

*new dictionary of the* history of ideas

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volume 5

Physics to Syncretism



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**Maryanne Cline Horowitz, Editor in Chief**

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# READER'S GUIDE

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*This Reader's Guide was compiled by the editors to provide a systematic outline of the contents of the New Dictionary of the History of Ideas, thereby offering teachers, scholars, and the general reader a way to organize their reading according to their preferences. The Reader's Guide is divided into four sections: Communication of Ideas, Geographical Areas, Chronological Periods, and Liberal Arts Disciplines and Professions, as indicated in the outline below.*

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### Communication Media

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### Sciences

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## COMMUNICATION OF IDEAS

This category is the newest aspect of the *New Dictionary of the History of Ideas*; cultural studies, communications studies, and cultural history are moving the disciplines in this direction.

### Introduction to History of Communication of Ideas

The following entries focus on the media humans have used to communicate with one another.

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Architecture: Asia  
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Theater and Performance  
Third Cinema  
Totems  
Tradition  
Translation  
Virtual Reality  
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### Communication Media

This is a listing of the types of historical evidence the author used in writing the entry. While entries in the original Dictionary of the History of Ideas were to a great extent the history of texts, the entries in the New Dictionary of the History of Ideas are generally the cultural history of ideas, making use of the records of oral communication, visual communication, and communication through practices, as well as the history of texts, in order to show the impact of the idea on a wide variety of people.

### ORAL

The selective list below contains the entries that give the most coverage to historical examples of the oral transmission and transformation of ideas.

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Americanization, U.S.  
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#### VISUAL

Each of the following entries in the *NDHI* either evocatively describes ideas, includes a visual image of an idea, or provides historical examples of societies visually transmitting and transforming ideas.

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 Aesthetics: Asia  
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Most of the entries in the *NDHI* discuss how specific societies habituated people to specific ideas. This selective list includes the entries on schools of thought and practice, religions, and political movements, as well as the entries on distinctive practices.

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Westernization: Southeast Asia  
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Zionism

## TEXTUAL

Every entry in the *New Dictionary of the History of Ideas* used texts. The following is a list of entries that focused mainly on the history of a succession of texts. Each academic discipline has a succession of major authors with whom later practitioners of the discipline build upon and respond to creatively. The historian of a discipline—such as the history of political philosophy, literary history, or the history of science—considers the responses of thinkers and practitioners of a discipline to the major earlier texts in the discipline. In tracing the origin, development, and transformation of an idea, the historian of ideas considers thinkers' responses to texts from a variety of disciplines.

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 Mysticism: Christian Mysticism  
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 Philosophy, Moral: Medieval and Renaissance  
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 Philosophy of Mind: Ancient and Medieval  
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 Poetry and Poetics  
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 Reading

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 Structuralism and Poststructuralism: Anthropology  
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**Global Entries**

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 Bilingualism and Multilingualism  
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 Feminism: Overview  
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 Historiography  
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 Identity, Multiple: Jewish Multiple Identity  
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 Islam: Sunni  
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 Maps and the Ideas They Express  
 Marxism: Overview  
 Mathematics  
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 Migration: Migration in World History  
 Migration: United States  
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 Music, Anthropology of

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Empire and Imperialism: Asia  
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Equality: Overview  
Equality: Gender Equality  
Equality: Racial Equality  
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Feminism: Africa and African Diaspora  
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- Genius  
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### Africa

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 Capitalism: Overview  
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 Colonialism: Africa  
 Colonialism: Latin America  
 Colonialism: Southeast Asia  
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**Middle East**

ENTRIES FOCUSING ON THE MIDDLE EAST

Alchemy: Europe and the Middle East  
 Anticolonialism: Middle East  
 Civil Society: Responses in Africa and the Middle East  
 Communication of Ideas: Middle East and Abroad  
 Death and Afterlife, Islamic Understanding of

Dialogue and Dialectics: Talmudic  
 Education: Islamic Education  
 Empire and Imperialism: Middle East  
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 Gender: Gender in the Middle East  
 Honor, Middle Eastern Notions of  
 Humanism: Europe and the Middle East  
 Intercession in Middle Eastern Society  
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 Judaism: Judaism to 1800  
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 Medicine: Islamic Medicine  
 Monarchy: Islamic Monarchy  
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 Pan-Islamism  
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**North America**

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 Feminism: Third World U.S. Movement  
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 Race and Racism: United States  
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## CHRONOLOGICAL PERIODS

This section is divided according to five periods in world history: Ancient, Dynastic, Early Modern, Modern, and Contemporary. Use this section together with the section on Geographical Areas.

### Ancient (before 400 C.E.)

#### ENTRIES FOCUSED ON THE PERIOD

Buddhism  
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Gnosticism  
Greek Science  
Hinduism  
Justice: Justice in East Asian Thought  
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Orthopraxy: Asia  
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Poetry and Poetics  
Sacred Places  
Sacred Texts: Asia  
Sophists, The  
Textiles and Fiber Arts as Catalysts for Ideas  
Time: China  
Time: India  
Yin and Yang

#### ENTRIES WITH EXAMPLES FROM BEFORE 400 C.E.

Generally the examples in this category are from the ancient Middle East, Europe, or Asia.

Aesthetics: Asia  
Aesthetics: Europe and the Americas  
Africa, Idea of  
Alchemy: China  
Alchemy: Europe and the Middle East  
Algebras  
Ambiguity  
Anarchism  
Anthropology  
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Architecture: Overview

- Architecture: Africa  
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 Untouchability: Menstrual Taboos

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**Dynastic (400 C.E.–1400 C.E.)**

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 Dialogue and Dialectics: Talmudic  
 Feudalism, European  
 Heresy and Apostasy  
 Motif: Motif in Literature  
 Orthopraxy: Western Orthopraxy  
 Sacred Places  
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 Textiles and Fiber Arts as Catalysts for Ideas

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 Protest, Political  
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 Reform: Islamic Reform  
 Religion: Africa  
 Religion: East and Southeast Asia  
 Religion: Middle East  
 Religion and the State: Europe  
 Religion and the State: Middle East  
 Religion and the State: United States Renaissance  
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 Ritual: Public Ritual  
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 Sufism  
 Suicide  
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 Travel: Travel from Europe and the Middle East  
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 Virtue Ethics  
 Visual Order to Organizing Collections  
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 War and Peace in the Arts  
 Wealth  
 Women's History: Asia  
 Work  
 Yoga  
 Zen

**Early Modern (1400–1800 C.E.)**

ENTRIES FOCUSED ON THE PERIOD

Astronomy, Pre-Columbian and Latin American  
 Cartesianism  
 Casuistry  
 Empiricism  
 Humanism: Renaissance  
 Idealism  
 Identity: Identity of Persons  
 Kantianism  
 Materialism in Eighteenth-Century European Thought  
 Mechanical Philosophy  
 Moral Sense  
 Naturphilosophie  
 Newtonianism  
 Phrenology  
 Protest, Political  
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 Renaissance  
 Scientific Revolution  
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 Time: Traditional and Utilitarian  
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ENTRIES WITH EXAMPLES FROM THE PERIOD

1400–1800 C.E.  
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 Alchemy: Europe and the Middle East  
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 Ambiguity  
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 Anticolonialism: Latin America  
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 Anti-Semitism: Overview  
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 Architecture: Overview

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### Modern (1800–1945)

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Untouchability: Menstrual Taboos

Untouchability: Taboos  
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Witchcraft, African Studies of  
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World Systems Theory, Latin America

## Contemporary

### ENTRIES FOCUSED ON THE PERIOD

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Bioethics  
Black Atlantic  
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Buddhism  
Bureaucracy  
Capitalism: Africa  
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Citizenship: Naturalization  
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Communitarianism in African Thought  
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Continental Philosophy  
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Cultural Studies  
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Eugenics  
Field Theories  
Fundamentalism  
Futurology  
Gay Studies  
Gender: Overview  
Genetics: Contemporary  
Globalization: Africa  
Globalization: Asia  
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Human Rights: Women's Rights  
Internal Colonialism  
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 Logic and Philosophy of Mathematics, Modern  
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 Marxism: Overview  
 Marxism: Asia  
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 Nationalism: Overview  
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 Nationalism: Middle East  
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 Nuclear Age  
 Orientalism: African and Black Orientalism  
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 Phenomenology  
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 Realism: Africa  
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Third World  
 Totalitarianism  
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 Westernization: Africa  
 Westernization: Southeast Asia  
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 Women and Femininity in U.S. Popular Culture  
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ENTRIES WITH EXAMPLES FROM THE PERIOD  
 SINCE 1945 (especially since the 1970s)

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 Arts: Overview  
 Arts: Africa  
 Asceticism: Western Asceticism  
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 Authenticity: Africa  
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## LIBERAL ARTS DISCIPLINES AND PROFESSIONS

This section is in accord with the university divisions of the Liberal Arts into Fine Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, and Sciences and the graduate programs of the professions of Law, Medicine, and Engineering. The sample of Interdisciplinary Programs are listed under their most common university grouping. For example, Fine Arts includes Performance Arts; Social Sciences includes Women's Studies and Gender Studies, as well as Ethnic Studies; Sciences includes Ecology and Geology, as well as Computer Sciences; Humanities includes programs of Communication, Language, and Linguistics. Meanwhile, the growth of interdisciplinary programs reflects the increasing overlap between studies listed under the labels of Fine Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, and Sciences. A discipline or interdisciplinary program only appears once, but an entry may appear under the several disciplines and interdisciplinary programs that influenced the scholarship of the article. Titles that appear in bold indicate entries that are especially suited as an introduction to the discipline.

Under the category Multidisciplinary Practices, there are entries on the many methods, techniques, theories, and approaches that have spread across the disciplines. The Multidisciplinary Practices help explain the contemporary trend of interdisciplinarity for which the history of ideas has long been known. At the end of this Reader's Guide is a listing of a number of entries that overlap three of the four divisions and a listing of entries that overlap all four divisions.

**Fine Arts**

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**Aesthetics: Africa**  
**Aesthetics: Asia**  
**Aesthetics: Europe and the Americas**  
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 Anthropology  
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 Architecture: Africa  
 Architecture: Asia  
 Arts: Overview  
 Arts: Africa  
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 Asceticism: Western Asceticism  
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 Avant-Garde: Militancy  
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 City, The: The Islamic and Byzantine City  
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**Periodization of the Arts**  
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Visual Culture  
Visual Order to Organizing Collections  
War and Peace in the Arts  
Westernization: Southeast Asia  
Women and Femininity in U.S. Popular Culture  
Yin and Yang

### MUSIC

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Humanism: Africa  
Humanism: Chinese Conception of  
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Love, Western Notions of  
Modernism: Overview  
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**Musical Performance and Audiences**  
**Musicology**  
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Orientalism: Overview  
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Realism: Africa  
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Religion: African Diaspora  
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Text/Textuality  
Third Cinema  
Virtual Reality  
Visual Order to Organizing Collections  
Westernization: Africa

PERFORMANCE ARTS (includes drama, dance, oratory, ritual, and ceremony)

Absolute Music  
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### Multidisciplinary Practices

The *New Dictionary of the History of Ideas* has many entries that discuss the methods by which scholars and researchers pursue knowledge. The entries below discuss approaches, methods, and practices that have influenced many disciplines.

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**Especially Interdisciplinary Entries**

The most interdisciplinary entries synthesized knowledge by using the methods and focusing on the topics of practitioners of several disciplines. Very few entries listed below are in only one division. Common pairs for the history of ideas are social sciences and humanities, social sciences and sciences, and humanities and sciences. In the early twenty-first century there is generally a recognition of the common overlap of the social sciences with the humanities; social scientists may take ethical and literary factors into consideration and humanists may incorporate societal contexts into their work. The presence of psychology in the sciences, as well as the quantitative nature of some social sciences work, creates an overlap of social sciences with sciences. Another interesting overlap is between humanities and sciences—topics that in antiquity were treated as philosophy or religion are now investigated by those following scientific methods.

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Communication of Ideas: Asia and Its Influence  
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# P

CONTINUED

**PHYLOGENY.** See **Development.**

**PHYSICS.** It should be understood that a full understanding of the history of physics would include consideration of its institutional, social, and cultural contexts. Physics became a scientific discipline during the nineteenth century, gaining a clear professional and cognitive identity as well as patronage from a number of institutions (especially those pertaining to education and the state). Before the nineteenth century, researchers who did work that we now refer to as *physics* identified themselves in more general terms—such as *natural philosopher* or *applied mathematician*—and discussion of their work often adopts a retrospective definition of physics.

For researchers of the nineteenth century, physics involved the development of quantifiable laws that could be tested by conducting experiments and taking precision measurements. The laws of physics focused on fundamental processes, often discovered in particular areas of research, such as mechanics, electricity and magnetism, optics, fluids, thermodynamics, and the kinetic theory of gases. The various specialists saw physics as a unified science, since they shared the same concepts and laws, with energy becoming the central unifying concept by the end of the century. In forming its cognitive and institutional identity, physics distinguished itself from other scientific and technical disciplines, including mathematics, engineering, chemistry, and astronomy. However, as we will see, the history of physics cannot be understood without considering developments in these other areas.

## Middle Ages

The Middle Ages inherited a wealth of knowledge from antiquity, including the systematic philosophy of Aristotle (384–322 B.C.E.) and the synthesis of ancient astronomy in the work of the Hellenistic astronomer Ptolemy (fl. second century C.E.). In agreement with those before him, Aristotle maintained that the terrestrial and celestial realms, separated by the orbit of the Moon, featured entirely different physical behaviors. His terrestrial physics was founded on the existence of four elements (earth, water, air, and fire) and the idea that every motion requires the specification of a cause for that motion. Aristotle considered two broad classes of motion: natural motion, as an object returned to its natural place (as dictated by its elemental composition), and violent motion, as an object was removed forcibly from its natural place. Because the natural place of the element earth was at the center of the cos-

mos, Aristotle's physics necessitated a geocentric, or Earth-centered, model of the heavens.

Whereas the terrestrial realm featured constant change, the heavenly bodies moved in uniform circular orbits and were perfect and unchanging. Starting from an exhaustive tabulation of astronomical data, Ptolemy modeled the orbits of each heavenly body using a complex system of circular motions, including a fundamental deferent and one or more epicycles. Often, Ptolemy was forced to make additions, including the eccentric model (in which the center of rotation of the orbiting body was offset from Earth) and the equant model (in which a fictitious point, also not located at Earth, defined uniform motion).

Despite the great value of this work, the West lost a good portion of it with the erosion of the Roman Empire. Luckily, a number of Islamic scholars took an interest in the knowledge of the ancients. In addition to translating Aristotle and Ptolemy (among others) into Arabic, they commented on these works extensively and made a number of innovations in astronomy, optics, matter theory, and mathematics (including the use of “Arabic numerals,” with the zero as a placeholder). For example, al-Battani (c. 858–929) made improvements to Ptolemy's orbits of the Sun and Moon, compiled a revised catalog of stars, and worked on the construction of astronomical instruments. Avempace (Ibn Badja, c. 1095–1138 or 1139) developed a position first staked out by the Neoplatonist philosopher John Philoponus (fl. sixth century C.E.), arguing that Aristotle was wrong to claim that the time for the fall of a body was proportional to its weight. After the reconquest of Spain during the twelfth century, ancient knowledge became available once again in the Latin West. Arab commentators such as Averroes (Ibn Rushd, 1126–1198) became influential interpreters of an Aristotle that was closer to the original texts and quite different from the glosses and explanatory aids that the West had grown accustomed to.

During the late Middle Ages, there was a general revival of learning and science in the West. The mathematician Jordanus de Nemore (fl. thirteenth century C.E.) pioneered a series of influential studies of static bodies. In addition to studying levers, Jordanus analyzed the (lower) apparent weight of a mass resting on an inclined plane. Despite the church's condemnation of certain radical interpretations of Aristotelianism during the late thirteenth century, there followed a flowering of activity during the fourteenth century, particularly concerning the problem of motion. Two important centers of activity were Merton College (at Oxford), where a group of mathematicians

and logicians included Thomas Bradwardine (c. 1290–1349) and Richard Swineshead (d. 1355), and the University of Paris, which included John Buridan (c. 1295–1358) and Nicole Oresme (c. 1325–1382).

The scholars at Merton College adopted a distinction between dynamics (in which the causes of motion are specified) and kinematics (in which motion is only described). The dynamical problems implied by Aristotelian physics, especially the problem of projectile motion, occupied many medieval scholars (see sidebar, “Causes of Motion: Medieval Understandings”). In kinematics, the release from the search for causation encouraged a number of new developments. The Mertonians developed the concept of velocity in analogy with the medieval idea of the intensity of a quality (such as the redness of an apple), and distinguished between uniform (constant velocity) and nonuniform (accelerated) motion. They also gave the first statement of the mean velocity theorem, which offered a way of comparing constant-acceleration motion to uniform motion.

While the Mertonians presented their analyses of motion through the cumbersome medium of words, other scholars developed graphical techniques. The most influential presentation of the mean speed theorem was offered by Oresme, who recorded the duration of the motion along a horizontal line (or “subject line”) and indicated the intensity of the velocity as a sequence of vertical line segments of varying height. Figure 1 shows that an object undergoing constant acceleration travels the same distance as if it were traveling for the same period of time at its average velocity (the average of its initial and final velocity). Although this work remained entirely abstract and was not based on experiment, it helped later work in kinematics, most notably Galileo’s.

Following Aristotle’s physics, medieval scholars pictured the celestial realm as being of unchanging perfection. Each heavenly body (the Sun, the Moon, the planets, and the sphere of the fixed stars) rotated around Earth on its own celestial sphere. Ptolemy’s addition of epicycles on top of Aristotle’s concentric spheres led medieval astronomers to speak of “partial orbs” within the “total orb” of each heavenly body. The

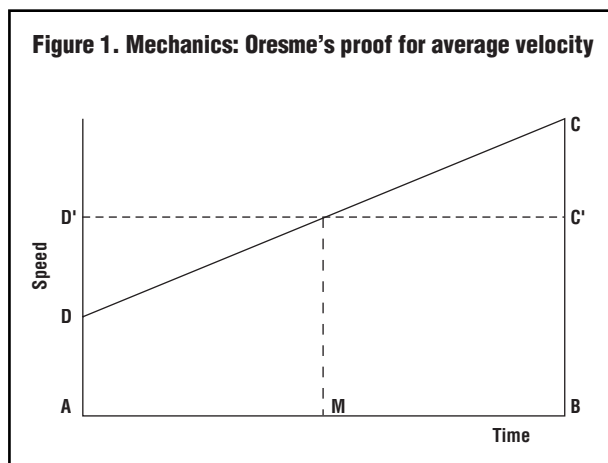
orbs communicated rotational movement to one another without any resistive force and were made of a quintessence or ether, which was an ageless, transparent substance. Beyond the outermost sphere of the fixed stars was the “final cause” of the Unmoved Mover, which was usually equated with the Christian God. Buridan suggested that God impressed an impetus on each orb at the moment of creation and, in the absence of resistance, they had been rotating ever since. Both Buridan and Oresme considered the possibility of a rotating Earth as a way of explaining the diurnal motion of the fixed stars, and found their arguments to be promising but not sufficiently convincing.

### Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries

The period of the scientific revolution can be taken to extend, simplistically but handily, from 1543, with the publication of Nicolaus Copernicus’s *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium*, to 1687, with the publication of Isaac Newton’s *Philosophiae naturalis principia mathematica*, often referred to simply as the *Principia*. The term “revolution” remains useful, despite the fact that scholars have suggested that the period shows significant continuities with what came before and after. Copernicus (1473–1543) was attracted to a heliocentric, or Sun-centered, model of the universe (already considered over one thousand years before by Aristarchus of Samos) because it eliminated a number of complexities from Ptolemy’s model (including the equant), provided a simple explanation for the diurnal motion of the stars, and agreed with certain theological ideas of his own regarding the Sun as a kind of mystical motive force of the heavens. Among the problems posed by Copernicus’s model of the heavens, the most serious was that it contradicted Aristotelian physics.

Heliocentrism was pursued again by the German mathematician Johannes Kepler (1571–1630). Motivated by a deep religious conviction that a mathematical interpretation of nature reflected the grand plan of the Creator and an equally deep commitment to Copernicanism, Kepler worked with the Danish astronomer Tycho Brahe (1546–1601) with the intention of calculating the orbits of the planets around the Sun. After Brahe’s death, Kepler gained control of his former associate’s data and worked long and hard on the orbit of Mars, eventually to conclude that it was elliptical. Kepler’s so-called “three laws” were identified later by other scholars (including Newton) from different parts of his work, with the elliptical orbits of the planets becoming the first law. The second and third laws were his findings that the area swept out by a line connecting the Sun and a particular planet is the same for any given period of time; and that the square of a planet’s period of revolution around the Sun is proportional to the cube of its distance from the Sun.

The career of Galileo Galilei (1564–1642) began in earnest with his work on improved telescopes and using them to make observations that lent strength to Copernicanism, including the imperfections of the Moon’s surface and the satellites of Jupiter. His public support of Copernicanism led to a struggle with the church, but his greater importance lies with his study of statics and kinematics, in his effort to formulate a new physics that would not conflict with the hypothesis of a moving Earth.





His work in statics was influenced by the Dutch engineer Simon Stevin (1548–1620), who made contributions to the analysis of the lever, to hydrostatics, and to arguments on the impossibility of perpetual motion. Galileo also repeated Stevin's experiments on free fall, which disproved Aristotle's contention that heavy bodies fall faster than light bodies, and wrote about them in *On Motion* (1590), which remained unpublished during his lifetime. There, he made use of a version of Buridan's impetus theory (see sidebar, "Causes of Motion: Medieval Understandings"), but shifted attention from the total weight of the object to the weight per unit volume. By the time of *Two New Sciences* (1638), he generalized this idea by claiming that all bodies—of whatever size and composition—fell with equal speed through a vacuum.

*Two New Sciences* summarized most of Galileo's work in statics and kinematics (the "two sciences" of the title). In order to better study the motion of bodies undergoing constant acceleration, Galileo used inclined planes pitched at very small angles in order to slow down the motion of a rolling ball. By taking careful distance and time measurements, and using the results of medieval scholars (including the mean speed theorem), he was able to show that the ball's instantaneous velocity increased linearly with time and that its distance increased according to the square of the time. Furthermore, Galileo proposed a notion of inertial motion as a limiting case of a ball rolling along a perfectly horizontal plane. Because, in this limiting case, the motion of the ball would ultimately follow the circular shape of the earth, his idea is sometimes referred to as a "circular inertia." Finally, Galileo presented his analysis of parabolic trajectories as a compound motion, made up of inertial motion in the horizontal direction and constant acceleration in the vertical.

The French philosopher René Descartes (1596–1650) and his contemporary Pierre Gassendi (1592–1655) independently came up with an improved conception of inertial motion. Both suggested that an object moving at constant speed and in a straight line (not Galileo's circle) was conceptually equivalent to the object being at rest. Gassendi tested this idea by observing the path of falling weights on a moving carriage. In his *Principia philosophiae* (1644), Descartes presented a number of other influential ideas, including his view that the physical world was a kind of clockwork mechanism. In order to communicate cause and effect in his "mechanical philosophy," all space was filled with matter, making a vacuum impossible. Descartes suggested, for example, that the planets moved in their orbits via a plenum of fine matter that communicated the influence of the Sun through the action of vortices.

Building on work in optics by Kepler, Descartes used the mechanical philosophy to derive the laws of reflection and refraction. In his *Dioptrics* (1631), he proposed that if light travels at different velocities in two different media, then the sine of the angle of incidence divided by the sine of the angle of refraction is a constant that is characteristic of a particular pair of media. This law of refraction had been discovered earlier, in 1621, by the Dutch scientist Willibrord Snel, though Descartes was probably unaware of this work. In 1662, the French mathematician Pierre de Fermat recast the law of refraction by showing that it follows from the principle that light

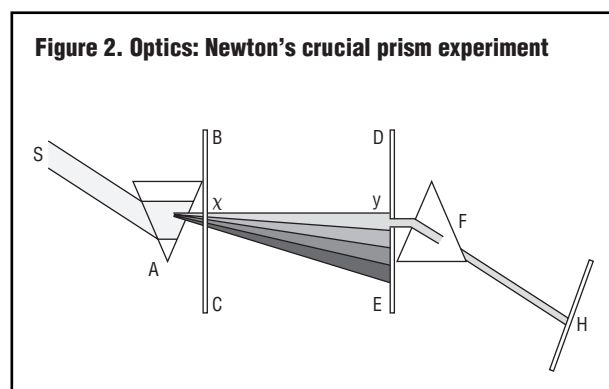
follows the path of least time (not necessarily the least distance) between two points.

The study of kinematics yielded various conservation laws for collisions and falling bodies. Descartes defined the "quantity of motion" as the mass times the velocity (what is now called "momentum") and claimed that any closed system had a fixed total quantity of motion. In disagreement with Descartes, Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz (1646–1716) suggested instead the "living force" or *vis viva* as a measure of motion, equal to the mass times the square of the velocity (similar to what is now called "kinetic energy"). For a falling body, Leibniz asserted that the living force plus the "dead force," the weight of the object times its distance off the ground (similar to "potential energy"), was a constant.

The culmination of the scientific revolution is the work of Isaac Newton. In the *Principia* (1687), Newton presented a new mechanics that encompassed not only terrestrial physics but also the motion of the planets. A short way into the first book ("Of the Motion of Bodies"), Newton listed his axioms or laws of motion:

1. Every body perseveres in its state of being at rest or of moving uniformly straight forward, except insofar as it is compelled to change its state by forces impressed . . .
2. A change in motion is proportional to the motive force impressed and takes place along the straight line in which that force is impressed . . .
3. To any action there is always an opposite and equal reaction; in other words, the actions of two bodies upon each other are always equal and always opposite in direction . . . (1999, pp. 416–417)

The first law restates Descartes's concept of rectilinear, inertial motion. The second law introduces Newton's concept of force, as an entity that *causes* an object to depart from inertial motion. Following Descartes, Newton defined motion as the mass times the velocity. Assuming that the mass is constant, the "change of motion" is the mass ( $m$ ) times the acceleration ( $a$ ); thus the net force ( $F$ ) acting on an object is given by the equation  $F = ma$ . Analyzing the motion of the Moon



led Newton to the inverse-square law of universal gravitation. Partly as a result of a debate with the scientist Robert Hooke (1635–1703), Newton came to see the Moon as undergoing a compound motion, made up of a tangential, inertial motion and a motion toward the Sun due to the Sun’s gravitational attraction. The Dutch physicist Christiaan Huygens (1629–1695) had suggested that there was a centrifugal force acting *away* from the center of rotation, which was proportional to  $v^2/r$ , where  $v$  is the velocity and  $r$  is the distance from the center of rotation. Newton had derived this result before Huygens but later renamed it the centripetal force, the force that is required to keep the body in orbit and that points *toward* the center of rotation. Using this relation and Kepler’s finding that the square of the period was proportional to the cube of the distance (Kepler’s “third law”), Newton concluded that the gravitational force on the Moon was proportional to the inverse square of its distance from Earth.

Newton presented his law of universal gravitation in the third book of the *Principia* (“The System of the World”), and showed that it was consistent with Kepler’s findings and the orbits of the planets. Although he derived many of these results using a technique that he invented called the method of fluxions—differential calculus—Newton presented them in the *Principia* with the geometrical formalism familiar to readers of the time. He did not publish anything of his work on the calculus until *De Analysisi* (1711; *On analysis*) during a priority dispute with Leibniz, who invented it independently.

### Eighteenth Century

It is helpful to identify two broad tendencies in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century physics, which had been noted by a number of contemporaries, including the German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724–1804). On the one hand, a mechanical approach analyzed the physical universe as a great machine and built models relying on commonsense notions of cause and effect. This sometimes required the specification of ontological entities to communicate cause and effect, such as Descartes’s plenum. On the other hand, the dynamical approach avoided mechanical models and, instead, concentrated on the mathematical relationship between quantities that could be measured. However, in avoiding mechanical models, the dynamical approach often speculated on the existence of active powers that resided within matter but could not be observed directly. Although this distinction is helpful, many scientists straddled the divide. Newton’s physics, and the general Newtonian scientific culture of the eighteenth century, utilized elements of both approaches. It held true to a mechanical-world picture in analyzing macroscopic systems involving both contact, as in collisions, and action at a distance, as in the orbital motion. But it also contained a dynamical sensibility. Regarding gravity, Newton rejected Descartes’s plenum and speculated that gravity might be due to an all-pervasive ether, tantamount to God’s catholic presence. Such reflections appeared in Newton’s private notes and letters, but some of these became known during the 1740s.

The development of mechanics during the eighteenth century marks one place where the histories of physics and mathematics overlap strongly. Mathematicians with an interest in

physical problems recast Newtonian physics in an elegant formalism that took physics away from geometrical treatment and toward the reduction of physical problems to mathematical equations using calculus. Some of these developments were motivated by attempts to confirm Newton’s universal gravitation. The French mathematician Alexis-Claude Clairaut (1713–1765) used perturbation techniques to account for tiny gravitational forces affecting the orbits of heavenly bodies. In 1747 Clairaut published improved predictions for the Moon’s orbit, based on three-body calculations of the Moon, Earth, and Sun, and, in 1758, predictions of the orbit of Halley’s comet, which changed slightly each time that it passed a planet. Some years later, Pierre-Simon Laplace produced a five-volume study, *Celestial Mechanics* (1799–1825), which showed that changes in planetary orbits, which had previously appeared to be accumulative, were in fact self-correcting. His (perhaps apocryphal) response to Napoléon’s question regarding the place of God in his calculations has come to stand for eighteenth-century deism: “Sire, I had no need for that hypothesis.”

The most important mathematical work was the generalization of Newton’s mechanics using the calculus of variations. Starting from Fermat’s principle of least time, Louis Moreau de Maupertuis (1698–1759) proposed that, for a moving particle, nature always sought to minimize a certain quantity equal to the mass times the velocity times the distance that the particle moves. This “principle of least action” was motivated by the religious idea that the economy of nature gave evidence of God’s existence. The Swiss mathematician Leonhard Euler (1707–1783) recast this idea (but without Maupertuis’s religious motivations) by minimizing the integral over distance of the mass of a particle times its velocity. The Italian Joseph-Louis Lagrange (1736–1813) restated and clarified Euler’s idea, by focusing on minimizing the *vis viva* integrated over time. His *Mécanique analytique* (1787) summarized the whole of mechanics, for both solids and fluids and statics and dynamics.

In its high level of mathematical abstraction and its rejection of mechanical models, Lagrange’s formalism typified a dynamical approach. In addition to making a number of problems tractable that had been impossible in Newton’s original approach, the use of the calculus of variations removed from center stage the concept of force, a vector quantity (with magnitude and direction), and replaced it with scalar quantities (which had only magnitude). Lagrange was proud of the fact that *Mécanique analytique* did not contain a single diagram.

Newton’s physics could be applied to continuous media just as much as systems of masses. In his *Hydrodynamica* (1738), the Swiss mathematician Daniel Bernoulli used conservation of *vis viva* to analyze fluid flow. His most famous result was an equation describing the rate at which liquid flows from a hole in a filled vessel. Euler elaborated on Bernoulli’s analyses and developed additional formalism, including the general differential equations of fluid flow and fluid continuity (but restricted to the case of zero viscosity). Clairaut contributed to hydrostatics through his involvement with debates regarding the shape of the earth. In developing a Newtonian prediction, Clairaut analyzed the earth as a fluid mass. After defining an equilibrium condition, he showed that the earth

should have an oblate shape, which was confirmed by experiments with pendulums at the earth's equator and as far north as Lapland.

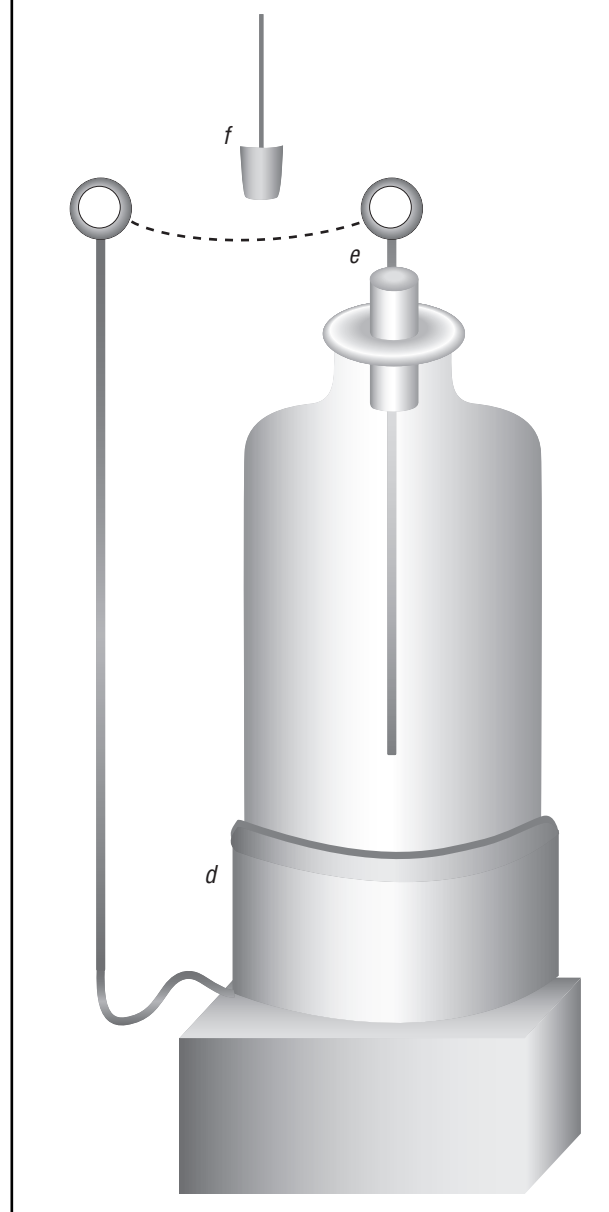
The study of optics inherited an ambivalence from the previous century, which considered two different mechanical explanations of light. In his *Opticks* (1704), Newton had advocated a corpuscular, atomistic theory of light. As an emission of particles, light interacted with matter by vibrating in different ways and was therefore either reflected or refracted. In contrast with this, Descartes and Huygens proposed a wave theory of light, arguing that space was full and that light was nothing more than the vibration of a medium.

During the eighteenth century, most scientists preferred Newton's model of light as an emission of particles. The most important wave theory of light was put forward by Euler, who hypothesized that, in analogy with sound waves, light propagated through a medium, but that the medium itself did not travel. Euler also associated certain wavelengths with certain colors. After Euler, considerable debate occurred between the particle and wave theories of light. This debate was resolved during the early nineteenth century in favor of the wave theory. Between 1801 and 1803, the English physician Thomas Young conducted a series of experiments, the most notable of which was his two-slit experiment, which demonstrated that two coherent light sources set up interference patterns, thus behaving like two wave sources. This work was largely ignored until 1826, when Augustin-Jean Fresnel presented a paper to the French Academy of Science that reproduced Young's experiments and presented a mathematical analysis of the results.

Electrical research was especially fruitful in the eighteenth century and attracted a large number of researchers. Electricity was likened to "fire," the most volatile element in Aristotle's system. Electrical fire was an imponderable fluid that could be made to flow from one body to another but could not be weighed (see sidebar, "Forms of Matter"). After systematic experimentation, the French soldier-scientist Charles-François Du Fay (1698–1739) developed a two-fluid theory of electricity, positing both a negative and a positive fluid. The American statesman and scientist Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790) proposed a competing, one-fluid model. Franklin suggested that electrical fire was positively charged, mutually repulsive, and contained in every object. When fire was added to a body, it showed a positive charge; when fire was removed, the body showed a negative charge. Franklin's theory was especially successful in explaining the behavior of the Leyden jar (an early version of the capacitor) invented by Ewald Georg von Kleist in 1745. The device was able to store electrical fire using inner and outer electrodes, with the surface of the glass jar in between. Franklin's interpretation was that the glass was impervious to electrical fire and that while one electrode took on fire, the other electrode expelled an equal amount (see Fig. 3).

After early efforts by John Robison and Henry Cavendish, the first published precision measurements of the electric force law were attributed to the French physicist and engineer Charles-Augustin de Coulomb (1736–1806). Coulomb used

**Figure 3. Electricity: One of Franklin's experiments with the Leyden jar**



a torsion balance to measure the small electrostatic force on pairs of charged spheres and found that it was proportional to the inverse square of the distance between the spheres and to the amount of charge on each sphere. At the close of the century, Cavendish used a similar device to experimentally confirm Newton's universal law of gravitation, using relatively large masses.

### Nineteenth Century

The development of physics during the nineteenth century can be seen as both a culmination of what went before and as



### CAUSES OF MOTION: MEDIEVAL UNDERSTANDINGS

Medieval scholars put considerable effort into modifying Aristotelian dynamics and answering the problems posed by it. Because most terrestrial bodies were composed of many elements, their natural motion was explained by summing the total power of heavy and light elements. This led medieval scholars to consider the minority type of material as providing a kind of “internal resistance.” Using this idea, motion in a hypothetical void or vacuum could be explained by qualities of both motive force and resistance that inhered in the object itself.

Probably the greatest puzzle facing medieval interpreters of Aristotle was the violent motion of projectiles. If the motion of every object required the analyst to specify a mover or cause for that motion, then what caused projectiles to continue in their trajectories after they lost contact with their original projector? Aristotle suggested that a surrounding medium was pushed by the original mover and so continued to push the projectile. For medieval scholars who admitted the possibility of a vacuum, however, this explanation was not tenable. In addition, if the medium was slight compared to the projectile (such as the air compared to a stone), then it was difficult to see how a corporeal mover could continue to be the cause of violent motion. Motivated by such concerns, in the sixth century John Philoponus suggested that the continued motion of a projectile was due to an incorporeal force that was impressed on the projectile itself by the original mover. The projectile would finish its motion when this impressed force wore off.

Some eight hundred years later, in the fourteenth century at the University of Paris, Jean Buridan renamed Philoponus’s impressed force “impetus,” and used the concept to interpret the motion of projectiles and falling bodies. Once impressed on a projectile, the impetus could bring about virtually constant motion unless it was interrupted or dissipated by a resistive medium, a notion that bears some resemblance to the conceptions of inertia developed later. Buridan also attempted to quantify impetus, by saying it was proportional to the moving object’s speed and its quantity of matter. As an object engaged in free fall, the power of gravity imparted larger and larger amounts of impetus to the object, thereby increasing its velocity.

A number of scholars attempted to quantify a relation between the impressed force and the velocity of an object. Paramount among these was Thomas Bradwardine of Merton College. In comparison to a projectile, a falling object presented special problems. Aristotle suggested that the velocity of the object was proportional to the total impressed force ( $F$ ) and inversely proportional to the resistance of an ambient medium ( $R$ ). Bradwardine rejected this formulation and a number of other suggestions by Philoponus, Avempace, and Averroes that involved simple ratios or subtractions of  $F$  and  $R$ . Instead, he proposed a dynamics in which the velocity of a body increased arithmetically as the ratio  $F/R$  increased geometrically. This formulation proved to be influential well into the sixteenth century.

preparing the stage for the revolutions in relativity and quantum theory that were to follow. The work of the Irish mathematician and astronomer William Rowan Hamilton (1805–1865) built on Laplace’s revision of Newtonian dynamics to establish a thoroughly abstract and mathematical approach to physical problems. Originally motivated by his work in optics, Hamilton developed a new principle of least action. Instead of using Lagrange’s integral of kinetic energy, Hamilton chose to minimize the integral of the difference between the kinetic and the potential energies. In applying this principle in mechanics, Hamilton reproduced the results of Euler and Lagrange, and showed that it applied to a broader range of problems. After

his work was published, as two essays in 1833 and 1834, it was critiqued and improved upon by the German mathematician Carl Gustav Jacob Jacobi (1804–1851). The resulting Hamilton-Jacobi formalism was applied in many fields of physics, including hydrodynamics, optics, acoustics, the kinetic theory of gases, and electrodynamics. However, it did not achieve its full significance until the twentieth century, when it was used to buttress the foundations of quantum mechanics.

Work on magnetism was encouraged by Alessandro Volta’s (1745–1827) development, in 1800, of the voltaic pile (an early battery), which, unlike the Leyden jar, was able to pro-

### THE NEWTONIAN SYNTHESIS

The Newtonian synthesis was, first and foremost, a unification of celestial and terrestrial physics. Newton's famous story of seeing an apple fall in his mother's garden does a good job in summarizing this achievement. According to the story, the falling apple made Newton consider that the gravitational force that influences the apple (a projectile in terrestrial motion) might also act on the moon (a satellite in celestial motion). He concluded that "the power of gravity . . . was not limited to a certain distance from the earth but that this power must extend much farther than was usually thought" (Westfall, 1980, p. 154). This idea is displayed in a famous diagram in the *Principia*, depicting a projectile being thrown from a mountain peak, which rests on a small planet; as the projectile is thrown with greater and greater speed, it eventually goes into orbit around the planet and becomes a satellite. Consideration of the moon's motion led Newton to the force law for universal gravitation. Simply by virtue of having mass, any two objects exert mutually attractive forces on each other (in accordance with the third law of motion). The inverse-square force law made the gravitational force quantified and calculable but regarding the cause of gravity itself, Newton famously claimed, "I feign no hypotheses."

As much as his specific scientific achievements, Newton's method of working became a touchstone for scientists of the eighteenth century and defined a general scientific culture of "Newtonianism." In this regard, the Newtonian synthesis can be seen as a combination of three broad

traditions: experiment, mathematics, and mechanism. Newton's *Opticks* (1704) exemplified the empirical, inductive approach recommended by Francis Bacon. There, Newton reports on careful experiments with light, including a series showing that when light passes through a prism, the prism does not modify the color of the light but rather separates it into its component colors (see Fig. 2). He also did experiments in which he shone monochromatic light on thin plates and films, to produce patterns of light and dark regions; these later became known as "Newton's rings."

The effort to describe physical events with mathematics, which was so evident in the work of Kepler, Galileo, and Descartes, reached its full expression in Newton's dynamics. The universal gravitation law, along with the three laws of motion and the calculus, presented a complete Newtonian approach to quantifying and calculating the motion of everything from the smallest atom to the largest planet. Closely related to this mathematical tendency is the mechanical philosophy pursued by Descartes, Gassendi, and Robert Boyle (1627–1691). Although Newton rejected Descartes's plenum, he retained a modified idea of mechanical causality. For Newton, gravity was an action at a distance; two masses acted on one another despite the fact that empty space lay between them. Defined as a change in motion, Newton's conception of force was a mechanical, causal agent that acted either through contact or through action at a distance.

duce a steady source of electric current. Inspired by the German philosophical movement of *Naturphilosophie*, which espoused that the forces of nature were all interrelated in a higher unity, the Danish physicist Hans Christian Ørsted (1777–1851) sought a magnetic effect from the electric current of Volta's battery. Ørsted's announcement of his success, in 1820, brought a flurry of activity, including the work of Jean-Baptiste Biot and Félix Savart, on the force law between a current and a magnet, and the work of André-Marie Ampère, on the force law between two currents. The magnetic force was found to depend on the inverse square of the distance but was more complex due to the subtle vector relations

between the currents and distances. For the analysis of inverse-square force laws, the German mathematician Carl Friedrich Gauss (1777–1855) introduced, in 1839, the concept of "potential," which could be applied with great generality to both electrostatics and magnetism. This work grew from Gauss's efforts in measuring and understanding the earth's magnetic field, which he undertook with his compatriot Wilhelm Eduard Weber (d. 1891).

The most significant work in magnetism was done by Michael Faraday (1791–1861) at the Royal Institution of London. By 1831, Faraday had characterized a kind of reverse

### FORMS OF MATTER

The development of physics both contributed to and depended on ideas about the structure of matter. In this regard, the history of physics is tied to the history of chemistry. Both sciences inherited a debate that began with the ancients regarding atomism versus continuity. Combining the influences of, among others, Pythagoras and Democritus, Plato saw matter as being composed of atoms that had different geometrical shapes for each of the four elements. Against this, Aristotle developed a continuum theory of matter, in part because his theory of motion would be contradicted by the existence of a void. This debate was reawakened during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. On the one hand, Descartes embraced a continuum theory involving a plenum of fine matter and vortices, founded on the idea that motion is caused through contact. On the other hand, Robert Boyle proposed atomistic explanations of his finding that reducing the volume of a gas increased its pressure proportionately. Newton refined Boyle's ideas by interpreting pressure as being due to mutually repelling atoms, and recommended an atomistic stance for further research in chemistry and optics.

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, many theorists and experimentalists posited the existence of a number of "imponderables," substances that could produce physical effects but could not be weighed. The first of these was proposed in 1703 by the German physician and chemist Georg Ernst Stahl in order to explain the processes of oxidation and respiration. Stahl's phlogiston theory, and the renewed interest in Newton's theories of an ether medium for gravity, encouraged further theories involving imponderables, most notably electrical fire (to describe the flow of static electricity) and caloric (to describe heat flow). Although the imponderables were eventually rejected, they served as useful heuristic devices in quantifying physical

laws. For example, the Scottish chemist Joseph Black (1728–1799) used the caloric theory to found the study of calorimetry and to measure specific heat (the heat required to raise the temperature of a substance one degree), and latent heat (the heat required for a substance to change its state).

