickner, *Gender in International Relations: Feminist Perspectives on Achieving Global Security* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992). An overview of the literature can be found in Craig N. Murphy, "Seeing Women, Recognizing Gender, Recasting International Relations," *International Organization* 50:3 (Summer 1996), pp. 513–38.

of male power is dominating studies of international relations. All the attention is said to be on the powerful few, while the important role that the powerless many play in structuring social life is being neglected. Others consider gender an important factor in the formation of basic political institutions or in sustaining various organizational cultures. The recent literature mostly complains that gender has been neglected as an identity and that a better understanding of it should help societies build more inclusive or less confrontational security identities.[85]

Whatever identity is being studied, it is important to remember that no identity exists by and for itself. Even if identity is simply being used to distinguish among the items in a class of objects, the classification will always be based on some relation among the objects. More important, humans and their groups forge and maintain identities through contact with "others," be they human or not. The next question to ask is: How do all these relations affect what actors seek to do?

III. CULTURE AND INTERESTS

Culture is clearly not the only factor behind the interests that actors pursue. Even when it does play a role, it may do so only under certain conditions, but these conditions themselves may evolve over time as culture exerts its influence or itself undergoes change. As in the case of identities, many discussions of these topics cannot escape asking how to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of human affairs, when and how social science should be done, and which theoretical tradition should be followed in pursuing useful knowledge.[86]

Leaving aside arguments about the validity of knowledge claims, one can say that culture affects interests, in basically two ways: it can regulate interests, or it can constitute them.[87] When culture regulates interests, it operates in much the same way as the rules of a game, dictating what moves can and cannot be made, what tactics can and cannot be followed. Its effect is also similar to the way in which the calculation of costs and benefits directs economic behavior in a market. In the case of culture, however, the costs and benefits are based on norms and principles that an actor relies on in deciding what should and should not be done. For example, human rights norms are said to prevent governments from abusing their own citizenry even when such abuse would help governments eliminate political opponents. Or transnational cultural taboos are said to have prevented arms manufacturers from producing exploding bullets in the nineteenth century or the major powers from using chemical weapons since World War I. Thus cultural instructions push an actor in certain directions, even when the actor would benefit by not following these instructions.

The arguments in support of the regulative function of culture are most convincing when no coercive sanctions are present to enforce the rules. For example, one generally does not commit a major crime, because the state would in all likelihood enforce the law and impose a penalty. At the same time, able-bodied individuals may have many opportunities to rob frail elderly people with impunity but avoid doing so because of the widely shared belief that it would be wrong, even though one could escape punishment. Cultural effects are considered important in these cases because they work independently without requiring a mechanism to coerce enforcement.[88] In short, there are certain things one just does or refuses to do because of culture.

Even when coercion is necessary, culture can make the sanctions work more smoothly. When culture exerts some of the pressure that keeps actors in line, it lightens the burden on the sanctioning agent. Furthermore, culture can legitimize enforcement, thereby reducing resistance to it, and making it less costly.

As mentioned earlier, culture is also said to define or constitute interests. It does so by delineating what is worth pursuing and what must be avoided. Again, the game metaphor is apt. The rules of a game do not simply tell a player what kinds of moves can and cannot be made, they indicate what the game is about; they reveal its purpose and objectives, and how a player is expected to behave. When states seek recognition

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[86] The kinds of valid knowledge that can be claimed about culture in social science are discussed in Paul Kowert and Jeffrey Legro, "Norms, Identity, and Their Limits," in Katzenstein, ed., *The Culture of National Security,* pp. 451–97; and Michael C. Desch, "Culture, Schmulture? When It Matters and When It Doesn't," manuscript (Cambridge, Mass.: Olin Institute for Strategic Studies, Harvard University, November 1997).

[87] On the regulative-constitutive distinction, see Ronald L. Jepperson, Alexander Wendt, and Peter J. Katzenstein, "Norms, Identity, and Culture in National Security," in Katzenstein, ed., *The Culture of National Security,* pp. 54–55.

