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ABSTRACT

While much has been written in recent times on the concept of civil society, the idea that it is part of an Orientalist construct of West and non-West has not been explored. This dissertation addresses this lacuna in the literature by examining Western concepts of civil society and establishing the ways in which these concepts are constructed through the deployment of a mirroring construction of non-Western Others.

I examine the work of three theorists (Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel) who wrote on civil society during the Enlightenment or in its aftermath. These theorists are emblematic of a discursive formation which differed from prior discursive formations in two related respects: their concept of civil society and their construction of non-Western Others. During the eighteenth century both constructions of the concept of civil society and of non-Western Others were undergoing significant changes leading eventually to a concept of civil society as distinct from the state and to what might be termed a "post-Enlightenment geographical imagination". To demonstrate the disjuncture between discursive formations, the work of two seventeenth-century theorists (Hobbes and Locke) is compared and contrasted with that of these writers.

The work of three late twentieth-century social scientists (Shils, Gellner and Fukuyama) is examined and their concept of civil society and use of non-Western Others is contrasted with those of the prior discursive formation. I show how their concept of civil society is informed both by the concept of civil society developed in the Enlightenment and its aftermath and by the mirroring constructions of non-Western Others of the post-Enlightenment geographical imagination.

Underscoring the work of all these theorists are methods of comparison and the
representational practices they authorize. These are explored through two conceptions of alterity which have operated in Western thought and their connections to questions of comparison. An analysis is made of the relationship of the ideas of comparison and comparative method to questions of translation in Western philosophy and social science. The implications of this discussion of comparison and representation for theories of civil society and their constructions of non-Western Others is analyzed.
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INTRODUCTION

As in a mirror the semblance is in one place, the substance in another, so matter seems to be full when it is empty, and contains nothing while seeming to contain all things. The copies and shadows of real things which pass in and out of it, come into it as into a formless shadow. They are seen in it because it has no form of its own.

Plotinus, *Enneads*.

The breakthrough toward radical otherness (with respect to the philosophical concept - of the concept) always takes place within philosophy, the form of an aposteriority or an empiricism. But this is an effect of the specular nature of philosophical reflection, philosophy being incapable of inscribing (comprehending) what is outside it otherwise than through the appropriating assimilation of a negative image of it, and dissemination is written on the back - the tain - of that mirror.

Jacques Derrida, *Dissemination*.

I begin this introduction with an epigram from the Greek philosopher Plotinus because it illustrates an important and frequently forgotten point about mirrors and their literal and figurative uses as representational devices. Plotinus draws our attention to the way in which mirrors may be used to create illusions or how they may deceive those who unwittingly employ them. This illusory capacity of mirrors bears directly on my choice of a title for this thesis and upon the argument I intend to present herein concerning "civil society" and mirroring constructions of non-Western Others.

As Richard Rorty has shown in *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, the mirror has been a ubiquitous metaphor in Western philosophy from the Greeks to the early twentieth century. The predominant construction of the mirror metaphor in this tradition has been the idea

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of the "mind as the Mirror of Nature", a mirror that accurately reflects the 'reality' outside the mind. Accordingly, the premiere task of Western philosophy (what Rorty calls "Philosophy with a capital P") has been to find ways to achieve more accurate representations "...by inspecting, repairing, and polishing the mirror". In so doing, however, philosophers often ignored the mirror's other properties: the ability to create illusions, either consciously or unconsciously. The idea of the mind as the "mirror of nature" facilitated the establishment of philosophy as a "foundational" discipline; the Kantian ideal of "... philosophy as a tribunal of pure reason, upholding or denying the claims of the rest of culture ..." and providing "... a general theory of representation ..." Mainstream Western philosophy (which Rorty calls "systematic philosophy") from Descartes onward sought to establish a "... permanent, neutral framework for inquiry ..." which is ahistorical, "rational", and "objective". Again, this enterprise is centred around a conception of accurate representation as knowledge. Such an ahistorical epistemology attempts to construct all knowledge claims as commensurable.

Rorty questions Western philosophy’s epistemological concern with accuracy of representation and argues for a rejection of this epistemology and of the goal of universal

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2 Ibid., 12.
3 Ibid., 4.
4 Ibid., 3.
5 Ibid., 8, 12.
6 See ibid., 12.
7 See ibid., 357.
commensurability. He demonstrates that "systematic philosophy's" fixation with ocular metaphors (especially mirrors) continues into contemporary ways of thinking:

There was, we moderns may say with the ingratitude of hindsight, no particular reason why this ocular metaphor seized the imagination of the founders of Western thought. But it did, and contemporary philosophers are still working out its consequences, analyzing the problems it created, and asking whether there may not be something to it after all.

Mainstream Western philosophy has not attempted to problematize its central mirror metaphor. Rather, in its attempt to perfect this metaphor, "systematic philosophy" has aspired to transcend it:

The notion of the unclouded Mirror of Nature is the notion of a mirror which would be indistinguishable from what was mirrored, and thus would not be a mirror at all. The notion of a human being whose mind is such an unclouded mirror, and who knows this, is the image ... of God.

While Rorty's work deals primarily with "systematic philosophy" and with its early twentieth century critics (the "pragmatic" philosophers, Dewey, Heidegger, and Wittgenstein), I assert that his argument about the dangers of an uncritical use of the mirror metaphor and its associated epistemology can also be applied to much of contemporary social and political theory. Indeed, many of the writers in Western philosophy and social theory who employ the term "civil society" have used a mirroring construction as a representational and theoretical device. Before discussing the transfer to and use of the mirror metaphor in contemporary political and social theory two caveats must be added. First, in my discussion of these matters I do not mean to (re)privilege Philosophy as the tribunal before which all claims in social and political theory are to finally be

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8 See ibid., 368.
9 Ibid., 38
10 Ibid., 376.
adjudicated. Second, it should be noted that the boundaries between philosophy, social and political theory and, indeed, "literature", have been productively blurred in the second half of the twentieth century.

The utilization of mirroring constructions in contemporary social and political theory, I suggest, has two underlying bases; one involving the act of "comparison", and the other inherent in Western philosophy itself. Plotinus refers to "the copies and shadows of real things which pass in and out..." of the mirror. A mirror has no form of its own but reflects content from somewhere outside it. This reflection may be "true" or it may be distorted. I argue that "civil society" is used as a mirroring device to reflect content from somewhere outside itself. Discussions of "civil society" have an inherent comparative dimension where Western ideas and values are compared (usually unconsciously) with those of the non-West. "Civil society" acts as a mirror which reflects content about the non-West (the Other) to the West for inspection and comparison. Derrida suggests how this is often "negative" content since, in Western philosophy, the Other is appropriated though the assimilation of its negative image. Comparison is, then, inherently in the West's favour.

As the epigram quoted from Derrida at the beginning of this introduction suggests Western philosophy, when confronted by the "Other", deploys a mirroring device in the form of the appropriation of a negative image of the "Other". Derrida echoes the assertion of Levinas that "from its infancy philosophy has been struck with a horror of the other that remains other..." and that its response to the Other is to appropriate it into the Same. Levinas calls

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this the "imperialism of the same". Hence, as Robert Young argues:

In all cases the other is neutralized as a means of encompassing it: ontology amounts to a philosophy of power, an egotism in which the relation with the other is accomplished through its assimilation into the self.

This "philosophical allergy" to the Other, endemic in Western philosophy, is expressed in its derivative social science disciplines through the use of mirroring devices which appropriate and negate the Other. The use of such devices is facilitated by the very nature of the comparative enterprise, in that, historically the idea of comparison has frequently involved the construction of holding up a figurative mirror to Others in order to better understand and/or establish an identity for the Self. This has been particularly true of social science disciplines which rely to a large extent on primary field research. Marcus and Fischer have analyzed the use of this technique in relation to anthropology in general and, ethnography, in particular. As they note, those working in this genre often have "... a marginal or hidden agenda of critique of their own culture ..." This process has been well illustrated by analyses of the colonial encounter in the Americas and Africa. Patrick Brantlinger argues that:

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14 Ibid., 12.

15 Note Lacan's "mirror stage" in the construction of identity.


Nothing points more uncannily to the processes of projection and displacement of guilt for one's own savage and shadowy impulses than those moments when white man confronts white man in the depths of the jungle ... the famous scene of "Dr Livingstone I presume?" suggests a narcissistic doubling, a repetition or mirroring. The solipsistic repression of whatever is nonself or alien characterizes all forms of cultural and political domination.  

In this manner, Brantlinger continues, "... the Dark Continent turned into a mirror, on one level reflecting what the Victorians wanted to see - heroic and saintly self-images - but on another, casting the ghostly shadows of guilt and regression." The analysis of the way in which the mirror has been used figuratively as a representational and analytical device to facilitate comparison of Same and Other can be applied to the way in which the term "civil society" has been deployed in Western thought.

"Civil society", from its earliest employment by philosophers through to its contemporary usage by social scientists has been used as a comparative mirror. "Civil society" is a mirror that appropriating assimilates the Other (in the form of a negative image) in the manner discussed by Derrida and Levinas - the "imperialism of the Same". This mirror both casts light into the so-called "murky depths" of Other societies and illuminates and enhances the understanding of the identity of the society of the Same and consolidates that identity.

In analyses which employ the comparative mirror, the "Other" is separated from the Same


18 Brantlinger, ibid., 215.

19 Ibid., 217.
(Europe or the West) either temporally or spatially. Temporal separation was employed in the analysis of ancient civilizations (e.g., Greece, Rome, Egypt) which were considered to have fallen into decline by their sixteenth - eighteenth century investigators. Spatially distinct, though temporally equivalent, societies became the frequent objects of analysis and comparison for Western philosophers and social scientists with the "Age of Exploration" (e.g., the Americas, Africa, Asia). As Fabian argues, separation and distancing through time and space are fundamental to the comparative method:

There would be no raison d'etre for the comparative method if it was not the classification of entities or traits which first have to be separate and distinct before their similarities can be used to establish taxonomies and developmental sequences.  

These practices of separation and distancing derived their ideological underpinnings and support from Enlightenment philosophy and from evolutionary theory. As Fabian concludes, "neither political Space nor political Time are natural resources. They are ideologically constructed instruments of power." Here Fabian’s analysis strongly echoes that of Foucault, of whom I will have a lot more to say in Part I of this thesis.

While it is true that until the latter part of the nineteenth century a "comparative method" did not exist per se, historians and philosophers from the classical civilizations onward utilized comparison as an analytical tool to examine Other societies as well as to describe and critique

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21 Ibid., 26-27.

22 See ibid., 27.

23 Ibid., 144.
their own societies. Herodotus' *The Histories*, Montesquieu's *Persian Letters* and de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* provide examples of three different genres (employed in three separate centuries) in which comparison as critique was employed. With the development of "social science" in the nineteenth century, social theorists also sought to establish a scientifically based "comparative method". In political science, for example, the first attempts to establish such a method were pioneered by philosophers and academics situated in nineteenth century Britain. However, it was not until the early twentieth century and the transplantation of these ideas across the Atlantic to the United States, that a "comparative method" in political science became fully fledged.

Marcus and Fischer analyze how the device of cultural critique developed as an integral part of the comparative method. While cultural critique has been an element of many different genres (from literature to ethnography) and appeared in many epochs, they argue that in certain eras, cultural critique is adopted more often by social scientists. The nineteenth century, the 1920s to 1930s, and the period from the late 1960s to the present are examples of this phenomenon. Marcus and Fischer identify two general forms of cultural critique: epistemological critique of analytical reason and empirical critique of institutions, etc.

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24 For example, in *The Mirror of Herodotus: The Representation of the Other in the Writing of History*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), xxiii, François Hartog argues that "... Herodotus's mirror is also held up to the Greeks themselves." Thus Herodotus provided a mirror which reflected representations about an Other (the Scythians) and at the same time reflected images about the Greeks. (See ibid., 10-11).


26 See Marcus and Fischer, op. cit., 114.
In the twentieth century, social scientists have amalgamated these two types of critique into one. In anthropology, at least, such critique has often taken the form of problematizing Western society by juxtaposing it against a non-Western Other. Sometimes the critique takes the form of "romanticizing" the Other, sometimes it works from a negative standpoint. Either way, Marcus and Fischer argue, these critiques do not take into account the problems of appropriating Otherness to a quite different location. In the nineteenth century, cultural critique was an important element in the attempts to constitute the comparative method (and social science generally) as "scientific" and secular approaches. While some aspects of nineteenth century comparative method may have been an advance on the more glaringly racist approaches of earlier research methodologies, it still relied on evolutionary premises and ideas of a "civilizing process". Many of the twentieth century attempts to employ cultural critique as part of the comparative method still retain this evolutionary character despite the inherent problem of critiquing an "advanced" society by comparison with a "less advanced" one.  

As Marcus and Fischer contend:

Despite the examples drawn from other societies to critique aspects of these most modern societies, such critique remains ad hoc, fragmentary, and nostalgic; the subliminal message tends to be affirming of the basic superiority of modern European or American society.  

The evolutionist approach remains an inherent aspect of much contemporary comparative research and can be seen in the use of such terms as "progress", "modern", "tradition", etc.  

In contemporary comparative analysis, one can see the way in which "civil society" is

27 See ibid., 128-129.

28 Ibid., 129.

29 See ibid.
deployed as a figurative mirror in the study of contemporary "Other" societies, in order to not only examine a variety of changes which are perceived to be taking place in those societies, but also to throw some light on the condition of Western society itself. This illumination of the state of the West is not necessarily a conscious part of a comparativist’s research agenda but it is often a significant by-product of the comparative enterprise and provides a confirmation, at the very least, of the researcher’s assumptions about the process of comparison, the canons of Western knowledge on which these are based, and the nature of "civil society" in the West.³⁰

This brief discussion of the mirror metaphor in Western philosophy, its reinscription in contemporary Western social and political theory, and of the way in which "civil society" is deployed as a mirroring construction in the study of "Other" societies, establishes the horizons within which the issues I deal with in this study emerge. Before turning to those questions, however, I need to problematize the notions of "West" and "Western" which I used in that discussion. Stuart Hall claims that the question "where and what is 'the West'?") has been problematic at least since the fifteenth century when Columbus sailed "west" and insisted the New World he "discovered" was the mythical "East" he had been looking for. This problem of the identity of the West, he continues, still exists today. Further, "our ideas of 'East' and 'West' have never been free of myth and fantasy, and even to this day they are not primarily ideas about place and geography."³¹

The terms "West" and "western" are used today in a variety of senses. Although they

³⁰See ibid., 111. Marcus and Fischer suggest that cultural critique is often a hidden or marginal agenda of ethnographers.

appear to refer to locations or geographies, they are also used to describe kinds of society and levels of socio-economic development. While the notion of the "West" seems to have arisen initially in relation to western Europe, its contemporary meaning is no longer restricted to Europe and today parts of Europe are not included in the "West". Hence, since the World War II era, America has been included in the "West" and Eastern Europe has been left out. In more recent times, the "West" has taken on new meanings which equate it with a type of economy (capitalist) and level of development, enabling the inclusion of countries outside Europe or North America in the "West" (such as Japan). As Hall concludes, "Clearly, 'the West' is as much an idea as a fact of geography". Rather, "... 'the West' is a historical, not a geographical construct ... 'the West' is ... also an idea, a concept." Hall contends that as a concept or idea, 'the West' has four principal functions:

First, it allows us to characterize and classify societies into different categories - i.e. 'western' and 'non-western' ... Secondly, it is an image or set of images. It condenses a number of different characteristics into one picture ... it functions as a 'system of representation' ... Thirdly, it provides a standard or model of comparison. It allows us to compare to what extent different societies resemble, or differ from, one another ... It helps to explain difference ... Fourthly, it provides criteria of evaluation against which other societies are ranked ... it produces a certain kind of knowledge about a subject and certain attitudes towards it. Hall goes on to argue that it was this comparative function of the concept of the West that lead to the evolution of ideas of Western superiority and uniqueness. Thus, he claims that during the

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32 Ibid. See also Raymond Williams, Keywords, 2d ed. (London: Fontana, 1976), 333-334. As Hay points out, "Europe" was also more an idea than a geographical construct, see Denys Hay, Europe: The Emergence of an Idea (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1968).

33 Hall, ibid., 277.

34 Ibid.
Enlightenment these notions were "produced by Europe's contact and self-comparison with other, non-western, societies." Hence, "the difference of these other societies and cultures from the West was the standard against which the West's achievement was measured. It is within the context of these relationships that the idea of 'the West' took on shape and meaning".  

Consequently, the concept of the West was developed as part of a process of identity formation for those in "the West"; "the West's sense of itself - its identity was formed, not only by the internal processes that gradually moulded Western European countries into a distinct type of society, but also through Europe's sense of difference from other worlds - how it came to represent itself in relation to its 'others'".  

In using terms like "West" and "Western", processes of homogenization, simplification and essentialization are involved. This "makes the West appear unified and homogenous - essentially one place, with one view of other cultures ..."  

'The West' encompasses many variations over space and time both within and outside Europe, and within colonialism and imperialism beyond Europe. However, as Hall remarks, "simplification is precisely what this discourse itself does. It represents what are in fact very differentiated (the different European cultures) as homogeneous (the West). And it asserts that these different cultures are united by one thing: the fact that they are all different from ...[the non-West] ..."  

Why then use terms like 'West' and 'Western'? I suggest there are two reasons for doing  

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35 Ibid., 278.  
36 Ibid., 279.  
37 Ibid.  
38 Ibid., 280.
so. First, the four functions outlined by Hall that 'the West' as a concept performs, describe the processes involved in the constructions of difference used to present non-Western Others as mirror-images of Westerners in Western concepts of civil society. However, in the first part of this study I will use the terms "Europe" and "European" since, although the writers I discuss there use the "West" at times, it is clear that by this they mean (Western) Europe alone. In Part II, I use the terms "West" and "Western" to acknowledge the shift in spatial and temporal location of the authors discussed there and to recognize the broader sense in which they think of "the West".

A second reason for using terms like "the West" is that, if these terms are not used, there are problems in finding better alternatives. As Robert Young observes, "how do you posit an alternative without simply repeating the category in question or asserting a transhitorical essence that the representation travesties?" This points to a wider problem identified by Partha Chatterjee in relation to Western social science in general. As he puts it,

> it is in fact the very condition of our intellectual discourse - in the ways it is framed through disciplinary practices in the universities and in the international academic community - that forces us to speak in the language of European philosophy ... If we wish to do academic social philosophy, we cannot pretend to occupy an alternative subject-position merely by privileging the concepts of ... [non-Western] philosophy. Alternative subject-positions, if they are to emerge, must be fought for through contestations within the site of European philosophy by pushing its terms of debate beyond its own discursive boundaries.  

Chatterjee uses this strategy to contest the assumption that "only by extending and enriching ... [concepts of European social philosophy, like civil society] can one encapsulate non-European

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39 Young, op. cit., 128.

40 Partha Chatterjee, "A Response to Taylor's 'Modes of Civil Society'", Public Culture 3, no.1 (Fall 1990), 120.
processes as the particulars of a universal history whose theoretical subject is, and will always remain, Europe". In this study, I also want to raise and problematize the use of concepts of civil society in this manner by Western writers.

There are many definitions of civil society which vary over both time and space. Since there is no single accepted definition for this term and, since its meaning has changed significantly over time, I will not offer a single, definitive definition here. Rather, I will elucidate the different meanings of this term within the text itself and will examine the different definitions and meanings of "civil society" used by each of the writers I discuss. However, on a general level, there appear to be two broad strands of meaning discernible in discussions of civil society: civil society defined in relation to the state and comprising forms of association distinct from the state, and civil society defined in relation to notions of "civility" or "civilization". While both of these strands may be present in discussions of civil society, most work tends to focus on the first strand, namely, civil society as a realm of non-state associations. Although I will be concerned with both strands in this study, the second strand of meaning relating to notions of "civility", "civilization", etc. will be of particular importance.

Hence, as Bryan Turner has noted, while there is a large amount of literature on the concept of civil society, "the fact that it has been part of the Orientalist construct of East and West has been seriously neglected". In this study, I intend to address this lacuna in the literature by examining Western concepts of civil society and establishing the ways in which

41 Ibid.

these concepts are constructed through the deployment of a mirroring construction of non-Western Others. In so doing, I will not be following what Said calls an "encyclopedic narrative" approach. The literature on Western concepts of civil society is vast and it would be impossible within this project to consider all of it. Nor, would this be a productive approach since most works in the "encyclopedic narrative" genre tend toward descriptive narrative rather than analysis. Instead, I will try to make a more selective and strategic contribution. In so doing, however, I am aware that I am writing from within the Western political imaginary, that my own view is highly partial, and that my view is neither the only view nor a privileged one.

Before describing the structure of the thesis, I will outline one additional caveat. I do not deal with "theory" in a separate (initial) chapter as most studies of this kind would do, since I do not see theory as separate from, or as something that stands over (or looms over) the text. Instead, theory is woven into the text throughout this study and put to work there. Structurally, the thesis is divided into three parts. In Part I, I examine the work of three authors (Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel) who wrote during the Enlightenment or in its aftermath on civil society. I begin my analysis here because I suggest that both constructions of the concept of civil society and of non-Western Others were undergoing significant changes in this period leading eventually to a concept of civil society which took account of modern life and of what might be termed a "post-Enlightenment geographical imagination".

I move on in Part II to examine the work of three late twentieth-century social scientists (Shils, Gellner and Fukuyama), how they conceptualize civil society, and how they deploy mirroring constructions of non-Western Others. Further, I discuss continuities and disjunctures

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between these two groups of theorists to elucidate how twentieth-century work on civil society has been informed by the concept of civil society developed in the Enlightenment and its aftermath and how it has been informed by the post-Enlightenment geographical imagination in its construction of non-Western Others. In Part III, I discuss broad issues of comparison and representation in order to illuminate the works examined in Parts I and II.

Each Part is further subdivided into chapters. Part I consists of four chapters. In Chapter One, I establish a theoretical framework for the first Part of the thesis and provide a sketch of the eighteenth-century context in which the concept of civil society began to be constructed as distinct from the state. I canvass methodological questions concerning how to establish a starting point or point of departure for a study of this kind and theoretical approaches within which to enframe my project. Discussion of the eighteenth-century context focuses upon changes occurring in the social, economic and political spheres and on changes in European views of, and relationships to, non-European peoples. In Chapter Two, I outline the concept of civil society, the construction of alterity and the mirroring construction of non-European Others, in the seventeenth-century as a point of contrast with the way in which these matters are constructed by the theorists discussed in Chapters Three and Four. In Chapters Three and Four, I examine the work of Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel, their concepts of civil society and mirroring constructions of non-European Others, how they each contributed to the eventual conceptual separation of civil society from the state, and their contributions to the post-Enlightenment geographical imagination.

Part II is divided into two chapters. In Chapter Five, I continue to use the theoretical framework discussed in Chapter One and add a further theoretical dimension in order to examine
the continuities and points of disjuncture in ideas brought about by temporal and spatial displacements such as those between the theorists examined in Parts I and II of this study. This is provided through a critical interrogation of Edward Said's notion of "travelling theory". This enables analysis of how, and with what effects, ideas or theories move across time and space. To this end, I provide a critical exegesis of Hegel's legacy for Western social and political theory which then is examined in relation to the work of three twentieth-century theorists in the next chapter. In Chapter Six, I outline the theories of civil society and constructions of non-Western Others of Shils, Gellner and Fukuyama and discuss how their work is informed by the post-Enlightenment geographical imagination and concept of civil society. Points of continuity and disjuncture between the writers in Parts I and II are considered under two broad headings - the use of a universal historical narrative and the construction of a complementary opposite or Other.

Part III consists of one chapter. In chapter Seven, I examine the wider context within which discussion in Parts I and II occurs and consider notions of comparison and the representational practices they authorize. In addition, I analyze how conceptions of alterity in Western philosophy are connected to ideas of comparison and how the concept of translation is imbricated in questions of comparison and comparative method. In the Conclusion, I draw together the strands of analysis running through the thesis, outline the findings of the study, and identify further matters for future investigation.
PART I

EUROPE'S OTHERS: NATIVES IN THE LOOKING GLASS
CHAPTER ONE

THE HISTORY OF CONCEPTS

The Orient is not only adjacent to Europe; it is also the place of Europe's greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other. In addition, the Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience. Yet none of this Orient is merely imaginative. The Orient is an integral part of European material civilization.

Edward W. Said, Orientalism.

They cannot represent themselves; they must be represented.

Karl Marx, The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte.

Introduction

In this chapter my task is to establish a theoretical framework for Part I of the thesis and to provide a broad account of the eighteenth-century context in which the concept of civil society began to be constructed as separate from the state. The chapter is divided into four sections. In the first section I review Edward Said's discussion of the methodological question of "beginnings" and the issues that arise regarding how to establish a starting point or point of departure in a project such as mine. In the second section I examine Georges Canguilhem's history of concepts approach and Michel Foucault's archaeological method and adopt them as a theoretical framework for this study. In the third section I outline briefly the eighteenth-century context in which a new concept of civil society was beginning to be constructed and highlight the significant changes that were taking place in the economic, social and political spheres. In the fourth and final section of the chapter, I continue my examination of the eighteenth-century context through a brief discussion of the changes in European views of, and relationships to,
non-European peoples. In particular, I spotlight the impact of the Pacific voyages on those attitudes and relationships along with changes taking place in representational practices and theories of knowledge. With a theoretical framework and a backdrop of the eighteenth-century context in place, I then move in Chapter Two to outline the concept of civil society, the figuring of difference and the mirroring construction of the non-European Other in the seventeenth century. In Chapters Three and Four I show how these differ from, and form a point of disjunctive with, the concept of civil society and the figuration of difference developing from the eighteenth century as evidenced in the work of Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel.

Beginnings

In the introduction to Orientalism, Edward Said discusses the significance of establishing a starting point for projects in the human sciences. He suggests that "...there is no such thing as a merely given, or simply available, starting point: beginnings have to be made for each project in such a way as to enable what follows from them."1 Establishing a beginning involves carving out from the full volume of available material something that can be "...separated from the mass, and made to stand for, as well as be, a starting point, a beginning..."2 In a project such as the study of Orientalism, Said continues, one is faced with the additional problem of deciding which "texts, authors, and periods" are appropriate for the work at hand.3

I should make it clear that my citation of Said here is not intended to privilege him or to

2 Ibid.
3 Ibid.
ignore critical approaches to the question of "origins". Nor, do I intend to conflate critiques of "origins" with the discussion of "beginnings" which Said puts forward, since they deal with somewhat different concerns. For example, both Foucault and Derrida have problematized the notion of an "origin". Foucault examines "the retreat and return of the origin" as an element of the analytic of finitude (man's finite limitations). He states that "it is always against a background of the already begun that man is able to reflect on what may serve for him as origin."\(^4\) Man is "... 'always already' in the world, in language, in society, and in nature."\(^5\) But this retreat from the origin is not insurmountable. The origin is recuperated through the notion that "... man always already has a history precisely insofar as his social practices enable him to organize all events, including events in his own culture, historically."\(^6\) However, although the origin is recuperated in this manner, it retreats again as man is unable to "reflect on what these practices are precisely because they are too near to him and thus too encompassing."\(^7\) Hence, "the origin or basis of man's history cannot be some empirical event in the past which is its beginning, nor an empty temporal field, nor an 'original' event ..."\(^8\)

Derrida is also suspicious of the search for an origin and presents a "critique of the classical concept of origin as a point of presence and simplicity to which reflection tries to return

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\(^6\) Ibid.

\(^7\) Ibid., 39.

\(^8\) Ibid., 40.
as to an ultimate ground from which everything else can be deduced."9 Instead, Derrida seeks to pluralize the origin by showing that "the origin is characterized by a certain heterogeneity."10

Hence, both Foucault's and Derrida's critiques of origins are somewhat different projects from Said's. They are concerned with theoretical, epistemological questions while Said's discussion of beginnings deals instead with methodological questions and "the methodological importance for work in the human sciences of finding and formulating a first step, a point of departure, a beginning principle."11 So, rather than searching for the origin of the concept of civil society or the origin of the use of mirroring constructions of non-Western Others, my intent here is merely to raise the methodological question of where to begin my project. For me, Said provides a useful discussion of the issues which arise in relation to establishing a beginning and selecting texts for scrutiny.

So, where to begin? For this first part of the thesis, I have selected for analysis three authors (Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel) who wrote about civil society during the Enlightenment or its immediate aftermath. These choices may appear to be somewhat arbitrary. However they are intended to enable the analysis that follows, in that, when examined more closely within the same frame, they illuminate the way in which the Other was constructed during the Enlightenment and its aftermath (a mirrored construction) and the relationship of this figuring of difference to the way in which civil society was being reconstructed in this period. The Enlightenment was also the time when the features of the comparative method (and social


10 Ibid. I discuss Derrida's critique of origins in relation to Hegel in Chapter Seven, infra.

science generally) were being significantly developed. Consequently, the texts I have selected are meant to be exemplary, i.e., "made to stand for" what was happening generally in relation to my objects of examination in this period. However, the arguments for adopting such an approach need some elaboration both in respect of the method adopted and as to why I begin my analysis with the Enlightenment. Said suggests some initial guidelines as to method in relation to his own work which I think are helpful to raise and follow here.

In establishing the parameters of his study of Orientalism, Said rejects what he calls the "encyclopedic narrative" approach to the topic since material for such an approach would be unlimited and because others have already created encyclopedic works on the topic. This then, as Said points out, provides the would be critic with a different task. That said, however, one is still confronted with the daunting task of delimiting the copious body of potential material to a practical and workable size. Then comes the task of "...outlining something in the nature of an intellectual order within that group of texts without at the same time following a mindlessly chronological order." 13

Much of the contemporary work on civil society adopts, at least in part, the "encyclopedic narrative" approach and attempts to give the reader an account of the uses of the term "civil society" from the Greek polis to contemporary Eastern Europe. While this approach seeks to outline the broad changes in meaning of the term throughout its history and illustrates these by reference to exemplary texts, it often does not lend itself to much specific critical reflection on the concept itself. Rather, it tends to a descriptive narrative. The critical reflection

12 See ibid.

13 Ibid.
that does occur tends to be pitched at a high level of generality, attributing the same rationale for the concept of civil society in each historical period, e.g., opposition to the state. This is, for example, why Charles Taylor is critical of any work on civil society "which identifies it simply with the existence of autonomous associations free from state tutelage" since "it fails to do justice to the historical concept" which has many more varied and complex dimensions than mere opposition to the state.

Similarly, this type of analysis usually does not address fully the question of whether the concept is identical in each epoch and whether one is analyzing the same thing merely because it is called "civil society". For example, on the one hand, the term civil society has been used both in the sense of being coterminous with political society (i.e., the state) and with being separate from it. On the other hand, several authors have constructed concepts of civil society in the same way but have used different names for it. For these reasons, then, and since there are already more than enough encyclopedic works available, writing another would contribute little, if anything, to academic discourse. I, therefore, intend to adopt a different approach to the analysis of civil society as a mirroring device and hence a different critical task.

Once the encyclopedic narrative approach is rejected the assignment, as Said counsels, is to delimit an ensemble of texts for examination and to establish an intellectual order among them which is not unreflexively chronological. In his study of Orientalism, Said emphasizes the importance of analyzing the "authority" of Orientalism, in particular, what he calls a "strategic

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15 See Charles Taylor, "Modes of Civil Society," Public Culture 3, no.1 (Fall 1990), 111.
formation"; which is "... the relationship between texts and the way in which groups of texts, even textual genres, acquire mass, density, and referential power among themselves and thereafter in the [Western] culture at large."\(^{16}\) The analysis of such formations is not undertaken to find deep meanings in the texts themselves but is, rather, premised on the idea of the exteriority of the text to what it narrates. In this manner, the Orientalist "... makes the Orient speak, describes the Orient, renders its mysteries plain for and to the West."\(^{17}\) The exteriority of texts creates "representation"; the text does not render a "true" portrait of its object but rather a re-presentation of it. In so doing, "... these representations rely upon institutions, traditions, conventions, agreed-upon codes of understanding for their effects ..."\(^{18}\) This, and other notions of "representation" are critical to an understanding of how the concept of civil society is deployed as a mirroring device (which is why I devote a whole chapter to "representation" and "comparison" later in the present work).

The idea of a strategic formation, as outlined by Said, appears to bear some resemblance to Foucault's concept of a discursive formation and his approach to analysis might appear somewhat similar to Foucault's archaeological method. The relationship between Said and Foucault is both complex and contentious. Although Said, at the outset of Orientalism, notes his intellectual debt to Foucault for the notion of discourse (part of the archaeological method), he does not make uncritical use of it. Said is eager to distinguish himself from Foucault because he considers that Foucault disregards the influence of particular writers or texts in favour of "the

\(^{16}\) Said, op. cit., 20.

\(^{17}\) Ibid., 20-21.

\(^{18}\) Ibid., 22.
otherwise anonymous collective body of texts constituting a discursive formation like Orientalism". Instead, Said advocates a careful analysis of writers and texts to establish the relationship between them and the overall formation. Or, as Gary Gutting puts it, "Archaeology is an important alternative to standard history of ideas, with its emphasis on the theorizing of individual thinkers and concern with their influence on one another." However, Said's distinction is somewhat overstated as Foucault does examine specific texts when employing the archaeological method and relates them to the relevant episteme. For example, in The Order of Things, he discusses Descartes' Rules For the Direction of the Mind which he considers first expresses the new way of thinking of the Classical Age. In addition, Said's critics also find it difficult to reconcile his recuperation of liberal humanist values with his invocation of Foucault's antihumanism.

Said is also uncomfortable with other aspects of Foucault's work. In later works, he is more critical of Foucault's analysis of power, especially its use outside the French context in which it was developed, which Said claims leads Foucault to draw universal conclusions on the basis of only French examples, and its conceptual expansion, which sees 'power' "... swallowing up every obstacle in its path (resistance to it, the class and economic bases that refresh and fuel it, the reserves it builds up)." Said views these both as instances of theory that "... travels too

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19 Ibid., 23.
far.\textsuperscript{23} In another register, however, Said criticises Foucault for being too limited in his work. He argues that Foucault's "Eurocentrism was almost total, as if history itself took place only among a group of French and German thinkers."\textsuperscript{24} In addition, Said contends, Foucault did not take account of the imperial project: "He seems unaware of the extent to which the ideas of discourse and discipline are assertively European and how ... discipline was used also to administer, study, and reconstruct - then subsequently to occupy, rule, and exploit - almost the whole of the non-European world."\textsuperscript{25}

However, Said has also been critiqued for his use of Foucault's notion of discourse. To this end, Lisa Lowe has criticized Said for "... totalizing orientalism as a monolithic, developmental discourse that uniformly constructs the Orient as the Other of the Occident."\textsuperscript{26} In contrast, she claims, "Foucault emphasizes that neither the conditions of discursive formation nor the objects of knowledge are identical, static, or continuous through time. In this way he seeks to avoid some of the overdetermining idealities of traditional historical study, with its desire for origins, unified developments, and causes and effects."\textsuperscript{27}

Consequently, while Said employs some of Foucault's concepts (like discourse) in his


\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., 6.
work, this is done neither uncritically nor unproblematically. Foucault's archaeological method is, I think, different in emphasis from Said's analysis of strategic formations and requires some further explanation since it is to Foucault's archaeological method and to its antecedent, Canguilhem's "history of concepts", that I look for an alternative approach to an analysis of the concept of civil society in the Enlightenment and its aftermath.

The History of Concepts and the Archaeological Method

A large proportion of Foucault's work may be classified under the rubric of the "history of concepts", an approach to the history of science developed by Georges Canguilhem. Indeed, Gary Gutting argues that Foucault's archaeological method may be understood as an expansion and reworking of Canguilhem's approach. 28 The archaeological method is one of the tools Foucault developed to enable him to undertake what he came to call "histories of the present", which involve his attempt "to use an understanding of the past to understand something that is intolerable in the present." 29 Archaeological analysis also plays a role in the genealogical method Foucault subsequently developed as another means to tackle histories of the present.

Foucault's two principal works concerning the archaeological method are The Archaeology of Knowledge and The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences. It is to these two works that Gutting primarily refers in constructing his account of Foucault's

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29 Gutting, "Introduction ...", op. cit., 10.
method. While Foucault’s archaeological method may appear to be confined to these works and his later work to signal a departure therefrom, Gutting contends that his archaeology underwrites a much more extensive and comprehensive project; genealogy. The genealogical method continues to use archaeology since "archaeology remains needed to describe the fields of practice (both discursive and nondiscursive) in which genealogical causes operate ... [they] ... are complementary instruments towards Foucault’s goal of uncovering the controlling structures that operate below the level of human subjectivity."30

To begin to understand what Canguilhem meant by a history of concepts it is useful to contrast his approach with those of the history of terms, of phenomena and of theories. The history of terms focuses on correspondence in the terms utilized by scientists in different epochs and bypasses the need for the critical interrogation of whether they actually perceived the subject matter in the same way. The history of phenomena seeks to uncover who first discovered a particular phenomenon but ignores the more important question of how that discovery was interpreted.31 However, it is in contrast to the history of theories that the history of concepts becomes most clearly delineated.

To grasp the essence of Canguilhem’s approach, Gutting proposes that, in contradistinction to Anglo-American approaches to the history of science, it is necessary to draw a contrast between theory and interpretation. The Anglo-American approach "... assumes that the interpretation of data is a matter of reading them in terms of a theory; that is, in terms of a


31 See Gutting, Michel Foucault’s Archaeology, op. cit., 32-33.
A concept provides us with the initial understanding of a phenomenon that allows us to formulate in a scientifically useful way the question of how to explain it. Theories provide a variety of (often competing) ways of answering the explanatory question. 

The same concept may be explained by several different theories; this is what Canguilhem describes as concepts being "theoretically polyvalent". Canguilhem can, therefore, compose histories which trace the generation and metamorphosis of concepts which work on a separate and more basic plane than histories of the evolution of theories. 

One major advantage of this approach is that it removes the need to discover the "precursors" of important scientific advances. Canguilhem contends that the identification of a precursor is often rooted in the inability to appreciate basic conceptual distinctions which subtend explanations which cosmetically appear to be alike. As Canguilhem observes, except where it has been:

... explicitly established that two researchers are asking the same question and have the same research goal, that their guiding concepts have the same signification and draw their meaning from the same system of concepts it is

32 Ibid., 33.
33 Ibid., 34.
34 Ibid., 34.
35 See ibid.
36 See ibid., 39.
artificial, arbitrary, and inadequate ... to say that two scientific authors stand in a logical relation of beginning to completion or of anticipation to realization.\(^3\)

However, Canguilhem does not discount the effect prior works may have on their successors. His approach stresses the importance of acknowledging the existence of continuities as well as points of disjuncture when writing histories of science.\(^3\)

As Gutting argues, Foucault's archaeological method draws upon Canguilhem's history of concepts and Foucault follows his accentuation of concepts rather than theories and stresses the futility of the search for "precursors". However, he did not simply mechanically copy Canguilhem's approach but, instead, reworked and expanded it to suit his own purposes.\(^3\)

While Canguilhem's analysis is concerned for the most part with medicine and biology, Foucault applies the history of concepts to the social sciences. Further, Canguilhem sees concepts as coinciding with disciplines and therefore their history is inscribed within the pertinent discipline. However, in *The Order of Things*, Foucault expands the use of the history of concepts from disciplines to an interdisciplinary focus. This enables him to show conceptual similarities across different disciplines in the same historical era.\(^4\) In addition, he argues that underlying concepts such as representation, resemblance and man, which are the "conditions of possibility" for conceiving first-order concepts, infuse every discipline in a particular epoch. First-order concepts are the concepts employed by those working in specific disciplines, e.g., the reflex was a first-order concept used by biologists. Hence, Foucault shows how first-order concepts are rooted in

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\(^3\) Quoted ibid.

\(^3\) See ibid., 40.

\(^3\) See ibid., 54.

\(^4\) See Gutting, "Introduction ...", op. cit., 9.
more universal formulations of representation.  

This, in turn, directs him to the idea of "an episteme as the system of concepts that defines knowledge for a given intellectual era." An episteme may be defined as "a conceptual grid that provides conceptions of order, sign and language that allow a series of discursive practices to qualify as 'knowledge'". Each episteme is characterized by a particular manner of thinking which differs from both prior and future systems of thought and, thus, signifies a decisive point of rupture. While other approaches to the history of ideas attempt to find precursors, the notion of epistemes opposes this. Many of Foucault's critics find the idea of epistemes to be totalizing and to imply a trans-discursive coherence. While it is true that Foucault tends to overstate the scope and coherence of epistemes (e.g., "in any given culture and at any given moment, there is always only one episteme that defines the conditions of possibility of all knowledge ..."), this does not mean that his work can simply be dismissed or rejected. Rather, as Gutting observes, "the value of sweeping historical constructions such as Foucault's is precisely as sources of fruitful suggestions rather than as ultimately accurate generalizations." Like Gutting, I find Foucault's archaeological work helpful for "its ability to stimulate a fruitful  

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41 See Gutting, *Michel Foucault's Archaeology*, op. cit., 219.

42 Gutting, "Introduction ...", 9.


44 See Gutting, *Michel Foucault's Archaeology*, op. cit., 176-179.


46 Gutting, *Michel Foucault's Archaeology*, op. cit., 179.
process of criticism and reconstruction," rather than for its overstated universal claims concerning epistemes.

Foucault's expansion of the history of concepts shifts it to a new plane which does not compel the definition of a discipline on its own level. His archaeological approach enables the analysis of the "intellectual subconscious" of disciplines. Rather than focusing on the ideas of particular authors and their interrelationship, archaeology emphasizes that particular works evolve in a universe organized and regulated by rules. Cognitively mapping the dimensions of this universe is the task of archaeology. Hence, archaeology is "... concerned only with the conceptual structures subtending reality." Gutting, following Foucault, suggests that "the history of concepts is most appropriate for disciplines well past the 'threshold of scientificity' and so is particularly prominent in ... [Foucault's] ... treatment of the social sciences and their predecessors."

Nevertheless, archaeology should not be seen as a total replacement for other historical methods. Rather, Gutting advises that it should be viewed as a "corrective" to the more common approaches to historiography: its strength is "... what it finds in the conceptual structures that lie beneath and outside the consciousness of individual subjects."

When talking about the purpose of his work, in a 1976 interview, Foucault stated that his

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47 Ibid.

48 See Gutting, "Introduction ...", 9-10.

49 Ibid., 12.


51 Ibid., 14.
books "... function as invitations, as public gestures, for those who may want eventually to do the same thing, or something like it, or, in any case, who intend to slip into this kind of experience." In the spirit of this invitation, I want to try to write a history of the concept of civil society in the Enlightenment and its aftermath and provide an archaeological analysis of the "conditions of possibility" for conceiving the concept in this period.

Polyvalence, the Enlightenment, and Civil Society

Civil society is "theoretically polyvalent" in the sense that Canguilhem uses this phrase: writers may produce different theories to account for the same concept. A history of concepts avoids the need to search for "precursors" for the way in which the concept was constructed in this period. Hence, it avoids the danger of comparing concepts which appear to be cosmetically similar but which are, in fact, conceptually distinct. In other words, it is important to be clear that one is dealing with the same concept and only different explanatory theories for it. This approach also avoids the problem of mistaking the disagreements between theorists, who propose different theories to explain the same concept, for fundamental conceptual shifts. Foucault cautions against these dangers when he questions the contemporary adoption of the term "civil society" to explain events in the late twentieth century:

Although this opposition between civil society and the state may quite rightly have

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52 Michel Foucault, Remarks on Marx (New York: Semiotext(e), 1991) 40.

53 For example, in The Order of Things, Foucault considers the disputes between the Physiocrats and the Utilitarians about the nature of wealth occurred within a common framework of thinking about wealth rather than being the sharp disjuncture in thought that traditional historical works would suggest: see Gutting, Michel Foucault’s Archaeology, op. cit., 170-172.
been greatly used in the late eighteenth and in the nineteenth century, I'm not at all sure that it is still operational ... In fact, the notion of an opposition between civil society and state was formulated in a given context and with a particular intention: liberal economists proposed it in the late eighteenth century with a view to limiting the state’s sphere of action, civil society being conceived as the locus of an autonomous economic process. It was a quasi-polemical concept, opposed to the administrative power of the states at the time, in order to bring victory to a certain liberalism.  

As Foucault points out, the development of the concept of civil society as separate from the state arose in a specific context; eighteenth-century Europe. In order to argue this new concept of civil society (expressed from anticipation to realization in the work of Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel) began to develop in the eighteenth century and that this represented a significant break or rupture with earlier formulations it is helpful to briefly consider the broader context in which this conceptual shift was taking place.

There has been much debate from the eighteenth century onward about how best to define the Enlightenment. Dorinda Outram notes that until recently, historians tended to speak of the Enlightenment, seeing it as single entity expressed in the alleged homogeneity of ideas of selected canonical authors (i.e., white, European males). Historians such as Ernst Cassirer and Peter Gay followed this approach in their works on the Enlightenment. However, in the last twenty years or so, a new approach to the question of defining the Enlightenment has emerged. This involves

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seeing "... the Enlightenment as a series of debates, which necessarily took different shapes and forms in particular national and cultural contexts ..."55 Porter and Teich’s edited volume, The Enlightenment in National Context, for example, follows this approach.56

Outram considers viewing the Enlightenment as a series of debates to be a better approach than seeing it as a homogeneous, monolithic entity. This is because it enables a more nuanced discussion of the Enlightenment which takes into consideration differences between national contexts. She approaches "... the Enlightenment as a series of problems and debates, of ‘flashpoints’, characteristic of the eighteenth century, or of ‘pockets’ where projects of intellectual expansion impacted upon and changed the nature of developments in society and government on a world-wide basis."57 Thus the Enlightenment is seen as a succession of discussions which varied in content and casting in different geographic and cultural locations.58 In this manner, the Enlightenment may be surveyed most usefully as:

... a capsule containing sets of debates, stresses and concerns, which however differently formulated or responded to, do appear to be characteristic of the way in which ideas, opinions and social and political structures interacted and changed in the eighteenth century.59

This approach will be followed here so as to highlight some of the issues and concerns raised in this period which are relevant to the way in which the concept of civil society was constructed

57 Outram, op. cit, 3.
58 See ibid.
59 Ibid., 12.
and in which alterity was cast by Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel.

In the eighteenth century Europe underwent profound political and social change. The population increased markedly, urbanization escalated and communications networks expanded. It was also a period of significant economic change both in terms of the size, nature and complexity of the economy. Europe experienced the onset of large-scale industrialization with mechanized production in factories instead of small-scale production by craftsmen. The establishment of a division of labour in factory production facilitated increased production of cheaper consumer goods which in turn led to increased profits. Such fundamental economic change was concomitant with a recasting of social and political relationships "... between social classes ... between states and societies, monarchies and social classes". Indeed, the whole concept of "society" was undergoing a profound shift in meaning in the eighteenth century because of the type of social transformation outlined above. This can be seen clearly if one looks at the etymology of the term "society".

In Keywords, Raymond Williams outlines the history of the concept of "society" in European thought. He argues that "society" today has two principal meanings: "as our most general term for the body of institutions and relationships within which a relatively large group

60 The examination of these changes which follows is based on Outram's account, ibid., 15-17.

61 Ibid., 30.

of people live; and as our most abstract term for the condition in which such institutions and relationships are formed. "Society" is derived from the Latin root, *socius* (companion). Its initial meanings were confined to ideas of companionship, fellowship, and association. The general sense of "society" developed from the mid-sixteenth century. Williams asserts that the passage to the modern idea of "abstract and more impersonal laws which determine social institutions" may be illustrated best by juxtaposing "society" to the "state". He contends that until the eighteenth century, "state" and "society" were not always clearly, separately, well-defined, but that what developed:

... was eventually a distinction between society and state: the former an association of free men (sic.), drawing on the early active senses; the latter an organization of power drawing on the senses of hierarchy and majesty. The crucial notion of civil society ... was an alternative definition of social order, and it was in thinking through the general questions of this new order that society was confirmed in its most general and eventually abstract senses.

The definitive shift in meaning thus occurred in the eighteenth century. Williams illustrates this by examining Hume’s *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* (1751) where "society" is used to mean "system of common life" more than four times as often than as to mean "company of his fellows".

The profound alterations that were occurring in the nature of society, and in particular the uneasiness with which changes in class relations were greeted, can be seen clearly in Montesquieu’s works, *Persian Letters* and *The Spirit of the Laws*, where he is especially

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63 Williams, ibid., 243.
64 Ibid., 244-245.
65 Ibid., 245.
66 See ibid., 245.
concerned with the role of the nobility in the face of the rise of a bourgeois class. The bourgeois or burgher was also of particular interest to Hegel in the construction of his theory of civil society.

These economic and social transformations also were concomitant with changes occurring in political arrangements in the eighteenth century. Foucault traced the effects on the century's political arrangements in his lectures on "governmentality".  

Colin Gordon asserts that while classical philosophy focuses on questions of obedience and sovereignty in trying to establish the theoretical underpinnings of the 'best' government, "governmentality" is concerned with questions of how to govern which are conditioned by "immanent conditions and constraints of practices." Foucault does not think these classical political questions are unimportant but, rather, that they do not help to establish how power is really deployed in a system of government. He centres his analysis on 'modern governmental rationalities' and commences his investigation in the sixteenth century with the evolution of ideas of raison d'État which signify the beginning of 'modern governmentality' "... as an autonomous rationality." As Gordon contends, reason of state means that "to know how to govern, one

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67 The account that follows is drawn primarily from Colin Gordon, "Governmental Rationality: An Introduction" and Graham Burchell, "Peculiar Interests: Civil Society and Governing 'the System of Natural Liberty'" in The Foucault Effect, ed. Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991), 1-51 and 119-150. I have relied on these works rather than on Foucault directly since most of Foucault's work on 'governmentality' is in the form of untranslated or unpublished lectures. Although, some of his lectures have recently been published in French, they are still unavailable in English: see Michel Foucault, Dits et Écrits: 1954-1988, 4 vols. (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1994).

68 Gordon, ibid., 7.

69 See ibid.

70 Ibid., 9.
must know the state and the secret springs of its interests ...”71 For Foucault, the object of reason of state is the state (not a ruler) and "government in accordance with the state’s strength".72 This is opposed to the Machiavellian approach which focused on the more limited task of perpetuating a ruler’s sovereignty.

The Machiavellian approach was transcended by the development in Germany of Cameralism or the ‘science of police’ (which today would probably be called "public administration") with its aim of increasing ‘the state’s strength’. Police science endeavoured to collect as much knowledge as possible concerning the government of the state. This hinged on the study of the ‘population’ which was considered the basis of the state’s strength.73 Cameralism involved incessant and minutely figured control of the population and meant that it was difficult to distinguish between the state and the ‘whole body of society’. This was the case in particular in respect of the economy since police science was:

... in conjunction with the allied knowledge of mercantilism and political arithmetic, the first modern system of economic sovereignty, of government understood as an economy. The economy emerges here ... as a specific, but not yet (as for liberalism) an autonomous form of rationality. The economy of a functioning whole is a machine which has to be continuously made, and not merely operated, by government. This governmental theme of economy retains here from the ancient context of the oikos all its implications of possession, domestication and controlling action.74

In police science, government not only regulated the economy but produced the space in which economic relations took place. As Foucault argues, Cameralism was a government ‘of all and

71 Ibid.
72 Foucault, quoted ibid.
73 See ibid., 10.
74 Ibid., 11.
of each'; the state was concerned with individuals and their welfare as productive units which contribute to the state's strength.\textsuperscript{75} To effect this type of government the state regulated, ordered, and controlled most aspects of life. This kind of governmental rationality was expressed in Hobbes' dictum that "Man is not fitted for society by nature, but by discipline."\textsuperscript{76} The level of state intervention was reflected in the lack of a clear distinction between civil society and the state.

Foucault identifies a major shift in governmentality during the eighteenth century with the advent of liberalism. A pivotal work in this process is Adam Smith's \textit{The Wealth of Nations}.\textsuperscript{77} Foucault discusses Smith's contribution to this shift in \textit{The Order of Things}. He contends that:

\begin{quote}
In relation to that of his predecessors, Adam Smith's analysis represents an essential hiatus: it distinguishes between the reason for exchange and the measurement of that which is exchangeable ... he formulates a principle of order that is irreducible to the analysis of representation: he unearths labour ... As for the fecundity of labour, it is not so much due to personal ability or to calculations of self-interest; it is based upon conditions that are also exterior to its representation: industrial progress, growing division of tasks, accumulation of capital, division of productive labour and non-productive labour ...\textsuperscript{78}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{75} See Michel Foucault, "Omnes et Singulatim: Towards a Criticism of 'Political Reason'," in \textit{The Tanner Lectures on Human Values}, vol.II, ed. Sterling M. McMurrin (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1981), 245.

\textsuperscript{76} Thomas Hobbes, \textit{De Cive}, 1.1., quoted in Gordon, op. cit., 14.

\textsuperscript{77} Susan Buck-Morss asserts that Hegel's concept of civil society "is precisely the society created by what Smith called political economy," see her "Envisioning Capital: Political Economy on Display," \textit{Critical Inquiry} 21, no.2 (Winter, 1995), 475. I discuss Buck-Morss' article and Hegel's relationship to political economy, especially the political economists and moral philosophers of the Scottish Enlightenment like Adam Ferguson, in more detail in Chapter Four, infra.