Even after the work of John Dalton, few chemists and physicists before 1890 accepted the actual existence of atoms. Nevertheless, they found the atomic hypothesis to be useful in suggesting experiments and interpreting the results. In 1863, the Irish physical chemist Thomas Andrews experimentally characterized the "critical point" between the gas and liquid phases: at relatively low temperatures, as the pressure was increased, the change from gas to liquid was abrupt; however, at relatively high temperatures, the transition was continuous. In part to account for the behavior of the critical point, the Dutch physicist Johannes Diderik van der Waals (1837–1923) assumed that the forces between atoms were attractive at large range but repulsive at short range. The work of van der Waals represented the first successful theory of phase transitions and showed how an atomistic model could describe both phases.

In the mid-nineteenth century, Michael Faraday and Julius Plücker (1801–1868), among others, pioneered research on the discharge of electricity through partially evacuated glass tubes. The British chemist William Crookes made a number of improvements to these discharge tubes and called the glowing material that formed in them the "fourth state of matter" (which was later dubbed "plasma" by the American chemist Irving Langmuir). Work in this area eventually led to Joseph John Thomson's discovery of the electron and Philipp Lenard's characterization, in 1899, of the photoelectric effect.

Ørsted effect, in which a change in magnetism gave rise to a current. For example, he showed that this "electromagnetic induction" occurred between two electric circuits that communicated magnetism through a shared iron ring but, other-

wise, were electrically insulated from one another (an early version of the transformer). Faraday made the first measurements of magnetic materials, characterizing diamagnetic, paramagnetic, and ferromagnetic effects (though this terminology is

## SECOND LAW OF THERMODYNAMICS

The development of the second law of thermodynamics was intimately tied to the kinetic theory of gases, and carried with it the rebirth of atomism and the founding of statistical mechanics. Despite the fact that Sadi Carnot believed that caloric was not lost when it traveled from the hot body to the cool body of an engine, he recognized that the work delivered depended on the temperature difference between the two bodies and that this difference constantly decreased. This observation was clarified by the German physicist Rudolf Clausius. In 1851, a few years after the acceptance of the first law of thermodynamics, Clausius recognized the need for a second law, to account for the fact that energy was often irrecoverably lost by a system. In a paper published in 1865, Clausius analyzed thermodynamic cycles with a quantity that he dubbed the “entropy” and found that it usually went up or at best (for a reversible process) was zero.

The Austrian Ludwig Boltzmann read Clausius’s paper and set about developing a mechanical interpretation of the second law. In a first attempt, published in 1866, he used Hamilton’s principle to analyze the development of a thermodynamic system made up of discrete particles. After Joseph Stefan (1835–1893) alerted Boltzmann to James Clerk Maxwell’s probabilistic approach, Boltzmann made refinements to Maxwell’s ideas and incorporated them into his mechanical interpretation. In 1872, he published a paper that made use of a transport equation (now called the “Boltzmann equation”) to describe the evolution of a probability distribution of particles. As the atoms of a gas collided and

eventually reached an equilibrium velocity distribution, the entropy was maximized.

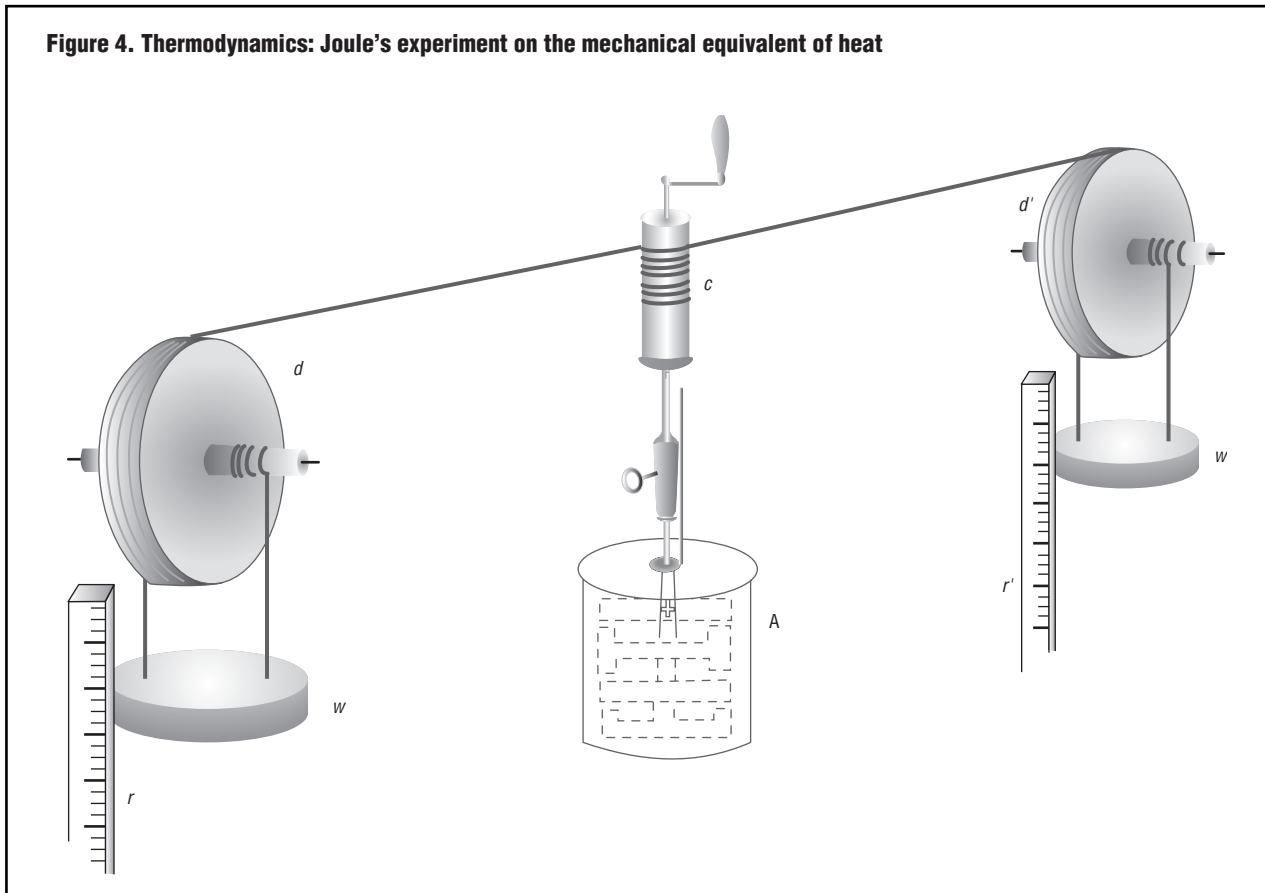
Boltzmann’s ideas were met with a number of objections. One objection argued that because Newton’s laws were reversible, thermodynamic processes described by the motion of atoms could be reversed in time to yield processes that deterministically went to states of *lower* entropy, thus contradicting the second law. Boltzmann’s response highlighted the statistical nature of his interpretation, arguing that, given particular initial conditions, any thermodynamic system has a vastly greater number of final states available to it with relatively high entropy. An increase of entropy means that the system has become randomized as the available energy is spread around to its constituent atoms. In 1877 Boltzmann published a paper that incorporated this idea and defined the entropy as a log of a quantity measuring the number of states available to a system. In doing his calculations, Boltzmann used the device of counting energy in discrete increments, which he took to zero at the end of his calculation. This method, a harbinger of the quantization of energy, influenced Planck and Einstein, over twenty years later.

Boltzmann had less success answering a second set of objections regarding atomism. The British physicist William Thomson (1824–1907) and Scottish physicist Peter Tait (1831–1901) rejected atomism as a result of their adherence to the dynamical theory of matter, which rejected the existence of a void. Similarly, Ernst Mach put forward empiricist counterarguments, which rejected Boltzmann’s adherence to entities that could not be confirmed by direct observation.

due to the English mathematician William Whewell). Finally, Faraday pioneered the concept of the field, coining the term “magnetic field” in 1845. He saw the “lines of force” of magnetic or electric fields as being physically real and as filling space (in opposition to the idea of action at a distance).

One of the pinnacles of nineteenth-century physics is the theory of electromagnetism developed by the Scottish

physicist James Clerk Maxwell (1831–1879). Maxwell brought together the work of Coulomb, Ampère, and Faraday, and made the crucial addition of the “displacement current,” which acknowledged that a magnetic field can be produced not only by a current but also by a changing electric field. These efforts resulted in a set of four equations that Maxwell used to derive wave equations for the electric and magnetic fields. This led to the astonishing prediction that light was an electromagnetic wave. In developing and interpreting his results,

**Figure 4. Thermodynamics: Joule's experiment on the mechanical equivalent of heat**

Maxwell sought to build a mechanical model of electromagnetic radiation. Influenced by Faraday's rejection of action at a distance, Maxwell attempted to see electromagnetic waves as vortices in an ether medium, interspersed with small particles that acted as idle wheels to connect the vortices. Maxwell discarded this mechanical model in later years, in favor of a dynamical perspective. This latter attitude was taken by the German experimentalist Heinrich Rudolph Hertz (1857–1894), who, in 1886, first demonstrated the propagation of electromagnetic waves in the laboratory, using a spark-gap device as a transmitter.

During the eighteenth century, most researchers saw the flow of heat as the flow of the imponderable fluid caloric. Despite developments, such as Benjamin Thompson's cannon-boring experiments, which suggested that heat involved some sort of microscopic motion, caloric provided a heuristic model that aided in the quantification of experimental results and in the creation of mathematical models. For example, the French engineer Sadi Carnot (1791–1832) did empirical work on steam engines which led to the theory of the thermodynamic cycle, as reported in his *Reflections on the Motive Power of Fire* (1824). A purely mathematical approach was developed by Jean-Baptiste-Joseph Fourier, who analyzed heat conduction with the method of partial differential equations in his *Analytical Theory of Heat* (1822).

Carnot's opinion that caloric was conserved during the running of a steam engine was proved wrong by the development of the first law of thermodynamics. Similar conceptions of the conservation of energy (or "force," as energy was still referred to) were identified by at least three different people during the 1840s, including the German physician Julius Robert von Mayer (1814–1878), who was interested in the human body's ability to convert the chemical energy of food to other forms of energy, and the German theoretical physicist Hermann Ludwig Ferdinand von Helmholtz (1821–1894), who gave a mathematical treatment of different types of energy and showed that the different conservation laws could be traced back to the conservation of *vis viva* in mechanics. The British physicist James Prescott Joule (1818–1889) did an experiment that measured the mechanical equivalent of heat with a system of falling weights and a paddlewheel that stirred water within an insulated vessel (see Fig. 4).

In his *Hydrodynamica*, Bernoulli had proposed the first kinetic theory of gases, by suggesting that pressure was due to the motion and impact of atoms as they struck the sides of their containment vessel. The work of the chemists John Dalton (1766–1844) and Amedeo Avogadro (1776–1856) indirectly lent support to such a kinetic theory by casting doubt upon the Newtonian program of understanding chemistry in terms of force laws between atoms. After John Herapath's work on the kinetic theory, in 1820, was largely ignored, Rudolf



Clausius published two papers, in 1857 and 1858, in which he sought to derive the specific heats of a gas and introduced the concept of the mean free path between atomic collisions. James Clerk Maxwell added the idea that the atomic collisions would result in a range of velocities, not an average velocity as Clausius thought, and that this would necessitate the use of a statistical approach. In a number of papers published from 1860 to 1862, Maxwell completed the foundations of the kinetic theory and introduced the equipartition theorem, the idea that each degree of freedom (translational or rotational) contributed the same average energy, which was proportional to the temperature of the gas. Clausius and Maxwell's work in kinetic theory was tied to their crucial contributions to developing the second law of thermodynamics (see sidebar, "Second Law of Thermodynamics").

### End of Classical Physics

By the close of the nineteenth century, many physicists felt that the accomplishments of the century had produced a mature and relatively complete science. Nevertheless, a number of problem areas were apparent to at least some of the community, four of which are closely related to developments mentioned above.

New rays and radiations were discovered near the end of the century, which helped establish (among other things) the modern model of the atom. These included the discovery (by William Crookes and others) of cathode rays within discharge tubes; Wilhelm Conrad Röntgen's finding, in 1895, of X rays emanating from discharge tubes; and Antoine-Henri Becquerel's discovery in 1896 that uranium salts were "radioactive" (as Marie Curie labeled the effect in 1898). Each of these led to further developments. In 1897, Joseph John Thomson identified the cathode rays as negatively charged particles called "electrons" and, a year later, was able to measure the charge directly. In 1898, Ernest Rutherford identified two different kinds of radiation from uranium, calling them alpha and beta. In 1902 and 1903, he and Frederick Soddy demonstrated that radioactive decay was due to the disintegration of heavy elements into slightly lighter elements. In 1911, he scattered alpha particles from thin gold foils and explained infrequent scattering to large angles by the presence of a concentrated, positively charged atomic nucleus.

The study of blackbody radiation (radiation from a heated object that is a good emitter) yielded results that are crucial to the early development of quantum mechanics. In 1893 Wilhelm Wien derived a promising "displacement law" that gave the wavelength at which a blackbody radiated at maximum intensity, but precision data failed to confirm it. Furthermore, classical theory proved unable to model the intensity curves, especially at lower wavelengths. In 1900 the German theoretical physicist Max Planck (1858–1947) derived the intensity curve using the statistical methods of the Austrian physicist Ludwig Eduard Boltzmann (1844–1906) and the device of counting the energy of the oscillators of the blackbody in increments of  $hf$ , where  $f$  is the frequency and  $h$  is a constant (now known as "Planck's constant"). Despite achieving excellent fits to data, Planck was hesitant to accept his own derivation, due to his aversion for statistical methods and atomism.

It is doubtful that Planck interpreted his use of energy increments to mean that the energy of the oscillators and radiation came in chunks (or "quanta"). However, this idea was clearly enunciated by Albert Einstein in his 1905 paper on the photoelectric effect. Einstein explained in this paper why the electrons that are ejected from a cathode by incident light do not increase in energy when the intensity of the light is increased. Instead, the fact that the electrons increase in energy when the frequency of the light is increased suggested that light comes in quantum units (later called "photons") and have an energy given by Planck's equation,  $hf$ .

Electromagnetic theory, though one of the most important results of nineteenth-century physical theory, contained a number of puzzles. On the one hand, electromagnetism sometimes gave the same result for all reference frames. For example, Faraday's induction law gave the same result for the current induced in a loop of wire for two situations: when the loop moves relative to a stationary magnet and when the magnet moves (with the same speed) relative to a stationary loop. On the other hand, if an ether medium were introduced for electromagnetic waves, then the predictions of electromagnetism should usually change for different reference frames. In a second paper from 1905, Einstein reinterpreted attempts by Henri Poincaré (1854–1912) and Hendrik Antoon Lorentz (1853–1928) to answer this puzzle, by insisting that the laws of physics should give the same results in all inertial reference frames. This, along with the principle of the constancy of the speed of light, formed the basis of Einstein's special theory of relativity.

*See also Causality; Change; Chemistry; Experiment; Field Theories; Mathematics; Mechanical Philosophy; Quantum; Relativity; Science.*

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**PIETISM.** Like the Enlightenment, Pietism has produced an extremely diverse body of historical scholarship, with opinions ranging from a denial of its existence to precise nationally,

geographically, or chronologically defined variants, as well as views that see Pietism essentially as identical with the history of modern Protestantism. Such divergent opinion has led to the introduction of categories such as reformed, classical, enthusiastic, and radical Pietism. The picture often becomes more complex when the scope of Pietism is expanded to include other religions such as Judaism, where Hasidism appears at least on the surface as a similar phenomenon. But even within Christianity, apparently similar movements such as French Jansenism or Spanish Quietism emerged almost at the same time.

The term *Pietist*, created during the seventeenth century, served initially as a derogatory term in reference to people who exhibited excessively spiritual and devout behavior. Most were followers of the German Lutheran reformer Philipp Jakob Spener (1635–1705), who organized Bible study gatherings, the so-called *collegia pietatis* (colleges of piety), in addition to the regular church services, which indicates how the term *Pietist* was often used interchangeably with the term *Spenerianer* (Spenerian). But in 1689 Joachim Feller (1628–1691), professor of poetry at the University of Leipzig, used the term in a positive way by including it in a funeral poem to stress the deceased person's interest in the study of the Bible, his saintly life, and his true devoutness.

### History

Most historical treatments of Pietism start with Spener, then pastor and senior of the ministerium in Frankfurt, who is generally regarded as a founding figure of the movement. Spener believed that the state's Lutheran churches had failed to complete the Reformation and had instead descended into theological irrelevance and quarrels. In his work *Pia Desideria* (1675; Pious desires) Spener proposed six measures that could lead to a revival of the German churches. They included the organization of small conventicles (*ecclesiola*) for meditation and the joint study of the Bible, an emphasis on the priesthood of all believers, a stress on practical rather than theological and intellectual Christianity, the abandonment of religious argument with other churches, a reorganization of the training of future ministers at the universities, and an increased emphasis on preaching. Spener's most notable follower was August Hermann Francke (1663–1727), who in 1691 was appointed professor of Greek and Oriental Languages at the newly established University of Halle. Under Francke's direction, Halle quickly became a leading center of Pietist studies. Although Pietism initially encountered significant resistance, especially from adherents of Lutheran orthodoxy, some rulers, such as the elector Frederick I of Prussia, embraced it. In Prussia, where the nobility was closely tied to the Lutheran Church, the monarchy's support of Pietism helped it secure a new ally against the provincial estates. In other cases, however, Pietists were less fortunate and were forced to move to areas where they would find a benefactor.

In Saxony, Count Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700–1760), strongly influenced by Pietism, granted refuge to a group of Moravians on his estate in 1722, where they were able to found the community Herrnhut (the Lord watches over). Under Zinzendorf's leadership the community spread quickly throughout Europe and to North America, where it inspired John Wesley (1703–1791), the founder of Methodism.



During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a variety of different movements emerged, which are all indebted to Pietism in varying degrees and even crossed the denominational line into Catholicism. Among these are Evangelicalism in England, the Réveil in France and Switzerland, and the Awakenings in Germany and the United States. Paradoxically this “neo-Pietism” was an offspring of the Enlightenment. In contrast to their seventeenth- and eighteenth-century predecessors, this new form of Pietism exhibited an unprecedented degree of optimism and an eagerness to establish societies and organizations such as youth groups.

### Significance of Pietism

The diversification of Pietism is also emblematic for the intellectual sources it drew on, digested, and developed. Many concepts and characteristics such as the “universal priesthood of all believers,” the formation of conventicles, or mysticism stem from the teachings of Martin Luther (1483–1546), John Calvin (1509–1563), and Jakob Böhme (1575–1624). At the center of Pietism stood the idea of a spiritual rebirth. Although this involved a higher degree of individualism, the concept of *communitas* remains pivotal. A process of sanctification, which includes a strong emphasis on inward edification, would eventually lead to the formation of a community of the “children of the Lord.” This belief, in combination with chiliastic elements under the guidance of the Book of Revelation, led to an increased emphasis on charitable and missionary work, since this would quicken the Second Coming of Christ.

Pietism’s greatest contribution was certainly in the field of Protestant theology. Pietism produced a large body of edifying literature and song. Especially noteworthy is its contribution in the area of the spiritual song, which served as a compensation for Pietism’s otherwise strict admonition against secular forms of entertainment such as theater or dance. Most famous in this area is probably Johann Anastasius Freylinghausen’s (1670–1739) *Geistreiche Gesangbuch* (1704; Spiritual hymnal), whose first edition contained 683 hymns and 183 melodies. It possibly served as a source for the composer Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750), whose cantatas and passions may have been influenced by Pietism.

A major point of scholarly debate remains the complex relationship between Pietism and the Enlightenment. Both of these “movements” were brothers in arms (at least initially) against religious orthodoxy and doctrine, and both strongly emphasized charity, compassion, and pedagogical initiatives. Pietism’s contributions in education, such as Francke’s *Pädagogium*, founded in Halle in 1696, are as significant as those of the Enlightenment, such as the Philanthropinum, founded in Dessau/Saxony in 1774 by Johann Bernhard Basedow (1723–1790). Enlightenment figures such as Samuel von Pufendorf (1632–1694) and Christian Thomasius (1655–1728) embraced Pietism’s focus on the laity and works of charity.

Yet the substance of the program of both the Enlightenment and Pietism with regard to religion could not have been more different. Whereas the rationalism of the Enlightenment sought to demystify religion, Pietism emphasized the inward spirituality of a “religion of the heart” as well as the centrality

of Scripture. The historical-critical method of biblical criticism undertaken by proponents of the Enlightenment undermined scriptural authority completely, whereas for Pietists the Bible practically served as the main source of guidance and knowledge. Symbolic for this antagonism is the conflict between the German Enlightenment philosopher Christian von Wolff (1679–1754) and factions of the theological faculty of the University of Halle under the leadership of Joachim Lange (1670–1744) and Johann Franz Buddeus (1667–1729). Both attacked Wolff on the grounds that his rationalism would inevitably lead to atheism and Spinozism. Surprisingly, many early Spinozists and radical thinkers such as Gottfried Arnold (1666–1714) and Johann Christian Edelmann (1698–1767) were originally Pietists, who still held on to many original ideas of the Reformation, such as the universal priesthood of all believers and freedom of conscience.

The case of Gottfried Arnold is particularly noteworthy. His *Unpartheyische Kirchen- und Ketzer-Historie* (2 vols., 1699–1700; Nonpartisan history of the church and heresy) was a pioneering work in ecclesiastical historiography. Far from being an apologetic work for heretics and still heavily influenced by mysticism, Arnold’s work nonetheless rendered heresy a respectable subject of scholarly study. It revealed the historical role of laymen and women in the church, and by describing the interrelation of church and state in history Arnold exposed darker aspects of the Christian Church. Arnold also serves as an example of how Pietism influenced later philosophical and literary movements.

The literary movement of Sturm und Drang (storm and stress) adopted Pietism’s emphasis on sensibility and spirituality to counter the rationalism of the Enlightenment. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832) wrote in his *Dichtung und Wahrheit* (1811–1833; Poetry and truth) that he profited from reading Arnold’s work at a very young age. But figures like Johann Georg Hamann (1730–1788), Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744–1803), and Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834) were also indebted to the Pietist concept of devoutness, and more recent scholarship suggests that Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) as well as Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831) were more indebted to Pietism than previous studies assume. Most of these figures were educated or raised under Pietist influence and digested parts of this early encounter in their works. In fact, Schleiermacher’s Moravian roots become apparent in his theology, which combined the Pietist idea of religious experience with the Romantic ideal of sensibility as opposed to the rationalism of the Enlightenment.

Pietism is a highly complex and multifaceted phenomenon that goes beyond the denominational limits of Lutheranism. Extending beyond just a spiritual phenomenon and the field of theology, Pietism’s impact could be felt in politics and culture as well. The movement’s far-reaching impact and diversity often makes it difficult to describe precisely the avenues it took, and so it often seems more fitting to distinguish between different Pietisms rather than lumping these strands together under one single umbrella. This becomes especially important with regards to the different strands of radical and separatist movements that developed the *collegia pietatis* into independent

social communities but which are often overlooked in general surveys of Pietism. The unprecedented, avid participation of women also suggests that these movements transgressed gender and class boundaries.

See also *Christianity; Enlightenment; Religion*.

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**PIETY AND IMPIETY.** See *Religion*.

**PLATONISM.** A principle feature of Platonism, which refers to the doctrines or philosophies influenced by Plato, is the belief in the existence of a distinction between the world that appears to the senses and a real realm that can be grasped only by the intellect. This latter realm contains the transcendental Ideas or Forms which, although existing independently of both the empirical world and human consciousness, may be apprehended through a human capacity of central import to Platonism, namely, that of reason. Reason, however, is not posited solely as a capacity possessed by humans, but is also understood more expansively as an ordering principle that extends throughout the entirety of the universe.

Platonism can be said to begin at Plato's death in 347 B.C.E. when his nephew Speusippus (c. 410–c. 339 B.C.E.) succeeded him as head of the Academy (founded by Plato in 386 B.C.E.). Under Speusippus, a Pythagorean metaphysics linking thought and numbers was drawn to the fore. The influence of the Epicurean and Stoic schools eventually superseded the preeminent role of the Academy, which turned toward the tradition of the Skeptics in its attempt to counter Stoicism. Confluent in many ways with the critical stance of Plato's teacher Socrates, the initial turn toward the Skeptic influence is generally associated with Arcesilaus (c. 316–c. 241 B.C.E.), while the further amplification of this tendency is associated with Carneades (213–129 B.C.E.).

With the decline of the Stoic influence, Neoplatonism, a new and highly significant strain of Platonism, emerged in the third century C.E. The influence of Pythagoreanism, already strongly imbued in Platonist thought, was here combined with features of Aristotelianism—although with Neoplatonism both the mathematical and quasi-religious features of Pythagorean

thought were greatly emphasized. Traceable to Ammonius Saccas (175?–c. 242), Neoplatonism was founded by his student Plotinus, the Egypto-Roman philosopher (205–270). In its broad fundamentals, Neoplatonism appears as an effort to articulate a relation between the two spheres that comprise the premier division in Platonism, that of the world of sense and that of the transcendent realm of Ideas. In Neoplatonism, the dichotomy between the two spheres emerged as a hierarchy of Being: in descending order, the One, Intellect or Mind, and the Soul, the Soul serving as the mediating functionary. Among those whose writings helped prepare the way for Neoplatonism was Philo (c. 20 B.C.E.–c. 50 C.E.), a notable member of the Egyptian Jewish diaspora whose writings on Hebrew scripture were based on Jewish religious revelation and highly influenced by the theory of Forms. Philo located the Forms within the Divine Mind; as preexisting features, these Forms serve as the pattern for the sensible world.

The significance exerted by Neoplatonist thought on Christian theology is traceable to Origen (185?–254? C.E.), who took from the Platonist tradition the doctrines of the preexistence of the soul and reincarnation and for whom, as for Philo, reason and revelation were not clearly distinguished. The relation between Neoplatonist philosophy and Christianity is most fully and richly pronounced, however, in the writings of St. Augustine (354–430). Augustine, a student of Neoplatonism before his conversion to Christianity, maintained the importance of this influence in his evolution toward the Christian faith. The Neoplatonist features of Augustine's thought emerge in his linking of human knowledge to an illumination by the Divine Mind and the positing of truth as existing in the mind of God. As with Philo and Origen, no absolute demarcation between reason and spiritual advancement exists in the writings of Augustine, for whom the highest level of philosophic knowledge is also at once a state of beatitude.

Neoplatonism exerted an influence not only upon Christianity, but also upon Islamic philosophy. Al-Kindi (c. 801–873) was the first of the Islamic philosophers influenced by Neoplatonism; he combined Neoplatonist thought with Aristotelian philosophy. Another significant figure was Avicenna (980–1037), who, like al-Kindi, is generally classified as an Aristotelian and was likewise influenced by Neoplatonism in his attempt to combine Platonist and Aristotelian traditions. The Neoplatonist proclivity for melding reason with spiritual insight emerged in the Middle Ages in the writings of St. Anselm (1033?–1109) and St. Bonaventure (1221–1274); the rationalist writings of the former were carried out under the Augustinian motto of *credo ut intelligam* (“I believe in order to understand”).

Despite the fact that by the thirteenth century Aristotle had largely supplanted Plato as the preeminent source of philosophic influence, a revival of Platonism occurred during the Renaissance. Inspired by Plato's Athenian Academy, the Florentine Academy was founded with the support of Cosimo de' Medici (1389–1464) in the mid-fifteenth century. Among the more influential figures populating the Academy were Marsilio Ficino (1433–1499) and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463–1494); Ficino's rendering of Platonic love exerted

considerable influence on the literature of the sixteenth century and beyond. In the European literature of successive centuries, both the doctrine of Platonic love and the notion of an unchanging transcendent true world resonated strongly, as, for example, in the sixteenth-century writings of Edmund Spenser (1552–1599) and in the Romanticism of the nineteenth century as found in the writings of Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792–1822) and William Wordsworth (1770–1850).

In the latter portion of the seventeenth century, the Neoplatonist tendency toward religiosity and mysticism emerged again in a group referred to as the Cambridge Platonists, for whom divine authority asserted the transcendent existence of ethical ideas. The premier enemy of the Cambridge Platonists was materialism; particularly that variation articulated in the writings of Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679). Benjamin Whichcote (1609–1683) and Henry More (1614–1687) number among this group, although Ralph Cudworth (1617–1688) is generally considered to be the most significant figure. Platonism was utilized not only as a counter to materialism but as a means to rethink empiricist philosophy, as found in the response of Richard Price (1723–1791) to the philosophy of John Locke (1632–1704). Among the German idealists, a Platonic inflection is found in the writings of Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), while similar tendencies condition the work of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831). In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a strikingly Platonic metaphysics occurred in the work of the Hegelian John Ellis McTaggart (1866–1925), for whom reality is a system of spiritual substances that reveal the unreality of both matter and temporality.

The influence of the Platonist rejection of the immediacies of sensible existence is likewise found in the writings of G. E. Moore (1873–1958). A common-sense realist, Moore rejected both materialism and idealism in favor of a philosophic realism. Moore was among the more energetic critics of idealism at the turn of the century, and his realism maintained a separation between the mental act of knowing and the objects of knowledge, the latter existing as interconnected objects independent of thought. Finally, Alfred North Whitehead (1861–1947) has been called the last and greatest of the Cambridge Platonists. A critic of positivism who sought a unified scientific religion, Whitehead articulated universal absolutes as eternal objects—and it was Whitehead who famously commented that all philosophy was “a series of footnotes to Plato.”

*See also Aristotelianism; Neoplatonism; Pythagoreanism; Stoicism.*

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**PLURALISM.** Pluralism derives from the Latin *plures*, meaning “several” or “many,” and it has formed the central concern of various intellectual traditions throughout the history of the West. Applied in philosophy, political theory, religion, and ethnic and racial relations, pluralism challenges the notion that a single authority or group must dominate all others. Rather than accepting the imposition of conformity to either a single standard of truth or a center of power, whether it is moral, political, cultural, or religious, pluralists have defended the right to diversity and difference. At its most promising, pluralism thus forms the basis of tolerance and the essential limitation of power and authority on behalf of human freedom.

### Philosophical Pluralism

Philosophical pluralism’s core belief consists of the notion that humans do not simply discover and copy, through the use of reason, a unified reality that exists independently of them. Rather, our view of reality, or that which we take as truth, is always influenced by our cultural and historical context. Truth, accordingly, can never be absolute, static, strictly objective, and monolithic. On the contrary, it always contains elements of subjectivity and change, more of relativism than absolutism. In short, truth, and even reality itself, consist of the many rather than the one.

Absolutism, on the other hand, holds that the human mind acts ideally as a passive mirror that faithfully reflects an independently existing, unified reality without distortion. Universal agreement about the nature of that reality is therefore possible. This notion was most famously articulated by the ancient Greek philosopher Plato (c. 428–348 or 347 B.C.E.). In his allegory of the cave, Plato regarded the knowledge of ordinary people to be distorted by the conventions of culture and the flux of change typical of the empirical world of passing phenomena. Plato’s philosopher, on the other hand, abandoned the cave of culture and walked outside into the light. There he apprehended the eternal, the unchanging, the very essence of all being—the pure Idea. Thus Plato’s philosopher rose above myth, deception, and error, above the darkness of the empirical world typical of the cave of ordinary life. He transcended all limitations to achieve objective, transparent, and timeless truth through the exercise of unconditioned reason. With his mind thus unfettered, the philosopher should also assume the political authority of king in the ideal republic because he alone could rule on the basis of truth and reason. Plato thereby introduced the undemocratic view that only those with privileged consciousness should rule.

### Aristotle

Future generations of pluralists would challenge absolutism in various ways, but it fell to Plato’s student Aristotle (384–322 B.C.E.) to criticize the overly abstract quality of the Platonic Idea of the Good, the True, and the Beautiful. In *The Nichomachean Ethics*, Aristotle pointed out that Plato’s disembodied categories of thought proved unhelpful and even irrelevant because they were too disconnected from reality to serve as a useful guide to experience. Even if the Platonic Idea of the Good, for example, could somehow be known by human reason (and Aristotle thought this impossible) “it is not easy to see

*how* knowing that same Ideal Good will help a weaver or carpenter in the practice of his own craft,” Aristotle argued, “or how anybody will be a better physician or general for having contemplated the absolute Idea” (p. 25). For Aristotle, reality consisted rather of the empirical facts as faced by humans in concrete situations. Not even the physician studies the Good in the abstract. Rather, “he studies the health of the human being—or rather of some particular human being, for it is the individual that he has to cure” (p. 25). Like Aristotle, future generations of pluralists would chafe against the arid abstractions of idealist philosophy; they, too, would favor the multiplicity of empirical facts encountered by historically situated subjects in search of truth capable of guiding action in the world shared by men and women. Their universe, unlike Aristotle’s, however, would be open-ended, changing; their truths would be plural rather than singular, monistic, and absolute. Nor would they come to expect universal agreement; for them, Socratic dialogue would be their guide.

### German Historicism

Giambattista Vico (1668–1744) and Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744–1803), the founders of German historicism, deepened the rebellion against monism and absolutism. These critics of the great tradition of Western philosophy rejected that tradition’s key assumption that natural laws operated to maintain an independent, objective reality, knowledge of which would yield absolute, foundational truth. Attacking the Enlightenment claim that European culture best exemplified the triumph of reason and science, Vico and Herder surveyed the sweeping panorama of history and cultural variation with deep respect and tenderness. Rather than demanding conformity to some chimerical universal truth, these pluralists cherished a world made vibrant by difference. Each culture, each epoch did not represent a mistake, deviation, or lower stage of development. Like a colorful garden made up of many flowers, the plurality of cultures suggested beauty and completeness in each form, all wondrous manifestations of the creative force of humankind. Vico grounded his defense of pluralism in a rejection of the philosophes’ notion that mathematical laws corresponded to those of an independent reality. Far from offering a paradigm of certainty, mathematics, for Vico, provided at best knowledge of regularity but certainly not authentic understanding of the human world. The utility of mathematics lay in its origin as a human creation, not in its presumed correspondence with reality. And humans could understand mathematics because they had created it. Vico then applied this maker’s theory of knowledge to the realm of culture. We could come to understand other cultures by virtue of our shared humanity and capacities as cocreators of culture. For this to occur, however, we must abandon the fallacious doctrine of absolutism and approach other cultures on their own terms.

Herder too rejected the mechanical method of science and universalism for sympathetic understanding, which he termed *Verstehen*. In exercising this ability to understand others separated from us by time or cultural difference, we engage the other in a process of dialogue in an encounter between self and other. Through the use of subtlety and imaginative reconstruction, we attempt to understand the different on its own terms rather than attempting to force it into conformity

with nonexistent laws. For Herder then, authentic progress consisted not in uniformity but in the acknowledgment that “not a man, not a country, not a people, not a natural history, not a state are like one another. Hence the True, the Good, the Beautiful in man are not similar either” (Berlin, p. 210). Thus by Herder’s lights, “It is terrible arrogance to affirm that, to be happy, everyone should become European” (Berlin, pp. 210, 197). For these defenders of difference, the flowering of spontaneous, natural forms of human self-expression by men and women in cultural groups united by a common language and worldview provided humankind with a flesh-and-blood alternative to the abstract, lifeless citizen of the Enlightenment.

### Pragmatism

At the dawn of the twentieth century, a new philosophical movement called pragmatism emerged, part of the modernist revolt against nineteenth-century orthodoxy. Influenced by the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) and the French thinker Henri-Louis Bergson (1859–1941), the movement included such leading figures as Charles S. Peirce (1839–1914), William James (1842–1910), and John Dewey (1859–1952). Although differences existed within the movement, pragmatists were united in their search for empirical truths capable of guiding action in a changing world. Unlike absolutists therefore, pragmatists conceived of truth as relative and akin to scientific hypotheses verifiable through experience and subject to revision in the light of new conditions. William James captured the reigning view of truth in his critique of absolute theism. Like philosophical idealism, its more secular counterpart, absolute theism insisted that “truth exists per se and absolutely by God’s grace and decree, no matter who of us knows it or is ignorant, and it would continue to exist unaltered, even though we finite knowers were all annihilated” (1909, p. 28). However, the proliferation of contending scientific theories in the late nineteenth century, as well as the profound influence of Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution, called into question the entire notion that truth represents a mere mental copy of a static, independent reality. Pragmatists believed “that even the truest formula may be a human device and not a literal transcript” (James, 1955, p. 233). Indeed James regarded the “very notion of a world complete unto itself, to which thought comes as a passive mirror, adding nothing to fact” as “irrational” (1955, p. 233).

By situating truth and reason inside the empirical flux of experience rather than outside it in some abstract, static transcendental realm, pragmatists abandoned the unhelpful quest for certainty and instead offered reason as an instrument of adaptation and dynamic transformation of the world. “What really exists,” James held, “is not things made but things in the making” (1909, p. 263). Regarding truth as an encounter between subject and object, he looked to “living understanding of the movement of reality” as an alternative. Moreover that flux could only be seen as pluralistic rather than monistic. In the place of monism, James thus offered his pluralistic universe, which he regarded “more like a federal republic than like an empire or kingdom. However much may report itself as present at any effective center of consciousness or action,” he cautioned, “something else is self-governed and absent and unreduced to unity” (1909, pp. 264, 321–322).

Life can be seen through  
many windows,  
none of them necessarily  
clear or opaque,  
less or more distorting  
than any of the others.

SOURCE: Sir Isaiah Berlin, “Winston Churchill in 1940,” in *Personal Impressions*, p. 4.

### Cultural Pluralism

The pluralistic defense of cultural diversity typical of Vico, Herder, and James has grown more powerful in the modern world as ethnic and racial groups within multiethnic societies have increasingly sought to exercise political power and retain their cultural heritage in the face of demands for cultural conformity. In the United States the pragmatists Horace Meyer Kallen (1882–1974) and Randolph Silliman Bourne (1886–1918) supplied a spirited defense of diversity during World War I. Although the American political tradition of classical liberalism championed individual rights, it failed to extend those rights to include the right to be culturally different. Liberal rights had wrongly assumed “that men are men merely, as like as marbles and destined under uniformity of conditions to uniformity of spirit,” Kallen wrote in “Democracy versus the Melting Pot” (p. 193). The right to cultural identity was essential to selfhood, however, and Kallen called for a “Federal republic,” a “democracy of nationalities, cooperating voluntarily and autonomously in the enterprise of self-realization through the perfection of men according to their kind” (p. 220).

Similarly Bourne’s 1916 essay “Transnational America” reminded dominant Anglo-Saxons that even the early colonists “did not come to be assimilated in an American melting-pot. They did not come to adopt the culture of the American Indian” (p. 249). Bourne also called for a “cosmopolitan federation of national colonies” within which ethnic groups “merge but they do not fuse” (pp. 258, 255). Thus an immigrant would be both a Serb and an American, for example, as difference harmonized with common ground.

Although both men challenged what was taken by most Anglo-Saxons to be the absolute truth regarding what it meant to be an American, Bourne went well beyond Kallen’s demand for freedom defined simply as a private right to be different. Influenced by the Enlightenment, Kallen assigned ethnicity to private life while he placed the public world in the hands of technical experts. Bourne, on the other hand, urged a national collaboration in the construction of a new national culture by all racial and ethnic groups in terms reminiscent of Herder. Contrarily then, Bourne’s freedom meant “a democratic cooperation in determining the ideals and purposes and industrial and social institutions of a country” (p. 252). Thus while Kallen’s vision served to strengthen the dominance of experts in the public

sphere of work and politics, Bourne called for a “Beloved Community” that placed democratic participation and a discussion of values at the very center of public life (p. 264).

Animated by these somewhat contradictory ideals, cultural pluralism constituted a protean movement in the first half of the twentieth century in the United States. Particularly important achievements include the efforts of John Collier (1884–1968) as commissioner of Indian Affairs during the administration of Franklin Roosevelt to overturn the U.S. government’s policy of assimilation of the American Indian. Due to Collier’s efforts, Native Americans regained the right to their cultures, lands, and tribal political institutions after decades of denial. The Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s also reflected the principles of cultural pluralism. Alain Leroy Locke (1886–1954), America’s first African-American Rhodes scholar and a former student of William James, furnished the guiding vision of the Renaissance and helped to achieve Bourne’s “beloved community.” Finding beauty within himself, through a rebirth of black art, the “new Negro” would thereby achieve the moral dignity suited to a “collaborator and participant in American civilization” (Locke, 1925, p. 5). Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, Claude Mackay, Jean Toomer, and others awakened black pride and offered an aesthetically and spiritually barren industrial capitalist America African-American wisdom and beauty instead of the ashes of materialism.

During the second half of the twentieth century, cultural pluralist thought in the United States was increasingly eclipsed by the lingering commitment of liberal intellectuals to the Marxist notion of culture as mere superstructure or as determined by the more fundamental struggle for power. Nevertheless, minority groups continue to struggle to achieve cultural democracy in the early twenty-first century’s multicultural societies. As the Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor, following Herder, has argued, being true to oneself requires an acknowledgment by both self and other of the indispensable role of culture in the creation of identity. Because culture imparts those particular aspects—religion, language, traditions—that make an individual or group unique, the forced assimilation of minorities to the hegemonic standard of identity by a majority group constitutes a form of oppression and violence of the spirit. This recognition has led in turn to efforts to expand the political theory of liberalism to include not only a defense of identical universal rights but the right of groups to cultural differences as well. Cultural pluralists therefore seek to supplant cultural monism or absolutism with pluralism by reconciling community with diversity in the modern world.

Critics of cultural pluralism and multiculturalism worry, however, that the twenty-first century’s emphasis on racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity will go too far and erode the common ground necessary to national unity. Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., for example, decried the collapse of shared values and traditions under the weight of a dangerous tribalism in *The Disuniting of America*. Assimilation within the crucible of the melting pot, America’s “brilliant solution for the inherent fragility of a multicultural society,” was being destroyed by the multiculturalists’ “search for roots” and the “cult of ethnicity” (Schlesinger, pp. 13, 15). Thus unity threatened to “give way to the Tower of Babel” (Schlesinger, p. 17).

Political thought is representative. I form an opinion by considering a given issue from different viewpoints, by making present to my mind the standpoints of those who are absent; that is, I represent them. . . . The more people’s standpoints I have present in my mind while I am pondering a given issue, and the better I can imagine how I would feel and think if I were in their place, the stronger will be my capacity for representative thinking and the more valid my final conclusions, my opinion.

SOURCE: Hannah Arendt, “Truth and Politics,” in *Between Past and Future*, p. 241.

David Hollinger has similarly pointed out the dangers of diversity. Unlike Schlesinger’s prescription for a conformist unity based on assimilation, however, Hollinger has called for a postethnic America founded upon cosmopolitanism. Drawing a helpful distinction between cosmopolitanism and conformist universalism, he argued that the former “shared with all varieties of universalism a profound suspicion of enclosures, but cosmopolitanism is defined by an additional element not essential to universalism itself: recognition, acceptance, and eager exploration of diversity” (p. 84). At their best, such critics remind us that the claims of diversity and community must be reconciled, a reconciliation achieved by the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s.

### Political Pluralism

In practice, the political variation on pluralist thought has attempted to disperse political power and authority in modern societies, with varying degrees of success. English political pluralists, for example, grappled with the problem of maintaining political diversity and liberty in the face of the growing power of the modern state in the early twentieth century. Influenced by the Whig tradition, which sought to safeguard the achievements of the Glorious Revolution of 1688 by limiting state power through a system of checks and balances, J. N. Figgis (1866–1919) and Harold J. Laski (1893–1950) feared this centralization of power and sought to disperse it among the various groups and associations within society. They thus opposed the idealist view of the state, typical of T. H. Green (1836–1882) and F. H. Bradley (1846–1924), as the highest expression of social unity. Contrarily, pluralists regarded the state as one group among many, the function of which consisted of maintaining individual liberty and the social order necessary to the pursuit of substantive goods by groups within a flourishing civil society. In their insistence that state power be limited, pluralists therefore followed the lead of Alexis de Tocqueville (1805–1859) and F. W. Maitland (1850–1906),



both of whom sought to strengthen those intermediate groups between the individual and the state as the most effective bulwark against tyranny. The works of Laski and Figgis influenced English guild socialists, such as G. D. H. Cole, S. G. Hobson, and A. R. Orage, who hoped to use the state to establish guilds that would abolish capitalism and reinstitute worker control of industry. That tradition, however, lost influence from 1920 to 1960 to the state socialism of the Labour Party.