[88] The dedicated enforcement mechanisms are key factors because cultural pressure is not painless; it, too, works through internalized mores, through shame, and through the disparagement or approval of others.

from other states that make up the international community, they are not just responding to appropriate cues from the international culture of law and diplomacy to gain for themselves the benefits of full-fledged sovereignty. Receiving recognition is also an end in itself. As in joining a club, attaining the status of membership is as important, and perhaps even more important, than gaining access to the amenities of the clubhouse.

The regulative effects of culture can be discerned from the manner and circumstances in which actors use culture to pursue their interests. Particularly close attention will therefore be given to cultures that are considered malleable enough to be adjusted to suit various interests. When states have common interests they want to pursue, but find it difficult to proceed in the absence of a central enforcement mechanism in the international realm, they often create institutions and norms to help them adjust their interactions.[89] Though these are rarely called "cultural" institutions, the fact remains that they are used to manage the perceptions and expectations of actors, without changing the underlying interests of actors. They affect how actors believe others will act and how their own behavior will affect the behavior of others:

> At the end of the day, success in the negotiation stage of regime formation occurs when parties find a mutually comprehensible language with which to communicate about the launching of a common project, however we as analysts choose to describe the nature of the underlying problem that stimulates the parties to act.[90]

Actors do not form regimes with a view to crafting a common language or a common culture. The culture that emerges is a tool actors use in pursuing the substantive goals they share, which is what actually brought them to the negotiating table.

In the rapidly growing literature on how institutions, norms, and shared understandings prove useful for international actors, these normative tools are said to complement the other regulative implements actors use in crafting cooperative arrangements in the international realm. This is the case whether regimes and international institutions were erected by dominant powers with the means to sanction non-compliance or whether they emerged through a more decentralized process. In transnational cooperation and governance, cultural elements such as norms and principles serve as mechanisms that reduce transaction costs, focus actors' attention on their mutual interests, or establish a common language that can help actors communicate. Yet the extent to which cultural ideas help elucidate the institutions and processes of international cooperation remains unsettled.[91]

Cultures also appear to regulate interests through domestic institutions and bureaucracies that operate internationally. The cultures that permeate military organizations and foreign-policy bureaucracies are used to interpret the international context and to organize and maintain the cohesiveness of these organizations. Whereas some cultures help actors collaborate on issues of mutual interest, especially within organizations, bureaucratic cultures also give rise to misperceptions about other actors and organizations, occasionally leading to consequences unintended by anyone.

The complexity of international policy issues poses a great challenge for policy-makers, who use various analytic tools to make problems more comprehensible and tractable. These ways of understanding and responding to the international context

[89] On the emergence of norms to facilitate cooperation and build reciprocity where cheating and defection from cooperation remain an ongoing concern, see Robert Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984).

[90] Oran R. Young, *Creating Regimes: Arctic Accords and International Governance* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998), p. 178.

[91] Phillpott, "The Possibilities of Ideas."

become entrenched as a policy culture. The problem is that this understanding may not be entirely objective or appropriate, in that policy-makers often to try to fit their potential adversaries into a preconceived mold. This can lead to either inappropriately aggressive or misguided conciliatory strategies.[92] Bureaucracies, too, rely on certain operational cultures in their decision-making. These are usually ones that have proved successful in previous contexts. They often prove, however, less useful and occasionally disastrous in newly emerging contexts.

On the other hand, organizations do become aware of the problems of a mismatch between their culture and that of the clients they serve. The World Bank, for one, is attempting to devise economic development strategies that are more compatible with indigenous cultures: "Even development programmes which are environmentally or economically sound are likely to stumble and eventually crumble, if they are not also *socially* and *culturally* robust and enduring."[93] Note that the purpose of becoming more culturally sensitive is to design and implement better projects and policies for economic growth and development. Culture remains a regulative tool.