\textsuperscript{78} Foucault, \textit{The Order of Things}, op. cit., 224-225.
Thus Foucault sees *The Wealth of Nations* "... as effecting not only a transformation in political and economic thinking but also a transformation in the relationship between knowledge and government."

Smith's idea of the 'invisible' hand is critical here. Since economic mechanisms work invisibly the government is unable to observe and regulate them and is, therefore, limited in its ability to act. This is opposed to the preceding formulation of the Physiocrats who argued that a ruler might "... permit economic subjects freedom of action just because ... the sovereign can still know what is happening in the economy, and how." Liberalism breaks with Cameralist notions of order as visible and representable. Rather, the workings of mechanisms of population are considered to be impenetrable and autonomous. In "Envisioning Capital: Political Economy on Display", Susan Buck-Morss disagrees with this analysis, claiming that "Smith's economic theory would have had no conviction if one could not see the effects of the processes it described", hence, the notion of *envisioning* capital. She argues that changes in the methods of visual representation, which occurred at the same time that Smith wrote, "made it possible to chart the effects of the invisible hand".

Buck-Morss claims that "Foucault praises the invisibility of Smith's hand because it does not allow the sovereign sufficient knowledge to control the social field of individual desire ..." and criticises "Foucault's affirmation of the incapacity to envision the economy ...". However,

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79 Gordon, ibid., 14.

80 Ibid., 15.


82 Ibid., 466.
this seems to me to attribute judgements and motivations to Foucault which he may not have had. In Gordon’s account of Foucault’s lectures on governmentality, Foucault appears to me to be attempting to describe liberal notions of economics and the relationship between knowledge and government they authorize, rather than passing judgement on whether these were positive or negative.\(^{83}\)

To continue with Foucault’s account, despite the (alleged) invisibility of economic processes and the mechanisms of population, liberals are still concerned with the necessity of controlling, of governing, the population, and this is expressed in the idea of ‘security’ as the principal element in liberal governmental rationality. Gordon contends that:

Foucault locates a major source of what is specific and original in the liberal treatment of population - and hence security - in a discovery of British empirical philosophy, that of economic man as a subject of interest, a subject of individual preferences and choices which are both irreducible ... and non-transferable... Political economy and Smith’s conception of an ‘invisible hand’ characterize the private determination of individual interests and their effective harmonization within society ... [which are] incapable in principle of becoming accessible to the totalizing scrutiny of subject or sovereign.\(^{84}\)

Liberalism is therefore, faced with a new assignment; the reformulation of the parameters of the realm of government. What liberalism attempts, then, is:

... the construction of a complex domain of governmentality, within which economic and juridical subjectivity can alike be situated as relative moments,

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\(^{83}\) Buck-Morss, at times, attributes Gordon’s words to Foucault, for example, when she states that "Foucault, in his late lectures, addressed The Wealth of Nations directly, speaking positively of the ‘benign opacity’ of the economic system ..." (see ibid., 450) In fact, the term ‘benign opacity,’ which appears in Buck-Morss’ account to be a quotation from Foucault, is Gordon’s phrase ("Foucault notes that this thesis of the benign opacity of economic processes ...", see Gordon, op. cit., 15). This ‘thesis’ is not Foucault’s but Adam Smith’s idea of the invisible hand; it was Smith who thought it was benign, not Foucault.

\(^{84}\) Gordon, op.cit., 21.
partial aspects of a more englobing element. The key role which it comes to play in this effort of construction and invention is, for Foucault, the characteristic trait of the liberal theory of civil society.\textsuperscript{85}

As Gordon contends, prior to the eighteenth century, civil society was used to describe juridical or political society. However, during the Enlightenment the meaning of civil society changed. Foucault considers that this change can best be observed in Ferguson's \textit{Essay on the History of Civil Society}. He considers that Ferguson broadens Smith's idea of individual 'economic interest' as the driving force of economic growth to encompass the establishment of society in general.\textsuperscript{86} Society is constituted and reconstituted through the free-play of economic against non-economic interests, and "the activity of government, as an organic component of the evolving social bond, participates in this historic passage through a range of distinct, consecutive social forms."\textsuperscript{87} Hence, civil society is seen as part of (or a tool of) a 'technology of government'. Foucault perceives civil society to be inhabited by \textit{homo economicus} (the 'man of interest') and, therefore, "... civil society is the concrete ensemble within which these abstract points, economic men, need to be positioned in order to be made adequately manageable."\textsuperscript{88} In Gordon's summation: "Adam Ferguson's notion of civil society can be read ... as being concerned with the task of inventing a wider political framework than that of the juridical society of contract, capable of encompassing individual economic agency within a governable order."\textsuperscript{89} Hence, the far reaching

\textsuperscript{85} Ibid., 22.
\textsuperscript{86} See ibid., 22.
\textsuperscript{87} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{88} Foucault, quoted ibid., 23.
\textsuperscript{89} Ibid., 37.
socio-economic changes of the eighteenth century were accompanied by alterations in the 'technology of government' and changes in the concept of civil society and its role as part of the emerging liberal method of 'governmentality'.

Colonialism, 'Civilization' and Europe's Others

The conceptual shift in the meaning of civil society that began to take place in the eighteenth century occurred at a time when European relationships to and, views of, non-European peoples and areas of the globe also changed. These shifting relationships were manifested in the way both Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment authors (like Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel) figured difference and in the mirrored constructions of non-European Others in their theories of civil society. The expansion of colonial empires and the debates over the meaning of "civilization" and "civility" which occurred during the Enlightenment were of particular importance.

During the eighteenth century, colonies were extended (e.g., America and India) and areas of the globe that were hitherto unexplored by Europeans were mapped and claimed by Europe. As Outram explains, colonialism, the exploitation of nature and the exotic were bound together in the Enlightenment and "by confronting non-European lands and societies, Europeans ... also found themselves confronting the whole question of difference."90 This in turn raised the question of European identity. The way "Europe" was defined was changing markedly as it was no longer feasible to define "Europe" as opposed to its traditional "other" ("Islam") with the waning of Turkey and the rise of Russia as a European power. Self-definition in relation to the

90 Outram, op. cit., 63.
'exotic' natives of the South Pacific thus seemed a more fruitful avenue of inquiry.\(^{91}\)

While religion had provided an important driving force conditioning encounters with Others since the "discovery" of America, in the eighteenth century this was not an incentive for interaction. Outram argues that this caused a significant transformation in the questions raised in European minds by encounters with Others. Hence, prior to the eighteenth century, Europeans (especially the Catholics who 'discovered' the New World) were concerned with issues surrounding the human status of natives and whether they possessed souls. In contrast, "Eighteenth-century concerns focused on three major areas: the debate generated by the idea of a 'universal' human nature; the associated debate on the meaning of human history; and the debate generated over the worth and nature of 'civilisation'".\(^ {92}\)

Like the term "society", "civilization" was also undergoing significant alterations in meaning in the eighteenth century. Today, as Raymond Williams suggests, "civilization" is used to characterize "... an achieved state or condition of organized social life", however, "... it referred initially to a process ..."\(^ {93}\) The prior term "civilize", is derived from the Latin root, \(v\)iv\(i\)\(i\)\(l\)\(i\)s (of or belonging to citizens) and from the sixteenth century also denoted "orderly and educated".\(^ {94}\) The term "civil society" was used by Richard Hooker (1594) in conjunction with this sense of citizens living together in an orderly fashion: "Civil society doth more content the

\(^{91}\) See ibid., 64.

\(^{92}\) Ibid.

\(^{93}\) Williams, op. cit., 48.

\(^{94}\) Ibid.
nature of man than any private kind of solitary living". However, it was the related term of "civility", derived from *civilitas* (community), which in the eighteenth century led to progress in the creation of a term for "an ordered society". Williams shows that the term "civility" was frequently employed where now "civilization" would be used. At this point, the principal meaning of "civility" "... emphasized not so much a process as a state of social order and refinement, especially in conscious historical or cultural contrast with *barbarism*."

In the early eighteenth century, "civilization" was connected with the "refinement of manners" and during the Enlightenment, "civilization expressed this sense of historical process, but also celebrated the associated sense of modernity: an achieved condition of refinement and order." The term "polishing" is used at this time in relation to "manners" (for example, Ferguson uses it prominently in his *Essay*). Williams notes that in eighteenth-century French and English, the terms "polished" and "polite" are imbricated and share the same root. The association of "civilization" with "manners" continued into the nineteenth century but it was during this period that it fully developed its modern meaning.

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97 Williams, ibid., 49.

"Civilization" was an important concept in the shifting constructions of European identity in the Enlightenment. Hence, rather than seeing their identity as opposed to Muslims and other non-Christians as in the Renaissance, eighteenth-century Europeans constructed their identity in counterpoint to uncivilized peoples. McGrane contends that "it was in the Enlightenment, at this epistemological moment, that the European became civilized (and since then, on the most primitive level, the West’s self-understanding has been absolutely interwoven around its conception of itself as "civilized")." 99

However, "civilization" was not without its European (and non-European) critics. Debate concerning the merits of ‘Western civilization’ evolved primarily from the mid-eighteenth century onwards. Of particular importance were Rousseau’s works which questioned the benefits of Western civilization. He contrasted what he saw as the corrupted and alienated life of Europeans with the more natural, genuine lifestyle of ‘primitive societies’. 100 ‘Noble savages,’ because they existed in a more immediate relationship to nature, were figured as the antithesis of ‘civilized’ Europeans. This was because "peoples outside Europe, apart from the Chinese, were usually seen as not having ‘civilisations’ of their own, but as being to greater or lesser degree in contact with ‘nature’." 101 However, while Rousseau criticized Western civilization, he did not advocate a return to the lifestyle of primitive societies as a remedy for civilization’s

100 See Outram, op. cit., 66-67.
101 Ibid., 67.
These issues were accented by the voyages of Bougainville and Cook to the South Pacific. This switched the spotlight from Native Americans to Pacific islanders (particularly Tahitians) as exotic referents. The Pacific peoples were viewed by most eighteenth century authors in the way that Native Americans had been viewed, namely, as "... spy-glasses into the heroic phases of European culture, their simple, natural cultures replicating those of Greece and Rome in their earliest phases." In this manner, they were seen by Europeans "... as both the ultimate 'opposite' or 'other' to themselves and yet also as a replication of Europe's own origins." Outram contends that the parallels between natives and the ancient world occurred because of the conceptualization of history and society as morality. The ancient world was seen as epitomizing virtues like "civic spirit, self-control, self-sacrifice and stoicism". Consequently, "once even some of these characteristics could be identified by Europeans in the exotic peoples they encountered, it was very easy to conflate their distance in space from Europe with their distance in time from the classical world. By the end of the century, the exotic was both profoundly

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103 Ibid., 67. However, Bernard Smith suggests that the exposure of artists on the Pacific voyages to "the influence of scientists and naval officers trained in empirical habits of observation" resulted in "their mode of perception bec[oming] increasingly less dominated by neo-classical theories of art and increasingly more influenced by empirical habits of vision", see Bernard Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific 1768-1850: A Study in the History of Art and Ideas* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960), 3-4.

104 Outram, op. cit., 67.

105 See ibid., 68.
other, and yet intimately linked to European origins".  

Discourses of "civilization" produced contradictory images of others that were deployed concurrently. As Stuart Hall puts it, the uncivilized, non-European "... becomes defined as everything the West is not - its mirror image. It is represented as absolutely, essentially, different, other: the Other." Europeans then further divided the category of the "Other" into two: the noble and the ignoble. On the one hand, European civility was juxtaposed to the barbarity of non-European peoples. On the other, non-Europeans were represented as lacking European civility but as living innocent, peaceful lives in accordance with nature.

In the eighteenth century, natives were represented frequently as 'noble savages', depicted in the manner of Romans and Greeks, and imagined as living an idyllic life in utopian societies situated in harmony with nature. At the same time, however, they were also constructed as 'ignoble savages' - primitive, barbarous, rude, uncivilized. Hall contends that during the eighteenth this latter construction "... was becoming the vehicle for profound reflection in European intellectual circles on the nature of social development." This kind of reflection revolved around the following type of questions: "What had led the West to it is high point of refinement and civilization? Did the West evolve from the same simple beginnings as 'savage

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106 Ibid.
107 Stuart Hall, op. cit., 308.
108 See ibid.
109 See ibid., 310-311.
110 Ibid., 311.
society' or were there different paths to 'civilization'?"  

Underlying these kind of questions and many of the innovations in Enlightenment constructions of alterity, were shifts in the way knowledge and systems of representation were constructed. This was the case, in particular, with respect to 'science', which was called 'natural philosophy' at this time. Foucault considers that changes in this field were exemplary of what was happening to knowledge in general. "According to Foucault", Outram remarks, "taxonomy served during this period not only as the dominant impulse for the pursuit of natural history, but as the organising principle for all intellectual activity." This involved a transformation of representational practices in "natural historical discourse from static tabulation of the external similarities and differences of plants and animals to dynamic narration of the inner developmental and historical process of living beings." During the Enlightenment natural history was trying to break free of theology especially in relation to establishing causal relations in the natural order (i.e., instead of attributing everything to divine plan). The introduction of history into natural philosophy constituted a breakthrough in this regard. Dorinda Outram provides a more nuanced account of these claims. As she observes:

Between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries natural history underwent profound transformations. An overwhelming interest in evolving classification systems for specimens of plants and animals was slowly edged out, though never completely replaced, by investigation into aspects of the inward functioning of

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111 Ibid.

112 Outram, op. cit., 48.


114 See Outram, op. cit., 59.
their physiological systems. 'Natural history' itself slowly separated into separate subdisciplines such as physiology and palaeontology, each with their own methods, agendas, and subject-matter. At the same time, natural history began to separate from theology, especially in continental Europe, though at a slower pace than in Britain. By the early nineteenth century active men of science began to see natural history as distinct from attempts to argue from the nature of the created world to belief in and knowledge of a benevolent deity.115

However, Foucault's claims regarding natural history are somewhat contentious and far from universally accepted. Thus, as Nicholas Jardine and Emma Spary observe:

Where Foucault emphasized the temporal discontinuities of disciplines, others have attended rather to their spatial and social discontinuities, arguing for the importance of national styles, and of divergences between the metropolis and the provinces, between the elites and artisans, between authors and their publics, between men and women.116

However, while there is disagreement about what to emphasize regarding the changes taking place in the study of natural history in the eighteenth century, it seems clear that important transformations in representational practices occurred during that century.

These innovations in the study of natural history also helped to facilitate the development of social science and comparative method. Methods developed in the natural sciences (observation, description, classification, comparison) were applied to other peoples and cultures.117 The eighteenth century voyages to the South Pacific provided ample opportunities to put these methods into practice in relation to Pacific peoples. Bernard Smith notes through the

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117 However, it is also the case that methods moved in the opposite direction: see David Philip Miller, "Introduction," in Visions of Empire: Voyages, Botany, and Representations of Nature, ed. David Philip Miller and Peter Hanns Reill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 3.
Pacific voyages "the sciences of visible nature, geology, botany, zoology ... imposed their interests ..." upon other fields such as the visual arts and thus "in the end scientific method triumphed in the description both of nature and man."\textsuperscript{118} However, scientific explanation of human phenomena "... continued to be mediated by European conceptual categories and European ways of seeing."\textsuperscript{119} For example, Enlightenment ideas of "civility" and "civilization" informed comparative analysis of others and established a frame in which stadial theories of social development evolved. As Stuart Hall states, "in Enlightenment discourse, the West was the model, the prototype and the measure of social progress. It was Western progress, civilization, rationality and development that were celebrated. And yet, all this depended on the discursive figures of the 'noble and ignoble savage', and of 'rude and refined nations'..."\textsuperscript{120}

These then were the type of important social, economic and political changes which took place during the Enlightenment and underscored the alterations in modes of representation and the production of knowledge during this period. They provide keys to understanding the "intellectual subconscious" of disciplines and the "conditions of possibility" of first-order concepts (such as civil society) during the eighteenth century. With this backdrop in place, I now turn in Chapters Two, Three and Four to an examination of how during the Enlightenment a rupture developed with previous conceptualizations of civil society. By way of illustration, in Chapter Two the work of Hobbes and Locke will be traced. In Chapters Three and Four, I will show how Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel construct their theories of civil society on a

\textsuperscript{118} Smith, op. cit., 254, 7.

\textsuperscript{119} Gregory, op. cit., 23.

different conceptual basis from seventeenth century theorists like Locke and Hobbes.
CHAPTER TWO

HOBBES AND LOCKE: SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY CONCEPTS OF CIVIL SOCIETY

It may preadventure be thought, there was never such a time, nor condition of warre as this; and I believe it was never generally so, over all the world: but there are many places, where they live so now. For the savage people in many places of America ... live at this day in that brutish manner ...


Thus, in the beginning, all the world was America.

John Locke, *Two Treatises on Government* (1690).

Introduction

In this chapter I examine the concept of civil society and the mirroring construction of non-European Others in the work of two seventeenth-century theorists: Hobbes and Locke. The chapter is divided into five sections. The first two sections deal with Hobbes’ theory of civil society and his use of non-European Others in its construction. The next two sections of the chapter are devoted to Locke’s work on these topics. In the final section of the chapter, I compare and contrast Hobbes’ and Locke’s work and juxtapose their concept of civil society to the one arising in the eighteenth century.

This chapter, therefore, is meant to be read in conjunction with Chapters Three and Four which examine the work of Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel. By comparing the work of the seventeenth-century writers with these theorists, I want to show how a point of discontinuity or rupture regarding the concept of civil society began in the eighteenth century. The opening of this rupture is evidenced in Montesquieu’s work, continues in Ferguson’s and is most fully
realized in Hegel's concept of civil society.

This disjuncture will be examined on three levels. First, Hobbes' and Locke's conceptions of civil society are constructed in contrast to the state of nature and constructions of alterity are used to illustrate conditions in the state of nature. However, eighteenth-century theorists reject the state of nature as a philosophical starting point for their conceptualizations of civil society. Instead, they make use of a stadial theory of history to ground their concept of civil society. Alterity is figured as part of this stadial approach to the history of human development.¹ Second, both Hobbes and Locke see civil society as coterminous with the state. Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel all break with this approach (to different degrees) by positing civil society as distinct from the state. This represents a major conceptual shift and a point of rupture with their predecessors' conceptualization of civil society. In short, they are not dealing with the same concept. Third, Hobbes and Locke make only brief (but effective) use of Others to ground their analysis. The range of examples chosen to illustrate their arguments is limited: their primary focus is on American Indians with only brief (almost throw-away references) to Other peoples or cultures. More constant referents are the civilizations of antiquity (predominately Greece and Rome). In contrast, Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel make use of a much wider range of comparative material in which to ground their concept of civil society. This, in turn, is ushered in by new systems of observation, classification, and ordering of material developed in the eighteenth century. Hence, a much more complex and comprehensive form of comparative

¹ For a related argument about the contrast between the state of nature debate and stadial theories of history as contexts for discussing "savagery", see the "Editors' Introduction" to Peter Hulme, "The Spontaneous Hand of Nature: Savagery, Colonialism, and The Enlightenment" in The Enlightenment and its Shadows, ed. Peter Hulme and Ludmilla Jordanova (London: Routledge, 1990), 16-17.
method can be discerned at work here. However, while greater and more sophisticated use is made of comparative material, it is still structured by Western techniques of seeing and methods of representation.

The Hobbesian State of Nature

In formulating his theory of civil society Hobbes broke with prior conceptualizations of the concept and with the canonical views on cosmology and on the correct methods for building political theories. Instead, he applied the principles of geometry and mechanical philosophy to political theory. In the 1630s, he set out to construct a comprehensive philosophical system based on these principles. This was to have three parts: "the first would deal with Body, or matter in motion, the second would deal with Man as a specific kind of body in motion [and] the third would deal with The Citizen, and how knowledge of human nature could be used to create a stable state."\(^2\) Hobbes developed a mechanistic ontology based on the idea that living things differ from non-living substances in that they have interior "vital motion" (i.e., blood circulation in humans). While all living beings have the same imperative, maintenance of this vital motion or self-preservation, humans differ from animals since their superior mental faculties give them an advantage in self-preservation.\(^3\)

In addition to vital motion, humans also experience motion through the functioning of their sensory organs. Hobbes argued that "whenever such motions augment the vital motions they


\(^3\) See ibid., 40.
produce ... pleasure and when they decrease the vital motions they produce ... pain. Since all humans are motivated principally to maintain their vital motions, humans inevitably act to increase their pleasures and decrease their pains. It is this instinct for self-preservation which causes humans to leave the state of nature and form civil or political society. Hobbes' mechanistic ontology also lead him to different ideas of liberty and freedom than those of classical political theory. For him, liberty meant "the absence of external impediments to motions" (negative freedom) rather than the classical notion of liberty as the right to engage in certain conduct (positive freedom).

Hobbes also applied the principles of geometry to questions of political theory. In this he was strongly opposed to experimental methods which lead him into a long conflictual relationship with Boyle and the Royal Society. He favoured geometry over experiment since he believed it provided precision and certainty. His concept of reason was constructed according to geometric principles, so that the mental processes which define reasoning "... are just those kinds of activities, and those kinds of activities alone, which are allowed in mathematics ... If we reason correctly in this way our conclusions must be true." Hobbes' attempts to ground political theory in principles of natural science can be seen in his concepts of the state of nature and civil or

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4 Ibid., 41.

5 See ibid., 42.

6 Ibid., 43.

7 See Steven Shapin and Simon Schaffer, Leviathan and the Air Pump: Hobbes, Boyle, and the Experimental Life (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985). This work provides an excellent and comprehensive discussion of Hobbes' use of geometry and mechanical philosophy, the scientific basis of his work, and of the conflicts with other theorists it engendered.

8 Olson, op. cit., 46.
political society.\footnote{Foucault argues that the "new technical and political rationality" associated with the study of population "branched off from ... the Hobbesian line [of political theory] which sought a general theory of society imitative of the physical sciences": Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, \textit{Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics}, 2d ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983), 134. For a somewhat inaccessible interpretation of Foucault's views on Hobbes' theory of sovereignty, see Pasquale Pasquino, "Political Theory of War and Peace: Foucault and the History of Modern Political Theory," \textit{Economy and Society} 22, no.1 (February 1993): 77-88.}

Hobbes departed from the Aristotelian model of civil society which counter-posed it to the family and instead viewed it as in contradistinction to the state of nature. In \textit{Leviathan} and \textit{De Cive}, Hobbes begins his analysis of the state of nature by establishing his disagreement with the Aristotelian model. Thus in Chapter 1 of \textit{De Cive}, "Of the State of Man Without Civil Society", Hobbes states that most authors who have written on Commonwealths assert that "Man is a creature born fit for society" (Aristotle describes man as a political or social animal) and "on this foundation they so build up the Doctrine of Civill Society".\footnote{Thomas Hobbes, \textit{De Cive}, ed. Howard Warrender (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), 42. Capitalization and spelling are as they appear in the original.} Hobbes says that these authors behave "as if for the preservation of Peace, and the Government of Man-kind there were nothing else necessary, then that Men should agree to make certaine Covenants and Conditions together, which themselves should then call Lawes."\footnote{Ibid.} However, these writers are in error since they have not made a thorough study of human nature. For Hobbes, a proper study of humans shows that they do not naturally come together into society but, rather, people form society for personal benefit: "All society therefore is either for Gain, or for Glory; (i.e.) not so much for love of our
Fellowes, as for love of our Selves ..."^12 However, no society can endure or be illustrious if founded for gain or glory. Above all, it cannot be a civil society. This is because "... civil Societies are not meer Meetings, but Bonds, to the making whereof, Faith and Compacts are necessary ..."^13 While humans might naturally desire civil society, they are not naturally suitable for it. Hobbes asserts that "Man is made fit for Society not by Nature, but by Education ..."^14

As Hobbes rejects gain, glory or mutual goodwill as bases for founding enduring (civil) societies he must establish another motive. He contends that civil society is established through the "mutual fear" that humans have for each other. He defines "fear" as not just being frightened but as having "... a foresight of future evill ..." and a highly developed sense of mistrust, suspicion and a heightened awareness of and sense of preparedness against the potential harmful acts of others.^13 Mutual fear is generated by the condition of man in the state of nature. The natural equality of humans in the state of nature precipitates conflict and violence. All have an equal right to everything in the state of nature and, combined with man's egotistical nature, this leads inevitably to jealousy, suspicion, conflict and violence. Since every man has the right to protect himself by whatever means necessary, he may do what he likes "... against whom he thought fit, and to possesse, use, and enjoy all what he would, or could get."^16 Hobbes argues that because of "... how easie a matter it is, even for the weakest man to kill the strongest ...",

^12 Ibid., 43.
^13 Ibid., 44.
^14 Ibid.
^15 Ibid., 45.
^16 Ibid., 47-48.
no one can claim that he is naturally superior or safe from the threat of others.¹⁷ This leads Hobbes to his quintessential statement in Leviathan about the state of nature:

During the time men live without a common Power to keep them all in awe, they are in that condition which is called Warre; and such a warre as is of every man, against every man ... In such a condition, there is no place for Industry; because the fruit thereof is uncertain: and consequently no Culture of the Earth; no Navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by Sea: no commodious Building; no instruments of moving; ... no Knowledge of the face of the Earth; no account of Time; no Arts; no letters; no Society; and which is worst of all, continuall feare, and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short.¹⁸

After describing the state of nature in this manner, Hobbes turns to the question of whether the state of nature every existed. He contends that "It may peradventure be thought, there was never such a time, nor condition of warre as this; and I believe it was never generally so, over all the world: but there are many places, where they live so now."¹⁹ He then cites the case of American Indians as exemplary of this: "For the savage people in many places of America, except the government of small Families, the concord whereof dependeth on naturall lust, have no government at all; and live at this day in that brutish manner, as I said before."²⁰ In De Cive, Hobbes again uses the American Indians as his example of people in the state of nature:

They of America are Examples hereof, even in this present Age: Other Nations have been in former Ages, which now indeed are become civill, and Flourishing, but were then few, fierce, short-lived, poor, nasty, and destroy'd of all that Pleasure, and Beauty of life, which Peace and Society are wont to bring with

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¹⁷ Ibid., 45.


¹⁹ ibid., 187.

²⁰ Ibid. Italics in the original.
them.\textsuperscript{21}

In his formulation of the state of nature and his use of American Indians as examples, Hobbes broke with Aristotelian cosmology and with the canons of natural history.\textsuperscript{22} In Aristotelianism, humans ranked above animals and, in Christian cosmology, Christians were above heathens and devil-worshippers. Americans Indians were not easily placed in this taxonomy because, although their humanity was acknowledged, they were thought to live like animals and to venerate devils. Seventeenth-century Europeans were eager to distinguish themselves from the "savage beasts" of America both on developmental and religious grounds. So while it was widely accepted that animals living in an ungoverned natural condition were constantly at war, it was difficult to accept Hobbes' argument that this was the "natural condition of mankind".\textsuperscript{23} Hobbes' contention that the progenitors of contemporary Englishmen were once like the "savages" of America was difficult for his contemporaries to accept. Similarly, Hobbes suggestion that even those currently living in civil society might slip back into a savage state if civil government were removed was equally disturbing to his contemporaries.\textsuperscript{24}

As Ashcraft contends, "the savages of the New World were important to Hobbes' argument precisely because he did not view them as exceptions, outside the framework of history

\textsuperscript{21} Hobbes, \textit{De Cive}, op. cit., 49. Italics in the original.


\textsuperscript{23} See ibid., 149-151.

\textsuperscript{24} See ibid., 162.
or political theory. However, in so doing, Hobbes transgressed the conventional rules for the production of political theory. Political theory then was generally based on the common features of "civilized" people living under the rule of law and not on the extraordinary lifestyle of savages living without legal restrictions. While Hobbes’ contemporaries saw Christianity as the hallmark of "civilization", he considered civilization to follow from the establishment of civil society and not to precede it. Hence, he asserted that "Whatsoever distinguisheth the civility of Europe, from the barbarity of the American savages, is the workmanship of fancy, but guided by the precepts of true philosophy."

Hobbes’ Civil Society and the Non-European Other

After outlining the condition of humans in the state of nature, Hobbes turns to the formation of political or civil society. As already noted, civil societies require bonds or covenants between men before they are established. These bonds are created when everybody subjects their will to one man or a council. Each person contracts with the others "... not to resist the will of that one man, or counsell, to which he hath submitted himselfe ... and this is called UNION." Hobbes continues: "Now union thus made is called a City, or civill society, and also a civill Person ... A CITY therefore (that we may define it) is one Person, whose will, by the compact

25 Ibid., 154.
26 See ibid., 163.
27 Hobbes, quoted ibid., 163.
of many men, is to be received for the will of them all ...”

It is clear from these statements that Hobbes sees political and civil society as coterminous. In this he is in accord with preceding formulations of civil society (such as Aristotle’s) which do not distinguish between civil society and political society or the state. However, he is not in accord with eighteenth-century constructions of civil society which try to establish distinctions between civil society and the state or political society. Further, Hobbes deviates from prior (Aristotelian) conceptualizations of civil society which counterpose civil society to the family. Instead, Hobbes posits civil society in contradistinction to the state of nature. Hobbes use of the state of nature as a linchpin for his concept of civil society also places him at odds with his eighteenth century successors. Eighteenth-century philosophers dispensed with the state of nature as a basis for building a concept of civil society and, instead, tended to employ stadial theories of human development on which to construct their arguments.

Hobbes’ use of the American Indians as living examples of people in the state of nature is also noteworthy. As the passages quoted above from Leviathan and De Cive demonstrate, Hobbes considers Indians living in the state of nature to be the Other; the antithesis of Europeans living in civil society. As Ashcraft notes, these references to American Indians are not atypical allusions but appear in other places in Hobbes’ work. For example. Hobbes employs this mirrored construction of difference in De Corpore Politico where he speaks of the condition of man in the state of nature as one of hostility and war and states that this "known" by "... the

29 Ibid., 89.

30 See Ashcraft, op. cit., 166.
experience of savage nations that live at this day ...”\textsuperscript{31} Similarly, in subsequent discussions of the state of nature in both \textit{Leviathan} and \textit{De Cive}, Hobbes uses the lifestyle of the Amazons to illustrate his argument.\textsuperscript{32} Thus Ashcraft concludes that “Clearly, Hobbes’ definition of the state of nature was explicitly intended by him to be associated with the ‘brutish’ and ‘savage’ life of the Indians.”\textsuperscript{33}

For Hobbes, then, the Indians represent the Other counterposed to ‘civilized’ man in civil society. In this, his construction of difference as mirror image prefigures his eighteenth-century successors except for one crucial point of disjuncture; he finds the origins of civil society in the state of nature (as represented contemporaneously by the Indians) whereas eighteenth-century philosophers rejected the state of nature as a starting point for their discussion of civil society. Similarly, Hobbes assertions regarding the conditions pertaining in the state of nature bear similarities to discussions by Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel of communities lacking a civil society. For example, in the passage quoted from \textit{Leviathan}, he speaks of the absence of industry and agriculture, transportation and trade in commodities, spacious architecture, knowledge of geography, systems of time keeping, arts and literature, and society. These perceived deficiencies of the state of nature are referred to by the eighteenth and nineteenth century theorists but, again, not in the context of people in the state of nature. Rather, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century writers tend to pose difference in terms of stadial theories of development which will be discussed more fully below.

\textsuperscript{31} Hobbes quoted in Ashcraft, ibid.
\textsuperscript{33} Ashcraft, op. cit., 154.
When looking at the American Indians, Hobbes was clearly impressed by what he perceived as the lack of civil or political society and, therefore, of 'civilization'. As Stuart Hall argues in respect of the inhabitants of America, "In fact, these peoples did have several, very different, highly elaborated social structures ... These were functioning societies. What they were not was 'European'."  

Hence, since the political and social organization of the Indians was not recognizable to Hobbes, he assumed they had no organization at all. Hall contends that those who employed the Indians in their literary works (such as Hobbes) believed that "living close to Nature meant that they had no developed culture - and were therefore 'uncivilized'."  

Indeed, Hobbes' views on 'civility' were similar to those of eighteenth-century authors as well as to those of the contemporary explorers and travel writers for whom his description of the state of nature had so much affinity. In Chapter 10 of De Cive, Hobbes compares the state of nature with that of civil society and argues that, in the state of nature, man is subject to "... a Dominion of Passions, war, fear, poverty, slovlinliness, solitude, barbarisme, ignorance, cruelty."  

However, civil society is "... the Dominion of reason, peace, security, riches, decency, society, elegancy, sciences, and benevolence."  

But, again, Hobbes constructs his mirror images of 'civility' and 'barbarism' around the state of nature. The centrality of the state of nature to the conceptualization of civil society can also be discerned in the writings of Hobbes' seventeenth-

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34 Stuart Hall, op. cit., 303-304.

35 See ibid., 305.

36 Ibid., 306.

37 For Hobbes' affinity with contemporary views expressed in travel writing and other fields, see Ashcraft, op. cit., 147.

38 Hobbes, De Cive, op. cit., 130.
The Lockean State of Nature

Hayden White argues that by the seventeenth century there were two general perspectives regarding nature and society, and therefrom, towards so-called " primitive" peoples. One perspective, exemplified by Hobbes, saw nature as bestial and as a sphere of conflict and strife. Society was, therefore, an improvement on the state of nature. Natural man was the antithesis of worthwhile human beings and an example of the fate of " civilized" man if he abandoned civil society. The other perspective took a benign view of nature and perceived society as an unfortunate (but necessary) departure from the ideal natural world. Natural man was perceived as the antithesis of man in the social state. This second perspective is exemplified by Locke.  

Hence, while Locke uses the state of nature as the basis for his theory of the origins of government and civil society, his view of it is somewhat different from Hobbes. In his Second Treatise on Government, entitled "An Essay Concerning the True Original, Extent and End of Civil Government", Locke outlines the condition of humans in the state of nature. He describes this as "... a state of perfect freedom to order their actions, and dispose of their possessions and persons, as they think fit, within the bounds of the law of nature, without asking leave, or depending on the will of any other man."  

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anyone has the right to judge the offender and execute a punishment. Locke argues that the absence of a universal and impartial judicial authority leads to disorder and disarray. The treatment for this state of affairs is civil government, "... to restrain the partiality and violence of men." 41 Hence, "... civil government is the proper remedy for the inconveniences of the state of nature ..." 42

The most fundamental "inconvenience" of the state of nature is the failure to provide security of property. Locke devotes a whole chapter of the Second Treatise to the subject of "property" which forms a linchpin for his whole argument about the state of nature and the origins of civil society and government. In the prior chapter on the state of nature, Locke uses "an Indian, in the woods of America" as an example of man in the state of nature.43 He develops this example at greater length in the chapter on property. He sets up his analysis on property with the following assertion:

The earth and all that is therein is given to men for the support and comfort of their being. And though all the fruits it naturally produces, and beasts it feeds, belong to mankind in common, as they are produced by the spontaneous hand of nature, and no body has originally a private dominion exclusive of the rest of mankind in any of them, as they are thus in their natural state, yet being given for the use of men, there must of necessity be a means to appropriate them some way or other before they can be of any use, or at all beneficial, to any particular man.44

Locke’s example of man exercising these common property rights is the American Indian. Thus

41 Ibid., para. 13, 9.

42 Ibid., para. 13, 9-10.

43 See ibid., para. 14, 10. Locke also refers in this paragraph to Garcilasso de la Vega’s history of Peru.

44 Ibid., para. 26, 17.
"... the fruit or venison which nourishes the wild Indian, who knows no enclosure, and is still a tenant in common, must be his ..."\textsuperscript{45} While God has bestowed the earth on all mankind equally, he has also endowed humanity with reason so that they may best exploit it. Locke argues that man also has a property in his own body and, therefore, his labour and work belong to him. Consequently, "Whatsoever, then, he removes out of the state that nature hath provided and left in it, he hath mixed his labour with it, and joined it to something that is his own, and therefore makes it his property."\textsuperscript{46} For example, Locke says that a deer in the wild belongs to everyone until an Indian kills it, whereupon it becomes the hunter's property.\textsuperscript{47} However, Locke distinguishes this application of labour from that of reason. The "spontaneous hand of nature" provides food and it does not require the exercise of reason to merely collect it. The application of reason is evinced by the development of land.\textsuperscript{48}

Proprietorship in land also involves the application of labour to it. Cultivation or enclosure of land confers rights to its products since "... 'tis labour indeed that puts the difference of value on every thing ..."\textsuperscript{49} Again, Locke illustrates this point with the American example:

There cannot be a clearer demonstration of anything than several nations of the Americans are of this, who are rich in land and poor in all the comforts of life;

\textsuperscript{45} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., para. 27, 17.
\textsuperscript{47} See ibid., para. 30, 19.
\textsuperscript{49} Locke, op cit., para. 40, 25.
whom nature, having furnished as liberally as any other people with the materials of plenty, i.e., a fruitful soil, apt to produce in abundance what might serve for food, raiment, and delight; yet, for want of improving it by labour, have not one hundredth part of the conveniences we enjoy. And a king of a large and fruitful territory there feeds, lodges, and is clad worse than a day labourer in England.  

Locke seeks to strengthen his argument for private control of land by asserting that it benefits all in the long run. He contends that cultivation of land (by Europeans) increases its product one hundred fold, thus benefitting the poor and impoverished masses. He illuminates this by a comparison of America and England:

For I aske whether in the wild woods and uncultivated wast of America left to Nature, without any improvement, tillage, or husbandry, a thousand acres will yield the needy and wretched inhabitants as many conveniences of life as ten acres of equally fertile land doe in Devonshire where they are well cultivated.

Locke closes his chapter on property with the bold statement "Thus, in the beginning, all the world was America", indicating that the present condition of the Indians in the state of nature was once the condition of Europeans (and others) who applied reason to life in the natural condition and, thereafter, advanced. Similarly, when speaking of the origins of political societies, Locke suggests that the Indians of America are "... a pattern of the first ages in Asia and Europe."

Lockean Civil Society

Following his discussions of the state of nature and property, Locke turns in Chapter 7
to the origins of political or civil society. While the state of nature is one of absolute equality and freedom governed by natural law, it may degenerate into a condition of war since some individuals will inevitably disobey the laws of nature and cause conflict. Without an impartial judicial system or a means to enforce judgements, an individual’s property rights (i.e., to life, liberty and estate) are not secure. This insecurity leads humans to make a contract with one another to give up their powers to punish wrongdoers to a common authority, and in so doing, form a political society. Locke continues, "Those who are united into one body, and have a common established law and judicature to appeal to, with authority to decide controversies between them and punish offenders, are in civil society one with another..." He asserts that "... all this is for the preservation of property of all the members of that society ..., " indicating again the fundamental importance of property (life, liberty and estate) to his argument. Once humans leave the state of nature in this manner they become a commonwealth.

The form of government is also a defining feature of civil society. Locke advises that absolute monarchy is "inconsistent" with civil society and is, therefore, not a type of civil government. An absolute monarch is not established by the people as a governmental authority which means that such communities are still in the state of nature. To illustrate the importance of consent to the establishment of the social contract and its absence in absolutist government, Locke uses the example of the Indians, "He that would have been insolent and injurious in the

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54 Ibid., para. 87, 50.
55 Ibid., para. 88, 51.
56 See ibid., para. 89, 52.
woods of America would probably not be much better in a throne". Locke suggests that civil society or political society may take several forms (democracy, oligarchy, monarchy) but to be a true commonwealth it must be consented to and established by the parties to the contract. The term commonwealth is not used by Locke to designate a particular form of government, but rather, refers to "... any independent community which the Latins signified by the word civitas, to which the word which best answers in our language is Commonwealth, and most properly expresses such a society of men which community does not ... and city much less."58

Civil Society and the Other in the Seventeenth Century

Locke’s discussion of the state of nature and the origins of civil society differs from Hobbes’ in some important respects but, at the same time, maintains some significant continuity of ideas. The most obvious point of difference is that the state of nature for Locke is not the anarchic battleground that Hobbes portrays but a realm of perfect equality and freedom which does not fully protect property. However, neither Hobbes nor Locke see civil society as natural but as artifice; something created or made by the people who contract with one another to leave the state of nature. Both Locke and Hobbes use the American Indians as examples of people in the state of nature. While both theorists have an underlying conception of human development at play in their work, neither advances a fully fledged stadial theory to account for man’s social evolution or for the origins of civil society. Ronald L. Meek argues that Locke gives some inklings of the germs of a stadial theory through his discussion of the origins of property.

57 Ibid., para. 92, 53. Locke continues by adding the example of Ceylon.

58 Ibid., para. 133, 77.
However, while Locke makes some reference to modes of subsistence he does not discuss all of the four stages associated with stadial theories of socioeconomic development - hunting, pasturage, agriculture and commerce. Further, he does not give the clear enunciation of a progression from stage to stage that eighteenth-century theorists do. However, both Locke and Hobbes remark on the lack of agriculture and commerce in the state of nature. These factors were later developed by eighteenth-century theorists as indicators of the presence or lack of civil society. This is particularly evident in Ferguson’s work.

Rather than setting out a fully developed stadial theory, Locke seems to have been arguing only that Indians in the state of nature were what Europeans were once like. In The Great Map of Mankind, Marshall and Williams suggest that Locke’s portrayal of the Indians in this manner may have been a response to large amounts of conflicting information regarding the Indians which was bombarding late seventeenth century England. Unable to establish a universal image of the Indians, a popular resolution was to portray them as like Europeans in an initial phase of development. However, like Hobbes, Locke differs from eighteenth-century theorists in that he grounds his discussion of the origins of civil society in the state of nature whereas his successors reject the state of nature as a starting point.

Locke conceives of civil society as coterminous with political society or the state. In this


he is in accord with Hobbes and at odds with the eighteenth-century theorists. However, Charles Taylor contends that although for Locke civil society is coterminous with the state, there is a "pre-political" society in existence in the state of nature. A community is formed in the state of nature through the exercise of natural rights. Taylor asserts that Locke is here "... preparing the ground for the emergence of the new, contrastive sense [of civil as opposed to political society] a century later".  

Like Hobbes, Locke uses the American Indians as an example of people in the state of nature. Given his more benign view of the state of nature he does not depict the Indians with quite the degree of barbarity or savagery apparent in Hobbes' work. Nevertheless, he deploys the Indians as the mirror images of civilized man in civil society as evinced in his statement that "... in the beginning all the world was America." Again, like Hobbes, he prefigures his eighteenth-century successors in the use of a mirroring construction but he uses the state of nature to form one side of the mirror relation, something the eighteenth-century writers do not do.

Locke's discussion of the lack of cultivation by the Indians is also notable. As Arneil points out, Locke emphasizes cultivation (especially crop-growing) over other kinds of labour and lauds the English farmer as the preeminent exponent of this type of work. In his emphasis on the superiority of the English farmer, Locke conveniently overlooks the fact that crops like maize and tobacco had been cultivated for hundreds of years by the Indians of the Americas.

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Hulme argues that this omission coincides with Locke's use of the concept of "the spontaneous hand of nature" in order to establish a distinction between Europeans who improve the land and Indians who merely gather what nature offers. As Hulme demonstrates, Locke's Second Treatise was used by his contemporaries as a philosophical basis on which to rationalize the alienation of Indian land by the British. Thus "from its inception the natural right to property is defined in such a way as to exclude non-Europeans from being able to exercise it." By asserting that the Indians only gather what nature provides, Locke makes it difficult to distinguish between them and animals, since animals collect food from nature without the application of reason. In this he seems to echo Hobbes' arguments about the similarity of man and animals in the state of nature.

Locke's argument that the Indians have not applied their reason, as demonstrated by the improvement of land, is echoed in his comments in his Essay Concerning Human Understanding where he places Indians with illiterates, idiots and children because they cannot apply reason in comparative, speculative or abstract ways. However, Locke does not consider the Indians to be irredeemable primitives. If they were raised and educated as Englishmen he considered they had the potential to be as well educated, but their natural condition was dismal and unconducive to development. Locke states, "Their notions are few and narrow, borrowed only from those objects they have most to do with, and which have made upon their senses the frequentest and

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63 See Hulme, op. cit., 30.
64 Arneil, op. cit., 609.
65 See Hulme, op. cit., 33.
66 See Marshall and Williams, op. cit., 192.
strongest impressions. Such kind of general propositions are seldom mentioned in the huts of Indians ... 

In his Second Treatise, Locke makes primary reference to American Indians to illustrate his arguments. In a similar manner to Hobbes, he does refer to Classical Antiquity and the Bible as sources of comparative material but these references are not fundamental to his thesis in the way that the Indians are. Similarly, Locke makes the odd allusion to other peoples (e.g., Ceylonese, Turks), usually in respect of absolute government, but these are merely brief illuminations and are not essential to his argument. In this regard, Locke is in distinct contrast to his eighteenth century colleagues such as Montesquieu.

Through the examination of the theories of civil society of Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel in the next two chapters, I will argue that the Enlightenment signifies a point of rupture with the preceding seventeenth-century formulations of civil society and will illustrate this by contrasting the work of Hobbes and Locke with that of these three theorists. This break with previous works revolved around the conceptual shift in the construction of civil society from seeing it as coterminous with the state, to viewing it as a separate entity. In other words, Locke and Hobbes were not dealing with the same concept as Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel. However, the rupture between seventeenth- and eighteenth-century concepts of civil society did not occur in one fell swoop. Rather, it was anticipated in Montesquieu's work, extended in Ferguson's, and fully realized in Hegel's Philosophy of Right.

In addition, the way that Otherness is figured and used to ground the concept also changes. While some similarity remains between Hobbes and Locke on the one hand, and

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Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel on the other, in that both draw on the ancient world and America for constructions of difference, from the eighteenth century onwards writers tend to look to a much broader range of examples to ground their analyses (e.g., the Middle East, the South Pacific, and Asia). This expansion of the use of comparative material can readily be seen in Montesquieu's *Spirit of the Laws* and culminates in Hegel’s theory of world history which divides up the whole globe (except Africa) into representations of his conception of the historical phases of human development. In this instance, there is a "logical relation of ... anticipation to realization" from Montesquieu to Hegel. Further, in the work of Hobbes and Locke, the alterity of Native Americans is put to a specific purpose, namely, to describe the original condition of humanity in the state of nature. None of the three theorists under discussion in the next two chapters use the state of nature to ground their philosophy.

In Chapters Three and Four, the way that Otherness is figured in the Enlightenment, as opposed to that in earlier periods, raises questions of how underlying concepts (such as representation) structured the way in which first order concepts such as civil society were conceived. Foucault's archaeological analysis comes into play and facilitates the identification and analysis of the "conditions of possibility" which underscore thought across disciplinary boundaries in this period. In this manner, the similarities between the three theorists in modes of representation through the figuration of difference and alterity, which were characteristic of this period, will be identified. All three writers make use of a comparative representational strategy but it is much broader and more complexly figured than their predecessors'.

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68 It should be noted that modern disciplines as we understand them did not exist in this period.
Everywhere I see people who talk continually about themselves. Their conversation is a mirror which always shows their own conceited faces. They will talk to you about the tiniest events in their lives, which they expect to be magnified in your eyes by the interest that they themselves take in them. They have done everything, seen everything, said everything, thought of everything. They are a universal pattern, the subject of unending comparisons, an inexhaustible fount of examples. Oh, how empty is praise when it reflects back to its origin!

Montesquieu, Persian Letters.

It is in their [Arabs, Native Americans] present condition, that we are to behold, as in a mhrour (sic.), the features of our own progenitors; and from thence we are to draw our conclusions with respect to the influence of situations, in which, we have reason to believe, our fathers were placed.


Introduction

This chapter is divided into two main sections. These sections deal in turn with the writers under discussion in this chapter - Montesquieu and Ferguson. The discussion of each theorist will be broken down further into subsections dealing with topics such as the state of nature, civil society and attitudes towards and uses of non-Western Others in their work. Here I will compare and contrast the two authors with their seventeenth century predecessors - Hobbes and Locke - with respect to these matters. In addition, each of the writers will be compared and contrasted with the other, and, with Hegel.

The task of this chapter is to demonstrate how Montesquieu and Ferguson each
contributed to the eventual conceptual separation of civil society from the state and how each contributed to what might (eventually) be called the post-Enlightenment geographical imagination.¹ The modes of representation that were figured in this imaginary were principally those of a mirroring construction of non-European (and in the twentieth century, non-Western) Others. In these two spheres, I suggest that each theorist may be viewed as forming a relation of "anticipation to realization" (as Canguilhem puts it), with Montesquieu marking the beginnings of a conceptual shift which is fully realized in Hegel's work which is discussed in the next chapter. In Part II, I go on to show how these modes of representation and constructions of knowledge (most fully realized in Hegel) have been influential in structuring the work of twentieth-century authors working on the concept of civil society, on their figuration of alterity and on their use of mirroring constructions of the non-Western Others.

**MONTESQUIEU**

Collini, Winch and Burrow remark that eighteenth century Europe was characterized by variety in many respects - there was diversity in the constitutional, social, cultural, religious, and economic spheres. In addition, the expansion of the Ottoman Empire into Europe, the voyages to the Pacific, and the enlargement and acquisition of colonial territories, confronted Europeans with even greater diversity. This variety, then, "constituted a pressing intellectual challenge" to eighteenth-century theorists and "the first and most influential author to respond to the challenge of the new opportunities for the comparison of law and government across space as well as time

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¹ I am indebted to Derek Gregory for this insight and for this term.
was Montesquieu". Montesquieu's writings differed from his predecessors in political theory in that he employed a much more comprehensive comparative approach and spotlighted the influence of morals and manners on laws and government.

This approach may be discerned in his two principal works, The Spirit of the Laws and the Persian Letters (1721). These works also reflect his "major intellectual interests" which were "natural history, especially geography and meteorology." As part of his interest in geography, Montesquieu read many of the vast number of volumes of travel writing, traders' and missionaries' accounts produced about non-European peoples in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As Olson observes, "several of these, especially Lahontan's [Supplement to the Voyages of Baron Lahontan in which One Finds Curious Conversations Between the Author and a Wise Savage (1703)], had used dialogues with non-Europeans as vehicles for criticizing current European society," and this may have inspired Montesquieu, in the Persian Letters, to adopt the device of a "fictional set of letters, ostensibly sent home by two Persian ambassadors in Paris during the final years of Louis XIV's reign, in order to criticize French society and the French monarchy."

In the Great Map of Mankind, Marshall and Williams remark that English works on Indians in the seventeenth century were distinguished by "... their brevity, their thinness, their

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3 See ibid.


5 Ibid., 147.
reliance very often on hearsay information. "6 In contrast, one could rarely accuse their Enlightenment successors of brevity or thinness in their descriptions of non-Western Others. However, the eighteenth-century writers still relied on hearsay accounts; for the most part they had no personal experience of the lands or peoples they were so keen to write about in their voluminous accounts. Such was the case with Montesquieu, whose work did not lack for myriad illustrations from a wide variety of peoples but tended to be based on his perceptions and imagination about Others, rather than on any first-hand knowledge or experience. Despite Montesquieu’s disclaimer that "I do not draw my principles from my prejudices but from the nature of things,"7 these observations become clear from an examination of his two principal works.

The State of Nature and the Nature of Government

Montesquieu begins The Spirit of the Laws with a discussion of natural law and the state of nature. He asserts that prior to civil and political laws are the laws of nature. He writes that "To know them well, one must consider a man before the establishment of societies."8 Humans in the state of nature "... have the faculty of knowing rather than knowledge" and cannot think in a conjectural, abstract fashion; their instinct would be to self-preservation rather than an inquiry into their origins. As an example of this, he cites "savages" in forests who are timid and


8 Ibid., Book 1, ch.2, 6.
afraid of everything. People in these conditions do not perceive themselves as equal but have a profound sense of inferiority. He continues, "Such men would not seek to attack one another, and peace would be the first natural law." Montesquieu then claims that Hobbes has got it wrong when he argues that men in the state of nature want to fight and conquer each other. In answer to Hobbes' question as to why do people arm themselves and lock their houses if there is no condition of war in the natural state, Montesquieu contends that this "... can happen to men only after the establishment of societies, which induced them to find motives for attacking others and for defending themselves ...". Mutual fear, biological attraction, and the acquisition of knowledge all lead man to "the desire to live in society". Society is not established by a social contract to get out of the state of nature.