Whereas their English counterparts were preoccupied with limiting state power, American pluralists, such as Arthur F. Bentley, Walter Lippmann, David Truman, and Robert Dahl, stressed a notion of pluralism as a system of indirect democracy characterized by interest-group competition and a balance of power. Purportedly open to all citizens and overseen by enlightened elites, these groups engaged in bargaining and compromise over rational, limited ends. With its roots in the works of Roberto Michels, Gaetano Mosca, and Vilfredo Pareto, American political pluralism, especially after World War II, emphasized the necessity of political and economic elites in maintaining democracy. As interpreted by liberal intellectuals during the Cold War, the masses could not be trusted to act rationally out of reasonable self-interest. Instead, they were seen as authoritarian, prone to conspiracy theories, and uncommitted to the values of liberal democracy. Only a system of interest-group competition within a stable, corporate capitalist system overseen by enlightened elites could prevent the mass activism that had led in Europe to the totalitarian regimes of Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin, it was believed. Thus democracy was redefined to mean not rule by the people but rather rule of the people by elites. Ethnic and racial groups were consequently redefined as organized interest groups vying with each other for a fair share of economic and political power within a responsive, expanding system of corporate capitalism and interest-group pluralism. Rule by the professional managerial class, experts, and intellectuals was therefore both rationalized and justified, a view for which pluralism has often been criticized. Nevertheless, Robert Dahl has called for the establishment of self-governing worker cooperatives in industry as a democratic antidote to the concentration of political power by America's corporate oligarchy. Likewise some neopluralist thinkers seek to revise conceptions of political power and better account for the political voice and engagement of the diverse groups pluralism aims to protect.

### Conclusion

Reinhold Niebuhr captured the spirit of pluralism when he wrote: "Absolutism, in both religious and political idealism, is a splendid incentive to heroic action, but a dangerous guide in immediate concrete situations. In religion it permits absurdities and in politics . . . unbearable tyrannies and cruelties" (p. 199). As the horrific events of September 11, 2001, demonstrated, religious absolutism too is capable of "unbearable cruelties." In the aftermath of September 11, pluralism therefore increasingly became synonymous with religious and cultural diversity and secularism as well as the decentralization of political power typical of the modern West. Thus pluralism has come to signify the tolerance and liberalism of the Western tradition as opposed to the closed, totalitarian societies of

Islamic fundamentalists. Whatever the sources of absolutism may be, the works of Hannah Arendt (1906–1975) and Isaiah Berlin (1909–1997) as well as those of the earlier pluralists remain an important guide in troubled times.

*See also Capitalism; Citizenship; Civil Society; Cultural Studies; Idealism; Identity: Personal and Social Identity; Liberalism; Marxism; Nation; Representation: Political Representation.*

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**POETRY AND POETICS.** In the fourth century B.C.E. Aristotle (384–322) successfully founded the discipline of poetics both by accepting poetry as suitable for rational analysis and by setting up the main terms of debate that still define the field today. Issues of genre, representation, decorum, interpretation, aesthetic evaluation, and what might be considered the essence of literary language are all broached in Aristotle's remarkable treatise *On Poetics*. Moreover, since he described this art or skill (*technē*) as concerned with what *may happen* as opposed to what *has happened*—with possibility, probability, or necessity rather than mere actuality (1451b)—the topic has been consistently attractive to philosophical investigation. Unmarred by the contingencies or accidents that characterize historiography, poetry may serve as a privileged area for philosophical reflection. Long before the eighteenth century developed a rigorous theory of aesthetics, Aristotle outlined the conceptual space wherein poetry and philosophy could enter into a fruitful and mutually enlightening dialogue.

### Genre

As a science of interpretation, poetics has consistently been concerned with delineating its proper field of study (“What is a poetic text?”) and then subdividing it into genres (“What kind of poetic text is under consideration and what interpretive approaches does it select?”).

**Classical poetics.** Although classical writers on the subject of literary types failed to formulate a comprehensive system of genres, they did fix certain distinctions that would continue to play a role—first prescriptive, then descriptive—in the Western poetic tradition. To begin with, the term *poetics* as Aristotle defined it exclusively pertains to literary works composed in verse. The verse form, however, is a less important criterion than the notion of *poiēsis*, which perhaps would be best understood as “fiction.” While it was common practice in antiquity to present scientific material in verse form, Aristotle decisively limited the term *poetry* to fictional representations. Homer is a poet; Empedocles is not (1447b). Prose, which was then restricted to oratory, historiography, and Aristotle's own manner of philosophical discourse, belongs instead to the realm of *rhetoric*. The fact that Aristotle neglected to account for the fictional use of prose, for example, in the fable, is already an indication of his general lack of comprehensiveness.

In a similarly broad move, Plato (c. 428–348 or 347 B.C.E.) had divided all literary genres into two primary categories: poetic representations by way of described action, as in epic poetry; and representations by way of impersonated action, as in drama. When Plato was faced with the fact that Homeric epic in fact employs both modes of representation, the philosopher added the “mixed mode,” where the related action alternates

between straight narrative and re-created dialogue (392–394). The existence of what we would call lyric poetry (for example, iambic poetry, elegy, melic poetry, or choral odes) is vaguely acknowledged by Plato in Book 10 of the *Republic*, but only to be condemned as beautifully contrived falsehoods passed off as truth. Aristotle, whose explicit intention at the beginning of *On Poetics* is to give an account of “poetry in itself and its kinds or forms [*eidē*]” (1447a), summarily abandons a discussion of lyric composition by reverting to Plato's fundamental division between narration and impersonated dialogue.

This persistent lacuna, however, hardly played a role in the development of European poetics. The crucial point rather is that both Plato and Aristotle insisted that poetry is an art of representation or imitation (*mimēsis*). Placed alongside a nascent theory of genre, the idea of mimesis introduces the important issue of *decorum* (what is appropriate for certain characters to say or do in certain situations). An ancient concern for genre thereby anticipated one of the fundamental tenets of later formalism, namely that representational content is inseparable from representational form. With the identification and accumulation of more poetic forms in Latin treatises such as Horace's *Ars poetica* and Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria*, classical genre theory could be further codified to serve as a system of prescriptive rules for composition as well as for the critic's evaluation.

**Neoclassicism and its critics.** The rediscovery of Aristotle's *On Poetics* in the sixteenth century gave rise to a fresh and impassioned interest in codifying a system of poetic forms. In addition to debates on the viability of particular “mixed forms,” for example, Giovanni Guarini's scandalous defense of his tragicomedy, *Il pastor fido* (1590; The faithful shepherd), this period established the doctrine of the three “unities” of time, place, and action, which would have a decisive influence on dramatic productions well into the eighteenth century. Lodovico Castelvetro's seminal commentary on Aristotle's *Poetics* (1570) is the key source of much of the normative poetics promulgated by European Neoclassicism. Another high point is Nicolas Boileau's elaborate typology, outlined in his *Art poétique* (1674), where the fundamental categories of epic and drama (both tragic and comic) are joined by the pastoral poem, the elegy, the ode, the epigram, and satire. As is generally the case with neoclassical movements, the rationale for such divisions as well as the demand that each genre remain distinct from the others are proffered as self-evident and entirely natural. Twentieth-century critics of ideology, for example, Fredric Jameson, will argue that it is precisely this naturalness that indicates that all genre theories reinforce the hegemonic order. The hierarchies of generic explication and their attendant ideals of decorum dictate the relations between the high, middle, and low spheres and thereby have deep implications for societal and political organization.

Although Romanticism rejected the authoritarian conventions prescribed by Neoclassicism, poets of the late eighteenth century, particularly in Germany, seem to have recognized the importance of literary form in relation to content. Genre is how poetry specifically transforms the actual into the possible. Friedrich Hölderlin (1770–1843), for example, developed an elaborate genre system to underwrite his experiments on the



long Pindaric ode. In his fragmentary essay, “Über die verschiedenen Arten, zu dichten” (c. 1800; On the different ways to compose poetry), he combines genre theory and a kind of ontological decorum by detecting a “proper” and “improper” tone in the constitution of the three major poetic modes: the natural, the heroic, and the ideal, which correspond respectively to lyric, epic, and drama. Literary genres became associated with the epistemological concerns opened up by the critical philosophy of Immanuel Kant (1724–1804). Here, traditional approaches to genre-criticism contributed to new models for explaining how we give form to the world around us.

**Contemporary issues.** Although the idea of using prescriptive norms for poetic composition had been entirely discredited by the close of the eighteenth century, this does not mean that theories of genre no longer contributed to discussions of poetics. Although Benedetto Croce (1866–1952) in his *Aesthetics* (1902) persuasively argued that all genre designations were mere abstractions disrespectful of the artwork’s uniqueness, there has been no lack of theoreticians who have recognized the benefits of generic descriptions for the study of literature. Accordingly, genre criticism has yielded to notions of intertextuality, where, as in the famous remark by T. S. Eliot (1888–1965), a poet’s individual voice is determined only in relation to the preceding tradition of forms or conventions. Northrop Frye, who outlines an altogether elaborate system of literary archetypes in his *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957), similarly approaches literary history with an eye toward broad, organizational patterns. Structuralist accounts, which in many respects respond to Frye’s archetypal criticism, essentially replace the term *genre* with *code*. The work of Roland Barthes, Tzvetan Todorov, and Gérard Genette, for example, demonstrates the continued usefulness of generic criticism, especially when the notion of genre assumes a more provisional and aspectual quality. Even postmodern theorists of *écriture féminine* (feminine writing), which explicitly claim to transgress all interpretive laws, as in the work of Hélène Cixous, should be regarded as perpetuating discussions of genre, however idiosyncratically. This is the case even when generic boundaries serve as the target of critique, as in theories of gender and sexuality, for example in the work of Judith Butler.

### Interpretation

Since Aristotle, poetic theory has oscillated between two distance tendencies: the desire to formulate philosophical statement aimed at describing the essential elements of poetry; and the equally prevalent desire to make aesthetic judgments capable of evaluating a given poetic work. Both strands work together to define the basic project of interpretation.

**Philosophy and aesthetic judgment.** Evident throughout Aristotle’s *Poetics* is an oscillation between two distinct tendencies: the desire to formulate philosophical statements aimed at describing the essential elements of poetry; and the equally prevalent desire to make aesthetic judgments capable of evaluating a given poetic work. Aristotle assumes the twin roles of theorist and critic. Certainly the theoretical emphasis on mimesis establishes the criterion for critical evaluation. Once representation is posited as the defining term for poetry, the question that always arises is: How well has the artist portrayed

the real? If one accepts Plato’s ontological division between a realm of transcendent Forms and the physical reality that merely copies them, then poetic mimesis is a doubly weak version, being a mere copy of a copy, “two steps removed from Truth” (10.602c).

If, however, like Aristotle, one construes mimesis as something creative rather than passive, as something that represents human actions rather than physical objects, then one can judge how effectively the poet has presented a new reality—a *possible* world—albeit on the basis of the actual. Already, then, in this quarrel between Plato and Aristotle, one can see the divide, persistent throughout the centuries, between those who demand poetry’s adherence to a referent in the world and those who appreciate poetry’s capacity to be self-referential.

Kant’s *Critique of Judgment* (1790) is the first sustained attempt to reconcile the claims of philosophical description with the declarations of subjective evaluation. By grounding the judgment of the beautiful entirely in a nonutilitarian, “disinterested pleasure,” Kant arrives at his goal of a subjective universal, which solves the inevitable problem of any poetic theory: How can the unique qualities of a poem (*poiesis singularis*) withstand the abstracting, de-individualizing forces of conceptual understanding (*mathesis universalis*)? Kant’s aesthetics, which successfully delimits a space for a nonconceptual mode of philosophizing, thereby becomes a foundational text for Western poetics, first through Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Friedrich Schiller, and then in twentieth-century aesthetics devoted to the intricate relations between content and form.

**Representation and expression.** Whereas the experience of the beautiful is firmly based on notions of representation, Kant’s discussion of the sublime takes place precisely where representation breaks down. An increasing attention to the ancient treatise *On the Sublime*, falsely attributed to Longinus (fourth century C.E.), brought along a new understanding of literature not strictly as a mimesis of the external world but rather as an expression of something internal. The title of M. H. Abrams’s extensive study *The Mirror and the Lamp* (1953) concisely marks the transition from a classical poetics of representation to a Romantic theory of expression, where, in the words of William Wordsworth (1770–1850), poetry became “the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings” (Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, 1798). Accordingly, the trend at the beginning of the nineteenth century to emphasize expression over representation paralleled the privilege given to lyric poetry over epic. This new preference reflected the general turn to concerns about subjectivity, which had come to define the post-Kantian philosophical environment. As might be expected, the fresh subjectivism brought a rekindled interest in notions of affect, consciousness, and emotion, all of which acted as a corrective to what was now viewed as the excessively one-sided objectivism of the Aristotelian tradition.

Expressivist theories of literature extended well past Romantic schools and informed a good deal of twentieth-century poetics. Theories of the preverbal or nondiscursive origins of art belong to this tradition, be it in the psychoanalytic-semiotic investigations of Julia Kristeva or the nearly Heideggerian meditations of Maurice Blanchot, where the work of art is but the

finite expression of an otherwise inaccessible, original experience. In this respect, Orpheus is Blanchot's paradigmatic poet precisely because Eurydice disappears in his backward gaze: what is always missing from the work of art is its origin.

### Poetic Function

The question of whether poetry is primarily representation or expression invariably hinges on the poetic function in language. What makes language literary? Is it possible to distinguish between a literary and a nonliterary use of language? Twentieth-century responses to these perennial questions differed from earlier discussions in that they tended to reformulate the matter by questioning the very tenability of a division between poetry and poetics. With an increased awareness of the rhetorical quality of all language—its “rhetoricity”—come fresh difficulties in discerning scientific from nonscientific discourse, concepts from metaphors, objectivity from subjectivity.

**New criticism and formalism.** Common sense would assert that the distinction between poetry and poetics is obvious. The poet provides what the interpreter must study, appreciate, and even evaluate. The New Critics, who during the middle decades of the twentieth century governed the reading practices of English-speaking academia, reinforced this commonsense premise by stressing the creative, literary qualities of the primary material (for example, the poem) and the scientific, essentially nonliterary qualities of the commentary devoted to it. This theoretical partitioning already determines what may and may not be considered a poem. As is so often the case, theory produces its own object of study. Whereas other interpretive traditions would regard poetry as representing reality mimetically, or as an expression of some internal state, or even as a vehicle for knowledge about the world or humankind in general, the New Critics were concerned exclusively with formal properties. And it is this decisive emphasis that invariably characterized the exegetical activity of the interpreter as an altogether distinct mode of discourse. The activities of the poet and the poetician rested on two entirely different functions of language. Even when a single person happened to publish both poetry and works of criticism, the difference was maintained by keeping an inventive treatment of language separate from more utilitarian intentions. The crafted, somewhat opaque quality of the poem, which featured any number of figurative and stylistic devices, from metaphors and imagery to alliteration and rhyme, distinguished itself from the critical tools of poetics, which on the whole abstained from figurative language and instead gave the appearance of being unambiguous and immediately transparent.

The paradigm for establishing this firm boundary between poetry and poetics is derived from the belief that the text should be approached by a reader who remains utterly detached from it. Cleanth Brooks's “well-wrought urn,” therefore, constituted an isolated and autonomous artifact, a tightly composed object wherein content is absolutely inseparable from form. Immanently coherent and dramatically structured by forces in tension, the poem presents itself as especially amenable to a highly professional explication. In a methodology that built on Kant's notion of aesthetic disinterestedness, the New Critical ideal prohibited any recourse to subjective opinion or impressionistic

feelings. Poetry and poetics had to be sharply delineated so as to preserve the formal purity of the artwork from personal contamination, not only from the reader, but from the author as well. Biographical details, sociocultural context, or other historical circumstances were all excluded from consideration by the New Critics, for whom art subsisted on intrinsic qualities alone free from all extrinsic forces.

Similarly, but with a greater attention to linguistic patterns, Russian formalists such as Victor Shklovsky, Boris Eichenbaum, and Roman Jakobson held that the distinction between the nonliterary and the literary was of primary importance. Again, their mode of investigation was concerned entirely with intrinsic elements. In his seminal essay “Linguistics and Poetics” (1960), Jakobson defines the “poetic function” of language as that which promotes “the palpability of signs,” which is to say that poetic language calls attention to its own medium. Whereas when one reads a nonliterary text it is necessary to *look through* the text, a literary experience is essentially an invitation to *look at* the text. The doctrine of the inseparability of form and content demands that the materiality of textual signs resist easy dissolution into immaterial sense. This adherence to the radically self-referential qualities of a poem was aimed at correcting the subjectivism of Romantic criticism, but thereby it also instigated denunciations from more politically motivated theorists, for example, from the Marxist Leon Trotsky (1879–1940), who attacked the formalists' neglect of the historical, social, and economic conditions of literature. For Trotsky—and this point would be championed by later Marxist critics—the formalist's act of sealing the poem off from life could be understood only as a grave shortcoming.

**Structuralism.** It was Jakobson's indebtedness to the work of the linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1857–1913) that connected Russian formalism to various trends of literary and cultural analysis grouped under the name *structuralism*. The key methodological premise of structuralism is that theoretical investigation must attend to systems, as opposed to the manifestations of those systems. In Saussure's terms, analysis is concerned with *langue* (“the system of language,” analogous to grammar) as opposed to *parole* (“actual expressions in the language”). The autonomous work of art should be subjected to an examination that will yield information about the system's operation. It is easy to see how this theoretical disposition would appeal more readily to the Russian formalists than to the Anglo-American New Critics, who had difficulties abandoning the idea of the poet as individual crafter. In structuralism, the literary work of art is simply the creation of transpersonal or even impersonal systems wholly beyond the author's control. As a movement, it marked the deposing of the individual, which eventually developed into the antihumanist stance most popularly associated with Roland Barthes, who along with others announced the “death of the author.” Interestingly, it is precisely this decentering of the individual artist that reconciled formalism with the demands of Marxist criticism: no longer the product of a single author working essentially in isolation, literature for the structuralists came to be regarded as the result of cultural and social systems, which served as correlatives to the socioeconomic conditions scrutinized by Marxist theorists. The ideological criticism of writers such as Louis Althusser reinterpreted the author

more specifically as a *subject* whose particular historical position serves as a conduit for the forces that maintain the hegemonic order of the state.

The work of Northrop Frye, which gives a different critique of formalism, owes more to Freud than to Marx. Still, Frye upheld the formalist principle of the poem's autonomy by keeping poetics (criticism, interpretation, or commentary) qualitatively separate from poetry. At the beginning of his *Anatomy of Criticism*, for example, he asserts, "There is a totally intelligible structure of knowledge attainable about poetry which is not poetry itself, or the experience of it" (p. 14). This distinction corresponds specifically to the difference between science and art. Science, the science of poetics, for example, deals exclusively with concepts or with the essence of poetry, both of which necessarily transcend the particularity of the object under investigation. The structure that makes poetry comprehensible is explicitly not poetry. The practice is similar to the model of psychoanalytic theory in that the wakeful scientist-*cum*-interpreter stands apart from the various distortions of the dream-work, in order to render the incomprehensible comprehensible. Accordingly, the singular experience of art must find its truth outside itself in the abstract categories of understanding.

**Poststructuralism.** The weaknesses of a demarcation between poetics and poetry along the lines of science and art are acutely recognized by literary theorists working in the wake of formalist and structuralist methods. First and foremost, any systematic division between poetry and poetics is based on the presumption that the particularities of a poem must be subsumed under the general concepts of theory if they are to communicate intelligibly. This view holds that abstractions alone give meaning to the singular event of the text. Invariably, these approaches lead to either a naïve optimism or a barren skepticism: the interpreter is either applauded for discovering and transmitting some hidden significance of a poetic work of art or denounced for proffering illusory interpretations that are merely subjectively imposed structures whose actual existence in the text remains highly questionable. On a more fundamental level, the distinction between a scientific poetics and a nonscientific (artistic) poetry relies on the untenable belief that poetic language can readily be separated from nonpoetic usage. As Jacques Derrida has shown, throughout the history of Western metaphysics philosophy persistently has made every effort to deny its participation in a language that it shares uncomfortably with poetic and literary texts. Philosophy tries to disavow a metaphorical use of language that necessarily compromises its aspirations to conclusions that are purely scientific, not contingent on history or culture, and therefore universally applicable. Deconstruction works to reveal that all language is metaphorical, that all science is art, that every poetics is poetry.

The dissolution of these barriers is already recognizable in the Greek word *technē*, which ambiguously denotes both science and art. Insofar as it is a *technē*, poetics shares with poetry the capacity to produce. Aristotle thereby brought out the artistic element of poetics as well as the scientific element of poetry, by considering both as modes of production. Just as Sophocles was responsible for producing *Oedipus Tyrannus*, so

For the historian and the poet do not differ by speaking either in meters or without meters. . . . But they differ in this: the one speaks of what has come to be while the other speaks of what sort would come to be. Therefore *poiēsis* is more philosophic and of more stature than history. For poetry speaks rather of the general things while history speaks of the particular things.

SOURCE: Aristotle, *On Poetics*, 1451b.

Aristotle saw himself as producing statements or judgments about it. Even in granting the fundamental distinctions between the scientific, investigative approach of one and the inventive, creative intent of the other, Aristotle suggests it is necessary to maintain this essential similarity.

That said, it is important to remember that although Aristotle does not posit poetry and poetics as opposites, he does in fact oppose poetry to history. It is history and not poetry that should be understood as the presentation of the particular. Poetry, by contrast, is philosophical, more interested in universals. If it is true that poetics performs a creative role comparable to poetry, then it is also true that poetry participates in the philosophical, abstracting project of poetics. In other words, Aristotle does not so much turn the philosophical project of poetics into poetry as transform poetry itself, in all its uniqueness, into a kind of philosophy. On this basis it is simple to see how Aristotelianism came to underwrite centuries of normative poetics. Precisely because poetics is a *productive* science, it has been capable of serving as a guide for the poet. Poetics operates not only in the realm of theory but in that of practice as well.

Romanticism may offer an alternative conclusion, namely that *as production* poetics itself should be construed as poetry. As Walter Benjamin (1892–1940) demonstrates in his study on the concept of criticism in Friedrich von Schlegel (1772–1829), both the artwork and the attendant theory must exhibit a creative impulse. Contrary to the formalist conclusion, Romantic theoreticians would deny the nonpoetic access to the poetic. In Lyceum Fragment 117, Schlegel adheres to the broadest ramifications of the word *technē*; when he collapses any distinction between art and science: "A critical judgment which is not itself a work of art has no citizen's rights in the realm of art" (p. 319).

**Hermeneutics, reception theory, and new readings.** The poetic response to poetry established by Romantic theory underpins one of the greatest achievements of Romantic philosophy, namely hermeneutics as elaborated by Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834). By emphasizing the role of the reader in the production of a text's meaning, Schleiermacher



prepared the way for later theoreticians of reading, particularly those associated with reader response. Reader-response theory identifies, describes, and gathers together a variety of reader types into a general theory of reception. Wolfgang Iser, for example, overrides the New Critical neglect of the reader's role—once branded the “affective fallacy” by William K. Wimsatt and Monroe C. Beardsley (1954)—when he grounds interpretation in the ever-shifting and inexhaustibly complicated experience of reading itself.

Deconstructive critics go even further. They radicalize the idea of the reader by voiding any promise of discovering a stable meaning within the text. Exposed to an apparently infinite universe of readerly forces, the poem or literary work puts into play textual energies impossible to foresee or control. At best, as Paul de Man has suggested, the literary critic may attend to the text's rhetorical properties: not what textual content might mean, but rather how meaning is produced. It is when such fresh and sophisticated investigations are focused on the construction of meaning that poetic theory becomes especially applicable to intellectual and political debates. Feminist criticism, queer studies, and postcolonial studies all build on rhetorical training in an essential way. The politically focused work of Susan Bordo and Judith Butler, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's advance in queer theory, and studies in postcolonialism sparked by theorists like Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, and Homi Bhabha all provide crucial approaches and speculative models to culture with its variegated materials. The political ramifications of poetic theory are no more clearly revealed than in Aristotle's formulation that poetry liberates us from the actual by presenting us with the possible. No longer in thrall to “what has come to be,” we become open to “what *would* come to be.” At least potentially, every poetics speaks in the optative mood.

See also *Aesthetics; Literary Criticism; Literature; Rhetoric.*

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John T. Hamilton

**POLITICAL, THE.** The word *political* derives from a Latin cognate (*politicus*) of the original Greek adjective *politikos*, which is also sometimes employed as a masculine noun to signify a public official or statesman.

#### Origins

The term thus originates in the ancient world, where it was typically applied to the features and qualities of a life based in the *polis*, delineating the uniquely civic existence led by its citizens from other modes of life. In Roman antiquity, Greek terminology for the polis disappeared in favor of *civitas* (which can refer to the city, but also to the condition of being a citizen) and related words derived from the Latin world of the Roman Republic. But under the influence of Aristotle, medieval Europe became reacquainted with the Greek vocabulary, employing it interchangeably with the Latin and, later, incorporating it into vernacular languages. Early modern authors referred repeatedly to “political society” and similar doctrines. Subsequently, social researchers have maintained that politics, like other human endeavors, should be the subject of scientific study, creating the modern discipline of “political science.”

### Current Usage

Precisely understood, the nominalization of the adjective “political” to construct *the political*, an abstract noun that demarcates a unique realm of existential experience, reflects an entirely modern development along with the influence of German philosophy on the contemporary lexicon of political theory. While in the early twenty-first century it enjoys broad circulation conveying a range of meanings that traverse the spectrum of contemporary political theory, this usage can be traced to the controversial German legal scholar, Carl Schmitt (1888–1985), whose treatise on *The Concept of the Political* (*Der Begriff des Politischen*) appeared in 1932.

Schmitt contends that the concept of the political is integral to the idea—and therefore to the intelligibility as well as ultimately the viability—of the state. As he explains at the beginning of *The Concept of the Political*, “[t]he concept of the state presupposes the concept of the political” (p. 19), for the latter expresses the defining antithesis around which every genuine political order arises. To be precise, *the political* denotes a fundamental, existential category to which belongs the distinction between friend and enemy. It hence encompasses powers, actions, and institutions tied to the necessity of such a determination, distinguishing them from those that pertain to other elemental categories, such as the moral, the aesthetic, or the economic. Moreover, it necessarily exercises a certain priority over all other categories since it entails, as Schmitt puts it, “the right to demand from [members of the polity] the readiness to die and unhesitatingly to kill enemies” (p. 46). And by the same token, it conveys the essence of the idea of sovereignty, that is, the authority to make such demands from those claiming membership in the sovereign entity.

An enemy, for Schmitt, is one who threatens the way of life of another. Schmitt therefore represents the state as a collective body whose political character resides most definitively in its ability to identify those who threaten its way of life—its enemies. In Schmitt’s words, “the state as an organized political entity decides for itself the friend-enemy distinction” (p. 29). Schmitt does not, however, mean to imply that every state is perpetually faced with war and conflict or that political life consists only of military action. He argued, in fact, that war is neither the aim nor the substance of politics but simply “the leading presupposition which determines in a characteristic way human action and thinking, and thereby creates a specifically political behavior” (p. 34). That behavior, accordingly, always has the preservation and perpetuation of a certain existence or mode of life as its ultimate impetus and justification. Thus the practice of politics is always tethered to a situation in which war, acknowledged by Schmitt to be the “most extreme” possibility (p. 35), remains nevertheless wholly conceivable.

If the possibility of war should be finally eliminated and the distinction between friend and enemy rendered obsolete, politics too would disappear. A world in which no social entity any longer finds reason to employ the distinction between friend and enemy would, according to Schmitt, include “neither politics nor state,” even if “culture, civilization, economics, morality, law, art, entertainment, etc.” persist (p. 53). Moreover, because politics can never be cordoned off from the

possibility of conflict and violence, the attempt to liberate politics from the friend-enemy distinction, an endeavor that Schmitt identified with modern liberalism, leads to an illusory politics that eventually abandons the state to the play of private interests. Schmitt believed this condition to be in fact the state of affairs that characterized Germany during the Weimar Republic.

### Recent Impact

Schmitt had a pronounced if sometimes unacknowledged impact on a number of important German social and political thinkers coming of age in the Weimar period, in particular on leading members of the Frankfurt School such as Walter Benjamin and Otto Kirchheimer. The often uneasy interest of radical left-wing thinkers is largely what enabled Schmitt to exercise a lasting influence on the contours and vocabulary of modern political thought. It is certainly not the case, however, that Schmitt’s influence has been limited to thinkers on the left. Among the last century’s most important thinkers for conservatives was Leo Strauss, another young student of political philosophy who came to maturity in the Weimar Republic. Strauss’s critique of modern liberalism might be said to take its cue from an acknowledgment of Schmitt’s achievement in reviving the political.

In more recent decades, both contemporary feminist political theory and select currents of democratic theory have been invigorated by a confrontation with the thought of Schmitt. Feminist champions of an “agonistic politics” have drawn inspiration from Schmitt’s treatment of the state, which arises in the first instance as a bulwark against enemies. Schmitt’s formulation of the political, moreover, implicitly rejects the liberal subordination of politics to material and economic relations, lending support to feminist assertions of the primacy of politics. Other theorists of contemporary democracy have found in Schmitt’s work a powerful critique of liberal democracy that can, however, usefully orient its defenders to the limitations and vulnerabilities of liberal-democratic theory and practice.

See also *Liberalism; Political Science; Public Sphere; Sovereignty; State, The*.

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Dwight D. Allman

**POLITICAL PROTEST, U.S.** Protests disrupt the peace, stop business as usual, and cause disquiet. Protesters in effect withdraw their consent to the way things are. Even if people are poor, unemployed, or seemingly without power, when organized together they can become a force that troubles the powerful. When the powerful are inconvenienced (or worse) by sit-ins, strikes, marches, and occupations, they will often negotiate to restore order and their own peace and privileges. In this way the powerless often wrestle concessions from the powerful.

The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution explicitly protects citizens' rights to assemble (gather in groups), speak out, protest, and believe in and practice their chosen religion (or absence of religion). Closely linked to these freedoms are the guarantees of a free press. Protest is a time-honored tradition in the United States. American schoolchildren are taught the stories of the Boston Massacre, the Boston Tea Party, and other events leading up to the American Revolution, many of them subversive protests against the ruling regime.

Protest is often difficult, however, because oppressed people understand the harsh consequences their dissent draws from the powers-that-be. People put up with a lot of injustices out of a sense of hopelessness, futility, fear, intimidation, and internalized oppression. Government repression of protest and activism was seen in the American labor union movement, the antislavery movement, the women's suffrage movement, and the early years of the civil rights movement. Governments can damage themselves, however, if they brutally repress a non-violent, sympathetic protest movement, as the British learned in India from the nonviolent civil disobedience movement led by Mohandas (Mahatma) Gandhi.

Ideological hegemony, a form of internalized oppression, is one of the most powerful barriers to protest by oppressed and aggrieved people. "Inequalities in power have their most insidious effect when the dominant group has so much control over the ideas available to other members of society that the conceptual categories required to challenge the status quo hardly exist" (Mansbridge, p. 4). Marxist theory of "false consciousness" similarly asserts that the poor are indoctrinated to believe in the justice of a system that harms them.

The latent powers of the weak, however, are often manifest in their potential to protest and in their actual demonstrations of disobedience. People can take courage from observing protests, as demonstrations show potential supporters that they are not alone in their beliefs and desires. Challenging authority can have harsh, even deadly, consequences for people; noteworthy, then, are the numerous—in fact countless—times peo-



School desegregation protest, St. Louis, Missouri, 1933. The 1930s saw an increase in black demonstrations against discrimination. After the 1954 landmark ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education*, which stated that racially segregated educational facilities were a violation of the Constitution, opposition to integration rose swiftly, primarily in the South. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

ple, often without formal power, have challenged authority and protested. Within societies, repertoires of protest develop. These are learned conventions of political contention that become part of the public culture (Tarrow, p. 20). Examples of culturally familiar protest repertoires include the French barricades, consumer boycotts, labor strikes, silent vigils at the White House by women's suffragists, the sit-ins of the civil rights movement, and petitions, to name a few.

#### Protest and the Media

Media attention often follows protest. For environmental causes, television footage of small Greenpeace boats and rafts moving against giant factory whaling ships epitomizes the adage "a picture is worth a thousand words." Another notable protest was the highly photogenic occupation of Alcatraz Island in San Francisco by Native American rights activists from 1969 to 1971.

Media coverage can potentially expand the audience for a protest worldwide, thus embarrassing and pressuring dominant groups to explain themselves and account for the issues protesters are raising. In the early 1960s, images of peaceful civil rights protesters being set upon by police dogs, water cannon, and police with truncheons troubled the consciences of citizens observing this on television news programs. Highly placed U.S. government officials were also forced to explain the contradictions between their Cold War rhetoric about oppressive governments abroad and the images shown worldwide of brutal treatment of their own American citizens.

Media attention can be harmful to a protest movement if the images are negative. For example, the anti-legal abortion group Operation Rescue found that extensive media coverage of abortion clinic blockades partly backfired against their cause.



Even when the public's reaction to media coverage of protests is negative, the protesters have achieved something because they have publicized their cause. The group ACT UP (the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power), for instance, engaged in wild and confrontational acts of protest about the spread of AIDS/HIV and the relatively weak governmental programs to address the disease. As a small group, ACT UP was able to broadcast its causes through media coverage of its flamboyant demonstrations, a sure success even though the television public was shocked and repelled by some of its performances. ACT UP's slogan, "Silence = Death," deftly epitomizes its approach.

### Violent Protest

One threat that groups can use is violence. Violence can help topple dominant regimes, but it has dangerous potentials for protesters. Violent protest can frighten the public, scare away potential allies, and ricochet against causes of groups that adopt these tactics. It also gives authorities a perceived mandate for severe repression.

### Regime Change and Revolutions

States can be toppled and replaced by sustained protest and contentious, rebellious movements. The most glaring instance of this in the United States is the American Revolution. The subtext of the Declaration of Independence is that governments can be legitimately, righteously replaced. Regime change is also evident in the aftermath of the American Civil War, with the defeat of the Confederacy and ratification of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution. Regime change was also arguably the result of the American civil rights movement and the transformation of the solid Democratic Party South into a two-party system or in some states a one-party (Republican) South. The realignments caused by the civil rights movement have done away with the official, *de jure* forms of racial segregation, something that the countermovements of the White Citizens Councils and the Ku Klux Klan tried to prevent.

### Protests and Political Parties

In democratic systems, political parties need to respond and adjust to new political social movements. Parties that do not realign to incorporate new interests and respond to protests and challenges often "go the way of the Whigs," that is, become a historic political party. In the meantime, new parties can arise and grow in response to shifts in popular opinion sometimes manifest in contentious politics such as protests (Sundquist, 1983). In the American two-party system, some third parties are protest parties to which the two dominant parties often selectively adjust. The Progressive Party, for instance, with its agitation for more open and representative government, had its thunder stolen in part by the Democratic Party, which over time incorporated Progressive Party platforms and absorbed Progressive activists. The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, formed in protest to the all-white official Democratic Party of Mississippi, challenged the credentials of the official party at the 1964 Democratic National Convention and won only token reforms from the national Democratic Party. By the 1968 Democratic Convention, however, partly because of the protest efforts in 1964 and beyond,



Texas students demonstrating for equal rights march to the state capitol, Austin, Texas. In *Sweat vs. Painter* (1950), the United States Supreme Court ruled that Texas University had to allow minorities into its law school, sparking demonstrations, both pro and con. RARE BOOKS AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DIVISION, THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

states could no longer send all-white delegations chosen by procedures that excluded African-Americans.

### La Raza: Latino and Latina Rights

Both major American political parties are currently vying for the Latino vote. Once a subjugated people, the Latino community in the United States has mobilized to assert the rights of Latinos and Latinas as full American citizens. In the 1960s and 1970s, for instance, the La Raza movement resonated positively with many Latinos. La Raza demonstrations for equal access to education, bilingual education, voting rights, and land tenure occurred throughout the Southwest. Often grassroots-organized, these protests had positive impacts on the political position of Latinos (Marquez; Montejano). As with all movements, however, while much was gained, much still needs to be achieved for Latinos and Latinas (as well as African-Americans, Native Americans, women, gay citizens, and others) to be fully incorporated into the body politic. Protest is one way this is achieved.

### Abortion Protests

Notably, groups on both sides of an issue can use similar rights discourses to frame their protests. Pro-choice protests highlight the rights of women, the right of privacy, and the right of bodily integrity. Anti-choice/pro-life protests focus on the right to life of the fetus (they do not use the word *fetus* but rather *unborn*, *preborn*, *baby*, or *child*).

### Protest and Religion

People organized in churches, synagogues, and mosques constitute existing networks that can often be mobilized into protest deriving from their religious beliefs and tenets. American antislavery activists were inspired by their Christian religious beliefs of equality and social obligations. When Britain abolished slavery and used its mighty navy to hinder



Thousands protest the Vietnam War outside the United Nations, New York City, 1967. By the late 1960s, opposition to the Vietnam War began to rise among Americans and protestors took to the streets in nationwide antiwar demonstrations. AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

the slave trade, this gave added impetus to American antislavery societies and, indeed, to antislavery efforts worldwide. Their protests, then, were not seen by them as subversive or disrespectful but rather as respectful of the principals of the American political system and their religion. Religious activists often assert that it is the government, not them, in the wrong. Religious beliefs and organizations are also fluid across state borders. Believers in one state might be mobilized to pressure their own government on behalf of fellow religious members in another state who are being oppressed or persecuted. Protests of this type are transnational and evoke a sense of community and solidarity beyond the borders of any one state.

#### **Protest via Irony, Satire, Performance, and Art**

People can articulate new values through their dress, lifestyles, music, and consumption patterns. In the 1960s and 1970s, the way young people wore their hair made symbolic statements against the dominant value system. When African-American youth wore their hair naturally in “Afros,” they were asserting race pride and protesting the power of the dominant white culture to prescribe what was “good” or “pretty” hair (i.e., straightened). Men and women can perform gender in ways that protest dominant images. During the antiwar movement in the 1960s and 1970s, men wearing their hair long was in part a symbolic protest against corporate dress styles and the close-cropped heads of the military.

Political cartoons, some quite scatological, have often lampooned government officials and corporate tycoons. While often humorous, political cartoons also protest in line and ink the transgressions and foibles of the powerful. Making fun of powerful people in this way “brings them down to size,” so to speak, and helps citizens conceptualize that the people in power are just like them. Tyrannical regimes, then, expend a lot of energy trying to silence the free press, artists, and performers who dare to poke fun at them and thus make them seem simply human.

In addition to visual art, music has the potential for unobtrusive mobilization and dissent. For instance, some slave songs tolerated by slaveholders as innocent and benign were actually songs of pride, solidarity, and liberation. Drawing upon the Jewish people’s escape from slavery in Egypt as told in Exodus, one powerful slave song states, “When Israel was in Egypt’s land—Let my people go—Oppressed so hard they could not stand—Let my people go.” Here religious beliefs and subversive speech are intertwined within a song. One scholar explains, “Thus in the Christian as well as the Jewish tradition the embedded heritage of God’s implacable opposition to oppression gave subordinate groups a strong claim for rectification of wrongs rooted in the unjust power that one group could wield against another” (Mansbridge, p. 3). When regimes officially repress dissent, it often goes underground



into clandestine newspapers, songs, legends, art, jokes, and satire that skewer the powerful and build a community of dissent and networks for protest and political challenges when the opportunities arise.

Examples of songs with political messages include Woody Guthrie's "This Land Is Your Land"; Bob Dylan's "The Times They Are A-Changing"; James Brown's "Say It Loud, I'm Black and I'm Proud"; "Bread and Roses," written by James Oppenheim in 1912 and adopted by the labor movement; "We Shall Overcome," a gospel song adapted as a civil rights anthem; and "Jesus Loves the Little Children," an innocent indoctrination in human equality.

### Symbols

Dissenters utilize symbols to promulgate their causes, sometimes under the very noses of their opposition. Use of flags, whistles, clothing, and jewelry (with symbols such as the "peace sign," for example) are illustrative. The wire clothes hanger, for instance, is a symbol and trope for the pro-choice movement that hearkens back to the days of illegal abortion when desperate women used implements such as coat hangers to self-abort.

### The Internet

The pamphlets of Thomas Paine leading up to the American Revolution were protests in print, information for adherents, and indications to consumers that they belonged to a larger community of readers. Today the World Wide Web disseminates information quickly, cheaply, and without respect for political borders or the sensitivities of the powers-that-be. Dissenting communities on the Internet have organized to protest the Iraq War, environmental issues, and women's rights, to name just a few issues. Through print and literacy via pamphlets, e-mail, or Web sites, information is out of the control of the powerful. Bad news about rulers and regimes can be horizontally, democratically diffused throughout this invisible community of readers.

### Intersectionality Simultaneously Expressed

People have often asserted their rights through protest. Citizens live within an interlocking context of their race, gender, social class, and sexuality. These variables are often simultaneously expressed (Weber). When people protest over racial equality, then, many of those attending the marches and sit-ins might also be thinking of the equality of gender and class. Questions of gender equality, privacy rights, and freedom of choice segue into mobilization and action around sexual diversity and legal rights. It is often when coalitions of groups mobilize around an issue that protesters have the highest chances of success. Ad hoc, issue-specific coalitions, however, can break apart if not prepared to address differences between people and groups as well as their commonalities (Woliver, 2002, 1993).

Ranging from large-scale mass actions to daily acts of resistance, people assert their beliefs through protests. Fluid social movements are not easily categorized as having won or lost politically, but they often leave "a residue of reform" (Tarrow, p. 175), changes in political cultures, and networks of people with common interests who survive after a particular protest is over.

See also **Abolitionism; Civil Disobedience; Democracy; Non-violence; Protest, Political.**

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Laura R. Woliver

**POLITICAL SCIENCE.** Political science, as currently conceived, is a relatively new concept that dates to the nineteenth-century United States. Prior to this time, the study of politics in the West remained a part of natural philosophy, and it tended to focus on philosophical, historical, and institutional approaches. The ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle is often named as the first "political scientist," but his approach differs markedly from what is currently understood to be "political science." Aristotle primarily occupied himself with addressing what sort of political system would best enable the

highest human life of *eudaimonia* (happiness). In the *Politics*, Aristotle surveys an array of constitutions, separating them into six categories based on how many rule the system and whether or not they rule well. This may be considered an empirical study of sorts and perhaps the first “typology,” but his method of study falls well short of what is currently considered to be scientific.

The ancient Indian approach exemplified in the treatise *Arthashastra* (written by Kautilya around 300 B.C.E.) similarly differs from the modern approach to studying politics. Kautilya, often compared to Thucydides, Thomas Hobbes, and Niccolò Machiavelli, discusses the importance of law, kingly conduct, foreign policy, and administrative practices in an attempt to explain that governments have the responsibility of tending to the well-being (broadly understood) of their people. While these ancient approaches to studying politics differ in important ways from the contemporary approach of political science, their emphasis on the pragmatics of political rule connect rather well with contemporary political practice in the West. The Islamic approach to political practice, however, contains some important differences. Notably, Islamic political practice is firmly grounded in religion in so far as it sees the purpose of the state to be the satisfaction of Allah’s wishes, namely, the eradication of evil. Thus, whereas political practice in the industrialized West has been able to evolve as ethical and moral codes have been altered or evaporated (for example, the Christian prohibition on usury no longer carries much weight in a capitalist framework), Islamic political practice has much more difficulty with such changes because Allah is considered the One who dictates moral and ethical codes.

Political scientists of the early twenty-first century are motivated far more by an interest in attaining political “knowledge” than Aristotle or Kautilya were. Aristotle sought less to be sure of what he knew than to assess the role of politics in the good life. Indeed, this was the motivating force behind almost all studies of politics (with the notable exceptions, perhaps, of Augustine of Hippo and Machiavelli) until the nineteenth century. In many areas of the world, such as Continental Europe, Asia, and the Middle East, the importance of studying politics for more metaphysical reasons, rather than for simply epistemological ones, continues into the twenty-first century. In these places, society still generally tends to take precedence over the individual as the focus of political study. In the United States and the United Kingdom, by contrast, the study of politics has adopted a strongly scientific stance, a stance that has embedded itself in empiricist epistemology and individualism.

### The Importance of Knowledge

The reasons for the empiricism of political science multiply the more one investigates the topic, but the secularization of the Western world certainly played a prominent role. The changes that occurred during the sixteenth century called into doubt the traditional understanding of the place of humans in the world by undermining the existential authority of the church. Now humans were faced once again with the same metaphysical problem of antiquity (“why are we here?”), and the French essayist Michel de Montaigne (1533–1592) gave voice to the age-old skeptical response. Interestingly, the French philosopher René Descartes (1596–1650) followed

Montaigne in the seventeenth century by providing a very similar answer, though he couched it in philosophical terms. Montaigne had said that because human knowledge is in doubt and human existence correspondingly has no necessarily universal meaning, it is up to the individual to endow his or her own life with meaning based on his or her own beliefs. Descartes also believed that human knowledge was in doubt, and he too contended that the grounding point for knowledge and human existence was the individual human. Actually, the grounding point for him was reason but only insofar as individual human beings exercise reason. Descartes believed that the world was composed only of matter and mind. The mind accesses matter via the senses and reason, but the senses are faulty and therefore they give humans an imperfect understanding of matter. Reason, however, is much more trustworthy. It is more trustworthy because it focuses the mind on the eternal or universal characteristics of the things it encounters, whereas the senses focus on the mortal or particular characteristics of the things it encounters. The senses trick people into focusing on the things that change, whereas reason focuses the mind on what is universal, on the properties of the thing rather than on the thing itself.