The limits and possibilities of cultures as regulative tools in international cooperation and policy-making is now the subject of a growing body of research. One of the central tenets of this work is that policy cultures can change through learning.[94] They can adapt to changing circumstances, as people who participate in them compare their cultural beliefs to what is taking place in the world, and as they acquire new ideas and knowledge. Indeed, ideas and knowledge are considered the crucial factors guiding actors whose job it is to negotiate and coordinate policies and define common problems. State leaders are said to arrive at their decisions by using as a guide the "lessons" they draw from analogous experiences in the past.[95] The United States and Soviet Union, for instance, decided on the basis of their confrontations earlier in the Cold War to build security regimes, and the Soviet elites, having learned about the limits of their policy culture, decided to engage in the "New Thinking" of the Gorbachev era.[96]

As actors attempt to alter the regulative culture they employ in pursuing their interests, they rely on new ideas and knowledge to change or supplant their existing policy cultures. Scholarship in this area has undergone an explosion recently, with scholars studying the effects of ideas on foreign policy and the role of "epistemic communities" in creating expertise-based consensual knowledge about certain issues areas. Ideas and knowledge are increasingly being seen as crucial factors in guiding how actors negotiate, coordinate policies, and define common problems. The growing importance of knowledge is clear; science itself has emerged as a transnational expertise-based culture. For example, the capacity to provide scientific analyses of climate change is said to have played a crucial role in getting states to agree on the recently negotiated ozone depletion treaties.[97]

These developments raise a very interesting question: With the rapid accumulation of ever more sophisticated knowledge, will these changes in regulative cultures lead to more fundamental change, beyond the manner in which actors pursue and coordinate interests? The strong suspicion is that interests themselves may change, as the constitutive vision of culture proposes.

[92] Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1976).

[93] Michael M. Cernea, "Culture and Organization: The Social Sustainability of Induced Development," *Sustainable Development* 1:2 (1993), pp. 18–29; the quotation is on p. 18.

[94] For a review of the literature on learning, see Jack Levy, "Learning and Foreign Policy: Sweeping a Conceptual Minefield," *International Organization* 48:2 (Spring 1994), pp. 279–312.

[95] Yuen Foong Khong, *Analogies at War: Korea, Munich, Dien Bien Phu, and the Vietnam Decisions of 1965* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992).

[96] See Joseph S. Nye, Jr., "Nuclear Learning and U.S.-Soviet Security Regimes," *International Organization* 41:2 (Summer 1987), pp. 371–402; and Richard Herman, "Identity, Norms and National Security: The Soviet Policy Revolution at the End of the Cold War," in *The Culture of National Security,* Katzenstein, ed., pp. 271–311.

[97] See Richard E. Benedick, *Ozone Diplomacy: New Direction in Safeguarding the Planet* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991). On the importance of regimes for disseminating scientific knowledge, see Peter M. Haas, Robert O. Keohane, and Marc A. Levy, eds., *Institutions for the Earth: Sources of Effective International Environmental Protection* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1994).

CULTURE, IDENTITY, AND SECURITY: AN OVERVIEW

In the constitutive view, cultural change causes actor identities to change, and hence the way actors think of themselves and their interests. Whatever the impact of the ongoing learning in regulative cultures, culture is believed to shape interests. Consequently, beyond serving to help or hinder actors in the pursuit of their interests, cultures define who they are and what they pursue.

If cultural change is possible, what then of the culturally based differences among human collectives that are again wreaking havoc on the world? Are they truly irreconcilable? On one hand, there are those who believe cultural differences at the level of civilizations are largely impervious to change. In the future they envision, the major fissures in world politics will be along deep cultural lines, much larger than those dividing states. Since the end of the Cold War, people have already begun to reaffirm their cultural — which some take to mean largely religious or ethnic —identity. These developments, it is said, presage a return to primordial cultural differences.[98] The more prevalent scholarly view, on the other hand, is that cultural change is altering identities and redefining interests. Evidence to this effect is drawn from various sources: the manner in which states come to common agreement on what it means to be a "civilized" state, military cultures reshaping attitudes toward security, or the cumulative effects of normative pressures that make certain policies "unthinkable" while others become so entrenched that it is difficult to imagine a world without them. The consensus among constitutive thinkers is that "cultural-institutional contexts do not merely constrain actors by changing the incentives that shape their behavior. They do not simply regulate behavior. They also help to constitute the very actors whose conduct they seek to regulate."[99]