Montesquieu makes it clear that "society" precedes both civil and political laws or government and civil society. In Chapter 3 of Book 1 he explains that "As soon as men are in society, they lose their feeling of weakness; the equality that was among them ceases, and the state of war begins." This leads to the establishment of positive law. Positive law is comprised of political law which defines relations between the governors and the governed and civil law which deals with relations between citizens. He continues by claiming that "A society could not continue to exist without a government." Governments may take different forms. However, the best government is one which most closely conforms to the nature of the polity and the people

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9 Ibid., 6-7. In his "Defence of the Spirit of the Laws", Montesquieu says of the beginning of that work that "The Author was attempting to overthrow Hobbes' system; a system the most terrible, it making all the virtues and vices depend on human establishments: and by endeavouring to prove, that all mankind are born in a state of war, and that the first natural Law, is that all should make war against all, he, like Spinoza, overthrows all religion, and all morality": quoted in Tzvetan Todorov, On Human Diversity, Nationalism, Racism, and Exoticism in French Thought (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993), 369.
thereof. Montesquieu explains his argument thus:

Laws should be so appropriate to the people for whom they are made that it is very unlikely that the laws of one nation can suit another ... They should be related to the physical aspect of the country; to the climate, be it freezing, torrid, or temperate; to the properties of the terrain, its location and extent; to the way of life of the peoples, be they plowmen, hunters, or herdsmen; they should relate to the degree of liberty that the constitution can sustain, to the religion of the inhabitants, their inclinations, their wealth, their number, their commerce, their mores and manners ... They must be considered from all these points of view.\(^{10}\)

Montesquieu states that this is exactly what he intends to examine in the rest of the book. He says that he is only interested in this "spirit" of laws and not in distinctions between civil and political laws. He begins his analysis by delimiting three types of government and then investigates the relationship of each sort of government to the factors outlined above.\(^{11}\)

Montesquieu posits that there are three types of government: monarchies, republics, and despotisms. He defines each as follows: "republican government is that in which the people as a body, or only part of the people, have sovereign power; monarchical government is that in which one alone governs, but by fixed and established laws; whereas, in despotic government, one alone, without law and without rule, draws everything along by his will and his caprices."\(^{12}\) Montesquieu argues that each form of government is based on a "principle" ("the human passions that set it in motion"): honour in monarchies, virtue in republics, and fear in despotisms.\(^{13}\) In addition, each type of government is associated by Montesquieu with a particular spatial and temporal location: monarchy with contemporary Europe, republic with the Ancient World, and

\(^{10}\) Montesquieu, ibid., Book 1, ch.3, 8-9.

\(^{11}\) See ibid., 9.

\(^{12}\) Ibid., Book 2, ch.1, 10.

\(^{13}\) See ibid., Book 3, chs.1-9.
despotism with "oriental" peoples. Montesquieu's examination of monarchies and despotisms is of particular relevance to the development of a concept of civil society separate from the state and to his discussion of non-European Others. Therefore, from here on, I will bracket his work on republics.

Montesquieu devotes a considerable amount of space in *The Spirit of the Laws* to an exegesis of the moral and physical causes of different types of government; Parts 3-5 (Books 14-24) deal with these matters. It is clearly impossible to re-present all his arguments or the profuse empirical examples made by way of illustration. Hence a "broad brush" approach will be used to indicate the general thrust of Montesquieu's argument and to demonstrate his deployment of non-Western Others as mirror-images of Europeans.

### The Empire of Climate

Montesquieu's principal interest in this part of his work is with the effects of climate on people and, ultimately, on the type of government and the laws. He devotes Books 14-17 to this topic. Clarence Glacken argues that there was nothing original in Montesquieu's discussion of climate since he simply restated ideas that had been held for a long time. Rather, Montesquieu's original contribution was to refocus attention on the association of physical and moral causes and away from an exclusive consideration of social causes. By the end of the

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15 I discuss Montesquieu's work on republics in Chapter Six, infra., in relation to Edward Shils' invocation of his notion of virtue.
eighteenth century, Montesquieu was regarded as the authority on this topic.\textsuperscript{16} Montesquieu establishes the primacy of climate for his analysis when he writes that "The empire of climate is the first of all empires."\textsuperscript{17} He makes the same suppositions about climate as his predecessors: climate (i.e., temperature) affects human physiology, human mental states are affected by climatic effects on the body, and the mental states of individuals are aggregateable to that of a whole group.\textsuperscript{18}

He establishes a binary opposition between those who live in cold (Northern) climates and those who live in hot (Southern) climates. The peoples of England, Germany and Scandinavia are Northern peoples while those living in Southern Europe, the Middle East and Asia are the Southern peoples. When discussing the South, however, his main focus is on Asia and the Middle East. He argues for the superiority of peoples in cold climates based on beliefs about the effects of temperature on the body. On this basis he claims that "... men are more vigorous in cold climates" and that "the peoples in hot countries are timid like old men; those in cold countries are courageous like young men." He argues further that people in cold climates are insensitive to pleasures while those in hot countries are extremely sensitive and that libido is weak in cold climates and strong in hot climates.\textsuperscript{19}

Montesquieu expands these kind of comments to establish a comprehensive explanation


\textsuperscript{17} Montesquieu, op. cit., Book 19, ch.14, 316.

\textsuperscript{18} See Glacken, op. cit., 568.

\textsuperscript{19} Montesquieu, op. cit., Book 14, ch.2, 231 -234.
for differences between cultures. He describes the people of hot climates at various points as cowardly, lazy, slothful, barbaric, weak, delicate, lascivious, prone to excess, voluptuous, timid and effeminate. In contrast, Northern peoples are courageous, vigorous, calm of passions, etc. He devotes substantially more space to the description and critique of the 'exotic' and 'gruesome' lifestyles and practices of non-Europeans, than to descriptions of virtuous Europeans.20

Montesquieu's use of the term "effeminate" to describe non-Europeans may seem odd in that he also uses terms like "savage" and "barbarian" to describe these peoples. However, the sense in which effeminate is used by Montesquieu is part of a "long-standing tradition of discourse" stretching back to the ancient world.21 This involved the juxtaposition of the term "fortune" to "virtue". The relationship was gendered: virtue was masculine and fortune was feminine. Fortune often was represented visually as a woman (hence, "Dame Fortune") or by a wheel and was ruled by imagined feminine traits such as capriciousness or unpredictability, denoting a condition of uncertainty. Virtue, on the other hand, was endowed with allegedly masculine qualities such as "heroic fortitude" and it was this quality which enabled men to deal "effectively and nobly with whatever fortune might send". Hence, virtue was masculine and active, while fortune was feminine and passive, and, therefore, virtue "could carry many of the connotations of virility, with which it is etymologically linked; vir means man".22 When Montesquieu describes non-Europeans as "effeminate" he is invoking this meaning of passive femininity (linked with unpredictability and caprice) and opposing it to the manly virtue of

20 See ibid., Books 14 -17, passim.


22 Ibid., 37.
Europeans which is active and noble, and expressed in the notion of civic virtue.\textsuperscript{23} Hence, he describes Europeans as vigorous, courageous and calm of passions. This trope of "effeminacy" is also used by Ferguson and Hegel in relation to non-Europeans.\textsuperscript{24}

Montesquieu also considers religious affiliation to be determined by climate. For example, he argues that Buddhism is an outgrowth of the climate in India and that Islam is more popular in Asia than Europe because of climatic factors (especially as the climate in Asia favours polygamy while in Europe it favours monogamy).\textsuperscript{25} However, he exempts Christianity from environmental determinism by claiming that it is a revealed religion and, therefore, does not originate in physical causes as other religions do. Eastern religions are "... purely human inventions that grew out of earthly conditions and the circumstances of life ... False religions could be explained by physical causes; Christianity, a revealed religion, could not."\textsuperscript{26} While, Montesquieu may have engaged in this kind of academic sleight-of-hand to avoid trouble with the Vatican (this did not prevent both his major works being placed on the Vatican's Index of Prohibited Books), he conveniently ignores the fact that Eastern religions such as Islam are also revealed religions. Montesquieu discusses the effects of climate on a myriad of other matters, from public health issues to suicide, from the imagination to sexual desire, in the remainder of


\textsuperscript{24} I discuss the opposition between fortune and virtue in Chapter Six, infra., with respect to Edward Shils' invocation of Montesquieu's notion of virtue.


\textsuperscript{26} Glacken, op. cit., 572.
Books 14-17.

While climate defines divergences in culture, for Montesquieu, it also accounts for cultural endurance. While European culture changed over time, Eastern cultures have remained static. Montesquieu claims that "... laws, mores, and manners, even those that seem not to matter, like the fashion in clothing, remain in the East today as they were a thousand years ago." He rounds off Book 17 with a further assertion about the unchanging nature of the East by asserting that "... liberty never increases in Asia, whereas in Europe it increases or decreases according to circumstances." This is consistent with Montesquieu's statement in the Persian Letters that "it would seem that freedom suits the character of the European peoples and servitude those of Asia." As Said remarks, "the theme of Europe teaching the orient the meaning of liberty" was to "acquire an almost unbearable, next to mindless authority in European writing".

Book 18 deals with the effect of material factors other than climate. It is concerned with the effects of soil fertility, typography, water, etc. Of principal significance here is the chapter on savages and barbarians. Montesquieu draws the following distinctions between them: "One difference between savage peoples and barbarian peoples is that the former are small scattered nations which, for certain particular reasons, cannot unite, whereas barbarians are ordinarily small nations that can unite together. The former are usually hunting peoples; the latter, pastoral

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27 Montesquieu, op. cit., Book 14, ch.4, 235.
28 Ibid., Book 17, ch.3, 280.
peoples. In *Persian Letters* he speaks of savages' "universal opposition to agriculture and work" and describes barbarism as an absence of "knowledge and culture". These definitions of barbarians and savages, together with the discussions of modes of subsistence and land cultivation, were of particular interests to the writers of the Scottish Enlightenment, especially Adam Ferguson.

Also of interest in relation to Ferguson's work are Montesquieu's comments about the effects of commerce. It was Montesquieu's identification of the ambiguous effects of commerce (especially the political effects) which was recognized, praised and adopted by writers of the Scottish Enlightenment (especially Ferguson) and later by Hegel. In *The Spirit of the Laws*, Montesquieu expresses the eighteenth-century theorists' ambivalence toward commerce. While in Books 20 and 21 he acknowledges some of what he considers to be the positive and progressive effects on society of increased commercial activity, he also expresses serious doubts that greater commercial interaction is an unqualified good. In particular, Montesquieu is concerned with the effects of luxury and concomitant inequalities of wealth on the polity. If one reads on beyond the initial definitions of virtue in Books 3, 4 and 5 of *The Spirit of the Laws* one finds sustained discussions of the effects of commerce on civic virtue and the corrosion of the warrior ethos by the corrupting effects of luxury. Also expressed is an unease with the effects of the division of labour being ushered in by the expanding economy. In particular, Montesquieu is concerned about the division of a citizen's civic and military duties. For example, he discusses

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33 See Glacken, op cit., 605.
the effect on civic involvement when citizens no longer take up arms to protect the republic and, instead, establish a professional army to do the job for them.\textsuperscript{34}

Similarly, when Montesquieu speaks of the need for equality in a republic he means not only the equal subjection of citizens to the laws but also the desirability of the equal division of land between citizens in order to curb the creation of wealth. Wealth leads to inequality among citizens, to the excitation of the passions, and to corruption. Hence Montesquieu states that the "love of democracy is also love of frugality."\textsuperscript{35}

However, in contrast to these negative consequences of commerce, Montesquieu also notes that it may have civilizing effects. He claims that:

\begin{quote}
Commerce cures destructive prejudices and it is an almost general rule that everywhere there are gentle mores, there is commerce and that everywhere there is commerce there are gentle mores ... it polishes and softens barbarous mores, as we see every day.\textsuperscript{36}
\end{quote}

The effects of commerce on the development of civil society was of major interest to the writers of the Scottish Enlightenment who explored the nature and effects of the economic expansion taking place in the eighteenth century. Ferguson's work will be examined in the next section of the chapter.

\section*{Civil Society and the Corps Intermédiaires}

Montesquieu associates despotism with hot climates, especially those in the Middle East

\textsuperscript{34} See for example, Montesquieu, \textit{The Spirit of the Laws}, op. cit., Book 5, chapter 19, 69.

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., Book 5, chapter 3, 43.

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., Book 20, ch.1, 338.
and Asia. In contrast, he associates cold climates like Northern Europe with moderate
governments such as monarchies. He distinguishes moderate and despotic governments in the
following manner:

In order to form a moderate government, one must combine powers, regulate
them, temper them, make them act; one must give one power a ballast, so to
speak, to put it in a position to resist another; this is a masterpiece of legislation
that chance rarely produces and prudence is rarely allowed to produce. By
contrast, a despotic government leaps to view, so to speak; it is uniform
throughout; as only passions are needed to establish it, everyone is good enough
for that.

Here he outlines one of the defining distinctions between monarchies and despotisms - the
constraint of a ruler by law and by the existence of countervailing powers. It is in his elaboration
of this thesis that Montesquieu begins to construct a theory of civil society distinct from the state.

In Book 2, Chapter 4 of The Spirit of the Laws, Montesquieu states that "intermediate"
powers are a defining feature of monarchy and distinguish it from despotism. He argues that the
"most natural" intermediate power is the nobility. He cites lords, clergy, and towns as other
examples of intermediate powers which (with the nobility) correspond to the three Estates. The
function of these intermediate bodies is to provide a check on the monarch:

Just as the sea, which seems to want to cover the whole earth, is checked by the
grasses and the smallest bits of gravel on the shore, so monarchs, whose power
seems boundless, are checked by the slightest obstacles ...
However, the presence of intermediate bodies alone is insufficient to check the power of the monarch. In addition, a "depository" of law is required. This depository exists in the political/judicial bodies - the Parlements. "Under the French ancien régime," C.J. Betts remarks, the Parlement "was an institution which administered the law as its main function, but also retained vestiges of a political power which in the past was considerable (and was to be revived during the eighteenth century)." In the Persian Letters, Montesquieu laments the enervated state of the Parlements: "The Parlements are like a ruin which can be trodden underfoot, but can still summon up the idea of a temple famous in some former religion. Almost the only function they still have is to dispense justice, and their authority always remains precarious unless some unexpected combination of events occurs to revive their life and strength."

Montesquieu argues that in despotic states there are no intermediary bodies and no depositories of law. To Montesquieu this explains why religion holds so much sway in despotic states; its customs provide the content for a type of alternative depository. Marshall and Williams argue that in the eighteenth century it was a commonly held belief that "... despotism also stifled progress by destroying all those groups between the ruler and the mass of the people from whom exertion could be expected ..."; a belief they consider Montesquieu also held.

Norberto Bobbio suggests that for Montesquieu, "... the power of the monarch must be limited not only by the existence of indisputable superior laws but also by the existence of

43 Marshall and Williams, op cit., 142.
legitimate power-centres - the clergy, the nobility and the cities with their collegial organs. ..." 44 From this, Charles Taylor contends, one can argue that Montesquieu 'laid the ground for the civil society/state distinction' with his discussion of intermediate powers. Taylor asserts that in Montesquieu's view "... limitation by law is ineffective unless there exist independent bodies which have a standing in this law, and are there to defend it. The rule of law and the 'corps intermédiaires' stand and fall together." 45 Thus, for Taylor, "Montesquieu's 'corps intermédiaires' are in fact 'amphibious' bodies. They have a life outside the political structure, and this is indeed their primary purpose, and the basis of their strength. But it is crucial to the health of the polity that they also play a role within it." 46 Taylor suggests that the influence of Montesquieu's notion of intermediate bodies may be discerned in Hegel's 'corporations' and later in Tocqueville's 'associations'. 47

Points of Disjuncture with Seventeenth-Century Concepts

Montesquieu differs from earlier writers like Locke and Hobbes in that he does not make the state of nature the starting point to ground his work. Although he does discuss the state of nature briefly, he does so mainly to disagree with Hobbes about the status of natural law. He does not consider that society was established by a social contract to get out of the state of nature. Instead, Montesquieu begins his analysis with the assumption that man is a social being

44 Bobbio, op. cit., 94.

45 Charles Taylor, "Modes of Civil Society," Public Culture 3, no.1 (Fall 1990), 105.

46 Ibid., 114.

47 See ibid., 116-117.
whose normal condition is in a social milieu. In *Persian Letters* he contends that "Man is born in society and there he remains".48

Montesquieu’s move away from the state of nature as a foundation for his thesis lead him towards the exposition of an early formulation of what would later, in the hands of the writers of the Scottish Enlightenment, become a fully fledged stadial theory. Meek suggests that Book 18’s discussion of the relationship between laws and the mode of subsistence was of particular importance in this regard. Here Montesquieu draws distinctions between ‘savages’, ‘barbarians’, and those who cultivate land and use money. Meek posits that "Montesquieu’s sustained use … of the notion that differences in manners and social institutions are related to differences in the mode of subsistence has no parallel in any of the earlier literature … and there would seem to be little doubt that this … was of considerable importance in the subsequent development of the four stages theory."49 However, Montesquieu does not clearly enunciate that the modes of subsistence he refers to are stages through which human societies sequentially progress. This was to be expressed more clearly by writers of the Scottish Enlightenment who were greatly influenced by Montesquieu’s work in this area.50

In discarding the state of nature as an original point on which to found philosophy Montesquieu contributes to the eventual separation of civil and political society. He does this by theorizing that society exists as man’s natural state and that it exists prior to the formation of political society or government. It is the conflict that develops between humans in society that


49 Ronald L. Meek, *Social Science and the Ignoble Savage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 34.

50 See ibid., 31-35.
leads to the creation of law and government.

Montesquieu does more to further the distinction between civil society and the state through his discussions of the differences between monarchies and despotisms. Here he evinces the role of intermediate bodies (the three Estates)\textsuperscript{51} in limiting the power of the monarch in conjunction with the rule of law. While, admittedly, Montesquieu does not use the term civil society or make a decisive distinction between it and the state, his work paved the way for others such as Hegel to make the distinction clear. In this sense, one can discern a relation of "anticipation to realization", as Canguilhem puts it, between the work of Montesquieu and that of Hegel.

Montesquieu provides some similarities with, but also differs from, the seventeenth-century writers in the way in which he makes use of comparative material. Like Hobbes and Locke he deploys a mirroring construction of non-Western Others to illustrate his argument. Again, like them, this use of a mirroring construction is of fundamental importance to his argument and to his assertions regarding the significance of intermediate bodies (and hence regarding civil society). It is this construction which provides the basis for his comparison of despotism to monarchy and, thus, of Europeans to non-Europeans.

However, Montesquieu differs substantially from Hobbes or Locke in the range of material he employs in his comparisons. While the seventeenth-century writers essentially confine themselves to the examples of the American Indians (with additional references to Antiquity and the Bible), Montesquieu expands his gaze to encompass almost the whole known world. He does

\textsuperscript{51} In \textit{Persian Letters} Montesquieu states that "there are three estates in France: the Church, the nobles of the sword and the nobles of the robe" (Letter 44, op. cit., 98).
not pay much attention to the American Indians except for one or two brief citations to indicate their despotic tendencies. The sources he employs are similar to those of the seventeenth century, namely, accounts of voyages and travel writing. However, he does make use of Jesuit missionaries' accounts which were not a resource used by Locke or Hobbes. As with earlier writers, Montesquieu's work suffers from the same problems as his sources in terms of reliability and point of view. He regards his material through a European lens and, hence, reproduces the familiar type of account where non-European Others are counterposed to 'civilized' Europeans.

In his expansion of the scope of his comparative material, Montesquieu again provides an anticipation of Hegel's work. Hegel classified and organized the world into developmental stages which corresponded with spatial and temporal regions. This he derived from Montesquieu's division in this manner of types of government into monarchies (contemporary Europe), republics (Antiquity) and despotisms (Oriental). Montesquieu considered that these forms of government were progressively substituted for one another. This was also true for Hegel although his taxonomy includes four phases as opposed to Montesquieu's three.

While Montesquieu did not present a comprehensive account of civil society as a discrete entity from the state or a fully developed stadial theory, his work may be seen as an anticipation of both of these notions which were more fully realized in the works of Hegel and Ferguson respectively. Similarly, his categorization of the world into spatial and temporal periods

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51 Readers interested in Montesquieu's use of travel literature may wish to consult Appendix II to Montesquieu, The Spirit of Laws (sic.), ed. David Wallace Carrithers (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 469-471, which lists 26 items of travel literature which Montesquieu cited in footnotes to his works.

53 See Bobbio, op. cit., 102.
corresponding to phases in human history anticipates Hegel’s philosophy of history and anticipates the post-Enlightenment geographical imagination. Montesquieu’s influence on the Scottish Enlightenment and the evolution of the concept of civil society can be clearly discerned in the work of Adam Ferguson, to which I now turn.

FERGUSON

J.G.A. Pocock has identified two main "approaches to the study of early modern political and social thought, and of Scottish historical and economic theory in particular;" the civic humanist and civil jurisprudential paradigms. The civil jurisprudential approach views Scottish social thought "in the context of a generalized history of western political theory, which everything encourages and even enjoins us to organize, and to see as having been organized, along jurisprudential and philosophical lines." The civic humanist paradigm, which Pocock used in The Machiavellian Moment, begins with "a certain early modern articulation of the idea of virtue," drawing on the classical idea of the "practice of citizenship," which

... entailed the maintenance of a civic equality among those who passed the often severe tests prerequisite to equality, and the moral disposition of the self towards the maintenance of a public (a better adjective than common) good, identifiable with the political association, polis or respublica, itself. It affirmed that the human personality was that of a zoon politikon and was fully expressed only in the practice of citizenship as an active virtue; man (the male bias of this ideal


55 Ibid., 247.
bordered on the absolute) was by nature a public being, and his public action was less that of a magistrate exercising authority than of a citizen exercising equality ... And as the result of historical processes ... virtue in this sense had acquired material as well as moral preconditions. To qualify for equality and citizenship, the individual must be master of his own household, proprietor along with his equals of the only arms permitted to be borne in wars which must be publicly undertaken, and possessor of property whose function was to bring him not profit and luxury, but independence and leisure. Without property he must be a servant; without a public and civic monopoly of arms, his citizenship must be corrupted.  

In *The Machiavellian Moment*, Pocock argues that these classical republican ideas were developed by the Florentines and reinscribed by English and American theorists. This was then responded to by the writers of the Scottish Enlightenment, "... a reply which helped constitute the new science of political economy".  

Pocock suggests that these paradigms are neither mutually exclusive nor necessarily oppositional and that they have coexisted since at least the thirteenth century. He argues that both are useful for analyzing Scottish social thought in the eighteenth century, so that "some aspects ... will continue to answer to the civic humanist paradigm, while others yield better results when treated by the jurisprudential". Pocock favours "approaching the birth of political economy" through the civic republican paradigm and, hence, viewing "Scottish thought as responding to the civic humanist challenge". Ferguson's *Essay on the History of Civil Society* may be seen as part of this genre of nascent political economy and, therefore, may be best approached in this manner.

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56 Ibid., 235-236.
57 Ibid., 246.
58 Ibid., 249-250.
59 Ibid., 251, 240.
Nicholas Phillipson follows this approach in his work on the Scottish Enlightenment. He suggests that the Scots "... modified the traditional language of civic morality which political moralists were accustomed to employ in discussing the affairs of civil society," and attempted to redefine the concept of civic virtue for their own time. In the republican tradition, men valued "above everything else the sense of moral autonomy that could be won by learning how to live virtuously in civil society" (i.e., political society) and virtue was actualized through political participation. However, Phillipson continues,

The Scots took it for granted that a sense of moral autonomy - or, as they sometimes put it, 'independence' - represented the supreme source of gratification to which men could aspire, and that this sentiment could only be found by participating in the public affairs of society. But they did not believe that political participation was the only means of releasing it. It was clear to them that savages, living in pre-political, tribal societies were capable of experiencing a sense of moral autonomy. More important, it was equally clear that in modern societies there were many men and women, often living far from the seat of government, who devoted themselves to local affairs and knew something of these feelings of moral autonomy even though the classic means of participating in the political process were effectively closed to them.

The awareness of the social and economic differences between the classical and other forms of society, lead the Scots to reevaluate the received civic republican paradigm:

Perhaps classic ideas of civic morality attached too much importance to the role of politics in shaping the moral personality of a citizen class and the constitution of a civil society or even a tribe. Perhaps not enough attention had been paid to the civic importance of economic, social and intellectual activity. Perhaps it was time to reconsider traditional ideas of civic virtue in light of the experience of men living in primitive and civilized societies and from what could be discovered

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61 Ibid., 21-22.
about the principles of human nature. This reevaluation was accomplished by the latter part of the eighteenth century and "provided the Scots with a new understanding of civic virtue and that 'sociological' understanding of the Science of Man which is the unique contribution of the Scots to the philosophy of the Enlightenment". Adam Ferguson's work may be examined in this context. The reevaluation of civic virtue by the Scottish writers may be seen as part of the process under way in the eighteenth century of separating civil society from its conflation with political society in the republican and other traditions. Similarly, the historical "sociological" approach to the study of man may be viewed as an eighteenth-century contribution towards the post-Enlightenment geographical imagination. These two themes will now be explored in Ferguson's work on civil society.

The State of Nature and the Origins of Society

Ferguson begins his Essay on the History of Civil Society (1767) with a discussion of the general traits of human nature. Wood contends that "Ferguson's whole approach to the study of man and society was grounded in the methods of the natural historians" and that "Ferguson invoked the methodological practices of natural history". Accordingly, Ferguson found fault with both Hobbes' and Rousseau's ideas of a state of nature since he saw them as hypothetical.

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62 Ibid., 22.
63 Ibid.

constructs which were not based on historical fact. Instead, he argued that ideas about human nature should be grounded in "the historical record which, he claimed, demonstrated that man is naturally a sociable animal."\textsuperscript{65}

Ferguson posits that society is mankind's natural condition and that it has existed for as long as there have been individuals. Humans live in collectivities in several different circumstances. Ferguson thinks that these are all 'natural' and, consequently, he rejects the idea of a state of nature or an 'original' condition.\textsuperscript{66} Therefore, in the first section of the Essay, Ferguson asserts that it is fallacious to begin analysis of the evolution of human history with the idea of escaping from the state of nature. In answer to the question 'where is the state of nature located?', Ferguson states that "it is here; and it matters not whether we are understood to speak in the island of Great Britain, at the Cape of Good Hope, or the Straits of Magellan".\textsuperscript{67} Here he argues against the hypothetical quality of the state of nature (the "imaginary state of nature"). Further, he contends that:

If we admit that man is susceptible of improvement, and has in himself a principle of progression, and a desire of perfection, it appears improper to say, that he has quitted the state of his nature, when he has begun to proceed; ... he only follows the disposition, and employs the powers that nature has given.\textsuperscript{68}

Ferguson suggests that it is this ability to improve which accounts for the diversity of

\textsuperscript{65} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{68} Ibid.
circumstances in which one finds humans. Man's desire for perfection and to better his lot leads him to cultivate his faculties and skills. It is on the capacity of human beings to 'improve' that Ferguson places his primary focus. He seeks to analyze the development of mankind from primitive ("rude") to civilized ("polished") types of society. This process of societal evolution, he considers, proceeds in a series of increments.

Ferguson, like Montesquieu before him, rejects the idea of the state of nature as the origin of society and also the notion of a social contract which establishes society. Society is not established according to rational planning or contract. In Principles of Moral and Political Science, Ferguson makes a point of attacking Hobbes' assertion of a contractual basis of social relations. Instead of a social contract, Ferguson sees society as arising and progressing in a spontaneous manner. He did not believe men were naturally pacific but, rather, that conflict is inherent to human nature. Further, he considered that conflict is an important factor in an individual's advancement and also in the creation of social institutions. The variation in human abilities leads to the creation of social structures and forms of government through a system of "subordination". The form of government is determined by the type of subordination.

Civil Society

After discussing the issues surrounding the origins of society, the social contract and the state of nature, Ferguson spends the remainder of the Essay examining the historical transition
of societal forms from 'rude' to refined or 'civilized,' i.e., "the natural history of society".\textsuperscript{71}

As Forbes observes, while Ferguson titles his book as an essay on "civil society", it is not particularly clear what he means by this. Forbes suggests that:

'Civil society' could mean civilization in the broadest sense, a state of society 'polished' and 'refined' as contrasted with rude or savage society; more technically, it could mean the state ... or a state of society with regular government and political subordination as opposed, in the fashionable political philosophy, to the 'state of nature'. One has only to glance at the table of contents to see that the scope of Ferguson's Essay is much wider than this latter meaning of 'civil society'; it is a history of civilization.\textsuperscript{72}

However, Ferguson depicts civilization as defined in political terms. He states that "Civilization ... belongs rather to the effects of law and political establishment, on the form of society, than to any state merely of lucrative possession of wealth."\textsuperscript{73} By way of illustration he uses the Roman republic and Sparta as examples of societies that were backward in technological innovation and commerce but were 'civilized' (due to their political institutions and laws). In contrast, he cites China and India as examples of societies which have advanced commercially and administratively but which are not 'civilized' (or part of the history of civil society) because their governments are despotic.\textsuperscript{74} Forbes concludes that Ferguson uses the term 'civil society' rather than 'civilization' because he wants to encompass a wide variety of matters within the

\textsuperscript{71} Ibid., xix.

\textsuperscript{72} Ibid., xix.


\textsuperscript{74} On Rome and Sparta, see ibid. On China and India, see Ferguson, \textit{Essay}, op. cit., Part 3, sec.1.
'political', such as the 'advancement of the commercial arts'.

Ferguson frames his discussion of social progress in a tripartite distinction between savages, barbarians, and 'polished' societies. He classifies savages and barbarians as 'rude' societies while 'polished' societies are considered 'civilized’. Ferguson differentiates between savages and barbarians on the following grounds. Savage societies "... have little attention to property, and scarcely any beginnings of subordination or government" while barbarous societies "... having possessed themselves of herds ... know what it is to be poor and rich. They know the relations of patron and client, of servant and master, and suffer themselves to be classed according to their measures of wealth".

The key to progress here is 'property' and the effects it has on human behaviour. The effort required to obtain property conquers the inclination towards "sloth" or "enjoyment" which afflicts those in the savage state. The "... habit of acting with a view to distant objects ... is slowly acquired, and is in reality a principal distinction of nations in the advanced state of mechanic and commercial arts". The development of private property leads to disparities of wealth and the ensuing rivalries lead people to band behind leaders "... distinguished by their fortunes, and by the lustre of their birth". This establishes forms of what Ferguson calls "casual subordination". There are three sources of subordination: differences in natural abilities and temperament, disparities in property holding, and differences in "... the habits which are

75 See Forbes, op. cit., xx.
76 Ferguson, op. cit., 81.
77 Ibid., 82.
78 Ibid., 98.
acquired by the practice of different arts [liberal or mechanical]. Ferguson argues that:

> In every society there is a casual subordination, independent of its formal establishment, and frequently adverse to its constitution ... this casual subordination, possibly arising from the distribution of property, or some other circumstance that bestows unequal degrees of influence, gives the state its tone, and fixes its character.

The intrinsic distinctions and inequalities between human beings form the basis from which formal political arrangements are derived. The source of government is not a contract but the natural relations of subordination within society and governmental arrangements change as society changes or, as Ferguson expresses it:

> No constitution is formed by concert, no government is copied from a plan ... [Humans] ... proceed from one form of government to another, by easy transitions ... the seeds of every form are lodged in human nature; they spring up and ripen with the season.

While the establishment of private property and the pursuit of wealth which ensues are seen as civilizing forces by Ferguson, an additional factor is required to make the transition to a "polished" society. This factor is the division of labour. Savages and barbarians must be self-sufficient and as a result choose to spend their spare time in "the enjoyments of sloth" rather than in the pursuit of wealth. The lack of a division of labour also inhibits the development of skill in any one area of endeavour, so that a man becomes a 'jack of all trades' and a master of none. This leads Ferguson to conclude that "... a people can make no great progress in cultivating the arts of life, until they have separated, and committed to different persons, the several tasks,

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79 Ibid., 184.
80 Ibid., 133.
81 Ibid., 123.
which require a peculiar skill and attention". The division of labour leads to prosperity and the perfection of production techniques. A similar process takes place in the realms of the military and of government. An efficient government allows for the development of the economy and further "improvements".

However, the improvement of society is not without its costs. The struggle to accumulate wealth is the result of "virtue", but the attainment of wealth may lead to corruption and decline. As Ferguson states, "the virtues of men have shone most during their struggles, not after the attainment of their ends. Those ends themselves, though attained by virtue, are frequently the causes of corruption and vice". Corruption manifests itself in several different forms. For example, a focus on money-making to the exclusion of other things makes humans self-interested and corresponds to a loss in public spirit.

In addition, the division of labour leads to a weakening of public spirit. This occurs because the division of labour tends "... to break the bands of society ... and society is made to consist of parts, of which none is animated with the spirit of society itself". The quest for economic advancement following on from the division of labour promotes disparities of wealth which corrupt both the lower and upper classes. This leads to "... considering public life as a scene for the gratification of mere vanity, avarice, and ambition ..." A dialectical relation

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82 Ibid., 180.
83 See ibid., 181.
84 Ibid., 206.
85 Ibid., 218.
86 Ibid., 258.
exists between "egoistic economic interest" and the "disinterested passions" in Ferguson's argument.  

The loss of public spirit is further compounded by two factors - the administration of government by public servants and the abdication of responsibility for defence to a professional military. Ferguson considers that "... to separate the arts which form the citizen and the statesman, the arts of policy and war, is an attempt to dismember the human character, and to destroy the very arts we mean to improve." Ferguson's study of the Roman Empire lead him to fear that a people's lack of military training might leave them unable to resist the violation of their freedom by the professional armies they had established:

The Romans only meant by their armies to incroach on the freedom of other nations, while they preserved their own. They forgot that, in assembling soldiers of fortune, and in suffering any leader to be master of a disciplined army, they actually resigned political rights, and suffered a master to arise for the state. This people, in short, whose ruling passion was depredation and conquest, perished by the recoil of an engine which they themselves had erected against mankind.

This points to Ferguson's primary fear concerning the loss of public spirit - the lulling of the people's distrust of those who hold power which facilitates the downhill slide to despotism. Ironically, civil society may degenerate into despotism since civil society has enlarged the state's sphere of administration, created a professional military and, thereby, may have benumbed its subjects' vigilance with the veneer of peaceful, orderly government. Civil society may lead to

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88 Ferguson, op. cit., 230.

89 Ibid., 231. See also Ferguson's History of the Progress and Termination of the Roman Republic (1783).
the loss of public spirit and, hence, "the rules of despotism are made for the government of corrupted men". However, Ferguson does not consider despotism to be the inevitable result of modern civil society. Despotism can be avoided if attempts are made to increase public spirit, the level of civic interaction, and the leadership role of the upper stratum of civil society, within a constitutional monarchy. Consequently, he advocates "a more civil society" to overcome the deleterious effects of the inadequate level of 'civility' in modern civil societies.

Non-European Others

Ferguson's examination of human nature and the evolution of human history involved the study of non-European as well as European societies. Like Montesquieu, he divides the world into zones according to climate. Civilization and civil society are found in temperate zones (i.e., Europe) where man "has always attained to the principal honours of his species" while "the torrid zone, everywhere round the globe ... has furnished few materials for history ... has no where matured the more important projects of political wisdom, nor inspired the virtues which are connected with freedom, and required in the conduct of civil affairs." Extremes of climate account for the static, unchanging nature of societies and peoples in those areas. Temperate climates enable people to progress. Climate also affects the qualities of humans and "under extremes of heat or of cold, the active range of the human soul appears to be limited; and men

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91 Keane, ibid.

92 Ferguson, Essay, op. cit., 110.
are of inferior importance ..." In cold climates, men are "dull and slow, moderate in their desires, regular and pacific in their manner of life", while in hot climates "they are feverish in their passions, weak in their judgements, and addicted by temperament to animal pleasure."

Throughout the Essay, Ferguson describes humans living outside the temperate zones of Europe in the hot climates of Asia, Africa, and the "East" as sensuous, passionate, cruel, absurd, wild, debauched, violent, superstitious, groveling, mean, impetuous, servile, corrupt and effeminate. As they are "addicted to pleasure" and "sunk in effeminacy" they will always be subject to "a permanent fabric of despotical government". Like Montesquieu, Ferguson thought that different kinds of government were the product of environmental conditions and represented different stages of development and that "forms of government must be varied, in order to suit the extent, the way of subsistence, the character, and the manners of different nations". He also cites with approval Montesquieu's tripartite division of types of government. Like Montesquieu, he attributes these to spatial and temporal locations: democracy to the ancient world, monarchy to contemporary Europe and despotism to Asia, Africa and the East. In particular he remarks on "the very important distinction, which Mr Montesquieu has made, between despotism and monarchy" and adopts the idea that despotism is a corrupt form of monarchy based on fear rather than honour.

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93 Ibid., 112.
94 Ibid., 116.
95 Ibid., 62.
96 See ibid., 65-73.
97 Ibid., 65.
Ferguson considers man to be capable of progress. In the history of civil society man has progressed from the savage state through barbarism to a "polished," "refined" or "civilized" condition as represented by the nations of contemporary Europe. In Part II of the Essay, "Of the History of Rude Nations," Ferguson argues that the rude ancestors of contemporary Europeans "resembled, in many things, the present natives of North America: they were ignorant of agriculture; they painted their bodies; and used for clothing, the skins of beasts." This condition, he claims, was the starting point of all societies and "in such circumstances are we to look for the original character of mankind." He continues that it is in the contemporary condition of the Indians, as in a mirror, that European man should look for an account of the life of his rude ancestors. Ferguson devotes considerably more time to discussion of the North American Indians than to any other non-Europeans and bases his account of their lifestyles on the works of travel writers (principally Charlevoix and Lafitau). Ferguson visited America 1778 with the Carlisle Commission whose task was to negotiate with the American government. However, this trip was seventeen years after the Essay was published.

In his discussion of rude nations, Ferguson claims that everywhere in America, Asia, and Africa one finds savage and barbarous nations. Thus the inhabitants of these areas have little interest in property and survive primarily through hunting and fishing. Since "property is a matter of progress" these nations have not progressed from the rude to a refined state as witnessed by the European nations. They also have not developed a division of labour which is

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98 Ibid., 75.
99 Ibid., 75, 80.
another factor required for man to progress to a condition of refinement and civilization. Since they lack the advances characteristic of refined nations (modern civil societies) rude nations will "always yield to the superior arts, and the discipline of more civilized nations ... and hence the Europeans have a growing ascendancy over the nations of Africa and America."\(^1\)

Points of Disjuncture with Seventeenth-Century Concepts

Like Montesquieu, Ferguson departs from the work of Hobbes and Locke by not grounding his theories in a state of nature and disagrees in particular with Hobbes' analysis. Similarly, he rejects the idea of a social contract and instead cites Montesquieu's claim in the *Persian Letters* that man is born in society and stays there.\(^2\) In departing from the state of nature and the social contract as the foundations for his study of the history of mankind, Ferguson developed his own "highly idiosyncratic" version of what Ronald Meek calls the "four stages" theory. This theory is based on the idea that:

... society 'naturally' or 'normally' progressed over time through four more or less distinct and consecutive stages, each corresponding to a different mode of subsistence, these stages being defined as hunting, pasturage, agriculture, and commerce. To each of these modes of subsistence ... correspond different sets of ideas and institutions relating to law, property and government, and also different sets of customs, manners and morals.\(^3\)

Meek argues that the four stages theory became the dominant paradigm for the study of the history of mankind and of political economy in the second half of the eighteenth century and was important in the development of disciplines like sociology, anthropology, economics and

\(^1\) Ferguson, op. cit., 95.

\(^2\) See ibid., 16.

\(^3\) Meek, op. cit. 2.
In Ferguson's discussion of rude nations he follows Montesquieu's attribution of savages to the hunting stage and barbarians (herdsmen) to the pasturage stage. Progress to the agricultural staged is premised on the establishment of property which leads to industry and the accumulation of wealth. The commercial phase is represented by the "polished" and "refined" commercial states of modern Europe. The notion of the sequential progression of human development is also the basis of Hegel's philosophy of history although he sees human development in terms of the evolution of self-consciousness and the unfolding of reason.

Like the seventeenth-century writers, Ferguson places most emphasis on the American Indians in his use of comparative material. Unlike them, however, he does not confine his analysis of non-Europeans to the study of the Americas. Rather, Ferguson makes use of material on the peoples of Asia, Africa, and the Middle East to illustrate his argument. He employs a mirroring construction between Europeans and non-European Others. His discussion of refined, modern (European) civil society is juxtaposed to the rude (savage and barbaric) societies outside Europe. Ferguson's sources are similar to those of Montesquieu, consisting primarily of travel writing and missionaries' accounts.

Ferguson associates different types of government with different modes of subsistence, customs, manners and morals. He also associates them with different spatial and temporal locations. He adopts Montesquieu's tripartite typology of governments and attributes them to the same locations. Ferguson particularly emphasized Montesquieu's distinction between monarchies

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104 See ibid.

105 See ibid., 153-154.
and despotisms, and like him, identified non-European forms of government as despotic. This categorization of the world into spatial and temporal regions anticipates Hegel's philosophy of history and the post-Enlightenment geographical imagination.

Ferguson's discussion of civil society shows some evidence of breaking with the classical and natural law traditions' conception of civil society as political society. While Ferguson does not present civil society as separate from political society he does include many matters within the 'political' which were absent in earlier accounts. This is especially the case in relation to economic matters and his discussion of the commercial arts. Foucault's analysis of governmentality also suggests how Ferguson's discussion of the market economy contributed to the eventual separation of civil society and the state. In prior formulations, civil society was juridical or political society. Foucault sees Ferguson's Essay as signalling a change in the meaning of civil society. Thus for Foucault, Smith's idea of individual 'economic interest' as the driving force of economic growth, was extended by Ferguson to encompass the establishment of society in general. Foucault sees Ferguson's conception of civil society "as being concerned with the task of inventing a wider political framework than that of the juridical society of contract, capable of encompassing individual economic agency within a governable order."\textsuperscript{106} Hence, Foucault considers civil society to be "the correlate of a political technology of government."\textsuperscript{107}

In his account of the history of civil society, Ferguson was confronted with the problem


\textsuperscript{107} Burchell, op. cit., 141.
of how the civic republican paradigm's notion of virtue could be revised to take account of modern life. "Ferguson", as Forbes remarks, "following Montesquieu, did not expect to find the wholly selfless public spirit or 'virtue' of the simple and economically primitive republics of antiquity in the large, complex and commercial monarchies of modern Europe." Consequently, he modified the classical emphasis on the political and the practice of citizenship in determining virtue by including discussion of economic and social considerations and of the principles of human nature. 'Moral autonomy' was realized through involvement in the public affairs of society but this was not limited to the practice of citizenship as in the classical world.

Ferguson and Montesquieu both wrote large historical analyses of the Roman republic and, like other eighteenth-century writers, looked to the classical models of Greece and Rome in constructing their works. However, this did not involve a merely uncritical appropriation of the ancient models. Rather, each tried to reevaluate the classical models in the light of the changes wrought by a market economy and by the other changes that occurred in the eighteenth century. Hegel, in the nineteenth century, was confronted by a similar problematic. His work may be viewed as an attempt to understand and theorize modernity and to reevaluate the classical models of ethical life in light of modern conditions.

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108 Forbes, op. cit., xxxii.

... the creation of civil society is the achievement of the modern world.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, The Philosophy of Right.

Introduction

In this chapter I trace Hegel's contribution to the conceptual separation of civil society from the state and his contribution to the post-Enlightenment geographical imagination. In both these respects Hegel's work may be viewed as forming a relation of anticipation to realization with the works of Montesquieu and Ferguson discussed in the previous chapter. This chapter is divided into six sections. In the first section I address Hegel's relation to modernity and its impact on his philosophy. The next four sections deal with Hegel's rejection of the concepts of the natural law tradition, his concept of civil society, his theory of world history and his construction of non-European others, and his relationship to Montesquieu and Ferguson. In the final section, I elucidate the principal common themes which may be drawn from these authors regarding civil society, the figuration of difference, and the use of non-European Others as mirror-images of Europeans.

Hegel and Modernity

Hegel's attempts to understand and theorize the notion of "modernity" are central to his concept of civil society and, indeed, to his philosophy in general. In The Philosophical Discourse
of Modernity, Jürgen Habermas claims that "Hegel was the first philosopher to develop a clear concept of modernity."¹ He shows how Hegel deployed the concept of modernity in historical contexts so that "within the horizon of the modern age, ... [i.e., from c.1500 onward] ... the present enjoys a prominent position as contemporary history."² For Hegel, the Enlightenment and the French Revolution mark a point of rupture which ushers in the history of the present. Hegel describes this as "a glorious sunrise" which signifies "the last stage in History, our world, our own time."³

Along with this understanding of the present, Habermas contends, a problem arose for "the modern historical consciousness of Western culture," namely, "modernity can and will no longer borrow the criteria by which it takes its orientation from the models supplied by another epoch; it has to create its normativity out of itself."⁴ In this "... problem of grounding modernity out of itself ...," Habermas declares, "modernity sees itself cast back upon itself without any possibility of escape. This explains the sensitiveness of its self-understanding, the dynamism of the attempt, carried forward incessantly down to our own time to 'pin itself down'."⁵


² Ibid., 6.


⁴ Ibid. Habermas’ ethnocentric focus on Western history and culture is well established and is comprehensively canvassed and critiqued in Victor Li, "Habermas and the Ethnocentric Discourse of Modernity," in Constructive Criticism: The Human Sciences in the Age of Theory, ed. Martin Kreiswirth and Thomas Carmichael (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 44-58. I discuss Li’s critique of Habermas’ ethnocentrism in Chapter Five, infra.

⁵ Habermas, ibid., 7-8.
For Habermas, Hegel’s achievement was to take the process of grounding of modernity in its own norms (rather than the external norms of past epochs) and elevate it to the plane of philosophy; Hegel was the first to conceive this as a philosophical problem. Indeed, Habermas considers this to be "the fundamental problem" of Hegel’s philosophy.\textsuperscript{6} Hence, "the anxiety caused by the fact that a modernity without models had to stabilize itself on the basis of the very diremption [or divisions …] it had wrought is seen by Hegel as ‘the source of the need for philosophy’."\textsuperscript{7} The self-consciousness of modernity brings with it a need for "self-reassurance," which manifests itself as "the task of grasping its own time."\textsuperscript{8}

Hegel perceives modernity as characterized by ‘subjectivity’ (self-relation) which he explains through the concepts of ‘reflection’ and ‘freedom’.\textsuperscript{9} As subjectivity is historically produced, Hegel considers the Reformation, the Enlightenment and the French Revolution to be milestones in the evolution to full subjectivity.\textsuperscript{10} Since modernity and its guiding principle of subjectivity are historically produced as the present, i.e., contemporary Europe, the milestones that represent the break with past epochs are all European. Subjectivity conditions all aspects of modern life so that "… religious life, state, and society as well as science, morality, and art are transformed into just so many embodiments of the principle of subjectivity."\textsuperscript{11}

\textsuperscript{6} Ibid., 16.
\textsuperscript{7} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{8} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{9} See ibid.
\textsuperscript{10} See ibid., 17.
\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., 18.
In philosophy, subjectivity has been analyzed in the philosophy of reflection from Descartes to Kant and expressed as "... the structure of a self-relating, knowing subject, which bends back upon itself as object, in order to grasp itself as in a mirror image - literally in a 'speculative' way."\(^{12}\) This formulation of the philosophy of reflection (which appears in Kant's three *Critiques*) did not satisfy Hegel because:

Kant does not perceive as diremptions the differentiations within reason, the formal divisions within culture, and in general the fissures among all those spheres. Hence he ignores the need for unification that emerges with the separations evoked by the principle of subjectivity.\(^{13}\)

For Hegel, Kant's formulation of the philosophy of reflection (and of the "self-interpretation of modernity") fails to account for the divisions within the society and culture of (European) modernity. His task, therefore, was to remedy this omission by finding a way to "grasp his own time" and account for these divisions in his concept of modernity and for what he perceived as the consequent need for unification.

John E. Grumley has analyzed this aspect of Hegel's philosophy through the concept of totality. He argues that by the end of the eighteenth century, Europe had undergone a period of rapid socio-economic transformation as evidenced in the growing complexity of contemporary society, increasing disparities in wealth and a rapidly advancing division of labour.\(^{14}\) However, although the mood of the time was generally optimistic and the new science of political economy

\(^{12}\) Ibid.

\(^{13}\) Ibid., 19. Here I will only consider the philosophy of reflection in broad outline as I discuss more fully the philosophy of reflection, Hegel's problems with prior formulations and his proposed resolution of those problems in Chapter Seven, infra.

mainly argued that these changes heralded growing national wealth, some eighteenth-century social critics (e.g., Ferguson and Montesquieu) worried about the negative aspects of modernity.\(^{15}\) Grumley identifies three principal areas of concern: "the loss of community and the resulting social and individual fragmentation."\(^{16}\) Thus there was a concern for the 'totality' of individuals who were affected by increasing social complexity and the specialization concomitant on an expanding division of labour and a concern for the 'totality' of society which was becoming more divided socially through inequalities in economic status culminating in a loss of community. For Hegel, the diremption of individuals in modern life was connected to the divisions in contemporary culture. Lack of cultural union or community was diagnosed by Hegel as the source of the alienated state of the modern individual.\(^{17}\) These problems appeared all the more acute because many eighteenth-century theorists looked to the "idealised homogeneity attributed to the classical Greek polis" as a comparative model.\(^{18}\)

Like his eighteenth-century predecessors, Hegel was concerned with these issues and, like them, idealized the polis as a model of homogeneity, community and social concord. In his early work, he would "... often compare the deplorable privatisation of modern individual existence to this ancient communality that integrated the individual into a higher social unity affirmed in a common religion and morality. This vital unity was polis life."\(^{19}\) However, unlike many of

\(^{15}\) See ibid.

\(^{16}\) Ibid.

\(^{17}\) See ibid., 14.

\(^{18}\) Ibid., 12.

\(^{19}\) Ibid., 13.
the eighteenth-century social critics, Hegel realized that the polis could not serve ultimately as a model for modern society. This realization emerged from his analysis of modernity in historical terms (as suggested by Habermas above) and through his study of the burgeoning field of political economy.²⁰

Hegel came to see that the changes taking place in the economy, which had intrigued the eighteenth-century Scottish political economists, were accompanied by changes in the nature of society and its relation to the political sphere. The questions that troubled writers like Montesquieu and Ferguson regarding the relations between the nascent commercial society of modernity and the political structure of modern society also formed the central problematic of much of Hegel’s work, especially his later work. His analysis of these issues was expressed most fully in his discussion of civil society (and the state) in the Philosophy of Right.

Ferguson and Montesquieu, in their attempts to answer these questions, still tended to glance backwards to the polis and the Roman republic (and the idealized notions of civic virtue and citizen participation) as potential models for trying to understand the evolving relations between an increasingly economically based, depoliticized notion of society and an increasingly discrete political sphere. While they made important steps towards separating civil society and the state and in rejecting the ancient models, they were never able to analyze modernity without some recourse to these models. Hegel, however, with the benefit of hindsight was able to step back and analyze the changes that occurred in the eighteenth century from some temporal distance. From this vantage point, he was able to present a new concept of civil society which differed substantially from the classical models and was thus able to ground modernity out of

²⁰ See ibid., 17.
itself.

From his study of political economy, particularly the works of writers of the Scottish Enlightenment, Hegel derived a new view of the changes occurring in modernity and began to put a positive spin on processes he previously had conceived negatively as instances of decline. From political economy, "he gained a new perspective on the apparent fragmentation and disunity of the emergent bourgeois order. There he found an evolutionist understanding of historical development based on the idea of the progressive unfolding of society's economic structure." 21 Hegel thus saw "an underlying progress of reason in history" and began to see the history of human life as a totality in which diremption was "a moment or a phase in a totalising process which overcame and encompassed it." 22 Hence, social disunity and division were a part of a dialectical process which enabled history to progress and the "fixed oppositions and polarities were relativised and subsumed as moments in greater unities of organic wholeness and living totalisation. Diremption and opposition are ... necessary moments of a living process ..." 23

Hegel conceived this historical process as one of spiritual development, as the progress of reason and the unfolding of human freedom. In this manner, he ontologized and historicized the concept of totality. 24 Therefore, "his mature idea of totality involved the processual self-actualization of an infinite, rational subject in the natural and historical worlds thereby realising

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21 Ibid., 17.

22 Ibid.

23 Ibid., 19.

24 See ibid., 20.
its own adequate self-knowledge."\textsuperscript{25}

This is why Habermas suggests that for Hegel the goal of philosophy was of demonstrating reason as "the power of unification."\textsuperscript{26} Reason is able to conquer the condition of diremption into which the (Kantian) notion of subjectivity had hurtled contemporary social conditions and also reason itself.\textsuperscript{27} Hegel takes issue with the philosophical oppositions which characterize the Kantian self-knowledge of modernity and thus with Kant's philosophy of reflection, so that "the critique of subjective idealism is at the same time a critique of modernity; only in this way can the latter secure its concept and thereby assure its own stability."\textsuperscript{28} Nevertheless, Habermas maintains that Hegel's attempts to overcome the problems he perceives in the philosophy of reflection and to critique modernity are ultimately unsuccessful because "he conceives the overcoming of subjectivity within the boundaries of a philosophy of the subject."\textsuperscript{29}

This means, Habermas explains, that:

... the negative aspect of a self-sufficient subjectivity that is posited absolutely is also disclosed to the faculty of reflection applied to itself. Hence, the rationality of the understanding, which modernity knows as its possession and recognizes as its only source of obligation, has to be expanded into reason, following in the tracks of the dialectic of enlightenment. But as absolute knowledge, reason assumes a form so overwhelming that it not only solves the initial problem of a self-reassurance of modernity, but solves it too well. The question about the genuine self-understanding of modernity gets lost in reason's ironic laughter. For reason has now taken the place of fate and knows that every event of essential

\textsuperscript{25} Ibid., 21.

\textsuperscript{26} Habermas, op. cit., 21.

\textsuperscript{27} See ibid.