So, one can see that even in the modern epoch philosophy focused (as did the ancients) on the relationship between the particular and the universal. Interestingly, though, in the modern epoch God dropped out of the picture. Descartes did not rely on God to provide the universalistic foundation for particularistic actions, beliefs, knowledges, and so on. Instead, for him, reason played this role. This “individualist” turn in philosophy led to some interesting problems with existence of God arguments, and some interesting solutions as well (for example, that of the eighteenth-century Irish philosopher George Berkeley [1685–1753]). Descartes, in other words, humanized philosophy, which opened up space for the individual. The individual’s exercise of reason allowed access to an understanding of the universal properties of the material world. All of modern philosophy extends from this basic principle. The eighteenth-century Scottish philosopher David Hume (1711–1776) dealt with it in his problem of induction. Berkeley approached it with his emphasis on perception. And the German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) addressed it with the synthetic a priori and the categorical imperative. Modern philosophers showed themselves to be preoccupied with epistemology, with finding a universal grounding point for knowledge in the absence of God as a unifying force. Science, accompanied by the belief that knowledge could transcend the subjective viewpoints of individual humans, ultimately emerged as an organizing principle for knowledge and, then, for society.

### The Universal and the Particular

The first applications of this particular understanding can be seen in the attempts by Kant, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831), and Karl Marx (1818–1883) to assess history in terms of how one might, through the proper understanding of historical trends and developments, actualize history’s end (or purpose). For each of these thinkers, the proper application of reason to history would enable humans to live together in peace and harmony. But these sorts of approaches to studying

politics were quickly displaced by narrower, more empirical approaches. Hegel had argued that the existential problem of human history had always been oriented toward an interplay, or dialectic, between the particular and the universal. Humans, in other words, have always sought to understand the nature of being, not only their existence in the world but also the existence of the world. The movement of history, then, can be seen in terms of the dialectic between developing understandings of the particular place of humans in the universe. For Hegel, the critical metaphysical question became not so much “why are we here?” but “who are we, here?” Hegel, in other words, sought to situate human beings within lived (or material) history and also within spiritual history. Hegel, that is, wanted to determine who people are or believe themselves to be (in spiritual history) at particular moments (in lived or material history). He understood who individuals are at particular moments in history to be simply the current synthesis of the historical dialectic between the particular and the universal. This approach, he believed, allowed human beings to ask not only what it means to be me (as a self or as an individual apart from others) but also what it means to be us (as individuals living together in a particular material and spiritual moment in history).

### Empiricism

Hegel’s idealism, while quite popular during much of the nineteenth century, was nevertheless displaced (in the United States and the United Kingdom, at least) by empiricism. (Positivism and logical positivism are contained within the empiricist approach.) Empiricists define knowledge in terms of a separated subject or agent accessing the truth, or accurately representing the facts, of the objective world. This presupposes Descartes’s separation of mind from matter, taking as given the existence of both and their necessary division. In this view, the external objective world of matter simply is separate from the internal subjective world of the mind. The problem for humans, and indeed for empiricist epistemology, then becomes how minds gain knowledge, understood in the universal terms of certainty, of the material world. The modern empiricist view of knowledge, then, proceeds from a profoundly skeptical viewpoint, which is what Kant called, in his *Critique of Pure Reason*, the “scandal of philosophy.”

Indeed, Kant endeavored to answer the skepticism of Descartes. Kant’s fundamental concern was to determine if inner experience (that is, ideas, perceptions, and representations) provides humans with any true knowledge about outer experience (that is, the objects that humans believe exist in the external world). But Kant, of course, was much more concerned with developing a scientific metaphysics. Modern empirical scientists had different goals. In the modern scientific view, the object world has a logic all its own. This means that anything that is *actually* separate from a subject or that is *understood* to be separate from a subject can be known (i.e., accurately represented) by a subject who has an inclination to represent it. One might even go so far as to say that any such separate thing can be *understood* by a subject so inclined to understand it. This allows individuals to give understandable and accurate *representations* of the things they study, and it helps them explain how humans might behave given those representations. But any

deeper, more metaphysical understandings and explanations of human actions drop from view. Some, such as Martin Heidegger, Ludwig Wittgenstein, and Paul Feyerabend, have differed strongly from the empiricist approach, but they have not succeeded in dulling the effects of the empiricist approach on political science.

And so, whereas in the early history of modern political science one can still find many of the lingering foci of earlier political studies (for example, attempts to provide political solutions to the timeless questions of antiquity regarding the good life), by the twentieth century many of these foci had disappeared. Increasingly, political scientists oriented their inquiries into politics around analysis of the concepts raised by the classical questions. Political scientists, in other words, began to shy away from metaphysical questions and systemic solutions, preferring instead to suggest pragmatic and prudential political action in accord with the rules established by the current political system. They took this approach because they appeared to find the political questions and “answers” put forth by metaphysicians to be philosophically irresponsible (because they cannot be logically justified given deductive logic), and this philosophical irresponsibility would then give rise to social, political, and moral irresponsibility. The metaphysical commitments of the philosophical idealists must be authoritarian because they can only be contingent and perspectival rather than necessary and absolute. Therefore, the “responsible” thing to do was to, as Daniel Bell put it in *The End of Ideology*, give up “the dream of organizing society by complete blueprint.” The prudent action is to focus, “within a framework of liberal values, on problem solving as a means of remedying social ills and inadequacies” (Bell, p. 419). Political science, then, must echo President John F. Kennedy’s statements in his commencement address at Yale University in 1962. It must “research for sophisticated solutions to [the] complex and obstinate issues” associated with the practical management of modern society. Searches for meaning and morality in social action, then, must fall by the wayside. No matter what, then, the human value of political action ceases to be a viable consideration when politics is studied scientifically.

### The Discipline of Political Science

The beginning of American political science as an organized discipline can be dated to December 30, 1903, when John Burgess, Frank Goodnow, Westel W. Willoughby, and others founded the American Political Science Association (APSA). The association’s journal, the *American Political Science Review* (APSR), followed in 1906. Even though most schools still lacked separate political science departments, the appearance of the APSA, and thereafter its journal, legitimated professional commitment to political science as a coherent area of study. The APSA gave political scientists, in and out of the university, a sense of common purpose, and the APSR offered an outlet for original research and scholarly exposure.

As the discipline was established, political scientists increasingly incorporated political knowledge as their peculiar domain. Political scientists, after “authorizing” themselves through the creation of a discipline, began cordoning off political research as their area of study. The study of politics



started to become a professional pursuit, sanctioned by a professional association. This trend toward professionalism in the field of political research became more clear during the behavioral revolution's move to "pure" science. With behavioralism, the discipline settled on a scientific identity, an identity that has changed little since its inception. Behavioralism, though, has its roots in the "science of politics movement," which began in the 1920s.

Political scientists believed that a scientific, disciplinary, and professional identity (that is, acceptance as "legitimate" producers of knowledge) depended on a common and useful methodology to separate trained "political scientists" from methodologically untrained amateurs. Scientific method would allow political scientists to arrive at objective, value-free truth (or truths) about a certain aspect of (usually) American politics in order to aid a modernizing polity in a purely technical way. There could be no normative goals in a value-free science. Political scientists, in other words, should not seek to express what ought to be done. Instead, their goal must be simply to explain the political world.

**The roots of behavioralism.** In the early 1900s, Arthur F. Bentley offered a tool for empirical, value-free social research in his work, *The Process of Government: A Study of Social Pressures*. Although Bentley was not an academic by trade, he did influence subsequent generations of political scientists, especially those within the behaviorist tradition. In *The Process of Government*, Bentley wanted to move away from the traditional notions of scientific explanation in society. He considered political science, with its nineteenth-century reliance on formalist studies of institutions, to be dead. The "barren formalism" of political science needed to be touched up with the "glow of humanity" by studying social actors themselves "for what they are" and "for what they represent" (Bentley, pp. 163–164). According to Bentley, the "raw material" for the scientific study of government cannot be found in one person. It must always be located in "something doing," in the activity of groups, in "the dispersal of one grouping of forces by another grouping." And while these groups do consist of thinking and feeling persons, the social scientist knows "nothing of 'ideas' and 'feelings' except through the medium of actions" (p. 175–176). Government is a process that is forever in flux, and, as such, it can never be described by law books, law, essays, addresses, or constitutional conventions.

Bentley argued that social science, then, should be empirical, measurable, progressive, and concerned with the interaction and activity of a complex and overlapping system of social, political, and economic groupings. Such a social science could, in Bentley's view, be objective and, as such, achieve "knowledge." Most of these aspects are evident again, in the science of politics movement of the 1920s and 1930s and in the behavioral political science that conquered the discipline by the late 1950s. The empirical, measurable, "progressive," and quantified behaviorist tradition gave political science the "scientific" identity it had sought since Bentley's era.

**The science of politics movement.** The new era in political science that followed World War I, like most new eras in the discipline, repudiated the previous era of political science.

Progressive political science was condemned as invalid and partisan, not scientific enough. The new era sought even more detached, scientific, methodical, and therapeutic reforms for what was perceived to be a democracy in crisis. According to post-World War I political scientists, the United States' "liberal democracy" emerged badly shaken from the war. Political scientists had supported the war "for the usual reasons—it was supposed to end European autocracy and thus end war" (Seideman and Harpham, p. 102). Instead, emboldened and effective fascist and communist governments in Europe strengthened their abilities to motivate their populaces to act in accordance with government interests. Post-World War I political scientists in America noticed a peculiar lack of any such motivational ability in the United States, and their wrath fell on their immediate predecessors. In their view, reform-minded progressive political scientists had not adequately and systematically located receptive reform publics, and their superficial and hasty analyses and proposals had consequently failed to be effective.

In light of this, political scientists of the new era saw the need for scholarly renovation. They renewed their dedication to establishing scientific inquiry in the hope that "scientific knowledge would emerge and contribute to improving the quality of public life in America" (Ricci, p. 77). The professional identity of the political scientist became that of political "healer," and political knowledge, implemented in the governmental system, was to be constructed toward this end. Political scientists such as Charles E. Merriam and Harold D. Lasswell saw themselves as social engineers whose purpose was the "rational" supervision of political actors tasked with ordering and controlling a logical and brave new political society. Merriam and Lasswell simply wanted to install a professional identity for political scientists based on a science that was organized to aid the liberal democratic state. As such, political knowledge was to be organized for the same purpose. This is part of the reason why such a formulation of science caught on in the discipline. It was constructed to correspond to the technical needs of society, and therefore it became the accepted identity for political scientists. But after World War II, this identity began to crumble. Behaviorists wanted to purify scientific political knowledge.

According to Albert Somit and Joseph Tanenhaus, numerous factors emerged to help establish behavioralism as a force in political science: Political scientists perceived that they were not considered legitimate scientists and consequently had problems securing research grants; they believed that the other social sciences (particularly psychology) were making broad advances while political science lagged behind; the reformist, normative nature of the discipline was generally considered speculative and unscientific; research technology (including survey techniques, statistical computations, and computers) became much more refined and available; and they pursued a "pure" science that operated on the presupposition that democracy is *the* best system of government because of its open and scientific qualities. In short, post-World War II political scientists sought to define the science of politics from the standpoint that science should be pure. The science of politics should be interested only in *explaining* the workings of American democracy in order to understand the American system better.



**Behavioralism.** Postwar political scientists believed that political crises remained because pre–World War II political scientists had allowed their reformist aims to occlude their understanding of politics. Many postwar political scientists wanted to embark on the pure scientific project of analyzing the workings of the American system without tainting the analysis with speculative notions of reform. These were the first self-conscious attempts to push normative political theory to the margins of the discipline. The assumption that American democracy is the best political system in the world expels the normative determination of value from the discipline’s activities. A pure science, after all, cannot consider such a claim. Rather, it must presuppose its end as it determines how best to reach or enhance it.

Somit and Tanenhaus have combined the various strands of behavioralism into what they term the “behavioral creed”:

1. Political science should search rigorously for regularities in political behavior in order to facilitate prediction and explanation.
2. Political science should concern itself with empirical political phenomena, that is, with the behavior of individuals and political groups.
3. Data should be quantifiable in order to aid predictive capabilities.
4. Research should be theory driven; in other words, research should begin with a theory that yields empirically testable hypotheses.
5. Political scientists should avoid applied (reform-minded) research in favor of pure scientific research.
6. Values such as democracy, equality, and freedom cannot be scientifically established and should thus be avoided unless they can somehow be made empirically testable.
7. Political science should become more interdisciplinary, at least at the behavioral level.
8. Political science should place more emphasis on methodology and make better use of multivariate analysis, sample surveys, mathematical models, and simulation.

Behavioralists were intent on building a scientific community that was centered on behavioral inquiry. They could do this by further institutionalizing political knowledge. Therefore, the research skills that behavioral inquiry required served to exclude those who did not possess the proper training and to solidify the scientific identity of political scientists.

One example of behavioral inquiry can be found in the work of David B. Truman, who is probably best known for his book *The Governmental Process*, first published in 1951, which revived Bentley’s group process theory of government. Truman’s argument, although less polemical, closely resembles Bentley’s and is offered in response to the expanding role of

interest groups in American politics and the public’s growing fear of their influence. *The Governmental Process*, by Truman’s own account, contributed to the “political behavior movement” in political science by increasing “the analytical strength and usefulness of the discipline” (pp. xix–xx). It also triggered the growth of the study of interest groups in the United States and abroad. Like Bentley’s work, *The Governmental Process* offers a tool for analysis: a theory to drive systematic behavioral research. It contains many “testable hypotheses” ranging from the political orientations of groups to the internal politics of the group process to the influence of groups on the legislature, the executive, the judiciary, and elections.

Truman’s basic argument revolves around the notion that because every individual attempts to become an accepted participant in a group or a set of groups, it makes sense to study political behavior in terms of groups and group interactions. He argues that “the patterns of action and attitude among individuals will differ from one another in large measure according to the clusters of group affiliations that the individuals have” (p. 16). Individuals define themselves based on the opportunities that groups afford. In Truman’s words, “It appears . . . that the group experiences and affiliations of an individual are the primary, though not the exclusive, means by which the individual knows, interprets, and reacts to the society in which he [sic] exists” (p. 21). Like Merriam, Truman believed that society had become sufficiently complex to necessitate an interdependent approach to the analysis of political behavior and government. In other words, any social or political action involves a complicated series of interactions, particularly at the group level, that affect individuals and the government. With this in mind, the purpose of Truman’s book was to analyze rigorously both the operations of representative government in the United States and the character of groups’ relationships with the governing process. He does not desire progressive reform; his research seeks “pure” explanation.

Another behavioralist, Heinz Eulau, openly criticized the reformist (“utopian”) political science of the pre–World War II era. In his 1969 book, *Behavioralism in Political Science*, Eulau argued that science can function only “in an environment that permits freedom of inquiry and freedom of speech” (p. 12). American liberal democracy allows such freedoms and thus is most suitable for scientific work. Political science can never undermine liberal democracy, as David M. Ricci reported that pre–World War II political scientists feared. Political scientists assumed, then, that American democracy must be alive and well as they pursued the new, nonreformist, scientific goal of analyzing and explaining the ways in which the American political system functioned.

The dominance of the behavioral approach to studying politics was seen in the field of international relations as well, which tended to personify states and study their “behavior.” This approach has been seen most clearly in realist and neorealist research in international politics. The field of comparative politics was also affected by the behavioral shift, as its practitioners abandoned the field’s legal-institutional approach in favor of a more quantitative analysis. Instead of simply explaining the similarities of and the differences between political institutions

across culture and context, behaviorally inclined comparative politics scholars sought to ground such institutional differences and similarities in “universal” terms of political behavior. The field of normative political theory was largely immune to the behavioral revolution and operated as a critic from without, which ultimately served to marginalize it from the accepted approach of the discipline. Postbehavioralism altered this situation in some important ways. All of the various subfields of study were opened to other methodological approaches, and political theory moved in a bit from the margins. Still, the scientific mood was not fundamentally altered.

**Postbehavioralism.** In 1967 the Caucus for a New Political Science was organized as a response to behavioral hegemony. Behavioral discourse, pro and con, dominated the discipline’s mainstream by the mid-1960s in terms of method, language, and research focus. Members of the caucus lamented the limited scope of behavioral inquiry. Behavioralism, they argued, neglected too many possible points of view; it was too “parochial.” The caucus desired a more open and expansive discipline. In 1969 David Easton responded to the aims of the caucus in his presidential address to the APSA. Easton coined the term *postbehavioralism* and made *relevance* and *action* its watchwords. Postbehavioralists, Easton argued, wanted to make political science more relevant to and active in society.

Ultimately, new areas of research were opened up within the discipline (for instance, the Vietnam War, race relations, poverty, and women’s rights), and the well-populated, university-centered discipline became specialized. Political scientists increasingly carved up special areas of the discipline for themselves, each area with a special language and technique that made intercommunication difficult and often without purpose. These subfields rapidly grew into self-contained entities within the field of political science.

During this era of fragmentation, antibehavioral forces found new voices. Research that was distinctly anti- or nonbehavioral found legitimacy as the discipline’s professional identity evolved away from its behavioral parochialism. The discipline became more tolerant of various perspectives on politics and political science during the postbehavioral era. The intellectual “community” that behavioralism constructed in the discipline of political science collapsed during the 1970s, the decade that witnessed the fragmentation of the discipline’s research agenda. This transpired for at least three reasons: (1) the Caucus for a New Political Science’s effectiveness at forcing the field to open up to more research interests; (2) the population explosion that occurred in the discipline following World War II, which increased the competition for recognition among political scientists; and (3) a related mood of openness that prevailed in the discipline following the closed and parochial behavioral era.

Because political scientists were generally required to publish in order to advance the accumulation of knowledge that “scientific communities” need, and because the range of suitable research topics was limited during the behavioral era while the population of the discipline was rapidly increasing, the discipline was quickly saturated. Political scientists sought new areas of expertise and the discipline opened up, allowing for

the creation of many new subfields. The topics covered by these new subfields were so diverse by 1977 that Nelson Polsby, the managing editor of the *APSR* at the time, “conceded that no editor could ‘judge the quality of manuscripts over the full range of concerns that political scientists write about’” (quoted in Ricci, pp. 222–223).

The discipline has become so complicated that even political scientists are unable to comprehend completely or become comfortable with its entire range of research. So much material is published in increasingly narrow fields that political scholars find it difficult to keep up with their own subfields, much less understand and integrate other subfields. Specialties and subspecialties continually emerge, and a broader base of expertise results. Each subfield churns out vast quantities of literature, and the literature from each subfield, taken together, is more than any one researcher can master. Nevertheless, one researcher can become an “expert” in the work of one subfield. Therefore, the discipline does not consist of “experts” in political knowledge (a central tenet of the APSA); it consists of “experts” in *certain aspects* of political knowledge. But while political scientists from different subfields find communication difficult, the notion of a common purpose (the construction of a body of political knowledge) remains.

In the early twenty-first century, however, the claim to this common purpose has come under some scrutiny by a new movement within the discipline called “Perestroika.” The Perestroika movement, begun anonymously in 2000, calls attention to two problems in the discipline: its lack of inclusiveness and its increasingly mathematical approach. In many ways, this movement revives the thinking behind the Caucus for a New Political Science movement in its concern for the apparent irrelevance of the discipline in the wider political context and its criticism of an increasingly quantitative orientation within the discipline. Those active in the Perestroika movement consistently point to the growing preponderance of rational choice approaches to studying politics, which, in their view, are becoming hegemonic within the discipline as departments repopulate themselves with scholars using rational choice methodologies in their research. While the Perestroika movement has witnessed some success (such as the founding of a new journal that promises to be more methodologically inclusive), it is not at all clear that it will succeed in altering the increasingly quantitative orientation of the discipline.

*See also Democracy; Historical and Dialectical Materialism; Humanism; Machiavellism; Marxism; Power; Representation: Political Representation.*

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Tim Duvall

**POLYTHEISM.** The concept of polytheism was a creation of the Enlightenment. Before then, Europeans had characterized the religious universe in terms of Christianity, Judaism, paganism, and (eventually) Islam. As late as the sixteenth century, the Franciscan friar Bernardino de Sahagun, in his remarkably detailed and sensitive account of pre-Columbian Mexican religion and culture, equated various Aztec divinities with their putative Roman equivalents. The rubric of “paganism” embraced any and all religions with multiple divinities.

The very distinction between monotheism and polytheism, lumping together, as it did, Christianity with Judaism and Islam, was the product of secularizing intellectuals—deists if not agnostics or atheists—distancing themselves in this manner from any specific theology. These implications were most fully developed by David Hume in *The Natural History of Religion* (1755). Polytheism, he argued, was the earliest form of religion: “the first ideas of religion arose not from a contemplation of the works of nature, but from a concern with regard to the events of life, and from the incessant hopes and fears which actuate the human mind” (p. 139). Such hopes and fears—about childbirth, illness, a bad harvest, and so on—were multiple, and each was presided over by a separate divinity. Eventually such notions gave way to a far more rational understanding of the world in terms of a single ideal creator—in other words, monotheism. In this way, the difference between polytheism and monotheism embodied the conflict between reason and the passions, which for Hume, ever the pessimist, led not to the ultimate triumph of reason but rather to a perpetual “flux and reflux in the human mind” (p. 58) when the cold and abstract reason of monotheism left human hopes and fears unsatisfied. Worse yet, the emotions aroused by monotheism were “sacred zeal and rancour, the most furious of all human passions” (p. 161). Polytheism was more irrational but also more tolerant than monotheism.



### Polytheism as an Evolutionary Stage

Nineteenth-century anthropological theorists adopted the perspective of their Enlightenment predecessors, not to mention their anticlerical biases, by categorizing types of religious beliefs as more or less rational. However, they did not share Hume's pessimism; instead they incorporated such ranking within an overall narrative of evolutionary progress. Sir Edward Burnett Tylor's *Primitive Culture* (1871) developed the most elaborate scheme of religious evolution. He categorized the most primitive religious beliefs as *animism*, the idea of a soul whose existence was separate from the body. The idea that human souls survived the death of the body engendered a belief in malevolent ghosts or the veneration of more benevolent ancestors. The notion that animals, plants, and even inanimate objects such as rocks or streams also possessed souls led to the worship of various nature spirits. Genuine polytheism emerged only at a higher stage of human development as distinctions of rank became increasingly important: "As chiefs and kings are among men, so are the great gods among the lesser spirits. They differ from the souls and minor spiritual beings which we have as yet chiefly considered, but the difference is rather of rank than of nature" (vol. 2, p. 334). If monotheism represented yet a higher stage of religious development, it was still characterized by survivals from the most primitive beliefs, not least of all in the soul. For Tylor, as for his contemporaries such as Herbert Spencer or James Frazer, science represented a development of human thought that made all religions, including monotheistic ones, obsolete.

Sigmund Freud's last book, *Moses and Monotheism* (1939), was the last major formulation of this kind of evolutionary scheme. For Freud, all religions were projections of unconscious facets of the human mind conceived and experienced as external forces. The gods of polytheism represented the multiple sexual urges of the Id, which had in some measure to be appeased if not gratified lest they wreak a terrible revenge, but which were by their very nature amoral at best. Monotheism, invented by the Egyptian Pharaoh Akhenaton and transmitted to the Jews by Moses, an Egyptian prince, represented a great advance in its worship of one God, a father figure and an externalization of the Superego, the arbiter of good and evil.

### Polytheism in Modern Anthropology

In the twentieth century, anthropologists rejected the grand evolutionary schemes of their predecessors and pursued the study of religion through attempts to understand religious beliefs from the perspective of the cultures they studied firsthand. Anthropologists concerned themselves with the internal logic of a culture's beliefs, not with their rationality as compared to those of our own or of other cultures. The very idea of polytheism, to the extent that it amalgamated highly disparate systems of religious belief in different places and times, was largely irrelevant to this enterprise.

One notable exception that indeed proves the rule was E. E. Evans-Pritchard's *Nuer Religion* (1956). Evans-Pritchard was concerned with reconciling Nuer concepts of *kwoth* (God or Spirit) with ideas about a variety of different kinds of spirits of the above and below. Spirits of the above included Deng, associated with illness, Buk, his mother, and Col, associated

with rain; spirits of the below were mainly totemic spirits associated with different lineages. Evans-Pritchard's solution was to suggest that

Since God is kwoth in the sense of all Spirit and the oneness of Spirit, the other spirits . . . are all, being also kwoth, thought of as being of the same nature as God. Each of them . . . is God regarded in a particular way; and it may help us if we think of the particular spirits as figures or representations or refractions of God in relations to particular activities, events, persons, and groups. (p. 107)

In other words, as far as the Nuer were concerned, the distinction between monotheism and polytheism was not one of religious belief but rather a question of emphasis, either on the oneness of Spirit or of the plurality of its manifestations.

More recently, Robin Horton's analysis of conversion to Christianity and Islam in Africa attempted to identify a sociological dimension to polytheism and monotheism. African cosmologies, he argued, included ideas about a high god, a creator, as well as a multiplicity of lesser spirits associated with specific localities or kin groups. These lesser spirits governed local events and social relationships, whereas the creator god transcended specific localities. Small-scale societies whose members were relatively unconcerned by events outside their social microcosm emphasized the importance of local spirits in their religions. As the social horizons of groups and individuals expanded, religious emphasis shifted toward the creator, if not toward monotheism, as beliefs in local spirits were ill equipped to make sense of the social macrocosm. Horton's self-styled intellectualist approach shared with his Enlightenment predecessors an emphasis on religion as a means of understanding and manipulating the world; but rather than rating religions in terms of rationality, he suggested that different kinds of religious beliefs were appropriate for different types of societies.

Most anthropologists found Horton's scheme too general to account for the complex historical interactions that led (or did not lead) to conversion in specific cases, African or other. J. D. Y. Peel, initially a proponent of Horton's approach, wrote one such account of the encounter of the Yoruba people with Christianity. Indeed, rather than studying polytheism as such, anthropologists such as Andrew Apter and J. Lorand Matory wrote rich, historically contextualized ethnographies of the worship of various deities in the Yoruba pantheon, while Sandra Barnes, among others, studied the ways in which these gods made their way into New World religions such as Voodoo in Haiti, Candomble in Brazil, and Santería in Cuba.

*See also Animism; Religion.*

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Robert Launay

**POPULATION.** Perceptions of the meaning, implications, and control of reproduction and sexuality, at both the individual and community levels, are among the most important, but also the most challenging, in the history of ideas. Changes in human population helped shape the twentieth century and are creating new tensions in the twenty-first, but, despite the profound significance of childbearing to individuals and the impact of population change on economics, politics, maternal and infant health, the environment, and national security, the intellectual history of population is oddly fractured and frequently uninformative. There are still divisions on the exact mix of factors, such as vaccination and socioeconomic change, driving the dramatic fall in death rates that pushed the global population from 1,650 million in 1900 to 6,071 million in 2000, and there is no consensus on the factors driving falling birth rates in recent decades. Many societies have made pragmatic decisions about their citizens' access to modern contraception and safe abortion, but bitter and painful differences on ethics persist. The two most important shifts in the intellectual history of population—the Papal encyclical *Humanae vitae* and the Chinese "one-child" policy—represent diametrically opposed responses to population change.

An understanding of population must draw on reproductive biology, anthropology, economics, political science, and demography, as well as knowledge of cultural and religious beliefs, but cross-disciplinary progress has been slow. As Charles Darwin (1809–1882) acknowledged, Thomas Robert Malthus's (1766–1834) *An Essay on the Principle of Population*, published in 1798, was the intellectual trigger for *The Origin of Species* (1851). In the second half of the twentieth century, biological perspectives began to influence ideas about population change. Anthropologists reconstructed the demographic history of preliterate communities, which have been characteristic of the hunter-gatherer way of life for more than 95 percent of the time *Homo sapiens* has been a distinct species. In such societies, women sometimes do not menstruate until they are eighteen or even twenty years old, and pregnancies are well

spaced by natural endocrine changes associated with breast-feeding. The average woman has six to eight pregnancies, half of which usually die, with the consequence that hunter-gatherer populations grow slowly.

The second half of the twentieth century saw unprecedented and unrepeatable changes in the growth of the global population. Rising potential fertility, as a result of changes in breast-feeding and the age of puberty, together with a rapid fall in death rates, pushed population growth rates up. The highest absolute growth in global population occurred in the mid-1980s, with more than 85 million more births than deaths per annum. During the same period, developed countries finally gained wide access to contraception and safe abortion, and in some regions average family size fell below two. In parts of Asia, which formerly had large families, the birth rate also fell to replacement level or below, although elsewhere in Asia and in Africa birth rates remain high. The implications for the health of women and children, for economic prosperity, social stability, and the environment of these changes are profound, yet some of the most important population changes were not predicted by most demographers.

The standard theory of the demographic transition was that a fall in the birth rate would lag behind any decline in the death rate and that birth and death rates would slowly stabilize as couples grew richer, became more educated, and made a rational decision to have smaller families. Frank Notestein, the distinguished American demographer, gave articulate expression to the theory. As the volume of empirical data on family planning has increased, so demographers have defined the proximal determinants of family size with increasing accuracy. These are the age at commencing intercourse, the prevalence of pathological causes of infertility, the suppression of ovulation associated with lactation, and use of contraception and abortion. However, the more distal determinants that make birth rates decline continue to be debated. The Office of Population Research at Princeton University explored the history of fertility decline in various parts of Europe and found that ideas about family planning spread by diffusion in homogeneous political and religious groups.

### Clash of Ideas

The United States led the way in research that produced oral contraceptives and a new generation of intrauterine devices (IUDs) in the 1960s, although restrictive contraceptive laws remained in place in many states until the 1965 Supreme Court case *Griswald v. Connecticut*. Eastern Europe and parts of Scandinavia reformed their abortion laws in the 1960s and England followed in 1967. In 1972 the U.S. Supreme Court struck down state laws forbidding abortion in *Roe v. Wade*. Advocates for family planning were often led by physicians, such as Alan Guttmacher, president of the Planned Parenthood Federation of the United States, and Fernando Tamayo, leader of Profamilia in Colombia.

In the 1960s, demographers and economists warned of adverse effects of rapid population growth on development. Paul Erhlich captured public attention with *The Population Bomb* (1968). The Rockefeller and other foundations began to fund family planning. The Swedish government offered international

support for family planning, and in the United States General William Draper Jr. persuaded Congress to follow suit.

However, other demographers, such as Kingsley Davis, continued to emphasize socioeconomic development as a prerequisite for smaller families. Gary Becker and others framed decisions about family size as economic decisions based on a rational analysis of costs and benefits of having children. However, given the frequency of human intercourse in relation to conception, the issue is not to decide when to have a child, but how to turn off the possibility of conception, something that can only be done when a couple has ready access to contraception, backed up by safe abortion. Everywhere poor families had more children than rich ones, but the question remained: was this a choice, or did poor people find it more difficult to access contraception and safe abortion?

Those working in the front lines of family planning, led by Reimert T. Ravenholt, the principal administrator in the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), believed improving access to fertility-regulating choices was the key to smaller families. He began to implement large-scale programs offering oral contraceptives, IUDs, condoms, and voluntary sterilization as well as initiating surveys of the family planning knowledge, attitudes, and practices of women in developing countries. These surveys have been broadened into *Demographic and Health Surveys*, and they remain the largest social science surveys ever conducted. Virtually every survey has demonstrated that women are having more children than they intend, and everywhere that realistic family choices were made available, as in South Korea, Thailand, or Mexico, family size fell. Nevertheless, several schools of thought about population continue to compete for intellectual dominance. All are influential in discussions about population, although only those specifically concerned with family planning have put population center stage.

**Economists.** Economists have always played an important, although sometimes contradictory, role in establishing intellectual and public policy related to population. Macroeconomic concerns that the investment required to keep pace with rapid population growth would undermine the economic development of poor countries supported family planning policies in the 1960s and 1970s. In a much-quoted article, “The Tragedy of the Commons,” Garrett Hardin saw rapid population growth exceeding the carrying capacity of the land. But, accepting then-current ideas about the demographic transition, Hardin concluded that voluntary family planning would not ameliorate the threat. Other experts saw the relationship between population and the environment as so complex that they were reluctant to provide clear-cut conclusions. Julian Simon, Ben Wattenberg, and others argued that increasing population would drive technical ingenuity to substitute new materials for declining resources. In the 1980s, the Reagan administration free-market policies trumped any adverse effects of rapid growth. In the 1990s, the pendulum began to swing back when it was shown that countries that had undergone a rapid fall in birth rates had reaped a “demographic dividend” benefiting their economies.

**Equity group.** A politically influential group in population research has been those who argue that attention to population

takes attention away from the excessive consumption of the first world, reflecting economic inequity, which is the primary injustice needing remedy. This school of thought was influential at the Rio Conference on population and development (Rio de Janeiro, 1992) and in certain circumstances it is a valid conclusion. In other situations, however, there is little doubt that population growth per se is the key factor. For example, in 2000, 179 million people in Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia depended on the Nile, which is almost depleted by the time it reaches the Mediterranean. In 2050, 385 million people will compete for the same amount of water.

**Women’s groups.** Since the mid-1960s, women’s groups have played an increasingly important role in discussions of population. In Europe and North America, they were forceful advocates for access to family planning as essential to female equality and empowerment. However, a subgroup of feminists opposed hormonal contraceptives as unnatural and feminists in India have prevented the use of the popular injectable contraceptive, DepoProvera, and objected to the use of a low-cost, nonsurgical method of voluntary sterilization.

**National security.** Rapid population growth is associated with a high ratio of younger to older men, and analysts in both academia and the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency found a relationship between this ratio and civil disturbances, warfare, and terrorism. It is a theme that was taken up in a secret National Security Study Memorandum requested by President Nixon in 1974, which recommended additional support to international family planning. As can happen in a field permeated with emotions and religious beliefs, and thinking that has no evidential basis, lobbying by Catholic bishops successfully blocked implementation of this memorandum, which was only declassified in 1989.

**The Vatican.** The Judeo-Christian association of sex with sin goes back to the Adam and Eve myth, but it was St. Augustine’s assertion that coitus can be justified only for procreation that underlies Vatican teaching. In the 1960s, many leading theologians, including the commission the pope himself established, argued that sex had a dual purpose—to express love and to procreate—and that contraception could be used to separate the two. The Catholic physician John Rock, who had played a leading role in developing oral contraceptives, argued in *The Time Has Come* that the pill was morally acceptable because it imitated the natural suppression of ovulation during pregnancy and lactation. However, Pope Paul IV provided the most wrenching twist in the intellectual history of population of the second half of the twentieth century by reiterating the Augustinian interpretation of sexuality in his 1968 encyclical *Humanae vitae*. In its wake, priests and communicants left the Catholic Church, and those who remained adopted contraception and safe abortion at the same rate as non-Catholics. While the Holy See continues to oppose family planning on the international stage, Italy voted in two referenda for contraception and safe abortion.

### Changing Paradigms and Uncertain Policies

The lack of consensus in intellectual thinking, the strength of faith-based assertions about human reproduction, and



competition over limited funds have all fed large and sometimes contradictory swings in domestic and international policies. The first of three landmark decennial international conferences on population in Bucharest in 1974 was summed up by the aphorism that “development is the best contraceptive.” Shortly afterward, however, China instituted a one-child policy and India passed (although it was never implemented) a compulsory sterilization law. By the 1984 conference in Mexico City, the developing countries were asking for main-line family support but the Reagan administration proclaimed that free markets trumped the population explosion.

The 1994 Cairo International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) saw yet another policy change. Some in the women’s movement began to portray organized family planning as intrinsically coercive and sought to secure the transfer of international resources to broader aspects of women’s health. The ideological shift altered the vocabulary in revealing ways, as *gender* was substituted for *sex* and *reproductive health* replaced *family planning*. For many, Cairo was an intellectual turning point, but shortfalls in funding have stymied large-scale implementation of the Cairo Program of Action.

The ICPD occurred as the number of AIDS infections was growing exponentially, although calls for action in this area were buried in a plethora of less important issues. In the early twenty-first century AIDS has reached catastrophic levels in some countries, but it will not change the trajectory of global population by much. It has, however, taken priority away from family planning in foreign aid budgets and, as a result, in parts of Africa the trend toward lower birth rates stalled or has been reversed.

In the 1990s, as access to contraception and safe abortion increased in Europe, birth rates fell to below replacement level, while in the rest of the world increases in population fed internal and cross-border migrations, with more and more people crowding into big cities. In 1975, 40 percent of four billion people lived in cities (twenty-six cities had more than five million people); it is estimated that in 2025, of almost eight billion people, 60 percent will live in cities (seventy cities with more five million people). Migration between countries is driven by economic pressures, long exposed borders between high- and low-income regions in North America and Europe, and the relatively low cost of air travel. In Europe, the right of citizens from the British Commonwealth or former French colonies to enter the mother country broke down because of the scale of the populations seeking to migrate. In the United States, policy differences between employers and free-market economists, both endorsing a free flow of labor, and those concerned with the environment remain unresolved.

In the history of ideas about population, abortion has proved the single most divisive topic. Abortion is one way women can limit the number of children they have and an important variable in family size. Globally, it is estimated that, on average, every woman now alive will have one abortion in her reproductive lifetime. Intellectually, the abortion debate has been framed in two ways: either as fetal rights or the mother’s right to control her body—a dichotomy that preempts further debate—or as an ethical question of “when life begins.” The U.S. Supreme Court, however, concluded “that

the right of personal privacy includes the abortion decision, but that this right is not unqualified and must be considered against important state interest in regulation.” The abortion debate deeply divides the United States, both because of strongly held religious views and because the Supreme Court, Congress, and state legislators can all set policy. In 1973, Jesse Helms, a conservative U.S. senator from North Carolina, amended the Foreign Assistance Act to exclude any support of abortion, forcing U.S. international family-planning policies into a more conservative mode.

The two most important responses to population growth occurred far outside the Western intellectual tradition. The first was the Chinese one-child policy of 1979, which was driven by intellectual analysis of demographic projections, but the policy encountered much external criticism. Yet, however the policy is viewed, without it, the economic growth in China from the 1990s on could not have happened. The second occurred in the Islamic Republic of Iran, where the average number of children in a family fell from 5.5 in the late 1980s to 2.0, a decline equal to that of China’s, but without a one-child policy. The driving force in the Iranian transition was not socioeconomic change, but a national policy to make all methods of family planning widely available. Iran’s demographers noticed that their population was growing faster than the economy, and if average family size did not decline, poverty would increase. The country’s religious leadership, whose intellectual framework for policymaking in the 1990s was profoundly different from that of Chinese Communism in the 1980s, and totally unlike the Vatican in the 1970s, agreed to family planning if it was for the woman’s health.

On the whole, the intellectual history of population in North America and Europe has been disappointing. There has been increasing methodological sophistication combined with an inability to produce an acceptable paradigm of human reproductive behavior. At the end of the twentieth century, discussion of population growth was pushed off the debating table by competing schools of thought. Yet, serious problems remain. Despite well-publicized declines in birth rates, globally there are one million more births than deaths every 110 hours. India has one million more births than deaths every twenty-three days and China (even with its one-child policy) adds one million people every thirty days.

In the history of ideas, interpretations of population change, appreciation of the consequences, and evidence-based rational responses have a long way to go.

*See also Antifeminism; Demography; Economics; Family Planning; Feminism; Motherhood and Maternity; Poverty; Religion and Science.*

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## POPULISM.

This entry includes two subentries:

*Latin America*  
*United States*

### LATIN AMERICA

If the term *populism* was initially borrowed from radical farmers' movements in the United States in the late nineteenth century to describe early-twentieth-century political developments

in Latin America, since then it has certainly acquired a special relevance for understanding this region's politics. The golden era for Latin American populism is usually cited as the 1930s to the 1960s and identified with such preeminent populists as Lázaro Cárdenas (1934–1940) in Mexico, Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre in Peru (though never president), and Juan and Eva "Evita" Perón in Argentina (1946–1955). If populism had a transformative impact on the region's politics, it was assumed that the series of military dictatorships beginning in the 1960s ended the populist phase. But since the 1980s Latin America has unexpectedly witnessed a round of neopopulism, with an expansion of the possibilities for popular political practice. Populism, it is clear, is a more enduring feature of the region's political landscape than once imagined.

Political analysts, however, have had great difficulty precisely defining populism. A wide selection of political goings-on have been called "populist." These include radical farmers' movements (Pancho Villa in the Mexican Revolution), or movements of radical intellectuals who valorize the "peasantry" (Luis Valcarcel's "Indianism" in Peru), and also spontaneous grassroots peasant movements (the populist Mexican Revolution's Zapatistas, but not the Cuban Revolution), dictatorships (Argentina's Perón, and more recently, Alberto Fujimori in Peru and Hugo Chavez in Venezuela), as well as distinctly reactionary populisms (Rene Barrientos in Bolivia). Since the 1980s we can add neoliberal neopopulisms and the populist practices of the New Social Movements to more documented variations.

### The Practice of Populism

If it is a distinctly Latin American way of conducting the people's business, what are the characteristics of populism as a political practice? Though diverse commentators emphasize different combinations of traits, generally populism has been associated with expansive electoral campaigning by a "charismatic" leader with special attributes (often a political outsider), the participation of the masses (that is, the "people," or the "popular" of populism), with strong appeals to nationalism or to cultural pride. Successful populist movements usually bypass traditional political institutions like the church, the oligarchy, political parties, newspapers, and elites. Given this, they are typically urban-centered and particularly court the working class but bring together a heterogeneous, if sometimes fleeting, coalition.

The career of Argentina's populist dictator Juan Perón is an oft cited archetypal instance of Latin American populism. Ideologically eclectic and personally charismatic, though a career army officer, Colonel Perón won the loyalty of most of the nation's working class by 1944, at once facilitating the desires of labor unions, long socially and politically isolated, while repressing the uncooperative. The bond between Perón and the nation's worker's movement (called the "shirtless ones") won him the 1946 election, after which he became a caudillo, or personalistic leader, even as he oversaw economic growth and continued to expand his political base among workers, improving health care, pension plans, and more. The great popularity of his wife, the actress Eva Perón, among the poorest classes, and her role as his personal intercessor to the people,

helped to cement Perón's image as a populist and to develop the political rituals of Peronism, which outlived the man himself.

To summarize, populism assumes a quasi-direct, emotionally charged relation between a personalistic leader and his devoted followers. If anything, "clientelism" is the experiential basis of populism. If populist leaders effectively redistribute material goods and other benefits among their loyal, poor constituency, the masses are incorporated into the political process only in a subordinated fashion, as the clients of a top-down, vertical process dependent on the patron's generosity. As prefigured in Antonio Gramsci's concept of the "national-popular," and reworked by populist theorist Ernesto Laclau, populism can obscure class rule and inequality by provisionally absorbing the contradictory interests of civil society within the orbit of the state. For this reason, populism has sometimes been treated as incompatible with democracy. An accompanying nation-building strategy of populist, clientelistic, regimes in Mexico, Bolivia, Peru, and Brazil has been to identify national identity with (racial, cultural, and class) mixture in the figure of the "mestizo," or what José Vasconcelos lyrically called the "cosmic race." Recent work of such cultural critics as Nestor García Canclini has given renewed attention to "cultural populism."

The wide application of the term *populism* begs the question: What might not be considered populist? Populism appears not in moments of stability, but as a condition of adjustment to periods of generalized political crisis. Historically it has been treated as a phase of political development in Latin America associated with the industrial period and the growth of cities, which made possible the political incorporation of the new urban masses. It has also been identified with the transition from oligarchic to modern politics, and with the condition of dependent capitalism. Populism is often located between the extremes of military dictatorship and political party democracy, though at times each has exhibited populist traits. Populism is also thought to spring up in the absence of both the gradual expansion of individual rights and self-governance. In contrast to liberalism or Marxism, populism conspicuously lacks an identifiable doctrine.

### Features of Populism

It has been easier to cite examples of populist leaders than to clearly demarcate the features of populism. To begin with, as a macro-explanatory framework, populism is often applied in a too general, and therefore vague, fashion. Attempted definitions, such as the formula: Populism = leader √ charismatic bond + elections √ followers, are imprecise and explain little, obscuring most of what deserves debate. Part of the problem has to do with the conditions of most populist movements: specific in time and place, associated with crisis and with political transition. Another error directly equates populism with a "leadership style." This leads to a plethora of biographies of outstanding populists, where "charisma," another slippery term, becomes a sufficient explanation for the phenomenon of populism, not in the sociologist Max Weber's sense of an attributed social authority, but as an essentially psychic fact. This ignores the collective nature of all such populist movements.



**Argentinean demonstration by supporters of Juan Perón, Vicente Lopez, Argentina, 1972.** Populist dictator Juan Perón rose to power in 1946, riding a wave of popular opinion he had fostered among Argentina's working class and labor unions. CORBIS/BETTMANN

A further temptation when defining populism is the almost tautological appeal to the "popular," which at once makes a virtue of "the people" and mystifies what it should explain. Locating a given movement in "the people" (as a collective national-popular will) fails to differentiate between politics as social and cultural practice (the work of politicians) and a given constituency, particularly in terms of the idioms, exchanges, and representations that produce and maintain relationships between leaders and followers, along with their contingent relation to social and historical context. In fact, simplified moral narratives of "the people" typically characterize political (and some scholarly) backlashes against populist regimes, where the lack of a doctrine and the demagoguery of an irresponsible leader are assumed to ignite a disorganized explosion of the masses, thus destabilizing the state. These arguments justified military coups in Argentina in 1955, in Brazil in 1964, in Panama in 1968, in Peru in 1968, and in Bolivia in 1964, among others.