As mentioned earlier, many now believe that the culture of the international system has changed what it means to be a state by altering the interests states pursue. Normative changes, some say, have made extinct the colonial identity considered legitimate in the nineteenth century.[100] The global abolition of slavery is also attributed to normative cultural change, as is the spread of increasingly negative attitudes toward war.[101] These developments indicate that certain interests previously considered integral to statehood have disappeared from the repertoire of state policies. At the same time, changes in the culture of the international system are creating new interests for states, such as humanitarian intervention. The driving force here often includes normative pressures rather than pure geopolitical interests, which were once the dominant concern in cases of intervention.[102] Rich and capable states have intervened in humanitarian crises because it was the right thing to do, even though it brought little obvious benefit to the intervening state. As also pointed out earlier, another new aspect of modern state identity emerging under the influence of information gained from international organizations, is science policy. Many newly independent states are establishing science policies because they are learning from international organizations such as UNESCO that modern statehood means having a science policy, even though it is not clear that this brings tangible benefits to resource-strapped developing countries.[103]

More broadly in the constitutive vein, it has been argued that states have also altered the cultural environment in which they operate. It has been said that the

[98] See Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations.* Also the fair but critical review by the eminent world historian William H. McNeill, "Decline of the West," *New York Review of Books,* January 9, 1997, pp. 18–22.

[99] Peter J. Katzenstein, "Introduction," in his *The Culture of National Security,* p. 22.

[100] Robert H. Jackson, "The Weight of Ideas in Decolonization: Normative Change in International Relations," in *Ideas and Foreign Policy,* Goldstein and Keohane, eds., pp. 111–38. As Jepperson, Wendt, and Katzenstein put it, "Today, in contrast to the late nineteenth century, it would be almost inconceivable for a country readily to vote to become a colony," in "Norms, Identity, and Culture," p. 36.

[101] See James Lee Ray, "The Abolition of Slavery and the End of International War," *International Organization* 43:3 (Summer 1989), pp. 405–40; John Keegan, *A History of Warfare* (New York: Knopf, 1993), p. 59; and John Mueller, *Quiet Cataclysm: Reflections of the Recent Transformations of World Politics* (New York: HarperCollins, 1995), pp. 111–23.

[102] Martha Finnemore, "Constructing Norms of Humanitarian Intervention," pp. 153–85. See also Laura W. Reed and Carl Kaysen, eds., *Emerging Norms of Justified Intervention* (Cambridge, Mass.: American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1993). On the normative motivations for United States overseas food aid, see Robert McElroy, *Morality and American Foreign Policy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992).

[103] See Martha Finnemore, "International Organizations as Teachers of Norms," *International Organization* 47:4 (Autumn 1993), pp. 565–98.

104 Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46:2 (Spring 1992), pp. 395–421.

105 Alexander Wendt, "Collective Identity Formation and the International State," *American Political Science Review* 88:2 (June 1994), pp. 384–96.

106 See Karl W. Deutsch et al., *International Political Communities: An Anthology* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1966); and Thomas Risse Kappen, "Collective Identity in the Case of a Democratic Community: The Case of NATO," in *The Culture of National Security,* Katzenstein, ed., pp. 356–99. Also Michael Barnett and Emanuel Adler, "Governing Anarchy: A Research Agenda for the Study of Security Communities," *Ethics and International Affairs* 10 (1996), pp. 63–98.

107 Elizabeth Kier, "Culture and French Military Doctrine before World War II," p. 187.

108 Elizabeth Kier, "Culture and Military Doctrine: France between the Wars," *International Security* 19:4 (Spring 1995), pp. 65–93.

109 Alastair Iain Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995).

110 See Peter J. Katzenstein and Oburu Okawara, "Japan's National Security: Structures, Norms and Policies," *International Security* 17:4 (Spring 1993), pp. 84–118; and Thomas U. Berger, "From Sword to Chrysanthemum: Japan's Culture of Anti-militarism," *International Security* 17:4 (Spring 1993), pp. 119–80.