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{29} Ibid., 22. I discuss Derrida's critique of Hegel's resolution of the problems of the philosophy of reflection in Chapter Seven, infra.
significance has *already* been decided. Thus, Hegel's philosophy satisfies the need of modernity for self-grounding only at the cost of devaluing present-day reality and blunting critique.\(^{30}\)

Habermas contends that the "blunting of critique" that occurs once the dialectic of enlightenment has been played out, is also present in what he calls Hegel's "construction of the 'sublation' of civil society in the state."\(^{31}\) In order to understand what Habermas means by this statement, I now will examine Hegel's theory of civil society against the backdrop of his attempts to understand and theorize modernity. As a way into Hegel's concept of civil society, however, I will outline first his reasons for rejecting the basic tenets of natural law theory and its classically based conception of civil society. By contrasting Hegel's theory of civil society with these earlier formulations, I intend to show how he presents civil society as distinct from the state and how this places his concept in, as Canguilhem puts it, a relation of "anticipation to realization" with those of Montesquieu and Ferguson.

**Critique of Natural Law Tradition**

Like Montesquieu and Ferguson before him, Hegel was critical of the natural law tradition of political theory and of its ideas of a state of nature and a social contract. Hegel's critique of the natural law tradition is particularly important because it is part of the rupture with classical and natural law theories of civil society (such as those propounded by Locke and Hobbes) which his theory of civil society establishes. In both his *Philosophy of History* and *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel rejects the notion of a state of nature as the original condition of

\(^{30}\) Ibid., 41-42.

\(^{31}\) Ibid., 37.
mankind. He attacks what he calls the "errors" of current "fashionable" theories "which pass for established truths, and have become fixed prejudices." He dismisses both theories of the state of nature as a hypothetical philosophical construct and as a condition which existed historically.

Regarding the hypothetical construct he argues that "the idea of a state of nature was merely an assumption as far as historical existence is concerned, an assumption made in the twilit regions of hypothetical reflection." While here he is critical of natural law theories generally, his primary target is Rousseau and his idea of the "primitive paradisiac condition of man". This is the notion "that man is free by nature, but that in society, in the State - to which nevertheless he is irresistibly impelled - he must limit his natural freedom." While Hegel rejects this formulation because it conflates (civil) society with the state, he also objects

[32] Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, The Philosophy of History, trans. J. Sibree (New York: Dover, 1956), 40. The Philosophy of History is based on Hegel's lectures over several years on this topic and is comprised of Hegel's manuscript drafts and published versions of the lectures, supplemented by passages from the notes of several students who attended the lectures. Sibree's translation does not distinguish between these sources in the text and he has edited the text with respect to content in a different manner from other translations. A more recent translation of the introduction to The Philosophy of History by H.B. Nisbet is now available: Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Lectures on the Philosophy of World History. Introduction: Reason in History, trans. H.B Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975). Nisbet's translation distinguishes between passages derived from Hegel's own drafts of his lectures and those derived from students notes. He also presents much more historical material on non-Western peoples (e.g., Hegel's discussion of Africa) which is omitted from Sibree's translation. Unfortunately, Nisbet's translation is only of the introduction and not the whole work. Consequently, I will use primarily the Nisbet translation but I will make use of the Sibree translation for the sections other than the introduction or where it provides material not covered or explored in as much depth by Nisbet.


[34] Ibid.

to it because "when man is spoken of as 'free by Nature,' the mode of his existence as well as his destiny is implied. His merely natural and primary condition is intended." He argues that this conception is wrong since man is not 'free' (in Hegel's sense of the word) in his natural condition. Thus he contends that:

What we find such a state of Nature to be in actual experience, answers exactly to the Idea of a merely natural condition. Freedom as the ideal of that which is original and natural, does not exist as original and natural. Rather must it be first sought out and won; and that by an incalculable medial discipline of the intellectual and moral powers. The state of Nature is, therefore, predominantly that of injustice and violence, of untamed natural impulses, of inhuman deeds and feelings.

However, even though this so-called 'state of nature' is wild and violent, man in this condition is a member of society and constrained by "social arrangements". Hegel asserts, therefore, that the state of nature as conceived by natural law theorists never existed. The state of nature, ... is not indeed raised to the dignity of the historical fact; it would indeed be difficult, were the attempt seriously made, to point out any such condition as actually existing, or as having ever occurred. Examples of a savage stage of life can be pointed out, but they are marked by brutal passions and deeds of violence: while however rude and simple their conditions, they involve social arrangements which (to use the common phrase) restrain freedom.

Consequently, Hegel argues for the rejection of the idea of a state of nature and of the Rousseauian notion of a "primitive paradisiac condition of man," since even savages (humans in the so-called natural condition) have social arrangements and, therefore, are neither in the state of nature nor 'free' in the sense that natural law theorists use either of these terms. In addition, Hegel contends that we should not regard the existence of social arrangements in the natural

36 Ibid.

37 Ibid., 41.

38 Ibid., 40.
condition as a restriction of freedom. Rather, "we should on the contrary look upon such limitation as the indispensable proviso of emancipation. Society and the State are the very conditions in which Freedom is realized."\textsuperscript{39}

Hegel makes similar arguments for the rejection of the state of nature and of the tenets of natural law theory in the \textit{Philosophy of Right}.\textsuperscript{40} In this work he also rejects the natural law theorists' idea of a social contract (to get out of the state of nature). Hegel dismisses the idea of contract as the basis of marriage and the family as "shameful," since these involve "ethical" relationships and spiritual bonds which transcend mere contractual relations which treat the parties as separate individuals.\textsuperscript{41} Nor can the state be founded on mere contract. Hegel argues that the notion of contractual relations "...is not the guiding principle of the family, still less of the state" and that such a notion "... stands opposed to the Idea of ethical life."\textsuperscript{42} He maintains that the state cannot be founded on contract on two grounds.\textsuperscript{43} First, since a contract may be dissolved by the parties, the state must be based on other ties which are indelible and irreversible. To found the state on contract would place political rights and duties in the private realm and would move "the characteristics of private property into a sphere of a quite different

\textsuperscript{39} Ibid., 41.


\textsuperscript{41} See ibid., paras. 75, 163, pages 58, 112.

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid., para. 281, page 186.

and higher nature." It would also mix up or confl ate the state with civil society and appear to make membership of the state optional:

If the state is confused with civil society, and if its specific end is laid down as the security of and protection of property and personal freedom, then the interest of the individuals as such becomes the ultimate end of their association, and it follows that membership of the state is something optional. But the state's relation to the individual is quite different from this. Since the state is mind objectified, it is only as one of its members that the individual himself has objectivity, genuine individuality, and an ethical life.\footnote{Hegel, The Philosophy of Right, op. cit., para. 75, page 59.}

Hegel is critical of natural law theorists for their conflation of civil society and the state through the notion of a social contract and singles out Rousseau for particular criticism in this regard.\footnote{Ibid., para. 258, page 156.}

Hegel's second ground for rejecting a social contract as the basis of the state is that the state can require its citizens to pay taxes and to make the ultimate sacrifice, i.e., to give up their lives for it, but these sacrifices cannot be required on the basis of contract. Hegel states that "... the state is not a contract at all ... nor is its fundamental essence the unconditional protection and guarantee of the life and property of members of the public as individuals. On the contrary, it is that higher entity which even lays claim to this very life and property and demands its sacrifice."\footnote{See ibid., 157.} Thus Hegel concludes for these reasons that the state cannot be based on contract and, instead, contends that "... we are already citizens of the state by birth. The rational end of man is life in the state, and if there is no state there, reason at once demands that one be...\footnote{Ibid., para. 100, page 71.}
Susan Buck-Morss argues that Hegel's rejection of the concepts of natural law theory such as the state of nature and the social contract is bound up with his departure from the classically based natural law theory of civil society. Following Riedel, she suggests that in natural law theories, societies are established by humans endowed with natural rights contracting to form society, that is, a political association. However, for Hegel, society is part of the private sphere and "... consists by definition in private persons bound together by need and labour. Labour is a specific mode of action, need is the natural basis of man as a 'private person'." Hence, Buck-Morss contends, "for Hegel, it is the (depoliticized) system of the economy that produces the social form ... and in modernity that form is the division of labor. Society is not a political creation, but an economic one." While natural law theories conceive civil society as a political association and, therefore, as the state, Hegel separates civil society from the state by shifting it "topologically" from the political to the economic plane as an historically produced aspect of modernity.

As Riedel notes, the concepts of natural law theory were still stamped by the influence of classical political theory. This is apparent in their conflation of the state with civil society

48 Ibid., para. 75A, page 242.


51 Buck-Morss, op. cit., 457.

52 See ibid.
which follows the classical notion of 'society' as political or civil society or the state.\textsuperscript{53} In the classical world, civil society had a political, public character, expressed in the polis. This was juxtaposed to the economic, private character of the oikos or domestic society. Riedel argues that in the ancient world, civil society was "distinguished by the specific civic quality of civility ... the citizens take part in public life, legislation, and administration."\textsuperscript{54} Accordingly, civil society was the domain of politics. Counterposed to the political domain of civil society was the economic domain of the oikos:

For in this classical tradition of politics, not all inhabitants of the community distinguish themselves by 'civility'. Neither the unfree of every kind, who must carry out the necessary elementary nurturing labours underlying the public-political civil sphere in the private circle of the home, nor the artisan, equally active 'economically' but bound to the domestic workshop, nor women, belong to \textit{societas civilis sive res publica}; since they are part of the \textit{oikos}, 'domestic society', they lack the political standing which confers civility.\textsuperscript{55}

This exclusionary model of civil society is the basis of the natural law conception of civil society which appears in the work of Hobbes and Locke. Hence, in the classical world there was no place in civil society for slaves, servants, or women and, to this list was added day-labourers and artisans by the eighteenth century. As Riedel observes, "their life runs its course outside the literally civil society which as such defines and contrasts itself by reference to them."\textsuperscript{56} To this list of 'internal' Others who define and contrast with civil society must be added the non-Western Other.

\textsuperscript{53} Riedel, op. cit., 134.

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., 136.

\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., 137.

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid.
In the ancient world, "barbarians" were excluded from the polis. The term "barbarian" originally denoted anyone who was not a Greek, i.e., it was the term for "foreigner," and was not originally or necessarily a pejorative term. Barbarians lacked the quality of civility necessary for life in the polis, they were not classical citizens, as witnessed by Herodutus' comments about the Scythians in his *Histories*. Herodutus constructed a mirror which reflected representations of an Other (the Scythians) as well as representations of the Greeks themselves. The use of a mirroring construction of non-Western Others in the construction of natural law concepts of civil society in the work of Hobbes and Locke was identified and analyzed in Chapter Two of this thesis. The location of non-Western Others outside the concept of civil society through the use of a mirroring construction by Montesquieu and Ferguson has been noted already in this chapter. Hegel also sets the non-Western Other outside civil society by locating civil society exclusively in the "modern world" (i.e., in contemporary Western Europe). I will discuss this more fully once I have outlined Hegel’s concept of civil society and his philosophy of history on which this mirroring construction is based.

**Civil Society**

Hegel breaks with the classically based model of civil/political society and economic/domestic society. He divides:

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the political sphere of the state from the realm of 'society' which has become 'civil'. In this way the expression 'civil' gains a primarily 'social' content as opposed to its original meaning and is no longer taken to be synonymous with 'political' ... It now names only the 'social' position of the self-supporting citizen within the state which has become absolute politically, and which from its side grants society its own source of gravity and sets it free as 'civil'.

Riedel posits that this separation of civil society and state was concomitant with a new meaning of citizenship which arose in the eighteenth century. This was the notion of the citizen as bourgeois in contrast to the citizen of the polis or republic. In the natural law tradition, man as a human being is "a member of the societas generis humani, species-being and individuality at the same time ..." while man as a citizen is a member of civil society or the political sphere. However, for Hegel, man in civil society is a "burgher as bourgeois", he is subject to material needs. Hence, "as a mere (i.e., natural) man, the human being is a being with needs, and as a being with needs he is a private person, i.e., citizen as bourgeois. Human being and citizen are no longer opposed as they were in the ... [natural law tradition] ... but rather in modern civil society the bourgeois contains the human being." Riedel suggests that this indicates a rejection by Hegel of the recourse to the civic republican notions of citizenship and the classical models that were still popular with eighteenth-century theorists. He argues that it is only after Hegel that "citoyen and bourgeois stand side by side, the citizen of the state (a status extended to all subjects) next to the private citizen."

In the Philosophy of Right, Riedel continues, Hegel "... divides the study of civil society

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59 Ibid., 139.
60 Ibid., 141.
61 Ibid.
62 Ibid., 142.
(human being as bourgeois) from that of the state (human being as citizen)."\textsuperscript{63} In so doing, he explores this relationship between the universal and the particular or individual which was so important to the theorists of the ancient world. However, while reflecting on these enduring concerns of political theory, Hegel is ever aware that one cannot merely apply the ancient models or principles to modernity. Ancient principles and models must be reworked to take account of the condition of diremption which characterizes modernity. Thus, Hegel's conception of the modern state is able "to sustain the contradiction between bourgeois and citoyen precisely because it produces the contradiction and pushes it to the limit in thought and reality."\textsuperscript{64} The question of the relation between the universal and the individual is, therefore, critical to his analysis of modernity. Accordingly, Hegel's resolution of this matter is expressed within the overarching concept of Sittlichkeit (ethical life) which provides the framework for his separation of civil society from the state.

In The Philosophy of Right, Hegel distinguishes morality (Moralität) from ethical life (Sittlichkeit) on the basis that morality is individual and subjective while Sittlichkeit deals with the ethical life of society as a whole. Thus Moralität governs relationships between individuals as individuals while Sittlichkeit governs relations among individuals interacting as part of a community.\textsuperscript{65} Charles Taylor explains Hegel's notion of Sittlichkeit thus:

'Sittlichkeit' refers to the moral obligations I have to an ongoing community of which I am a part. These obligations are based on established norms and uses ...

\textsuperscript{63} Ibid., 127.

\textsuperscript{64} Ibid., 127-128.

\textsuperscript{65} See Shlomo Avineri, Hegel's Theory of the Modern State (Cambridge:Cambridge University Press, 1972), 137.
The doctrine of *Sittlichkeit* is that morality reaches its completion in a community ... Because the realization of the Idea requires that man be part of a larger life in a society, moral life reaches its highest realization in *Sittlichkeit*. This highest realization is an achievement, of course, it is not present throughout history ...  

For Hegel, then, *Sittlichkeit* is historically produced, the most recent incarnation being the Greek polis. Here, "men had seen the collective life of their city as the essence and meaning of their own lives, had sought their glory in its public life, their rewards in power and reputation within it, and immortality in its memory." As Taylor notes, *Sittlichkeit* also "was his [Hegel’s] expression for that *vertu* which Montesquieu had seen as the mainspring of republics." However, Hegel realized that the *Sittlichkeit* of the Greek polis was no longer an apposite model for ethical life in modernity. It is through man’s relation to the contemporary community that Hegel reworks the notion of ethical life for the modern age.

In his discussion of *Sittlichkeit*, Hegel deals with types or "moments" of communal association: the family, civil society and the state. In modern society, these moments form an ascending hierarchy. The family is *Sittlichkeit* "in its natural or immediate phase" but it "loses its unity, [and] passes over into division." It passes into civil society which is comprised of self-subsistent, interdependent individuals. Their association is a means to fulfil their egoistic needs and represents only "abstract" universality. Unity is only achieved in the *Constitution of the State* which is the end and actuality of both the substantial universal order and the public life

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67 Ibid., 378.

68 Ibid.


70 Ibid.
devoted thereto."\textsuperscript{71} Hegel examines each of these moments in turn.

The family, as already noted, is not based on contract but on love.\textsuperscript{72} It also differs from the classical domestic sphere, the oikos, since it is no longer conceptualized as an economic entity but, rather, as a 'private' domain structured by emotional bonds. The economic functions of the oikos are now part of civil society.\textsuperscript{73} The family manifests a form of unity based on these emotional bonds which allows its members to view themselves as elements of a community. However, the unity of the family does not allow for individuality and this unity is based on emotion rather than reason. Hence, the family by itself is insufficient to realize ethical life.\textsuperscript{74} Hegel argues that the family "disintegrates" once its children become adult individuals, can hold property and begin families of their own. Its unity also disintegrates through man's realization of individuality (subjective freedom) in the modern age.\textsuperscript{75} The disintegration of the family marks the point of transition to civil society.

In civil society, man behaves as an individual and interacts economically with other individuals. Accordingly, Hegel defines civil society as:

an association of members as self-subsistent individuals in a universality which, because of their self-subsistence, is only abstract. Their association is brought about by their needs, by the legal system - the means to security of person and property - and by an external organization for attaining their particular and

\textsuperscript{71} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{72} See ibid, para., 158, page 110.

\textsuperscript{73} See Riedel, op. cit., 47.

\textsuperscript{74} See Taylor, op. cit., 432.

\textsuperscript{75} See Hegel, \textit{The Philosophy of Right}, op. cit., paras. 177-181, pages 118-122.
common interests.\footnote{Ibid., para. 157, page 110.}

He then proceeds to analyze each of these aspects of civil society in turn. This analysis begins with Hegel's notion of man.

As Taylor observes, "civil society is the level of relations into which men enter ... just as men. It is a sphere in which men are related to each other as person's in Hegel's sense, i.e., as bearers of rights."\footnote{Taylor, op. cit., 432.} For Hegel, such a man is a "concrete person," a "totality of wants and a mixture of caprice and physical necessity."\footnote{Hegel, The Philosophy of Right, op. cit., para. 182, page 122.} However, each person is related to others since in modern society he cannot alone satisfy his needs or aims. Consequently, he states that "individuals in their capacity as burghers in this state are private persons whose end is their own interest. This end is mediated through the universal which thus appears as a means to its realization."\footnote{Ibid., para., 187, page 124.} This creates a "system of complete interdependence," a form of universality which "constitutes" civil society as "the world of ethical appearance". Hence, while the economic interdependence of civil society may look like ethical life, this is really an illusion; this universality is only abstract. Instead, it is a realm of egoistic self-interest which is only restrained by some elements of universality.\footnote{See ibid., para. 185, page 123.}

Hegel summarizes these contentions in the idea that civil society has three "moments":

\section*{The System of Needs}

"the mediation of need and one man's satisfaction through his work and the
satisfaction of the needs of all others"), the administration of justice which protects property ("the actuality of the universal principle of freedom"), and the Police and the Corporation which deal with "contingencies still lurking in ... [the first two moments] ... and care for particular interests as a common interest."\(^{81}\)

Hegel begins his discussion of the system of needs by distinguishing between animal and human needs. Man satisfies his needs through labour which mediates his relationship to nature. The conquest of nature through labour is a liberating experience which allows man to transcend the restrictions that animals are still subjected to by nature. In addition, while animal needs are material and corporeal only, humans require consciousness to express their needs. Consciousness is also developed through labouring to satisfy needs.\(^{82}\) Since man's needs are not restricted by nature they can become infinite. This creates two opposing conditions - luxury or dependence and want:

When social conditions tend to multiply and subdivide needs, means, and enjoyments indefinitely - a process which, like the distinction between natural and refined needs, has no qualitative limits - this is luxury. In this same process, however, dependence and want increase \textit{ad infinitum}, and the material to meet these is permanently barred to the needy man because it consists of external objects with the special character of being property, the embodiment of the free will of others ...\(^{83}\)

Hence, the market economy operating in civil society produces economic benefits and advancement for some (to the point of luxury) while for others it produces poverty and dependence. This is the result of the multiplication and subdivision of needs which in turn

\(^{81}\) Ibid., para. 188, page 126.

\(^{82}\) See ibid, paras. 190-195. See also Avineri, op. cit., 143-144.

\(^{83}\) Ibid., para. 195, page 128.
encourages the expansion of the division of labour. The multiplication of needs and the division of labour become interdependent, creating "an endless spiral" which drives the system of needs.\textsuperscript{84}

Norbert Waszek, in his study of the influence of the Scottish Enlightenment on Hegel's concept of civil society, argues that "the framework of Hegel's discussion of the division of labour, i.e. his conception of contemporary industrial and trading conditions, is essentially the framework of the Scottish Enlightenment authors ..."\textsuperscript{85} He further suggests that Hegel was indebted particularly to Adam Ferguson's analysis of the division of labour.\textsuperscript{86} Like the Scots, Hegel perceived both positive and negative consequences arising from the division of labour produced by the modern market economy. However, while he evinces some concern about the negative effects and considers they justify interference with the mechanisms of the free market economy, he does not query the institution of the free market per se. Rather, he takes as a given the market economy, and examines the conditions under which intervention in the market is justifiable.\textsuperscript{87}

One condition requiring ameliorative intervention is the poverty caused by the division of labour. Participation in world markets and the international division of labour causes unemployment (and thus poverty) for those employed by domestic industries due to the vagaries of the world market or the loss of competitive advantage. Greater mechanization of production


\textsuperscript{85} Ibid., 219.

\textsuperscript{86} See ibid., 230.

\textsuperscript{87} See ibid., 196.
processes also produces more unemployed workers. Unemployment and poverty exacerbate social inequality. The division of labour produces great profits for the owners of capital but for workers it leads to dependence. Specialization of work means that workers are limited in the type or range of work they can do, so that, if there is no work which requires their particular skills they cannot do other work. 88

However, while Hegel saw poverty as a problem, it was not the mere existence of disparities of wealth that bothered him. On the contrary, he saw these as an inevitable and necessary, albeit undesirable, part of a free market system. This can be seen in his distinction between the poor and "the rabble" who are affected psychologically by the division of labour. Thus, what did concern him were these negative psychological effects of the division of labour which enervate the human spirit and destroy communal association. Hence, "on the level of communal life, too, the division of labour necessarily has unintended and indeed unwanted outcomes: it corrupts the 'sense of community' which is so essential for the virtues of the citizen and the soldier. In this respect, Hegel is very close to Ferguson." 89

The system of needs and the relations of production, distribution and exchange which it creates, produce three economic class divisions: the agricultural, business and civil servant classes. These classes are placed in an apparently hierarchical relation. The agricultural class is closest to nature and "owes comparatively little to reflection and independence of will". 90 Here Hegel suggests that "the real beginning and original foundation of states has been rightly ascribed

88 See ibid., 221-224.

89 Ibid., 226-227.

90 Ibid., para. 203, page 131.
to the introduction of agriculture" since this establishes the idea of private property and contrasts this with the "nomadic life of savages". The business class is more advanced in that it must adapt raw materials through labour to meet man's needs. This work has three forms: craftsmanship, manufacture and trade, which require "reflection and intelligence". The third class, the civil servants, deals with "the universal interests of the community". To fulfill this function, the civil servants do not perform "direct labour" and instead are paid by the state or have independent means.

Hegel argues that class membership is ultimately determined by "subjective opinion and the individual's arbitrary will" rather than by "accident of birth". Here he distinguishes between "the political life of the east and the west", arguing that social structures like the Indian caste system do not take account of or reconcile subjective particularity within society and, therefore, fall prey to inner corruption and degeneration. In contrast, the West is able to incorporate and reconcile subjective particularity and thus "when subjective particularity is upheld by the objective order in conformity with it and is at the same time allowed its rights, then it becomes the animating principle of the entire civil society ..."

With respect to the influence of the Scottish Enlightenment study of political economy on Hegel's work, Waszek contends that:

"Hegel's 'philosophy of right' assimilates and reproduces the views of a variety of Scottish Enlightenment authors with respect to the following subject matters:

92 Ibid., para. 204, page 132.
93 Ibid., para. 205., page 132.
94 Ibid., para. 206, page 133.
needs, labour, exchange, classes; the interventionist qualifications to the idea of the free market economy; and the division of labour ... [and] ... through his study and assimilation of the advanced economic theories of the Scottish Enlightenment thinkers, was able to raise their understanding of the modern market economy to a comprehensive political philosophy.\textsuperscript{95}

In this manner, Hegel was able to 'grasp his own time' and ground modernity out of itself. This is what Habermas maintains makes Hegel the first philosopher to conceptualize modernity. Indeed, it is in relation to understanding the characteristics and processes of the system of needs in modern civil society that Hegel perceives the role of political economy. He declares that:

Political economy is the science which starts from this view of needs and labour but then has the task of explaining mass-relationships and mass-movements in their complexity and their qualitative and quantitative character. This is one of the sciences which have arisen out of the conditions of the modern world. Its development affords the interesting spectacle (as in Smith, Say, and Ricardo) of thought working upon the endless mass of details which confront it at the outset and extracting therefrom the simple principles of the thing, the Understanding effective in the thing and directing it. It is to find reconciliation here to discover in the sphere of needs this show of rationality lying in the thing and effective there ...\textsuperscript{96}

Here Hegel expresses the way in which the analyses of political economy enable him to perceive the rationality underlying modern economic processes which initially appear only to manifest themselves as instances of division and diremption in modern society. This allows him to see reason working within civil society through the universal authority (in the form of police/public authority and the corporation) which ameliorates and contains the extremes of the systems of needs.

While the system of needs is the realm of the particular, it also contains an element of

\textsuperscript{95} Waszek, op. cit., 230.

\textsuperscript{96} Ibid., para. 189, page 126-127.
universality, "the universality of freedom", but this is only abstract (as true freedom is only present in the state) and is expressed as the right to private property. This right is recognized and actualized in civil society by the protection of property through the administration of justice.\(^97\) This moment of civil society is concerned with the promulgation of laws and with the adjudication of alleged infringements especially in relation to property and contract. Public authorities - courts of justice - perform this adjudication function. Through the administration of justice, then, the particularity of civil society is mediated by universality but only as abstract right. Rather, Hegel contends, "the actualization of this unity through its extension to the whole ambit of particularity is (i) the specific function of the Police, though the unification it effects is only relative; (ii) it is the Corporation which actualizes the unity completely, though only in a whole which, while concrete, is restricted."\(^98\)

The Police and the Corporation are the third moment of civil society. Hegel posits that "the right actually present in the particular requires, first that accidental hindrances to one aim or another be removed, and undisturbed safety of person and property be attained; and secondly, that the securing of every single person's livelihood and welfare be treated and actualized as a right ..."\(^99\) The need for the Police or public authority arises from this injunction to ensure public welfare because of the operation of the free market economy in civil society. The Police are required to ensure security in two areas - the sphere of contingencies and external organization.

\(^97\) See ibid., para. 208, page 134.

\(^98\) Ibid., para. 229, page 145.

\(^99\) Ibid., para. 230, page 146.
With respect to contingencies, the Police have both ongoing and emergency jurisdictions. Their ongoing functions are dealing with crime, "control of victuals" (weights and measures, meat inspection, pharmaceuticals), control of the education system (administration, enforcement of attendance, curriculum), public health (vaccinations) and public works (road and harbour building and maintenance). Emergency powers are given to the Police where conflict and immediate problems pose a danger to the public and the situation cannot be left to the market to resolve. Problems concerning "daily necessities" (e.g., basic foodstuffs) such as supply and pricing issues entitle the Police to regulate the market through price controls or setting shop trading hours.

Problems caused by "external organization" are also within the Police's purview. This refers to difficulties generated by international markets and divisions of labour. Where these forces threaten local industries the police may impose measures such as tariffs, customs duties, taxes, etc. The public authority is also charged with trying to find new markets for goods.

This search for new markets is also part of the government's function of trying to alleviate the negative effects of the market economy produced by the division of labour. These are unemployment, social inequality, poverty and human degradation. One of the remedies Hegel puts forward for some of these problems is colonization which ameliorates the problems by creating new markets and removing surplus population. However, this can only provide a

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100 See ibid., paras. 232-240, page 146-148. See also Waszek, op. cit., 198-200.

101 See ibid., paras. 235-236, page 147; see Waszek, ibid., 201-202.

102 See ibid, para. 236, page 147; Waszek, ibid., 203.

103 See ibid., paras. 236-244, pages 147-150; see Waszek, ibid., 222-227.
temporary solution to these difficulties, and the public authority must find other ways to mitigate these problems at home.¹⁰⁴

Hegel’s concern with the diremption modernity causes in the individual through the loss of community is sought to be remedied by the Corporations. Corporations are “not the traditional, restrictive old guilds, but voluntary organizations into which persons organize themselves according to their professions, trades and interests.”¹⁰⁵ They form intermediate bodies which exist between the state and the individual. Hegel considers it important to provide individuals with ways to act in the public domain as part of ethical life:

Under modern political conditions, the citizens have only a restricted share in the public business of the state, yet it is essential to provide men - ethical entities - with work of a public character, over and above their private business. This work of a public character, which the modern state does not always provide, is found in the corporation.¹⁰⁶

The corporations provide a forum for the egoistic individuals of civil society (especially the business class) to interact with others in a communal setting. As Avineri notes, "because of the strength of the disruptive forces of civil society, Hegel realized that the kind of solidarity he envisaged in the state cannot be created in an unmediated way; antagonistic bourgeois cannot become co-operative citoyens without a lengthy process of mediation and Bildung, and the corporation is one of the prime vehicles for this education of modern man."¹⁰⁷ Corporations act as a "second family" to their members, providing them with education, ameliorating the negative

¹⁰⁴ See ibid., paras. 246-249, page 151-152.

¹⁰⁵ Avineri, op. cit., 164.

¹⁰⁶ Hegel, The Philosophy of Right, op. cit., addition to para. 255, page 278.

¹⁰⁷ Avineri, op. cit., 165.
effects of the market economy, and aggregating and representing their interests. Through the
institutionalization of interests, corporations provide an "institutionalized guarantee against state
encroachment upon economic activity."¹⁰⁸

Corporations are intermediate bodies between the individual and the state. Charles Taylor
has noted the connection between Montesquieu’s ‘corps intermédiaires’ and Hegel’s corporations.
Like Montesquieu’s intermediate bodies, the corporations are "amphibious bodies," which
function outside the political sphere in civil society but they also have a function to perform with
respect to it. Hence, the corporations are "engaged in conscious self-management" and "are also
integrated in their own way into the state."¹⁰⁹

The corporations, then, provide a setting for mediation and for the education of the
bourgeois in a communal association in civil society which prepares them for the fulfilment of
ethical life in the modern state. In the "higher community" of the state, individual subjectivity
and the universal are harmonized. Hegel calls this "concrete freedom."¹¹⁰

World History and the Non-European Other

As part of his attempt to theorize ethical life in modernity, Hegel locates civil society
spatially and temporally in contemporary Western Europe. Hence, he temporalizes civil society
by his claims that "the creation of civil society is the achievement of the modern world...." and


¹⁰⁹ Charles Taylor, "Modes of Civil Society," Public Culture 3, no.1 (Fall, 1990), 108.

¹¹⁰ See Hegel, The Philosophy of Right, op. cit., para. 260, page 160; See Taylor, Hegel,
op. cit., 438.
with the description of civil society as "the child of modernity." In the Philosophy of History, he locates civil society spatially in the modernity of Western Europe by contrasting it with contemporary America. America, he claims, does not have a civil society or an organized state. These will only arise "after the immeasurable space which that country presents to its inhabitants shall have been occupied, and the members of the political body shall have begun to be pressed back on each other." Hence, "only when, as in Europe, the direct increase of agriculturists is checked, will the inhabitants, instead of pressing outwards to occupy the fields, press inwards upon each other - pursuing town occupations, and trading with their fellow citizens; and so form a compact system of civil society, and an organized state." 

Hegel also grounds his discussion of ethical life culminating in the modern state in an historical framework in the Philosophy of Right. In the section entitled "World History," he refers to "civil society" as the "particular," in contrast to the universality of world history. Hegel's philosophy of history is the underpinning to his location of civil society in modernity and the construction of non-European Others as outside modernity and civil society. Once again, these Others are used as a mirror in which Hegel is able to construct modern European civil society.

The section on "World History" in The Philosophy of Right is a condensed version of

111 Hegel, ibid., addition to para. 182, page 266, translator's note to para. 202, page 356.

112 Hegel, The Philosophy of History, op. cit., 86. Nisbet translates the term "organized state" as "organic state" which makes more sense in this context (see Nisbet, op. cit., 170). The state to which Hegel refers is the modern state which is the actualization of reason and freedom and the apex of ethical life. This form of state only occurs in the modern world, i.e., contemporary Western Europe.

Hegel's lectures on the philosophy of history. At the outset of *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, Hegel tells his audience that "I have no text book on which to base my lectures; but in my 'Elements of the Philosophy of Right,'... I have already defined the concept of world history proper, as well as the principal periods into which its study can be divided." The progressive development of spirit is the basis of World History through "freedom's progress towards self-realization in human consciousness, and the unfolding of reason ..." Hegel divides world history into four phases which are associated with specific spatial and temporal locations: the Oriental, Greek, Roman and German worlds. Each of these phases embodies a stage in human consciousness which culminates in the self-consciousness or self-awareness of man in the modern state. Each phase of history is represented by one national culture which expresses the spirit of the age in its culture. Hegel encapsulates this in his claim that "the east knew and to the present day knows that only that One is Free; the Greek and Roman world, that some are free; the German World knows that All are free." Each of these historical epochs is expressed in a particular type of government: "the first political form therefore which we observe in History, is Despotism, the second Democracy and Aristocracy, the third Monarchy."

History is a dialectical process in which man develops in stages to self-consciousness.

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114 These Lectures present a constructed and composite Hegel, reconstructed from his own (fragmentary) lecture notes and those of several students, see footnote 32 supra.

115 Nisbet, op. cit., 11.

116 Avineri, op cit., 221.


118 Ibid.
While individuals have a role to play in creating history ("world historical individuals") their agency is limited as they are vehicles for the expression of the spirit of the age. Thus, reason unfolds in the progress of history through these agents although they may not be conscious of the role of reason or of their own role in history. Hegel calls this the "cunning of reason". However, while world historical individuals are unconscious of reason working in history, philosophers are able to see this and perceive the relationship between history and the development of consciousness.\(^{119}\) Philosophers have the benefit of hindsight but as philosophy "comes on the scene too late" it is not the task of philosophers to give "instruction as to what the world ought to be." This is expressed in Hegel's well-known statement that "When philosophy paints its grey in grey, then has a shape of life grown old. By philosophy's grey in grey it cannot be rejuvenated but only understood. The owl of Minerva spreads its wings only with the falling of dusk."\(^{120}\) This is also why Hegel does not consider it to be the role of philosophers to predict the future.\(^{121}\)

Hegel considers history to be geographically based and, like Montesquieu, he believed that national spirit or character were determined to a large extent by geographic factors such as climate. He spends a substantial amount of the introduction to The Philosophy of History discussing the effects of typography and climate on the peoples of various geographic regions. He divides the world into old and new worlds: the new world is America and Australia while the old world is comprised of the continents of Asia, Africa and Europe.

\(^{119}\) See Avineri, op. cit, 230-234.


\(^{121}\) See Avineri, op. cit., 236.
Hegel's discussion of the new world is confined to the Americas. Here he distinguishes between the white settlers and the native inhabitants whom he likens to "unenlightened children, living from one day to the next, and untouched by higher thoughts or aspirations." The natives are inferior "in all respects" both physically and mentally. He considers the Africans in the Americas to be superior to the native Americans since "... the negroes are far more susceptible to European culture than the Indians." Accordingly, he concludes that in the Americas "the effective population comes for the most part from Europe, and everything that happens in America has its origin there."

Turning to the old world, Hegel declares that this is "the setting of world history". He divides it into three continents which differ not only according to geographical considerations but also according to "spiritual character". Hegel claims that his principal source for this typology is Karl Ritter (1779-1859), a professor of geography at Berlin and the principal architect of a comparative 'scientific geography'. He says "it was Ritter who formulated these distinctions between the continents and expressed them in a direct and tangible form."

Hegel begins his discussion of the old world with the African continent. He subdivides Africa into three regions: Africa proper (south of the Sahara), European Africa (north of the Sahara), and the Nile (linked to Asia). European Africa and Asia do not figure in his account since they are not world-historical settings and their characters are conditioned by their

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122 Hegel, Lectures on the Philosophy of World History, op. cit., 165.
123 Ibid.
124 Ibid.
125 Ibid., 173.
Thus his analysis of Africa centres around "Africa proper". He begins with Africa since "... it can well be taken as antecedent to our main enquiry. It has no historical interest of its own, for we find its inhabitants living in barbarism and savagery in a land which has not furnished them with any integral ingredient of culture." He describes Africa as "the land of childhood, removed from the light of self-conscious history and wrapped in the dark mantle of night." This he attributes not just to its tropical climate but to its "geographical character," i.e., "it is still unexplored, and has no connections whatsoever with Europe." This is in contrast to the European part of Africa (the north) which has a "new character through contact with Europeans." Consequently, "in this main portion of Africa, history is in fact out of the question. Life there consists of a succession of contingent happenings and surprises. No aim or state exists whose development could be followed; and there is no subjectivity, but merely a series of subjects who destroy one another."  

Hegel notes that not much study has been done of the "peculiar mode of self-consciousness" apparent in Africa. Indeed, most of the firsthand accounts of Africa are considered by Europeans to be "incredible" (i.e., so strange that they are not credible; they are unbelievable) and furnish merely "a collection of fearful details" instead of an historical analysis. Here he imposes two caveats, one concerning source materials and, the other, concerning the content of those materials. With regard to source materials he warns that "the literature on a subject of this kind is somewhat indefinite in scope, and anyone who wishes to go into it in detail must be prepared to find himself overwhelmed by confusion."

126 See ibid., 173-174.

127 Ibid., 174.

128 Ibid., 176.
must avail himself of such material as is available in the useful works of reference. The best general account of Africa is provided in *Ritter's geography*. 

Next he warns that the "African character" discerned from these accounts "... is difficult to comprehend, because it is so totally different from our own culture, and so remote and alien in relation to our own mode of consciousness." He continues that because of this quality of absolute otherness, "we must forget all the categories which are fundamental to our own spiritual life, i.e. the forms under which we normally subsume the data which confront us ..."\(^{129}\) Therefore, Africa is so profoundly different from Europe that it requires a completely different framework and categories of analysis. Here he constructs Africa as contradiction, as the denial and negation of Europe.\(^{130}\)

Hegel devotes several pages of the introduction to describing the character and conditions of Africa. It seems odd to devote so much space to a region which is not, by his own definition, part of history and of which he repeatedly states that "the consciousness of the inhabitants has not yet reached an awareness of any substantial and objective existence."\(^{131}\) Rather, he seems to be fascinated by the "fearful details" originating from the accounts of missionaries and gets caught up in recounting these at every opportunity. As his discussion of Africa is derived from his lectures on world history this recital of the "fearful details" may have served to enliven his lectures with sensational and gruesome content apart from any prurient interest he may have.

\(^{129}\) Ibid.

\(^{130}\) I owe this insight to Derek Gregory who has analyzed Hegel’s geographical imaginary in terms of the principle Hegel uses to characterize the relation of Europe to other non-European geographic areas: contradiction for Africa, and opposition for Asia.

\(^{131}\) Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, op. cit., 176-177. Sibree’s translation omits all the detail of Hegel’s discussion of Africa.
harboured.

Africa is mired in subjectivity with no concept of the universal or knowledge of the absolute. Man in Africa has "not progressed beyond immediate existence" and "is nothing more than a savage". Hegel describes Africans as savages, barbarians, lawless, cannibals, idolaters, fetishists, sensuous, effeminate, arbitrary, fanatics, and frenzied. He claims that "the negro is an example of animal man in all his savagery and lawlessness, and if we wish to understand him at all, we must put aside all our European attitudes." He continues that "for this reason, we cannot properly feel ourselves into his nature, no more than into that of a dog ..."\(^{132}\) Once again, Hegel constructs Africans as absolutely Other and as incomprehensible to Europeans. So much so, that they do not even appear to him to be part of the same species. Along this line, he also rejects the Rousseau-esque idea of Africans as in a paradisiacal "state of innocence." On the contrary, he declares, "this primitive state of nature is in fact a state of animality. Paradise was that zoological garden in which man lived in an animal condition of innocence - but this is not his true destiny."\(^{133}\) Indeed, the slaves taken to the new world are better off than those who were left behind in Africa. This is because slavery is "a moment of transition towards a higher stage of development" in which man moves from his "purely fragmented sensuous existence" and is educated to "a higher ethical existence and a corresponding degree of culture."\(^{134}\)

While Africans have government, they are not ruled by "rational laws". Rather their government is patriarchal and despotic since ".... sensuous barbarism can only be restrained by

\(^{132}\) Ibid.

\(^{133}\) Ibid., 178.

\(^{134}\) Ibid., 184.
despotic power.” Like Montesquieu, Hegel constructs a tripartite model of types of government: democracy, aristocracy, monarchy. He further subdivides monarchy into despotism and “monarchy proper,” as Montesquieu does. Hegel ascribes these types of government to spatial and temporal locations and to phases in the development of Spirit. Hence, the oriental world is characterized by despotic government, the Greek world by democracy, the Roman world by aristocracy, and the European world by monarchy. The African form of government is also despotic even though Africa is not part of the development of Spirit.

Taking all these "traits" into account, Hegel concludes that "... intractability is the distinguishing feature of the negro character" and that "the condition in which they live is incapable of any development or culture, and their present existence is the same as it has always been." Hence, Africa is stationary and static, enduring and unchanging. At this juncture, he concludes, "we shall leave Africa at this point, and it need not be mentioned again. For it is an unhistorical continent, with no movement or development of its own."

After dismissing Africa as unhistorical, Hegel turns his attention to the "real theatre of world history". In Asia or the Oriental world, "consciousness in and for itself" begins to emerge. He describes Asia as the "continent of sunrise and of origins in general ... it is there that the light of the spirit, the consciousness of a universal, first emerged, and with it the process of world history". He continues that "while every country is both east and west in relation to others,

135 Ibid., 186.

136 See Hegel, The Philosophy of History, op. cit., 44.

137 Hegel, Lectures on the Philosophy of World History, op. cit., 190.

138 Ibid., 190.
so that Asia is the western continent from the point of view of America; but just as Europe is the centre, and end of the Old World - i.e. absolutely the west - so also is Asia absolutely the east." Here, Hegel establishes from the outset the oppositional relation between east and west, between Asia and Europe. They are opposites - mirror-images.

Hegel employs a heliographic trope repeatedly when describing the progress of world history:

The sun rises in the Orient. The sun is light, and light is universal and simple self-relatedness, i.e. universality in itself. This light, though universal in itself, exists in the sun as an individual or subject. We often imagine someone watching the moment of daybreak, the spreading of the light, and the rise of the sun in all its majesty ... And by evening, man has constructed a building, an inner sun, the sun of his own consciousness, which he has produced by his own efforts ...\(^{139}\)

Like the progress of the sun, "world history travels from east to west; for Europe is the absolute end of history, just as Asia is the beginning."\(^{140}\) Hegel invokes other luminary metaphors to describe the birth and maturation of history: light, radiance, dawn, etc. He contrasts these with terms like dark, night, evening, etc., evoking again the trope of the dark continent for Africa which he describes as "removed from the light of self-conscious history and wrapped in the dark mantle of night."\(^{141}\)

In the Oriental world, the universal and the individual are not distinct in consciousness. Hence, "the substantial world is distinct from the individual, but the object has not yet been located in the spirit itself."\(^{142}\) This phase of spirit is manifested in the form of government,
which is despotic, since the type of government (the despot) embodies the level of consciousness and freedom. Hence, only the despot is free. This kind of state is static; it is "an enduring state, for it cannot change itself by its own efforts." As Avineri notes, "Hegel is extremely critical of the various romantic idealizations of Oriental society, so fashionable in the early nineteenth century ... [e.g., his] ... devastating critique of Wilhelm von Humboldt's and Johann Josef von Görres' views, especially on India ... "

He further separates the Oriental world into three forms: China, India and Persia. China is a "theocratic despotism" since subjective consciousness and objective existence are still combined. It is static, stagnant, stationary and has no history. Hegel describes the Chinese as unchanging, fixed, superstitious, imitative, proud, servile, 'clever', and their language, mathematics, science, philosophy, historiography, religion, and art as inferior in various respects.

Hegel considers India to be "more advanced" than China since the Chinese state is patriarchal and despotic and the individual has no sense of self. However, Indians are, according to Hegel, governed by a caste system whose divisions do not express spirit but do allow for differentiation on some level. Thus India is a "theocratic aristocracy" since "independent members ramify from the unity of despotic power." He describes India as "in the ecstatic state of a dreaming condition," and as sensuous, bizarre, confused, ridiculous, dumb, disgusting,

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143 Ibid., 198.
144 See Avineri, op. cit., 224.
145 See ibid.
146 See Avineri, op. cit., 225.
147 Hegel, The Philosophy of History, op. cit., 144.
wicked, degraded, voluptuous, vulgar, monstrous, irrational and effeminate. Like China, India is "stationary and fixed".\textsuperscript{148}

Persia, Hegel contends, forms the "true transition from the Orient to the west," since here "the substantial unity has attained a purer form" which is "theocratic monarchy". Unlike China and India which have remained fixed and stationary, Persia "has been subject to those developments and revolutions, which alone manifest a historical condition."\textsuperscript{149} The Persians, are, therefore, the first historical people since they "discovered reason as well as its opposite, but never were able to go beyond this opposition .... [and] .... freedom is still embedded in the abstract action of the monarch, not in any consciousness acting in the populace."\textsuperscript{150}

World history now moves to the second phase in the development of Spirit - the Greek world. Individuality arises here but is still grounded in substantial unity. However, since these two elements are combined, freedom is still unrealized and Spirit moves to the third phase of history "when inner reflection ... liberates itself and presses forward, so preparing the way for a new universal end."\textsuperscript{151} This next phase is the Roman Empire which is characterized by universality, but only abstract universality. This "subjugates" individuality and leads to the transition to the next phase of history; the transition is "a struggle between abstract individuality and individuality."\textsuperscript{152} The principle of subjective consciousness arises with Christianity during

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{148} Ibid., 139.
\item \textsuperscript{149} Hegel, \textit{The Philosophy of History}, op. cit., 173.
\item \textsuperscript{150} Avineri, op. cit., 225.
\item \textsuperscript{151} Hegel, \textit{Lectures}, op cit., 203.
\item \textsuperscript{152} Ibid., 204.
\end{itemize}
the era of the Roman Empire. Hence, as Avineri notes, for Hegel "the role of the Germanic peoples in history is due solely to the fact that they received Christianity from the Romans, and though they destroyed the Roman empire, they absorbed its culture which included at that time the Christian religion."\(^{153}\)

The fourth stage of history is represented by the "Germanic World" which would be better translated as Western Europe or Western Christendom since it comprises France, England, Scandinavia, Italy, and Spain as well as Germany.\(^{154}\) The subjective freedom expressed in Christianity is further advanced by the Reformation and the French Revolution. These events signal the beginning of modernity, of the present, within this world. Self-consciousness and freedom are concretized in this world.

**Relationship to Montesquieu and Ferguson**

In his philosophy of history, Hegel figures alterity through a mirroring construction of non-European Others. In this he is similar to Montesquieu and Ferguson. However, his construction is more complex than those of the eighteenth-century writers. One possible reading of Hegel's geographical imagination is through a semiotic square. In this manner, Hegel produces a tripartite model of the Other with Europe as the reference point. Africa and Asia are characterized by a principle of relation with Europe: Asia by opposition and Africa by

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\(^{153}\) Avineri, op. cit., 229.

\(^{154}\) See Hegel, *Lectures*, op. cit., 195; see also Avineri, ibid., 228.
Both of these Others, in different ways, act as mirrors in which European identities and notions of civil society are constructed. Africans are so different from Europeans that they scarcely belong to the same species and live a savage and barbarious existence so alien to European experience that there is no possibility of civility or civil society. Africans are the absolute Other, they are the negation and contradiction of European life; they are "blank darkness". Asians, on the other hand, have civilizations but these are opposite to European civilizations. While European civilizations have progressed and evolved, Asian civilizations have remained static and unchanged from their inception. Their form of government (despotism) is the negative mirror-image of the European form of government (monarchy).

Hegel’s more sophisticated and differentiated mirroring construction of non-European Others reflects his overall relationship with his eighteenth-century predecessors. Waszek expresses this succinctly when he states that while "Hegel himself cannot be considered an Enlightenment figure ... Hegel’s indebtedness to the Enlightenment is ... of a ‘living mirror,’ which does not directly reflect the Enlightenment, but assimilates it." This claim is echoed by Cohen and Arato who contend that Hegel "synthesized much of late eighteenth-century thought" on civil society. In particular, they assert, Hegel synthesized the eighteenth-century idea of ‘society’ as expressed, for example, by Montesquieu, the notion of a ‘civilized society’

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155 America/Australia cannot be described as relational in this manner as they are neither oppositional nor contradictory to Europe and hence form the "impossible relation" or "impossible square". On the semiotic square, see Donna Haraway, "The Promises of Monsters: A Regenerative Politics for Inappropriate/d Others," in Cultural Studies, ed. Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson, and Paula Treichler (New York: Routledge, 1992), 295-337.


157 Waszek, op. cit., 18.
defined in economic terms by Scottish Enlightenment writers like Ferguson, and the notion of intermediate bodies suggested by Montesquieu.\textsuperscript{158}

With respect to Montesquieu's influence on Hegel, he cites Montesquieu with approval both in The Philosophy of History and The Philosophy of Right. Montesquieu's principal influence appears to have been in relation to the tripartite model of government (monarchy, democracy/aristocracy, despotism), the doctrine of the separation of powers, the geographical basis of history and the effects of geography and climate on national character, and the role of intermediate bodies as part of civil society.\textsuperscript{159} In The Philosophy of Right Hegel claims that "Montesquieu proclaimed the true historical view", referring to The Spirit of the Laws (Book 1, chapter 3), and in The Philosophy of History he also praises this work, calling it "both thorough and profound."\textsuperscript{160}

Ferguson's influence on Hegel is less overt, though no less important. Waszek, in his study of the Scottish Enlightenment's influence on Hegel's concept of civil society, argues that Ferguson and the other Scottish writers worked at a time when the social sciences were beginning to evolve from moral philosophy but they still considered their economic and sociological writings to be part of moral philosophy. However, much of Hegel's work was produced in the nineteenth century at a time when the social sciences were established. He viewed political economy as a resource for philosophical work but did not see it as part of philosophy. He

\textsuperscript{158} Jean L. Cohen and Andrew Arato, Civil Society and Political Theory (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1994, 89-90.


\textsuperscript{160} Ibid, 16; Hegel, Lectures, op. cit., 22.
therefore viewed the works of the Scottish philosophers as "... 'external' or 'extra-mural' influences which he felt less obliged to acknowledge, especially in purely philosophical contexts."\textsuperscript{161} For example, Waszek demonstrates that in his lectures on the history of philosophy, Hegel examines Hume's philosophical works but "... Ferguson, who no doubt exerted a far greater influence on him, he only mentions in passing."\textsuperscript{162}

Waszek sets out to demonstrate the influence of the Scottish enlightenment authors despite this lack of direct citation in his work. Through a meticulous analysis and comparison of the works of the Scots with Hegel's writings (which are far too detailed to repeat here), Waszek presents a convincing case for Scottish influence on Hegel. With regards to Ferguson, his \textit{Essay on the History of Civil Society} was translated into German and was available within a year of its first publication.\textsuperscript{163} Waszek demonstrates that Ferguson's work, "which Hegel knew for certain", especially his discussion of the division of labour, was influential in the construction of Hegel's notion of civil society.\textsuperscript{164}

However, some writers seem to argue against Ferguson's influence on Hegel. They claim that Ferguson's notion of civil society is still the same as the natural law conception of civil/political society.\textsuperscript{165} However, this is not really the case. Ferguson includes a wide variety of matters within the 'political,' including economic matters such as the 'advancement of the

\textsuperscript{161} Waszek, op. cit., 21.

\textsuperscript{162} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{163} See ibid., 59.

\textsuperscript{164} Ibid., 153, 230.

\textsuperscript{165} For example, see Fania Oz-Salzberger, \textit{Translating the Enlightenment, Scottish Civic Discourse in Eighteenth-Century Germany} (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 113.
commercial arts' and, consequently, his concept of civil society is not simply that of the natural law tradition. This seems to be a situation where Canguilhem's caveat about the difference between concepts and theories applies. There is no great conceptual shift between Ferguson and Hegel. Both have the same concept of civil society but, rather, have different theories about it. Hence, it is better to see their work on civil society (along with Montesquieu's) as forming a "relation of beginning to completion or of anticipation to realization."166

Conclusion to Part I

The task of Part I of this study was to demonstrate that a discontinuity or rupture with respect to the concept of civil society began to occur during the eighteenth century. The beginning of this rupture is evidenced in Montesquieu's work, continues in Ferguson's and is most fully realized in Hegel's concept of civil society. Hence, the eighteenth century marks the commencement of a discursive break or conceptual shift in the concept of civil society expressed in the conceptual separation of civil society and the state. To establish this break or conceptual shift the work of Hobbes and Locke on civil society was contrasted with that of Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel. From this discussion, conclusions may be drawn regarding two major themes: one relating to the concept of civil society, and the other to what I have called the post-Enlightenment geographical imagination. In both cases, the work of Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel forms a relation of "anticipation to realization".

The disjuncture with prior concepts of civil society that began in the eighteenth century

is evident in several points of contrast with the theories of seventeenth-century authors. Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel all reject the state of nature and the social contract as starting points for political theory. Instead, they consider man to be born in society and to remain there. In rejecting these concepts they begin to also reject the identification of civil society with political society evident in Hobbes' and Locke's work. Through their discussion of the modern market economy and its relation to ancient models of civic virtue and ethical life, they also begin to diverge from the classical notion of civil society as political society. This represents a break with the classical dyadic model of polis (civil/political society) and oikos (domestic/economic society). The disjuncture is most fully realized in Hegel's notion of civil society as a realm of (individual, self-interested) economic activity tempered by public intervention. Hence, each writer attempted to reevaluate the received classical models of civic virtue and revise them to take account of the modern European economy. However, each writer expressed some ambivalence towards modern commerce and its effects on (civil) society. While commerce was perceived in general to be a civilizing and progressive force, its potential for social diremption and the weakening of communal association were of concern to each author.