For the many reasons cited above, it is less constructive to insist upon populism as an identifiable political type, philosophy, doctrine, or style, in short, any "ism" succinctly defined. Rather, *populism*, the term, is itself implicated in the history and struggles of Latin America, a charged point of reference for diverse political relationships, practices, strategies, and sets of representations, in specific times and places, where new political constituencies are introduced. Called both "premodern" and "progressive," populism is a relational rather than categorical fact of Latin American politics.

Neopopulisms in Latin America since the 1980s, both in government and as effective opposition movements, have surprised many. Neopopulists like Argentina's Carlos Saúl Menem (1989–1999), Brazil's Fernando Collor (1990–1992), and Peru's Alberto Fujimori (1990–2000) all combined populist charisma and neoliberal structural adjustment policies to



address their nations' economic stagnation, demonstrating unexpected affinities between neopopulism and neoliberalism. Both rely on mass support of the poor, distance from intermediary organizations (like political parties), attacks on the "political class," strengthening of the state, winning of support through bold reform, and targeted benefit programs. Neoliberal neopopulism has been criticized, however, for confusing "consumer" with "citizen," where collective demands are articulated primarily through individual cost-benefit analyses, the market, voting, and the sale of labor.

Further populist developments deserving mention are the region's many New Social Movements, primarily in nations with significant indigenous populations such as Mexico, Ecuador, Bolivia, Guatemala, and Brazil, and for which Mexico's EZLN (1994–present)—also called the Zapatistas—has been a model. These movements often rely on grassroots agrarian unionism, frequently combine antineoliberalism (such as rejection of NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement) with defense of national sovereignty, the call to expand citizenship rights, and the use of spectacular direct-action protests. Less preoccupied with charismatic leadership than with a new locus for "the people," these movements have switched the emphasis from "peasant" to "Indian" and from "class" to "culture," while embracing a plebiscite or assembly-style democracy to critique the exclusionary state. La Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas in Ecuador and MAS (Movement toward Socialism) in Bolivia are current examples. Venezuela's Hugo Chavez (1998–) is a hybrid exception, mixing an authoritarian caudillismo with effective use of the popular referendum. These movements demonstrate the symbolic power of populist tactics, as an opposition dedicated to the region's political renewal.

See also *Authoritarianism: Latin America; Capitalism; Communism: Latin America; Democracy; Dictatorship in Latin America; Nationalism.*

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#### UNITED STATES

Populism (from the Latin term *populus*, usually translated as "the people") is the name of a group of ideologies that stresses the need for a more equitable distribution of economic, political, and cultural power. Populists argue that an elite of some form or another holds an unfair concentration of political and

I would be presumptuous, indeed, to present myself against the distinguished gentlemen to whom you have listened if this were but a measuring of ability; but this is not a contest among persons. The humblest citizen in all the land when clad in the armor of a righteous cause is stronger than all the whole hosts of error that they can bring. I come to speak to you in defense of a cause as holy as the cause of liberty—the cause of humanity.

SOURCE: William Jennings Bryan, "Cross of Gold" speech (1896).

economic power and typically that government intervention is required to counteract this injustice. Occasionally, this belief in the unfair concentration of power leads to complex theories about the subtle mechanisms by which many are oppressed and the belief that only the "common people" have the moral wherewithal to see through these manipulations. Nevertheless, such theories often penetrate the subterfuge of those in power and work to form a rallying point for those being unfairly treated.

Populists typically valorize the traditional over the contemporary, small-town and rural culture over cosmopolitan and urban culture, and basic or simple values over more complicated versions of morality and ethics. "The people" are seen as the exemplars of virtue and are marked off from the corrupting influence of large-scale government and grand economic powers. Often these beliefs lead populists to advocate the suppression of less traditional ways of life, cultural beliefs, and foreign influences. Because of this, populists are sometimes painted as culturally backward and suspicious of any form of diversity. At the very least, populists are usually seen as alarmists and often as merely reactionary. Such characterizations, however, are not always accurate but rather represent a means by which those who wish to maintain the status quo discredit their more radical adversaries.

In many cases, populists depend upon a mythological and often heavily nostalgic portrait of their own pasts and their own traditions. Rather than carefully critiquing their traditional ways of life alongside the problems of more contemporary movements, populists often eschew outside influences in a wholesale fashion, preferring a romanticized version of their accepted way of life. By offering such familiar notions of virtue, however, populism can serve as a call to action against oppressive forces that might otherwise obscure or erase the many achievements of the past and the lessons that can be culled from their study. Hence populism is not so much a political theory as it is a political strategy. While certainly not always a conscious tactic, populism may take the form merely of a rhetorical appeal to these notions of basic fairness, suspicion of a perceived class of elites, and a desire to return to a simpler life.

Populist movements often occur in reaction to perceived cultural changes brought about by technological and economic development that the populists find threatening. Populism is hence often a movement to shore up local and more traditional values over and against values deemed too new or from outside sources. Populism often takes the form of consolidating one's in-group, of working to ensure that one's way of life may continue, or of efforts to prevent further encroachment of the large-scale over the small. These movements work to halt or alter such changes, but often with unintended consequences that are themselves significant changes.

Populism may take a variety of forms; historically, powerful populist movements have arisen on both the left and the right. On the left, populists are usually concerned with hedging the power of big business. Left-leaning populists are suspicious of free-market capitalism, with its consequent growth and monopolization of power in the hands of an economic elite of the privileged few. Right-wing populists, by contrast, typically work to curtail the reach of government power, seeing the real threat to traditional ways of life in the form of bureaucracy, standardization, and intrusive legal power. In either case, what is usually advocated is some sort of regulation on the broad exercise of power by the suspected group in favor of more local or small-scale organizations. Populists on the left, for example, typically praise the virtues of smaller and locally owned businesses, whereas more conservative populists prefer a movement of government power away from the national or federal level and into local and regional sources.

Perhaps the best known and most influential populist movement is the rise of the People's Party in the late-nineteenth-century United States. Throughout the American South and West, an increasing level of discontent grew among farmers and other rural workers. It was felt that the more urban Northeast areas of the country harbored an increasing concentration of economic and political power and that the formation of political organizations such as the Farmers' Alliance and the People's Party was necessary to consolidate and give voice to these concerns. Added to this discontent was the position of black farm laborers, many of whom joined the Colored Farmers' Alliance, an organization formed in Houston County, Texas, in 1886 in response to the segregating practices of other populist organizations but which eventually spread throughout the South. These organizations were based in part upon the social and cultural ties made by the work of the Patrons of Husbandry, or National Grange, an older organization of farmers founded shortly after the end of the Civil War. Other predecessors include the Union Labor Party, the Knights of Labor, the National Labor Reform Party, and the Greenback Party.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the People's Party in the United States had elected governors, sent members to Congress, and had many successes with local elections. The party advocated women's suffrage, temperance, and various reforms in national and state policies involving land use. The People's Party was often at odds with the interests of railroad companies, banks, and other large business organizations and fought hard against the gold standard. Many of the issues important

to women, such as suffrage and temperance, however, were later taken out of the party's platform in the interest of gaining larger popular support. By 1896, the People's Party joined with the Democratic Party to support William Jennings Bryan's failed presidential campaign. Shortly thereafter, the party began declining as many of its members became Democrats or lost interest in large-scale national politics.

The history of the People's Party is only one example of populist organizations' activities. Populism, in fact, is not a unified theory or movement at all. There are as many populists as there are identifiable groups of people. Populism represents an attitude about the nature of a given social and political situation. It holds that there are those in power who hold that power unfairly, secretly, or in an unjust concentration. Regardless, this elite class wields such power at the expense of others—these others being “the people.” The populist claims to speak for these people, to represent their interests and their values. The populist wants to challenge, react to, and undermine the elite's claims to legitimacy and to fairness. The populist, instead, appeals to “common sense,” “common values,” and “basic fairness” in her or his attempts to reclaim a more traditional way of life, an exposure of the elite's secretive machinations and plots, or a more equitable distribution of cultural, economic, or political power.

See also *Democracy; Representation: Political Representation*.

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Stephen Barnes

**POSITIVISM.** The history of positivism falls into two nearly independent stages: nineteenth-century French and twentieth-century Germanic, which became the logical positivism or logical empiricism of the Vienna Circle that, in turn, enjoyed an American phase. In the postmodern world, “positivist” is often a term of abuse, but historical research now contests the received characterization.

In a broad sense, positivism is the philosophical expression of scientism, the view that empirical science is the primary cultural institution, the only one that produces clear, objective, reliable knowledge claims about nature and society that accumulate over time and thereby the only enterprise that escapes the contingencies of history. For positivists, that reliability is

proportional to the proximity of claims to observed facts—the empirical basis of knowledge. Every substantive claim not tested by experience is sheer human fabrication. Positivists claim that they alone take fully into account the special nature and historical importance of science, with its actual and potential contribution to human life and culture. They reverse the traditional intellectual priority of science and philosophy (epistemology): philosophy is no longer prior to science but becomes the interpreter of and commentator on science. As W. V. Quine once quipped, “Philosophy of science is philosophy enough” (1976, p. 155).

Positivists aim to carry on the social mission of the scientific Enlightenment. The sciences, including the new human sciences, are to be unified under one method, usually with physics as the model. The positivists’ insistence that the hardheaded, allegedly value-free methods of the natural sciences (*Naturwissenschaften*) be extended to the human sciences or humanities (*Geisteswissenschaften*) has provoked charges of cultural imperialism from those defending historical, hermeneutical-interpretive, religious, or aesthetic modes of understanding (*Verstehen*).

In the broad sense, Karl Popper and even Quine are positivists, despite their trenchant critiques of the logical empiricists of the Vienna Circle (especially Rudolf Carnap), who achieved cultural authority in the twentieth century and with whom “positivism” in a narrow sense is now identified.

### The Nineteenth Century: Comte to Mach

Although it owes something to the British empiricism of David Hume and to later radical empiricists such as John Stuart Mill and Alexander Bain, positivism as a movement developed on the Continent in France and later in central Europe, especially Vienna and Berlin. We can recognize positivist strains in the French Académie des Sciences around 1800, but it was the sociologist and philosopher August Comte who, in the 1830s, founded positivism as a distinctive movement, gave it its name, and also named the new science of social physics “sociology.” The conjunction was not accidental. For him, sociology was the final science, crowning the hierarchy of sciences, employing the same lawful methods as all positive sciences, and making possible a mature scientific philosophy. Comte is most famous for his law of three stages, which claims that civilization (and every field of knowledge) passes from a naïve, animistic, theological stage, through a more abstract, metaphysical-philosophical stage, to a final, scientific or “positive” stage. In the French tradition of Descartes and the *encyclopédistes* of the Enlightenment, Comtean positivism was an entire cultural system designed to fill the vacuum left by the French Revolution, which had swept away the religious and metaphysical *ancien régime*. Comtean positivism became an evangelical movement, with scientific humanism as the new religion and Comte himself as the high priest.

The law of three stages implied the need to demarcate science from other endeavors. Comte’s criterion was that scientific claims are predictive, which excluded not only metaphysics but also unstructured accumulations of singular facts. Positive science aims at lawful generalizations expressing invariable succession and resemblance, including laws of history and

society—previously considered the domain of free human action and thus outside the scope of science. Positive science is cumulative and hence progressive. For Comte, something is “positive” insofar as it is precise, certain, useful, an organic organizing tendency for society, and relational rather than absolute. This last contrast means that Comte’s science seeks lawful correlations among phenomena rather than essences or underlying causes (the postulation of which smacks of metaphysics). It sticks to the observable surface of the world. “No proposition that is not finally reducible to the enunciation of a fact, particular or general, can offer any real and intelligible meaning” (vol. 3, p. 358). For Comte, explanation has the same form as prediction, namely subsumption of a fact under a general regularity rather than as the effect of a cause. Yet Comte also embraced the newly popular method of hypothesis against the old empiricist requirement that laws be induced from prior facts. All of these tenets except the strange Comtean religion are characteristic of later forms of positivism, although rarely via Comte’s influence. The great French sociologist Emile Durkheim did acknowledge a large debt to him.

Positivist strains are also evident in German scientific thinking in the decades before and after 1900, but it was Ernst Mach, physicist, historian, and philosopher of science, who made Vienna a center of positivist thinking. Positivists typically minimize the gap between appearance and underlying reality, at least knowable reality. Mach rejected atomic theory as empirically meaningless metaphysical speculation, at best of heuristic value; and his emphasis on the economy of thought led him to view scientific laws as rationally organized summaries of facts. Unlike the later positivists, he worked seriously on history of science (especially mechanics) and wrote on the processes of problem solving and discovery.

### Logical Positivism and the Vienna Circle

The most developed form of positivism was the logical positivism or logical empiricism (LE) of the Vienna Circle. LE developed in three main phases: the first Vienna Circle from about 1907; the second Vienna Circle (the Vienna Circle proper), from the mid-1920s until about 1933; and the predominantly American emigrant phase after Hitler came to power. In all three cases the logical empiricists (LEs) were scientists, mathematicians, and scientifically trained philosophers who met to discuss substantive and methodological problems of science and society. The first circle was influenced directly by Mach and other scientists such as Heinrich Hertz, Richard Avenarius, Wilhelm Ostwald, Henri Poincaré, and Pierre Duhem, and by scientific developments such as non-Euclidean geometry, David Hilbert’s axiomatization of Euclidean geometry, and Einstein’s relativity theories. The second circle was heavily influenced additionally by Bertrand Russell and Alfred North Whitehead’s attempted reduction of mathematics to the new symbolic logic in *Principia Mathematica* (1910–1913), Ludwig Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus* (1921), Hilbert’s metamathematics, the new quantum theory, behavioral psychology, and antivitalistic progress in biology.

All three phases were also shaped by their respective social contexts. The first circle experienced the events leading to World War I and the final days of the Habsburg Empire, while



the Weimar period framed the sociopolitical issues of the second circle. By contrast, the “end of ideology” characterized the American period, especially after World War II. Upon the emigration to America by members of the circle, the LE social program vanished. The American LEs presented their work as purely technical and hence politically neutral.

Many postmodern intellectuals, who think of the positivists as heavy-handed, dogmatic conservatives or as emotionless technical analysts disinterested in cultural affairs, are surprised to learn that the Vienna Circle assigned itself the urgent mission of reforming and transforming all of social and political culture by adapting to present conditions the program of the scientific Enlightenment. A major initiative was linguistic reform. The Viennese positivists’ animus against metaphysics was directed as much against obfuscatory and potentially totalitarian political discourse as it was against woolly philosophy. This is apparent at once in the manifesto of 1929, “The Scientific Conception of the World: The Vienna Circle,” by Hans Hahn, Carnap, and Otto Neurath in honor of their leader, Moritz Schlick. Modernist in outlook, the Vienna Circle celebrated the machine age and the transformative reconstruction (*Aufbau*) of Europe after World War I. It had close ties with a similar circle of scientific philosophers around Hans Reichenbach (Einstein’s colleague) in Berlin and with the Bauhaus school of design at Dessau, which in its own way emphasized clarity of structure shorn of all baroque, metaphysical adornment. Like the Bauhaus, the circle was international in outlook and pro-working class, and some members were politically active. Neurath was a neo-Marxist social scientist who radicalized the young Carnap, a logician. Schlick led a moderate wing.

When Schlick was assassinated in 1936, Neurath and Carnap became the leaders of the circle. It was in America that the indefatigable Neurath found a publisher for his dream project of a new, systematic encyclopedia of the sciences, but the overall project was a failure. Neurath died in 1945, and the University of Chicago Press published only twenty monographs of what was intended to be a long-term monthly subscription series. (These were later reissued as the two volumes of *Foundations of the Unity of Science* in 1955 and 1970.) One of the last contributions was Thomas Kuhn’s *Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962), commonly regarded as a refutation of logical empiricism. Meanwhile, Carnap, Herbert Feigl, Reichenbach, and Carl Hempel (a student of Reichenbach) headed the American phase of the movement. Ernest Nagel, although of a more Deweyan pragmatic cast, was a close associate. In America, unlike Europe, the aforementioned all had important academic positions, which they used to found the new specialty discipline of philosophy of science as well as to teach a new generation of philosophers, including Adolf Grünbaum, Wesley Salmon, and Hilary Putnam. With its rigorous formal methods, LE made the pragmatism of Charles Peirce, William James, and John Dewey seem quaintly dated and gradually displaced it as the official scientific philosophy. LE remained dominant until the 1960s and still casts a large shadow at the start of the twenty-first century.

The received view of the Vienna Circle is largely a post-Kuhnian construction that is now being contested. To be sure,

the LEs wanted to make philosophy (or their replacement for it) a collective, progressive enterprise like that of the sciences, but the manifesto announced a more iconoclastic unity than was actually present. Accordingly, it was easy for opponents to miss the internal discord and tar all LEs with the same brush. Although the LEs were vehemently antimetaphysical and rejected most philosophy as a meaningless, fruitless pursuit of solutions to “pseudoproblems,” they were liberal in refusing to dogmatize about empirical questions and they viewed their group as open to discussion of all views. Another source of misunderstanding was A. J. Ayer’s inflammatory *Language, Truth, and Logic* (1936), the book that brought German positivism to an English-speaking audience. Ayer’s “potboiler” (as it has been called) mislocated the positivists in the British empiricist tradition.

Archival research sensitive to the intellectual and cultural milieu of central Europe later provided a major reinterpretation of the Austro-German positivist movement from Mach to Hempel. The participants came from varying academic backgrounds and life experiences and they frequently disagreed over matters of philosophical content as well as strategy and politics. They were their own most trenchant critics. For example, Kurt Gödel defended a Platonist (and hence metaphysical) ontology of mathematics. Neurath was out of sympathy with Carnap’s project to reconstruct science within a formal logical system and with Schlick’s commitment to the correspondence theory of truth. Neurath rejected the foundational, linear empiricist theory of justification, from supposedly infallible basic statements up through ever-higher levels of theory, in favor of a holistic coherence position featuring mutual support, a stance that he famously articulated in his ship metaphor: “There is no tabula rasa. We are like sailors who have to rebuild their ship on the open sea, without ever being able to dismantle it in drydock and reconstruct it from the best components” (Giere and Richardson, p. 83).

The LEs also disagreed over labels. Several members attacked “positivism,” and Reichenbach sometimes denied that he was a “logical empiricist.” (By the beginning of the twenty-first century, however, the inclusive term “logical empiricism” was commonly applied to both the Vienna and Berlin groups as well as the American contingent and was preferred to “logical positivism.”) Also, the views of the leading figures developed significantly over their lifetimes. Accordingly, a summary that is both brief and accurate is impossible.

Contrary to Ayer, the LEs had too serious an engagement with Kant to be squarely in the British empiricist tradition. They were anti-Kantian up to a point, with the political goal of displacing the neo-Kantians of the Marburg school (which included Ernst Cassirer) as the dominant school of scientific philosophy in Europe. The central problem was to retain what was correct in Kant’s critique of crude, British empiricism without commitment to Kant’s permanent categories and forms of intuition, which licensed synthetic a priori judgments. The latter are necessary truths that are knowable a priori yet make substantive statements about the universe, for example, that physical space is Euclidean and the laws of mechanics, Newtonian. Without them, Kant had said, mathematics and natural science would be impossible.

Kant had realized that sensory inputs do not automatically sort themselves into intelligible perceptions about which we can make coherent judgments. Coherent perception and thought must be actively constituted by the human mind by means of its processing rules (the categories and forms of intuition). Upon analyzing relativity theory, Reichenbach and Schlick concluded that Kant was partly right: science does need constitutive framework principles that are neither logical truths nor empirical claims subject to testing and in that sense a priori. But how, then, to avoid Kant's commitment to a special, nonnatural intuition that yields synthetic a priori truths? Briefly, the LEs' solution, anticipating Kuhn's paradigms by several decades, was to disambiguate Kant's *necessary* a priori from the *constitutive* a priori of framework principles and to regard the latter as based on human convention rather than Kantian intuition. For example, Reichenbach's analysis of space-time theory bifurcated it into two components: a purely conventional component of "coordinating definitions" that define the meaning of measurement operations (and that we could change if it proved convenient to do so), plus a purely empirical component expressing the substantive content of the theory relative to the constitutive framework.

Stated in another way, the LEs' problem was how to wed empiricism to logic and mathematics. As Kant had emphasized, raw experience is not the sort of thing that can enter into logical relations with statements, providing justificatory reasons or evidence. And analytic claims need their own special warrant. Carnap, the most influential LE, later widened the above approach to include logic itself. The axioms of a logical system are not self-evident to reason, he said, for there is no such thing as a special faculty of rational intuition. It is not even a question of epistemic correctness; rather, it is a question of human linguistic convention—choice of language. The choice is pragmatic, not epistemic. We may freely choose any formal system we like and explore its consequences, keeping those systems that produce the most fruitful consequences for our purposes. Thus we arrive at the mature LE view that all and only empirical statements are synthetic and all and only a priori statements are analytic (in the pragmatically grounded sense). On this view, the a priori—a posteriori distinction coincides with the analytic-synthetic distinction. There is no synthetic a priori.

Where does philosophy fit into this scheme? For Carnap its task is purely analytic—*Wissenschaftslogik*, the logical analysis of the language of science using the tools of symbolic logic. Scientific philosophers clarify the logical structure of empirical science but do not *do* empirical science. Thus was born both mature analytic philosophy and philosophy of science as a specialty.

### Logical Empiricist Themes—and Their Reception

What follows is a list of several interlocking theses and projects and their outcomes, several of which were controversial among the LEs themselves.

**1. *The verifiability theory of meaning.*** A sentence is empirically meaningful if and only if it is verifiable in principle and (roughly) its meaning is given by the method of its verification. The LEs quickly rejected full verifiability in favor of weaker forms

of testability. However, they were never able to formulate an adequate formal criterion of meaning or justify the equation of meaning with empirical evidence. It was this "verificationism" that backed the LEs' anthropomorphic claim that all genuine problems are empirical and therefore humanly solvable and their dismissal of all metaphysical problems as pseudoproblems. Since competing metaphysical positions, by definition, have no empirical consequences, they cannot differ in meaning; so there can be no meaningful problem of choosing between them.

**2. *The attack on metaphysics as meaningless.*** The LEs agreed that an enlightened society has no room for metaphysics; however, they sometimes disagreed over what counts as metaphysics.

**3. *A sharp fact-value distinction and emotive ethics.*** Ethical and aesthetic utterances are emotional reactions. Since they are not empirically testable, they have no cognitive meaning and cannot be true or false. Nonetheless, the early LEs took a strong normative stance on social and political issues.

**4. *The observational-theoretical distinction.*** The project to distinguish epistemically unproblematic observational terms and sentences from the theoretical ones and legitimize the latter in terms of their logical relations to the former ran into similar difficulties despite important progress such as Carnap's treatment of dispositional terms. N. R. Hanson, Popper, Kuhn, Paul Feyerabend, and Putnam noted that scientific observational language is "theory laden" and that there is no context-free, linear gradation of theoreticity.

**5. *The analytic-synthetic distinction.*** Quine's influential critique of this pillar of LE (and of much else), in "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" and other writings, and his return to a pragmatic naturalism were heavy blows. The second dogma was "radical reductionism," the idea that each sentence in isolation can be correlated with a range of experience.

**6. *Application of the resources of the new symbolic logic and the third dogma.*** The LEs (especially Carnap) developed and applied the new symbolic logic in ingenious ways, mainly in terms of purely syntactic rules; but later critiques by Quine, Hempel, Nelson Goodman, and others showed that semantic and pragmatic considerations are unavoidable, effectively dooming Carnap's project to produce objective, ahistorical, context-free languages of science. By the 1950s and 1960s, philosophers increasingly felt that the LEs had exhausted the resources of deductive logic without adequately capturing the richness of scientific reasoning. Static logical relations seemed especially incapable of modeling scientific theories and deep conceptual change, for example, scientific revolutions. Commitment to deductive logic by the LEs and Popper has been called the third dogma of empiricism. (Others, following Donald Davidson, give this label to the so-called scheme-content distinction.) Reichenbach all along had urged a probabilistic approach (a theme continued by his student, Salmon), although he and Carnap had developed probability theory in roughly opposite ways.

**7. *Logical analysis of scientific confirmation, explanation, and theory structure.*** The LEs admirably articulated

old and new ideas here in terms of detailed models. Their work set the standard for ongoing research in these areas. Hempel's extension of "covering law" explanation to history, psychology, and the social sciences was especially controversial since it challenged old ideas about human freedom and spontaneity and the need for sympathetic understanding. Yet it also failed to capture the force of causal explanation.

**8. *The unity of science.*** Pitting the sciences against the rest of culture, some LEs defended the unity of science on three fronts: conceptual, doctrinal, and methodological. Conceptual unity means that there is one universal language of science; doctrinal unity, that more complex disciplines such as biology are ultimately reducible to more basic disciplines such as chemistry and physics; methodological unity states that there is one general method of science, that all legitimate theories, all explanations, and so on possess the same logical structure. All of these projects produced interesting results, but have since been abandoned. In the antireductionist, more pragmatic atmosphere of the early twenty-first century, the emphasis is on diversity, on teasing out the differences among the various sciences rather than on trying to model all of them on physics; and physics itself turns out to be internally diverse. Most experts reject the existence of a unique scientific method as a fiction of textbooks and school administrators.

**9. *The fall and rise of naturalistic epistemology.*** Prominent LEs followed Gottlob Frege in sharply distinguishing logic and epistemology from psychology; "psychologism" was the fallacy of confusing them. It was on this point that the positivists differed most obviously from the American pragmatists. (As usual, the most important exception was Neurath, who promoted a naturalistic epistemology.) But the LEs' own critique of Kant's transcendental epistemology could be viewed as a step toward a naturalistic epistemology. Quine took the next step and urged a return to a naturalistic pragmatism, contending that epistemology should become a branch of behavioral psychology. Historical case studies by Kuhn, Feyerabend, and their followers showed that the failure of LE and Popperian methodologies to fit actual history was so great as to raise the question whether anything recognizable as science could fit the old rules of method. Since (as Kant said) "ought" implies "can," the critics thereby showed that empirical information is relevant to and can in a sense "refute" a methodology despite its normative character.

This surprising turn does fit Quine's pronouncement that "no statement is immune to revision," come what may—not a conventional or "analytic" statement or even a normative one. The critics increasingly perceived some problems in the philosophy of science as artifacts of the LE approach and hence as pseudoproblems with respect to real science. Kuhn famously distinguished normal science under a paradigm (a quasi-Kantian categorical scheme that made normal science possible and intelligible) from revolutionary science, neither of which fit the tenets of either LE or Popperianism. In "the battle of the big systems" (initially among the LEs, Popper, Kuhn, Feyerabend, Imre Lakatos, and Stephen Toulmin), many considered Kuhn the winner, although many philosophers severely criticized his work. And yet Carnap, who increasingly thought

in terms of free, pragmatic choices among available linguistic frameworks, welcomed Kuhn's contribution as making a similar point. The work of Kuhn and Feyerabend brought all the above-mentioned difficulties of LE to a focus, which hastened its demise as the generally accepted account of science. No similarly grand consensus has replaced it.

**10. *The discovery-justification distinction.*** This distinction was an LE bulwark against psychologism. The basic idea is that it does not matter how or why a theory or problem solution pops into someone's head; what matters is how the claim is tested. There is a psychology of discovery but no logic of discovery, only a logic of justification. Philosophy is concerned only with the logically reconstructed products and not the processes of science. The LEs' applications of the discovery-justification distinction drew philosophy of science closer to philosophical problems of logic and epistemology and away from the study of science as practiced by communities of scientists. Since the new historical case studies were precisely the study of the process of investigation, they challenged these applications.

**11. *The emergence of science studies.*** As scientific insiders, the original LEs relied on their own knowledge and intuitions about how science works (or should work) and, qua analytic philosophers, saw no need for careful empirical studies of the sciences themselves. The Kuhnian revolution changed that. Their sharpest critics noted the irony that the logical *empiricists* urged everyone else to be empiricists but themselves! But while post-Kuhnian philosophers began to take the history of science seriously, they did not study in detail the scientific practices of contemporary science. They thereby left an opening for the new empirical sociology of scientific knowledge that has since grown into a multidisciplinary "science studies," often defined to exclude philosophy.

**12. *Realism versus social constructionism and "the science wars."*** As strong empiricists, early LEs tended to advocate a minimalist stance toward theories and the entities that they appeared to postulate. Some regarded theories as instruments for calculation rather than as attempts truly to describe underlying reality. Carnap himself used Russell's maxim as a motto: "Wherever possible logical constructions are to be substituted for inferred entities." This is a *logical* constructionist position. Most science studies practitioners are also constructionists, but *social* constructionists. They deny that science is a special, epistemically privileged institution and regard its results as negotiated social constructions. In reaction, many philosophers now take a "realist" position that affirms objective, scientific progress toward truth and vigorously denies the cultural relativity of scientific results. As heirs of the Enlightenment, they reject the centrifugal tendencies of postmodernism and defend the special place of the sciences in human culture. This heated debate among philosophers, science studies practitioners, culture theorists, and scientists themselves is commonly known as "the science wars." If the postmodernist critics are right, Comte's law of three stages stopped at least one stage too soon!

**13. *The linguistic turn and the rise and fall of narrowly analytic philosophy.*** With G. E. Moore, Russell, and the early Wittgenstein as precursors, the LEs, and especially



Carnap, were the primary developers of analytic philosophy. After World War II, a wider sort of linguistic philosophy, “ordinary language philosophy,” flourished at Oxford. Both movements construed philosophy itself as a metadiscipline concerned to analyze language rather than to address substantive questions about the world and human activity. But since the 1960s, Anglo-American philosophy has become more liberal in its interests and methods. Philosophers once again vigorously discuss the metaphysical issues rejected by the LEs as pseudoproblems, and there is even something of a rapprochement with the so-called Continental philosophy of Heidegger and his successors. Carnap dominated the American phase and the received view of LE; but at the turn of the twenty-first century, many experts were examining Neurath’s position in greater detail and finding it more defensible.

See also *Analytical Philosophy; Empiricism; Falsifiability; Linguistic Turn; Paradigm.*

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Thomas Nickles

**POSTCOLONIAL STUDIES.** Postcolonial studies designates a broad, multidisciplinary field of study that includes practitioners from literary, cultural, and media studies, history, geography, art history, philosophy, anthropology, sociology, and political economy. Postcolonial studies is the analysis of the phenomenon of imperialism and its aftermath: slavery, colonialism, nationalism, independence, and migration. Its eclectic disciplinary and methodological range differentiates postcolonial studies from its subdivision field of “postcolonial theory,” which is dominated by practitioners of literary studies who conceptualize narrative structures, representations of cultural difference, and strategies of subject-formation in colonial and postcolonial texts.

Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (1978) initiated the entry of postcolonial studies into the metropolitan academies of Europe and the United States. Said’s study draws upon the ideas of Antonio Gramsci and Michel Foucault to explore constructions of “the Orient” by European and American politicians, scholars, and artists. The intellectual origins of postcolonial studies are more debatable. Deconstructionist or postmodernist practitioners (including Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak) regard *Orientalism* as the inaugural text of postcolonial studies, while for Marxist or materialist practitioners (including Timothy Brennan, Benita Parry, and E. San Juan, Jr.), the field’s origins are much earlier, with the predominantly Marxist anticolonial writings of activist-intellectuals that include George Antonius, Edward Wilmot Blyden, Simon Bolivar, Amilcar Cabral, Aimé Césaire, Frantz Fanon, Marcus Garvey, C. L. R. James, Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere, George Padmore, Roberto Fernández Retamar, Walter Rodney, Jean-Paul Sartre, Léopold Senghor, and Eric Williams.

Many prominent contemporary practitioners originate from Asia (Aijaz Ahmad, Bhabha, Said, San Juan, Jr., Spivak); Africa (Chinua Achebe, Mahmoud Mamdani, Achille Mbembe, V. Y. Mudimbe, Ngugi wa Thiong’o, Wole Soyinka); and Latin America and the Caribbean (E. Kamau Brathwaite, Ariel Dorfman, Eduardo Galeano, Eduardo Glissant, Wilson Harris, Jamaica Kincaid). Of these, the majority have relocated to Europe or North America, where there is no intellectual monopoly on postcolonial intellectual practices but where practitioners enjoy the lion’s share of material resources to publish and distribute postcolonial academic materials.

### Colonial Encounters

Materialist postcolonial scholars understand colonialism to be a territorial expression of political-economic expansionism. Its foundations in domination, appropriation, and exploitation place the colonizer and colonized populations in a fundamentally antagonistic relationship that Fanon famously described as “Manichean.” Deconstructionists tend instead to understand colonialism as a cultural, epistemological, or psychological condition, and they perceive its political dimension as a “will to power” that operates autonomously of material determinants. In general, deconstructionists regard Fanon’s Manicheanism as a binary opposition that requires breaking down. Accordingly, they interpret colonial dynamics as ambivalent, indeterminate, or negotiated.

All practitioners share an understanding that colonies played a constitutive role in the emergence and development of metropolitan Europe. These global dependencies have been studied in all spheres of human activity: cultural, economic, subject-formation. Ann Laura Stoler and others have developed Foucault’s ideas of power/knowledge, discourse, and governmentality. This Foucauldian wing analyzes the production and regulation of colonial identities through modes of government, sexuality and gender, and educational systems. Colonial discourse analysis is concerned with knowledge production by various agencies of empire about colonized “others” (travel writers, missionaries, administrators, merchants, ethnographers, and so forth). Some practitioners emphasize the “epistemic violence” performed by these discourses; others emphasize their self-deconstructive qualities. Marxist studies have instead used concepts of ideology to explore the relations between imperialist ideologies and material practices, and consider the ways in which imperialist activities have denied and distorted indigenous social, cognitive, and cultural structures. Deconstructionists reason in spatial terms: space confers a single homogeneous political, social, ideological, and cultural identity upon its occupants (the West, Europe, Africa). Materialists criticize this approach for being monolithic, and explore instead the dynamic social-economic processes and diverse human agencies that, for them, operate within certain spaces.

### Nationalism

Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities* (1983) has been influential in its suggestion that nationalism is constitutively paradoxical, the expression of a historical rupture that must assert itself as an historical continuity. This has encouraged studies of the temporality of nationalism and highlighted the function of print capitalism in the development of national identities. Divisions between materialism and deconstructionism feature in studies of nationalism as they do in debates over colonialism. Materialists analyze historical anticolonial nationalist resistance as a collective and liberatory struggle for self-determination; deconstructionists analyze it as a master narrative derived from and complicit with the West. The Western source is, for some deconstructionist thinkers, the Enlightenment, for others, humanism, for others, colonialism, and for others, European nationalism.

According to materialists, anticolonial nationalism has historically mobilized leaders and masses as a political unity that

represents the needs and desires of the entire colonized population. Materialist scholars apply class analysis to differentiate between socialist, populist nationalisms and bourgeois nationalisms. Their approach rests on a dialectical understanding of the reciprocal transformability of leaders and masses as political agents.

Deconstructionists, who see the concept of political unity as a ruse, question such an understanding. They contend that it is the interests of a male social elite that nationalism actually served (and serves) and that these interests conflict with the interests of women, the peasantry, workers, and the poor. The deconstructionist critique of nationalism rests on a categorical or structural (as opposed to a dialectical and historical) understanding, which posits that these heterogeneous groups are fixed in their autonomous, essentially cultural, differences. Any claim, or attempt, to unify them does violence to those differences; any attempt to politically represent, or “speak as” the entire dominated population is actually an exploitative act of “speaking for,” that is, another example of self-consolidation through others.

### Resistance

Debates over nationalism have intensified studies of anticolonial resistance in general. The conventional historical distinction between primary resistance (physical opposition to initial colonial invasion) and secondary resistance (constitutionalist struggles against an established colonial administration) has been augmented and contested by a broad range of studies. These have examined spontaneous political uprisings, local insurgencies, and industrial action, and have tended to focus analysis on the consciousness of the resisters. The indirect, everyday, cultural, religious articulations of anticolonial resistance have also been energetically analyzed and theorized, as have women’s resistances. In this context, Bhabha’s notions of “sly civility” and “mimicry” have been widely circulated.

Some practitioners have been prompted by a postmodern politics of difference, while others have seen their work as an extension of Marxist and nationalist politics. Both tendencies, however, evaluate the material value of culture and debate the relationship between cultural and political expressions of resistance. Some have analyzed a dialectical relationship; others have seen culture as necessarily preceding political forms. Still others have seen culture as following from politics.

In general, recent critical studies of resistance have disputed developmental models that posit a qualitative linear progression of resistance and consciousness “from protest to challenge.” For some, this model denies the heterogeneity of resistant currents at work in any one historical movement or moment; others object to the teleological worldview, or belief in the idea of progress, to which this model subscribes.

### Decolonization, Postindependence and Neocolonialism

The debate over nationalism extends to the nation-state and to nationalism’s legacy in postindependent societies. Deconstructionists argue that the state is an alien structure imposed by colonialism. By adopting it as their goal and means of



social liberation, anticolonial nationalists doomed themselves to cultural inauthenticity and to political failure. Against this, materialists have argued that the state, as a political structure, has its origins in precolonial, not colonial, polity. They suggest that in a world increasingly governed by global capitalism, the state potentially provides an important safeguard of human needs. As a structure it is uniquely accountable to, and transformable by, its populations; the nation-state remains a tool to oppose neocolonialism.

Both tendencies agree that there are serious difficulties besetting much of the postcolonial world. Materialists regard and study political corruption, ethnic and religious conflicts, patriarchal practices, gross socioeconomic inequality, and national debt as originating in colonialism and in contemporary global configurations of capitalism that follow a neocolonial dynamic. Postmodernists interpret these same phenomena as arising from the structural flaws of nationalism itself.

### Historical and Regional Contexts

Academic postcolonial studies initially focused largely on the imperial metropolises, colonies, and former colonies of Britain and France. It has subsequently expanded to include critical analysis of other European imperialisms (Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese, German) and that of the United States. The field has additionally investigated transnationalism, race, ethnicity, diaspora, and globalization, which now operate as autonomous academic fields. The institutional relationship of postcolonial to ethnic studies and to area studies varies; in some instances, mergers of these previously discrete programs and departments have occurred.

Different regions are associated with different intellectual concerns and contributions. The study of race, for example, has been particularly pronounced in work from (and about) Africa and the Caribbean, challenging orthodox political economy by arguing that, historically, enslaved labor did not precede but was integral to the development of metropolitan capitalism. This work insists on the economic as well as the ideological significance of race.

Postcolonial intellectuals from these regions have also developed negritude and pan-Africanist scholarship that argues for the liberatory value of racial identification. At the same time the strikingly multicultural and multiracial qualities of Caribbean history have led to scholarly studies of cultural plurality and mixing: creolization, *metissage*, *mestizaje*, and syncretism are ideas that have been heavily debated in and regarding the Caribbean.

Postcolonial studies originating from (or about) Asia have arguably shown the heaviest imprint of poststructuralism applying Foucauldian, Derridean, and Lacanian psychoanalytic ideas. From India emerged Subaltern Studies, an influential collective of historians. Its original Gramscian-Marxist orientation produced studies of colonialism as “domination without hegemony” (Ranjit Guha), and studies of the resistance history and consciousness of subalterns (a term describing subordinated social agents). At the start of the twenty-first century, subaltern studies has moved towards deconstructionism.

*See also Empire and Imperialism; Equality; Eurocentrism; Europe, Idea of; Interdisciplinarity; Nationalism; Postcolonial Theory and Literature; Postmodernism; Structuralism and Poststructuralism.*

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Laura Chrisman

### POSTCOLONIAL THEORY AND LITERATURE.

Postcolonial theory, often said to begin with the work of Edward W. Said, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, and Homi K. Bhabha, looks at literature and society from two broad angles: how the writer, artist, cultural worker, and his or her context reflects a colonial past, and how they survive and carve out a new way of creating and understanding the world. One of the earliest critical works to present this point of view is Robert J. C. Young’s *White Mythologies: Writing History and the West* (1990).

When Said published his path-breaking book *Orientalism* in 1978, it established a trend that was, for some years, loosely described as “colonial discourse studies” rather than “postcolonial theory.” Although Said ostensibly wrote about the Middle East being constructed as the “Orient” by French intellectuals of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it was the Spanish

## EDWARD W. SAID

Edward W. Said was born in Jerusalem in 1935 and raised in Jerusalem and Cairo. Said earned his B.A. from Princeton University in 1957, and his M.A. (1960) and Ph.D. (1964) from Harvard University.

Said began teaching at Columbia University in 1963, where he rose to be University Professor of English and Comparative Literature. He was the author of twenty-two books, translated into thirty-five languages; they include *Beginnings: Intention and Method* (1975); *Orientalism* (1978); *The Question of Palestine* (1979); *Covering Islam* (1981); *The World, The Text, and the Critic* (1983); *After the Last Sky* (1986); *Musical Elaborations* (1991); *Culture and Imperialism* (1993); *Representations of the Intellectual: The 1993 Reith Lectures* (1994); *Peace and Its Discontents: Essays on Palestine in the Middle East Peace Process* (1996); *Out of Place: A Memoir* (1999); *The End of the Peace Process: Oslo and After* (2000); *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays* (2001); *Power, Politics, and Culture* (2001); *Parallels and Paradoxes* (2002); and *Freud and the Non-European* (2003). *Humanism and Democratic Criticism* (2004) appeared posthumously.

Said experienced postcoloniality as exile when the state of Israel was established in Palestine in 1948. "Orientalism" created a new way of theorizing the last few centuries, when the imperialist West constructed the colonies as aberrant cultural and political objects, needing the civilizing efforts of the master races. This is postcolonial theory. As a public intellectual, Said spoke indefatigably against Israeli colonialism in occupied Palestine. We might call this postcolonial intellectual practice.

Said wrote a twice-monthly column for London-based pan-Arab daily *Al-Hayat* and the Cairo paper *Al-Abram*; he wrote regularly for newspapers in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East, and was the music critic for the magazine *The Nation*. Said lectured all over the world, protesting the violence in the Middle East, speaking "truth to power." A member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Royal Society of Literature, and the American Philosophical Society, Said was a member of the PEN Executive Board until 1998, and President of the Modern Language Association for 1999.

Said received twenty honorary doctorates, from the University of Chicago, Jawaharlal Nehru University (New Delhi), Haverford College, Bir Zeit University (Palestine), University of Michigan, University of Edinburgh, University of Warwick, University of Exeter, National University of Ireland, University of Paris 7 – Denis Diderot, Institute of Social Sciences (The Hague), American University of Beirut, and the University of Aberdeen, among others. In 1998, he was awarded the Sultan Owais Prize for general cultural achievement; in 1999, he received the first Spinoza Prize (Netherlands). Said's memoir *Out of Place* received the New Yorker Book Award for Non-Fiction (1999), the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award for Non-Fiction (2000), and the Morton Dauwen Zabel Award in Literature. In 2001, Said was awarded the Lannan Literary Award for Lifetime Achievement; in 2002, he received the Prince of Asturias Award for Concord. Professor Said died on 23 September 2003.

and British empires that formed the main fields of colonial discourse studies. Although Said's main thesis was that the West constructed something called the "Orient" as an object of investigation through varieties of cognitive, disciplinary, and administrative practice, colonial discourse studies was broader in its focus and conclusions.

Said, an Arab-American of Palestinian origin, continued to influence colonial and subsequently postcolonial studies and

its offshoots (cultural studies, women's studies, ethnic studies) with his writings and his political journalism. Important works are *Covering Islam* (1981), *The Question of Palestine* (1979), *The World, the Text, the Critic* (1983), and *Culture and Imperialism* (1993).

#### First Wave: Colonial Discourse

The influential practitioners of early colonial discourse studies were, on the Latin American front, Gordon Brotherston,

### MAHASWETA DEVI

Mahasweta Devi was born 1926 in Dhaka, then in British India, to parents who were nationalist intellectuals. She was educated at a school and college established by anti-imperialist poet Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941). Devi earned her M.A. in English from Calcutta University in 1963.

Exposing exploitation and domination in the postcolonial state, Devi's writings are different from the literature of diasporic nostalgia for the place left behind. Between 1956 and 1965, Devi published nineteen titles. Among these was *Jhansir Rani* (The Queen of Jhansi, 1956), a novel about young princess of a small princely state losing her life in the Mutiny of 1857 against the British, based on archival sources as well as oral history collected by Devi herself.

From 1966 to 1975, Devi published three historical novels. One explored a low-caste boy's struggle for human rights; another, the Maratha cavalry raids in the eighteenth century. *Hajar Churashir Ma* (Mother of 1084) provided a feminist and urban perspective on the Naxalite movement of the early 1970s that brought peasants and intellectuals together. This was Devi's first major book.