111 Jeffrey W. Legro, "Military Culture and Inadvertent Escalation in World War II," *International Security* 18:4 (Spring 1994), pp. 108–42; Legro, *Cooperation under Fire: Anglo-German Restraint during World War II* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1995); Legro, "Culture and Preferences in the International Cooperation Two-Step," *American Political Science Review* 90:1 (March 1996), pp. 118–37, 134. One way to identify the norms that matter out of all the norms that compete for the attention of states, says Legro, is to look at those norms that are internalized by military organizations. These organizations serve as mediators between norms in the international system and state behavior. See his "Which Norms Matter?" *International Organization* 51:1 (Winter 1997), pp. 31–64.

112 Richard Price and Nina Tannenwald, "Norms and Deterrence: The Nuclear and Chemical Weapons Taboos," in *The Culture of National Security,* Katzenstein, ed., p. 115. See also Price, *The Chemical Weapons Taboo.*

113 Price and Tannenwald, "Norms and Deterrence," p. 139.

114 Ibid., pp. 140–41. Interestingly, General Lee Butler implies that the culture of nuclear deterrence has not yet been adequately tamed by these taboos: "The cold war lives on in the minds of men who cannot let go of the fears, the beliefs, and the enmities born of the nuclear age. They cling to deterrence, clutch its tattered promise to their breast, shake it wistfully at bygone adversaries and balefully at our new or imagined ones. They are gripped still by its awful willingness not simply to tempt the apocalypse but to prepare its way." General Lee Butler, "The Risk of Deterrence: From Super Powers to Rogue Leaders," Speech before the National Press Club, February 2, 1998, excerpted in Committee on Nuclear Policy, *Policy Brief* 2:3 (1998). Also available at www.stimson.org/policy.

international context itself is a cultural creation of states, which at times throughout history has been filled with a competitive, war-prone spirit often referred to as "international anarchy." Such conditions are not simply due to the fact that no central government is in operation in the international community; the customs and habits of interacting in this decentralized environment are the results of a culture created by states.[104] States made this system, and they can change it. Moreover, they have indeed collaborated on some functions that have been described as the seeds of an international state.[105]

Less abstractly, patterns of cooperation have been identified in security matters. Some states are said to be building "security communities" that are generating new security identities as well as shared norms of appropriate behavior.[106] These communities are based on a sense of "we"-ness and a commitment to abstaining from violence in solving problems within the community. Though these alliances differ as to the degree of "we"-ness among members, they are more than pragmatic associations designed to ward off potential threats from outside the community. In many cases, such alliances engage the identities of the member states and thus alter their conceptions of their interests.

A state's security policies are also greatly influenced by its bureaucratic and military culture. In other words, a policy-maker's cultural environment can help to account for choices between offensive and defensive military doctrines.[107] A case in point is the disastrous defensive doctrine France adopted before World War II as a result of its cultural emphasis on short-term conscription. That doctrine failed to take into account the complex operations, and hence long-term training, needed for mechanized warfare.[108] Similarly, China's *realpolitik* approach to grand strategy has been deeply embedded in its military culture for much of its history.[109] For Germany and Japan, a culture of antimilitarism now appears to be shaping their security identities.[110] Military culture may also affect the ways in which states conduct warfare or may even drive states with the same political structure into conflict because of their different beliefs about norms of cooperation and appropriate external behavior.[111]

Transnational norms, especially those related to weapons and the use of force, must also be included among elements of culture that have an impact on security. There are taboos against the use of nuclear and chemical weapons, for instance, shaped by "prohibitionary norms."[112] These norms do not simply reflect a lack of military effectiveness or a fear of retaliation, but also the belief that the consequences of using such weapons would be so vast and so indiscriminate that they would exceed all standards of what is morally acceptable. Though a taboo plays a regulative role in constraining the use of weapons, it also has a constitutive function once it becomes internalized by policy-makers.[113] Interestingly, it may have unforeseen side effects as well: some have suggested that the nuclear taboo has led to a search for alternative weapons that could have the same effect while escaping the nuclear odium.[114]