In rejecting the ideas of a state of nature and a social contract, Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel each adopted instead their own versions of a stadial theory of human development. They all perceived man to be progressive. Montesquieu and Ferguson presented versions of the "four stages" theory of human development which saw mankind moving in increments from a primitive, rude state (represented by contemporary non-Europeans, especially the American Indians) to a refined, civilized state (represented by contemporary Europeans). Hegel also viewed man as progressing in stages but each stage was linked to the development of self-consciousness
and reason rather than to the mode of subsistence.

However, all three writers associate forms of government with spatial and temporal locations that also correspond to stages of human development. Montesquieu's typology of democracy, monarchy and despotism is adopted and the forms of government are associated respectively with the ancient world, contemporary Europe, and the contemporary non-European world. Similarly, Montesquieu's distinction between monarchies and despotisms (with its notion of corps intermédiaires which are important for the development of a concept of civil society separate from the state) is adopted by Ferguson and his idea of intermediate bodies is echoed in Hegel's notion of the corporations.

In the development of a concept of civil society as separate from political society or the state, each writer deploys a mirroring construction of non-Europeans. Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel all make use of non-Europeans as points of contrast with Europeans with respect to civil society, suggesting that non-Europeans are uncivilized and therefore do not have civil societies. Their conception of civil society is confined to Europe. This is epitomized in Hegel's statement that "the creation of civil society is the achievement of the modern world". These mirroring constructions of non-European Others also played an important role in the development of the post-Enlightenment geographical imagination.

While seventeenth-century writers like Hobbes and Locke largely confined their use of non-Western comparative material to illustrations drawn from works on the American Indians, eighteenth-century writers like Montesquieu and Ferguson drew on a much wider range of comparative material. This was due in part to the exploration of different geographic areas in the eighteenth century (e.g., the Pacific voyages) and to changes in the practice of natural history
with the introduction of new scientific techniques and epistemologies. The use of comparative material by Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel was also much more sophisticated and complexly figured than that presented by prior authors. They all were concerned with the effects of geography on human development. Geographic variables such as typography and climate were examined to ascertain their effects on the mode of subsistence, character, and differences in cultures. The effects of climate were of particular importance to each author and climatic variables were used to explain differences between cultures and to ground typologies of static (non-European) peoples and progressive (European) peoples.

The characteristics of different societies derived from geographical analysis were used in turn to divide the world into spatial and temporal locations which corresponded with different societies and stages in human history. Each location was part of a stadial theory of human development and was associated with a particular form of government. These developmental sequences culminated in contemporary Europe and the (modern) idea of civil society. Again, a relation of anticipation to realization can be discerned in the work of Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel. Montesquieu’s discussions of geographic factors such as climate and his spatially and temporally located typology of types of government, were followed by Ferguson, and were refined and developed by Hegel as part of his quadratic typology of world history. In Part II of this thesis, I will examine how this post-Enlightenment geographical imagination and the concept of civil society which were realized in Hegel’s work have informed twentieth-century writing on civil society and the use of non-European Others in the construction of that concept.
PART II

HEGEL'S SHADOW
The Philosophical traveller, sailing to the ends of the earth, is in fact travelling in time; he is exploring the past; every step he makes is the passage of an age.


A place on the map is also a place in history.

Adrienne Rich, "Notes Toward a Politics of Location (1984)".

**Introduction**

In Part I of this study, the relationship between the post-Enlightenment geographical imagination and the concept of civil society was encapsulated in Hegel's claims that "the creation of civil society is the achievement of the modern world" and that civil society is "the child of modernity". By the modern world, of course, Hegel meant contemporary Europe. America was not yet part of this modern world, in Hegel's eyes, because civil society and a modern state had not yet been established. However, Hegel believed that America was "the land of the future, where in the ages that lie before us, the burden of the World's History shall reveal itself ..."\(^1\)

In the twentieth century, America's prominent role on the world stage, in particular since World War II, encouraged the shift from the use of the terms "Europe" or "European" to "West" or "Western". While originally the "West" seems to have been defined geographically in relation to the "East", the inclusion of the United States in the Western alliance in World War II altered

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the notion of the West/East divide. Post-World War II, in the Cold War era, the world was divided into East (the USSR and its allies) and the West (the USA and its allies). This notion of the West eventually evolved into the idea of the West as capitalist or free-enterprise systems in contrast to (Eastern) socialist systems. Thus (non-European or American) capitalist states like Japan are now included under the term "western". Today, therefore, "West" and "Western" are not geographically defined (if they ever really were) but, instead, are historically constructed and express an idea or concept, an imagined geography.

This refocusing of attention from the idea of Europe to that of the West may be discerned in the work of twentieth-century theorists of civil society. In Part II of this study, I examine the work of three writers (Shils, Gellner and Fukuyama), their theories of civil society and their use of non-Western Others in the construction of those theories. In so doing, I will analyze how their work is informed by the post-Enlightenment geographical imagination and concept of civil society in light of this shift from the notion of Europe to the West. Each of these writers is influenced by either Montesquieu, Ferguson, or Hegel in their work on civil society. However, as the most fully realized theories of the post-Enlightenment geographical imagination and civil society, Hegel's work will be used as emblematic of these constructions in this chapter. Here, the influence of his work in general, and his philosophy of history in particular, upon contemporary Western thought will be discussed. In the following chapter, I will examine the effect of this

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2 This discussion is based on Raymond Williams, *Keywords*, 2d ed. (London: Fontana, 1988), 333-334.

legacy on Shils, Gellner and Fukuyama and their constructions of civil society and non-Western Others.

This chapter is divided into five sections. In the first section I outline Said’s notion of travelling theory and its utility for understanding how and with what effects ideas or theories (such as Hegel’s) move across time and space. In the next four sections, I provide a critical exegesis of Hegel’s legacy for contemporary Western social science. The theoretical framework established in this chapter will then be applied to an analysis of the work of Shils, Gellner and Fukuyama in Chapter Six.

Said’s Travelling Theory

While I will continue to use Foucault’s archaeological method and Canguilhem’s history of concepts (outlined in Chapter One of this thesis) as analytical tools for examining contemporary works on civil society in Chapter Six, a further theoretical dimension must first be added in order to examine the continuities and points of disjuncture in ideas brought about by temporal and spatial displacements such as those between the theorists discussed in Parts I and II of this study. This is provided through a critical interrogation of what Edward Said has called "travelling theory".

In his essay, "Traveling Theory", Said observes that "ideas and theories travel - from person to person, from situation to situation, from one period to another." While the transfer of ideas (whether it be through "creative borrowing or wholesale appropriation") is in general

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a boon for academic work, it should not be considered to involve a simple, direct transfer or to be an innocent or value-neutral activity. Consequently, Said continues:

... one should go on to specify the kinds of movement that are possible, in order to ask whether by virtue of having moved from one place and time to another an idea or theory gains or loses in strength, and whether a theory in one historical period and national culture becomes altogether different for another period or situation ... Such movement to a new environment is never unimpeded. It necessarily involves processes of representation and institutionalization different from those at the point of origin.5

Taking an historical approach, Said goes on to track the travels of one particular theory. He demonstrates how Lukács' theory of sociohistorical change set out in *History and Class Consciousness* (1923) is subsequently taken up by Lucien Goldmann in 1955 and is "transformed and localized" by this appropriation. From Goldmann the theory is picked up by Raymond Williams who further modifies and localizes Lukács' ideas. Said is eager to highlight two points of displacement which occur in each act of travel. The first concerns the question of praxis and the location of the individuals making use of the theory. Hence, Lukács was "a directly involved militant" and "committed revolutionary" while Goldmann was a "politically committed scholar" and Williams a "reflective critic".6 The other displacement concerns the spatial and temporal location of the writers in question. Lukács' theory moved from its original location in "revolutionary Budapest" to post-World War II Paris and then to 1970s' Cambridge.7 For Said, these two kinds of displacement have important effects on what happens to theory when it travels. Hence, "Lukács wrote for as well as in a situation that produced ideas about

5 Ibid.
6 Ibid., 234, 238.
7 Ibid., 238.
consciousness and theory that are very different from the ideas produced by Goldmann in his situation."\(^8\) History and situation, therefore, must be taken into account. However, this is not to say that theory is determined by spatial location. Rather, one must recognize "... the extent to which theory is a response to a specific social and historical situation ..."\(^9\) From this Said concludes that:

No reading is neutral or innocent, and by that same token every text and every reader is to some extent the product of a theoretical standpoint, however, implicit or unconscious such a standpoint may be ... we distinguish theory from critical consciousness by saying that the latter is a sort of spatial sense, a sort of measuring faculty for locating or situating theory, and this means that theory has to be grasped in the place and the time out of which it emerges as a part of that time, working in and for it, responding to it; then, consequently, that first place can be measured against subsequent places where the theory turns up for use. The critical consciousness is awareness of the differences between situations, awareness too of the fact that no system or theory exhausts the situation out of which it emerges or to which it is transported.\(^10\)

He notes further that when theories travel they may be in danger of undergoing two kinds of revision. Travelling theory either may be "reduced, codified, and institutionalized" or may become "a theoretical overstatement, a theoretical parody of the situation it was formulated originally to remedy or overcome."\(^11\) Said sees this "theoretical overtotalization" at work in Foucault's ideas on power when they travel from specific institutional sites to society in general and from France to other geographic locations.\(^12\)

\(^8\) Ibid., 236.
\(^9\) Ibid., 237.
\(^10\) Ibid., 242.
\(^11\) Ibid., 239.
\(^12\) See ibid., 242-247.
Oddly enough, as Janet Wolff points out, Said's idea of "travelling theory" (in the sense of the effects on theory when it changes location) has not been used in much subsequent writing on theory and travel. Instead most writing on this topic has been concerned with travel writing or with the idea that "there is something mobile in the nature of theory" or with metaphors of travel which are intended to call into question the actual travel of researchers to research sites and the "fixed and ethnocentric, categories of traditional anthropology". While it is curious that Said's focus on travelling theory has not been more widely employed, since it seems to offer an extremely useful and necessary framework for charting the movement and modifications of theory, it has not completely been ignored.

For Derek Gregory, Said's discussion of "travelling theory" raises the "situatedness" of

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13 Janet Wolff, "On the Road Again: Metaphors of Travel in Cultural Criticism," Cultural Studies 7, no.1 (May 1993): 225-226. One of the most comprehensive works in this travel genre is James Clifford's "Traveling Cultures" in Cultural Studies, ed. Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson and Paula A. Treichler (New York: Routledge, 1992), 96-112. Clifford discusses the implications of travel for twentieth century ethnography, especially travel by ethnographers to research sites. However, as bell hooks has noted in relation to Clifford's other essay on travel ("Notes on Travel and Theory," Inscriptions 5 (1989): 177-188) his "playful" invocation of travel does not take account of the possibility that "... travel as a starting point for discourse is associated with different headings - rites of passage, immigration, enforced migration, relocation, enslavement, homelessness." Clifford's textual situation of writing from the rather Eurocentric viewpoint of the Western ethnographer avoids recognizing the wholly different experiences of travel of people of colour and those outside the privileges of the academy. As hooks points out, "theorizing diverse journeyings is crucial to our understanding of any politics of location" (bell hooks, "Representing Whiteness in the Black Imagination," in Cultural Studies, op. cit., 343).

14 On the need for this type of framework Said claims that "... it is ridiculously foolish to argue that 'the facts' or 'the great texts' do not require any theoretical framework or methodology to be appreciated or read properly" ("Traveling Theory", op. cit., 241). Caren Kaplan in Questions of Travel: Postmodern Discourses of Displacement (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996) makes use of Said's analysis to discuss "terms, tropes, and subjects of criticism" rather than theories (see ibid., 5).
theory which may be considered in two imbricated respects. The first sense of "travelling" involves Culler's idea of "theory" as a genre and its ability to create "redescriptions that challenge disciplinary boundaries." This travel across disciplinary boundaries becomes more apparent if, as Gregory proposes, we picture "social theory" in terms of discourse, as "... a series of overlapping, contending and colliding discourses that seek, in various ways and for various purposes, to reflect explicitly on the constitution of social life and to make social practices intelligible." By constructing social theory as critical discourse we may account for this travelling and make clear:

... the situatedness of theory: the contexts and casements that shape our local knowledges, however imperiously global their claims to know, and the practical consequences of understanding (and indeed being in) the world like this rather than like that ... to speak of discourse rather than discipline is not to escape the bonds between power and knowledge. On the contrary, to use this vocabulary is to reflect explicitly on those constellations and their distinctive regimes of truth.

The second notion of "travelling" which expresses theory's situatedness is concerned with "the globalization of intellectual cultures" and involves "the trope of traveling, of tracking 'roots' and 'routes'..." but in a way which questions this very enterprise. Western social science continues to be caught up with the Enlightenment ideas from which it is derived. This is particularly true of the type of universalist claims which followed from the Enlightenment endeavour to establish

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17 Gregory, op. cit., 10.
18 Ibid.
19 Ibid., 12.
Reason as the yardstick for all intellectual inquiry. As Gregory asserts, much of modern social theory is characterized by this kind of universalism or generality which seeks to wipe out specificities and transcend what Habermas called the "context-bound everyday practice" fixed within such discourses. For Habermas, with the triumph of modernity "the transcendent moment of universal validity bursts every provinciality asunder." This is what is problematized by the idea of "travelling theory":

The objection is not so much that social theories are inescapably context-bound, but rather that the origins of 'traveling theory' need to be scrupulously acknowledged because it will always be freighted with a host of assumptions, often derived from different and radically incommensurable sites, which may not - and usually should not - survive the journey intact. Traveling thus becomes a way of resisting the imperial ambitions of theory, of making those who work with it accountable for its movements and of challenging ... 'the politics of closure.'

Hence the situatedness of theory (and particularity) are juxtaposed against the claims to universality and transcendence of Western social theory and the Enlightenment project. The free-floating intellectual posited by Karl Mannheim or what Foucault termed "universal intellectuals" are called into question by travelling theory. As Clifford observes, "Said's "Traveling Theory" challenges the propensity of theory to seek a stable place, to float above historical conjunctures."

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21 Ibid.


24 Clifford, ibid.
Gregory demonstrates how "travelling theory" raises the question of the incommensurability between the sites of production and reproduction of theory. Many contemporary accounts of civil society simply transfer ideas from the seventeenth or eighteenth century without stopping to consider the effects of temporal and spatial location on the theory produced. Even where this matter is given some thought this unproblematic transfer is often easily rationalized by claims that earlier theorists constructed civil society as a bulwark against despotism and that this is also the task of contemporary writers.\textsuperscript{25} However, like Foucault (as quoted in Chapter One) we need to question whether a concept developed in the eighteenth century in response to specific socio-economic conditions can be transferred unproblematically to twentieth century Eastern Europe or, in a further act of displacement, to non-Western areas.

\textbf{Hegel's Legacy}

"In The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity", Jürgen Habermas claims, "we are still contemporaries of the Young Hegelians", meaning that those who came after Hegel must inevitably grapple with his theoretical legacy (or, as someone once put it, "Hegel is the turnstile through which every theorist of modernity must pass").\textsuperscript{26} The effects of the Hegelian legacy can be seen in much of the contemporary writing in Western social science in general of both Marxist and non-Marxist perspectives. Hence, "the problem of the Hegelian model, particularly of a historicism which presupposes a governing structure of self-realization in all historical process,

\textsuperscript{25} For example, see John Keane, "Despotism and Democracy: The Origins and Development of the Distinction Between Civil Society and the State 1750-1850," in Civil Society and Political Theory (London: Verso, 1988).

\textsuperscript{26} Habermas, op. cit., vii.
is by no means confined to ... Marxism."\(^{27}\)

In chapter 1 of *White Mythologies: Writing History and the West*, Robert Young examines the problem of ‘History’ and the Hegelian dialectic for contemporary social theory and, in particular, for Marxism. While Young’s focus in this book is on how Marxists have dealt with the problem of History and the challenges posed to it by poststructuralism, his analysis of the Hegelian legacy has applications for contemporary thought in general and not just Marxism.\(^{28}\)

Young begins his analysis by quoting Hélène Cixious’ account of her early life in colonial Algeria. After analyzing the way in which colonial subjects are made ‘invisible’ by the operation of colonialism, she concludes the passage by stating that this occurs "... Thanks to some annihilating dialectical magic. I saw that the great, noble, ‘advanced’ countries established themselves by expelling what was ‘strange’; excluding it but not dismissing it; enslaving it. A commonplace gesture of History: there have to be two races - the masters and the slaves."\(^{29}\)

This statement prompts Young to assert that "... the ways in which Hegel has been read, absorbed and adapted", especially the dialectic (of master and slave) and the notion of History, have led to problems for contemporary social theory and for Marxism in particular.

Thus, theory "... insofar as it inherits the system of the Hegelian dialectic, is also implicated in the link between the structures of knowledge and the forms of oppression of the


last two hundred years: a phenomenon that has become known as Eurocentrism. "30 He observes that a "... universalizing narrative of the unfolding of a rational system of world history" is nothing more than the mirror image of the experience of European imperialism, and reminds us of Hegel's claim of Africa's lack of history and Marx's contention that colonization initiated India's entry into the progressive flow of world history. Consequently, for Young, "... the story of 'world history' not only involves ... the wrestling of freedom from the realm of necessity but always also the creation, subjection and final appropriation of Europe's 'others'."31 The Other in History forms an essential and constitutive part of the (theoretical) dialectic of master and slave. As Cixous puts it, "There has to be some 'other' - no master without a slave, no economico-political power without exploitation, no dominant class without cattle under the yoke, no 'Frenchmen' without wogs, no Nazis without Jews ... - an exclusion that has its limits and is part of the dialectic."32

For Young there is a clear connection and complicity between Hegelian models of thought and the colonial projects of the West:

Hegel articulates a philosophical structure of the appropriation of the other as a form of knowledge which uncannily simulates the project of nineteenth-century imperialism; the construction of knowledges which all operate through forms of expropriation and incorporation of the other mimics at a conceptual level the geographical and economic absorption of the non-European world by the West.33

When Marx turned Hegel on his head he did not break out of this conceptual system and its

30 Young, ibid., 2.

31 Ibid.

32 Cixious, quoted ibid., 2-3.

33 Young, op. cit., 3.
immanent Eurocentrism. As Young reminds us, Hegelian Marxism is not called ‘Western Marxism’ for nothing.\textsuperscript{34}

The type of knowledge constructed by the Hegelian dialectic (with its appropriation and erasure of the other) turns upon notions of the same and the other. Young maintains that:

Such knowledge is always centred in a self even though it is outward looking, searching for power and control of what is other to it. Anthropology has always provided the clearest symptomatic instance ... History, with a capital H, similarly cannot tolerate otherness or leave it outside its economy of inclusion. The appropriation of the other as a form of knowledge within a totalizing system can thus be set alongside the history (if not the project) of European imperialism ...\textsuperscript{35}

The binary structure of same and other developed from a phenomenological formulation of how knowledge is constructed. The other is negated as other by the same and then assimilated into it thus constituting the dialectic of same and other. Following Descombes, Young suggests that much of twentieth century philosophy has been concerned with trying to escape the Hegelian dialectic. However, it is impossible to "get out of Hegel by simply contradicting him ...[or] ... by simply removing him ..."; one cannot merely "...exclude, excise or extirpate Hegel."\textsuperscript{36} Young discerns this problem in Said's work. While Said is able to identify the predicament of Hegelian formulations he is unable to escape it.\textsuperscript{37}

However, even though Said is unsuccessful in escaping the Hegelian problematic, his discussion of the connections between historicist models of knowledge and European imperialism

\textsuperscript{34} See ibid.

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., 4.

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., 6.

\textsuperscript{37} See ibid., 11.
is useful. Said sees the problem as one of "historicism and the universalizing and self-validating that has been endemic to it". He considers historicism to be both a legacy of Orientalism and one of its epistemological foundations. The historicism he refers to is that of Hegel and, in particular, Hegel's belief in the unity of History. Part and parcel of this historicism is the placement of the West (or Europe) at the centre of History so that it becomes the subject of History. As Said puts it:

So far as Orientalism in particular and the European knowledge of other societies in general have been concerned, historicism meant that the one human history uniting humanity either culminated in or was observed from the vantage point of Europe, or the West.

The peoples and cultures that were left out of this History (those Wolf called "the people without history") were later appropriated in the twentieth century by the newly established genre of "world history" as employed by Braudel, Wallerstein, and Anderson. Said maintains that this "world history" is descended from anthropology and Orientalism. However, like other forms of historicism, "world history" has failed to face up to its complicity with European imperialism. Said sees this as:

... a fairly uniform avoidance of the relationship between European imperialism and these variously constituted, variously formed and articulated knowledges ... The curious result is that the theories of accumulation on a world scale, or the capitalist world state, or lineages of absolutism depend (a) on the same displaced percipient and historicist observer who had been an Orientalist or colonial traveller three generations ago; (b) they depend also on a homogenizing and incorporating world historical scheme that assimilated non-synchronous developments, histories, cultures, and peoples to it; and (c) they block and keep down latent epistemological critiques of the institutional, cultural and disciplinary instruments


39 Ibid.
linking the incorporative practise of world history with partial knowledges like Orientalism on the one hand, and on the other, with continued "Western" hegemony of the non-European, peripheral world.\footnote{Ibid.}

Historicist theoretical models such as "world history" present their objects within a totalizing framework. This framework is teleological, charting a single evolutionary path whose stages and sequences follow those of Europe and whose telos is Western modernity. Whether consciously stated or not, the West/Europe is positioned at the centre of the account. When not stated specifically the centrality of the West is assumed as is that of the European voice. In this manner, "Hegel's hypostatization of Europe as the subject of History", its essence, is reiterated.\footnote{Gregory, op. cit., 369. See also Stuart Hall, "Introduction" in Formations of Modernity, ed. Stuart Hall and Bram Gieben (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), 5.} Thus, as Said argues, all other histories are subsumed into Western History. This Hegelian framework appropriates all other histories and places them in a progressive developmental sequence which culminates in the West. Hence, the Other is first negated by and then assimilated into the Same; the Hegelian dialectic.

While Young presents the Hegelian legacy and its implications for Western social science very effectively in White Mythologies, at the same time, his analysis contains a curious omission. His work seems throughout to be permeated with Derrida's ideas (Young's book is even titled after one of Derrida's works) and yet, there is no sustained engagement with his works. The longest discussion of Derrida is one section in chapter 1 which is actually more concerned with Levinas than with Derrida. This is odd because Derrida's critiques of Western philosophy seem to have much to offer for any examination of historicism, dialectics and ethnocentrism and their
relation to Western philosophy. Derrida's essays "Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourses of the Human Sciences" and "White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy" are of particular importance in addressing the Hegelian legacy.

Derrida's Critique of Western Metaphysics

Young makes two broad observations about Derrida's work which may serve as ways into questions of historicism and Eurocentrism and their relations to philosophy. The first point is that Derrida's critique of logocentrism highlights the ethnocentrism of logocentrism. Derrida considers that Western philosophy privileges speech over writing (phonocentrism). As writing is considered to be a displacement from consciousness and, therefore, inferior this leads to logocentrism, "the belief that the first and the last thing is the Logos, the Word, the Divine Mind, the self-presence of full self-consciousness." Western philosophy's logocentrism involves a dedication to "a belief in some ultimate 'word', presence, essence, truth or reality which will act as the foundation of all our thought, language and experience." This universal sign is called the 'transcendental signified' and holds the key to all other meanings. "The Idea" and "World Spirit" as used by Hegel, for example, are transcendental signifieds. The transcendental signified attempts to provide the foundation for the framework of thought as a whole and therefore must itself be transcendental. However, Derrida considers this transcendental

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44 Ibid., 40.
gesture to be a fantasy. Rather, some signs become privileged by certain ideologies\(^45\) (e.g., "Freedom" in Hegel’s case). These can be depicted as either the origin or as the telos of all other signs. This enables meanings to be ordered and ranked in a hierarchy.\(^46\)

For Derrida, a thought-system is "metaphysical" if it "... depends on an unassailable foundation, a first principle or unimpeachable ground upon which a whole hierarchy of meanings may be constructed."\(^47\) First principles are characterized by binary opposition and are specified by the exclusion of the other. Same/Other is an example of a metaphysical binary opposition. In each opposition the first term is privileged (e.g., master/slave, Same/Other) and "... the ‘privileged’ term depends for its identity on its excluding the other ..."\(^48\) For Hegel the contradictions in such oppositions (the dialectic) are determined through sublation, whereas for Derrida they are reversed and displaced through deconstruction.\(^49\) Derrida’s emphasis on the ethnocentrism of the logocentrism of Western philosophy brings out philosophy’s attempt to swallow up the rest of the world in its universal, transcendental, thought-systems with their totalizing categories and dialectical oppositions of Same and Other in which the West always takes centre stage and in which the Western voice is always privileged.

Young’s second observation concerns Derrida’s identification of the privileging of the

\(^{45}\) See ibid.

\(^{46}\) See ibid.

\(^{47}\) Ibid.

\(^{48}\) ibid., 56.

\(^{49}\) See ibid.
centre over the margin as a philosophical category which he then connects to Eurocentrism.\textsuperscript{50} In "Structure, Sign and Play", Derrida questions the claims to objectivity and scientific neutrality of disciplines like anthropology and, instead, demonstrates that knowledge in these disciplines is constructed on the unconscious deployment of concepts such as the centre. As Young puts it, "the analysis of the dialectics of the centre and the margin can thus operate geographically as well as conceptually, articulating the power relationships between the metropolitan and the colonial cultures at their geographical peripheries."\textsuperscript{51} Further, Derrida considers that this kind of analysis can also be used in respect of historical concepts like ‘end’ and ‘origin’.\textsuperscript{52} In "Structure, Sign, and Play" he says of History that it is:

\begin{quote}
... a concept which has always been in complicity with a teleological and eschatological metaphysics, in other words, paradoxically, in complicity with that philosophy of presence to which it was believed history could be opposed. The thematic of historicity ... has always been required by the determination of Being as presence ... History has always been conceived as the movement of a resumption of history, as a detour between two presences.\textsuperscript{53}
\end{quote}

History which moves in a linear, teleological manner from an origin to an end (telos) through the coming to self-consciousness of World Spirit or the self-consciousness of the Idea (the end being foreshadowed in the "form of presence") can only have meaning in relation to a transcendental signified. This conflicts with Derrida’s notion of deconstruction of the idea of

\textsuperscript{50} See Young, op. cit., 18.

\textsuperscript{51} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{52} See ibid., 64.

presence which shows the consequences of the want of a such a sign." Thus Derrida subscribes to the same view of history as Althusser of whom he states:

Althusser’s entire, and necessary, critique of the ‘Hegelian’ concept of history and of the notion of an expressive totality, etc., aims at showing that there is not one single history, a general history, but rather histories different in their type, rhythm, mode of inscription - intervallic, differentiated histories. I have always subscribed to this.55

Derrida contests the Hegelian notion of a totality of History since History must continually transcend itself to achieve totality. In "Violence and Metaphysics: An Essay on the Thought of Emmanuel Levinas" he writes: "History is not the totality transcended by eschatology, metaphysics, or speech. It is transcendence itself."56

In "Structure, Sign, and Play", Derrida raises the connection of philosophy (and history) to metaphor, "the history of metaphysics, like the history of the West, is the history of these metaphors and ... Its matrix ... is the determination of being as presence ..."57 He develops this theme further in "White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy" where he argues that philosophy is actually conceptually dependent on metaphor for its structuring figures and tropes. This is problematic for two broad reasons: the (in)conceivability of a universal system of

54 See Young, op. cit., 65.


57 Derrida, "Structure …", op. cit., 279.
metaphors and the West's connection to the rest of the world.\textsuperscript{58} While the West has in one way or another been bound up with the histories and cultures of the rest of the globe, it systematically and consistently wants to refuse this. Instead it constructs "a myth of itself as the sovereign centre of History" and reproduces itself "as autonomous, uncoloured, as discretely white."\textsuperscript{59} Similarly, while it cannot do without metaphor, it pretends and deludes itself that these are not situated and grounded and denies that "the concepts of Western Reason have come in part from elsewhere, their non-West, metaphorical past glossed as such as nonwhite by a superseding 'white mythology'."\textsuperscript{60} This process of locating the West at the centre of History and of "whiting out" the non-West is what Derrida calls "white mythology":

Metaphysics - the white mythology which reassembles and reflects the culture of the West: the white man takes his own mythology, Indo-European mythology, his own logos, that is, the mythos of his idiom, for the universal form of that he must still wish to call Reason ... White mythology - metaphysics has erased within itself the fabulous scene that has produced it, the scene that nevertheless remains active and stirring, inscribed in white ink, an invisible design covered over in the palimpsest.\textsuperscript{61}

Hence, the deployment of metaphor by Western theorists which initiates logocentrism is based on the metaphysical violence immanent in the playing out of the Self/Other dialectic and effects


\textsuperscript{59} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{60} Ibid., 108.

the West's installation as the centre of History. Once again, "White Mythology" raises some familiar Derridian themes concerning Western philosophy and its Hegelian legacy. Central to this are the problems associated with historicism such as the assimilation of the histories of all peoples and cultures to a single Western History, of totalizing schemata and of closure, of the teleological nature of History, of the placement of the West at the centre of History and the privilege bestowed upon the European voice, and of the elevation of universal and transcendental narratives of History over situated, particular, and located histories which do not privilege History over geography. It also emphasizes another important theme in Derrida’s work, the connection of philosophy (and History) with ethnocentrism.

Hegel and History

Another significant aspect of Hegel’s legacy for contemporary social thought relates to the way in which his philosophy of history, with its notions of sequential developmental historical stages corresponding to the spatial and temporal locations of specific cultures, dovetailed with nineteenth-century anthropological discourse. Nicholas Thomas argues that post-Enlightenment anthropology represents a fundamental break with earlier constructions of "man"
and of the Other.

Prior to the Enlightenment, non-Western peoples were constructed "... not in any anthropologically specific terms, but as a lack or poorer form of the values of the centre."64 This approach, which Thomas calls "the vacancy of otherness", can be seen in the work of seventeenth-century writers like Hobbes and Locke. They compare the lifestyles of American Indians to the condition of Europeans and portray the Indians as lacking the basics of civilized European life. During the eighteenth century this representational strategy changed and, by the end of the century, "... figures of inadequacy are subordinated to a distinctively anthropological discourse, which registers a variety of human races or peoples, who are mapped and ranked ... in an evolutionary natural history."65 The shift to this kind of construction of otherness can be seen in the work of Montesquieu and culminates in Hegel's anthropological typology of historical epochs.

According to Thomas, this shift from the "vacancy of otherness" to an anthropological view of humanity as a number of distinct peoples or races lead to a new way of representing such peoples:

This distinctively modern and anthropological imagining projects natural differences among people that may be rendered at one time as different 'nations', at another as distinct 'races' or 'cultures'. The underlying epistemic operation - of partitioning the human species - makes possible a variety of political and ethnographic projects ...66

Thus by the end of the eighteenth century constructions of otherness were based on the ideas

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65 Ibid.

66 Ibid.
prevalent in the field of natural history and revolved around perceived differences in physique and personal attributes ascribed to distinct peoples. These kind of constructions were stimulated by the expansion of colonial empires which required greater administration. This task necessitated the representation and management of the subject populations and was facilitated by notions of distinct and knowable peoples or cultures. The division of human populations into different groups lead to their essentialization into types which in turn were ranked in a hierarchy.67

Thomas considers that these constructions of otherness based on natural history are still pervasive in much twentieth-century social science. While eighteenth-century discussions of 'nations' evolved into the nineteenth-century fixation on 'races' and, in the twentieth century, into the examination of 'cultures', the same kind of constructions are at work. As Thomas observes, "Each of these concepts privileged differences - understood at different moments primarily in temperamental, physical and now cultural terms - and rendered the essentialized entities through an array of attributes that are supposedly peculiar to them."68 Contemporary social science, therefore, is still strongly influenced in its constructions of otherness by post-Enlightenment ways of representing non-Western peoples. In this manner, "... the character that is posited is a fixed essence attached to a species, a nation, a people or a culture" which can be described and represented.69 This "discursive technology"70 can be seen at work in the writings of Shils, Gellner and Fukuyama who all construct others as distinct groups (usually as 'cultures'),

67 See ibid., 74-80.
68 Ibid., 89.
69 Ibid., 92.
70 Ibid., 97.
'peoples', or 'worlds') who differ in fundamental ways from Europeans or Westerners. These kind of constructions, as Thomas shows, are inherited from the post-Enlightenment geographical imagination of natural history as exemplified in Hegel's philosophy of history. This discourse of difference (together with historicism and dialectics) is part of the shadow cast by Hegel over twentieth century social theory and is evident in much of the contemporary work on civil society.

Spectres of Hegel

How does this Hegelian legacy affect contemporary social theory and the construction of contemporary concepts of civil society? By way of illustration, I will make use of Victor Li's analysis of Habermas' theory of modernity as it points up some of the central problems of the Hegelian legacy which also afflict the three theorists I will be considering in the next chapter. Li sets up his analysis of Habermas by employing Charles Taylor's distinction between cultural and acultural theories of modernity. Cultural theories of modernity present changes that have led to Western modernity as the result of the ascendance of a new culture. Acultural theories, on the other hand, present these changes as a "culture-neutral" process. Thus, an acultural theory of modernity is one that "... promotes a narrative that stresses a universal capacity for change and, more importantly, that portrays modernity as a single-track development or growth


of human understanding and reason". Taylor sees acultural theories as creating "... an ethnocentric prison" in which we are "... condemned to project our own forms onto everyone else, and blissfully unaware of what we are doing." For Li, Habermas' theory of modernity is a prime example of an acultural theory, "... a narrative of the progress of rationality."

In Habermas' theory, modernity is distinguished from prior eras because it does not ground itself normatively in prior models but, instead, establishes its own normativity. This process is connected to the unfolding of humanity's reason and the development of rationality. In response to criticism of modernity, that is, of the Enlightenment belief in the progress of reason and its consequences, Habermas argues that modernity's accomplishments not only lie in technological and material gains but also in moral and cognitive development. In this regard, he differentiates between the "... 'closed' mythic world or archaic societies and the 'open' rational world of modern occidental society" and his theory of social evolution allows him to place "... modern rationality above mythic or traditional thought."

Habermas portrays the achievements of modernity not merely as the expression of European experience but as a universal improvement in mankind's abilities. In this manner, he seeks to describe modernity in universal terms and not in relativist or ethnocentric ones (i.e., as contemporary European culture). He contends that "the discourse of modernity is not ethnocentric precisely because it has achieved a level of rationality which allows for context-transcendent

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73 Li, op. cit., 45.
74 Taylor, op. cit., 606.
75 Li, op. cit., 45.
76 Ibid., 46.
judgments ..." However, as Li points out, Habermas' claim that his theory of modernity is not ethnocentric is based on two questionable practices:

... first, Habermas's theory of modernity presupposes and constructs a complementary opposite, an Other, namely the premodern or traditional closed society, and second, while seeking to avoid ethnocentrism, Habermas's theory reinstates an even more powerful version of it in the form of a universal narrative which deploys a normative temporal or evolutionary schema, a narrative of cognitive development and ethical maturation best illustrated it seems by the history of Western Enlightenment.78

Although Habermas attempts to differentiate his theory of social evolution from Hegelian and Marxist teleological models "in which the pattern and goal of progress are theorized in advance", he is unsuccessful since the terminus of his theory of human development is still the West.79 As Gregory notes, Habermas consistently privileges the West and the European voice even when he tries to avoid this.80 For example, in his lectures on modernity, Habermas makes clear the centrality of the West when he asks "Who else but Europe could draw from its own traditions the insight, the energy, the courage of vision ..."81

Habermas' theory of development not only essentializes Others but also essentializes the West in modernity. As Li puts it, "... the process of essentializing the Other is always dialectically related to the essentializing of the self."82 Thus theories like Habermas' depend on

77 Ibid., 47.
78 Ibid.
79 Ibid., 48.
80 See Gregory, op. cit., 175.
81 Habermas, op. cit., 367.
82 Li, op. cit., 48.
the Other as a foundational category, for "it is the enlightened and the rational who require their mythical, irrational other."\(^{83}\) Li argues that we must "... confront theories of modern rationality and social evolution such as Habermas's as myths, as specifically Western myths."\(^{84}\) These "white mythologies" avoid their own origins as myths by whiting out or erasing their "own mythic conception."\(^{85}\)

The kind of totalizing schema employed by theorists like Habermas - which give the observing subject a sense of the totality, an overview - are confounded by an additional problem that Li does not address. Such schemata presuppose "an external vantage point" which produces a "transcendent vision" of the object of inquiry. As Nicholas Thomas observes, "it is ... this sense of society as an objective whole, an object of anthropological knowledge and governmentality, that is constitutive not only of modern colonialism but of modernity."\(^{86}\) This is what Donna Haraway calls the "God-trick of seeing everything from nowhere".\(^{87}\)

Haraway argues that "situated knowledges" are an alternative to "... a conquering gaze from nowhere. This is the gaze that ... makes the unmarked category claim the power to see and not be seen, to represent while escaping representation."\(^{88}\) The unmarked categories denoted by

\(^{83}\) Ibid., 53.

\(^{84}\) Ibid., 52.

\(^{85}\) Ibid., 53.

\(^{86}\) Thomas, op. cit., 111.

\(^{87}\) Donna Haraway, "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective", Feminist Studies 14, no. 3 (Fall 1988), 581.

\(^{88}\) Ibid.
this gaze are, for Haraway, white and male.\textsuperscript{89} Haraway also reminds us that "the Western eye has fundamentally been a wandering eye, a traveling lens. These peregrinations have often been violent and insistent on having mirrors for a conquering self ...", raising again the problematic of travelling theory and the intellectuals ability to "float" over "context-bound everyday practice".\textsuperscript{90} For Haraway, situated knowledge involves what Adrienne Rich calls "the politics of location" and not subject/object dichotomies/dialectics or universality and transcendence. In this manner, the viewer is made responsible for ways of seeing and the knowledge claims that flow therefrom.\textsuperscript{91} Location, then, becomes a means to oppose totalizing frameworks and the "politics of closure". Hence, "views from somewhere" must resist and replace the "gaze from nowhere".\textsuperscript{92}

This point is echoed by James Clifford in his discussion of travel and theory since, as he puts it, "theory is always written from some 'where'..."\textsuperscript{93} He notes how Adrienne Rich disrupts the homogeneous categories employed in theories through the invocation of a politics of location:

"Location", here, is not a matter of finding a stable "home" or of discovering a common experience. Rather it is a matter of being aware of the difference that makes a difference in concrete situations, of recognizing the various inscriptions, "places," or "histories" that both empower and inhibit the construction of theoretical categories ... categories essential to ... serious comparative knowledge.\textsuperscript{94}

\textsuperscript{89} See ibid.

\textsuperscript{90} Ibid., 586. The phrase "context-bound everyday practice" is from Habermas, op. cit., 322.

\textsuperscript{91} See ibid., 583.

\textsuperscript{92} See ibid.

\textsuperscript{93} Clifford, "Notes on Travel and Theory", op. cit., 185.

\textsuperscript{94} Ibid., 182.
Clifford claims that while theory is often concerned with the universal and the trans-historical this may be enervated by localization. Theory's claims to a 'God's eye view' and its avoidance of location thus can be challenged. Once again, we return to the question of the situatedness of theory which is problematized by the notion of travelling theory. Hence, by returning to the notion of travelling theory we have come full circle and arrived at the point at which I began my theoretical framework for this chapter. The task in the next chapter is to apply that framework to the writings of Shils, Gellner and Fukuyama on civil society.

\textsuperscript{95} See ibid., 179.
Whether we know it, or like it, or not, most of us are Hegelians and quite orthodox ones at that.

Paul de Man, "Sign and Symbol in Hegel's Aesthetics".

**Introduction**

In this chapter I examine the theories of civil society and constructions of non-Western Others of Shils, Gellner and Fukuyama and how their work is informed by the post-Enlightenment concept of civil society and geographical imagination outlined in Part I of this study. I show how each of the twentieth-century writers was influenced by Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel and how their work has been effected by the Hegelian legacy (outlined in the preceding chapter). Hence, the critical framework I established in Chapter Five will be applied to Shils, Gellner and Fukuyama. Said’s notion of travelling theory is invoked here to show how and with what effects, ideas or theories travel across time and space, enabling continuities and points of disjuncture brought about by temporal and spatial displacements to be identified. The idea of travelling theory is used to problematize the situatedness of theory both in terms of the contexts which mould particular theories despite their claims to universality, and in terms of the universalism and generality of theory which attempts to wipe out specificities. Hence, theories are always wrapped up in a set of assumptions which are drawn from other (often incommensurable) sites which must be identified and problematized and the tendency for theory to hover above historical specificities must also be challenged by the notion of travelling
This chapter is divided into three main sections dealing in turn with each theorist. The discussion of each theorist is broken down into subsections dealing with topics such as civil society and the construction of non-Western Others. The points of continuity and disjuncture between the work of each twentieth-century writer and the discursive formation identified in Part I of this thesis will be considered under two broad headings: the use of a universal historical narrative and the construction of a complementary opposite or Other. In the final section, I discuss the principal common themes which may be drawn from these authors regarding civil society and the mirroring construction of non-Western Others, and their relationship to the post-Enlightenment concept of civil society and geographical imagination outlined in Part I.

**SHILS**

Edward Shils is a sociologist who, during a long academic career extending from the post-World War period to the 1990s, has been an important figure in American sociology and social science in general. As well as co-authoring *Toward a General Theory of Action* with Talcott Parsons and for other structural-functionalist works, Shils is well-known for his work in the field of (political) development. Shils produced a substantial body of work (primarily in the 1950s and 1960s) on the political development of the "new states", i.e., those states established

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following decolonization after World War II and which make up a large proportion of what is often referred to today as the "Third World". His work on the political development of the "new states" was constructed according to the theories, conventions and tropes of the dominant paradigm in American sociology and social science in general of the post-War era - modernization theory. Shils’ writing on political development in the "new states" is of interest here because he is one of a very few authors in this period who frame their discussion of political modernization in terms of civility and civil society.³

Shils has written at least six articles from 1957 to 1995 which deal to a greater or lesser extent with civil society. He employs the term "civil society" in each of these articles but does not always state what he means by the term. However, from examination of those works where he does discuss "civil society" in more detail, and from the context in which it is used in his other works, it becomes apparent that he intends the term to have the same general meaning throughout.

In broad terms, Shils sees civil society as approximating the structures and sensibilities of the political and social systems of the West (specifically the United States and Britain) and, in particular, the mode of civility which he perceives to underlie political interaction in those polities. As a sociologist concerned with the (political) development of the "new states", Shils locates his discussion of civil society on a world historical canvas and employs a mirroring comparative device in which the West provides the unstated yardstick against which the lack of civil society in the "new states" is measured.

Virtue and Civility

As already noted, Shils' early work does not theorize the concept of civil society or ground it in any philosophical context; he uses the term without any real definition or explanation, assuming the reader knows to what he refers. Although civil society has been a recurring theme in his work for almost forty years, Shils did not discuss its meaning at any length until 1991 and instead focused on the meaning of the term "civility". While it became apparent in his later work that "civility" and "civil society" are linked, he did not make any clear effort to connect the two terms in his earlier work, preferring instead to leave the connections unstated.

In his 1991 article "The Virtue of Civil Society", Shils finally discusses what he means by "civil society" and its links with "civility". Here he specifically claims that his conception of civil society is derived from Montesquieu's discussion of types of government and the principles which activate them in the Spirit of the Laws. Shils never provides an explanation of why he looks to Montesquieu for a concept of civil society. However, his uncritical appropriation of Montesquieu's ideas illustrates the perils of using theory generated in another spatial and temporal location without taking into account the specific context in which that theory was generated or exploring the differences between (often incommensurable) sites of production and subsequent invocation.

Shils' use of Montesquieu's theories differs from the way in which Charles Taylor and

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Norberto Bobbio see Montesquieu's work as leading to a theory of civil society. Taylor and Bobbio both see Montesquieu's distinctions between monarchies and despotisms (i.e., the existence of intermediate bodies in monarchies) as providing a basis for a theory of civil society. Shils, however, suggests that civil society arises from Montesquieu's identification of the principles activating different kinds of government. Montesquieu argued that republics were activated by virtue and it is from this that Shils derives his theory of civil society.

According to Shils, Montesquieu established that there is "... an association of particular moral qualities and beliefs with particular political regimes." For Shils, what Montesquieu termed "virtue" may be equated with "public spirit" and both of these terms are synonymous with "civility". He states that he wishes to investigate the role of civility or virtue in the "liberal democratic order" which he claims Montesquieu called republican government. While acknowledging that "civil society" and "liberal democratic society" are not completely synonymous, Shils maintains that "in civility lies the difference between a well-ordered and a disordered liberal democracy."

The way in which Shils employs Montesquieu's statements on republican government and the interpretation he gives to those statements requires some analysis and critique. It should be noted that when Montesquieu spoke of republican government he had two forms in mind: aristocratic and democratic. Shils does not mention this and simply equates the republican form

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6 Ibid., 3.

7 Ibid.
of government with democracy. Further, he equates the republicanism of which Montesquieu speaks with present day liberal democracy. As Montesquieu makes clear, when he discusses "democracies" he refers to the Greek city states (Athens and Sparta) and the Roman republic. When Montesquieu elaborates on the structure of these democracies it is apparent that they cannot be equated easily with present day liberal democracy. For example, the franchise was limited to male property owning citizens which excluded women, slaves and "foreigners" (Montesquieu cites a census of Athens which showed 21,000 citizens, 10,000 resident aliens and 400,000 slaves, it seems that women were not even counted8), Roman citizens were divided into classes to determine those eligible to stand for office, and there was no secret ballot, instead voting was done in public through the raising of hands so that "the lesser people must be enlightened by the principal people and subdued by the gravity of certain eminent men."9

This differs from Shils' idea of the institutions necessary for a civil society (i.e., the institutions of a contemporary Western liberal democracy) such as universal suffrage and free and open elections conducted by secret ballot.10 Shils has made the conceptual leap between Montesquieu's discussion of the ancient republics and present day liberal democracy without examining the implications of such travelling theory. Shils makes a similar conceptual leap by transferring Montesquieu's ideas about the principle activating republican government (i.e., virtue) to the twentieth century and by then conflating "civility" with "virtue".

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Shils draws on Montesquieu again to explain what he means by "civility", claiming that for Montesquieu, virtue was love of the republic, love of country and love of democracy. It is not clear from his citation from *The Spirit of the Laws* whether this is Shils' own translation of Montesquieu's work or exactly how this fits into the work. He seems to have taken three separate quotations from different chapters of the work and placed them together but out of context. What Montesquieu meant by "virtue" became an issue when the work was first published and his attempts to define more specifically what virtue is are relevant to Shils' interpretation and use of this term.

The Catholic church was critical of the original version of the *Spirit of the Laws* especially the definition of "virtue". Criticism was centred on whether the claim that monarchies are activated by honour and not virtue, referred to Christian or moral virtue. Montesquieu published an "Author’s Explanatory Note" to the 1757 edition (referred to in subsequent editions as the "Author’s Forward") in which he attempts to set out what he means by "virtue". In this Note he states that virtue in a republic is "love of the homeland, that is, love of equality." He calls this "political virtue" and distinguishes it from Christian or moral virtue. This conflicts with Shils’ opening claim that Montesquieu demonstrated how moral qualities and beliefs are associated with particular political regimes. In Book 4, chapter 5 Montesquieu defines virtue in a republic as "the love of our laws and the homeland". He states that this applies only to democracies and that this requires "a continuous preference of the public interest over one’s

11 See ibid., 11.

12 In order of quotation by Shils, these are taken from Book 5, chapter 2, 42; Author’s Forward, xli; Book 5, chapter 3, 43.
own" and that this "produces all the individual virtues; they are only that preference."\textsuperscript{13}

It is this notion of placing the public good above individual interest which is the basis of Shils' idea of "civility". In all his writings, Shils argues that civility is more than good manners and that it is the ability to transcend the personal and the parochial which distinguishes a polity infused with civility. He equates this with the virtue or public ethos of the Greek polis and the Roman republic. It is this quality that he finds lacking in the "new states". Shils' conflation of "virtue" and "civility" is problematic for several reasons which are all at base derived from Shils' misunderstanding or distortion of Montesquieu's arguments and a failure to contextualize Montesquieu's statements in the eighteenth century milieu which so strongly conditioned them.

Foucault once said that "Marxism exists in nineteenth century [European] thought like a fish in water".\textsuperscript{14} The same could be said of Montesquieu's work and eighteenth-century European thought. However, while Montesquieu's ideas concerning virtue were imprinted deeply with the contemporary concerns of the eighteenth century, they were rooted in the republican tradition stretching back to the ancient world. J.G.A. Pocock has examined the relation between virtue and republican forms of government from the ancient Greeks to the founders of the American Republic.

Pocock shows how in the ancient world virtue was placed in an oppositional relationship with fortune. This relationship was gendered with virtue endowed with perceived masculine characteristics and fortune endowed with imagined feminine qualities. Hence, the relationship between virtue and fortune often was represented as "a masculine active intelligence ... seeking

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., Book 4, chapter 5, 36.

\textsuperscript{14} Michel Foucault, \textit{The Order of Things} (New York: Vintage Books, 1970), 262.
to dominate a feminine passive unpredictability which would submissively reward him for his strength or vindictively betray him for his weakness."¹⁵ Fortune was "the circumstantial insecurity of political life" while virtue was the idea that "... in acting upon his world through war and statecraft, the practitioner of civic virtue was acting on himself; he was performing his proper business as a citizen and was making himself through action what Aristotle had said man was and should be by nature: a political animal."¹⁶ By acting in the civic arena, citizens moulded the unformed raw material of circumstance provided by fortune and, in this manner, created citizenship and the city itself.¹⁷

For the ancient philosophers, like Aristotle, one of the principal philosophical questions was whether citizens should aspire to a life of political action or a life of scholarship and reflection. As Pocock shows, this lead to a distinction between terms such as "civil" and "civic":

The Athenian polis had been a community of culture as well as of decision-making, and words like "polite," "civil," "urbane" seem to have acquired from the contemplative style of humanism the connotation, which they bear in contrast to their cognate terms "political," "civic," "urban," of a social life which consists in civilized conversation rather than in political decision and action.¹⁸

The philosophical traditions derived from Aristotle and the Athenian polis considered political involvement as the most elevated form of human community and the life of contemplation as inferior to this. As Pocock puts it, "The philosophic basis of the vivere civile was the conception that it was in action, in the production of works and deeds of all kinds, that the life of man rose


¹⁶ Ibid., 40.

¹⁷ See ibid, 41.

¹⁸ Ibid., 64.
to the stature of those universal values which were immanent in it."\textsuperscript{19}

Political involvement by citizens through governing and being governed generated civic virtue. Each citizen's virtue was connected to that of all the others and required that each place the common good above their individual interest. However there was always an inherent tension between individual interest and the common good which was not amenable to easy resolution. When a citizen placed his own interest above the public interest he lost his civic virtue and since such virtue also involved his fellow citizens it might be lost also due to their putting their own interests first. The loss of virtue in this manner was termed corruption and this was considered a constant threat to the republic. Hence the existence of virtue depended on the conjunction of several contingent elements - individual behaviour, legal regulation, outside events - and the power regulating the mixture of these elements was called fortune.\textsuperscript{20} It was on these antiquarian foundations that the eighteenth century discussion of virtue was built.

Eighteenth-century philosophers were concerned with civic virtue and the threat of corruption but their discussion was enframed by a radically different socio-economic situation from that of the Greek polis, namely, a market economy. While they also were concerned with the threat of corruption, eighteenth century writers defined the self-interest that leads to corruption in specifically economic terms. This lead to a theoretical predicament of sorts in which the idea of the ideal citizen was out of step with the changes which had occurred in the external world:

... the civic and propertied individual was endowed with an ethic that clearly and

\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., 64-65.

\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., 74-76.
massively depicted him as a citizen of classical virtue, the inhabitant of a classical republic, but exacted the price of obliging him to regard all the changes transforming the world of government, commerce, and war as corruption - corruption essentially the same as that which had transformed Rome from republic to empire. Hence the age's intense and nervous neoclassicism. The dominant paradigm for the individual inhabiting the world of value was that of civic man; but the dominant paradigm for the individual as engaged in historic actuality was that of economic and intersubjective man, and it was peculiarly hard to bring the two together.  

Pocock argues that two philosophic responses to this predicament developed in the eighteenth century. The "country" or "Old Whig" school took a normative approach which emphasized civic liberty and the threat of its corruption by the socio-economic changes which were identified as ushering in the modern world. The "court" approach, on the other hand, took a pragmatic approach, delineated the factors leading to change and suggested how governments could deal with these new conditions but did not advance a normative theory on which to base this.  