Between 1976 and 1985, Devi's work focused on the aboriginal and the (post)colonial state. Her fiction about the Indian "aboriginals" (remnants of ethnic groups already living on the Indian subcontinent when the pastoralist economies, speaking Indo-European languages, spread to the area between 6000 and 2000 B.C.E.) include the novel *Aranyer Adhikar* (1975; Right to the forest), on Birsa Munda and the anti-British Munda rebellion in the late nineteenth century; the short story collection *Agnigarbha* (1978; Womb of fire); and the novel *Chotti Munda Ebong Tar Tir* (1980; Chotti Munda and his arrow).

In 1980, Devi started the Bengali quarterly *Bortika* (Torch) as a forum for peasants, agricultural and factory workers, the urban subproletariat, middle-class activists, and conscientious government workers. It was the first significant alternative publication in Bengali. In 1980 and 1981, she initiated investigative and interventionist journalism against every social ill in the postcolonial state. In 1981, Devi became involved with bonded labor (rural landowners charging exorbitant interest for small, often imagined, and invariably undocumented, loans, so that generations give free labor in "exchange"). Active in national and state-level human rights, Devi masterminded the first public interest litigation against the state on behalf of the aboriginals in 1998.

Devi is a one-person resource center for people in distress, tenaciously holding the state to its accountability. Her activism is thus different from the international civil society—self-selected moral entrepreneurs, controlled by the dominant states of the world, who bypass the dominated states. She is "postcolonial" against this new and unacknowledged colonialism. Devi approaches administrative machinery at all levels. In her fiction, she presents the aboriginal in her otherness and singularity. In her activism, she is careful that those whose suffering she foregrounds should not suffer because of her intervention.

Devi was named Padmashree (distinguished citizen) by the government of India in 1986 for work among aboriginals. In 1996, she received the Jnanpith (a literary award presented by the government of India) and the Ramon Magsaysay award (for literature, given by the government of the Philippines). In 2003, Devi was named to the Légion d'honneur (second order, by the government of France).

José Rabasa, and Peter Hulme. Brotherston's book *The Book of the Fourth World* (1992) was particularly significant in suggesting major differences in the historiography of time and place if indigenous languages were studied in depth.

By far the most numerous studies were confined to the British Empire in India. An offshoot of this work was a thorough investigation of the cross-cultural elements of the British Renaissance period. This work has also been called the New

### W. E. B. DU BOIS

W. E. B. Du Bois was born in 1868 in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. At fifteen, Du Bois was a race correspondent for the *New York Globe*. He encountered racism early, but gained a deeper knowledge of it teaching at a county school while an undergraduate at Fisk College in Nashville, Tennessee. Du Bois earned his B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. from Harvard University. His doctoral thesis, *The Suppression of the African Slave Trade to the United States of America, 1638–1870*, is the first volume of the Harvard Historical Series.

Du Bois initiated the scientific approach to social phenomena in 1896 with his work *The Philadelphia Negro*. He continued developing methodology while serving on the faculty of Atlanta University, presenting historical versions of African and African-American cultural development. Du Bois engaged in a growing ideological controversy with Booker T. Washington (1856–1915), who preferred industrial to liberal education and limited economic growth to political power. Du Bois proposed higher education of the “Talented Tenth.”

In 1903, Du Bois saw the publication of his landmark *The Souls of Black Folk*.

In 1906, Du Bois organized the “Niagara Movement,” leading on to the establishment of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). In 1909, Du Bois began editing the chief organ of the NAACP, *Crisis* magazine; he continued as editor for twenty-five years. Du Bois’s scathing editorials often led to battles within the ranks of the association.

During World War I, Du Bois used *Crisis* to lead Congress to open black officer training schools, bring legal action against lynchings, and set up a federal work plan for returning veterans. *Crisis* subscription grew from 1,000 in 1909 to over 10,000 in 1919. Du Bois’s “Returning Soldier” editorial marked the climax of the period.

In 1919, Du Bois represented the NAACP at the Peace Conference in France, where he organized the abortive Pan-African conference. In 1921, Du Bois planned a second Pan-African meeting. That same year, Du Bois met the populist Jamaican

leader Marcus Garvey (1887–1940) and visited Africa for the first time. With the publication of “The Negro Mind Looks Out” (1925), Du Bois anticipated postcolonial criticism by fifty years.

In 1927, Du Bois visited the Soviet Union. He commented, “My day in Russia was the day of Communist beginnings.” Du Bois left the NAACP in 1933 and rejoined Atlanta University. His works on the black freedom struggle, *Black Reconstruction* and *Dusk of Dawn*, were published in 1935 and 1940, respectively.

As an associate consultant to the American delegation, Du Bois charged the fledgling United Nations with imperialism in 1945.

The Fifth Pan-African Congress, also in 1945, included Kwame Nkrumah (1909–1972), the first president of Ghana; George Padmore (1903–1959), the international revolutionary; and Jomo Kenyatta (c. 1890–1978), the first president of Kenya. Du Bois was elected International President, and was named “Father of Pan-Africanism.” His *The World and Africa* was published in 1947.

As a member of the American Labor Party, Du Bois asserted, “Drunk with power, we are leading the world to hell in a new colonialism with the same old human slavery, which once ruined us, to a third world war, which will ruin the world.”

Du Bois demanded the outlawing of atomic weapons as chairman of the Peace Information Center. He was indicted under Foreign Agents Registration Act, but was acquitted on insufficient evidence. In 1959, Du Bois told a large audience in Beijing: “In my own country for nearly a century I have been nothing but a NIGGER.” Du Bois left the United States permanently for Ghana in 1961. He directed the state-sponsored *Encyclopedia Africana* at Nkrumah’s request and became a Ghanaian citizen and member of the Communist party.

Du Bois died in Ghana in 1963.

SOURCE: Adapted from Gerald C. Hynes, “A Biographical Sketch of W. E. B. Du Bois.” Available from <http://www.duboislc.org/html/DuBoisBio.html>.



Historicism. The most important critic in this trend is Stephen J. Greenblatt. Greenblatt's most representative book is *Marginal Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (1991).

As for colonial discourse studies proper, work by the British Indian scholar Homi K. Bhabha can be seen as groundbreaking in the early 1980s. In the essays collected as *The Location of Culture* (1994), Bhabha describes "mimicry" as "at once resemblance and menace," "hybridity" as "'denied' knowledges enter[ing] upon the dominant discourse and estrang[ing] the basis of its authority," and the "third space" as "the non-synchronous temporality of global and national cultures."

The importance of Bhabha's early work lay in his use of the discourse of psychoanalysis as revised by the French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan (1901–1981), and developed by the British journal *Screen*, where some of Bhabha's earliest writings appeared. "DissemiNation," the influential introduction to his edited volume *Nation and Narration* (1990), considers how to conceptualize the nation under colonialism and, by default, in postcoloniality. Here he takes issue with the anthropologist Benedict Anderson's view of the relationship between imperialism and its resistance in *Imagined Communities* (1991). Anderson, a scholar of Southeast Asia, suggests that the narrative time of the novel is particularly suitable for the epistemic shift suffered by colonial populations. In his 1998 book *The Spectre of Comparisons*, Anderson provides a detailed analysis of the coming into being of a place called Southeast Asia. This is a postcolonial text that carries on the Saidian tradition of the construction of an object of investigation into the academic practice of the U.S. university.

### Interdisciplinarity

Although the three founders of the movement are located in the discipline of literary criticism, the Saidian revolution has been felt in anthropology as well. In a landmark article published in 1989 and delivered earlier to the American Association of Anthropology, Said accused anthropology of being a tool of imperialism. From within the discipline, the response to this was not as hostile as might have been expected. Important texts are Johannes Fabian's *Time and the Other* (1983); Michael Taussig's *Devil and Commodity Fetishism in South America* (1980) and *Shamanism, Colonialism, and the Wild Man* (1987); and James Clifford's *Predicament of Culture* (1988). Arjun Appadurai cofounded the journal *Public Culture* in 1988, and it soon became a leading proponent of a postcolonial approach to global migration. Carol Breckenridge, its founding co-editor, is a feminist postcolonialist historian of South Asia. In the discipline of history, names to be mentioned are Ann Laura Stoler and Gauri Viswanathan, a star pupil of Edward Said, whose work combines historical scholarship with skills in literary reading.

### Subaltern Studies

The connection between the discipline of history and colonial discourse/postcolonial studies can be traced also through the Subaltern Studies collective, established in the early 1980s at the University of Sussex under the leadership of Ranajit Guha. The term *subaltern* comes from the Italian political theorist

Antonio Gramsci (1891–1937). Guha had, however, published a monograph entitled *A Rule of Property for Bengal* in 1963, which anticipated colonial discourse studies by two decades. The collective initially concentrated on the study of peasant and tribal insurgency in South Asia. Their main thesis was that colonial, nationalist, and Marxist historiography of this region had ignored the importance of such insurgencies. In asserting this, they questioned the validity of the category of the "pre-political," as advanced by British historian Eric Hobsbawm. Dipesh Chakrabarty's *Rethinking Working-Class History* (1989) is a study that illustrates why a strict Marxist class analysis is not appropriate for the study of the subaltern in colonial discourse. Chakrabarty has moved to a more metropolitan approach in his later work *Provincializing Europe* (2000).

Indeed, by the turn of the twenty-first century, the entire Subaltern Studies group had moved to problems that are more specifically post-colonial. Important in this area are Partha Chatterjee's studies of nationalism and his idea of "political" rather than "civil" society in the postcolonial subaltern context.

### Second Wave: Postcolonial

This entry will now consider second-wave postcolonial theory as applied to Latin America, Britain, the Caribbean, Africa, Australian, New Zealand, Hawai'i, and East and Southeast Asia, as well as from the perspective of feminism.

**Latin America.** It has already been mentioned that colonial discourse studies was strong in the Latin American area. Specifically postcolonialist work was undertaken by Jean Franco; Walter D'Amico, with his *Local Histories/Global Designs* (2000); Mary-Louise Pratt, with specific reference to migrant movements; and others. Franco's *Plotting Women* (1989) is an exemplary text of postcolonialist feminism. Her *Decline and Fall of the Lettered City* (2002) relates postcolonial theory to the thematics of the Cold War. In addition, John Beverley, Ileana Rodríguez, Alberto Moreiras, and others have started a Latin American Subaltern Studies group. Moreiras's work is strongly marked by poststructuralism.

The Latin American trend continues the tradition of José Enrique Rodó (1871–1917), with his work *Ariel* (1900); Roberto Fernández Retamar (b. 1930), with his "Caliban" (1974); and Angel Rama (1926–1983), with *The Lettered City* (1996), as these earlier writers considered the relationship of Latin America to the metropole. Behind them is the shadow of the Cuban writer José Martí (1853–1895) and his powerful work, especially his essay "Our America" (1891), which defines Latin America not only in terms of the European metropole, but also over against the United States.

**British cultural studies.** Bhabha's early affinities were with the Birmingham Cultural Studies group, established in the mid-sixties by Richard Hoggart and Stuart Hall. This group was specifically interested in Black Britain—the scene of the migrant—and was thus unconnected, in early stages, with colonial discourse as such. Hall was a member of the British New Left of the 1960s and later an editor of *Marxism Today*, the journal of British Labour. He followed and developed Louis Althusser's (1918–1990) theory of ideology. His loyalties were therefore more centrally connected to Marxism than many of



the postcolonialists. In “When Was Postcolonialism?” published in 1996, Hall clarifies his own relationship to postcolonialism.

Paul Gilroy was the leader of the Race and Politics Group that produced the celebrated Birmingham Cultural Studies collection *The Empire Strikes Back* (1982). Gilroy moved to the United States and published a book called *The Black Atlantic* (1993), which is more in the postcolonial stream. His work then shifted into the space occupied by Martin Bernal’s *The Black Athena* (1987), which claims “African” origin for Greek culture; or Ivan van Sertima’s book, with the self-explanatory title *They Came Before Columbus* (1976); or yet the work of Jack D. Forbes, the most interesting example being *Black Africans and Native Americans* (1988), where Forbes argues the heterogeneity of the color-coding of the Greater Caribbean, by which he means North America.

Under the influence of Henry Louis Gates, Jr., the eminent African-Americanist, Bhabha’s work now focuses on the great African-American historian W. E. B. Du Bois (1868–1963). In Britain, Robert J. C. Young’s *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (2001) has provided a compendious volume that should be read in conjunction with this essay. The other important figure is Rajeswari Sunder Rajan, who divides her time between India and Britain. Among her many books, *Real and Imagined Women: Gender, Culture, and Postcolonialism* (1993) and *The Scandal of the State: Women, Law, Citizenship in Postcolonial India* (2003) are most pertinent to postcolonial theory. Young and Sunder Rajan co-edit *Interventions*, an important journal of postcolonial studies.

**Caribbean.** This is also an extension of Bhabha’s earlier and continuing work on Frantz Fanon (1925–1961), the revolutionary psychiatrist from Martinique. The work of Aimé Césaire, also from Martinique and the author of *Discourse on Colonialism* (1970), should be mentioned here. With Léopold Sedar Senghor, Césaire founded the movement called “Négritude,” a critique of colonial discourse that looked forward to postcoloniality. Edouard Glissant’s concept of “créolité” or “creoleness” may be termed its postcolonial hybridization. Pertinent essays are to be found in *Caribbean Discourse* (1989).

With Guha’s *Rule of Property for Bengal*, C. L. R. James’s *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L’Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (1963) can be considered a source text of postcolonialism.

**Africa.** In 1974, the African novelist Chinua Achebe published an essay, “An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*,” which may be called the first essay of postcolonial literary criticism. Like much postcolonial criticism, it is undertaken by a metropolitan migrant. The question—Can a work which represents Africans as near-animals be called “great”?—is a classic postcolonial question.

In the case of sub-Saharan Africa, there is also a text located on the continent that has become a classic. It is the Kenyan writer Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o’s *Decolonising the Mind: Politics of Language in African Literature*, published in 1986. In it, Ngũgĩ makes the bold and controversial suggestion that, in postcoloniality, the indigenous languages of Africa should

be developed as interactive literary languages. Ngũgĩ writes in Kikuyu himself and translates the material into English. He also works to support Kikuyu-language publication among Kenyan-Americans.

Among other African postcolonialists, one should consider the Nigerian-American Nobel Laureate Wole Soyinka’s writings, among them *Open Sore of a Continent: A Personal Narrative of the Nigerian Crisis* (1996), and “Arms and the Arts,” given as a T. B. Davie memorial lecture at the University of Cape Town. In Cape Town, the work of Njabulo Ndebele (*South African Literature and Culture: Rediscovery of the Ordinary*, 1994) should be considered, and in the United States, the work of Anne McClintock and Rob Nixon in the context of South Africa. Shula Marks produced feminist postcolonial work in South Africa. Marks edited *Not Either an Experimental Doll: The Separate Worlds of Three South African Women* (1987), which outlines the race, class, and gender lines in postcolonial feminism with extraordinary poignancy.

The Congolese-American philosopher V.Y. Mudimbe has laid down the lines of postcolonial thinking in his book *The Invention of Africa* (1988). Abdul JanMohamed, a Kenyan Indian who burst upon the U.S. scene with his *Manichean Aesthetics: The Politics of Literature in Colonial Africa* in 1983, has combined Africa with African-America in his later work on the author Richard Wright. In this connection, it should be mentioned that Rodolfo Acuña (*Occupied America*, 1972) and Mario Barrera (*Race and Class in the Southwest*, 1979) had theorized “internal colonization” in the Chicano context.

Samir Amin, the eminent Egyptian sociologist, would not describe himself as a postcolonialist. His first monumental book, *Unequal Development: An Essay on the Social Formation of Peripheral Capitalism* (1975), is, however, a “postcolonial” re-thinking of the Marxian vision of the narrative history of the world in terms of the progression of the modes of production. In the field of anthropology, one should mention Ifi Amadiume, *Male Daughters, Female Husbands: Gender and Sex in African Society* (1987).

**Australia, New Zealand, Hawai’i.** The names to be mentioned in the Australian context are Simon During, editor of *The Cultural Studies Reader* (1993); Helen Tiffin and Bill Ashcroft, editors of the *Post-colonial Studies Reader* (1995); John Hutnyk, co-editor of *Travel Worlds: Journeys in Contemporary Cultural Politics* (1999); and Nikos Papastergiadis, long associated with the London-based postcolonialist art journal *Third Text* and author of *Turbulence of Migration: Globalization, Deterritorialization, and Hybridity* (2000). The specifically feminist postcolonialist here is Sneja Gunew, who indefatigably edited and co-edited multicultural and feminist Australian texts since 1982.

In New Zealand, postcolonial studies merge with Maori Studies. An important feminist whose work tends toward postcolonialist theory is Ngahuia Te Awakotuku, author of *Mana Wabine Maori: Selected Writings on Maori Women’s Art, Culture, and Politics* (1991). This tendency toward postcolonialism is also marked in Hawai’ian cultural theory, in the work of Jon Kamakawiwoole Osorio and Haunani-Kay Trask.

**Post-Soviet.** In post-Soviet Europe, postcolonial theory is undergoing a transformation, because the colonialism in question belongs to the old multicultural empires—Ottoman (c. 1300–1922), Hapsburg (1282–1918) and Russian—followed by the Soviet experiment. The Belgrade Circle has produced many interesting texts, among them *Balkan as Metaphor* (2002), edited by Savić and Dusan I. Bjelić. The “Tocka” group in Skopje, Macedonia regularly considers questions of postcoloniality. Translations of postcolonial texts are also being undertaken in Ukraine. Mark von Hagen has suggested that the postcolonial approach should be used to rethink the former Soviet Union as “Eurasia.” His essay “Empires, Borderlands, and Diasporas: Eurasia as Anti-Paradigm for the Post-Soviet Era” appeared in the *American Historical Review* in April 2004.

**East and Southeast Asia.** The adjective *postcolonial* is disputed among writers in China, Korea, and Japan. Among Chinese writers, one might mention Eileen Chang (1920–1995), who survived the Japanese occupation of China and moved to the United States, where she died. She wrote in English and Chinese. Xiao Hong (1911–1942), Xiao Jun (1907–1988), and Duanmu Hongliang (1912–1996) might also qualify. They published during the anti-Japanese war, criticizing both the colonizing power and a reactive patriotism.

The critic Ping-Hui Liao has claimed the Taiwan writer Wu Zhuoliu (1900–1976) as a postcolonial, again with reference to the Japanese occupation. And critics such as Kuei-fen Chiu have claimed that “when situated in the postcolonial historical context of Taiwan, the canon debate gets a further complicated twist that extends the issue beyond the scope of discussion found in Western feminist writing” (from a private communication with Tani Barlow, professor of Chinese literature at University of Washington). This relates to the view that Taiwanese literature cannot be considered part of the literature of China. It is not possible to entertain such broad issues here. The literature of the Southeast Asian Chinese diaspora is also an important consideration here, and it too is beyond the scope of this article. In Japan, the classic postcolonial writers are Yokomitsu Riichi (1898–1947) and Kenzaburo Oe. In his novel *Shanghai* (1929–32) and in his essay “China Sea” (1939), Riichi presents the hybrid modernity of Asia in Western colonialism. Kenzaburo Oe tackles the problem of America. His *Hiroshima Notes* (1963) perhaps confronts the problem most directly. “Literature must be written from the periphery towards the center, and we can criticize the center. Our credo, our theme, or our imagination is that of the peripheral human being. The man who is in the center does not have anything to write” (Kenzaburo Oe Internet site, available from <http://www.ou.edu/worldlit/authors/oe/oe.html>). His *Silent Cry* (1974) and *Dojidai Gemu* (The Game of Contemporaneity, 1979) are plangent novels of Japanese identity. The “Overcoming Modernity” debate of the 1940s presages in Japan a sort of postcolonial discussion that is distinctive: a regional colonial power coming to grips with the modernity of international colonialism. Harry Harootunian has written on this in his *Overcome by Modernity* (2000). This must be accommodated in a broad vision of postcoloniality. On the contemporary scene, one might consider the “resident Koreans” who write in Japanese and have created a flourishing and

much-prized tradition in fiction, drama, and other genres. Most famous perhaps is Yu Miri and Murakami Haruki. *Postcolonial* is also a problematic term in Korean literature, but three writers might be considered under that rubric: Sin Tongyop (1930–1969), Pak Wan-so, and Cho Chong-Rae. The first of these three, a poet, was associated with the Minjung Movement, giving a divided Korea a sense of being in the grip of U.S. colonialism, going back to the 1960s and early 1970s. Here again, we are facing a different picture of postcoloniality.

**Feminists.** Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (b. 1942) is usually thought of as one of the three co-founders of postcolonial theory. Her *Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present* (1999) is her definitive statement on postcolonial theory. Her work combines Marxism, feminism, and deconstruction. She introduced many to this type of postcolonial theory when she published three pieces in the 1980s: “Three Women’s Texts and a Critique of Imperialism,” “Can the Subaltern Speak?,” and “‘Draupadi’ by Mahasweta Devi.” Her translations of Mahasweta Devi, a fiction-writer in Bengali, have been influential in establishing the parameters of the literature of postcoloniality; these include *Imaginary Maps* (1995), *Breast Stories* (1997), *Old Women* (1999), and *Chotti Munda and His Arrow* (2002). Other feminist postcolonial theorists and their texts of note are Diane Bell, author of *Daughters of the Dreaming* (1983), a text on aboriginal women from Australia; Maxine Hong Kingston, *Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts* (1976); Trinh Ti Minh-ha, *Woman, Native, Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism* (1989); and Chandra Talpade Mohanty, “Under Western Eyes,” (1984) and *Feminism Without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity* (2003). Mohanty worked with U.S. feminists who thought of the older minorities as internally colonized, and women as doubly colonized within that pattern. A representative work would be *This Bridge Called My Back* (1981), edited by Gloria Anzaldúa and Cherrie Moraga. In 1999, Anzaldúa published *Borderlands*, a book on the new hybrid that has had an enormous impact on U.S. postcolonial thinking. A representative example of similar impulses within the African-American community would be the work of bell hooks. In the diasporic Asian context, Rey Chow’s *Writing Diaspora* (1993) occupies an important place.

### Next Wave: Globalization

At the turn of the twenty-first century, postcolonial theory is merging with cultural theories of globalization, with the metropolitan emphasis coming frankly to the fore. A book riding the wave is Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri’s *Empire* (2000).

**Literature: a reader’s guide.** The literary production of postcoloniality has generally been in the languages of the metropole, sometimes creolized. This is such a prolific impulse that only a few names can be cited here. For purposes of efficiency, the list is confined to the areas of the world where postcolonial theory has developed and flourished. By and large, the main thematics of postcolonial literature divide themselves between the experience and legacy of colonialism and the experience of migrancy and exile.

*Africa.* Amos Tutuola, *The Palm-Wine Drinkard and His Dead Palm-Wine Tapster in the Dead’s Town* (1953); Naguib

Mahfouz, *Palace Walk* (1956–1957); Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* (1958); Ousmane Sembène, *God's Bits of Wood* (1962); Bloke Modisane, *Blame Me on History* (1963); Tayeb Salih, *Season of Migration to the North* (1969); Wole Soyinka, *Death and the King's Horseman* (1975); Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *Petals of Blood* (1977); Mariama Bâ, *So Long A Letter* (1980); Nadine Gordimer, *July's People* (1981); Buchi Emecheta, *The Rape of Shavi* (1983); Nuruddin Farah, *Maps* (1986); Assia Djebar, *Fantasia: An Algerian Cavalcade* (1989); Abdelkebir Khatibi, *Love in Two Languages* (1990); J. M. Coetzee, *Disgrace* (1999); Tsitsi Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions* (1988); Zoë Wycombe, *David's Story* (2001); and Tahar Ben Jelloun, *This Blinding Absence of Light* (2002), among many others.

*Latin America.* Alejo Carpentier, *The Lost Steps* (1956); Carlos Fuentes, *The Death of Artemio Cruz* (1964); Julio Cortázar, *Hopscotch* (1966); Mario Vargas Llosa, *The Green House* (1968); Gabriel García Márquez, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1970); Manuel Puig, *Betrayed by Rita Hayworth* (1971); Marta Traba, *Mothers and Shadows* (1983); Severo Sarduy, *Colibri* (1984); Isabel Allende, *House of the Spirits* (1985); Silviano Santiago, *Stella Manhattan* (1985); Diamela Eltit, *The Fourth World* (1995); João Gilberto Noll, *Hotel Atlântico* (1989); César Aira, *The Hare* (1998); Ricardo Piglia, *The Absent City* (2000); and Pedro Lemebel, *My Tender Matador* (2003), among many others.

*East and Southeast Asia.* Eileen Chang, *The Rouge of the North* (1967); Pramoedya Ananta Toer, *The Fugitive* (1975); John Okada, *No-No Boy* (1975); Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, *Dictee* (1982); Wendy Law-Yone, *The Coffin Tree* (1983); Amy Tan, *The Joy Luck Club* (1989); Jessica Tarahata Hagedorn, *Dogeaters* (1990); Pak Won-so, *The Naked Tree* (1995); Yu Miri, *Family Cinema* (1996); Lan Cao, *Monkey Bridge* (1997); Cho Chong-Rae, *Playing with Fire* (1997); Murakami Haruki, *The Wind-up Bird Chronicle* (1997); Wu Zhuoliu, *The Fig Tree: Memoirs of a Taiwanese Patriot* (2002); and Monique Truong, *The Book of Salt* (2003), among many others.

*South Asia.* R. K. Narayan, *Swami and Friends* (1944); Kamala Markandaya, *Nectar in a Sieve* (1954); Raja Rao, *Serpent and the Rope* (1960); Bharati Mukherjee, *The Tiger's Daughter* (1972); Salman Rushdie, *Midnight's Children* (1981); Hanif Kureishi, *The Buddha of Suburbia* (1990); Meena Alexander, *Fault Lines: A Memoir* (1993); Mahasweta Devi, *Imaginary Maps* (1994); Jhumpa Lahiri, *Interpreter of Maladies* (1999); Amitav Ghosh, *The Glass Palace* (2001); and Rohinton Mistry, *Family Matters* (2001), among many others.

*Caribbean.* George Lamming, *In the Castle of My Skin* (1953); V. S. Naipaul, *Mystic Masseur* (1959); Kamau Brathwaite, *Rights of Passage* (1967); Aimé Césaire, *Tempête* (1986); Maryse Condé, *Heremakhonon* (1976); Wilson Harris, *Guyana Quartet* (1985); Derek Walcott, *Omeros* (1990); Jamaica Kincaid, *Lucy* (1990); and Erna Brodber, *Louisiana* (1994), among many others.

*Polynesia.* Albert Wendt, *Sons for the Return Home* (1973); Keri Hulme, *The Bone People* (1985); Epeli Hau'ofa, *Tales of the Tikongs* (1983); Witi Tami Ihimaera, *Bulibasha: King of the Gypsies* (1994); Haunani-Kay Trask, *Light in the Crevice*

*Never Seen* (1994); Sia Figiel, *Where We Once Belonged* (1996); Patricia Grace, *Baby No-Eyes* (1998), among many others.

*United States.* Toni Morrison, *Beloved* (1987); Américo Paredes, *George Washington Gomez* (1990); Leslie Marmon Silko, *Almanac of the Dead* (1991); Sandra Cisneros, *Caramelo, or, Puro cuento* (2002), among many others.

See also **Literature; Occidentalism; Orientalism; Other, The, European Views of; Postcolonial Studies.**

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**POSTMODERNISM.** Few terms in the contemporary critical lexicon have been as vociferously debated and as persistently unstable in meaning and use as *postmodernism* and its various avatars, such as *postmodernity*. In spite of this instability, postmodernity may be defined as a broad category designating the culture that historically extends from the late 1960s to the early twenty-first century, and that is economically determined by postindustrial capitalism. Postmodernism would refer, more narrowly, to the characteristic intellectual and aesthetic currents and practices of that era, reflected, for example, in certain philosophical ideas or works of literature and art.

The terms *postmodernity* and *postmodernism* also suggest a break, respectively, with *modernity*, determined economically by capitalism and culturally by humanism and the Enlightenment, and with *Modernism*, the literary and aesthetic movements of modernity in the late nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. While the distinction between modernity and postmodernity can be made without much difficulty, the distinction between modernism and postmodernism is more complicated. Some early critics argued that postmodernism was not really "post" at all, but simply "late" modernism. It quickly became apparent, however, that, despite its continuities with modernism, postmodernism does represent a definitive break from its predecessor, as well as

The status of knowledge is altered as societies enter what is known as the postindustrial age and cultures enter what is known as the postmodern age. . . . Postmodern knowledge . . . refines our sensitivity to differences and reinforces our ability to tolerate the incommensurable.

SOURCE: Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*.

a broader overall phenomenon, which includes in particular postmodernist theory.

Arguably the single most crucial conceptual determinate of the postmodern era and of postmodernism, defining this break, is an uncontainable and irreducibly de-centered multiplicity of coexisting cognitive and cultural paradigms, without any one of them being uniquely dominant or central. This postmodern de-centering, however, is defined not by the absence of all centrality, but by multicentering as the emergence of many centers and claims upon one or another centrality, including by previously marginalized fields and groups. Multiculturalism and related trends may be best seen as reflections of this situation, whose cultural and political implications, however, have a much greater scope.

### Conceptual Postmodernism and Postmodernist Theory

The roots of conceptual postmodernism may be found in the ideas of some of the major figures of modernity and modernism, ideas that set in motion profound challenges to and changes in our thinking about the world and in the status of knowledge itself. Friedrich Nietzsche, in particular, initiated a radical critique of the Enlightenment ideals of absolute truth, universal morality, and transhistorical values, which he replaced with a radically multicentered or, in his terms, perspectival understanding of human knowledge, morality, and culture. It is primarily through Nietzsche and related figures, such as Sigmund Freud and Martin Heidegger, that the genealogy of postmodernist thinking is connected to *Poststructuralism*, one of the most important conceptual revolutions of postmodernism. Several parallel scientific revolutions took place throughout twentieth-century science, especially in physics (relativity and quantum theory) and biology, and in literature and art, and these revolutions also contributed to postmodernist conceptuality and epistemology.

These changes culminated in the postmodern crisis of, in Jean-François Lyotard's terms, legitimation of knowledge. "The postmodern condition" itself, responsible for this crisis, was famously defined by Lyotard as "an incredulity toward metanarratives," especially the "grand narratives" that seek to provide a single, all-encompassing or teleological framework for un-

derstanding the world. Lyotard's key example is the Enlightenment grand narrative of the progress of civilization through reason and science. He, however, extends this critique to other grand narratives of modernity, including Hegelianism, Marxism, and Freudianism. The collapse of the grand narratives has left us with no hope of a single conceptual system or discourse through which we might attempt to understand the totality of the world. Instead we have a plurality of frequently incommensurable *worlds* and often mutually incompatible *systems* of language and thought through which to comprehend them.

### Cultural and Political Postmodernism

The cultural formations and aesthetic movements of postmodernism are intricately bound up with both the ideas of conceptual postmodernism and the economic, technological, and political transformations of postmodernity. A dramatic example of this entanglement is the relationship between "the disappearance of the real," which is an epistemological conception, and media culture. Jean Baudrillard observed that by the late twentieth century, media technologies in their roles as technologies of reproduction and representation, had become so advanced that images or copies have become "simulacra," reproductions sufficiently powerful that they first obscure, then displace, and ultimately replace and function as "the real." This instability in the distinction between reality and representation is an abiding theme and hallmark of postmodern culture and art.

Postmodern technologies are also transforming other fundamental concepts and categories through which people understand the world and themselves. As postmodern bioengineering and genomic technologies erode the distinction between human and machine, humans and their conceptions of themselves are being reshaped and reimagined to an unprecedented degree. Technologies of transportation and communication are creating the "spatialization of experience" and the concomitant disappearance of the temporal, which are linked to a postmodern subjectivity that is fragmented and contingent, an intersection of fluctuating "positions." This spatialization of experience and the loss of a sense of history accompanying it, Fredric Jameson argues, impair the ability of postmodern subjects to "cognitively map" their positions in relation to the increasingly complex political and economic systems of global capitalism.

For Lyotard, postmodernity potentially offers a new and better ground for the practice of democracy and justice. He argues, against Jürgen Habermas, that de-centered postmodern heterogeneity makes obsolete the Enlightenment ideal of consensus, which all too frequently required the suppression of minority dissent. Postmodernity, with its heterogeneous interests and worldviews, allows previously oppressed or marginalized groups to make claims upon justice, and upon a position of centrality, even in the absence of majority consensus concerning such claims.

By contrast, Jameson defines postmodernism as "the cultural logic of late capitalism," for him an inherently unjust formation. The material structures of postmodern technologies, local and international politics, and global capitalism, he argues, ultimately determine our experience of postmodernity



and the nature of postmodernist culture and art, and thus put justice in conflict with postmodernity.

Most current views of postmodernity and postmodernism may be positioned between these two visions, between the justice of the heterogeneous and the “cultural logic” and unbridled power of global capitalism. If, however, one combines the views of Lyotard and Jameson, cultural postmodernism embodies two competing and conflicting drives arising from capitalism and democracy defining postmodernity. Globalization, in its positive and negative aspects, comes with postmodernity, and together they give rise to conceptual, cultural, and political postmodernism across the geopolitical landscape of both hemispheres.

### Postmodernism in Literature and Art

In considering postmodernist aesthetic practices in parallel with the postmodern lack of political consensus, Lyotard invokes “the lack of *consensus* of taste.” Instead these aesthetic practices are characterized by an affirmation of their multiplicity. None needs to be defined by any given form, however multiple or fragmented, as was the case in modernist aesthetics, and as would be demanded from art by the consensus of modernist taste. By contrast, postmodernist aesthetic practices may adopt any form, outlook, or agenda, new or old, and allow for other (than postmodernist) practices and alternative approaches. The postmodernist aesthetic is thus defined by the (political) sense of this multiplicity of practices.

**Literature.** Continuing the narrative experiments of the modernists, the first generation of postmodernists, American and British writers of the 1960s and 1970s “metafiction” (Kurt Vonnegut, John Barth, Thomas Pynchon, John Fowles, and Angela Carter), produced texts that simultaneously questioned and violated the conventions of traditional narrative. Similarly the postmodernist Language poets (Lyn Bernstein, Charles Hejninian, and Bob Perelman), inspired by the linguistic experiments of modernism and the new ideas of poststructuralism, deployed a fractured, systematically deranged language aimed at destabilizing the systems (intellectual, cultural, or political) constructed through language. The fragmentation, intertextuality, and discontinuity that characterize so much of experimental modernist and postmodernist literature find a kind of fulfillment in the inherently fragmented, intertextual, and discontinuous form of “hypertext,” a computer-generated Web text with multiple branching links.

Another hallmark of postmodern literature, and of postmodern art in general, is the erosion of the boundaries between “high,” elite, or serious art and “low,” popular art, or entertainment. Decidedly serious literary works now make use of genres long thought to belong only to popular work. A related phenomenon is the development of numerous hybrid genres that erode the distinctions, for instance, between literature and journalism, literature and (auto)biography, and literature and history.

The emergence and proliferation of feminist, multiethnic, multicultural, and postcolonial literature since the 1970s is, however, the most dramatic and significant manifestation of the de-centering and de-marginalization defining both postmodernity and postmodernism. In the 1970s and 1980s,

No doubt the logic of the simulacrum, with its transformation of older realities into television images, does more than merely replicate the logic of late capitalism; it reinforces and intensifies it.

SOURCE: Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*.

American and European literature underwent an immense transformation as writers who had traditionally been excluded from literary canons—women and ethnic and racial minorities—moved from the margins to the centers of the literary world. There are counterparts to this phenomenon in history and anthropology, which have seen a proliferation of histories from below and outside—histories of women, of children, of the working class. Postmodernism has gone from History with a capital H, to histories, small h.

**Visual art.** With the institutionalization of “high modernism” in the mid-twentieth century and the increasing commercial appropriation and commodification of artworks, the modernist ideal of an artistic avant-garde, standing apart from mainstream culture, became increasingly obsolete. Postmodernist art has been, since its beginnings in the movements of the 1960s—Pop art, Fluxus, and feminist art—art that was inherently political and simultaneously engaged with and critical of commercial mass culture. All these movements are linked to the development of multimedia performance art and conceptual art, a term that designates art that is neither painting nor sculpture, art of the mind rather than art of the eye. The logical extension of this definition (following Marcel Duchamp) is that nearly anything, properly “framed” or designated as such, might be thought of as art. One of the most distinctive characteristics of postmodernist art is the dissolution of traditional categories of art and artworks, and the proliferation of new and hybrid forms that have broadened these categories to an unprecedented degree, even greater than encountered in literature.

The feminist art of the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s challenged the institutionalized male bias and sexism of the art system in a wide-ranging critique that extended from the writing of art history and criticism, to museums and art galleries, to the predominance of the “male gaze” and the objectification of women in visual media throughout history, to definitions of art that excluded such traditionally female forms as quilts and weaving.

Other strains of postmodernist art (from the 1980s to the early twenty-first century), which one might call “the art of simulacra,” focus on the prevalence of the image (particularly the media image), technologies of reproduction, and strategies of appropriation of already existing works. It encompasses the work of a broad range of artists and movements, from the video and performance art of Nam June Paik, Laurie Anderson, and

Bruce Nauman, to the photography of Cindy Sherman and the graphic art of Barbara Kruger.

**Architecture.** While reflecting many general aspects of postmodernism, the phenomenon and concept of postmodernist architecture have a particular specificity and complexity, in part because the term postmodernist architecture was given a specific meaning very early in the postmodern period. What characterizes postmodernist architecture most, however, is its diversity in spirit and in style, and the ways it defines itself, in each movement and project, in relation to this diversity.

For some, the quintessential expression of postmodernist architecture is the shopping mall, an enclosed city in which spatial disorientation seems to have been a deliberate, structural intention. Elsewhere this disorientation also takes on a temporal, historical form, as architects combine disparate elements from previous architectural eras and styles in the same building, an incongruous mixing that initially gave rise to the term postmodernist architecture. Philip Johnson's AT&T headquarters in New York City, an austere, International-style skyscraper sporting a baroque Chippendale pediment, would be a postmodernist building in this earlier sense. For some architects, postmodernism was defined by the abandonment of modernist utopianism and a validation of vernacular architecture, as in Robert Venturi's celebration of the "decorated shed" of commercial architecture. New computer-assisted design and computer-assisted manufacturing (CAD/CAM) technologies and high-tech materials have made it possible to break from the traditional architectural forms and create more free-form and sculptural edifices, such as Frank Gehry's Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain.

**Music and dance.** Although not as widespread or influential as other art forms, postmodern music and dance have nevertheless developed many of the key traits of postmodernism, sometimes in their most radical aspects, both building upon and working against such modernist figures as Arnold Schönberg, Igor Stravinsky, and Pierre Boulez in music, and George Balanchine, Martha Graham, and Merce Cunningham in dance. Radically experimental postmodernist composers such as Karlheinz Stockhausen, Iannis Xenakis, and György Ligeti have gone beyond modernism in dislocating the classical harmonies and replacing them with ever more complex, nearly unmusical, sounds and noises.

The same formal experimentation can often be found in postmodernist dance. Postmodernist dance is, however, particularly characterized by the collapse of boundaries between "high" dance (classical ballet and modern dance) and "popular" dance (jazz dance, folk and tribal dance, ballroom dancing, break and line dancing, and Broadway musical choreography), as choreographers fused their various styles and movements. Among the most prominent representatives of the postmodern dance scene are Bill T. Jones, Twyla Tharp, and Mark Morris. Some choreographers have gone even farther afield, incorporating movements from the martial arts, sports, acrobatics, mime, games, and even the mundane physical activities of everyday life. These trends are found in postmodernist (classical) music as well, from the usage of elements of jazz and rock and roll to the incorporation of street or elevator noises.

Dance, however, became quite literally more a part of the world, as choreographers developed architecturally inspired, site-specific works. At the same time, dance increasingly became a part of the broader forms of performance art and multimedia art, as choreography was linked to political concerns and combined with video, text, and other media. One might say that the choreography of postmodern dance is the choreography of postmodernism itself, its aesthetics and its politics, including its politics of aesthetics defined by the lack of a single consensus of taste.

See also *Modernism; Structuralism and Poststructuralism*.

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**POSTSTRUCTURALISM.** See *Structuralism and Poststructuralism*.

**POVERTY.** As an idea, poverty has had an eventful history. From roughly the eighteenth century onward, a change in moral sensibility caused a shift in the understanding of poverty as being an ideal state (for both individuals and communities) to being an execrable condition that societies should seek to ameliorate. In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries,

with the growth of social welfare programs, intense academic debate has focused on the meaning and definition of the term. These debates, though they now dominate the discussion of poverty, nevertheless echo earlier discussion surrounding poor laws and social administration. This article will chart the development in sensibilities and attendant evaluations and then consider how the “problem of poverty” was framed and how it has manifested itself in contemporary debates.

### Poverty as an Ideal

There is a long-standing discourse within which poverty has a positive moral connotation. Facets of this discourse are delineated below.

**Self-control.** With respect to the idea of poverty as a voluntary condition, two emphases can be identified. The first of these is exemplified by Stoicism, in thinkers such as Seneca (4 B.C.E.–65 C.E.) and Epictetus (c. 55 C.E.–135 C.E.), but is equally manifest in the ascetic tradition in Christianity and other religions. Here, like its contextual close-relations, *simplicity*, *austerity*, and *severity*, *poverty* refers to the estimable practice of temperance and continence. To live the simple life of poverty in this sense is to be in control of oneself and thus of one’s actions; it is to know the true and proper value of things and to be in a position of forswearing temptations, that is, things of illusory value. The second emphasis is more civic and is embodied, though commonly retrospectively as some lost ideal, in Sparta or ancient Rome or the earliest Christian communities. One consequence, common to both emphases, of situating poverty in this lexicon is that it is a product of choice or will or reason. Thus understood it is possible to draw a conceptual distinction between poverty as a self-imposed voluntary state and being impoverished (or necessitous; that is, having no choice).

Accompanying this idealized or moralized use of poverty is a hierarchical division between reason and desire. The Greek philosopher Aristotle (384–322 B.C.E.) established the core principle when in *The Nicomachean Ethics* he distinguished those (the *enkratic*) who exhibit discipline and act from choice not from “desire” from those (the *akratic*) who lack discipline and who, as a result, pursue bodily pleasures excessively. The notion of “excess” is crucial. There is a natural norm that ought not to be transgressed. Hence, in line with this principle, the virtue of poverty is expressed by the individual who, in the light of a rational apprehension of the natural order, self-disciplines desires so that indulgence is forsworn. So the Stoic sage will drink but not get drunk and one informed with patristic teaching will forgo sex with (or as) a pregnant woman. Of course, the body has needs that must be satisfied but there is also a natural or rational limit to this satisfaction—hence only drink when thirsty and only have sex for the sake of conception. Similarly, in the civic emphasis, the virtuous citizens of Rome’s early years, for example, were portrayed as exhibiting personal poverty while dedicating their resources to public monuments.

This idea of self-control, of poverty as a voluntary state, played an important role in Christian teaching and practice. In part this was negative. As St. Thomas Aquinas (c. 1224–1274) expressed it in *Summa contra gentiles*, poverty is commendable

because it frees a man from “worldly solicitude.” The more positive aspect, as also articulated by Aquinas, was that those who embraced voluntary poverty did so to follow Christ and “be useful to their community.” While *community* here refers to society at large, perhaps, the most distinctive Christian contribution has been the establishment of institutions that explicitly identify poverty as their rationale.

**Monasticism.** Institutions embracing poverty, generically known as monasteries, took their inspiration from a view of the early life of the Christians, who, expecting an imminent Second Coming, withdrew from worldly contact and tried to live a simple Christ-like life. But the eventual establishment of Christianity as the legal religion of Rome by the Emperor Constantine in the Edict of Milan (313) led to a reaction and an attempt to re-create the ideal of poverty. This appeared first in Eastern (or Orthodox) Christianity as initially individuals, then communities, fled to the deserts of Egypt. The principles of life in such communities became codified and the most influential “code” was issued by St. Basil (c. 329–379 C.E.), the archbishop of Caesaria. His Rules established the goal of monastic life—jointly to practice the Christian virtues of chastity, poverty, and sharing the common goods of the monastery. These ideas spread into western (or Latin) Christianity through the medium of (among others) St. Ambrose (339–397), who had himself spent time in the Palestinian desert. The western equivalent to Basil was St. Benedict (480–547) who also laid down his Rule. This went into great detail about monastery life, not only specifying meal times but also how much can be consumed and the proper conduct while doing so. While not strenuously ascetic the monks are instructed to chastise the body, to love fasting and not become addicted to pleasures. They should also relieve the poor. This command seemingly acknowledges that for some, poverty was not a voluntary state.

**Voluntary and involuntary poverty.** The canon lawyer Huguccio of Pisa (d.1210) elaborated upon the distinction between voluntary and involuntary poverty. In his commentary (1188) on Gratian’s *Decretum* (c. 1140), the primary canon law text, Huguccio divided the poor into three categories. There were those who while born poor willingly endured this state as an expression of their love of God, and there were those who deliberately surrendered their possessions that they might live a virtuous Christian life. Both of these exemplified voluntary poverty. The third category, however, comprised those who were destitute and liable to be inhibited from achieving the higher moral values. This was involuntary poverty. However, the thrust here is on the involuntary poor being inhibited; as the first category demonstrates, the dominant sensibility was that poverty was not of itself an evil to be extirpated. Indeed, Stoic echoes can still be heard in Huguccio’s explicit identification of this category with those who are poor because they are filled with the “voracity of cupidity” (quoted in Tierney, p. 11).