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Other transnational norms of interest to the global community are those that lead away from *realpolitik* behaviors and identities.[115] These include human rights norms, the spread of which has made states de jure guarantors of universal rights for their citizens.[116] Furthermore, human rights norms have helped give shape to the emerging pan-European identity.[117]

The subject of human rights illustrates the difficulty in determining the effectiveness of transnational norms. Norms are rarely uncontested, and there are generally multiple norms vying for prominence and relevance.[118] In practice this has led to controversies over "Asian" values and charges of a Western bias in the documents and philosophies that undergird the human rights instruments of international law. Nonetheless, most commentators remain impressed by the global spread of human rights and the degree to which systematic abuses are disavowed by virtually all states.

The strength of norms and principles appears not to diminish even when they are occasionally violated. All societies have a norm against murder, and there are clear violations of this norm. But this does not mean that the norm against murder is ineffective or irrelevant. Similarly, in the international realm, transnational cultural prescriptions and prohibitions are occasionally violated. Yet state leaders do seriously consider the moral implications of these violations. In deciding whether to go to war, for example, they do worry about how they will be able to justify the use of force.[119] The implication is that actors who care about what others think will only undertake activities they can justify. And it is the culture that actors share that provides the range of what is justifiable. Thus, even when a norm against a certain type of behavior is not enough to elicit compliance, a great deal may still depend on how violations are justified.

In constitutive thinking, the incidence and conduct of organized violence will depend on whether the recourse to force is justified as a means of self-defense or as an expression of the principle "might makes right." Over time, the cumulative effect of arguing about what is and is not justifiable may change what actors believe is justifiable and thus the endeavors they undertake.[120] The central question for students of international relations is whether these justifications can travel across cultural divides and help uncover ways to reduce violent conflict.

[115] The Katzenstein volume is framed as a "hard case" for the role of culture precisely because there has been a perception in the literature that human rights, humanitarian, and environmental norms were emerging as "progressive" improvements on the realities of power in international relations, especially its security dimensions. The hardness of the case is to demonstrate that even security policies, conventionally understood in *realpolitik* terms, are significantly shaped by culture, even when that culture is not humanitarian or pacifist in its thrust. See Katzenstein, "Introduction," *The Culture of National Security*, and Johnston, *Cultural Realism*, p. 216. Also Emanuel Adler and Beverly Crawford, eds., *Progress in Postwar International Relations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991).

[116] See Jack Donnely, *Internationalizing Human Rights* (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1991).

[117] See Kathryn Sikkink, "The Power of Principled Ideas: Human Rights Policies in the United States and Western Europe," in *Ideas and Foreign Policy,* Goldstein and Keohane, eds., pp. 139–70.

[118] See Kowert and Legro, "Norms, Identity, and Their Limits," pp. 486–88.

[119] See, for example, David Welch, *Justice and the Genesis of War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

[120] For one of the most concise and eloquent arguments for the importance of justifications, albeit from a philosophical perspective, see Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, 2d ed. (New York: Basic Books, 1992), pp. 3–20.

IV. CULTURES OF CONFLICT AND COOPERATION

Whatever the media may have to say about "ancient hatreds," it is a well-established fact that cultural difference by itself is not a leading cause of conflict.[121] What is not yet fully understood, however, is how different kinds of identities may contribute to or prevent violent conflict.

The underlying causes of conflict are obviously complex, for they are rooted in many factors: organizational structure, political pressures, socioeconomic interests, and certain cultural beliefs. Cultural contributors to conflict fall into two main categories: discrimination against minorities and a collective enmity arising from past atrocities.[122] A related factor is "ethnic geography." When ethnicities are intermingled rather than clearly separated, there is a multiplicity of flashpoints and battlefields. Civilians are more likely to become targets as belligerents seek to establish ethnically "pure" areas that can be more readily protected and relied on for loyalty. Other causal factors—such as economic and political transitions, elite and mass politics, or external actors—are, however, generally thought to outweigh the importance of cultural difference in causing conflict. One prominent exception occurs when culture is manipulated in the mass media by leaders bent on inciting violence.[123]