During the first half of the eighteenth century the "country" approach maintained theoretical dominance and it is within this school of thought that The Spirit of the Laws may be located. The "country" approach saw the threat of corruption in corporeal and tangible terms expressed as "private appetites and false consciousness." To keep these in check, theorists advocated (rather unrealistically) a precommercial economic independence, a constitution like Britain's which balanced and checked powers and the practice of civic virtue by individual citizens. Pocock argues that by the middle of the century the "court" and "country" ideologies

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21 Ibid., 466.

22 See ibid., 466-467.

23 Ibid., 486.

24 See ibid., 486-487.
were no longer in opposition but coexisted in a symbiotic relationship. This enabled philosophers to take a fresh look at the relations between monarchies and representative institutions, the outcome of which was the works on the British political system which considered the problems of reconciling the civic ethos of the ancient republics with commerce, a market economy, and their potentially corrupting effects. Montesquieu's discussion of Britain in Book 19, chapter 27 of *The Spirit of the Laws* was part of this genre.²⁵

Montesquieu considered virtue in a republic to be political virtue and not Christian or moral virtue. Political virtue required that all citizens were equally subject to the laws and that they were committed to the public good. Pocock points out that "... the ethos of the ancient cities was essentially a warrior ethos" and commercial enterprise was scorned. Commercial interaction outside the city's jurisdiction lead to the development of values which were considered softer than the strict discipline of the warrior ethos of the republics.²⁶ Commerce, in the eighteenth century, came to have a somewhat ambiguous status for writers like Montesquieu. On the one hand, it softened manners but, on the other, this lead to luxury, the expansion of personal appetites, the excitation of the passions and the concomitant undermining of civic virtue. Pocock explains how this is dealt with by Montesquieu:

Commerce is the source of all social values save one ... but that one, the *vertu politique*, is that which makes man a *zoon politikon* and consequently human ... Commerce, which makes men cultured, entails luxury, which makes them corrupt; there is no economic law which sets limits to the growth of luxury, and virtue is to be preserved only by the discipline of the republic, educating men in

²⁵ See ibid., 488.

²⁶ Shils incorrectly identifies the "virtue of the warrior" (the warrior ethos) with "aristocratic virtue" and distinguishes it from "civil virtue" which he calls the "virtue of the citizen": See Shils, "Ideology and Civility", op. cit., 470.
frugality - which indeed is conducive to further commercial growth - by means which include both music and the practice of arms.\textsuperscript{27}

For Montesquieu commerce replaced fortune as the force underlying the threat to the republic of corruption and ultimately "... commerce and culture were incompatible with virtue and liberty".\textsuperscript{28} While commerce was considered undesirable in the ancient republics and the growth of economic inequality and luxury were perceived as a threat to the practice of civic virtue, these concerns were heightened for the eighteenth-century theorists by the expansion of and the changes wrought by the contemporary economy. It is this eighteenth-century context of Montesquieu's discussion of virtue in republics which is missing in Shils' account and in his transfer of Montesquieu's ideas to the study of "new states" in the second half of the twentieth century.

The threats posed to virtue by the corrupting effects of commerce and, in particular, the effects of economic inequality on political virtue are Montesquieu's primary concern. However, Shils considers the threat to virtue in democracies to be from primordialism. While primordialism is not considered to be a threat to the civic ethos of modern polities like the United States and Britain, "new states" are seen by Shils to be plagued by primordialism and therefore unable to form civil societies.\textsuperscript{29}

In his 1957 article "Primordial, Personal, Sacred and Civil Ties", Shils speaks of primordial groups as "primary groups" which demonstrate strong cohesiveness. He contrasts

\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., 492.

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{29} For example, see Edward Shils, "The Prospect for Lebanese Civility" in Politics in Lebanon, ed. Leonard Binder (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1966), 2.
these primary groups with the civilly structured relations of "modern" society (i.e., the West) and argues that "the civil attachment, the moderate pluralistic concern for the whole, ... is not the spirit of the primary group ... the ethos and tone necessary for the maintenance of civil society is ... inimical to the fervour and passion of the primary group." 30

Shils' initial discussion of primordialism was given its seminal exposition in Clifford Geertz's article, "The Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States". Geertz argued that "the new states are abnormally susceptible to serious disaffection based on primordial attachments." 31 "Primordial attachments" are those that arise from one's entry through birth into specific groups such as religious, linguistic or customary communities. Membership in such groups leads to especially strong bonds between members and to strong group solidarity. Geertz contends that in modern societies these bonds no longer tend to form the basis for political organization and, instead, solidarity is based on civil attachments to a civil political community. However, in new states these civil attachments for the most part are lacking and, instead, political organization is based on the primordial attachments which the West has come to consider "pathological". 32

Like Geertz, Shils perceives the new states to be organized along primordial or communal lines. In his estimation, societies such as Lebanon lack civility because they are organized on primordial lines. They lack civility as citizens are unable to transcend their own primordial group interests and act in the interests of the greater social good or to place the public good above

30 Ibid., 144.


32 See ibid., 259-260.
What then is "civil society" and how does this notion of civility relate to it? For Shils, civil society is "the idea of a part of society which has a life of its own, which is distinctly different from the state, and which is largely in autonomy from it. Civil society lies beyond the boundaries of the family and the clan and beyond the locality; it lies short of the state." This last part of his definition has a strong Hegelian ring to it. Hegel located civil society between the family and the state. Shils identifies civil society as having three primary elements: autonomous institutions, interrelationships between those institutions and the state which protects the separation of state and civil society but continues links between them, and a prevailing model of "refined or civil manners".

As well as these elements, Shils contends that "civil society requires a distinctive set of political institutions", namely, universal suffrage, a competitive party system, regular elections, representative institutions which have some freedom from the electors, an independent judiciary and a free press. In short, the institutions of a contemporary Western liberal democracy such as Britain or the United States. Once again, this does not tally with Montesquieu's idea of democracy or republicanism. Shils claims that civil society is a variant of liberal democracy and

33 See Shils, "The Prospect for Lebanese Civility", op. cit., 2.


36 Ibid., 10.
the polar opposite of another variant, "mass or populistic" democracy which he considers is rule on behalf of one segment of the population. A civil society, on the other hand, is one in which rule is on behalf of all elements of the population and in which particular interests are transcended in favour of the common good.37

Civil society and civility appear to be linked in two ways. Initially, Shils states that "a civil society is a society of civility in the conduct of the members towards each other".38 Here civility applies to the behaviour of individuals or groups to one another and to the interaction of individuals or groups with society or the state. Later, he contends that "civility is an appreciation of or attachment to the institutions which constitute civil society."39 Here again, the connections between civility and civil society are not well established and the reader is left unclear about what exactly civil society is.

By inference what does seem clear, however, is that a civil society is one which approximates the structure and operations of a contemporary Western liberal democracy. This is reinforced by Shils' attempt to locate his work on civil society within a Western democratic theoretical tradition beginning in the seventeenth century. Shils makes a cryptonormative gesture when he equates what he considers to be normatively superior with the contemporary civil societies of Western liberal democracies like Britain or the United States. This equation is not made directly but by inference; when he discusses the abstract features of an ideal civil society these curiously always sound like a textbook checklist of the structure and principles of Western

37 Ibid., 11.
38 Ibid., 4.
39 Ibid., 11.
liberal democracy. Thus a concealed normative content is present in such a gesture but remains unstated.

Shils presents an often unique and interesting argument about civil society. His use of Montesquieu as a philosophical source for his theory of civil society does not follow the mainstream approach of writers like Taylor or Bobbio. In his discussion of historical antecedents, Shils highlights two additional sources - Ferguson and Hegel. Of the two, Hegel is given more prominence but is discussed mostly in respect of issues of private property and the market in relation to civil society. While Shils identifies the standard points about civil society in Ferguson's and Hegel's work he does not link these in any effective way with his own ideas about civility and civil society.

While Shils' overt attempts to tie his conception of civil society to that of Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel are not very successful, nevertheless, his work contains strong elements of continuity with the preceding discursive formation. Two major points of continuity may be discerned between Shils' work and the prior discursive formation: a universal narrative structure and a mirroring construction of non-Western Others.

**Universal Historical Narrative**

Shils stages his work in a global-historical context by establishing what Young calls a "universalizing narrative of the unfolding of a rational system of world history" through the use of a mixture of historicism, dialectics, and the nineteenth century anthropological discourse

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41 Young, op. cit., 2.
outlined in the preceding chapter. Much of Shils’ work was written during the 1950s and 1960s and forms part of the dominant paradigm of the social sciences in that era, namely, modernization theory. One of the primary features of modernization theory was its use of a universal historical narrative. Like many of his contemporaries whose academic careers were forged in that era, Shils has found it difficult to discard the underlying premises of modernization theory in his later work. Modernization theorists saw development in the new states in universalistic terms; development involved a replication of the evolutionary stages of growth in the West culminating in liberal democracy. The model is unilinear, seeing development as inevitable, and following the path first trodden by Western states. It is also teleological; the telos of which is "modernity" as represented by the contemporary American political systems.

The universal narrative of the unfolding of world history is at base a representation of Western history writ large upon a global stage. As Said has argued, this approach is not only universalizing and self-validating for the West which is installed at the centre (and as the subject) of history, but it also homogenizes and incorporates all other (non-Western) histories into it.\(^{42}\) The role of the West as a universal model for modernization theorists was made clear by Gabriel Almond in his quintessential exposition of modernization theory:

> The political scientist who wishes to study political modernization in the non-Western areas will have to master the model of the modern, which in turn can only be derived from the most careful empirical and formal analysis of the functions of modern Western polities.\(^{43}\)

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\(^{42}\) See Said, "Orientalism Reconsidered", op. cit., 22.

The historical development of the West provided not only a model for political modernization but also a model for general societal change. Social theorists of the 1960s like Geertz and Shils believed that the West had advanced in its political organization from an initial system based on "pathological" primordial ties to one which transcended these and was based on civil affiliations. Therefore, when the new states modernized, modernization theorists argued, ethnic or primordial affiliations would lose their potency and a "civic" or "national" culture would develop instead. Some theorists went as far as to postulate the emergence of a single "world culture" (the West's, of course) which would be diffused to the Third World through modernization.

The notion of a nascent "world culture" is one of the cornerstones of Almond and Verba's The Civic Culture. The authors seek to explore what they term one of the classic themes of political science, namely, "civic virtue" and its relationship to democracy. The "civic culture" is the "culture of democracy and of the social structures and processes that sustain it." Britain and the United States are presented as the two polities which most closely approximate a "civic culture". Indeed, the authors claim that "the whole story of the emergence of the civic culture is told in British history." Almond and Verba argue that a democracy is not just a set of institutions but needs a political culture consonant with it. The civic culture and an "open polity" are the "great ... gifts of the West" which may be diffused to the Third World. Establishing a democratic (or civic) culture in the new states requires change in the populations' "political


46 Ibid., 8.

orientations", that is, in "attitudes toward the political system and its various parts, and attitudes toward the role of the self in the system. It is a set of orientations toward a special set of social objects and processes."48

The civic culture is "a political culture of moderation" which can only take root where political development takes place peacefully through processes of modernization.49 Almond and Verba acknowledge that social change will occur more rapidly in the new states than it did in their Western models but consider that the problems inherent in such rapid change may be overcome through education which promotes the civic culture.50

Almond and Verba's notion of a civic culture is similar to Shils' ideas concerning the need to establish civility in the political culture of the new states. Like Almond and Verba, Shils uses the Western polities as models of development which the new states will emulate. In so doing, he presents a universalist view of history which places the West as the subject of history and which homogenizes and incorporates the histories of the new states into Western history. This is most apparent in his study of Lebanon.

In "The Prospect for Lebanese Civility" (1966), Shils claims that "Lebanon is not a civil society" because it is "deficient" in civility and has a "defective civic spirit".51 Or in Almond and Verba's terms, Lebanon has not developed a civic culture. According to Shils, this is

48 Ibid., 13.
49 Ibid., 500.
50 See ibid., 501.
51 Shils, "The Prospect for Lebanese Civility", op. cit., 2. As evidence of "defective civic spirit" Shils claims that "tax evasion, corruption, etc. are common" in Lebanon. These have been known to occur in the advanced civic cultures of the United States and Britain.
because Lebanon suffers from "communalism" or primordialism in its political organization. Primordial ties form the bases for political association and the government is paralysed, unable to institute reform for fear of upsetting the complex balance of primordial groups represented in parliament. Shils distinguishes this situation from that pertaining in the "advanced countries, such as the United States and Great Britain", where citizens have transcended primordial attachments in favour of a civic culture. He presents these "most advanced and stable countries" as the model toward which Lebanon should aspire and speculates upon the prospect that this will occur (which he considers "favourable"). In this manner, Shils makes the West the subject of history and presents the new states as a mere part of the unfolding of a universal history which culminates in Western modernity.

Said argues that this kind of universal history has sought to avoid the connections between these forms of knowledge and European imperialism. Shils' discussion of Lebanon is a case in point. He successfully manages to ignore Lebanon's long history of colonization beginning with its incorporation into the Ottoman Empire in 1516 and culminating with the struggle for independence from its status as a French Protectorate following World War II. The French established links with the Maronites (Christians) during the Crusades and began trading with the

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52 See ibid., 4.
53 Ibid., 4-5, 11.
Lebanese in the seventeenth century. They then instituted what they considered to be a "civilizing mission", opening missions and schools to facilitate education. However, as Christopher observes, "it seems never to have occurred to the French that the Lebanese had a civilization of their own and did not need a 'civilizing mission'." 56

After World War I, the Arab territories of the Ottoman Empire were divided up and administered by either Britain or France. The French administration of Lebanon under a League of Nations mandate, in which France was to be both "tutor and trustee", had important effects on the primordially based system of political organization that evolved in Lebanon. The French pursued a "divide and rule" strategy in their administration of the mandate by reorganizing the geographical boundaries of Lebanon to alter the ethnic balance of the population and dealt with the population as primordial groups. While the French were only intended to act as "trustees" under the Mandate, "psychologically, however, many Frenchmen found it hard to accept these limitations, for they felt as if part of the Crusades legacy of Outremer [the four Crusader states captured by Europeans during the Crusades] had at last returned to its rightful owners." 57

Although Lebanon was recognized as an independent state following World War II and asked to join the United Nations as a charter member in 1945, the French continued to occupy Lebanon and were only compelled to leave at the insistence of the Western allies in 1946. 58

Shils does not mention Lebanon's experience of foreign rule and writes as though Western imperial pursuits had nothing to do with the contemporary political configuration of Lebanon.

56 Ibid., 93.
57 Ibid., 87.
58 See ibid., 92.
He speaks as though political organization on the basis of primordial affiliation arose naturally and in a vacuum rather than being the legacy of a Western political administration which continued the construction of political identity along primordial lines and bestowed the "gift" of Western political institutions on a subject population.

The universal, totalizing schema with which Shils' enframes his discussion of the new states provides the reader with a sense of totality or overview of the historical landscape and a view into the future. Such an overview, however, presupposes "an external vantage point" and produces a "transcendent vision" of the object of inquiry. It is this sense of totality which Nicholas Thomas argues is "constitutive" of colonialism and "modernity". Shils, like other modernization theorists, plays the "God-trick of seeing everything from nowhere", and manages to represent his objects of inquiry while at the same time avoiding being represented himself. The 'God's eye view' is not only a device employed as part of a universal theoretical schema but also forms an important tool for constructing a mirroring device which, in turn, is based on the construction of a complementary opposite or Other (a mirror image) to the West.

Non-Western Others

Shils' figures difference through the construction of a complementary opposite or Other

59 Nicholas Thomas, Colonialism's Culture: Anthropology, Travel and Government (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 111.

60 Donna Haraway, "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective," Feminist Studies, 14, no.3 (Fall 1988), 581.

which mirrors the characteristics of the Western model he sets up but in a way which appropriates and negates the non-West. In so doing, he is able to erase or 'white out' the individual histories of the new states and homogenize and incorporate them into a universal narrative of (Western) history.

Shils' construction of a non-Western Other also provides points of continuity with the nineteenth century anthropological discourse which dovetailed with Hegel’s philosophy of history based on the idea of sequential developmental stages which correspond with the temporal and spatial location of specific groups. Here groups were constructed as 'nations', 'races' or 'cultures' in order to represent and manage subject populations. This task was made easier when distinct and knowable peoples or 'cultures' could be constructed. These constructions essentialize not only the groups who are the objects of inquiry (who form the Other) but also essentialize the West in modernity.  

Shils deploys a mirroring construction in his work by constructing an Other which is the negative mirror image of the West. In many of his articles, he constructs a category called the "new states" which covers those states which were established following decolonization post-World War II. This amorphous group is then compared to the historical Western model of development in a way which locates the "new states" as a complementary opposite of the contemporary Western polities. For example, in "Political Development in the New States," Shils claims that "there are very few states today which do not aspire to modernity" and that "'modern' means being Western ...". He continues by stating that states in North America or

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62 See Thomas, op. cit., 89. On the essentialization of the West, see Li, ibid., 48.

Western Europe "need not aspire to modernity. They are modern."64 These Western states "... provide the standards or models in the light of which the elites of the unmodern new states of Asia and Africa seek to reshape their countries."65

In "The Virtue of Civil Society," Shils takes a similar approach. However, here the construction of the Other is implied rather than being overtly stated. The models for civility and civil society are contemporary Western liberal democracies which are contrasted with polities organized along primordial lines (e.g., the new states) and with "mass or populistic" democracies (e.g., contemporary Third World states). Shils contends that civility is "the difference between a well-ordered and a disordered liberal democracy".66 As well as constructing a homogeneous Other called the new states, Shils employs a similar approach when dealing with a specific society; Lebanon.

In "The Prospect For Lebanese Civility," Shils constructs "Lebanon" as a mirror for the West in which Lebanon forms a negative mirror image of Western liberal democracies. Throughout the article, Lebanon is represented as the West’s complementary Other and is implicitly compared to an ideal Western polity. Shils’ writes of Lebanon’s "shortcomings and handicaps" in comparison with the Western model, and of the tensions "between the Western and Arab orientations", and locates Lebanon in some geographically determined developmental stage

64 ibid., 267.
65 Ibid.
66 Shils, "The Virtue of Civil Society", op. cit., 3. This is reminiscent of Samuel P. Huntington’s assertion that it is the degree of government that counts not the form. Huntington considered that the new states lacked order and that their governments were ineffective and lacked legitimacy because of this: see Political Order in Changing Societies (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), 1, 4.
when he refers to "... countries in their part of the world". The prospect for Lebanese civility is, according to Shils, "favourable" which means that it has a chance to become like the United States or Britain (its own mirror image).

GELLNER

The type of universal narrative evident in Edward Shils work on civil society and on the new states is also apparent in the writings of Ernest Gellner on civil society and what he calls its "rivals". Gellner has written several articles and a book on (Western) civil society and its relation to what he considers to be its two major "rivals" (or points of contrast): Marxism and Islam. These works present a consistent point of view throughout so I will concentrate on Gellner's book *Conditions of Liberty: Civil Society and its Rivals* which provides the most comprehensive statement of his ideas on these topics, but I will also refer to his articles on civil society and its "rivals" where these provide a clearer statement of his argument.

As an anthropologist, Gellner has focused on ethnographic research on North Africa and Islam as well as on broad theoretical issues such as nationalism or religion. An East European émigré, Gellner has a long-standing and deep seated antipathy to Marxism and to the forms of government which claim it as their philosophical base; his abhorrence is expressed in anti-Marxist polemics whenever the opportunity arises. Hence his work on civil society brings

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67 Shils, "The Prospect for Lebanese Civility", op. cit., 3, 10, 6.

together several of his research interests: Western social theory, Islam and Marxism.

In order to combine these themes, Gellner places his discussion of civil society in a universalist framework in which he makes sweeping generalizations and comparisons between (Western) civil society and its rivals: Marxist or Islamic societies. In so doing, Gellner sets up the West as the yardstick for comparison and, like Shils, is "... confident in the superiority of the West." The use of the loaded term "rivals" also immediately establishes Gellner's intention from the outset - to demonstrate the superiority of Western civil society when compared to its inferior and undesirable rivals or alternatives (Islam and Marxism). He also employs a mirroring construction of civil society in which Marxism and Islam are the complementary opposites, the Other, of Western civil society; its negative mirror image. Before examining the way in which Gellner places his discussion of civil society in a universalist framework and deploys a mirroring comparative device to compare civil society and its "rivals", I will examine his theory of civil society and the connections and/or disjunctures between his ideas and the prior discursive formation presented by Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel.

Civil Society

Gellner employs a round about method for defining civil society. He begins most of his works by observing that civil society is a desirable feature of contemporary Western liberal democracies which is now desired by other regions of the world (especially Eastern Europe) and (to his mind) curiously undesired by others (societies where Islam is prominent). He claims that

civil society involves "institutional and ideological pluralism" and then presents a standard
definition: "Civil society is that set of diverse non-governmental institutions which is strong
enough to counterbalance the state and ... can ... prevent it from dominating and atomizing the
rest of society." However, this definition is inadequate in Gellner's eyes because it does not
specify that pluralism is more important in the economic sphere than in the social or the political
spheres for two reasons: the modern Western state must be centralized and hold a monopoly on
force, and, economic pluralism requires a significant quantity of "civic spirit" and economic
growth to function.

Gellner distinguishes modern Western civil society which is based on non-kinship
associations from prior social formations (segmentary societies) in which association is based on
real or imagined kinship ties. "Civic spirit" for Gellner is what makes non-kinship associations
viable institutions of civil society. Hence civic spirit is "... the presence and authority of a moral
conscientiousness, which binds a man to his contractual and other obligations, without needing
to be underwritten by a torrid network of ritually reinforced social links." This is similar to
Shils idea of civility but bears a stronger resemblance to what Fukuyama calls "trust". The
viability of these associations enables them to resist and counterbalance the state and creates a
climate which favours economic growth and eventually is a prerequisite for its continuation.

70 Gellner, Conditions of Liberty, op. cit., 5.


72 Ibid., 501.

73 See Francis Fukuyama, Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity (New

Gellner asks how civil society is possible: "how is it possible to have atomization, individualism, without a political emasculation of the atomized man (as in the world of Ibn Khaldun [i.e., traditional Islam]), and to have politically countervailing associations without these being stifling [as in segmentary societies]?" His answer is that civil society can do both of these things because of what he calls the "modularity of man". Modular (or modern) man differs from his predecessors in ways that facilitate the transition to civil society. Thus

modular man is capable of combining into effective associations and institutions, without these being total, many-stranded, underwritten by ritual and made stable through being linked to a whole inside set of relationships, all of these being tied in with each other and so immobilized. He can combine into specific-purpose, ad hoc, limited association, without binding himself by some blood ritual. He can leave an association when he comes to disagree with its policy, without being open to an accusation of treason.

"Modular man" is also capable of thinking in ways that his predecessors were not, he is: "capable of lucid, Cartesian thought, which separates issues rather than conflating them and takes them one at a time: the non-conflation of issues, the separating-out of the social strands, which makes society non-rigid, presupposes not merely a moral willingness, but also an intellectual capacity. It presupposes that capacity for segregating all separable issues and taking them one at a time ..." Hence, modularity represents the "moral and intellectual pre-conditions" of civil society.

By the end of Conditions of Liberty, Gellner has amended his definition of civil society.

75 Gellner, Conditions of Liberty, op. cit., 99.
76 Ibid., 99-100.
77 Ibid., 104.
78 Ibid., 106.
to take into account these factors:

Civil society is a notion which serves a double function: it helps us understand how a given society actually works, and how it differs from alternative forms of social organization. It is a society in which polity and economy are distinct, where polity is instrumental but can and does check extremes of individual interest, but where the state in turn is checked by institutions with an economic base; it relies on economic growth which, by requiring cognitive growth, makes ideological monopoly impossible.\(^{79}\)

In this definition, Gellner brings into play some of the important intellectual substructures which underlie his notion of civil society: it is based on Western experience and it is comparative to, though innately different from, non-Western "alternatives".

Like Shils, Gellner derives his definition of civil society by starting with Western liberal democracies as a model. He repeatedly makes statements which confirm the link between the West and civil society such as "Atlantic society is endowed with Civil Society" and "... Civil Society, a society liberal in the modern sense ..." and he speaks of "a liberal Civil Society" or he claims that "the ideas associated with this expression are indeed intimately connected with the establishment of a democratic or liberal social and political order."\(^{80}\)

In equating civil society with contemporary Western liberal democracies Gellner, like his fellow universalists, practices a form of cryptonormativism in which they "... confuse their analysis of what is with what they think ought to be."\(^{81}\) He makes clear his admiration of Western political and social arrangements and his belief in their excellence by speaking in the first person plural ("we aspire", "our norms") and by claiming that non-Western societies

\(^{79}\) Ibid., 211.

\(^{80}\) Ibid., 13, 48, 140-141; "Civil Society in Historical Context," op. cit., 495.

\(^{81}\) Hann, op. cit., 18.
"yearn" to have such arrangements.\textsuperscript{82}

Ironically, at the same time that Gellner was making these sweeping claims that civil society is almost universally desired, others noted that the demand for civil society was waning in Eastern Europe since the effects of Western liberal capitalism had begun to bite.\textsuperscript{83} Further, the efficacy of the (so-called) Western model is being called into question as a universal panacea for non-Western societies beyond Eastern Europe and Hann and Dunn's edited volume \textit{Civil Society: Challenging Western Models}, for example, raises the possibilities of non-Western forms of civil society. Also being questioned is whether the model is an accurate representation of the organization of Western society and whether only one model of Western civil society exists (e.g., are Britain and the United States really exactly the same?).\textsuperscript{84}

Gellner contrasts modern Western civil society with its antecedent (segmentary communities) and with its modern rivals (Marxism and Islam). He argues that it is "radically distinct" from either its antecedents or its rivals and proceeds to explain why. For historical contrasts and antecedents in the Western tradition, Gellner follows David Hume's work in the sociology of religion which he claims also "... constitutes a theory of the pre-conditions of liberty."\textsuperscript{85} Hume examines how the ancient republican ideals of civil duty and social virtue were

\textsuperscript{82} Ibid., 211.

\textsuperscript{83} See Philip Resnick, "Whatever Happened to Civil Society?," Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, Brock University, June 1996, 11-14; see Hann, op. cit., 10.

\textsuperscript{84} See ibid., 15ff and Hann, ibid., 10, 12.

superseded by Christianity. This involved a break from "... the ancient non-liberal cousinly and ritualized plural and balanced society" which led eventually from Christianity to a secularized society. \(^{86}\) This in turn paved the way for a liberal civil society which was both pluralistic and free from a sense of community based on ritualized kinship ties.\(^{87}\)

While Gellner is influenced by Hume’s sociology of religion, he devotes a chapter-length critique to Adam Ferguson’s work on civil society. Although he criticizes Ferguson for not examining the role of religion in the development of civil society, Gellner sees Ferguson’s *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* as "one of the points of origin of the use of the expression Civil Society." \(^{88}\) While Gellner acknowledges that the circumstances that prompted Ferguson to write about civil society were different than those that pertain today, he considers that Ferguson’s "... manner of handling the problem ... helps to throw light on the contemporary issue connected to this notion ..." \(^{89}\) Gellner particularly admires Ferguson’s observations on the "social and political implications of economics" and his uneasiness with the civil society which was developing in the eighteenth century, especially his emphasis on the effects of the division of labour. \(^{90}\)

Ferguson’s identification of the dangers inherent in separating the civic role of citizens from their military obligations (which incidentally Montesquieu had pointed to in *The Spirit of

\(^{86}\) Ibid., 48.

\(^{87}\) See ibid., 51.

\(^{88}\) Ibid., 61.

\(^{89}\) Ibid.

\(^{90}\) Ibid., 61, 62.
the Laws several years before, as discussed above in relation to Shils) is of particular moment for Gellner:

This is at the heart of Ferguson’s anxiety. Civil Society is all very well in itself, but by separating rulers/warriors from the civilians, the arts of the citizen from those of war, does it not create the danger of a take-over by the former, which will destroy the benign order which had itself engendered the separation? That is the danger!  

Ferguson’s anxiety is realized for Gellner in twentieth-century Marxist states which he considers have "pulverized" civil society. Gellner continues his critique of Ferguson by noting that Ferguson did not consider Europe to be under threat of external invasion, rather, "he notes the new disproportion of strength between Europe and the rest, and perceptively anticipates the consequence, namely the emergence of the colonial empires which in fact were the fruits of that disproportion in the nineteenth century." This is one of the few times Gellner acknowledges the existence of colonialism but only in passing. Instead, he concentrates on the threat of internal decline which is also what worries Ferguson.

Internal decline occurs through the lack of citizen participation in defence and military affairs concomitant on a division of labour and a society focused on economic production. For Gellner the problem lies in the non-participation of citizens who "turn to production rather than martial honour, and allow legitimate coercion to be not just a specialism but a monopolistic specialism of a single institution - the state ...." Gellner sees parallels, not only with Marxist states, but between Ferguson’s analysis and Ibn Khaldun’s, i.e., in that "... producers who

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91 ibid., 63.

92 Ibid.

93 ibid., 64.
delegate security to others, to specialists of government and war, become politically and militarily emasculated and helpless."\textsuperscript{94} This happened to the urban dwellers in Ibn Khaldun’s exegesis on the differences between urbanites and tribesmen in "traditional" Islamic society.

Gellner discusses at some length Ferguson’s examination of the potential effects of the tensions between a participant form of civic virtue (including military participation) and the emerging division of labour with the emphasis on production and accumulation leading to reduced citizen participation and the delegation of defence to a professional army. He notes Ferguson’s discussion in this regard of the Roman Empire and of the American Indians. Here Gellner claims that "Ferguson does not patronize the Romans, but he does patronize the redskin" and comments on Ferguson’s assumption of "a superior air."\textsuperscript{95} These comments seem rather ironic in light of Gellner’s defence of orientalists and his own patronizing approach to Muslims. Calling Indians "redskins" does not strengthen his argument.

While he criticizes Ferguson for not giving religion a prominent role in the development of civil society and the modern state, Gellner claims that Ferguson’s discussion of virtue (in relation to Sparta) is the only point "... where Ferguson does accord a place to religion of a kind ..."\textsuperscript{96} He concludes that "making virtue the prime object of government is indeed a good definition of an \textit{Umma} or of a charismatic community" and that "a devotion to virtue so complete

\textsuperscript{94} Ibid. Ibn Khaldun was a fourteenth century Arab historian who Gellner relies on for a representation of "traditional" Islam. A discussion of Gellner’s use of Ibn Khaldun follows at page 230 infra.

\textsuperscript{95} Ibid., 67.

\textsuperscript{96} Ibid., 69.
does indeed make the society a kind of sacramental community." 97 As was noted above in relation to Shils, virtue in the ancient republics was political virtue not moral or Christian virtue. Here Gellner employs one of his recurring devices of analogising something to the status of a religion in order to belittle and dismiss it; a tactic he uses repeatedly in relation to Marxism. As Islam is already classified as a religion it is easy for Gellner to represent it as a monolithic, inflexible orthodoxy (which he pejoratively calls an *Umma*) and dismiss it. He represents both Islam and Marxism as "Ummas"; Islam he considers a "successful" Umma while Marxism is a "failed" Umma. Only Christianity escapes criticism as it is a necessary evolutionary step towards civil society for Gellner.

Gellner eventually concludes that Ferguson's concern that "polished society" (in which people are free and self-governing) might regress into a society under the "domination of praetorians" was unfounded. 98 Rather, it is Ferguson's interest in the problems of "order and survival" and the "maintenance and enhancement of production" which are relevant for the constitution of civil society. Ferguson's fears of a "new serfdom" arising from the transition to a market economy were not realized in modern Western Europe but, Gellner argues, this did occur elsewhere. Ibn Khaldun's analysis of the political emasculation of commercially based urban areas in "traditional" Islamic society where "... civility and cohesion were mutually incompatible" is one of Gellner's examples. 99 Others are the Italian republics, analyzed in similar terms by Machiavelli. On the other side of the coin, Turks, Arabs and Berbers provide

97 Ibid.
98 Ibid., 68.
99 Ibid., 71.
examples of societies with "cohesive rulers/warriors" in contrast to the fragmented, commercial urban areas. Thus, for Gellner, "Flaubert's Salammbô, a curious work using a society which has cause to fear its mercenaries, is used as a parable for a society terrified by its own hired workers."\textsuperscript{100}

Gellner offers seven reasons why Ferguson's fears were not realized in modern Western Europe.\textsuperscript{101} Summarily he claims that:

the victory of commercial over predatory society in the eighteenth century was for once made permanent and stable, and did not in the end destroy itself, because the commercial revolution and the political one were in due course complemented by the industrial-scientific one, which supplied the means by which it could make itself permanent and secure.\textsuperscript{102}

Gellner concludes his discussion of Ferguson by claiming that the nascent separation of the economic and political spheres analyzed by Ferguson "is an inherent feature of Civil Society, and indeed one of its main glories."\textsuperscript{103}

**Non-Western Others**

This Western liberal civil society derived from Christian roots is, for Gellner, the "mirror image" of Islam and, for slightly different reasons, of Marxism.\textsuperscript{104} Gellner also believes Islam and Marxism to be "mirror images" of one another in two respects. First, Gellner considers

\textsuperscript{100} Ibid., 72.

\textsuperscript{101} See ibid., 73-78.

\textsuperscript{102} Ibid., 79.

\textsuperscript{103} Ibid., 80.

\textsuperscript{104} Ibid., 50.
Marxism to be a "religion" of sorts which in the late twentieth century has suffered a "collapse of faith", an "erosion of belief" like that which occurs when a religion becomes secularized. In Islam, however, no comparable loss of faith or secularization has occurred. In fact, Gellner contends, "... that the hold of Islam over its believers is as strong, and in some ways stronger, now than it was 100 years ago." For Gellner, Islam is "secularization-resistant". Second, while the former Marxist states of Eastern Europe "yearn" for civil society, Gellner argues that in the "Muslim world" there is comparatively little "longing for civil society."

Gellner sets out to explore why there is a difference in the level of desire for civil society in the Marxist and Islamic "worlds". He maintains that "civil society has been atomized or fragmented in both the Marxist and the Islamic systems, though in completely different ways." In Marxist states, civil society was "pulverized" by the centralization of economic, ideological and political structures into one governing structure which destroyed the basis for any kind of pluralism.

Gellner claims that civil society is "atomized" in the Muslim world but for different reasons than in Marxist states. He perceives a connection between the reasons for the "secularization resistance" of Islam and the atomization of civil society in Muslim states. He sets out to explore why Islam has not become secularized with the coming of economic modernization.

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106 Ibid.

107 Ibid.

108 Ibid.

109 See ibid.
(i.e., why modernization does not equal Westernization) and draws on Ibn Khaldun (a fourteenth century Arab historian) for a model of "traditional Islam".

Ibn Khaldun posited a binary division of Muslim society between urban and rural inhabitants. Those who lived in towns were "... socially pulverized because the specialization, the division of labour and the dependence on protection that urban folk seem to require emasculates them politically." However, those who lived in the "marchlands of mountain or desert" beyond the reach of the state had to develop associations ("tribes") based on real or imagined kinship ties for protection and administration. For Gellner, traditional Muslim society has two facets: tribes which are "... endowed with political and military muscle" and urban dwellers who are "... productively more important but politically emasculated." The combination of these two facets was a civil society of sorts. However, Gellner argues that the contemporary "Muslim world" is not the same as that outlined by Ibn Khaldun. He suggests that Ibn Khaldun's traditional portrait has been "... profoundly modified by the impact of industrialism and the West."

Gellner draws a distinction in "religious styles" between "high" and "low" forms of Islam. Low Islam is that of "... the cult of personality-addicted, ecstatic, ritualistic, questionably literate, unpuritanical and rustic Islam of the dervishes and marabouts" while high

110 Ibid.
111 Ibid., 5.
112 Ibid.
113 See ibid. This clearly is based on Redfield's classic distinction between the "great" and "little" traditions in civilizations and the world religions, though not clearly acknowledged by Gellner. See Robert Redfield, "The Social Organization of Tradition," chap. in Peasant Society and Culture (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1956), 40-59.
Islam is that of "... the urban-based, strict, unitarian, nomocratic, puritan and scripturalist Islam of the scholars." Before the coming of modernity both forms of Islam coexisted. However, the introduction of the modern state wiped out the "... tribes that had provided the social base for the personalized, ecstatic, questionably orthodox, low religion", allowing for the triumph of the high form of Islam. Hence, today "... the Muslim world displays a strong tendency towards the establishment of an *Umma*, an overall community based on the shared faith and the implementation of its law." This takes the place or role of civil society in the West and explains why Islamic society lacks the "... capacity to provide political countervailing institutions or associations ..." Gellner contends that the triumph of high Islam (or "fundamentalism", as he dismissively calls it) has allowed the Muslim world to respond to Western modernity in a manner unavailable to non-Muslim Third World states. Other "underdeveloped" states have had two options: either "...idealize and emulate the West (a humiliating option) or ... idealize the local folk tradition and indulge in some form of populism..." Islamic societies, on the other hand, can undertake reform "... in response to modernity and the temporary domination of the West" through the high form of Islam which "... has dignity in international terms and yet is genuinely local."  

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114 Ibid.
115 Ibid.
117 Ibid., 29.
119 Ibid.
High Islam makes little interference in the economic sector and the political sphere is governed by "patronage networks". This has enabled Islamic societies to remain "secularization resistant" and, consequently, there is "little yearning for civil society."\(^{120}\)

For Gellner, then, Islam and Marxism are "mirror-images" of one another in whether or not they have "lost faith" and whether or not they desire (Western) civil society.\(^{121}\) However, both Islam and Marxism are also "mirror-images" of Western civil society.\(^{122}\) In this manner, Gellner constructs a complementary opposite (an Other) for the West. While both Marxism and Islam are profoundly "other" for Gellner, I will only examine his observations about Islam as his comments on Marxism are not directly relevant to how he uses a mirroring construction of a non-Western Other in his theory of civil society.

Throughout *Conditions of Liberty*, Gellner repeatedly states that he is using Islam as a "contrast" to (Western) civil society.\(^{123}\) Indeed, he claims that "a thing is perhaps best understood through its contrasts ..." and that "the notion of Civil Society is being investigated ... by contrasting it with its available alternatives."\(^{124}\) While such statements affirm Gellner's belief in the comparative method of analysis, they also demonstrate his penchant for the type of binary thinking which Derrida condemned in his critique of logocentrism. Here Gellner places

\(^{120}\) Ibid.

\(^{121}\) Ibid., 1.

\(^{122}\) See Gellner, *Conditions of Liberty*, op. cit., 50 where he describes Islam as the "mirror image" of Western Christianity.

\(^{123}\) See ibid., 13, 14, 29, 43, 50, 97.

\(^{124}\) Ibid., 14, 97.
the West and Islam in a binary opposition with the West as the superior of the two.\textsuperscript{125} Indeed, the whole structure of \textit{Conditions of Liberty} and Gellner's other works on civil society is based on a mirroring comparison in which the West is compared to and differentiated from Islam (or Marxism or segmentary societies). In so doing, Gellner makes sweeping generalizations about Islam and its antipathy to civil society and produces an essentialized and homogenized image of Islam. He not only essentializes Islam but also Christianity by treating it as though it were a monolithic religion, and the West by essentializing it in modernity.\textsuperscript{126}

Throughout his work on civil society, Gellner refers to generalized, monolithic entities called "Islam", the "Muslim world" or the "Islamic world", as though Islam were a homogeneous, monolithic entity. He also speaks of "Islam" in an ahistorical framework - referring at times to "traditional" or "modern" Islam - without locating it in a temporal or spatial location. At times he alludes to North Africa (an area he is most familiar with) as though this constituted the "Muslim world" and uses Ibn Khaldun (an Arab historian) to generate a model of "traditional Islam".

However, Islam is not confined to the "Arab world" but is a major religion in Asia (Indonesia is numerically the largest Islamic country in the world), Africa and parts of Europe. As a world religion, Islam partakes of the diversity of cultures in which it is practised and the social and political conditions under which it operates cannot be essentialized or homogenized into one category, the "Muslim world". It is not monolithic. Even within the so-called "Arab

\textsuperscript{125} When affirming the comparative method Gellner speaks of the "opposition" between civil society and Islam, see ibid., 97.

\textsuperscript{126} See Li, op. cit., 48.
world" there is great diversity in political and social arrangements (e.g., are Saudi Arabia, Iran, Turkey, and Algeria all the same?).

Similarly, Gellner does not acknowledge the well-established divisions within Islam between Sunnis, Shiites, and Ishmailis. As Edward Said points out, Gellner speaks of "Muslims" though "... not a single one [is] mentioned by name, specified in history, located in an actual society ..." which "... allows him to posit what is his main (and false) claim that 'Atlantic civilization' and 'Islam' are in some fundamental opposition to each other ...". Said continues that for Gellner, "Islam" "... turns out to be neither a place, nor a people, nor a country, nor anything but an ideological concoction inherited ... from a lot of English and French authorities ...". Gellner also speaks of Islam in a pejorative manner. He describes the "hold" it has over believers, making it sound like a disease. He never refers to Christianity in these terms.

However, Gellner is very sensitive about charges of "orientalism" being applied to his work and takes every opportunity to take aim at Said or anyone else who questions the orientalist and Eurocentric structures at play in his or the work of others, as expressed in his review of Said’s Culture and Imperialism which is really a critique of Said’s earlier work, Orientalism. In Conditions of Liberty he also complains that writers like Machiavelli and de Tocqueville are unfairly labelled "orientalists" because they contrast the West with the East.

In this manner, Gellner also indulges in the kind of nineteenth-century anthropological

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129 See Gellner, Conditions of Liberty, op. cit., 81.
categorization outlined by Nicholas Thomas. He presents categories such as the "Muslim world" or the "Arab world" which are essentialized and homogenized caricatures of the diverse peoples inhabiting those areas. These "worlds" are then ranked and placed in a hierarchy with the West at the top. Like Hegel's anthropological categories, Gellner's essentialized "worlds" have broad temporal and spatial locations. Similarly, they also have an evolutionary quality to them; Gellner argues that "traditional Islam" was "... profoundly modified by the impact of industrialism and the West."\(^{130}\)

This kind of claim places the West at the centre of Gellner's account; even when he is speaking of Islam it is the West which is the agent of historical change and it is contact with the West which forces transformation on an otherwise static East. Here Gellner practices the "white mythology" identified by Derrida, so that the "Muslim world's" histories are subsumed into or whited out by their incorporation into the larger picture of the march of Western History. At this point, Gellner's construction of a complementary opposite (or negative mirror image) of the West dovetails with his employment of a universalist narrative historical framework.

Gellner sets his discussion of civil society in a historical narrative framework which mirrors the history of the West. He adopts Hume's account of the transition from ancient republicanism to Christianity to a secular, liberal civil society and incorporates Ferguson's discussion of the potential problems inherent in the evolution of rude to polished societies in this historical framework.\(^{131}\) The telos of his historical account is Western modernity or, in his terms, Western liberal society as indicated by the title of his book, Conditions of Liberty (which

\(^{130}\) Gellner, "Islam and Marxism," op. cit., 5.

\(^{131}\) See Conditions of Liberty, ch. 8.
attempts to link civil society with the preconditions of liberty for the modern liberal state).

In this, Gellner's conception of history is distinctively Hegelian as he traces the unfolding of the "conditions of liberty" (including civil society) toward their ultimate expression in the modern Western liberal state. He speaks of modern Europe's production of civil society in a manner reminiscent of Hegel's claim that civil society is the achievement of the modern world. Like Hegel, Gellner's conception of historical change is stadial; he writes of the evolution of segmentary societies into authoritarian states or into commercial city states and then into civil societies. With each of these historical forms he associates a particular kind of society, e.g., Islam is associated with the authoritarian agrarian state while Christianity is associated with the commercial city state which led to civil society. Here Gellner periodicizes spatial and temporal eras in a manner similar to Hegel's division of history into worlds that correspond to geographic regions and also hierarchializes them as Hegel does.

While it seems ironic that Gellner would employ a historicist structure to present his theory of civil society when he claims that the subtitle of his book ("Civil Society and its Rivals") is a homage to Popper's anti-historicist polemic The Open Society and its Enemies, he contends that "a partial historicism is inevitable" since civil society "... seems linked to our historical destiny ... industrialism being our manifest destiny, we are thereby also committed to its social corollaries." In adopting this unapologetically Eurocentric universalist framework,

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133 See Gellner, Conditions of Liberty, op. cit., 206.

134 Ibid., 208-209.

135 Ibid., 213.
Gellner is able to homogenize, essentialize and subsume the histories of non-Western peoples into the grand march of Western history. Non-Western peoples only appear as points of contrast to the West and historical change only occurs in these static societies when they are placed in contact with the West.

However, like Shils, Gellner manages to avoid the effects of Western colonialism on the "Muslim world", making only one passing allusion to colonialism and otherwise only euphemistic references to "the impact of industrialization and the West." Again, like Shils, Gellner manages to locate himself outside the objects of his inquiry, placing himself in a position where he is the observing subject who, from a vantage point above the action, can see the totality of what he observes but is himself unrepresentable; Haraway's "God-trick of seeing everything from nowhere".

**FUKUYAMA**

The kind of universal narrative structure and mirroring comparative device identified in the work of Shils and Gellner is also at play in the work of Francis Fukuyama. Indeed, Fukuyama's book *The End of History and the Last Man* may be seen as the strongest contemporary restatement of the idea of universal history which previously received its quintessential treatment in Hegel's philosophy of history. In the course of making a case for the revival of the idea of universal history, Fukuyama employs the type of mirroring construction used by Shils and Gellner to figure difference (the non-Western Other) in conjunction with the use of a universal historical narrative. It is on this world historical canvas that Fukuyama locates

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his discussion of civil society and connects it with the prior discursive formation represented by Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel. Before turning to Fukuyama’s discussion of civil society, I will briefly outline his general argument about the end of history since it is within this broad framework that his discussion of civil society and his use of a universal narrative and mirroring construction of difference take place. These themes (especially civil society) are further developed in Fukuyama’s subsequent book Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity.

The End of History?

Fukuyama initially raised the question of the end of history in an article in The National Interest in 1989 at the end of the Cold War and the beginning of the liberalization of Eastern Europe. The provocative style of the article engendered a large (and mostly hostile) number of responses ranging from criticism based on a misunderstanding of the idea of the end of history to astute and searching critique. Fukuyama wrote a follow-up article in which he attempted to reply to his critics but provided his major response by revising and expanding his initial essay into a book in 1992. He contributed a further response to his critics in a collection of essays on the expanded version of his end of history treatise.137

As a strategy for dealing with criticism, Fukuyama modifies his argument in various ways

often claiming that he really meant something different from what his critics think he said. By continuously reinventing himself and retreating from his more extreme and provocative statements he makes it difficult to give a consistent account of his end of history idea. However, the core of his argument as outlined in the introduction to The End of History has remained consistent to a substantial degree. I will, therefore, follow this for the most part in outlining his theory of universal history. When examining his discussion of civil society or his use of a universal historical narrative and his mirrored construction of a complementary non-Western Other, I will refer to statements in his prior article on the end of history and his most recent response to his critics which demonstrate some inconsistencies in his work.

In the Introduction to The End of History, Fukuyama establishes the broad parameters of his case for the utility of universal history in the late twentieth century. He begins by restating the main point of the 1989 article, namely, that at the close of the twentieth century there is a "remarkable consensus concerning the legitimacy of liberal democracy" and, with the recent fall of many left and right wing dictatorships, that this ideology has "conquered" all other ideologies on the world stage. Further, he asserts that this triumph of liberal democracy may represent the "end of history" in the sense that it represents the "final form of human government" and thus means an end to "ideological evolution". Although today's liberal democracies are plagued with important social problems, Fukuyama considers that these may be worked out by the further realization of equality and liberty; the foundational tenets of liberal democracy. This incomplete implementation of its foundational tenets does not constitute an internal contradiction in liberal democracy at the ideological level. For Fukuyama, "the ideal of liberal democracy could not be improved on." Rather, it was the "grave defects and irrationalities" which constituted the
"fundamental internal contradictions" inherent in other ideologies that precipitated the fall of left and right wing regimes in recent years.\textsuperscript{138}

Hence Fukuyama's claim is that History has come to an end, i.e., "... history understood as a single, coherent, evolutionary process, when taking into account the experience of all peoples in all times."\textsuperscript{139} This view of History, he says, he derived from Hegel. Fukuyama states that Hegel's idea of history gained a wider audience when adopted by Marx and that the Hegelian notion of History is "implicit in our use of words like 'primitive' or 'advanced,' 'traditional' or 'modern,' when referring to different types of human societies."\textsuperscript{140} He describes Hegel and Marx's concept of History in the following terms:

For both of these thinkers, there was a coherent development of human societies from simple tribal ones based on slavery and subsistence agriculture, through various theocracies, monarchies, and feudal aristocracies, up through modern liberal democracy and technologically driven capitalism. This evolutionary process was neither random nor unintelligible, even if it did not proceed in a straight line, and even if it was possible to question whether man was happier or better off as a result of historical "progress".\textsuperscript{141}

However, the evolutionary process for Hegel and Marx was not without end. Once a social form was produced which fulfilled humanity's immanent desires the evolutionary process would come to a halt as no further evolution was required or possible. According to Fukuyama, the social form which fulfilled these requirements was the liberal state in Hegel's case and, for Marx, it was communism.

\textsuperscript{138} Francis Fukuyama, The End of History, op. cit., xi.

\textsuperscript{139} Ibid., xii.

\textsuperscript{140} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{141} Ibid.
It is this conception of History which interests Fukuyama and forms the premise for his book. Although it is difficult to see the distinction, Fukuyama claims that this does not constitute a restatement of his 1989 article but, rather, that now he wishes to investigate "whether, at the end of the twentieth century, it makes sense for us once again to speak of a coherent and directional History of mankind that will eventually lead the greater part of humanity to liberal democracy?"\textsuperscript{142} Fukuyama answers this question in the affirmative and argues that this is so based on two reasons: economics and the "struggle for recognition".

The economic argument in favour of universal history is founded on the idea of "... modern natural science as a regulator or mechanism to explain the directionality and coherence of History." Fukuyama claims that modern (i.e., Western) natural science is accepted by "common consensus" to be both "cumulative and directional" although its effects on the welfare of humanity may be equivocal. Further, he contends, the "conquest of nature" through the application of scientific method was conditioned by "... certain definite rules laid down not by man, but by nature and nature's laws." Fukuyama asserts that "the unfolding of modern natural science has had a uniform effect on all societies that have experienced it, for two reasons."\textsuperscript{143} The first is that the application of technology leads to military superiority which impels states to undertake "defensive modernization" in order to preserve their independence. The second reason is that "modern natural science establishes a uniform horizon of economic production possibilities." Technological innovation allows for the unrestricted creation of wealth which in turn allows for the fulfilment of the continually enlarging list of human desires. For Fukuyama:

\textsuperscript{142} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{143} Ibid., xiv.
This process guarantees an increasing homogenization of all human societies, regardless of their historical origins or cultural inheritance. All countries undergoing economic modernization must increasingly resemble one another: they must unify nationally on the basis of a centralized state, urbanize, replace traditional forms of social organization like tribe, sect, and family with economically rational ones based on function and efficiency, and provide for the universal education of their citizens.\textsuperscript{144}

These homogenous societies are further connected by "global markets" and the expansion of a "universal consumer culture". From this, Fukuyama concludes, "... the logic of modern natural science would seem to dictate a universal evolution in the direction of capitalism."\textsuperscript{145}

However, while Fukuyama considers that modern natural science as an engine of historical change goes a long way in explaining economic change and the homogenization of distinct societies into a world culture, it does not explain the development or increasing popularity of democracy. He notes that there is no necessary connection between advanced industrialization and democratic political systems. Authoritarian systems coexist with industrialization and economic success. Hence modern natural science only provides an economic explanation of historical change.\textsuperscript{146}

For Fukuyama, humans possess desires which go beyond the material such as those for liberty and equality. He contends that non-economic desires also form a motor of historical change and require another explanation than the economic account outlined above. In order to account for a non-economic basis for historical change, Fukuyama turns to Hegel's theory of History as represented (for Fukuyama) by the "struggle for recognition" (the master/slave

\textsuperscript{144} Ibid., xiv-xv.

\textsuperscript{145} Ibid., xv.

\textsuperscript{146} See ibid.
dialectic) and the theory of dialectical change in *The Phenomenology of Spirit*. Fukuyama contends that the desire for recognition is a concept dating from the beginning of Western philosophy, appearing in Plato’s *Republic* as the component of the soul described as *thymos* ("spiritedness") which requires recognition.\(^{147}\) For Hegel, Fukuyama maintains, this is what activates historical change.

Fukuyama interprets Hegel’s discussion of the struggle for recognition in the following manner. While humans (like animals) have material desires for the necessities of life and for self-preservation they also desire to be "recognized" by other human beings. This is the desire to be recognized as having dignity or value as a human being - today this would be described as self-esteem.\(^{148}\) This recognition is initially achieved when a man is prepared to conquer his inclination for self-preservation and lay down his life in a battle for true recognition. During this battle one of the parties is overcome by the instinct for self-preservation and capitulates to the other party. This establishes a relationship of master and slave between the parties. This struggle takes place at the start of History "and precisely because the goal of the battle is not determined by biology, Hegel sees in it the first glimmer of human freedom."\(^{149}\)

The initial struggle for recognition results in the creation of societies divided into groups of masters and slaves. These are the "unequal, aristocratic societies that have characterized the greater part of human history". However, in the long run, the desire for recognition of both masters and slaves was not satiated by these social arrangements. Slaves remained unrecognized.