**Change and renewal.** It is a notable characteristic of the ideal state of poverty that it represented a pristine condition from which any change was a deterioration. This resulted in a recurrent motif of regeneration or a return to “basics.” The Roman moralists treated the history of Rome in this manner. Livy (59 B.C.E.–17 C.E.) prefaced his *History* with the judg-



ment that no republic, in its origin, was greater or more virtuous, because then poverty and thrift were honored, but, now, it has been brought to ruin by the introduction of luxury and avarice. Since, for Livy, history is valuable because of the lessons it imparts then this judgment in this context makes his purpose clear. He was here following the lead of (among others) Sallust (86–35 or 34 B.C.E.), who, in his *The Conspiracy of Catiline* (43 B.C.E.), used polemically and not disinterestedly the corruption associated with that conspiracy (64 B.C.E.) to contrast the rampant love of luxury and riches with the original dedication of the Romans to the public good, as seen in their courage, their lavish treatment for the gods, and their domestic frugality. This motif was to recur. Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1527), in what is ostensibly a commentary on Livy, declares that the way to renew a corrupt state of affairs is “to bring them back to their original principles.” And, as his version of the story of Cincinnatus makes plain, these principles were designed to keep the Roman citizens poor.

According to Machiavelli, religious, as well as political institutions, are liable to fall into corruption. It was certainly a feature of monasticism that it was continually being renewed. If one monastic order appeared to become lax, another more rigorous one was established. Given that a frequently identified source of this laxity was wealth, then these new (or renewed) orders laid emphasis on being truer to the founding ideals of poverty. Hence the Cistercian order, founded in 1098, though decisively developed by St. Bernard (1090–1153) in his *Apologia* (1127), was based on the original (ascetic) Rule of St. Benedict. But even the Cistercians accumulated wealth.

In the thirteenth century orders of mendicant friars were established, who being without ties to a particular institution were thought more likely to escape the accumulation and trappings of wealth. The Franciscan order, founded by St. Francis of Assisi (1181 or 1182–1226), was based on a re-created ideal of apostolic poverty (so begging was preferred to having money) and, the other great order, the Dominicans followed suit, if less wholeheartedly (always allowing for example the personal ownership of books). The adoption of these principles did not preclude, in due course, extensive intellectual debate between the two orders on the meaning of “property,” in which Aquinas (a Dominican) participated vigorously. At the end of the thirteenth and beginning of the fourteenth century, the so-called spiritual wing of the Franciscan order, under the influence of the writings of John Peter Olivi, insisted on an extreme interpretation of voluntary poverty. Their open conflict with the more moderate “conventuals” led to the suppression of the spiritual party by Pope John Paul XXII. These ideals and practices are not confined to Christianity. Most of the world’s religious and ethical systems adopt a similar range of attitudes. For example, one of the five great vows of Jainism is *aparigraha*, meaning nonpossession or nonattachment to material things (including people). Their monks (and nuns) follow this vow strictly and totally—they are permanently naked and eat only once a day—but even lay members try to follow the vow as far as they can, hence for example, they undergo prolonged fasts. Buddhism is less austere; only in the special cases of holy persons should poverty be deliberately cultivated. In Islam the emphasis is, perhaps, less on individ-

He, therefore, who keeps himself within the bounds of nature will not feel poverty; but he who exceeds the bounds of nature will be pursued by poverty even though he has unbounded wealth.

SOURCE: Seneca, *To Helvia on Consolation*.

ual self-control than on responsibility toward the poor. It is a recurrent injunction in the Koran that the poor rate should be paid, and it is a mark of the unrighteous that they do not feed the poor. Often too, here, there is the periodic call to abandon current corruptions and return to the purity of the original state and in Islam’s case this gathered political momentum in the later decades of the twentieth century.

### Changing Conceptions of Poverty

The most far-reaching call for spiritual renewal was the Reformation, which characterized European Christendom in the sixteenth century. Martin Luther (1483–1546), himself a monk, inveighed against the corruption of Christian practice and advocated a return to a more austere theology. But, as argued in Max Weber’s (1864–1920) classic work *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1904), perhaps more strikingly, the Reformation fostered a view of salvation that associated it with industry or work in conjunction with a worldly asceticism. A corollary of this was to associate indolence with lack of virtue. While this applied to the “idle rich” it also encompassed “beggars and vagabonds,” whose poverty became presumptive evidence of their wickedness. Voluntary poverty now takes on a negative character, a “popish conceit,” as the English Puritan theologian William Perkins (1558–1602) called it. Nonetheless, Perkins also held that poverty should be seen as providential and even those whose “calling” requires the performance of “poore and base duties” will not be base in the sight of God, if they undertake those duties in obedient faith to the glory of God.

This idealization of poverty was undermined by the Scottish philosopher David Hume (1711–1776), who explicitly criticized those he called “severe moralists” (he named Sallust as an example). These individuals are those who uphold the virtue of poverty, which they typically contrast with the vice of luxury. Hume subverted this contrast. By understanding poverty not as virtuous austerity but as necessitousness then (and this is his main aim here) luxury can lose its negative (moralized) meaning. The effect of this is to associate “ages of refinement,” or luxury, with happiness and positively with virtue. Luxury nourishes commerce and this both reduces destitution and augments the resources available for amelioration.

This argument was influentially developed by the Scottish economist Adam Smith (1723–1790). By being “blessed” by opulence, the members of a commercial society are able to en-

joy a far better standard of living than those in earlier ages. In material terms their basic needs of food, shelter, and clothing are better and more adequately met. Beyond this, human relationships are more humane. This enhanced “quality of life” extends beyond “goods” or things to relationships. In the introduction to his text *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776), Smith says that the inhabitants of “savage nations of hunters and fishers” are “miserably poor,” so that, as a consequence, “they are frequently reduced or, at least, think themselves reduced, to the necessity sometimes of directly destroying and sometimes abandoning their infants, their old people and those afflicted with lingering diseases, to perish with hunger or to be devoured by wild beasts.” This is a powerful and important argument. Contrary to Stoic “frugality” or Christian asceticism, or Algernon Sidney’s (1622–1683) characteristic neo-Stoic, or civic republican, view that poverty is “the mother and nurse of . . . virtue,” Smith is firmly repudiating any notion that poverty is ennobling or redemptive; a life of necessity now signifies not the austere life of poverty but an impoverished one, a life of misery. And since the abundance that commerce brings is precisely such an improvement, then Smith’s repudiation of the nobility of poverty is a key factor in his vindication of “modern” commercial society.

Smith is, perhaps, now best known for developing an economic theory that relied, in circumstances of “freedom and security,” on the “natural effort of every individual to better his own condition” in order to carry society to “wealth and prosperity.” This “effort,” moreover, was capable of “surmounting a hundred impertinent obstructions with which the folly of human laws too often incumbers its operations.” An example of such a folly is the English Poor Law, which, on Smith’s reading, by prohibiting the mobility of labor, inhibited the spread of commerce and thence of the affluence that was the most effective remedy for poverty. Smith similarly berates the mercantilist advocacy of “low wages.” In *Fable of the Bees*, the Dutch-born English essayist Bernard Mandeville (1670–1733)—admittedly an extreme case, a position he artfully cultivated—wrote that the poor are to be “well-managed,” so that while they should not starve yet they “should receive nothing worth saving.” This argument for what E. Furniss called the “utility of poverty” was rejected by Smith, who declared unambiguously in *The Wealth of Nations* that “no society can be flourishing and happy of which the greater part are poor and miserable,” (just as Hume had earlier stated, in “Of National Characters,” that “poverty and hard labour debase the minds of the common people.”

The change in sensibilities that the work of Hume and Smith represents comes to dominate. With the advent of the industrial revolution, the apparent confidence that Smith exhibited in the workings of commerce to improve the lot of the poor seemed increasingly complacent. The condition of the “working class” (as they became known) prompted a range of responses. What they shared was a moral revulsion at the dreadful circumstances in which the poor lived. Important work was done to document just how awful these conditions in fact were. Friedrich Engels’ (1820–1895) *Condition of the Working Class in England* (1845) was a pioneer study and the seventeenth-volume *Life and Labour of the People in London* (1891–1903)

Such poverty is therefore commendable when a man being freed thereby from worldly solicitude, is enabled more freely to occupy himself with divine and spiritual things yet so as to retain the possibility of lawfully supporting himself, for which purpose not many things are needful. And according as the manner of living in a state of poverty demands less solicitude, so much the more is poverty to be commended: but not according as the poverty is greater. . . .

For those who embrace voluntary poverty ought to hold temporal things in contempt . . . [and who] in order to follow Christ renounce all things precisely that they may be useful to the community since by their wisdom, learning and example they enlighten the people and sustain them by their prayers and intercession.

SOURCE: St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra gentiles*.

of Charles Booth (1840–1916) and Seebohm Rowntree’s (1871–1954) study of York were prototype social surveys documenting the lives of the poor. Poverty gradually became in this way a topic of social science—something to be measured and statistically analyzed. But it never lost sight of its origins in moral disquiet. Rowntree, for all his deliberate attempt to “state facts,” declared the finding that a quarter of his survey lived below the poverty line, in a time of unexampled prosperity, may cause “great heart-searching” (p. 304). Hence, while emphases differed, this shared moral concern prompted a search for remedies. Karl Marx (1818–1883) is the best-known analysis of capitalism. He argued that the increasing (relative) misery of the proletariat was caused by capitalism. Marx is equally recognized (if only because of the subsequent revolutions that evoked his name) for his advocacy of communism as a solution. Poverty was thus for him symptomatic; for others it was more central. Some, like Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809–1865), while criticizing the destructive competitiveness of capitalism, even reinvoked the moral ideal of poverty. Marx was, however, scathing of the contemporary attempts to deal with the “problem of the poor,” which he alleged located the source of the problem in the poor themselves.

### The Problem of the Poor

The “problem of the poor” was always one of a threat to social order and thus always had a political dimension. For example, in Aristotle’s classification of constitutions in *The Politics*, democ-



racy was identified as a perverse form, since it was rule by the “many” for the good of the many (not “all”). The many are immediately said to be the poor. This association between the poor and inferior political order endured. The “mob” was perceived as an ever present threat and European history has been marked by the recurrent eruptions of urban riots and peasant uprisings.

One of the striking things about the ideal of poverty was that very often in practice it served to underwrite a hierarchical status quo. For example, innumerable sumptuary laws were passed in the Roman republic and empire, and all European “states” followed suit throughout the early modern period. This legislation sought to preserve the extant social pecking-order, to attempt to confine the incidence of a good and prevent its diffusion. Luxury, “new” wealth, always threatened to overturn this hierarchy; Hume’s defense of luxury, as part of his reconfiguration of poverty from ideal to a state of necessity, was a critique of this rationale. From the “ideal” perspective, those in the lower ranks of these societies may well want some of those privileged goods but that “wanting” was a mark of their unworthiness; their lack of the requisite self-control, and if self-control is lost then the stability of the social order is under threat. Hume’s view contains a rebuttal of that disparagement. In so doing he was representing the “modern” view of human nature. Humans are motivated by their desires and the work of reason is not to control these but to steer them effectively. It is this same understanding of the effective springs of human motivation that underpins the shift in moral sensibilities that displaced the ideal view of poverty by one which conceived of it as state of material distress.

**Poor laws.** Sumptuary laws were only indirectly concerned with the question of the poor and poverty. More overt measures were undertaken. A petition to the English Parliament of 1376 linked poverty with idleness and criminality. This was before the English Peasants’ Revolt of 1381, which had been preceded by an uprising in France in 1358, and there were similar revolts in Florence in 1378 and the Low Countries in 1382. In early modern Europe, attempts were made to deal with poverty administratively. The Elizabethan Poor Law (1601), which Perkins, in *Treatise of the Vocations*, called an “excellent statute” and “in substance the very law of God,” charged each parish with the responsibility to support their own poor. Adam Smith put its origin down to Henry VIII’s dissolution of the monasteries, which had previously been the major source of charitable relief for the impoverished and destitute. This law was revisited over the years. The Act of Settlement of 1662 enabled parishes to eject immigrant paupers—ostensibly to counteract inequality of provision. The whole system was overhauled in 1834 after a royal commission into the Poor Laws. The new poor law nonetheless retained the basic distinction, made by Perkins and other advocates of the original poor law, between the deserving poor who worked (independent laborers) and the undeserving who were dependent on “public largesse” (paupers, sturdy beggars). The latter were less “eligible” for relief than the former; that is, the relief had to be less attractive than that available to even the poorest laborer (otherwise there would be no incentive to work). The tenability of the distinction was assailed from its origins, and a further commission in 1909 was divided in its

I am forced to admit that [my description] instead of being exaggerated . . . is far from black enough to convey a true impression of the filth, ruin and uninhabitableness . . . and such a district exists in the heart of second city of England [Manchester], the first manufacturing city of the world. . . . Everything which here arouses horror and indignation is of recent origin, belongs to the industrial epoch . . . [which] alone enables the owners of these cattlesheds to rent them for high prices, to plunder the poverty of the workers, to undermine the health of thousands in order that they alone may grow rich.

SOURCE: Friedrich Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, 1845.

recommendations. The majority view still distinguished between unwilling and willful incapacity and saw an important role for charity. The minority view, led by Beatrice Webb (1858–1943), an early leader of the Fabian Society, which published a cheap and best-selling version of her “view,” wanted a radical break with the past both administratively and with respect to the principle that the causes of poverty lay in individuals (in some moral defect) rather than having a social origin. With the emergence of explicitly welfare states in the second half of the twentieth century the basic thrust of the minority view was implemented.

**Polizei.** Because Britain was the most advanced industrial society, it is there that many of the issues surrounding the problem of poverty were articulated and why so many British sources and experience figure so prominently in its history. Britain, however, had no monopoly. The French, for example, had a system of *hospiteux* and the Dutch *spinhausen*, which functioned like English workhouses, although the parish-based localism of the English system was distinctive. While most of the associated literature dealt with practical issues, such as curbing the spread of begging, there were more theoretical treatments. Prominent among these is the systematic development by a group of theorists, known as the cameralists, of the notion of *Polizei* (police). The task of the *Polizei* was to care for the “order, security and welfare of subjects” (the German philosopher and administrator Johann Justi [1720–1771], quoted in Knemeyer). The Prussian code of 1794 institutionalized the idea, and the best-known theoretical appropriation of the term was by Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831), who used the idea of *Polizei* to refer, in general, to the administration of the contingencies of “civil society” (*bürgerliche Gesellschaft*) and included, more particularly, therein an examination of the question of “modern poverty.” What is “modern” is not being

destitute but in having a “disposition” toward one’s plight, attributing it (say, a failed harvest) not to fate or God’s punishment but to a social cause. This attitude to poverty breeds what Hegel calls a “rabble” (*die Pöbel*) and he is, uncharacteristically, indeterminate when it comes to finding a solution. Marx, Hegel’s most famous critic, saw the solution (implicitly) in a cooperative society based on the common ownership of the means of production, where, it follows, there would be no exploitative relations, and where the organizing principle would be, in a famous—if unoriginal—phrase, “from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs.”

### Relativism and Equality

The idea of needs, while always perhaps implicit in the notion of poverty, has come to the fore in contemporary debates. The crux of these debates is whether poverty is necessarily relative. At the root of Hume’s critique of the “severe” morality of poverty was his replacement of the categorical distinction between necessity and luxury to one where these are points on a scale. This then enabled him consistently to argue (as many others did likewise) that onetime luxuries could become necessities. Adam Smith defined “necessaries” as “not only commodities which are indispensably necessary for the support of life but whatever the customs of the country renders it indispensible for creditable, even of the lowest order, to be without.” Hence in Smith’s time, a day laborer would be ashamed to appear in public without a linen shirt (its nonpossession, indeed, would denote a “disgraceful degree of poverty”) when the Greeks and Romans of an earlier age lived very comfortably though they had no linen.

**Relative or absolute?** In modern debates, this fluidity in the meaning of *necessity* has been taken to be a vindication of the “relativity” of poverty. A major advocate of this position is the sociologist Peter Townsend, who declares that poverty can be defined “only in terms of the concept of relative deprivation” (p. 31). More precisely the standard of deprivation is socially relative and Townsend is critical of an “absolute concept” that would be based on some universal, extra-social, notion of “needs.” Townsend holds that needs must be defined as more than some biological minimum and, rather, as “the conditions of life which ordinarily define membership of society.” These conditions comprise “diets, amenities, standards and activities which are common or customary” (p. 915). The reference to “custom” is a deliberate echo of Smith’s argument. The poor are now identified as those who lack the resources to participate in those customary conditions definitive of social membership and who are as a consequence “excluded from ordinary living patterns” (p. 31).

To its critics, Townsend’s relativity approach leads to the absurd conclusion that someone could be called poor because they could buy only one Cadillac a day while others in the same community could buy two, or that more people can be “poor” in California than in, for example, Chad. It follows, further, that poverty cannot be eliminated, no antipoverty program can ever be entirely successful. To these critics there has to be an absolute core, since only from such a secure basis is it possible meaningfully to identify poverty and only then does it become possible to conceive of poverty’s elimination. Hence the num-

Poverty in itself does not reduce people to a rabble; a rabble is created only by the disposition associated with poverty, by inward rebellion against the rich, against society, the government etc. . . . The rabble do not have sufficient honour to gain their own livelihood through their own work yet claim they have a right to receive their livelihood. No one can assert a right against nature but within the conditions of society hardship at once assumes the form of a wrong inflicted on this or that class. The important question of how poverty can be reconciled is one which agitates and torments modern societies especially.

SOURCE: Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, 1821.

ber of people with inadequate sustenance, shelter, and life expectancy is greater in Chad than in California, and, thus, there are more in poverty in the former than in the latter location.

Whether poverty is regarded as a form of social exclusion or as the deprivation of basic needs, the shared assumption is that it is a morally pernicious state of affairs. It is bad in itself because suffering is bad in itself and not, as the “virtuous” view would claim, a condition of “indifference” or even sanctity. This is the modern sensibility and it is now dominant—in no way can poverty be an ideal. The corollary of this is that the existence of poverty is indefensible and there is a moral imperative to seek remediable action, which to be effective is now typically thought to require the activity or intervention of the state. Here the poverty debate enters into the mainstream of contemporary moral, social, and political theory.

**Contemporary debate.** On one side there are liberals (such as the Austrian economist F. A. Hayek [1899–1992]) who argue that the best remedy to poverty is to permit inequality in the form of wide income differentials so that the incentive to gain these high rewards produces the social wealth (and higher tax revenues) that enables the lot of the impoverished to be improved. Indeed, Hayek claims that in this way “poverty in the absolute sense has been abolished” (vol. 2, p. 139). This belongs in the Smithian tradition—Smith himself had said that universal poverty was conjoined with absolute equality in the earliest (hunter-gatherer) societies. The thrust of the argument here is that what matters morally is individuals having enough to sustain themselves, not that others might have more than enough. On the other side are welfare socialists, like Townsend, who (as previously noted) picks up a different aspect of Smith. Socialists are far less complacent about inequality. Townsend’s own

prescription is the abolition of “excessive” income and wealth and the establishment of a more egalitarian society. These two positions do not exhaust the field. There are welfare liberals (including John Rawls [1921–2002] in his *A Theory of Justice* [1971]) who think that inequalities in income and wealth are justified so long as the lot of the least-well-off is maximized. There are also more radical approaches that seek appropriately the root of the problem and locate this in a socially induced emphasis on production and consumption. The anthropologist Marshall Sahlins, for example and unwittingly echoing Thomas Paine in *Agrarian Justice* (1797) about the American Indians, argues that poverty is a problem created by the market-industrial system and when the lives of those assumed to be in dire poverty, such as the Bushmen of the Kalahari, are examined they can be discerned to live in “a kind of material plenty”—they are content with few possessions. This approach has affinities to environmental or “green” thought, which enjoins what one of its influential sources, E. F. Schumacher, in *Small Is Beautiful* (1973), has called “Buddhist economics.” Without ever expressing the point explicitly it is, from the perspective of the history of ideas, possible to see here a reprise of the ideal of poverty, understood as self-control. The Bushmen have (so to speak) heeded the wisdom of the Stoic sage and have no wants beyond what they need; they do not experience poverty.

### Conclusion

Poverty is an idea with a history that is particularly instructive. In the twenty-first century, poverty as a state of material and social deprivation is regarded as the standard meaning. But when examined historically, it can be seen that this meaning has far from dominated. In the history of Western experience (with echoes elsewhere) poverty had for a long period been considered a preferred condition, one where humans demonstrated their control both of their own nature and of the circumstances in which they found themselves.

See also **Capitalism; Christianity; Liberalism; Monasticism; Property; Stoicism; Wealth.**

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**POWER.** In its most general sense, *power* refers to the capacity to have an effect. A powerful hurricane comes ashore uprooting trees and destroying houses; the power of music stirs



our emotions; the power of love makes gentle the surly man or woman. We speak of electric or wind power, of powerful machines or human bodies. Many different phenomena with a very wide range of effects are said to be or to have power. The definition of the term therefore has led to a good deal of controversy.

Even more controversial has been the moral assessment of power: is power a good? Should one seek to acquire and to use power or is it the duty of morally conscientious persons to avoid power and the ability it implies of coercing others?

### Personal Power

Much of the time, power is discussed only as it manifests itself in economic, social, and political life.

***The power to get what one wants.*** Most generally, “The power of man is his present means to obtain some future apparent good” (Hobbes, p. 56). The ability to get what one wants because one believes it to be good is what the English philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) calls “power.” Bertrand Russell (1872–1970), another English philosopher, defended a very similar conception of power. This is *power to get what one wants*.

***The power to dominate.*** Much more common, however, is a more limited conception according to which power consists of getting what one wants from another person, particularly if it is ceded unwillingly. Thus Max Weber (1864–1920) defines power as “the probability that one actor in a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests” (Weber, p. 152). Power here concerns the relationship between individual actors or groups of individuals where some are able to do as they please in spite of the resistance by others. A similar definition was given by Robert A. Dahl (b. 1915): “A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do” (1957, pp. 202–203). These formulations describe a form of power excessively familiar to children who are bullied by classmates or teachers; to their parents who feel oppressed by their employers; and to citizens who must unwillingly obey the dictates of the government, sometimes in the guise of the neighborhood policeman. This is the *power to dominate*.

***The power to manipulate.*** However familiar, the preceding definition has encountered many criticisms and has had to defend itself against other concepts of power. Some theorists have pointed out that we do indeed exercise power when we overcome the resistance of others. But power can also shape situations and persons so that they will never think to resist. Instead, they submit willingly to a yoke, which later, perhaps, they may find onerous. The *power to manipulate* so that resistance does not arise is more impressive than the power to overcome resistance. Telling a child about to be inoculated that “it won’t hurt” sidesteps the child’s resistance and struggle. Official lies that persuade citizens that they have been attacked by a foreign power, when in fact it is their government that is the aggressor, have persuaded many who would not ordinarily consider becoming soldiers to flock to the flag of their country. The number of casualties in a war and the extent of destruction and suffering

imposed would produce strong criticism, but if no one knows about the damage done by the armies, opposition will not develop.

***Hegemonic power, or ideology.*** Manipulation occurs between individuals and groups. But preemptive shaping of the agendas for discussion and action may be much more insidious and less deliberately deceptive. There are organizational structures that, although not intended for that purpose, function to lessen dissent and opposition. Electoral systems often function in that way, especially in a situation of severe economic and social stratification. The dissatisfied have a ready mechanism at hand for expressing their discontent, but unless they belong to the ruling elites, their efforts will consume a great deal of energy but bear little fruit. Such tamping down of discontent may be the unintended consequences of certain political arrangements. There exists no ready term for power in that sense. Terms sometimes used in this context such as *hegemonic power* or *ideology* are often understood in an excessively intellectual sense. At issue here is the power, inherent in existing institutions, of privileged strata of a society to avoid popular criticisms and demands.

These various forms of power, whether intentional or the side effect of certain political institutions, still deal with antagonists who are latent, if not actual, resisters. Were they not misinformed, or sidetracked by the complexities of electoral politics, they would certainly express their discontent quite vocally. These are all different variants of power that some one or some group has *over* another, individual or group. They are still variants of the power to dominate.

***Influence and authority.*** But not all power is power to dominate. Influence is the most obvious example of a different kind of power. Frequently someone is only too glad to follow the wishes of another whom they love and who loves them. Their love is strong; there is no shadow of a threat to withdraw love if the other does not yield. But each is glad to do what is asked of them because it pleases them to please their lover. In similar ways parents and children often have influence over one another. Each person has power in relation to the other—a power freely given—which is power to influence the other. Influence does not dominate and neither does authority: one allows another to influence one’s thought and action because the other is an expert, or a revered spiritual teacher. Their power to give us orders or directions is, in some way, legitimate. (The word *authority* also has a different meaning. “The authorities”—not only legitimate authorities—are only too frequently able and willing to dominate by making us do what we do not want to do.)

***Power with.*** Neither influence nor authority is the power to dominate—*power over*. Instead it is *power with* that arises out of the cooperation of several individuals or perhaps an entire people. We experience this in times of crisis, in a family or in a nation, when everyone ignores their own immediate needs and desires and pitches in to solve a shared problem or protect the entire group against imminent danger. Hannah Arendt (1906–1975) pointed out that a people gains strength from cooperation, from a shared sense of a common goal or mission: “Power corresponds to the human ability not just to

act, but to act in concert” (p. 44). The familiar slogan “United we stand; divided we fall” represents the popular understanding of this power that arises out of unity and cooperation. This power enhances the life of a nation and stiffens its resolve and ability to overcome difficult challenges. Only when it loses this *power with* does a government have to resort to violence. A nation subdued by violence may be tyrannized, but in order to govern it, one requires the support of the people. Only then can one have power.

Such *power with* exists not only in larger groups but is important in the relations between very few people. Couples find themselves better able to confront problems and to tackle difficult tasks because their shared values and understanding of the world increase their power. Power grows out of the mutual respect and recognition of two persons. Small groups, like families, grow better able to face demanding tasks when their mutual respect and understanding makes each stronger and wiser.

In the intellectual space of the West, *power with*, if recognized at all, is assigned a subsidiary role. But anthropologists report that among many of the indigenous inhabitants of the American continent, power was traditionally of this sort—*power with*. The chiefs of many tribes in North and South America did not have any power to dominate or to coerce. They provided leadership because they were respected. Many tribes had two chiefs; one led by authority and the voluntary compliance of the tribe’s members in peace time. The other, the war-time chief, had the more familiar kind of power—the *power to coerce*.

Comparisons between Western philosophy and Chinese thought are fraught with difficulties. Nonetheless, some experts recognize in Confucian classics distinctions very similar to the ones we draw between *power to dominate* and *power with*. Confucianism sought an ordered society through the education of a morally superior elite to lead the nation. For the purpose of forming such an elite, classical Confucian texts reject laws as means for developing this elite and, instead, recommend a civil, humane practice within communities resting on cooperation and mutuality. Laws threaten and coerce. The power to dominate wielded by laws is not acceptable to the Confucian educator who, instead, puts his faith in the *power with* of communal and reciprocal action.

### Impersonal Power

The different forms of power discussed so far, whether variants of *power to dominate* or *power with*, are all intimately connected to specific and identifiable persons. One knows who the bully is in a group. One can identify the government functionaries who put out misleading propaganda. One can identify the persons who, through their solidarity and unity, give strength to their group, or even their nation. The power of ideology is more diffuse; it is less easy to identify the prominent contributors to dominant beliefs that reduce the possibility of resistance. But the ruling ideology is promulgated by and in the interest of the ruling strata of the society, and one knows who the members of these ruling strata are. One may not know all of them, but one knows that there are specific individuals and associations of individuals that yield the

powers that manipulate the majority of the population. All the variants of power discussed so far belong to specific human beings or groups who wield this power.

But the power individuals wield presupposes complex social arrangements. Thomas Wartenberg points out that a judge’s power to punish a convicted criminal depends on an intricate network of other institutions and the different roles these institutions contain. Judges can condemn the criminal only while seated on the bench in the courtroom; they must be within a prescribed context in order to exercise their official role. They cannot do it in their home while lounging in the bathtub. The court is not only a place; it is an institution, complete with court officers, stenographers, lawyers, prosecutors, and so forth. The entire power of the judge presupposes the law and the many different institutions that give rise to the law and legitimate it. The judge’s power does not belong to the judge unless there exists an extended set of institutions that function because everyone is doing his or her job and exercising the power that comes with that job.

It is important that the different participants in the drama of crime and punishment understand the significance of the places, the institutions, and the actions of functionaries. Everyone must understand what it means when the judge bangs her gavel and says “Twenty years.” Various persons understand that these two words instruct them to lead the criminal out of the courtroom and remand him to the prison authorities who, in their turn, must follow established bureaucratic procedures. In these two words the judge manifests her power and everyone must understand that. For power to function there must be a wealth of shared understanding of the significance of words and actions.

For this reason, Niklas Luhmann says that power is a “code”—a quasi language. This conception was first introduced by the American sociologist Talcott Parsons, who criticized the conception of power as belonging to individual persons, urging us, instead, to understand power as a “medium” analogous to money as the medium of the economy. An economic system, Parsons pointed out, consists of a large number of offers and demands for goods and services. These offers, and their acceptance or rejection, must be communicated, and money is the medium of this communication. (“Money” here does not refer to the dollar bills in your wallet but to the institution of the market and the banking institutions and other financial contrivances for communicating offers and demands within the economy.) Political institutions correspondingly are the medium in which in politics we pass on messages. Power is a form of “social knowledge.”

**The importance of personal power.** Power as medium or as code or as social knowledge is, indeed, social; it no longer belongs to specific individuals but inheres in the society. It is interesting to notice that, from the beginning of Western philosophy, the power inherent in societies to shape each of us has been familiar. In Plato’s dialogue *Crito*, Socrates, on the eve of his execution, receives his friend Crito in prison. Crito urges Socrates to escape with him; everything is prepared for him to flee. But Socrates refuses. The laws of Athens, he says, have made him who he is. He owes them obedience even if



they are, in his case, applied unjustly. Our culture shapes and constrains us and makes us who we are. While not a modern discovery, this social power has attracted a great deal of attention in modern times. Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) complained about the conformity modern societies demand of their members, forcing them to pretend to be persons they are not rather than be themselves. Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) echoes that understanding of the power of social structures. Karl Marx (1818–1883) is very clear that the injuries capitalism inflicts on workers are not to be laid at the door of individual capitalists because they, too, are under the compulsion of the laws of the capitalist marketplace. The power to exploit inheres in the capitalist system; it is not the fault of the capitalists.

Discussions of the impersonal power of social institutions, the “regime without a master” in the words of Joan Cocks (p. 187), have become even more frequent in the twentieth century. John Dewey complained about the standardization of human beings in modern society. Members of the Frankfurt School—Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Herbert Marcuse, and others—wrote about the power of mass entertainment to regiment members of modern societies and to make it impossible for critical voices to be raised, let alone be heard. The concept of a power not owned by anyone, implicit in these critiques, was then made explicit by the theorists of power, Talcott Parsons, Niklas Luhmann, and Barry Barnes.

Popular culture took up the worry of these theorists; the subservience of the individuals to their culture that seemed to Socrates a perfectly obvious and uncontroversial fact about each of us, has in our world become a matter of unease. In many cases this unease takes the form of a polemic against what the author labels “conformism” in such works as *The Organization Man* by William H. Whyte (1956), or Arthur Miller’s *Death of a Salesman* (1949), and in David Riesman’s *The Lonely Crowd* (1950) as well as the novel by Richard Yates, *Revolutionary Road* (1961). After World War II, talk about authenticity became very common—being oneself in the face of great social pressures to conform became a frequently heard moral demand. Films like *2001: A Space Odyssey*, and more recently *The Matrix*, had enormous appeal because, among other things, they expressed the anxiety felt by many that impersonal forces, unknown to us, hold us in their thrall.

It was left for the French philosopher Michel Foucault (1926–1984) to attempt an explanation of why we moderns are much more concerned about being subject to impersonal social power. The eighteenth century, he believes, brought many changes: the beginning of capitalism with its much more rational, carefully planned methods of production, the acceleration of urbanization, which brings many persons together in a small space, and the beginnings of the study of humans and their societies. These changes gave rise to many new techniques of surveillance, of controlling and keeping track of persons. The new social sciences developed a typology of persons; each of us exemplifies many different types, being men or women, parents or not, educated or not, belonging to a particular income bracket or not, practicing a particular religion or not, having children in the approved way (“in wedlock”), and so forth. The

typologies serve to “normalize,” to set standards by which we are measured from birth as being within normal range of variation or needing to be supervised, cured, corrected, counseled, tutored, or otherwise brought back to the norm.

All of these are forms of domination, Foucault argues. But the origins of the acts of domination are obscure. We are dominated by impersonal systems, much more often than by specific persons. “Power is no longer substantially identified with an individual . . . it becomes a machinery that no one owns” (Foucault, p. 156).

### The Value of Power

There exists a range of different ideas in the different world traditions about the value of pursuing, having, and using power. Among the Old Testament Hebrews and in Islam, where temporal government and religion are very closely associated, the use and pursuit of power are accepted without question. Both the Old Testament Jews and the followers of Mohammed were quite content to use the temporal power in their possession for the purpose of extending the realm of the one true God. At the same time, the close association of governance and the deity imposed moral limitations on the uses of power. They were permitted only in the service of extending God’s realm.

Both Judaism and Islam, in their classical formations, were religions of this world. While Islam speaks of an afterlife, the work of the religious person was in this world to extend and fortify the rule of the divine. Some Eastern religions, by contrast, such as Hinduism and Buddhism, saw everyday life as full of suffering and a realm of mere appearance. The goal of the religious individual was to overcome suffering by detaching him- or herself from ordinary desires, from emotions, from attachment to the things of this world.

Nevertheless, dominant strands of Buddhism and Hinduism were willing to use secular and military power to extend the sway of their religions. But at the same time, Buddhist and Hindu thought made room for a radical rejection of the pursuit and use of power. Doing no harm to any human or animal is an important principle of Buddhism. The thought of Mahatma Gandhi illustrates one version of Hinduism that rejects all uses of power, other than the power of persuasion. It resolutely refuses to coerce anyone or to use power to dominate. In this context, the use of violence is definitely an inferior alternative to the use of nonviolence.

The Christian tradition is equally conflicted. Jesus’s saying that we should “render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s” (Matthew 22:21, Mark 12:17, and Luke 20:25) has encouraged Christian monarchs and popes to use violence and power to dominate in the Crusades, in the Inquisition, and in the conquest and devastation of the Americas. But there is another Christian tradition of nonviolence exemplified by the Christian injunction that we turn the other cheek to those who strike us (Matthew 5:39 and Luke 6:29). Martin Luther King Jr. (1929–1968) elaborated this reading of Christianity in his doctrine and practice of nonviolence, which substituted persuasion for coercion.

See also *Authority; Autonomy; Liberty.*

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*Richard Schmitt*

**PRACTICES.** Practices are actions or activities that are repeatable, regular, and recognizable in a given cultural context. In everyday language, *practice* is often contrasted with theory, ideas, or mental processes: what is done as opposed to what is thought, the pragmatic as opposed to the ideational. Practices may be *discursive* (practices that communicate meanings through language), *visual* (practices that communicate meaning through images), or *embodied* (practices accomplished through bodily movement and gesture). Julia Kristeva (b. 1941) has proposed using the term *signifying practices* to denote all types of practices that communicate meaning. It could be argued, however, that it is in the nature of *all* social practices to communicate

meaning. It has been argued, for example, that religions are not constituted solely or primarily by belief or doctrine, but by the inculcation of practices (through the actions of the powerful), both in terms of formal ritual and in terms of quotidian practices such as dress, diet, social interaction, and so forth.

Ritual practice is particularly important since, as Victor Turner (1920–1983) has argued, it links the natural, cosmological, and social levels of order through the manipulation of symbols. As such, it is an important legitimating device in the secular as well as religious spheres. As is true of religious beliefs, religious practices may be considered authorized and therefore legitimate (orthopraxy), or they may be practiced without formal legitimation (heteropraxy) and considered marginal, contestatory, or both.

Professions and disciplines, likewise, are defined and bounded as much by their practices as by their objects of investigation or intervention. Chemistry and alchemy, astronomy and astrology, for example, differ less in their objects of study (the combination of materials in the former, the stars and planets in the latter), than in the practices through which statements about the world may be considered true or false.

#### Practice Theory

In the 1970s and 1980s, practice and practices came to be seen as the object of theorization in certain branches of critical sociology and cultural anthropology. Practice theories, in general, seek to integrate objectivist theories of society (such as structuralism, functionalism, or Marxism) with theories that view social life as the contingent outcome of decisions, actions, and interpretations of competent (albeit not fully conscious) social actors. Prior to the 1970s, the dominant paradigms in both fields were objectivist, and shared a tendency to develop models of social life in which all social action could be seen as an outcome of underlying structures. Functionalist approaches derived from the sociology of Émile Durkheim viewed social behaviors as determined by the social structure, a set of interacting, mutually dependent institutions. Followers of the French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss (1908–), on the other hand, understood social action to be the expression of conceptual structures. Structure, in Lévi-Strauss's sense, consists of cultural grammars, themselves the outcome of the structured categorizing activity that is a universal feature of the human mind. Materialist approaches (including Marxist and crypto-Marxist approaches such as U.S. cultural ecology) likewise saw social action as determined by a structure of social relations that are themselves determined by the exigencies of the natural and human environment.

In all three paradigms, then, some larger entity—a system or structure—is abstracted from the activities of social agents. The actions and intentions of social actors remain outside of the model in all three cases (with the partial exception of some varieties of Marxism). Finally, their coherence as paradigms depends on the suppression of the dimension of time (again, with the partial exception of Marxist paradigms). For example, functionalist approaches tend to be ahistorical. They portray society (or societies) as a set of relations among institutions as if they maintained a state of homeostasis. Likewise, for

Levi-Strauss and his followers, the object of analysis is always the relationship among and between conceptual elements that exist, as it were, outside of the flow of time. On the other hand, phenomenological approaches, such as Harold Garfinkel's (1917– ) ethnomethodology or Erving Goffman's (1922–1982) symbolic interactionism took a processual view of society that accounted for both the temporal dimension of social life and the intentionality of subjects. Their account of society as the product of ongoing interactions could not, however, account for inequalities in power, status, or effective agency of those same subjects. The question raised by practice theorists in the 1970s, then, was how to reconcile objectivist and subjectivist accounts of society: to explain the reproduction of power and inequality as both ground and effect of quotidian interaction.

Practice theory (or action theory) has been associated primarily with four theorists: Michel Foucault (1926–1984), Pierre Bourdieu (1930–2002), Michel DeCerteau (1925–1986), and Anthony Giddens (1938– ).

### Practice and Discourse: Michel Foucault

Often described as a poststructuralist concerned with the analysis of power (although he himself rejected both labels), the philosopher/historian Michel Foucault's central project was developing “a history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subjects” (1982, p. 208). In his analysis, the subject was not an a priori category, but, rather, an effect of power, of both objectification and subjection. His aim, however, was to move from state-centered models of power (which viewed power as a repressive force wielded by states) toward one that recognized power as diffused throughout societies, constitutive of social relations in general, and productive of distinct forms of subjectivity.

In the context of this larger project, practices (or “mechanisms”) served both a methodological and theoretical function. His interest was primarily in discursive practices, by which he meant *ways of constituting objects through their ostensible description*. His argument, in brief, was that the historical trajectory of the Enlightenment, conventionally understood as a progression toward more accurate descriptions of the natural world and more reasonable and humane forms of social organization, should be seen, instead, as a series of shifts in the ways in which power was exercised. For example, in *Discipline and Punish* (1975), his study of punishment in the West, he argues that the transition from the practice of public torture and execution to the practice of incarceration was not the result of an evolutionary trajectory from brutality to civilization, but part of a general shift toward an increasing investment of power in the surveillance and minute control of living bodies. This same change requires the surveillance and bodily ordering of children in schools, workers in factories, and soldiers in armies.

The key to understanding and historicizing the operations of power, according to Foucault, is to attend to the ways that specific *practices* of professional disciplines (and other social institutions)—surveillance, particular modes of categorization, particular bodily disciplines—surreptitiously undermine some forms of power and reorganize others. Practice thus produces

subjectivity (both in the sense of identity and the sense of subjection), simultaneously constituting and limiting social subjects.

### Pierre Bourdieu and Anthony Giddens

The central problem in the work of the French sociologist/anthropologist Pierre Bourdieu and the British sociologist Anthony Giddens is the relationship between agency (the capacity of human subjects to engage in social action) and social structure. Both see social structure as including both patterns of distribution of material resources and systems of classification and meaning. In their works, *social structure* encompasses both the Marxian/Durkheimian and Lévi-Straussian senses of the phrase. Both share the insight that the social structure as such has no reality apart from its instantiation through the practices (Bourdieu) or actions (Giddens) of particular human beings. Those actions, in aggregate, create and reproduce the structure in which the actions are embedded.

The two theorists diverge, however, in their assessment of the importance of conscious intention in the reproduction of the social structure. Bourdieu labels the key concept for understanding the relationship between action and structure *habitus* (following Marcel Mauss [1872–1950]). The habitus consists of “systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures” (1977, p. 72). Quotidian practices—of work and leisure, of the design and use of space—communicate basic assumptions about such social categories as gender, age, and social hierarchy. Through practice, actors are socialized to particular embodied dispositions (their habitus). Like Raymond Williams's (1921–1988) “structures of feeling,” the habitus does not determine particular actions, but orients actors to particular goals and strategies. Acting on their (socially determined) intentions, the improvised and contingent practices of social actors thus tend to reproduce the symbolic and material orderings of the social world. Since key aspects of the social order are naturalized through the discipline of the body, they are (or appear to be) beyond the social order itself, indeed becoming part of the taken-for-granted, “natural” order (in Bourdieu's system, *doxa*). Practices thus tend, regardless of the actor's intentions, to reinforce the claims of the powerful.

Although he prefers the term *action* to *practice* in his own work, Anthony Giddens is usually considered in discussions of practice theory. The key term in Giddens's work is *structuration*. Like Bourdieu, Giddens views social structure as encompassing both material and symbolic dimensions. Social structure, according to Giddens, is the product of action, “a stream of actual or contemplated causal interventions of corporeal beings in the ongoing process of events-in-the-world” (1979, p. 55). Agents (actors with the capacity to act and, moreover, the *capacity to have acted differently* in any given situation), thus, create structure. However, their agency is only meaningful insofar as they are constructed as subjects (in particular subject positions) in a given social structure. Structuration describes the essentially recursive quality of social process: the agent is produced by the structure, which is, in reality, no more than the objectification of past actions by agents.



The main difference between the accounts of Bourdieu and Giddens lies in the relative significance that each gives to the conscious intentions of social actors. For Giddens, actors are reflexive; they have the capacity to reflect on their actions and their identities, and to act according to their intentions. The reflexivity of actors is, indeed, an aspect of social action, and, thus, part of structuration. In the work of Bourdieu, conscious reflection on one's habitus is a possibility, but not a usual part of social process. For Giddens, in contrast, reflexivity is an essential and potentially transformative element of social process.

### Practice as Resistance: Michel de Certeau

Influenced by the work of Foucault and Bourdieu, Michel de Certeau's main contribution to practice theory has been to posit practice as the ground of resistance to domination (in addition to the reproduction of power relations). De Certeau distinguishes between two types of practice: strategies and tactics. Strategies are only available to subjects of "will and power," so defined because of their access to a spatial or institutional location that allows them to objectify the rest of the social environment. "A strategy assumes a place that can be circumscribed as a proper (*propre*) and thus serve as a basis for generating relations with an exterior distinct from it (competitors, adversaries, "clienteles," "targets," or "objects of research)" (1984, p. xix). Strategies thus invoke and actualize a schematic and stratified ordering of social reality.

Other people, however, though lacking a space of their own from which to apply strategies, are not merely passive objects of such subjects. On the contrary, they are active agents, but their mode of practice is tactical rather than strategic. Everyday practices of consumption (including activities like walking or reading) are tactical in that they continuously resignify and disrupt the schematic ordering of reality produced through the strategic practices of the powerful. The possibility of contestation of the social order, which is created through multiple strategies, is always implicit in the tactical practices of everyday life.

### Anthropology and Practice

The impact of practice theories, particularly those of Foucault and Bourdieu (who was trained in anthropology as well as sociology, and whose early work focused on the Berber-speaking Kabyle peasants of the Maghrib of North Africa), on cultural anthropology has been profound and far-reaching, sufficiently so that Sherry Ortner (1994) claimed it as the most important general paradigm of cultural anthropology of the 1980s as a whole. This should not be surprising; after all, participant-observation is a matter of observing and participating in practices. Theories that privilege practices—both as forms of communication and as the bases on which social relations are structured—provide a means of theorizing the connections between the "imponderabilia of daily life" and the larger questions about structures of power and social change.