Still, even when manipulated, culture serves as a proximate rather than an underlying cause of violence: "It is simply the raw material."[124] Nonetheless, cultural mistrust, if brought into the open, may help opposing groups arrive at a long-term prevention strategy:[125]

> Getting groups to come to terms with the distorted and pernicious aspects of their histories and inculcating the values of compromise and tolerance in political and social discourse are among the most important problems war-torn countries face. In short, education is one of the keys to long-term political stability. This is surely an area where the international community can make a difference.[126]

Although many remain skeptical about the theoretical and policy importance of culture, it is a key component of a number of state activities and policies under implementation. Indeed, cultural and scholarly exchanges, as well as overseas broadcasts, are part of several long-standing programs administered by the U.S. Information Agency, and military-to-military contacts through the Pentagon are a frequent occurrence.

Furthermore, vast networks of non-governmental efforts parallel these governmental initiatives. The mission of many non-governmental organizations is to change the attitudes and beliefs of their beneficiaries, the governments they petition, or the donors from whom they seek support. Their intent is to change the culture in the field in which they operate, whether to reduce the abuse of human rights, protect the environment, secure more aid for the world's poorest populations, or alter some other established practices.[127] These efforts, governmental and non-governmental, are arguably contributing to a decrease in mistrust and an increase in transnational

[121] Culture receives more attention in the literature on intrastate war than in writings on interstate war. Despite Huntington's thesis regarding future fault lines among civilizations, most scholars who study international war do not think culture is an important cause. See Theodore K. Rabb and Robert I. Rotberg, eds., *The Origin and Prevention of Major Wars* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989). For more general opinions, see Michael E. Brown, "Introduction," in *The International Dimensions of Internal Conflict*, Michael E. Brown, ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1996), pp. 1–32; and Michael E. Brown, "The Causes of Internal Conflict: An Overview," in *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflicts*, Michael E. Brown et al., eds. (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1997).

[122] See Brown, "The Causes of Internal Conflict," pp. 12–13.

[123] See Brown, "The Causes of Internal Conflict." However, see the widely read argument that an "eliminationist" anti-Semitic culture led to Germany's broadly based participation in the Holocaust: Daniel J. Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (New York: Knopf, 1995). For the use of cultural images and symbols by Milosevic in Serbia, see Gagnon, "Ethnic Nationalism and International Conflict." On the manipulation of public media in ethnic conflicts with examples from Rwanda and Serbia, see Jack Snyder and Karen Ballentine, "Nationalism and the Marketplace of Ideas," *International Security* 21:2 (Fall 1996), pp. 5–40.

[124] Michael Brown argues that there is a need for better understanding of proximate causes of internal conflict. See his "The Causes of Internal Conflict," p. 25.

[125] See, for example, Stephen Van Evera's prescription, proposing that the West place the following condition on its economic relations with the former Soviet Bloc states: that they curb the kind of chauvinistic mythmaking that can incite inter-ethnic tensions. See Van Evera, "Hypotheses on Nationalism and War," pp. 5–39, at 37–38.

[126] Michael E. Brown and Chantal de Jonge Oudraat, "Internal Conflict and International Action: An Overview," in *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflicts*, Brown et al., eds., pp. 262–63. See also Carnegie Commission, *Preventing Deadly Conflict*, esp. chap. 7, "Toward a Culture of Prevention."

[127] Thanks to Martha Finnemore for this insight.

[128] Joseph S. Nye, Jr., and William Owens, "America's Information Edge," *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 1996), pp. 20–36.

[129] For an argument on how an adapted diplomatic corps can serve as a vital link in the increasingly intercultural context of global diplomacy, see Raymond Cohen, "Negotiating across Cultures," in *Managing Global Chaos: Sources of and Responses to International Conflict,* Chester Crocker and Fen Osler Hampson, with Pamela Aall, eds. (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 1996), pp. 487–99.