\(^{147}\) See *ibid.*, xvi.

\(^{148}\) See *ibid.*, xvii.

\(^{149}\) *Ibid.*, xvi.
as human beings while their masters remained unrecognized by other masters (their equals). This amounted to a "contradiction" which engendered further historical evolution. The resolution of this contradiction occurred with the eighteenth century revolutions in France and America which established the principles of democracy. Hence the division between masters and slaves was abolished and, instead, a system based on "universal and reciprocal recognition" was established and enshrined in the state's recognition of individual rights.  

Fukuyama considers that "the desire for recognition, then, can provide the missing link between liberal economics and liberal politics that was missing from the economic account of History ..." With industrialization social changes occur (particularly education) which, along with increasing material equality, encourage people to seek recognition. This is expressed, according to Fukuyama, in the desire for democracy and its foundational tenets of equality and liberty. For Fukuyama this explains why people are not content with authoritarian forms of government which merely provide them with material prosperity or with systems like communism which provide a "gravely defective form of recognition".

Fukuyama asserts that "this Hegelian understanding of the meaning of contemporary liberal democracy" is not the same as that put forward by theorists in the British liberal tradition whose ideas formed the foundations for democracy in the Atlantic states. He suggests that for theorists like Locke and Hobbes, and later Madison and Jefferson, "the prideful quest for recognition was to be subordinated to enlightened self-interest - desire combined with reason -

150 Ibid., xvii-xviii.

151 Ibid., xix.
and particularly the desire for self-preservation of the body." Further, the purpose of rights for these theorists was to secure the private domain for the protection of private property and the pursuit of material desires. Hegel, on the other hand, "saw rights as ends in themselves" since humans are only truly content with recognition of their humanity and not merely with economic success. This desire for recognition is fulfilled by the social and political systems established in the West by the democratic revolutions of the eighteenth century. Thus History comes to an end.  

By employing the Hegelian notion of the struggle for recognition as the engine of historical change, Fukuyama claims that he can explain an array of historical phenomena from religion to nationalism. Thus practitioners of religious faith desire recognition for their beliefs while nationalists look for recognition of their ethnic group. However, these kinds of recognition are, in Fukuyama's eyes, "less rational than the universal recognition of the liberal state" since they are founded in "arbitrary distinctions" among beliefs or among different groups. Therefore, these irrational forms of recognition have generally been perceived as impediments to the creation of liberal capitalist democracies.  

Yet, these irrational forms of recognition do have an important role to play in Fukuyama's account of universal history. He maintains that:

... the success of liberal politics and liberal economics frequently rests on irrational forms of recognition that liberalism was supposed to overcome. For democracy to work, citizens need to develop an irrational pride in their own democratic institutions, and must also develop what Tocqueville called the "art of

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152 Ibid., xviii.

153 See ibid.

154 Ibid., xix.
associating," which rests on prideful attachment to small communities. These communities are frequently based on religion, ethnicity, or other forms of recognition that fall short of the universal recognition on which the liberal state is based.\(^{155}\)

It is here that Fukuyama first raises the idea of civil society which he discusses at slightly greater length in subsequent chapters of the book. After introducing the idea of civil society in this work he pursues it in more depth in his subsequent book and a 1995 article.\(^{156}\) I will examine Fukuyama’s theory of civil society after completing this summary of his argument for a theory of universal history.

Fukuyama suggests that a similar argument to that concerning politics may be made in respect of liberal economics. While work is often understood in the West as a necessary evil to provide the necessities of life, in other cultures it is perceived as a means of recognition. He argues that in Asian cultures that possess a "strong work ethic", recognition is a more important work motivation than material reward. He contends that "this suggests that liberal economics succeeds not simply on the basis of liberal principles, but requires irrational forms of *thymos* as well."\(^{157}\)

In addition to explaining historical change on the intra-state level, Fukuyama argues that the Hegelian struggle for recognition also accounts for behaviour at the global level. Thus states are also subject to relations of domination and fight to attain recognition in the international system. This, he claims, is facilitated through nationalism and "... leads logically to imperialism...

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\(^{155}\) Ibid.


\(^{157}\) Ibid., xx.
and world empire."\textsuperscript{158} However, the global evolution towards universal liberal democracy reduces the bases for international conflict by providing mutual and equal recognition of states and dispenses with the "irrational desire" to be recognized as superior. This trend is apparent in the West where "the demand for national recognition ... has been domesticated and made compatible with universal recognition ..."\textsuperscript{159}

Fukuyama concludes his discussion of universal history by speculating about the kind of humans that are produced by the "end of history". This revolves around the question of whether contemporary liberal democracy really fully meets the need for recognition of its citizens. Fukuyama perceives two answers to this question. The Left would answer this question in the negative because they consider that liberal democracy and capitalism have not met the citizen's desire for equal recognition. Fukuyama rejects the Left's argument in favour of the Right's contention concerning "the leveling effects of the French Revolution's commitment to human equality."\textsuperscript{160} Here he invokes Nietzsche and the idea that liberal democracy signifies "... not the self-mastery of former slaves, but the unconditional victory of the slave and a kind of slavish morality."\textsuperscript{161} This produces the Nietzschean "last man" who is satisfied with the satiation of his material desires and the equal recognition embodied in liberal democracy. The "last man" has no desire to be recognized as superior to his compatriots since he no longer possesses thymos. Thus he no longer strives for "excellence or achievement", remaining satisfied with fulfilment

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{158} Ibid.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{159} Ibid.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{160} Ibid., xxii.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{161} Ibid.}
of his material desires and, thereby, loses his humanity.\textsuperscript{162}

Fukuyama questions whether the desire for unequal recognition is necessary for human survival and whether, in the long run, the reassertion of such a desire in liberal democracies that have reached the "end of history" would constitute a "contradiction" which would kick-start History back into life or lead to a reversion to the battles that characterized the beginning of History.\textsuperscript{163} However, on balance, he sees reversion to "... the passions of the first man ..." as unlikely in the post-historical world. Such a world is more likely to be peopled by Nietzschean "last men".\textsuperscript{164}

\textbf{Civil Society}

Fukuyama's notion of civil society arises within his broad overarching argument about universal history. He focuses on de Tocqueville's comments about the "art of associating" in the American democracy of the early nineteenth century and links this with his own interpretation of the Hegelian "struggle for recognition" as the driving force of History. He argues that de Tocqueville and Hegel "... emphasized the importance of associational life as a focus for public-spiritedness in the modern state."\textsuperscript{165} In modern democracies, citizen participation in government consists of voting in periodic elections in contradistinction to the Ancient Republics where citizenship required participation in all aspects of statecraft. For this reason:

\textsuperscript{162} See ibid.

\textsuperscript{163} See ibid., xxiii.

\textsuperscript{164} Ibid., 336.

\textsuperscript{165} Ibid., 322.
In modern times, citizenship is best exercised through so-called "mediating institutions" - political parties, private corporations, labor unions, civic associations, professional organizations, churches, parent-teacher associations, school boards, literary societies, and the like. It is through such civic associations that people are drawn outside of themselves and their private selfish concerns ... A private association, no matter how small, constitutes a community, and as such serves as an ideal of a larger project toward which an individual can work and sacrifice his own selfish wants.\footnote{166}

This kind of "private associational life" provides greater "recognition" for citizens of modern democracies than does citizenship per se. Hence, "recognition by the state is necessarily impersonal; community life, by contrast, involves a much more individual sort of recognition from people who share one's interests, and often one's values, religion, ethnicity, and the like."\footnote{167}

Although de Tocqueville's 1835 study, \textit{Democracy in America}, is commonly cited as the source for the theory of "associational life in modern society", Fukuyama contends that in Hegel's \textit{Philosophy of Right} one can find "rather similar arguments for such 'mediating institutions' ..."\footnote{168} To this end, Fukuyama asserts that:

Hegel as well thought that the modern state was too large and impersonal to serve as a meaningful source of identity, and therefore argued that society ought to be organized into \textit{Stände} - classes or estates - like the peasantry, the middle classes, and the bureaucracy. The "corporations" favored by Hegel were neither closed medieval guilds nor the mobilization tools of the fascist state, but rather associations organized spontaneously by civil society that served as a focus for community and virtue.\footnote{169}

\footnote{166}{Ibid., 322-323.}
\footnote{167}{Ibid., 323.}
\footnote{168}{Ibid., 388.}
\footnote{169}{Ibid. Fukuyama points out that "in this respect, Hegel himself is quite different from Kojève's interpretation of him. Kojève's universal and homogeneous state makes no room for 'mediating' bodies like corporations or \textit{Stände}; the very adjectives Kojève uses to describe his..."}
Yet, while this kind of associational life avoids the production of Nietzschean "last men" in liberal democracies, it is also in danger from the foundational tenets of liberal democracy, liberty and equality. Fukuyama argues that these dangers stem from Anglo-American liberal democracies' emphasis on rights rather than duties, on equality rather than "... the exclusivity engendered by strong and cohesive communities", and on "enlightened self-interest" rather than binding "absolute obligations" as demonstrated by the decline of the family as an arena of associational life in contemporary America. The tenets of liberal economics also tend to undermine associational life by dividing and atomizing citizens. The mobility demanded by the contemporary capitalist system means that people are unable to form or sustain communities by participating in associational life.\footnote{170}

As Fukuyama argues it, this presents something of a paradox for liberal democracies since "... the community life on which they depend must ultimately come from a source different from liberalism itself." However, the "religious or pre-modern values" that nourish associational life are under attack from the very foundations of liberalism and therefore threaten liberal democracy's "... ability to be self-sustaining."\footnote{171} This supposed paradox of liberal theory encourages Fukuyama to distinguish between Lockean-Hobbesian and Hegelian liberalism regarding the concept of civil society.

For Fukuyama, the conception of liberal society presented by Locke and Hobbes differs fundamentally from that of Hegel. He sees Lockean liberalism as based on selfish (self)interest end state suggests a more Marxist vision of a society where there is nothing between free, equal, and atomized individuals and the state." Ibid.

\footnote{170}{See ibid., 323-325.}

\footnote{171}{Ibid., 326-327.}
whereas, Hegelian liberalism is based on the "nobler" footing of the "non-selfish part of the human personality" as expressed in the struggle for recognition.\textsuperscript{172} Hence, whereas man's condition in the state of nature leads to civil society through a social contract for Hobbes and Locke, for Hegel, man's initial state does not lead directly to civil society but to a battle for recognition. Instead of civil society, the initial struggle for recognition results in the relationship of domination between master and slave.\textsuperscript{173} The unfolding of human freedom through the progressive struggle for recognition is finally fully realized with the Hegelian universal state which provides universal recognition. It is only within this final stage of History that civil society appears. This is why Hegel describes civil society as the achievement of the modern world.

Fukuyama considers early modern liberalism to be activated primarily by the desire to protect private property, to increase the opportunities for material accumulation, and to "... eradicate thymos from political life altogether, and to replace it with a combination of desire and reason."\textsuperscript{174} He maintains that this "denigration of aristocratic pride" was adopted by Enlightenment theorists like Montesquieu and Ferguson.\textsuperscript{174} Thus, "in the civil society envisioned by Hobbes, Locke, and other early modern liberal thinkers, man needs only desire and reason", not thymos.\textsuperscript{175}

Hegel, on the other hand, saw the relations among private property, civil society and thymos differently. Fukuyama contends that Hegel "... had a very different understanding of the

\textsuperscript{172} Ibid., 145.
\textsuperscript{173} Ibid., 147.
\textsuperscript{174} Ibid., 185.
\textsuperscript{175} Ibid.
meaning of private property than did Locke ... The protection of private property is a legitimate end of civil society for Hegel, as it is for Locke ... But Hegel sees property as a stage or aspect of the historical struggle for recognition, as something that satisfies thymos as well as desire."

In summary, for Fukuyama then, Hobbesian-Lockean liberalism is activated by the "pursuit of rational self-interest while Hegelian liberalism is concerned with the "pursuit of rational recognition, that is, recognition on a universal basis in which the dignity of each person as a free and autonomous human being is recognised by all.""

Fukuyama declares that "if the health of contemporary liberal democracy rests on the health of civil society, and the latter depends on people’s spontaneously ability to associate, then it is clear that liberalism must reach beyond its own principles to succeed." It is to the associational life based on "irrational" forms of recognition such as religion, which were identified by de Tocqueville in nineteenth century America, that one must look for a successful democracy. This theme is taken again up by Fukuyama in his subsequent book, Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity, to which I now turn.

In the Preface to Trust, Fukuyama picks up the threads of the argument he made in his prior work concerning the relationship at the end of history between liberalism and civil society, in particular, how economics "... is grounded in social life and cannot be understood separately from the larger question of how modern societies organize themselves. It is the arena in which

176 Ibid., 194-195.
177 Ibid., 200.
178 Ibid., 222.
179 See ibid.
modern recognition struggles play themselves out." In examining these issues, Fukuyama explores the social configurations of several Western (United States, Germany, France, Italy, Japan) and non-Western (Korea, China) societies. However, he does not classify these societies along Western vs. non-Western lines but rather according to the level of "trust" each society evinces. Thus the United States, Japan and Germany are "high trust" societies while Italy, France, China and Korea are "low trust" societies. Further, Fukuyama perceives a strong correlation between "high trust" societies and economic prosperity.

Fukuyama defines "trust" in the following manner: "Trust is the expectation that arises within a community of regular, honest, and cooperative behavior, based on commonly shared norms, on the part of other members of the community." "Trust" is linked to civil society by the concept of "social capital" which is "the ability of people to work together for common purposes in groups and organizations." Fukuyama asserts that this "... ability to associate depends, in turn, on the degree to which communities share norms and values and are able to subordinate individual interests to those of larger groups. Out of such shared values comes trust ..."). An essential component of social capital is "spontaneous sociability" which "... refers to the wide range of intermediate communities distinct from the family or those deliberately established by governments ... [i.e.,] the spontaneous communities of civil society."

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182 Fukuyama, ibid., 10.

183 Ibid.

184 Ibid., 27.
Social capital effects the type of economy which a society can establish. Societies with high levels of spontaneous sociability and trust such as Japan, Germany and the United States are able to organize businesses according to non-familial structures which promote flexibility and innovation. Low trust societies with low levels of spontaneous sociability such as China, Korea or Italy are characterized by associations based on familial or kinship models and the ability to establish large, private business organizations (and hence prosperity) is inherently restricted.\textsuperscript{185}

Fukuyama, citing Gellner's \textit{Conditions of Liberty} as authority, repeats the contention that he made in \textit{The End of History} that "... liberal political and economic institutions depend on a healthy and dynamic civil society for their vitality."\textsuperscript{186} He defines civil society as "a complex welter of intermediate institutions, including businesses, voluntary associations, educational institutions, clubs, unions, media, charities, and churches ... [which] builds, in turn, on the family ..."\textsuperscript{187} He charges that "a thriving civil society depends on a people's habits, customs, and ethics - attributes that can be shaped only indirectly through conscious political action and must otherwise be nourished through an increased awareness and respect for culture."\textsuperscript{188}

\textbf{Non-Western Others}

Fukuyama delineates "three broad paths for sociability" (and hence civil society): kinship

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{185} See ibid., 26-30.
\item \textsuperscript{186} Ibid., 4.
\item \textsuperscript{187} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{188} Ibid., 5.
\end{itemize}
or family, non-kinship voluntary association, and association established by the state. Each of these paths has a type of economic organization associated with it: "the family business, the professionally managed corporation, and the state-owned or -sponsored enterprise." Whichever path each society follows is determined largely by culture.

Fukuyama uses the United States as an illustration of this connection between civil society and culture. While the American constitution enshrines individual rights and freedoms, American society is not based merely on individualism. Rather, it is also characterized by "... many strong and important communal structures that give its civil society dynamism and resilience." These kind of associations were identified by de Tocqueville and given special mention in his account of the success of American democracy. Fukuyama contends that these associations are rooted in non-kinship structures arising from cultural factors such as religion. In the United States, "sectarian Protestantism" provided the foundation for much of the associational life. Hence, for Fukuyama, "the sectarian, as opposed to established, character of Protestantism in the United States, and its resulting vigor, would appear to be crucial for understanding the continuing strength of associational life in American society."

In contrast, societies like China or Korea have cultures in which the family is the predominant form of organization and in which voluntary associations not based on kinship are rare. This lack of spontaneous sociability is an impediment to developing large-scale private

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189 See ibid., 62.

190 Ibid.

191 Ibid., 50.

192 Ibid., 290.
economic organizations and therefore is an impediment to the creation of prosperity.\textsuperscript{193} Fukuyama argues that societies deficient in trust and spontaneous sociability have two choices if they want to develop these kinds of economic organizations. They can either establish state sponsored economic organizations or rely on joint ventures or direct investment from foreign sources. However, he considers this to be a less desirable path than the one followed by high trust societies (e.g., the United States) which are able to create their own large-scale private business organizations.\textsuperscript{194}

While Fukuyama tries to present his theory of civil society in neutral, non-ethnocentric terms by including Western societies in his category of societies which are low trust and lacking in spontaneous sociability, he merely reinscribes a "white mythology" in his work. This is apparent in the way he uses the United States as the centre of his account and in the way he follows a narrative of universal directional history and employs a mirroring construction to figure difference.

In \textit{Trust} he uses the United States as the primary example of a high trust society which demonstrates high levels of spontaneous sociability. Here he practices a kind of cryptonormativism where he uses the contemporary American model of civil society as the example of what civil society ought to be. For Fukuyama Western (i.e., American) ideas, forms of economic and political organization, and social arrangements are all superior to non-Western alternatives. Supposedly Western countries, like France and Italy, are classified only with inferior non-Western states because they failed to emulate the model presented by the United States.

\textsuperscript{193} See ibid., 62-65.

\textsuperscript{194} See ibid., 338.
While he discusses other high trust societies such as Japan and Germany both these examples were highly influenced directly by America after World War II and it is hardly surprising, therefore, that they demonstrate strong similarities to the United States in respect of spontaneous sociability and economic organization. In addition America is always at the centre of the account when he discusses low trust societies like China or Korea. These societies, which he considers to be rooted in Confucianism, are always placed in a comparative relationship (often unstated) with the United States. Here, again, Fukuyama practices a form of cryptonormativism by making American civil society the ideal-type against which other societies are measured. This concealed normative content is again revealed when Fukuyama attributes the differences identified between these types of societies to differences in "culture".

Fukuyama’s reliance on "culture" as a universal explanatory category is part and parcel of his use of a universal narrative framework and his construction of a complementary opposite or Other. The actors in his universal historical framework are various "cultures" with the European voice privileged and forming the centre of the account. Like Hegel, Fukuyama’s concern is the unfolding of universal History which culminates in the triumph of Western ideas and forms of political, economic and social organization. A recent review essay in The Economist points to the current popularity of "cultural explanations" for explaining historical change.195

In discussing the utility of such explanations the question of cultural determinism also arises. Fukuyama employs cultural determinist explanations in both his works on the end of

history and trust. Non-Western states remain stuck in history because they have not evolved culturally to the summit represented by Western civilization. The two engines of historical change (natural science and the struggle for recognition) are both linked to the West. Thus it is Western natural science which creates historical change, and societies which come in contact with it are transformed to look more and more like the West. Here Fukuyama argues that as "modern natural science" unfolds it leads to the "homogenization" of all societies that come into contact with it. The model they are homogenized into is, of course, Western culture. This recalls the argument made by modernization theorists like Almond and Verba in The Civic Culture that a "world culture" was emerging in the post-war period (i.e., the culture of the West, or more specifically, the culture of the United States).

Similarly, the struggle for recognition is also culturally determined. Universal recognition of all citizens as equals is achieved only in the modern liberal state. This means, for Fukuyama, the contemporary liberal capitalist democracies of the West. Non-Western states which do not practice this form of liberal democracy have not completed the struggle for recognition and therefore are structured by the relations of domination which characterize the uncompleted struggle for recognition. Here Fukuyama uses culture as an explanation for societies' failure to fully emulate the Western model.

Cultural determinism also forms a large part of Fukuyama's construction of a complementary opposite to the West. He employs the kind of categories used in nineteenth century anthropological discourse (such as culture) which Nicholas Thomas identified. Here cultures are described and ranked in a hierarchy as part of a process of essentialization. This involves not only essentializing non-Western societies but also the essentialization of the West
in modernity. In this manner, Fukuyama establishes a theory of universal directional history based on a similar structure to Hegel’s periodicization of different cultural groups in time and space.

Fukuyama’s demonstrates the appropriation and negation of the Other in his end of history thesis when he states that "The Universal Historian must be ready to discard entire peoples and times as essentially pre- or non-historical, because they do not bear on the central ‘plot’ of his or her story."196 He dismisses non-Western cultures still stuck in History when he claims that he does not need to respond to "... the challenges to liberalism promoted by every crackpot messiah ..." as they are not part of world History and that "... it matters very little what strange thoughts occur to people in Albania or Bukina Faso, for we are interested in what one could in some sense call the common ideological heritage of mankind."197 That heritage is, of course, Western civilization.

Fukuyama is quite clear in his belief in the existence of universal and directional history. His employment of a universal historical narrative is subject to all the problems and criticisms already outlined with respect to universal history in the preceding chapter. This legacy of historicist thinking was there attributed to Hegel. While other writers like Shils and Gellner employ this kind of historicist structure in their works it is not overtly stressed or attributed to Hegel. In contrast, Fukuyama is quite clear about his intellectual debt to Hegel’s theory of universal history. However, the complicating factor in this is that Fukuyama combines his own (mis)reading of Hegel with that of Alexandre Kojève, one of Hegel’s most well known twentieth

196 Francis Fukuyama, The End of History, op. cit., 139.

century interpreters. The problem is that it is often hard to establish exactly whose voice is speaking as Fukuyama does not always make it clear whether it is himself or Kojève who speaks for Hegel.

This presents an example of the perils of "travelling theory" as identified by Said. Here a theory of universal history travels from its origins in nineteenth century Prussia to 1930s Paris to 1990s Washington, D.C. As this theory travels it becomes subject to the mutations, distortions and neutralizations which Said wrote about with the theory of sociohistorical change of Lukács, Goldmann and Williams. Fukuyama wants to make light of Said's idea that theory is often written as "... a response to a specific social and historical situation ..." He attempts to negate the nineteenth century Prussian context which surfaces in Hegel's writing, often claiming that Hegel is misunderstood as an apologist for the Prussian state, authoritarianism, and anti-democratic ideas. While Hegel undoubtedly has received a distorted image through over-stated claims along these lines, this cannot be used to negate the effect of his temporal and spatial location on his work. His theory of History was conditioned by and a response to his location in nineteenth-century Prussia as was his theory of civil society.

Similarly, Fukuyama glosses over the intellectual "baggage" that comes with Hegel's theories. For this reason, he rewrites in his own work the flaws and problems concomitant with the Hegelian theory of History. He lacks the "critical consciousness" which Said says would allow for identification of "... differences between situations". Fukuyama manages to represent his (or Kojève's?) version Hegel's theory of History with very little modification apart

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199 Ibid., 242.
from extending it to cover the period since Hegel wrote it. Hence, incommensurability between sites of production and reception is not a consideration which looms large in Fukuyama's work.

Conclusion to Part II

The task of Part II of this study was to analyze the way in which the post-Enlightenment concept of civil society and geographical imagination identified in Part I have informed the work of twentieth-century writers on civil society. In order to identify points of continuity and disjuncture between the two, Said's notion of travelling theory was added to the theoretical framework of this study in Chapter Five. Also in Chapter Five, a critical exegesis was presented of Hegel's legacy for twentieth-century Western social science as a prelude to tracing the effects of this legacy on Shils, Gellner, and Fukuyama in Chapter Six. In Chapter Six, I identified two principal points of continuity between the twentieth-century authors and the prior discursive formation, namely, the use of a universal historical narrative and the construction of a complementary opposite or Other.

Like their predecessors, Shils, Fukuyama and Gellner stage their theories on a world historical canvas. This is not in all cases their stated intention but is implied by the way they locate their subject matter against a global and historical backdrop. This is evident, for example, in the way each writer figures difference and in the allied implicitly stadial approach that each of them adopts. Each assumes that societies pass through some series of developmental stages and that the West represents the final stage which others are striving towards. This can be seen clearly in their periodization and location of civil society: the contemporary West is the model of civil society, others strive to achieve it.
Their formulation of civil society in this manner creates several problems. Each writer begins with the West as (an often unstated) model of civil society. They establish the characteristics of and criteria for civil society by examining the social and political configuration of Western society (usually the United States) and then proceed to equate the Western model of liberal democracy with civil society. Once they have made a list of the features of civil society, they extrapolate backwards from the West and find that the non-West (both Eastern Europe and the Third World) does not meet these criteria fully and therefore are not civil societies. By adopting this approach, each of these writers (as Cohen and Arato noted about Talcott Parsons) "identifies the normatively desirable with the actual functioning civil society of the present", a problem which Habermas, in another context, called cryptonormativism.\textsuperscript{200} Like Parsons and Hegel before them, each author "... is ready to pronounce a single version of modern society ... as more or less the highest realization of the potentials of modernity."\textsuperscript{201} In this sense, American (or in Gellner’s case, English) civil society represents the "end of history".\textsuperscript{202}

Shils, Gellner and Fukuyama each refer to one of the theorists in the prior formation as being of particular importance for their own work. Thus, Shils draws primarily on Montesquieu, Gellner relies most on Ferguson, and Fukuyama adopts Hegel’s theoretical formulations. In so doing, each situates himself in some manner in a continuous relationship with the preceding formation and engages in a dialogue with it. While this is probably unintentional on the authors' part, it provides a continuity at the conceptual level between the two discursive formations. In


\textsuperscript{201} Ibid., 119.

\textsuperscript{202} See ibid., 142.
addition, while each of the three contemporary writers sees himself as having a singular affinity with one or other of the earlier theorists, their more obvious collective intellectual debt is to Hegel. As Cohen and Arato have observed:

... several important theoretical traditions that emerged after Hegel, with or without conscious reference to him, continued to move within the terms of analysis that he has brought together ... [Hegel is] ... the most important theoretical forerunner of several later approaches that have preserved their potential to provide more global, intellectual orientation even in our own time.\(^{203}\)

The uncritical appropriation of ideas, theories or concepts from the prior discursive formation by Shils, Gellner and Fukuyama are illustrative of the matters problematized by Said’s notion of travelling theory. Each author neglects the situatedness of theory both in terms of the effects of the context in which it is produced on the theory itself and in terms of the universality or generality of its claims which seek to transcend and erase specificities. Similarly, they ignore the assumptions produced at different sites that travel along with theories. In short, they ignore Said’s injunction "... that theory has to be grasped in the place and the time out of which it emerges as a part of that time, working in it and for it, responding to it ... ". "Then," Said continues, "that first place can be measured against subsequent places where the theory turns up for use." Thus none of these three twentieth-century writers has developed what Said calls a "critical consciousness", an "awareness of the differences between situations".\(^{204}\) Consequently, in another register, the work of Shils, Gellner and Fukuyama raises again the question posed by Foucault (and cited in Chapter One) of whether a concept developed in the eighteenth century,

\(^{203}\) Ibid., 91.

and in that century's specific context, can be transferred and applied unproblematically hundreds of years later and in quite different contexts from the sites of its production.

In Part III of this study, I will examine wider questions of comparison and representation as a means of elucidating why and how the theorists discussed in Parts I and II of this study all deploy mirroring constructions of non-European or non-Western Others in the construction of their theories of civil society. In addition, in this wider context, I will examine how the notion of comparison and the representational practices it authorizes enable the reinscription of ideas, categories, concepts, etc. from sites of production to (often incommensurable) sites of reception. This, in turn, should cast light back on to the examples of these kind of reinscriptions identified in the work of Shils, Gellner and Fukuyama in Part II of this thesis.
PART III

OUT OF THE PAST
CHAPTER SEVEN

COMPARISON AND REPRESENTATION

Europe is literally the creation of the Third World.

Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth.

Here the mirror is the *predicament*: a necessary or fateful situation, a quasi-nature; we can give a neutral formulation of its predicate or category, and we can state the menacing danger of such a situation, the technical machinery, the artifice that constitutes it. We are caught in the mirror’s trap.

Jacques Derrida, "Psyche: Inventions of the Other".

**Introduction**

In Part III of this study, I widen the frame of reference of my analysis to take in a wider context in which my discussion in the previous chapters is enframed. Here I consider questions of comparison and the concomitant representational practices that underscore the work of the theorists discussed in Parts I and II. This chapter is divided into eight sections. In the first four sections I examine questions of comparison and representation and outline two conceptions of alterity in Western philosophy which are connected with notions of comparison. By way of example, in the next two sections, I show how these conceptions of alterity have operated in the work of two writers: Hegel and John Stuart Mill. In these sections, the work of Jacques Derrida is highlighted. Derrida’s critiques of Western metaphysics and, in particular, his critiques of representation, Hegelian dialectics, and of the concept of translation, are central to the analysis presented in this chapter. In the next two sections I examine the notion of translation and its relationship to ideas of comparison and the comparative method in Western social science. In the
final section, I conclude Part III by analyzing the implications of my discussion of questions of comparison and representation for the study undertaken in this thesis.

Questions of Comparison

Most of the contemporary discussion of "comparative method" in political science, and in social science in general, deals with only the second half of this phrase, namely, "method". Questions of method - mathematical formulae, sampling techniques, problems of "too many variables and too few cases" - tend to predominate in the literature. We can always formulate categories, observe situations, and outline the "technical machinery" involved in the construction of such a method. And yet, while social scientists seem to have no difficulty in continually defining and refining methodological issues, very little is ever said about questions of "comparison".

One possible reason for the lack of discussion of "comparison" might be that all the important and interesting issues arising from this term have been explored fully and resolved in a manner which is acceptable to all practitioners of the social sciences. However, this seems implausible on both counts. A more likely explanation would be that "comparison" raises very complex and difficult issues which cannot be resolved in any straightforward or universally acceptable ways. Social scientists tend to refer these questions to "philosophers" and to perceive their resolution as the task of "Philosophy". Hence, it is easier and safer to take refuge in discussions of method, concerned as these are with apparently neutral and objective matters, that is, with the "scientific" aspects of comparative method. In this manner, social scientists have, for the most part, been able to dodge the philosophical and ethical issues which underpin
questions of comparison. By concentrating on methodological issues, social scientists avoid having to deal with the really interesting (and important) issues of comparison: Why compare? What is the purpose behind it? To what project is it put to work?

It is to this lacuna in the contemporary literature on comparative method that I wish to turn my attention in this chapter. The issues surrounding the notion of comparison bear directly upon my discussion of civil society as a mirroring construction in the preceding chapters. There I argued that the authors discussed all use civil society as a comparative mirror between the West and the non-West. Hence, historically, the idea of comparison often involved the holding up of a mirror to Others for the confirmation or construction of Western identity. Indeed, this mirroring process forms the basis of the philosophy of reflection in Western thought.

Comparison, then, is inextricably bound up in the history and constitution of Western philosophy. In particular, comparison is concerned with questions of sameness and difference which are manifested most often in the form of Same/Other comparisons. Comparisons of Self and Other are not undertaken always as an overt research strategy but often occur as an unconscious side-effect of the way in which Western philosophy constructs the comparative enterprise through the philosophy of reflection. Hence, the issues I identified above as the really interesting questions pertaining to comparison may be explored if we consider comparison as relations of sameness and difference. Specifically, these issues are connected to two ways in which alterity has been conceived in Western philosophy.

Two Conceptions of Alterity

Kalpana Seshadri-Crooks argues that in Western philosophy, alterity (which she calls the
"margin") is constructed as either a form of difference that can be domesticated and brought within Western Reason and colonial modernity, or as radical alterity which cannot be recuperated. In the first construction, alterity is a "subject position - the excluded other that must be coaxed into the centre through incorporation, inversion, hybridization, revolution ...". The second construction is that of an "... irreducible other - the condition for the production of our discourse (and all positive knowledge) that must be acknowledged as incommensurable and irrecoverable." She asserts that the construction of alterity as recuperable and commensurable "speaks the positive discourse of rights" while the construction of incommensurable and irrecoverable alterity "speaks the negative discourse of limits".

Seshadri-Crooks contends that contemporary liberal discourses of affirmative action and multiculturalism are based on the notion of the margin/alterity as subject position, that is, on (spatial) constructions of alterity as "the excluded and unintegrated other". For example, discussions of multiculturalism in Western liberalism are underpinned by a discourse of rights and turn on questions of "recognition and respect or the equal right to dignity." This "quest for recognition" is, in turn, underwritten by a "subjectivist notion of authenticity" which allows the liberal philosopher or social scientist to study other cultures/societies and then to "... form judgments of worth on a comparative basis." This liberal perspective assumes "... the possibility of studying and completely comprehending the other" and evokes "an epistemology of the other

2 Ibid.
3 Ibid., 53.
4 Ibid., 50.
that can only make sense within the ... liberal tradition ..." 

The liberal notion that "... hierarchy between groups can be redressed through recognition and respect for the other's authenticity" thus "... posit[s] a utopian moment in which the marginal as such will cease to exist, with power circulating freely and fluidly connecting and equalizing all points of habitation." 

Here, the margin "becomes also the source of rejuvenation of the centre, where knowledge as positive knowing is made possible." 

Or as George Yúdice observes, "...‘marginality’ became a focus of interest through which ‘we’ (Western culture) discovered otherness and our own ethnocentric perspectives. Today, it is declared, the ‘marginal’ is no longer peripheral but central to all thought." 

Seshadri-Crooks is critical of the construction of alterity that underscores liberal discourses of multiculturalism since, inter alia:

... far from undermining the hegemony of Western civilization, multiculturalism merely expands its frontiers both geographically - world culture itself is appended to the US - and pedagogically - as the universal system of knowledge both in terms of method and ideology. 

While contemporary liberalism often conceives of alterity as the spatially constructed "excluded and unintegrated other," it is not the only philosophical discourse that conceives of alterity in this manner. Some postmodern theorists also construct alterity spatially as the margin, where "... the

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5 Ibid., 51.

6 Ibid., 51, 53.

7 Ibid., 53.


9 Seshadri-Crooks, op. cit., 52.
margin is the space of agitation, subversion, and thus theoretical innovation." In this view, "the margin is the site of subversion - it must be made to arrive at the centre and disrupt it." Strange as it may seem, then, and despite some theoretical disagreements, for both liberal and postmodern constructions "the margin is a source of rejuvenation. A future moment must be posited when it will be either incorporated or dissolved and hierarchy will be undone."

The second conception of alterity, as "irreducible otherness", is underwritten by a "discourse of limits". Seshadri-Crooks derives the notion of the "limit" from Drucilla Cornell’s The Philosophy of the Limit. Cornell coined the term "the philosophy of the limit" as a new name for deconstruction to avoid the preconceived ideas and negative baggage that surround that concept. She suggests that we use the idea of the "limit" to "refocus... attention on the limits constraining philosophical understanding ..." and "expose... the quasi-transcendental conditions that establish any system ... as a system." For Derrida, "this exposure ... demonstrates how the very establishment of the system as a system implies a beyond to it, precisely by virtue of what it excludes." Another notion of the "limit" is represented for Cornell by the concept of "secondness" in Charles Pierce’s critique of Hegelian idealism. For Cornell, "by secondness Pierce indicates the materiality that persists beyond any attempt to conceptualize it. Secondness,

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10 Ibid., 53.
11 Ibid., 58.
12 Ibid.
14 Cornell, ibid., 1.
15 Ibid.
in other words, is what resists."¹⁶

Seshadri-Crooks suggests that Foucault's designation of the modern age "as marked by the emergence of Man in his finite spatiality as the subject and object of his own knowledge" provides an example of this sense of the "limit". Henceforth, she argues, "it is no longer a question of knowing the limits of knowledge, as with classical philosophy, but of discerning the constitutive negativity, the otherness, the irrrecuperable, the 'unthought' that makes positive knowing possible."¹⁷ This idea of alterity has underscored many of the contemporary critiques of Western knowledge beginning with Edward Said's exposure of "the constitutive function of this margin for Western knowledge" in Orientalism.¹⁸ Relationship to the Other is also one of Derrida's most central and enduring concerns.¹⁹

Cornell argues that Derrida's approach to revealing the limit of a system is significant. Rather than "positively ... describe the limit as an oppositional cut" which would reintroduce the binary oppositions he wishes to undo, Derrida contends that "the force of différence prevents any system - [e.g.] ... Hegel's system - from encompassing its other or its excess. The Other for Derrida remains other to the system."²⁰ Hence, Derrida uses deconstruction to reveal the limits of Hegelian idealism, "if idealism is understood to give us a system that can successfully

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Seshadri-Crooks, op. cit., 59-60.

¹⁸ Ibid., 60.

¹⁹ See Cornell, op. cit., 1.

²⁰ Ibid., 2.
incorporate what is other to the system and thereby erase the system's contradictions."\textsuperscript{21} Cornell suggests further that "... Derrida's project is not only to show us why and how there is always the Other to the system; it is also to indicate the ethical aspiration behind that demonstration."\textsuperscript{22} 

\textit{Différance} is a term coined by Derrida to encapsulate the dual meanings of the French verb \textit{différer}, namely, to defer/postpone or to differ. The term then denotes "... active non-self-presence both in space and time."\textsuperscript{23} Thus Cornell asserts that \textit{Différance} names the deferral in time and space of the closure of the circle of immanence in Hegel's absolute knowledge" and that "for Derrida, we confront the 'matter,' the remain(s), the 'beyond,' only through \textit{différance}; the trace of what differs from representational systems and defers indefinitely the achievement of totality."\textsuperscript{24}

\textbf{Operation of Conceptions of Alterity}

While it is useful to delineate two general conceptions of alterity, it is not always easy to place specific theories neatly within either category, since the stated objective of an author in respect of a concept or theory may not always tally with the result it produces. For example, although a theory or concept may be intended to appropriate and negate alterity or to subsume it in a universal category, it may be unsuccessful theoretically in doing so or may produce further (unexpected or unintentional) exclusions or oppositions. Thus there is a substantial amount of

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{21} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{22} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{24} Cornell, op. cit., 58, 70.
\end{itemize}
"leaking" or "bleeding" between categories which makes it difficult to position some theorists' work solely in one category or the other. However, despite the "haemorrhaging" that occurs between the two categories, I consider that they still have utility for discussing different constructions and responses to alterity in Western thought.

I now will examine how these categories operate and how sometimes they haemorrhage into one another by way of two examples: Hegel and John Stuart Mill. Hegel is important for my argument since, as I have shown, he is of great significance for contemporary formulations of alterity, civil society, and general systems of thought in contemporary social science. Mill is important because he is identified by most practitioners of comparative method across the social science disciplines as the progenitor of "the comparative method" in the social sciences. Ironically, Mill did not consider that his "method of concomitant variations" could be used in the social sciences since too few similar cases could be identified.25 Further, Mill thought that the use of this method in political science was "completely out of the question" since it involved a "gross misconception of the mode of investigation proper to political phenomena".26 Despite this, Mill's "method of agreement" and "method of difference" in his Science of Logic (1843) are perceived by many in the social sciences as the starting point of comparative method which have been methodologically refined by subsequent theorists.27


26 Ibid., 883, 886.

Rodolphe Gasché claims that "... Western philosophy is in essence the attempt to domesticate Otherness, since what we understand by thought is nothing but such a project ..."\(^{28}\) This comment echoes Levinas' assertion that "from its infancy philosophy has been struck with a horror of the other that remains other -- with an insurmountable allergy ... Hegel's philosophy represents the logical outcome of this underlying allergy of philosophy."\(^{29}\) In addition, both Gasché and Levinas emphasize Western philosophy's desire for unity and totality.\(^{30}\) This desire for unity/totality grounds Western philosophy's antipathy to Otherness that remains Other. However, while Western philosophy is conditioned by the desire to domesticate Otherness and achieve unity/totality which may be expressed in liberalism's universal categories or in Hegelian dialectics, there is a tension between this desire and the formulation of Otherness as the negative or as contradiction. A trace of the Other remains outside the system or is excluded from a universal category. This trace remains exterior to the system and cannot be reduced to the Self's Other and completely incorporated or interiorized.\(^{31}\) The tension created accounts for the problematic relation between the two categories of alterity identified above. Thus, while the impulse within Western philosophy is towards incorporating alterity within the Same/Self or within a universal order (i.e., towards alterity as recuperable), the formulation of alterity as


\(^{30}\) See ibid.; Gasché, op. cit., 36ff.

\(^{31}\) See Cornell, op. cit., 74.
negative or as contradiction also leads to its being pushed out of the system or excluded from a universal category and therefore remaining an irrecuperable Other (i.e., the Other remains incommensurable). This predicament can be seen in Hegel's attempt to overcome contradictions within the philosophy of reflection.

Gaschê provides a useful account of the history of the philosophy of reflection in his work on Derrida, *The Tain of the Mirror*. Here he argues that "the concept of philosophical reflection is ... a name for philosophy's eternal aspiration to self-foundation." With Descartes, reflection became central to Western philosophy for two reasons. First, it

... signified the turning away from any straightforward consideration of objects and from the immediacy of such an experience toward a consideration of the very experience in which objects are given. Second, with such a bending back upon the modalities of object perception, reflection shows itself to mean primarily self-reflection, self-relation, self-mirroring.

As a result, Descartes was able through the idea of self-reflection to establish the subject as independent of "all unmediated relation to being". This is the moment Foucault identifies as the emergence of Man as both a subject and an object which, for him, marks the dawning of the Modern Age. For Gaschê, "... self-reflection marks the human being's rise to the rank of a subject. It makes the human being a subjectivity that has its center in itself, a self-consciousness certain of itself." As Gaschê notes, this idea of reflection as self-consciousness has had an "eminently emancipatory function" beginning with Descartes and continuing (at least) through German Idealism. Further, he contends that:

32 Gaschê, op. cit., 13.

33 Ibid.

34 Ibid., 14.
... self-reflection in modern philosophy not only grounds the autonomy of the individual as a rational being; it also appears to be the very motor of history as progress toward a free society. Self-reflection has informed all philosophy of spirit since Descartes; indeed, it also constitutes the modern concept of history and is the alpha and omega of political philosophy.  

The next major breakthrough in the philosophy of reflection occurred with Kant's idea of transcendental philosophy. Here "transcendental" means "... that sort of philosophical reflection that brings to consciousness the inner conditions that constitute the objects in general that present themselves to our experience." In transcendental philosophy, "self-reflexivity remains an a priori structural precondition of what we understand by knowledge itself" and therefore "it must also reflect on the ground proper of philosophy, and thus become the medium of the self-reflection of philosophy." Here the idea emerges that philosophy is foundational for all other knowledge claims. With transcendental reflection the process of reflection comes to have two moments. Hence, "reflection is the structure and the process of an operation that, in addition to designating the action of a mirror reproducing an object, implies that mirror's mirroring itself, by which process the mirror is made to see itself."  

As Gasché points out, merely identifying this double gesture does not explain how these two moments are associated. For Kant, transcendental reflection embodied the transcendental unity of empirical (inner) and logical (outer) reflection and also the "thinking of the unity of the

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35 See ibid.

36 Ibid.

37 Ibid., 15.


39 Gasché, ibid., 16-17.
operation of reflection itself. Thus Kant attempted to resolve the question of "how reflection as a unitary phenomenon can at once be reflection of Other and reflection of the mirroring subject." He tried, therefore, to achieve the "universal requirement for unity" of Western philosophy.

Gasché contends that while Kant tried to solve this problem through his transcendental philosophy, ultimately, he was unsuccessful. For Gasché, this would only be achieved with Hegel’s notion of absolute reflection. He suggests that this is because it is within subjectivity that the two moments of reflection may be united and the "mirroring subject’s self-mirroring" is achieved which "... is the goal of the whole process." To achieve this, a third moment is needed that will provide the unification of all the moments into a totality or whole. This third moment occurs with "the recognition that the object reflected by the mirroring subject is not just any object but rather this subject’s symmetric Other - in other words, a representation of its alienated self." Thus:

With such an alienating positing of itself as object, its reflection truly becomes an act of bringing back, a recapturing recognition. In the reflection of the mirror-subject as an annulment of the mirroring subject’s former alienation, the reflection of the Other becomes a reflection of self. The mirror’s self-reflection is the embracing whole that allows it to release itself into Other, which explains why it faces an object in the first place and why it returns reflexively to itself. These three moments form the basis of Hegel’s system of dialectics and the unity of self-

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40 Ibid., 18-19.
41 Ibid., 20.
42 Ibid.
43 Ibid., 21.
44 Ibid.
reflection. Gasché describes the operation of the Hegelian dialectic in the philosophy of reflection:

The paradigm of reflection thus requires, in addition to the two moments ... a third element, which triggers the unifying dialectic between the mirror and its object, as well as between the mirror and itself. This dialectic, by means of which the mirrored object is seen to be that into which the mirror opens out as an image of the mirror and itself, both the same as and different from it, allows for the integration of the two previously distinguished moments of reflection into the unity created by the self-revelation of the mirroring subject. The alienation of the mirror in its Other and the reflection of the object are linked together in such a way as to form a totality in which they are reflected into one another, leaving absolutely no remainder outside.⁴⁵

This dialectical system's relations of self and Other underpins Hegel's philosophy of spirit and provides the motor for his theory of history. Hegel's aspiration, then, is to recapture or recuperate the Other into a unity or totality (as suggested by the first construction of alterity). However, Derrida suggests, he is unsuccessful in achieving the desire to recuperate/appropriate the Other completely and leave no remainder. In this manner, then, his work bleeds into the second category of alterity where the Other remains Other and unincorporated.

Gasché notes that Hegel perceives difference as contradiction and the Other as the negative. Negativity, "as the underside and accomplice of positivity", is one component of the dialectic and enables the contradiction which leads to sublation in the dialectical system of the absolute.⁴⁶ It is with Hegel's (limited) idea of negativity and his idea of a totality that leaves no remainder outside that Derrida takes issue.

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⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Gasché, op. cit., 102.
Derrida's Critique of Hegelian Metaphysics

Robert Young has noted that much of twentieth-century philosophy has been concerned with trying to extricate itself from the Hegelian dialectic. As he points out, however, technically there is no exit from the Hegelian dialectical system, since contradiction or opposition is "always recuperable" and is merely sublated in another upward movement of the dialectic. Nor is ignoring Hegel an option. As one cannot "simply ... exclude, excise or extirpate Hegel," Young contends that, "other strategies are required." Derrida recognizes this predicament and his notion of deconstruction (or the philosophy of the limit, as Cornell calls it) is an attempt to get around the problem by assailing the Hegelian system from within. In Of Grammatology, he describes how deconstruction operates: "The movements of deconstruction do not destroy structures from the outside. They are not possible and effective, nor can they take accurate aim, except by inhabiting those structures ... [They] ... operat[e] necessarily from the inside, borrowing all the strategic and economic resources of subversion from the old structure ..." Much like a bacterium or virus, deconstruction "disrupts" the dialectical system "through the detection of its own fissures." In this manner, the dialectical system implodes, caving in upon itself as the breaches and cracks in its edifice are used to disrupt its supporting structure.

The way in which Derrida uses the fissures in the Hegelian dialectic to deconstruct it (or expose its limits) is outlined by Cornell in The Philosophy of the Limit. As she notes, Derrida's

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49 Young, op. cit., 7.
engagement with Hegel is often bound up with his discussion of the philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas, and so Levinas' ideas will feature in the following account from time to time. Cornell begins her analysis by posing the "opening question of Derrida's Glas - a kind of wake for Hegel ... - 'what, after all, of the remain(s), today, for us, here, now, of a Hegel?' in the name of the elusive residuum left over once the relentless machinery of the Hegelian dialectic has finished its work."30 Here Derrida questions both what remains of Hegel and what has become of the Other that was thrust out of the system, i.e., the remains.31

Levinas is critical of Hegel's desire for totality since it refuses "... 'actuality' to the Other 'excluded' from the system." Cornell illustrates this by reference to "Hegel's infamous statement" that Siberia is outside his philosophy of history.32 While Hegel does indeed claim that Siberia "lies out of the pale of history," a much more infamous example of the exclusion of the Other in this work is that of Africa, of which Hegel states:

... we leave Africa not to mention it again. For it is no historical part of the World; it has no movement or development to exhibit ... What we properly understand by Africa, is the unhistorical, undeveloped Spirit, still involved in the conditions of mere nature, and which had to be presented here only as on the threshold of the World's History.33

Hegel's dismissal of Africa as merely an "introductory element" signals its exclusion from the dialectical system of World History. By ejecting Africa from World History, Hegel constructs it as profoundly and irrecoverably Other, or, in Christopher Miller's eloquent phrase, as "blank

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30 Cornell, op. cit., 63.

31 See ibid.

32 Ibid., 66.

darkness". Hence, "that which is left out and thus denied actuality does not count"; it becomes a blank, black hole.

Here we come back to Derrida's question about the remains (of Hegel). Cornell argues that it is through *différance* ("the trace of what differs from representational systems and defers achievement of totality") that Derrida is able to engage 'the remain(s)' or 'the beyond'. Cornell notes that for Derrida, "when we attempt to think 'exteriority,' ... we are always walking on a tightrope and risking the fall into another mechanism of appropriation." To speak of the remain(s) would be to reappropriate them. Hence, "for Derrida, what we confront in the aporia ... is *différance* ..." An aporia or "limit of philosophy" is not a disabling moment for Derrida. Instead, "the dead end of the aporia, the impasse to which it takes us, promises through its prohibition the way out it seems to deny. To promise through prohibition is the 'action' of allegory." Cornell summarizes Derrida's disruption of the Hegelian system thus:

Hegel's philosophy of history in which everything that is to count as Spirit is re-collected into the system is disrupted by the Other that cannot be fully interiorized. There is an otherness beyond Spirit which cannot be reduced to Spirit's Other. And it is precisely the trace of otherness that cannot be recouped that is the defective cornerstone of the entire Hegelian system. It is this defective cornerstone that both de Man and Derrida understand as allegory. Hegel's philosophy then, reread as allegory, 're-read from the most deficient and efficient

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55 Cornell, op. cit., 66.

56 Ibid., 70.

57 Ibid.

58 Ibid.

59 Ibid., 71.
cornerstone, is said to be - over its dead body - an allegory of disjunction.' Such an allegory of disjunction has as its object not the whole, Hegel's object, but the morsel, which has been disjoined from the system.60

Derrida's deconstruction of the Hegelian system demonstrates how Hegel's construction(s) of alterity do not fit neatly into either of the two categories of alterity distinguished by Seshadri-Crooks. Rather, there is a significant slippage or leakage from one category to the other.

For Cornell, then, "the philosophy of the limit clearly guards the trace of otherness that resists assimilation and reduction to the selfsame ..."61 Further, for her, Derrida's "deconstructive intervention" into Hegel (and the philosophy of the limit in general) is "driven by an ethical desire to enact the ethical relation ... [namely] ... the aspiration to a nonviolent relationship to the Other, and to otherness more generally, that assumes responsibility to guard the Other against the appropriation that would deny ... [its] ... difference and singularity."62 Part of such an ethical relation would be facilitating the Other's speaking to us rather than us speaking to it. However, as Cornell notes, "the problem, of course, with any attempt to let the ... [Other] ... speak directly in its language is that it is always blocked by the imposition of our language, our meaning. We are always translating ..."63 I will return to the problem of translation after outlining the operation of the two categories of alterity in John Stuart Mill's work.


61 Cornell, ibid., 84-85.

62 Ibid., 62.

63 Ibid., 80.
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Mill's Strategies of Exclusion

At first sight, liberalism also appears to manifest the desire to domesticate Otherness which Gasché identifies as characteristic of Western philosophy. However, this ostensible gesture toward inclusion or appropriation masks the exclusionary moves evidenced in liberal practice. In "Liberal Strategies of Exclusion," Uday S. Mehta analyzes liberal theory to account for "... how a set of ideas that professed, at a fundamental level, to include as their political referent a universal constituency nevertheless spawned practices that were either predicated on or directed at the political marginalization of various people."64 She examines the work of Locke and John Stuart Mill to illustrate the different strategies of exclusion they employ. While Mehta shows that Locke and Mill use somewhat different exclusionary strategies, at the same time, she demonstrates that there is an "exclusionary impulse" within all liberal theory which is not simply a problem of practical realization. Rather,

"... the exclusionary basis of liberalism does ... derive from its theoretical core, and the litany of exclusionary historical instances is an elaboration of this core ... behind the capacities ascribed to all human beings, there exist a thicker set of social credentials that constitute the real bases of political inclusion. The universalistic reach of liberalism derives from the capacities it identifies with human nature and from the presumption, which it encourages, that these capacities are sufficient and not merely necessary for an individual's political inclusion."65

It is upon this immanent basis of exclusion that the exclusionary strategies of Locke and Mill are constructed. I will only outline briefly Mehta's discussion of Locke, since it is principally with her analysis of Mill that I am concerned.


65 Ibid., 429.
Locke argues that humans are born free, rational and equal. Mehta calls this the "anthropological minimum". This "anthropological minimum" provides the basis for his normative claims and the entitlement to rights which appear universal in character. However, while Locke ostensibly seems to include all in a universal category based on the anthropological minimum, in reality he excludes certain groups such as women and non-Europeans, through "the subtle invoking of politically exclusionary social conventions and manners." Locke excludes "idiots," "lunatics," and children from the apparently universal category entitled to political participation as he considers them unable to consent to political authority since consent is based on the ability to reason. Since they are unable to reason, they may be ruled without their consent.

In a similar fashion, Locke uses these same exclusionary gestures with respect to non-Europeans to construct them as unfit to govern themselves and to justify their being governed by Europeans without their consent. As Ann Laura Stoler puts it, "... racialized Others invariably have been compared and equated with children, a representation that conveniently provided a moral justification for imperial policies of tutelage, discipline and specific paternalistic and maternalistic strategies of custodial control."

In contrast to Locke, Mehta argues, nineteenth-century liberals used two strategies of exclusion, namely, inscrutability and civilizational infantilism. These strategies frequently were

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66 Ibid., 428.

67 See ibid., 436.

applied concurrently. The operation of these strategies can be illustrated by way of the nineteenth century British liberal fascination with India. During the nineteenth century, India was used as a kind of theoretical and literal social laboratory in which solutions to problems such as the control and government of the lower classes at home could be worked out. However, despite their focus on India, Mehta notes, liberal exclusionary practices operated in other areas as well.

The idea of inscrutability can be seen in the work of Mill’s father, James Mill. In his The History of British India, James Mill makes a double inscription of "the total inclusion of India as part of the study of Britain and of simultaneously sequestering it by a description that renders it all but inscrutable." Thus while India is implicitly a component of the British political constellation, it is also concomitantly "characterized by its inscrutable and chaotic intransigence." Mehta contends that inscrutability differs qualitatively from the refusal of comprehension. This is so because "... inscrutability designates an unfathomable limit to the object of inquiry without implicating either the process of inquiry or the inquirer" and "... inscrutability clearly places a limit on political possibilities by closing off the prospect that the object satisfies the however minimal conditions requisite for political inclusion." Again, this

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69 See Mehta, op. cit., 443.
70 See ibid., 439-440.
71 Ibid., 441.
72 Ibid., 442. There is a large amount of postcolonial literature on the Mills and other English liberals (especially in relation to India), see for example, Homi K. Bhabha, The Location of Culture (London: Routledge, 1994).
73 Mehta, ibid.
opens the way for the government of these "insufficient" peoples by those capable of reason and consent.  

In this manner, inscrutability is "a mark of irredeemable alterity" which serves to expose liberal universal categories as being far from inclusionary. While these universal categories may appear, at first glance, to recoup or appropriate otherness in the quest for universality or unity, in fact, alterity is constructed as irrecoverable Otherness. As Mehta notes, something which merely resists comprehension one day might alter and become comprehensible, but something which is inscrutable is unchanging and remains impenetrable, indescribable and, therefore, irrecoverable.  

As well as using the exclusionary strategy of inscrutability, James Mill made use of the strategy of civilizational infantilism. This second strategy also can be seen at play in the work of John Stuart Mill. While constructions of inscrutability are based on a disavowal of the "particulars of India," the construction of civilizational infantilism is dependent on their elucidation. This involves "delving into the arcane details of ancient theological, cultural and historical particulars and through them exposing the deficiencies of India's political, although most often psychological, endowments. It presumes on the necessity of a complex set of individual and social indexes as the prerequisite of political inclusion." How the exclusionary strategy of civilizational infantilism operates can be seen in two of John Stuart Mill's works: On

74 See ibid.
75 Ibid., 453.
76 See ibid.
77 Ibid., 443.
Liberty (1859) and Considerations on Representative Government (1861). In both cases, Mill establishes a universal category or principle and then uses sociological or developmental details to exclude India or Indians from the universal category due to their alleged deficiencies.

In the introductory chapter to On Liberty, Mill states that his subject is "the nature and limits of the power which can be legitimately exercised by society over the individual." He continues that in relation to this issue his object is "to assert one very simple principle," namely, "that the sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number, is self-protection." However, while he establishes the universality of the principle of liberty by speaking of the universal category of mankind, he immediately qualifies this universality in the next sentence by stating "that the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others." Mill explains and justifies this restriction of the principle of liberty to civilized people by reference to two groups whom he specifically excludes from the ambit of the principle.

Mill claims that it is "hardly necessary to say that this doctrine is meant to apply only to human beings in the maturity of their faculties." Here he excludes children and those below the age of majority. This exclusion of non-adults is justified on the grounds that "those who are still in a state to require being taken care of by others, must be protected against their own

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79 Ibid., 223. My emphasis.

80 Ibid., 224.
actions as well as against external injury." Mill continues that "for the same reason, we may leave out of consideration those backward states of society in which the race itself may be considered as in its nonage." These "backward" peoples, then, are excluded because they are analogous to children and in need of protection from their own actions and from harm caused by others.

Although Mill believes that man is a "progressive being," he argues with respect to these "backward" societies, that "the early difficulties in the way of spontaneous progress are so great, that there is seldom any choice of means for overcoming them; and a ruler full of the spirit of improvement is warranted in the use of any expedients that will attain an end, perhaps otherwise unattainable." Consequently, "backward" peoples are excluded from the principle of liberty and, in fact, "despotism is a legitimate mode of government in dealing with barbarians, provided the end be their improvement, and the means justified by actually effecting that end." Mill concludes that:

Liberty, as a principle, has no application to any state of things anterior to the time when mankind have become capable of being improved by free and equal discussion. Until then, there is nothing for them but implicit obedience to an Akbar or a Charlemagne, if they are so fortunate as to find one.

Here Mill raises one of his enduring concerns; the merits of different forms of government and their proper application to different situations. Bryan Turner notes that while absolutism in the

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81 Ibid.
82 Ibid.
83 Ibid.
84 Ibid.
85 Ibid. Akbar, Jalaludin Muhammad (1542-1605) was Mogul Emperor of India from 1556.
eighteenth century lead to discussion of these issues (e.g., Montesquieu and Ferguson canvassed these issues thoroughly), the expansion of colonialism in the nineteenth century pushed these issues again to the forefront of debate. Turner further points out that debates within British Utilitarianism about the proper political system for Britain were conducted in a context of British management of colonial territories in India. He remarks that, "the utilitarians were concerned both with the problem of the working class and parliamentarian government in Britain and with the government of Indian natives." Hence, questions about native despotism and the best form of government for colonial dependencies arose.

Turner suggests that for Mill "the principal political solution to ... static native despotism was a dose of 'despotisme eclaire'..." courtesy of British colonial administration. Further, he contends that Mill’s distaste for the static nature of Oriental despotism was linked to his anxiety about "the effects of majority rule in popular democracies on the life and conscience of the educated and sensitive individual." Mill’s fear of the "tyranny of the majority" was exacerbated by his reading of de Tocqueville’s Democracy in America, in which de Tocqueville concluded that "majority rule on the basis of universal franchise could result in a sterile consensus which was inimicable to individuality and individual rights. The only check to the despotism of the majority would be the existence of strong voluntary associations (that is, civil society) protecting the individual from majority control and protecting diversity of interests

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87 Ibid.

and culture." In the absence of these associations, Mill thought that Britain would be subject to the same sterile consensus and stagnation as Oriental despotisms. He frequently expresses the fear that without vigilance, Britain might slip into "Chinese stationariness". Here, then Mill displaces his fears about 'internal' Others (the lower classes) onto non-Western Others and uses them as a theoretical mechanism to critique his own society, much in the way Montesquieu uses this technique of projection in the Persian Letters.

Mill pursues his interest in colonial government in Considerations on Representative Government. In Chapter 18, "Of the Government of Dependencies by a Free State," he revisits the theme of Oriental despotism. Although in prior chapters he establishes the superiority of representative government, in Chapter 18 he seeks to limit its application to Britain and certain types of colonies. Mill separates Britain's colonial territories into two classes: white settler colonies like Australia, and "Others" like India. The white settler colonies are "composed of people of similar civilization to the ruling country; capable of, and ripe for, representative government" while the "Others" are "still at a great distance from that state."

Mill argues that, in respect of these "Others", the question of the correct form of government is merely "a choice of despotisms." He contends that those colonies which have not reached a state of civilization akin to that of Britain must be governed by a superior country

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89 Turner, op. cit., 31.


92 Ibid., 568.
or its delegates. This is legitimate since it is most likely to lead to the civilizational improvement of backward peoples. Consequently, "... a vigorous despotism is in itself the best mode of government for training the people in what is specifically wanting to render them capable of higher civilization." This enlightened despotism of colonial government is contrasted with "native despotism" in which "... there being no spring of spontaneous improvement in the people themselves, their almost only hope of making any steps in advance depends on the chances of a good despot." Mill concludes that:

Under a native despotism, a good despot is a rare and transitory accident: but when the dominion they are under is that of a more civilized people, that people ought to be able to supply it constantly. The ruling country ought to be able to do for its subjects all that could be done by a succession of absolute monarchs, guaranteed by irresistible force against the precariousness of tenure attendant on barbarous despotisms, and qualified by their genius to anticipate all that experience has taught to the more advanced nation. Such is the ideal rule of a free people over a barbarous or semibarbarous one.93

Once again, Mill manages to exclude non-Western Others through their construction as civilizational infants. They are not entitled to representative government because they are excluded from the class of advanced civilizations made up of Britain and its white settler colonies. Mill confirms this view in his autobiography where he states that "... I ceased to consider representative democracy as an absolute principle, and regarded it as a question of time, place and circumstance ..."94

As Mehta notes, liberalism appears to accept or tolerate a great many forms of difference but, in fact, it frequently excludes many forms of Otherness. Thus "the putative perimeter of its

93 Ibid., 567.

sympathies is marked by the expansive range of the differences it tolerates. The limiting point of this perimeter is a form of alterity beyond which differences can no longer be accommodated. The alterity can take many forms."\textsuperscript{95} Or, as Edward Said describes the inclusionary and exclusionary gestures of Mill and other nineteenth century liberals, "... another link in the chain binding 'us' together was formed while another outsider was banished."\textsuperscript{96} Consequently, rather than always appropriating or recuperating Otherness, liberalism at times excludes categories of Others which remain irrecoverable and incommensurably Other. Again, the slippage or leaking between categories of alterity is apparent.

I will have more to say about John Stuart Mill below in relation to comparative method but first I want to return to the notion of translation which I raised in the context of Derrida's deconstruction of Hegelian metaphysics. Now I am concerned to show how the idea of translation is connected to the two ways in which alterity has been conceived in Western thought. The notion of translation is imbricated not just with philosophy but with history, anthropology, and the Western social sciences and arts in general. Further, through its role in the social sciences, translation is connected to the idea of comparison and to the development of comparative method. As François Hartog observes, comparison "has a place in the rhetoric of otherness, operating there as a procedure of translation."\textsuperscript{97}

\textsuperscript{95} Mehta, ibid., 441.


Comparison and Translation

Tejaswini Niranjana provides a useful way into discussion of the problematic of translation in Western thought in Siting Translation: History, Post-Structuralism, and the Colonial Context. She suggests that translation is "a significant site for raising questions of representation, power, and historicity."98 This is because "translation depends on the Western philosophical notions of reality, representation, and knowledge" in which "reality is seen as something unproblematic, 'out there'; knowledge involves a representation of this reality; and representation provides direct, unmediated access to a transparent reality."99

While these Western philosophical concepts lead to modes of translation that can be used as a buttress to colonial domination, at the same time, translation in the colonial context establishes a "conceptual economy" which becomes part of the discourse of Western philosophy.100 These practices of translation, then, are part of what Derrida calls a "conceptual network in which philosophy itself has been constituted."101 Niranjana asserts that "by employing certain modes of representing the other - which it thereby also brings into being - translation reinforces hegemonic versions of the colonized, helping them acquire the status of what Edward Said calls representations, or objects without history."102 In addition, she

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99 Ibid., 2.
100 See ibid.
102 Niranjana, op. cit., 3.
In creating coherent and transparent texts and subjects, translation participates - across a range of discourses - in the fixing of colonized cultures, making them seem static and unchanging rather than historically constructed. Translation functions as a transparent presentation of something that already exists, although the 'original' is actually brought into being through translation.\(^{103}\)

Here Niranjana’s arguments about translation dovetail with Derrida’s critique of representation and his observations about translation.

Derrida’s critique of representation challenges the idea of an "origin" as a single, pure well-spring of meaning. Rather, the ‘origin’ is "always already heterogeneous" so that "... there is no primordial ‘presence’ that is then re-presented ... It is the concept of representation that suppresses the difference that is already always there in the so-called origin and grounds the whole of Western metaphysics."\(^{104}\) Derrida calls this the ‘metaphysics of presence’. The importance of the idea of single, pure origin in Western philosophy is, for Derrida, illustrated by the practices of logocentrism and phonocentrism, whereby, speech is privileged over writing because it is considered to be direct and immediate (or ‘present’) while writing is a copy of a copy and, therefore, is indirect and mediated. The ideas of immediacy and transparency which characterize Western philosophies of representation are bound up with the theory of meaning in which "the sign unproblematically represents reality, makes it present."\(^{105}\) Here the sign is a reflection which returns us to the critique of the philosophy of reflection.

Derrida disputes these notions of the metaphysics of presence by "revealing that any

\(^{103}\) Ibid.

\(^{104}\) Ibid., 39.

\(^{105}\) Ibid., 81.
notion of the simple, the center, or the primordial is always already characterized by an irreducible or untranscendable heterogeneity.\textsuperscript{106} Niranjana contends that Derrida employs the notion of 'writing' to deconstruct the metaphysics of presence. Here 'writing' stands for "difference at the origin" and "the sign of origin, for Derrida, is a writing of a writing that can only state that the origin is originary translation. Metaphysics tries to reappropriate presence ... through notions of adequacy of representation, of totalization, of history."\textsuperscript{107} This leads into Derrida's critique of historicism and the importance of the ideas of telos and origin in totalizing historical schemata. These schemata raze difference and replace it with a monolithic and unified History with a single origin and telos.\textsuperscript{108}

Derrida's critique of representation dovetails with his theories on translation.\textsuperscript{109} In \textit{Positions}, Derrida discusses the opposition or difference between the signifier and the signified and argues that:

... no translation would be possible without it. In effect, the theme of a transcendental signified took shape within the horizon of an absolutely pure, transparent, and unequivocal translatability. In the limits to which it is possible, or at least \textit{appears} possible, translation practices the difference between signified and signifier. But if this difference is never pure, no more so is translation, and for the notion of translation we would have to substitute a notion of \textit{transformation} ... \textsuperscript{110}

Derrida maintains that the quest for a transcendental signified is an attempt to find a single, pure

\textsuperscript{106} Ibid., 40.

\textsuperscript{107} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{108} See ibid.

\textsuperscript{109} See ibid.

origin for philosophy. Hence, in The Ear of the Other, he speaks of "the philosophical operation" as a "project of translation". In this project:

What matters is truth or meaning, and since meaning is before or beyond language, it follows that it is translatable. Meaning has the commanding role, and consequently one must be able to fix its univocality or, in any case, to master its plurivocality. If this plurivocality can be mastered, then translation, understood as the transport of a semantic content into another signifying form, is possible. Therefore the thesis of philosophy is translatability in this common sense, that is, as the transfer of a meaning or a truth from one language to another without any essential harm being done ... The origin of philosophy is translation or the thesis of translatability, so that wherever translation in this sense has failed, it is nothing less than philosophy that finds itself defeated.¹¹¹

In "Plato's Pharmacy" he tried to illustrate this by analyzing a series of words which are "a constant challenge to philosophy." For example, the word "pharmakon" has a double meaning of either "remedy" or "poison". The meaning of "pharmakon" is therefore "undecidable". Derrida maintains that "philosophical discourse cannot master a word meaning two things at the same time and which therefore cannot be translated without an essential loss ... So pharmakon is one of the limits ... marking the limit of philosophy as translation."¹¹²

Hence, in Derrida's example of the term "pharmakon" one can see how translation is linked to the two constructions of alterity. In order to be translatable, a term must be univocal in meaning or, if plurivocal, it must be a form of alterity which is domesticatable. Therefore, to be translatable, a term must manifest the kind of alterity (plurality of meaning) that can be recuperated and incorporated into the centre. In this category, alterity is negated and obliterated. However, if a term has a double (opposed) meaning then it is untranslatable and it falls within


¹¹² Ibid. See also Niranjana, op. cit., 144.
the second category of alterity. For example, the two meanings of "pharmakon" (as "remedy" and "poison") are opposites, one the negative mirror image of the other, and, as their alterity cannot be recuperated, one remains incommensurably Other. Thus "pharmakon" is undecidable and untranslatable. Such a double meaning would interfere with the concept of translation in Western metaphysics as "... an absolutely pure, transparent, and univocal translatability."113 For Derrida, the idea of pure, transparent translation is impossible since the origin is always heterogeneous.

As Niranjana notes, the conception of translation "... that grounds Western metaphysics is the same one that presides over the beginnings of the discourse of Orientalism. Neither is prepared to acknowledge, in its humanism and universalism, the heterogeneity that contaminates 'pure meaning' from the start, occluding also the project of translation."114 As a foundation of Orientalist discourse, translation is part of the conceptual apparatus of history, anthropology and other social science disciplines.

Niranjana suggests that in the colonial context methods of representing colonized peoples present these representations as though they merely were re-presenting an 'original' people who exist 'out there' and then (through the notion of transparency) are accurately represented. Instead, she suggests, there is no such thing as transparent representation but, rather, that these methods of representation "bring into being" or construct colonized peoples in the Western imagination. These "coherent and transparent" representations brought into being by translation become "hegemonic" and "fixed," so that the colonized people appear to be "static and unchanging rather

113 Derrida, Positions, op. cit., 20.

114 Niranjana, op. cit., 55.
than historically constructed."115 While Niranjana focuses her analysis on what she calls the "colonial context" (and on India in particular), she does suggest at times that her arguments about translation are applicable to a much broader range of representational practices in Western thought with respect to non-Western Others. Thus, I would argue that these notions of representation that operate in translation can be seen at play in the work of eighteenth century writers like Montesquieu and Ferguson and also in the work of twentieth century social scientists such as Shils, Fukuyama and Gellner.116

For Niranjana, Hegel’s work provides a particularly good example of the way in which notions of translation operate in the philosophy of history. She asserts that "the Hegelian conception of history that translation helps bring into being endorses a teleological, hierarchical model of civilizations based on the ‘coming to consciousness’ of ‘Spirit,’ an event for which the non-Western cultures are unsuited or unprepared."117 This kind of historicist framework also represents the non-Western Other as static and unchanging, as natural rather than historical. Hence, "the colonial subject is constituted through a process of ‘othering’ that involves a teleological notion of history, which views the knowledge and ways of life in the colony as distorted or immature versions of what can be found in ‘normal’ or Western society."118 Niranjana concludes that this type of "deployment of translation …colludes with or enables the construction of a teleological and hierarchical model of cultures that places Europe at the

115 Ibid., 3.

116 Niranjana does mention Montesquieu as one writer who participates in these hegemonic representations of non-Western peoples, see ibid., 71.

117 Ibid., 3.

118 Ibid., 11.
pinnacle of civilization, and thus also provides a position for the colonized."\(^{119}\)

Colonial translation, Niranjana contends, also has an effect on Western metaphysics. Hence, "the concept of representation put into circulation by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century translators of non-Western texts grounds, for example, the Hegelian theory of world history."\(^{120}\) In this manner, then, Hegel’s philosophy of history "not only interpellates colonial subjects but is \textit{authorized} by colonial translations."\(^{121}\)

One way in which the concept of translation grounds Orientalist discourse is through its connection with notions of comparison and comparative method. While it was not until the late nineteenth century that attempts were made to establish a comparative "method" (or "methods"), comparison was used by writers in many different genres as a device for the description and analysis of other societies and/or as a foil for the critique of their own societies. In the ancient world, these practices can be seen at work in the writings of Thucydides and Aristotle and can also be seen in the works of seventeenth and eighteenth century writers like Locke, Hobbes, Montesquieu and Ferguson. In the nineteenth century, theorists like de Tocqueville continued to make use of comparison in these ways. Indeed, many contemporary writers employ comparison in their work without making use of any specific comparative "method". For example, Shils, Gellner and Fukuyama all use comparison in this manner.

This longstanding use of comparison has always been connected to the notion of translation. François Hartog, in his analysis of Herodotus’ work, describes the way in which

\(^{119}\) Ibid., 18.

\(^{120}\) Ibid., 25.

\(^{121}\) Ibid., 26.
writers in the ancient world employed comparison:

On the basis of the fundamental relationship established between two sets by the significant difference between them, a rhetoric of otherness may be developed, to be used by narratives that tell primarily, of 'others,' travellers' tales in the widest sense of the expression. A narrator who belongs to a group tells the people of a about b; there is one world in which one recounts, another that is recounted. How can the world in which one recounts be introduced in convincing fashion into the world where it is recounted? That is the problem facing the narrator: a problem of translation.122

Again, this notion of translation is the based on the idea of pure, transparent and univocal translation critiqued by Derrida. The representational practices derived from this idea of translation (and problematized by Niranjana) are apparent also in works which use comparison as an analytical device.

Comparative Method

During the nineteenth century, the idea of social science (a science of society based on the principles and methods of natural science) was starting to be explored. At this time, social science was referred to as the "moral sciences". It was out of these attempts to develop a universal social science that notions of comparative method arose. However, as Collini, Winch and Burrows point out, most nineteenth century theories of social science were erected on ideas and practices developed in the eighteenth century. They identify Montesquieu, Ferguson and the Scottish Enlightenment theorists of civil society as laying the foundations of the historical, sociological and comparative dimensions of nineteenth century social science.123

122 Hartog, op. cit., 212.

123 See Stefan Collini, Donald Winch and John Burrow, That Noble Science of Politics: A Study in Nineteenth-Century Intellectual History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,
As they also note, during the eighteenth century, a trend toward applying the "Newtonian or experimental method" to social scientific topics began. The late eighteenth century voyages to the South Pacific provided opportunities to apply scientific methods of observation, description, classification, and comparison to non-Western human objects. Explorers and scientists thus observed, described and even "collected" non-European peoples. These processes depended upon the Western metaphysical model of translation and the representational practices it authorizes. Hence, for example, Joseph Banks, botanist on Cook’s first voyage to the South Pacific (1768-1771) who observed and wrote about the South Pacific peoples was "...preoccupied ... with domesticating difference by caging it within a general taxonomic grid". This domestication of difference allowed Europeans to construct non-Western Others as primitive ancestors of Europeans (analogous to Greeks or Romans) and to classify and arrange them in historical developmental sequences. These stadial sequences were further developed in the nineteenth century and are apparent in the historical stages of Hegel’s philosophy of history.

However, despite the opportunities for the study of "primitive" peoples afforded by voyages of exploration, in the moral sciences there were not many situations in which controlled experimentation could be employed. Therefore, it was necessary, as Hume put it, to "glean up our experiments in this science from a cautious observation of human life, and take them as they appear in the common course of the world, by men’s behaviour in company, in affairs, and in


their pleasures." It was this study of human nature, expounded in the eighteenth century, that provided a new and contrasting method to the previously employed technique of historical analysis.

Thus, as Collini, Winch and Burrow contend, by the nineteenth century there were two "basic approaches" for the application of the methods of science to moral subjects, "... one emphasising the lessons or maxims that could be drawn, more or less systematically, from historical evidence, the other concentrating on those constant 'springs' of human nature, those psychological propensities that seemed not to vary greatly across time and place." The use of both these approaches in tandem was the preferred method of most eighteenth century writers. Nevertheless, during the eighteenth century there was "an unresolved tension between the claims of, on the one hand, proceeding deductively from the laws of human nature, and, on the other, arguing inductively from the evidence of the historical record ..." which kept coming up in nineteenth-century attempts to establish a social science and can be seen in John Stuart Mill's endeavour of trying to "transmute this divided inheritance into a still more ambitious synthesis."

As I noted at the outset of this chapter, Mill is credited by many practitioners of contemporary social science with originating what is today called the comparative method. In addition, in his own day, Mill's work on the "nature and methods of 'science', in the broadest

127 Ibid., 21.
sense, attained an authority in England that was positively papal..."128 For these reasons, then, his work requires some examination. In Book VI of his *A System of Logic*, Mill presents his arguments "On the Logic of the Moral Sciences". Here he asserts that "the methods of investigation applicable to moral and social science" are "those of science in general."129 His purpose, then, is to discuss which of the methods of natural science is most appropriate for the different kinds of moral/social science, any problems these might entail, and to explain why previous efforts at social inquiry have been unsatisfactory.

Underlying Mill's theories concerning the moral sciences was "ethology" (the science of character) which involved the study of how both individual and national "character" are formed. The use of national character as an explanatory concept can be seen in Mill's distinctions between Europeans and non-Western Others in *On Liberty* and *Considerations on Representative Government* discussed above. His views concerning ethology are somewhat paradoxical, however, since he propounded his belief in universal laws of human nature at the same time as arguing that human character was variable.130 This type of ambiguity or ambivalence also characterizes his attitude towards the use of inductive and deductive method.

Mill begins his analysis of the appropriateness of deductive and inductive methods in social science by stating that prior works on social science are characterized by the employment of either of two "erroneous" methods: the experimental/chemical method and the abstract/geometrical method. The chemical method is subdivided into several different methods.

128 Ibid., 130.


These are the Method of Difference which involves two cases "which tally in every particular except the one which is the subject of inquiry", the Indirect Method of Difference which "compares two classes of instances respectively agreeing in nothing but the presence of a circumstance on the one side and its absence on the other," and the Method of Agreement in which "if two or more instances of a phenomenon under investigation have only one of several possible causal circumstances in common, then the circumstances in which all instances agree is the cause of the phenomenon of interest." Mill found problems with the use of all these methods in the social sciences. Ironically, despite Mill's rejection of these methods for use in the social sciences, the methods of difference and agreement were adopted as the comparative method in contemporary social science and attributed to Mill.

Once the chemical method is rejected, Mill moves on to reject the Geometrical/Abstract Method and then to outline the "true" method for the social sciences, the Physical or Concrete Deductive Method. This method "proceeds ... by deduction from many, not from one or a very few, original premises; considering each effect as (what it really is) an aggregate result of many causes, operating sometimes through the same, sometimes through different mental agencies, or laws of human nature." Here he gives primacy to a deductive method based on the laws of human nature. However, while Mill was still prepared to acknowledge that the study of history (an inductive method) has a role to play in the moral sciences, it was not always clear what that

133 Mill, op. cit., 894.
role was or what its relation was to the laws of human nature.\footnote{34}

Collini, Winch and Burrow suggest that Mill's ambivalence toward the role of history was most apparent in his reaction to the Comparative and Historical Method which arose in the latter half of the nineteenth century. While most of the practitioners of this approach considered Mill to have disregarded the significance of history, in reality he revered the work of the initiator of this approach, that is, Maine's \textit{Ancient Law} (1861). Maine's Comparative/Historical Method was influenced by German historicism, positivism, comparative philology as practised at Oxford by Max Müller, historical jurisprudence and the history of institutions.\footnote{135} This comparative method, however, was of rather limited application. The influence of philology lead to the limitation of the comparative model to the idea of a single Aryan family. Thus the Comparative Method (as practiced by Maine and his followers) was concerned with the study of the "story of the progressive nations of the Aryan family" and this story often was juxtaposed to the stagnation of Oriental despotism.\footnote{136} The Comparative/Historical method of Maine differs from another kind of comparative method that also was developing in the nineteenth century, namely, the "wider and looser employment of ethnographic comparison which was increasingly identified with 'Anthropology'... [and] ... associated with Tylor and Frazer."\footnote{137}

Marcus and Fischer note that the type of ethnology produced by nineteenth-century anthropologists like Tylor and Frazer differs from that of contemporary anthropologists. Thus

\footnotetext[34]{See Collini, et al, op. cit., 143.}
\footnotetext[135]{See ibid., 210-211.}
\footnotetext[136]{Ibid., 217.}
\footnotetext[137]{Ibid., 212.}
their work was produced in "an era imbued with a pervasive ideology of social progress, it was
dominated by hopes for a general science of Man, for discovering social laws in the long
evolution toward ever higher standards of rationality." 138 Writers like Frazer, Tylor, and
Durkheim searched for "the origins of modern institutions, rituals, customs, and habits of thought
through the contrasts of evolutionary stages in the development of human society. Material on
contemporaneous 'savage,' or 'primitive,' peoples served them as living cultural analogies with
the past. theirs was an era of 'armchair' ethnology." 139 Their work, for the most part, was
based on descriptions of these peoples by travellers, missionaries or colonial officials, rather than
on their own firsthand accounts. 140

The early twentieth century saw the transition to a new approach in anthropology. As
Marcus and Fischer put it, there was a shift in focus which "made a distinctive kind of method
the center of social and cultural anthropology in its new disciplinary placement as a social science
... This distinctive method was ethnography." 141 Ethnography is defined as "a research process
in which the anthropologist closely observes, records, and engages in the daily life of another
culture - an experience labelled as the fieldwork method - and then writes accounts of this culture
..." 142 Marcus and Fischer argue that ethnography has two "justifications", namely, "the

138 George E. Marcus and Michael M.J. Fischer, Anthropology as Cultural Critique: An
Experimental Moment in the Human Sciences (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986),
17.

139 Ibid.

140 See ibid.

141 Ibid., 18.

142 Ibid.
capturing of cultural diversity … in the now uncertain tradition of anthropology’s nineteenth-century project” and "a cultural critique of ourselves". They choose to explore each of these justifications in turn by examining the development of ethnography as a "genre of writing".

While "the genre conventions that have embodied ethnographic writing have incorporated much of the generalist orientation of anthropology’s nineteenth century project … the generalist ambitions of social and cultural anthropology were redrawn within the practice of ethnography in two ways.” First, contemporary anthropologists focused on ‘holism’ (i.e. "represent[ing] a particular way of life as fully as possible") rather than on formulating universal or global claims as their nineteenth-century colleagues did. Second, the mode of comparison subtly shifted. As Marcus and Fischer put it:

... the comparative dimension of anthropology’s global vision was no longer framed by an evolutionary scheme or oriented to the measurement of relative progress toward ‘rational’ values, though comparison has remained embedded in the rhetoric of any ethnographic text. The undeveloped, relatively implicit side of ethnographic description focused on a cultural other is the reference it makes to the presumed, mutually familiar world shared by the writer and his readers. One of the key contemporary justifications for anthropological knowledge has derived from this us-them, comparative side of ethnography ...

Hence, although twentieth-century ethnographic works may have dispensed with the nineteenth-century fascination with the origins and driving forces of human progress and shed the crude evolutionist sequences, they typically still retain the idea of self/other comparison and its

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143 Ibid., 20.

144 Ibid., 22.

145 Ibid., 22.

146 Ibid., 23.
concomitant notion of translation. The nineteenth century legacy can be seen clearly in the way in which ethnographic texts deal with the concept of time.

Marcus and Fischer observe that twentieth-century ethnographic texts which situate their "accounts in a timeless present" often are faulted for displaying a "synchronic bias" and for ignoring history and social change. Ironically, however, these ethnographic texts are not really synchronic. This is so because "there is a gap between the contemporaneity of fieldwork, during which the ethnographer and his subjects share the same immediate present, and the way these same subjects are temporally distanced from the back-home world of the ethnographer in his account derived from field research."

Johannes Fabian calls this the "denial of coevalness" and makes it the central argument of his treatise on the role of time in anthropology. He argues that the historicist developmental sequences of nineteenth-century anthropology are based on a concept of time which is really spatialized. Non-Western Others are constructed through notions of distance both temporal and spatial. Thus "those furthest from the centers of civilization belong to the more primitive/earlier stages of culture, mentality, and social organization." This idea of "difference as distance" was integral to the development of comparative method in nineteenth-century anthropology. Thus, "radical naturalization of Time (i.e., its radical dehistorization) was of course central to the most celebrated scientific achievement of that period, the comparative method, that

148 See Niranjana, op. cit., 95.
149 Ibid., 96.
150 Ibid., 97.
omnivorous intellectual machine permitting the ‘equal’ treatment of human culture at all times and in all places.”\footnote{151} Fabian charges that “the enthusiasm and euphoria generated by this new toy made it easy to overlook that, while the data fed into the machine might have been selected with positivist neutrality and detachment, its products - the evolutionary sequences were anything but historically or politically neutral.”\footnote{152} Hence, while these evolutionary sequences might appear to operate on the construction of alterity as domesticatable and able to be brought within Western Reason and colonial modernity (through notions of progress and the discourse of improvement), in fact, they depend upon the construction of alterity as incommensurable and irrecuperable. As Fabian puts it:

... evolutionary sequences and their concomitant political practice of colonialism and imperialism may look incorporative; after all, they create a universal frame of reference able to accommodate all societies. But being based on the episteme of natural history, they are founded on distancing and separation. There would be no raison d’être for the comparative method if it was not the classification of entities or traits which first have to be separate and distinct before their similarities can be used to establish taxonomies and developmental sequences.\footnote{153}

Fabian contends that while evolutionist beliefs were rejected by twentieth-century ethnographers, the evolutionist notion of time has continued to be employed. Hence, the anthropological paradigms which emerged after the rejection of the evolutionist paradigm, such as functionalism and structuralism (and structural-functionahsm), still used time spatially to separate and distance their objects from their own societies.\footnote{154} Therefore, although twentieth-century anthropological


\footnote{152} Ibid., 17.

\footnote{153} Ibid., 26-27.

\footnote{154} See ibid., 20.
comparison may have dropped overt evolutionist sequences, its retention of the nineteenth-century notion of time and its "denial of coevalness," means that its use of comparison is still rooted in the Western metaphysical idea of translation and the representational practices it authorizes.

Marcus and Fischer note that from the 1930s 'functionalism' became the dominant paradigm in Western ethnography. They describe it as "... essentially a theory for thinking about field materials and organizing ethnographic accounts; it was a strain in European social theory that was domesticated for what had become the specific descriptive and comparative purposes of anthropology." However, functionalism was not limited to anthropology and became one of the predominant paradigms of the social sciences in general. Similarly, structuralism also became an important theoretical base for conducting ethnographic research, attempting "to describe culture as a system of differences, wherein the meaning of any unit is defined through a system of contrasts with other units."

Both structuralism and functionalism were employed by comparative political scientists in the 1950s and 1960s (more commonly known as modernization and developmentalist theorists) who were notorious for their appropriative raids into the theoretical storehouses of anthropology and sociology. Ironically, as Huntington notes, comparativists in political science tended to vigorously embrace the theories of other disciplines at the very moment they were being

155 Marcus and Fischer, op. cit., 19.
156 Ibid., 28.
debunked by the disciplines from whence they came. This was true in the case of structural-functionalism.\textsuperscript{158}

Marcus and Fischer's second "justification" for ethnographic research is cultural critique of the author's society/culture. They argue that the evolutionary sequences in the comparative method of nineteenth-century ethnography played a somewhat positive role with respect to cultural critique, arguing that "... this form of comparative method played a profound role in nineteenth-century battles to establish a secular-scientific outlook, to argue for the malleability, and thus reformability, of society, and finally to initiate the modern sense of tolerant pluralism."\textsuperscript{159} Although, this might seem to imply a positive legacy for twentieth-century ethnography, in reality, these evolutionary forms of comparative method bequeathed a largely negative inheritance to contemporary theorists. As Marcus and Fischer observe:

It seems intuitively obvious that evolutionary schemes provide poor platforms from which to critique societies that are conceded to be the most evolved. Despite the examples drawn from other societies, such critique remains ad hoc, fragmentary, and nostalgic; the subliminal message tends to be affirming of the basic superiority of modern European or American society. This legacy of evolutionism remains a firmly embedded part of popular contemporary thought: the continua of modernization or development ... draw upon the Victorian doctrine of progress, and reinforce American or European self-congratulatory complacency.\textsuperscript{160}

Consequently, notions of comparison and comparative method in anthropology/ethnography, and social science in general, are inextricably bound up with the idea of translation and the representational practices it authorizes.


\textsuperscript{159} Marcus and Fischer, op. cit., 128.

\textsuperscript{160} Ibid., 129.
Niranjana demonstrates how the kind of intercultural translation produced in ethnographic work relies on the Western metaphysical concept of translation. She does this by way of Derrida’s well-known statement about ethnology in "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences":

One can assume that ethnology could have been born as a science only at the moment when a decentering had come about: at the moment when European culture - and, in consequence, the history of metaphysics and its concepts - had been dislocated, driven from its locus, and forced to stop considering itself as the culture of reference ... [Ethnology] is primarily a European science employing traditional concepts, however much it may struggle against them. Consequently, whether he wants to or not - and this does not depend on a decision on his part - - the ethnologist accepts into his discourse the premises of ethnocentrism at the very moment he denounces them. This necessity is irreducible.\footnote{161}

This paradoxical situation occurs since anthropology relies on the Western metaphysical idea of representation as the re-presentation of an ‘original’ ‘out there’ and on "notions of translation, representation, and reality that in turn show its complicity with the vocabulary of liberal humanism or empiricist idealism".\footnote{162} Ethnology, then, through its relation to Western metaphysics remains ethnocentric and logocentric.

Niranjana contends that while Derrida acknowledges some of the effects on the discipline of anthropology of the acceptance into its discourse of the "premises of ethnocentrism at the very moment" when it is also denounced, he does not recognize "the discourse’s deliberate as well as unwitting complicities in the power relations of colonial administration ..."\footnote{163} She goes on


\footnote{162} Niranjana, op. cit., 65.

\footnote{163} Ibid., 68.
to show how anthropological research provided large amounts of detailed information which enabled missionaries, traders and colonial administrators to "know" and, thereby, more effectively control their colonial subjects. Far from being a "disinterested science," then, ethnography was allied to and deeply complicit with the colonial project.

Conclusion to Part III

The naming of this complicity brings me back to the questions that I suggested at the beginning of this chapter were the really interesting (and important) issues of comparison: Why compare? What is the purpose behind it? To what project is it put to work? Niranjana's citation of the complicity of the concept of translation (in ethnography in particular) with colonialism is not limited to ethnography or to the nineteenth century. Many disciplines that employ notions of comparison and translation are also complicit with colonial and neocolonial projects. Indeed, it is not difficult to show that the social sciences as they emerged in the West were complicit with projects of imperialism and colonialism. For example, in Foucault's notion of discourse "the knowledge which a discourse produces constitutes a kind of power, exercised over those who are 'known'. When that knowledge is exercised in practice, those who are 'known' in a particular way will be subject (i.e. subjected) to it." This "subjectification" through knowing may occur in different ways. Timothy Mitchell shows the way in which British colonial power came to

164 See ibid., 72.

165 For a detailed discussion of Foucault's ideas of power/knowledge and governmentality in the colonial context, see Timothy Mitchell, Colonizing Egypt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988).

"know" its Egyptian subjects through devices such as the census and how this knowledge then was used to control them through the disciplinary technologies of the education system, the army, etc. In addition, in Orientalism, Said illustrates the way in which "orientalism" not only constructed "the Orient" as the West's irrational Other and thereby justified ex post facto colonial rule, but also prefigured colonialism and imperialism by providing an a priori justification for them. In Culture and Imperialism, Said explores the relations between culture and empire and the way in which cultural discourses have justified and shored-up imperial projects.

However, while focusing on the way in which the social sciences as they emerged in the West are complicit with the practice and implementation of colonialism and imperialism (as Niranjana does) is an important project, it is also limited. It is limited because it always places colonialism in the past and implies that it is over and that we may wash our hands of it. Yet, while few colonies now exist in the post-World War II era, the colonial power of 'knowing' its "subject" is not in the past, and is reinscribed today in the activities of modern Western governments and in the complicity of practitioners in the social sciences. For example, the reinscription of these practices may be seen in the study of comparative politics in the post-War era.

Following World War II, the United States became the self-appointed leader of the 'free world', an era "... in which the problems of containing the Soviet Union and dealing with national liberation movements throughout much of Asia and Africa were the country's top

167 See Mitchell, op. cit.

168 See Gregory, op. cit., 170-171.

foreign policy priorities." World War II ended American isolationism which "made Americans aware of the need to study and understand foreign nations" and also aware of how little they knew about them. Commenting on the effects of the War on the study of comparative politics, Karl Loewenstein declared that:

the knowledge of foreign political institutions and ideologies has become of paramount importance. Comparative government has been transformed from a Cinderella-like academic discipline into a political instrumentality of the most immediate potency ... Comparative government has ceased to be merely l'art pour l'art. It is forced to reorient itself in line with the technological development which is about to weld the world together into a closer union of peoples, if not states. Hence, Loewenstein claims, "it is essential to be informed on the political habitat of other nations" or as Gabriel Almond (one of the preeminent modernization theorists of the post-War era) remarked in 1960, "... practical policy motives have forced the modern political scientist to concern himself with the whole scope of political systems which exist in the modern world." In Orientalism, Said demonstrates how these considerations led to the reinscription of orientalist discourses in much of the work in twentieth-century social science.

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170 Tony Smith, "Requiem or New Agenda for Third World Studies?", World Politics 37, no.4 (July 1985), 533.


173 Ibid.


In another register, Robert Young comments on the ethnocentrism of Foucault’s work and the "absence of explicit discussions of colonialism" in it. He argues that "again and again the paradox of Foucault’s work is that his analyses seem particularly appropriate to the colonial arena, and yet colonialism itself does not figure". As Young suggests, then "Foucault's own domains of reference remain resolutely fixed within the western world ..."). Hence, both focusing on colonialism as if it were something in the past or simply ignoring it, are sure ways to bring it out of the past and reinscribe it. As Mieke Bal remarks, "an unproblematic emphasis on the difference of the colonial past is a sure way to keep it alive in an unacknowledged present.

Therefore, "focusing attention on the presence of the colonial imagination in today’s postcolonial society is not a gesture of ahistoricism - on the contrary. Problematizing historical distance and analyzing the ways streams of the past still infuse the present make historical inquiry meaningful." In Part III of this thesis, and indeed in the whole of this thesis, I have tried to do exactly this in reflecting on questions of comparison. The arguments I have presented throughout this study have been comparative and historical and I have tried to demonstrate how these ideas, theories and tropes of "the past still infuse the present". Hence, the past is not behind us, it is reinscribed in the present.

177 Ibid.
178 Mieke Bal, "The Politics of Citation," Diacritics 21, no.1 (Spring 1991), 44.
179 Ibid., 34.
CONCLUSION

The developed world shows to the less developed the mirror of its own future.

Karl Marx, Preface to Capital.

In this study I set out to accomplish several tasks. First and foremost, I set out to address a significant gap in the large contemporary literature on civil society. As Bryan Turner remarks, while there has been much written in the last few years on civil society, "the fact that it has been part of the Orientalist construct of East and West has been seriously neglected".1 This study is a modest initial contribution which goes some way toward filling this lacuna. It is of necessity a selective and strategic contribution. Since the literature on civil society is extremely large, I could not follow what Said calls an "encyclopedic narrative" approach as it would have been impossible to consult all of this work in a project of this size. Nor would this have been a productive approach since it tends to produce work which is descriptive rather than analytical in character. Consequently, I had to be selective in the choice of materials and authors for analysis. In addressing this gap in the literature, then, I examined Western concepts of civil society and established the ways in which these concepts are constructed through the deployment of a mirroring construction of non-Western Others.

In Part I of this study, I selected the work of three authors (Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel) who wrote during the Enlightenment or in its immediate aftermath on civil society. I

decided to begin my analysis here because, as I demonstrated in Part I, both constructions of the concept of civil society and of non-Western Others were undergoing significant changes in this period leading eventually to a concept of civil society which took account of modern life and of what I called the "post-Enlightenment geographical imagination".

In Part II of this study, I selected the work of three late twentieth-century social scientists (Shils, Gellner and Fukuyama) and discussed how they conceptualize civil society and how they deploy mirroring constructions of non-Western Others. In addition, I aimed to present the continuities and points of disjuncture between these theorists and those discussed in Part I, in order to establish that twentieth-century work on civil society has been informed both by the concept of civil society developed in the Enlightenment and its aftermath and by the post-Enlightenment geographical imagination’s mirroring constructions of non-Western Others. In Part III of this study, I raised broad questions pertaining to comparison and representation and then used this discussion to reflect back upon the discussions in Parts I and II of the thesis.

In each Part of the thesis, I set out to accomplish specific tasks. The task of Part I of this study was to demonstrate that a discontinuity or rupture with respect to the concept of civil society began to occur during the eighteenth century. The beginning of this rupture was evidenced in Montesquieu’s work, continued in Ferguson’s and was most fully realized in Hegel’s concept of civil society. Hence, the eighteenth century marked the commencement of a discursive break or conceptual shift in the concept of civil society expressed in the conceptual separation of civil society and the state. To establish this break or conceptual shift the work of Hobbes and Locke on civil society was contrasted with that of Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel. From this discussion, conclusions were drawn regarding two major themes: one relating
to the concept of civil society, and the other to what was termed the post-Enlightenment geographical imagination. In both cases, the work of Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel formed a relation of "anticipation to realization".

The disjuncture with prior concepts of civil society that began in the eighteenth century was evident in several points of contrast with the theories of seventeenth-century authors. Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel all rejected the state of nature and the social contract as starting points for political theory. Instead, they considered man to be born in society and to remain there. In rejecting these concepts they began to also reject the identification of civil society with political society evident in Hobbes' and Locke's work. Through their discussion of the modern market economy and its relation to ancient models of civic virtue and ethical life, they also began to diverge from the classical notion of civil society as political society. This represented a break with the classical dyadic model of polis (civil/political society) and oikos (domestic/economic society). The disjuncture was most fully realized in Hegel's notion of civil society as a realm of (individual, self-interested) economic activity tempered by public intervention. Hence, each writer attempted to reevaluate the received classical models of civic virtue and revise them to take account of the modern European economy. However, each writer expressed some ambivalence towards modern commerce and its effects on (civil) society. While commerce was perceived in general to be a civilizing and progressive force, its potential for social diremption and the weakening of communal association were of concern to each author.

In rejecting the ideas of a state of nature and a social contract, Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel each adopted instead their own versions of a stadial theory of human development. They all perceived man to be progressive. Montesquieu and Ferguson presented versions of the
"four stages" theory of human development which saw mankind moving in increments from a primitive, rude state (represented by contemporary non-Europeans, especially the American Indians) to a refined, civilized state (represented by contemporary Europeans). Hegel also viewed man as progressing in stages but each stage was linked to the development of self-consciousness and reason rather than to the mode of subsistence.

However, all three writers associated forms of government with spatial and temporal locations that also corresponded to stages of human development. Montesquieu's typology of democracy, monarchy and despotism was adopted and the forms of government were associated respectively with the ancient world, contemporary Europe, and the contemporary non-European world. Similarly, Montesquieu's distinction between monarchies and despotisms (with its notion of corps intermédiaires which was important for the development of a concept of civil society separate from the state) was adopted by Ferguson and this idea of intermediate bodies was echoed in Hegel's notion of the corporations.

In the development of a concept of civil society as separate from political society or the state, each writer deployed a mirroring construction of non-Europeans. Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel all used non-Europeans as points of contrast with Europeans with respect to civil society, suggesting that non-Europeans were uncivilized and therefore did not have civil societies. Their conception of civil society was confined to Europe. This was epitomized in Hegel's statement that "the creation of civil society is the achievement of the modern world". These mirroring constructions of non-European Others also played an important role in the development of the post-Enlightenment geographical imagination.

While seventeenth-century writers like Hobbes and Locke largely confined their use of
non-Western comparative material to illustrations drawn from works on the American Indians, eighteenth-century writers like Montesquieu and Ferguson drew on a much wider range of comparative material. This was due in part to the exploration of different geographic areas in the eighteenth century (e.g., the Pacific voyages) and to changes in the practice of natural history with the introduction of new scientific techniques and epistemologies. The use of comparative material by Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel was also much more sophisticated and complexly figured than that presented by prior authors. They all were concerned with the effects of geography on human development. Geographic variables such as typography and climate were examined to ascertain their effects on the mode of subsistence, character, and differences in cultures. The effects of climate were of particular importance to each author and climatic variables were used to explain differences between cultures and to ground typologies of static (non-European) peoples and progressive (European) peoples.

The characteristics of different societies derived from geographical analysis were used in turn to divide the world into spatial and temporal locations which corresponded with different societies and stages in human history. Each location was part of a stadial theory of human development and was associated with a particular form of government. These developmental sequences culminated in contemporary Europe and the (modern) idea of civil society. Again, a relation of anticipation to realization can be discerned in the work of Montesquieu, Ferguson and Hegel. Montesquieu’s discussions of geographic factors such as climate and his spatially and temporally located typology of types of government, were followed by Ferguson, and were refined and developed by Hegel as part of his quadratic typology of world history.

The task of Part II of this study was to analyze the way in which the post-Enlightenment
concept of civil society and geographical imagination identified in Part I have informed the work of twentieth-century writers on civil society. In order to identify points of continuity and disjuncture between the two, Said's notion of travelling theory was added to the theoretical framework of this study. A critical exegesis was presented of Hegel's legacy for twentieth-century Western social science as a prelude to tracing the effects of this legacy on Shils, Gellner, and Fukuyama. I identified two main points of continuity between the twentieth-century authors and the prior discursive formation, namely, the use of a universal historical narrative and the construction of a complementary opposite or Other.

Like their predecessors, Shils, Fukuyama and Gellner staged their theories on a world historical canvas. This was not in all cases their explicit intention but was implied by the way in which they located their subject matter against a global and historical backdrop. This was evident, for example, in the way each writer figured difference and in the allied implicitly stadial approach that each of them adopted. Each assumed that societies pass through some series of developmental stages and that the West represents the final stage which others are striving towards. This can be seen clearly in their periodization and location of civil society: the contemporary West is the model of civil society, others strive to achieve it.

Their formulation of civil society in this manner raised several problems. Each writer began with the West as (an often unstated) model of civil society. They established the characteristics of and criteria for civil society by examining the social and political configuration of Western society (usually the United States) and then equated the Western model of liberal democracy with civil society. After cataloguing the features of civil society, they extrapolated backwards from the West and found that the non-West (both Eastern Europe and the Third
Shils, Gellner and Fukuyama each referred to one of the theorists in the prior formation as being of particular importance for their own work. Thus, Shils drew primarily on Montesquieu, Gellner relied most on Ferguson, and Fukuyama adopted Hegel’s theoretical formulations. In so doing, each situated himself in some manner in a continuous relationship with the preceding formation and engaged in a dialogue with it. While this was probably unintentional on the authors’ part, it provided continuity at the conceptual level between the two discursive formations. In addition, while each of the three contemporary writers saw himself as having a singular affinity with one or other of the earlier theorists, their more obvious collective intellectual debt was to Hegel.

The uncritical appropriation of ideas, theories or concepts from the prior discursive formation by Shils, Gellner and Fukuyama illustrated the matters problematized by Said’s notion of travelling theory. Each author neglected the situatedness of theory both in terms of the effects of the context in which it is produced on the theory itself, and, in terms of the universality or generality of its claims which sought to transcend and erase specificities. In addition, they did not acknowledge the assumptions produced at different sites that travel along with theories. Here I raised again the question posed by Foucault (quoted in Chapter One) of whether a concept developed in the eighteenth century, and in that century’s specific context, can be transferred and applied unproblematically hundreds of years later and in quite different contexts from the sites of its production.

The task of Part III of this study was to examine questions of comparison and representation and to then use this analysis to reflect back upon the discussions in Parts I and II.
Specifically, I examined two conceptions of alterity in Western philosophy which are connected to notions of comparison. Then I demonstrated how these conceptions of alterity have operated in the work of Hegel and John Stuart Mill. It was important to analyze Hegel’s work here, since, as I have shown, his work is significant for contemporary formulations of alterity, civil society, and general systems of thought in contemporary social science. It was also important to analyze Mill’s work in this context because he is identified frequently (though erroneously) as the progenitor of the "comparative method" in the social sciences. Jacques Derrida’s work was highlighted here and shown to be of central importance to the analytical tasks undertaken in this part of the study. Here I also established that the notion of translation is connected to ideas of comparison and comparative method in Western social science and argued that this has important conclusions for work undertaken in the social sciences. Finally, I used the discussion in this part of the study to reflect back on the discussions of civil society and the mirroring constructions of non-Western Others in Parts I and II of the thesis. Here I argued that notions of comparison and the representational practices they authorize undergird the works analyzed in the first two parts of the study with important conditioning effects for the way in which mirroring constructions are used in the construction of civil society.

The study undertaken here has gone some way towards addressing the gap in the contemporary literature identified by Turner. However it is, by necessity, only a selective and partial contribution. Consequently, several additional matters still await future investigation. In this study, I raised briefly some matters which might fruitfully be pursued in future research. For example, Foucault’s work on governmentality and its relation to civil society was only briefly outlined here and warrants a more in depth investigation. This could well be followed up in
relation to eighteenth century authors like Ferguson and other writers of the Scottish Enlightenment as a means to analyze their concepts of civil society in the context of emerging liberal strategies for dealing with the problem of how to govern a society reconfigured by the burgeoning market economy.

In making a study of this kind, I was limited in the number of authors I could analyze in any depth. Consequently, there are still many important theorists of civil society whose work could well be analyzed along similar lines to those presented in this thesis. For example, the writers of the Scottish Enlightenment (e.g., Smith, Steuart, Hume, etc.) would make good candidates for such an analysis. Similarly, theorists such as Marx and de Tocqueville might be investigated to see how their conceptions of civil society were effected by their constructions of non-Western Others. With the growing literature in the late twentieth century on civil society, contemporary authors, other than those I selected for examination, could also be reviewed. However, these are all projects which await future investigation.


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