[130] Though communication was a significant topic of research in international relations during and after World War II, when many scholars were involved in propaganda analysis, it has received less attention since. See, for example, Richard L. Merritt, *Communication in International Politics* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1972).

[131] For example, the Bosnian Interreligious Council was formed during a symposium at the United States Institute of Peace in October 1997. Its purpose is "to promote religious tolerance and understanding and to provide a forum for dialogue and communications between the religious communities." *PeaceWatch* 4:1 (1998), p. 2. For an overview of the role of truth commissions and other efforts at "overcoming" past injustices after major social transitions, see Timothy Garton Ash, "The Truth about Dictatorship," *New York Review of Books,* February 19, 1998.

[132] Carnegie Commission, *Preventing Deadly Conflict,* p. 155.

cultural understanding. They are also said to be promoting America's values and its international powers of persuasion.[128] Many of the non-governmental contacts are called "track-two" diplomacy. They offer good offices, mediation efforts, and channels of communication that official actors cannot exploit.[129] Like other forms of cultural communication, they are considered the great hope of populations subjugated by ruling elites or caught in a web of international hostility.[130] To this end, various non-governmental, religious, and occasionally third-party state-based initiatives have put great effort into establishing lines of communication among antagonistic parties, before, during, and after conflicts.[131] All such activities spring from the belief that cultural exchange can have long-term consequences for world peace and cooperation. In the words of the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict:

> Those who have a deep sense of belonging to groups that cut across ethnic, national, or sectarian lines may serve as bridges between different groups and help to move them toward a wider, more inclusive social identity. Building such bridges will require many people interacting across traditional barriers on a basis of mutual respect. Developing a personal identification with people beyond one's primary group has never been easy. Yet broader identities are possible, and in the next century it will be necessary to encourage them on a larger scale than ever before.[132]

V. CONCLUSION

There is scant systematic evidence that cultural difference by itself is a significant cause of organized violence. What remains to be examined is the proposition that misunderstanding — rather than difference — among cultures is a fundamental source of conflict. Clearly, many of the world's loftiest hopes for the future are now pinned on building better understanding among cultures. There is widespread excitement over the growing body of information regarding how actors think about themselves and one another, especially at a time when information and knowledge are being manipulated with unprecedented dexterity; however, the sources and distribution of the shared beliefs and values reflected in the word "culture" remain poorly understood. In common parlance and even in some learned circles, the term is still taken to mean ways of understanding the essential, and thus presumably unchangeable, mentalities of certain groups of people. In this view, one must accept that these mentalities are a permanent fact of life, and that neither those who possess these mentalities nor others have any levers at their disposal to change them. The best course of action to ensure scarce moments of international harmony, then, would be to determine what is feasible, through a realistic appraisal of the underlying cultural limits on the existing state of affairs.

But there are also those who believe that many of the obstacles standing in the way of global security can be overcome through education and communication. They call for appropriate policies directed at overcoming the misunderstandings that gave rise to the obstacles in the first place, whether about the dynamics of economic markets, the design of laws and state policy, peoples' customary ways of dealing with the natural environment, or the long-established mistrust and fear among different cultural identities.

To settle such disagreements, it is not necessary to eliminate the differences. Rather, it is essential to understand them — what they consist of and why they exist — in order to ensure that they do not lead to violence. Perhaps a first step would be to plant the seeds of a new culture, one that believes organized violence is not inevitable. As facile as this may sound, it would be an enormous task. As the preceding discussion has shown, the wheels of change can grind very slowly where cultural attitudes are concerned. But cultural change can also, on occasion, result in sudden and unexpected transformations.

Scholars and practitioners find that many questions about culture and identity remain unresolved. In addition, debates about identity are hotly contested because they raise for analysts of national security "directly and unavoidably pressing moral issues."[133] Definitions of security have always referred to the protection of certain values and ways of life. But in questioning identity and how culture may be affecting it, one is inevitably questioning precisely how, and who should be protected. When all is said and done, this question does not have a value-free answer.

[133] Peter J. Katzenstein, "Preface," in his *The Culture of National Security*, p. xiii.