Attention to processes of the transformability of social systems, indeed, distinguishes much practice-based ethnography from the practice theories of Bourdieu and Giddens. As Dirks, Eley, and Ortner point out, for Bourdieu, the habitus is a virtual mirror of the social order, thus the ethnographic project

is "largely a matter of decoding the public cultural forms within which people live their lives . . . that already encode the divisions, distinctions, and inequalities of the society as a whole. And the aim is to get as close as possible . . . to the practical ways in which, in enacting these forms, the subject/agent comes to embody them, assume them, take them so utterly for granted that 'it goes without saying because it comes without saying'" (1994, p. 16).

Indeed, practice theory can provide a framework for examining the reproduction of inequality in general. Works such as Paul Willis's *Learning to Labor* (1981) or Phillippe Bourgois's *In Search of Respect* (2003) are more closely aligned with neo-Gramscian theories of hegemony than practice theory as such. Nevertheless, these studies portray their disempowered subjects (working-class British teenagers and New York crack dealers, respectively) in a double bind: the social practices through which they express their resistance to their subjugated status (resistance to school or participation in the illegal economy) ultimately reproduce the set of social relations that binds them to those statuses. In general, however, practice-based ethnographies have been equally interested in the culturally situated practices that lead, intentionally or not, to social change.

Marshall Sahlins's (1930–) influential *Historical Metaphors and Mythical Realities* (1981) is a case in point. Using the episode of Captain Cook's death at the hands of the Hawaiians, Sahlins argued that the Hawaiians' complex response to Cook's arrival—ranging from exchanges of material goods and sexual relations up to and including Cook's murder—took place within the cultural logics of the Hawaiian prestige systems. These practices (seen, from the Hawaiian point of view in terms of circulation of *mana*, or "vital force"), however, applied to a novel context (from the English point of view, trade), ultimately undermined the bases of the indigenous prestige system by incorporating English trade (goods and relations) into that system. Social change, in Sahlins's model, happens as a result of "structures of conjuncture": changes in the systems of meaning, which are, in turn, the unintended consequences of the deployment of social practices, rooted in a traditional system of relations, to novel circumstances.

Sahlins's method—tracing out relationships between changes in practice, changes in systems of meaning, and changes in structures of power—has been applied to shed new light on processes of social change. In his study of the village of Gapun, New Guinea, for example, Don Kulick convincingly argues for the importance of attention to local practices in the process of "modernization." In his account of the disappearance of the local vernacular, Taiap, in favor of the Melanesian pidgin, Tok Pisin, he shows that changes in linguistic practice are motivated by traditional ideas linking gender, linguistic practices, and prestige. The conjunction of local systems of value with missionization and temporary wage labor led to a number of unrecognized effects. The incorporation of Christianized cosmological theories and the language Tok Pisin into indigenous categories, coupled with local ideas about first-language acquisition, led to the systematic suppression of Taiap competence among young children *and* changes in patterns of (adult and child) sociation. Gapuners came to devalue

Taiap not as a rejection of local symbolic practices in the face of outside forces, but of their resignification, the process of which, nevertheless, undermined the basis of reproduction of traditional forms of social action and authority.

Second, because practice provides the basis of the construction of categories of identity along with power, practice theories have been important (explicitly or implicitly) in anthropologies of gender. Roger Lancaster's 1994 study of Nicaraguan *machismo* as a discourse of embodied practices and Don Kulick's 1998 study of the construction of gendered identities through linguistic practices among Brazilian travestis are cases in point. Anna Tsing's 1993 analysis of discourses of power among the Meratus of Indonesia shows how gendered inequalities are constructed through practice, even where such inequality lacks an ideological basis. Sherry Ortner's (b. 1941) work (1989, 2001) shows the complex and sometimes contradictory character of the gendered projects of Sherpas in general, and Sherpa women in particular, in relation to their engagement with Western mountain climbers and Buddhist monasticism. Finally, practice theory has been important to the ethnography of science, the *doxa* of modern societies. The work of Bruno Latour (1947) and Steven Woolgar (1979) on the social construction of "facts" or Rayna Rapp's (2000) work on amniocentesis problematize the authorizing discourses of science through the examination of its practices.

Practice theory has, indeed, been of central importance in anthropology since the 1970s, because it links different levels of social analysis. In defining social structure as the outcome of the practices of (socially constructed and constrained) actors, it avoids the contradiction between objectivist and subjectivist, synchronic and diachronic accounts of society and culture.

*See also Anthropology; Orthopraxy; Ritual; Society; Structuralism and Poststructuralism: Anthropology.*

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*Heather Levi*

**PRAGMATISM.** Pragmatism is the collective name for a family of theories emphasizing the practical consequences of holding a belief as a means to evaluating the truth of that belief. This focus on the practical was born of attempts to evade or escape many of the traditional metaphysical and epistemological puzzles and problems of traditional Western philosophy. Rather than continuing to deploy philosophical talents and energies in the service of seemingly endless debates about potentially irresolvable problems, pragmatists instead have addressed the specifics of actual, troubling difficulties felt by philosophers and non-philosophers alike.

Pragmatic theories of truth, for instance, seek to avoid the difficulties of traditional appeals to correspondence and coherence. A correspondence theory of truth typically claims that statements are true if and only if such statements correspond to actually existing and independent state of affairs in the world. Such a theory raises epistemological problems of knowing these relations among statements and the world, as well as the question of our ability to know any state of affairs independent of our ability to capture that state in language and description. A coherence theory of truth typically claims that a statement is true if and only if it coheres with the set of our other beliefs. Such a theory raises the immediate difficulty of possessing a large and coherent web of false beliefs—adding one more coherent belief to this web does nothing to make such a set any more true. Pragmatic theories of truth, instead,



Endeavoring, as a man of that type naturally would, to formulate what he so approved, he framed the theory that a *conception*, that is, the rational purport of a word or other expression, lies exclusively in its conceivable bearing upon the conduct of life; so that, since obviously nothing that might not result from the experiment can have any direct bearing upon conduct, if one can define accurately all the conceivable experimental phenomena which the affirmation or denial of a concept could imply, one will have therein a complete definition of the concept, and *there is absolutely nothing more in it*. For this doctrine he invented the name *pragmatism*.

SOURCE: Charles Sanders Peirce, "What Pragmatism Is" (1905)

It is astonishing to see how many philosophical disputes collapse into insignificance the moment you subject them to this simple test of tracing a concrete consequence. There can *be* no difference anywhere that doesn't *make* a difference elsewhere—no difference in abstract truth that doesn't express itself in a difference in concrete fact and in conduct consequent upon that fact, imposed on somebody, somehow, somewhere and some-when. The whole function of philosophy ought to be to find out what definite difference it will make to you and me, at definite instants of our life, if this world-formula or that world-formula be the true one.

SOURCE: William James, "What Pragmatism Means" (1907).

typically appeal to the practical consequences of holding a belief. A belief is true if it brings about a satisfactory result in a particular inquiry or investigation. Truth cannot be separated from the specific context of an investigation, nor can it be divorced from the interests of the inquirer, the history of such investigations, or the habits of the culture and persons involved. The specifics of such a theory—what constitutes a satisfactory outcome, how settled a situation must be in order to count as resolved, and the nature and influence of previous such inquiries, for instance—are the subject of much debate and form much of the history of pragmatism's development.

### Charles Sanders Peirce

Charles Sanders Peirce (1839–1914) was a logician, mathematician, philosopher, and semiotician. He never published any books, nor did he hold an academic position for any significant period of his life. Nevertheless, Peirce is often credited with being the father of pragmatism. For Peirce, pragmatism was primarily a theory of meaning. He intended it to stand in opposition to various strands of idealism—to force mere theorizing to test the effects of beliefs in the "real" world.

His famous formulation set forth pragmatism as a method for testing the meaning of any belief, idea, or term by means of analyzing the effects of its adoption on future conduct and belief. For Peirce, beliefs were guides for action. Beliefs typically endure until some reason for calling them into doubt arises. Once one is confronted by doubt, he or she needs to once again arrive at some belief or beliefs as guides to future actions. Peirce explicated four methods of "fixing" such beliefs: tenacity, authority, an *a priori* method, and science, or experimentation. Tenacity and authority refer to the clinging to old beliefs in the face of present doubt due to, respectively, personal or institutional commitments. An *a priori* belief is

fixed solely by an appeal to some version of "reasonableness" or other already existing preferences. Experimentation, for Peirce, was the preferred method of fixing belief, entailing the testing of hypotheses against public and verifiable observations.

Although Peirce coined the term *pragmatism* in 1878, it was William James who later went on to popularize it. This led Peirce to introduce, in 1905, the term *pragmaticism*, thus distinguishing his theory from that of James. Peirce intended pragmatism to be a means to an objective and impersonal reality—William James's interests lay in a very different direction.

### William James

William James (1842–1910), brother of novelist Henry James, was a psychologist, physician, and philosopher. For William James, pragmatism was personal and pluralistic. His attention to the affective elements of experience, such as feelings of volition, intention, and personal identity, mark the breaking point from Peirce's version of pragmatism. James was always more the psychologist, Peirce the logician and mathematician. Author of numerous influential books and essays, James's popularizing of pragmatism gained both him and the movement great notoriety.

James's landmark *The Principles of Psychology* (1890) described consciousness as an activity of selection. This selection occurs within a "stream of consciousness" (a term coined in *The Principles*). James worked to make psychology a natural science, using human physiology and employing the scientific method.

In "The Will to Believe" (1897), James advocated a freedom of choice or belief when empirical evidence does not provide sufficient warrant to commit us to one belief or another,

and when the situation presents us with a “forced, living, and momentous” decision. Here James employed the notion of selectivity he had earlier developed to describing the volitional function of consciousness.

In *Pragmatism* (1908) and *Essays in Radical Empiricism* (1912), James went on to develop a nondeterministic and nondualistic theory of knowledge. In these works, James advocated the notion of truth as the “cash value” of a proposition or belief. James called for a consideration of philosophical dilemmas in terms of the effects of their resolutions. If it benefits us to hold a particular belief, we should take those benefits into account when considering the advisability of adopting such a belief as true.

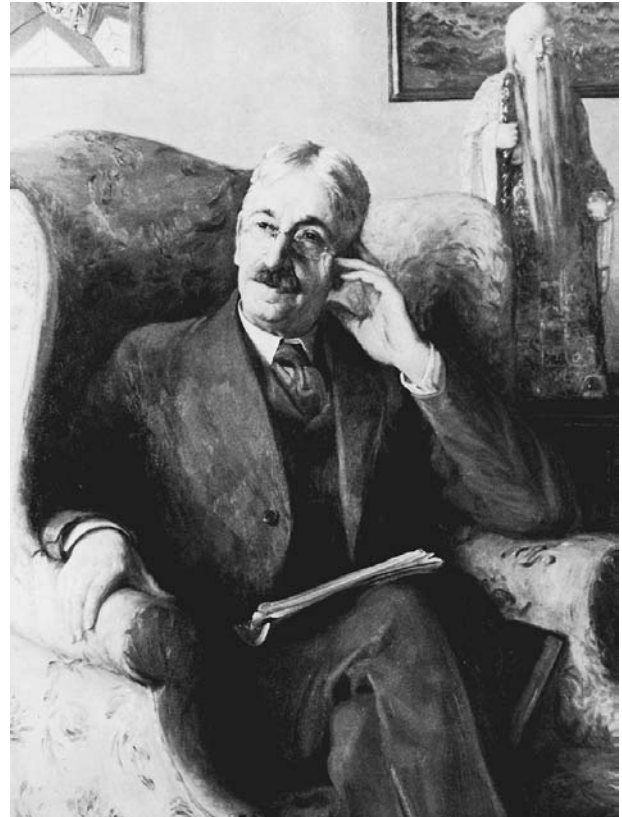
In addition to Peirce, James’s influences include Charles Bernard Renouvier (1815–1903) and F. C. S. Schiller (1864–1937). For example, James’s diary entry from April 30, 1870, addressed Renouvier’s definition of free will as “the sustaining of a thought *because I choose to when I might have other thoughts.*” James’s response was to write, “My first act of free will shall be to believe in free will...I will assume for the present—until next year—that it is no illusion.” And James worked with Schiller to establish pragmatism as a form of humanism.

Perhaps the most important philosopher to benefit directly from James’s work was American educator, psychologist, and public philosopher John Dewey.

### John Dewey

John Dewey’s (1859–1952) life spanned nearly a full century, and his written work reflects a corresponding breadth of influences and interests. Dewey brought pragmatism to maturity by focusing on the pragmatic method of inquiry as an ever-ongoing, self-correcting, and social process. Dewey used the scientific method as a paradigm of controlled and reflective inquiry, and referred, in various works, to his version of pragmatism as “instrumentalism” and “experimentalism.” Dewey combined Peirce’s community-sense of inquiry with the affective elements of James’s work. Furthermore, Dewey added a historical consciousness he inherited from his study of G. W. F. Hegel (1770–1831). As a result, Dewey’s version of pragmatism deemphasized knowledge and belief as the sole ends of inquiry, and instead sought to combine intelligent reflection with intelligent action.

Dewey was born the same year as the publication of *On the Origin of Species* (1859), and Darwin’s evolutionary thought had a profound impact on Dewey’s contributions to pragmatism. Dewey’s instrumentalism is a theory of the process of the transformation of an inchoate, problematic situation into a coherent unified one where knowledge is the product of inquiry and the means, or instrument, by which further inquiries may be made. Dewey’s fallibilism, inherited from Peirce, holds that no belief, view, or claim to knowledge is immune to possible future revision. Whereas Peirce’s fallibilism emphasized the revisability of scientific theories, Dewey sought to advocate the ways in which ongoing communication among diverse persons and experiences may inform and refine each other. Knowledge, for Dewey, was the *product* of inquiry, built out of the raw materials of experience. Knowledge, or “warranted assertability,” is not a private



**Portrait of John Dewey by Edwin B. Child.** Dewey (1859–1952), an American philosopher, is considered by many to be one of the three most influential pragmatists. He believed that problems could be solved through the application of experience and inquiry. COLUMBIANA COLLECTION, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

affair. Rather, it is the result of intelligent and public interaction between communicating inquirers and their world.

### Other Key Figures in the History of Pragmatism

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882) was no pragmatist himself, but his provocative insistence upon the value of experience and the power of democracy provided the background for much of pragmatic thought. Other important figures in the history of pragmatism include: institutional economist Thorstein Veblen (1857–1929); philosopher, educational theorist, and social activist Jane Addams (1860–1935); sociologist and psychologist George Herbert Mead (1863–1931); critical race theorist, critic of capitalism, and social activist W. E. B. DuBois (1868–1963); philosopher William Ernest Hocking (1873–1966); philosopher and logician C. I. Lewis (1883–1964); philosopher Alain Locke (1885–1954); Marxist philosopher and Dewey’s student Sidney Hook (1902–1989); philosopher Justus Buchler (1914–1991); and sociologist C. Wright Mills (1916–1962).

### Recent Developments in Pragmatism

Willard Van Orman Quine (1908–2000) wanted to naturalize epistemology, to make it a part of the physical sciences. In “Two

Dogmas of Empiricism” (1953), he rejected the analytic-synthetic distinction, and the strong distinction between math and logic, on the one hand, and the empirical sciences, on the other. Furthermore, he claimed that experience works on all of our beliefs holistically, and not as a piecemeal series of revisions.

Hilary Putnam (b. 1926) argues, by employing the writings of classical pragmatists, for various versions of realism. His use of figures like James and Dewey has not only served to revitalize interest in their work, but also to bring pragmatic points of view into conversation with many of the important contemporary debates in philosophy of mind.

Throughout his writings, Richard Rorty (b. 1931) argues for antifoundationalism and antiessentialism. According to Rorty, we know our experiences through “final vocabularies,” which are always already products of social and historical contingencies. Philosophers do much of the work of clearing out dead vocabularies so that “strong poets” may develop the key terms of new ones.

The extremely prolific Cornel West (b. 1953) continues to develop a “prophetic pragmatism,” emphasizing the religious and liberatory elements of pragmatic thought and social action. Through writings, audio recordings, and public presentations on television and radio, West has marked himself as an important advocate for the thoughtful exchange of ideas and the challenging of the political and social *status quo*.

The online “Pragmatism Cybrary” ([www.pragmatism.org](http://www.pragmatism.org)) is the chief Internet source of information and interest in the work of past and contemporary pragmatic thinkers. The leading print journals of pragmatism include *Transactions of the Charles Sanders Peirce Society* and the *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*.

See also *Epistemology: Modern; Truth*.

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Stephen Barnes

**PRE-COLOMBIAN CIVILIZATION.** Knowledge about pre-Columbian civilizations comes from two main sources: archaeological remains and the accounts written by European men. The latter include a first group of explorers who described the alien worlds they encountered (and destroyed), and a second group of priests, scholars, and administrators who interviewed the survivors who remembered the past, and later their descendants, who retold the tales they had heard in their youth. The first chroniclers viewed native societies through a self-confident, conservative, and unquestioning Catholic lens; fiercely religious themselves, they emphasized religion as the central force of native life. Although some, such as Bernal Diaz, express awe at the cultural, artistic, and technical achievements of Native Americans, for the most part these texts dismiss native societies as primitive and their religious ideas as confused and fundamentally wrong. Some use the term *pagan*; others assume that exotic practices such as polytheism and ancestor worship, common to many Native American societies, were synonymous with devil worship. Serious attempts at what in the early twenty-first century might be termed *ethnographic* and linguistic scholarship were nevertheless undertaken, mostly by religious writers. For the most part, as in the famous “Extirpation of Idolatries” texts, these were motivated by the need for more effective evangelization when, after years of conversion efforts, religious authorities realized that native understanding of Catholicism was spotty and shallow at best. Friars such as Bernardino de Sahagun of Mexico and Domingo de Santo Tomas of Peru began to study native languages and culture to facilitate intercultural communications and to explore native belief systems. Later, major extirpation campaigns yielded page after page of proceedings in which native witnesses tried to explain, usually through interpreters, the rationales for their persistent worship of their ancestral gods. The study of these records and the material record of these societies have led to the more relativistic prism through which most modern scholars have come to view these societies.

These early written sources are invaluable for understanding those civilizations that existed at the time of the encounter with the Europeans, most notably the Aztecs and Incas. The Aztecs, or Mexica, are believed to be migrants into central Mexico from the arid regions to the north, home to less settled tribes. As recent arrivals into an area that had for centuries been one of the great urban centers of art, architecture, religion, wealth, and political might, the Mexica at first served as mercenaries to some of the established city-states in the vicinity of Lake Texcoco. Their rapid rise to power appears to have been the result of a series of political intrigues, among other factors. But after the fact, the Aztecs, like other imperial peoples, came to see their own hegemony as foreordained by supernatural powers. According to their own origin myths, as recorded after the conquest, they had left their mythic home-



land of Aztlán, led by their priest-god Huiztlipochtli, and traveled until they settled where they saw a pre-ordained sign—an eagle with a snake in its mouth, resting on a rock. This rock happened to be in the middle of Lake Texcoco, so it was there that they began to construct their capital of Tenochtitlan. They later allied with two other city-states—Texcoco and Tlacopan—and, with their combined power, began their expansion. The Aztecs came to dominate the Triple Alliance and, at the time of contact with the Europeans, they occupied lands from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific, north toward the Rio Grande, and south through Tehuantepec.

The Aztecs worshiped a plethora of gods. They included creation gods such as Quetzalcoatl, the Feathered Serpent, who was also the wind god; Huehuateotl, the god of fire; Tezcatlipoca, the Smoking Mirror, the god of the night and darkness; Tlaloc, the rain god (one of the oldest and most widely worshiped Mesoamerican deities); and their own patron deity Huitzilopochtli, the god of war. Besides these gods, there were gods of certain social groups, like the *pochteca* (merchants) and lineage gods. For example, the *pochteca* chose Quetzalcoatl—god of creation and the bearer of culture, and often regarded as the maize god—as their patron and protector.

Their religious ideas provided the Aztecs and other Central Mexicans with an explanation of their origins, an expectation about life, and a method to influence the present and the future. Aztecs believed, as Friedrich Katz so ably states, that “a hard fate, filled with gloom and privation” awaited most of humankind (p. 161). They believed that life on earth was a short illusion. Only the warriors who fell in battle, the prisoners sacrificed to their deities, the women who died in childbirth, the persons who died in natural catastrophes, and children could hope for a more comfortable afterlife. Hope rested with the gods who could be placated through sacrifice. Human blood, for example, was shed to nourish the sun, which would be extinguished without such sustenance. Child sacrifices placated the rain god Tlaloc. Thus did ordinary individuals, some taken as prisoners in combat and others transferred to the state as tribute, contribute to the future of Aztec civilization. It is worth noting that in the twenty-first century, scholars such as Elizabeth Brumfiel have cautioned, however, that recorded Aztec religion is largely the religion of the male elite; its glorification of warfare and early death is probably not representative of the beliefs of the majority of the people, farmers, merchants, and artisans who may well have had a more pragmatic and life-affirming view of the cosmos.

The Aztecs adopted some of the gods and practices of their subject peoples. In Tenochtitlan a special temple housed the idols of vanquished peoples, but the Aztecs did not require subject peoples to worship their own deities; indeed, they reserved that right for the chosen few. They allowed the subject peoples to continue speaking their own language and practicing their own cults and culture. For these reasons, scholars have described the Aztec empire as a loose confederation of distinct peoples.

The Incas, like the Aztecs, were one of many relatively small polities in the Andean region of South America that rapidly expanded into an empire encompassing many peoples with

distinct traditions and identities. According to the histories told by Inca royalty to Spanish writers, the precipitating experience for expansion was the challenge from the leader of another polity, called the Chanca, for the claim of being the son of the sun. Once the Incas defeated these rivals, they began to expand, conquering the recalcitrant and allowing others to submit peacefully.

Inca imperial religion was built upon long-standing Andean beliefs and traditions, in which the worship of the ancestors and of sacred places played an important part. Each provincial people worshiped their forbearers, some of whom had been transformed into or identified with rocks or mountains. These ancestors, like the Sun, the apical ancestor of the Incas, were believed to have influence over daily life. In return for fertility, health, and success in battle, the natives sacrificed to and danced and sang for their gods. Sacrifices included corn beer and cakes, camelids, guinea pigs, and other foodstuffs. On special occasions, such as the death of an important ruler, humans were sacrificed. The paradigm can be summarized as “to feed and be fed.”

These lineage cults gave these agricultural and pastoral peoples their social and cultural identity at the local level. Expansive and ambitious polities such as the Inca state and its predecessors built larger political identities out of these localized traditions; the Inca constructed a complex state religion in which, out of the capital city of the Cuzco, radiated a set of sacred lines, called ceques, which were conceptualized as enveloping each of the local sacred places of lesser lineages into a single sacred landscape. This schema, at once religious and political, allowed individual peoples to retain their sense of cultural and religious autonomy and their distinctive deities, while still claiming a place within the larger imperial hierarchy. Within the capital city and other Inca centers, a highly stratified hierarchy of male priests and female *acllas* or “chosen women,” tended to the state religious cults, working in tandem with administrators and the military to fuel the imperial expansion.

The Andean civilization that built magnificent stone ceremonial cities, such as Cuzco and Huanuco Viejo, irrigated the hot desert coast; constructed footpaths linking what has become southern Columbia to the middle of Chile, and from the Pacific into the Andes mountains to Bolivia and southwestern Argentina, impressed the Spanish with its magnificence. Still, like the Aztecs, it was only the latest in a long line of impressive civilizations stretching back thousands of years, each of which contributed unique architectural, artistic, and intellectual legacies. The arrival of Europeans and Africans, and the vast, violent set of transformations that followed destroyed much of what had been, leaving only fragments and ruins. But archaeologists, ethnohistorians, and other scholars have reconstructed much of these lost social worlds, and the resurgent Native American political and cultural movements of recent decades have proudly reclaimed this history, serving as a reminder that if European culture has dominated in Latin America for the last five hundred years, the great Native American civilizations held sway for millennia before.

*See also Astronomy, Pre-Columbian and Latin American; Empire and Imperialism: Americas.*

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Susan Elizabeth Ramirez

**PREHISTORY, RISE OF.** Historians have long distinguished between matters recent or of record and antiquities, which surpassed memory if not understanding, and which Thucydides (d. c. 401 B.C.E.) called “archaeology.” The prehistory of “prehistory” itself includes the collection of curiosities, remains, and relics underlying the emergent disciplines of mythology, philology, ethnography, and anthropology. The practice of prehistory was also apparent in the tradition of Eusebian world history (which was based on the model of Eusebius’s universal chronicle) and was set within the biblical framework until it was secularized in eighteenth-century conjectural history and shifted to the larger arena of natural history, as in the work of Johann Gottfried von Herder, Johannes von Müller, and C. A. Walkenaer. The pursuit of prehistory was especially evident in the work of Enlightenment philologists and mythologists such as Thomas Blackwell, C. G. Heyne, Georg Friedrich Creuzer, Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling, and Karl Otfried Müller. As Heyne wrote, “In interpreting myth we must transport ourselves back into the manner of thought and expression which belonged to that remote period” (Müller, p. 256).

A major arena for the pursuit of prehistory *ante litteram* was the study of cultural history (*Kulturgeschichte*), especially in the work of authors like Herder, Gustav Klemm, Friedrich Hellwald, and Gustav Kolb. It was in the later nineteenth century, however, that such efforts produced the modern discipline of “prehistory,” a neologism self-consciously coined by Daniel Wilson in 1851. “Prehistory” (*Vorgeschichte, préhistoire, preistoria*) drew especially on two new disciplines with old names—that is, “anthropology” (the philosophical study of human nature) and “archaeology” (Thucydidean prehistory). Monuments, memorials, and material objects offered historians access to a deeper past than afforded by written records, private or public. Graves, sepulchral urns, runes, and stone implements uncovered beginning in the seventeenth century threw light on the life (as well as death) and migrations of “barbarian” peoples, while fossil remains forced Christian scholars to confront, and finally to acknowledge, the notion of a humanity older than Adam.

### Science of Prehistory

In fact the materials for the “new science” of prehistory had been accumulating for three centuries and more, without the

accompaniment of a theoretical framework but with a substantial constituency in the republic of letters. The works of Georgius Agricola (Georg Bauer; 1494–1555) and Conrad Gesner (1516–1565) on fossils were followed in the seventeenth century by state-supported efforts, notably in Denmark and Sweden, the establishment of societies of antiquities (such as the Society of Antiquaries of London, 1717, and the Society of Dilettanti, 1732) and of journals (that of A. A. Rhode in 1719, and *Archaeologia*, London, 1770), and other signs of professionalization. Archaeological inspirations came from the discovery of Chilperich’s grave (1653), the study of the ruins of Pompeii, and the history of ancient art associated with Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717–1768). In the view of Rhode writing on north German antiquities, material remains furnished a much better access to the ancient Germans than Cornelius Tacitus (c. 56–c. 120 C.E.) and all commentary and derivative historiography.

Throughout the century local evidence continued to accumulate. John Frere reported on evidence for the antiquity of man from a site in Suffolk in an archaeological journal in 1800, although its significance was not appreciated, or accepted, for another generation. In 1813 James Prichard had already held out the possibility of the nonbiblical principle of polygenesis. By 1846 Jacques Boucher de Crèvecœur de Perthes (1788–1868), acknowledged founder of “prehistory,” was publishing his findings about “antediluvian man.” In 1857 Neanderthal man was unearthed, and in the 1860s John Lubbock was celebrating Frere’s discoveries, adding his own and those of Boucher de Perthes. About the old biblical chronology he wrote, “The whole six thousand years, which were until lately looked on as the sum of the world’s existence, are to Perthes but one unit of measurement in the long succession of ages” (pp. 1–2).

Even before the English scholars, French, German, and especially Scandinavian archaeologists had appreciated the high “antiquity of man” (Charles Lyell’s phrase) for almost half a century. One pioneering archaeologist was Rasmus Nyerup, whose efforts led to the founding of a national museum in Copenhagen in 1819, whose first director, C. J. Thomsen, was one of the formulators of the three-age system, which was “archaeology’s first paradigm.” A variation on this scheme was offered by Sven Nilsson: savage, barbarian, agricultural, and (adopting the rubric of historians) civilized. Nilsson’s work on the early inhabitants of Scandinavia, published in 1834, was translated in 1868 by Lubbock, who drew on other Scandinavian researches and publications. In 1861 Lubbock painted a glowing picture of the progress of understanding prehistory and described the new periodization in this way: the ages of stone (which he divided into old and new—Paleolithic and Neolithic), bronze, and iron, which replaced or gave solid reinforcement to the “four-stage” system of eighteenth-century conjectural history, by connecting it with more precise chronological—that is, stratigraphic—calibrations.

A central figure in nineteenth-century prehistorical studies was Jens Jacob Asmussen Worsaae (1821–1885), who was both professor of archaeology at the University of Copenhagen and head of the Royal Museum of Northern Antiquities. For Worsaae the “progress of culture” was measured not by writing but “as indicated by the appearance of pile-dwellings and other



remains." As for the "antiquity of man" he stopped short of Charles Lyell's estimate of the age of the human race as about 100,000 years. "Yet this much is certain," Worsaae added, "the more our glance is directed to that epoch-making point of time, when the Creator wakened man in all his nakedness into life, and therefore most probably under a warmer sun in some more genial clime, the more does that point recede into an endlessly distant undefinable past" (*The Prehistory of the North*, p. 2).

### Evolutionary Contributions

The "antiquity of man" was confirmed by the evolutionary ideas that emerged and began to prevail in the nineteenth century. Darwinism, preceded by the naive evolutionism of Herbert Spencer (1820–1903), Robert Chambers, and Charles Darwin's (1809–1882) own grandfather, Erasmus Darwin, gave systematic and scientific basis to age-old organic and biological analogies. It joined all human races, however defined, in one general process, and in this way extended the field of comparisons to the entire globe, which had been the scene of the ages of stone, bronze, and iron. With the emergence of written culture, however, the uses of archaeology diminish, so that, as Worsaae acknowledged, "monumental records and ancient relics become mere illustrations of the internal and external contemporary conditions of civilisation, the main features of which are already known in history" (*The Prehistory of the North*, p. 181). Later archaeologists, such as Gabriel de Mortillet (1821–1898), likewise insisted on the priority of cultural over narrowly paleontological criteria.

Evolutionism became commonplace in the wake of Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859) and the work of Ernst Haeckel (1834–1919) and Friedrich Ratzel (1844–1904) in Germany. The connection with prehistory became more direct in the work of Ratzel, who extended the views of Herder into the new discipline of "anthropogeography" and who published works on "the prehistory of European humanity." A philosophical emphasis was added by Otto Caspari, who, investigating "the prehistory of humanity with a review of its natural development" followed the anti-Kantian critique of Herder by insisting on the growth of human reason rather than the structure of "pure" reason. By the later nineteenth century prehistory was not something that students of world history (or indeed national history) could ignore.

### New World Discoveries

How did the New World fit into the prehistorical perspective that was emerging in the nineteenth century? The discoveries of Columbus and his followers and the imperial extensions of the conquistadores were incorporated without much difficulty into the "universal histories" of European tradition, though at first the political and cultural categories of the colonial intruders were imposed indiscriminately on the original inhabitants. The old theme of the four world monarchies was replaced by the modern succession of empires—Spanish, English, Dutch, French, and American—as a way of periodizing the grand narrative of Western history; and historians of all nationalities gave interpretations of the consequences of the opening of the new hemisphere. The old stereotypes of barbarism and civilization, too, were employed to distinguish not only the vanquished from the victors but also the primitive

stages of historical development from those of material and spiritual culture, whether governed by laws of providence or of secular progress.

Early ideas of pre-Columbian history were based on old rumors, prophecy, and poetic visions going back to Dante and Petrarch, and not until the seventeenth century did scholars begin to pass beyond myth and ungrounded speculation to ethnographic inquiries into the origins of the Indian populations of the Americas, such as arguments for the Israelite origins of the Indians and Hugo Grotius's (Huigh de Groot; 1583–1645) choice of the Scandinavians. Indeed, wrote Justin Winsor, "there is not a race of eastern Asia—Siberian, Tartar, Chinese, Japanese, Malay, with the Polynesians—which has not been claimed as discoverers, intending or accidental, of American shores, or as progenitors, more or less perfect or remote, of American peoples" (p. 59)—and none of them, he went on to add, without some plausibility.

The Asiatic theory of American origins, upheld by Joseph-François Lafitau (1670–1740), Alexander von Humboldt (1769–1859), and Charles Lyell (1797–1875), was the most popular, although specific tall tales of Chinese discoveries were discredited; and it was reinforced by the fact of the narrowness of the Bering Strait and its frozen condition in winter. Long before the Norwegian author Thor Heyerdahl, ideas of Polynesian contacts were defended, and so were Welsh—even by Edward Burnett Tylor (1832–1917)—and Irish claims. In 1843 William H. Prescott, confronting the question in the context of Mexican civilization, surveyed the myths and theories deriving from discredited notions of the unity of the human race and in the end rejected Hebrew, Egyptian, Chinese, or Tartar origins for East Asia—but in a period "so remote, that this foreign influence has been too feeble to interfere with the growth of what may be regarded, in its essential features, as a peculiar and indigenous culture." In other words, prehistory was largely a matter of speculation, and scholars should confine themselves to recorded and accessible periods.

Another question was that of the early contacts made by the Scandinavians and testified to by the Icelandic sagas written down by the thirteenth century and by later historical writings, including beginning with Olaus Magnus in the seventeenth century. Most controversial was the story of the voyages to Vinland, whether region or island, mentioned in the works of Adam of Bremen (d. 1081–1085) and Ordericus Vitalis (1075–?1142) as well as a number of other manuscripts. The problem was proving such claims, many of them arising from national pride, and the criteria for such proofs came to depend on increasingly strict and scientific standards of historical linkage. Arguments were supported by interpretations of myths, similarities of customs and rituals, intuitive etymologies, physical and cultural anthropology, comparative linguistics, and archaeology (later to be supplemented by radio-carbon and DNA testing); and though the standards and techniques change, the results are still coming in.

### Archaeology and Related Fields

The idea of the "antiquity of man" overcame initial resistance, especially through the work of Tylor, Lubbock, Adolf Bastian,

and Theodor Waitz, based on studies of American Indians, and eventually shifted opinion within the scientific community; in 1896 Andrew Dickson White celebrated Darwin's victory over the obscurantist theological champions of the "fall of man." But prehistorical investigations were also pursued along more scientific lines. "Between 1780 and 1860," wrote Bruce Trigger, "archaeology in the central and eastern United States passed through an antiquarian phase which recapitulated the development of archaeology in England and Scandinavia between 1500 and 1800" (p. 105). As in Europe, the existence of human remains along with those of extinct mammals forced acceptance of the antiquity of man and, as C. C. Abbott concluded, following Scandinavian scholars, of his existence in Paleolithic times in America.

And proofs continued to accumulate, especially with the collective efforts reflected in the spread of archaeological museums and periodicals, beginning with the transactions of the American Philosophical Society (1769), whose president, Thomas Jefferson, was himself a pioneering archaeologist, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (founded "to promote and encourage the knowledge of the antiquities of America"), the publications of the American Antiquarian Society (1812), the American Ethnological Society (founded by Albert Gallatin), the proceedings of the American Association for Advancement of Science (began in 1848), the publications of the American Geographical Society (1852), the *American Naturalist* (1867), the *American Antiquarian* (1878), the Archaeological Institute of America (1879), the *American Journal of Archaeology* (1881), the American Folk-Lore Society (1888), the Smithsonian Institution (1846), the Peabody Museum (1866), and others.

In Henri Berr's great series on "the evolution of humanity" the study of prehistory—"still in its infancy"—takes a place of honor with eleven volumes devoted to aspects of the subject, including Jacques de Morgan's *Prehistoric Man* (1925); and no survey of human civilization can omit consideration of this period before the appearance of historical "sources" properly speaking. Before spiritual advance came material endowment—before language came the tool; and the understanding of this link leads back to a modern sort of "conjectural history," which underlay the efforts of the post-World War I generation, scholars such as Jacques de Morgan and V. Gordon Childe (whose *Dawn of European Civilization* also appeared in 1925), to achieve a "new synthesis" for the study of humanity in its terrestrial home. "Aided by archeology," Childe wrote, "history with its prelude prehistory becomes a continuation of natural history." Yet there is still truth in the remark made by Morgan in the synthesis published three quarters of a century ago, that "What we know to-day is very little in comparison with what remains to be learned."

See also *Barbarism and Civilization; Evolution; History, Idea of.*

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Donald R. Kelley

**PREJUDICE.** The concept of prejudice emerged during the early twentieth century and soon became the most prominent social scientific and lay concept to describe antipathy for others based on their social group or category membership. Social scientists have typically defined prejudice as a negative intergroup attitude. Many, however, have added the rider that this negative intergroup attitude is bad or unjustified in some way, and it is this broader concept that has been entrenched in lay discourse. This conceptualization raises several issues. One is whether it is indeed possible to distinguish between negative intergroup attitudes that are prejudiced (that is, bad or unjustified) and those that are not. A second issue is that of the structure and dimensionality of these negative intergroup attitudes, a third is whether there are different types or kinds of prejudice, and a fourth is that of how prejudice has been explained and understood.

### Prejudice: Social Problem, or Problem Concept

The perspective of prejudice as a “bad” or “unjustified” attitude arises out of the social-problems approach to the study of intergroup relations, which was prominent for much of the twentieth century. This perspective implied a distinction between those intergroup attitudes that were socially problematic and those that were not, and only the former qualified as prejudice per se. For example, George Simpson and J. Milton Yinger, in their influential handbook *Racial and Cultural Minorities: An Analysis of Prejudice and Discrimination* (1985), write that “for a democrat to be prejudiced against communists and fascists is different from his being prejudiced against Japanese—not entirely different, to be sure, but sufficiently so to require separation in vocabularies (for example, prejudice 1 and prejudice 2). It is the latter type that is the subject of this book” (p. 22).

But how do negative intergroup attitudes that are prejudiced differ from negative intergroup attitudes that are not prejudiced? A number of possible differences have been proposed. It has been suggested that prejudiced intergroup attitudes involve a faulty or incorrect generalization, that they involve rigid or inflexible attitudes, that they are overgeneralized attitudes, that they are irrational attitudes, that they justify discrimination, that they are attitudes that are not based on actual experience, that they are attitudes that are not based on objective evidence, and that they are unjust attitudes.

The problem with this pejorative concept of prejudice is that no evidence has ever shown that those negative intergroup attitudes viewed by social scientists as prejudiced are actually any more rigid, inflexible, irrational, any more based on faulty or incorrect generalizations, and any less based on real experience and objective evidence than negative intergroup attitudes not viewed as prejudiced. The distinction therefore has tended to reside purely in the belief, sometimes explicit but more commonly implicit, that these negative intergroup attitudes are “unjust” without any further specification in observable or measurable terms. The attribution “unjust” has therefore been purely a value judgment that is inevitably influenced by the beliefs, group membership, and biases of the person making it as well as the social and historical circumstances. For example, Simpson and Yinger’s suggestion that a democrat’s dislike of communists may be justified but not a dislike of Japanese may have seemed reasonable to American social scientists in the 1970s but might not have seemed as reasonable during World War II, when the Soviet Union and the United States were allies in the war against Japan.

Because the idea of prejudice as a bad or unjustified negative intergroup attitude has never had any empirical basis and therefore has not been empirically measurable, the body of knowledge that has emerged on the topic of “prejudice” actually consists of research on intergroup attitudes. Because of the social-problems perspective, social scientists have focused most of their attention on attitudes toward those social or ethnic groups, particularly minorities, which they have viewed as being the targets of unjustified negative attitudes and discrimination. Thus during the twentieth century first anti-Semitism and then antiblack racism were particular foci of attention.

There is no evidence, however, that the nature and dynamics of these “unjustified” negative intergroup attitudes toward minorities differ from negative attitudes that might be held by these minorities against majorities or indeed from any other negative intergroup attitudes, whether seen as “justified” or “unjustified.”

This problem with prejudice as a pejorative concept might be one reason why the term “prejudice” has been less used in the social-science literature on intergroup relations and attitudes since the last two decades of the twentieth century. When it has been used, it has also tended to be defined in an ostensibly neutral and nonpejorative manner, as simply referring to “negative intergroup attitudes” (Duckitt, 1992, pp. 15, 18), though the implication that these attitudes are “unjustified” has tended to remain, particularly in lay discourse. This shift toward defining prejudice in nonpejorative and ostensibly neutral terms has also paralleled a move away from the social-problems perspective of prejudice and the emergence of the cognitive approach to studying intergroup relations in psychology. This cognitive approach has viewed intergroup biases and stereotyping as being rooted in universal human cognitive processes rather than as pathological or abnormal phenomena.

### The Structure of Intergroup Attitudes

Given that prejudice is conceptualized as a negative intergroup attitude, the issue of the structure and dimensionality of these negative intergroup attitudes arises. Social psychologists have distinguished three distinct components of prejudice or ways in which negative intergroup attitudes can be expressed or manifested. These are in the form of negative stereotypes (cognitive component) of the target group, negative feelings (affective component) toward the target group, and negative behavioral inclinations (behavioral component) toward the target group. Each of these components of negative intergroup attitudes will be briefly considered below.

**Stereotypes and prejudice.** Contemporary social scientists typically define stereotypes as beliefs about the personal characteristics of a group or category of people. In contrast to traditional approaches that saw stereotypes as necessarily incorrect, irrational, rigid, or faulty in some way, stereotypes in the early twenty-first century are seen as arising out of normal and adaptive cognitive processes, such as categorization, which function to reduce the complexity of social information processing. An important conclusion from research within this new approach has been that stereotypes function as generalized expectancies about social categories or groups, which bias the perception of and behavior toward individual members of those groups so as to maintain the stereotype and generate behavioral confirmation of it.

Stereotyping per se, however, does not necessarily involve prejudice. Out-group stereotypes can be evaluatively positive, neutral, or negative. Only evaluatively negative stereotypes are usually viewed as expressive of prejudiced attitudes. But how important are negative stereotypes as an expression of prejudice?

It has been widely assumed that negative stereotypes should be strongly associated with other expressions of prejudice, such as negative feelings or affect toward the target group or



discriminatory behavior toward and behavioral avoidance of the target group. The evidence, however, does not seem to support this. John Brigham's review of research on stereotyping concluded that negative stereotypes and prejudice were only weakly and inconsistently related. Later research has come to similar conclusions. A meta-analysis of thirty hypothesis tests from twelve different studies indicated that American whites' evaluative stereotypes of blacks correlated positively but only weakly with whites' overall racial attitudes and very weakly with indices of discriminatory behavior toward blacks (Dovidio et al.). These findings suggest therefore that negative stereotypes may not be as important a component of prejudice as has been frequently assumed.

***Intergroup affect and prejudice.*** Although psychologists had originally believed that negative affect or feelings of dislike for out-groups were the central core of prejudice, in the 1970s their emphasis began to shift toward cognitive aspects of prejudice, such as categorization and stereotyping. However, during the 1990s several influential commentaries suggested a possible shift back to an emphasis on affect as central to intergroup attitudes, behavior, and relations. For example, Susan Fiske has suggested that prejudice should be conceptualized specifically as negative intergroup affect. Eliot R. Smith has also proposed a theory suggesting that when group identity is salient, the way in which people appraise intergroup contexts or relationships generates particular feelings about out-groups, and it is these "social emotions" that constitute prejudice and determine intergroup behavior.

Research has also suggested that affect toward out-groups may be the most critical component of prejudiced attitudes. Charles Stangor et al. found that affective responses to national, ethnic, and religious groups were clearly better predictors of general favorability toward and social distance from these groups than the stereotypes held about those groups. The aforementioned meta-analysis by John Dovidio et al. found that affective prejudice toward blacks correlated more strongly with discriminatory behavior toward blacks than did the stereotypes of blacks. Empirical research therefore seems to support those, such as Smith and Fiske, who have argued that the feeling or affective component of prejudice is its most central and critical aspect.

***Behavioral expressions of prejudice: Social distance, discrimination, and violence.*** While social psychologists have primarily studied the cognitive, perceptual, and affective aspects of prejudice, sociologists have devoted more attention to its behavioral expressions, in the form of peoples' intentions and dispositions to behave negatively to out-group members. The most studied behavioral expressions of prejudice have probably been social distance preferences (behavioral avoidance) and discriminatory behavior. Interestingly, intentional acts of serious violence against individuals because of their group or category membership, or "hate crimes," have been much less studied.

Social distance is typically measured using variants of a questionnaire originally developed by Emory Bogardus in 1925, which asked about people's willingness to have personal contact of varying degrees of intimacy ("close kinship by marriage," "in my street as neighbors," "employment in my occupation," "citizenship in my country") with members of particular

ethnic groups. An important finding from social-distance research has been of the relatively consensual or normative nature of prejudice within societies. Numerous studies have documented a hierarchy of social-distance preferences in the United States that is widely accepted and has remained remarkably stable over much of the twentieth century. At the top of this hierarchy are fair-skinned North European peoples, followed by East and South Europeans, then Asian peoples, and finally African peoples at the bottom. Even low-ranking minorities accept the hierarchy, except for their own group, which they rank high.

Louk Hagendoorn's comparative research on the social-distance hierarchies within a number of West and East European societies confirmed that these hierarchies are highly consensual within social groups. They also tend to be consensual across groups within particular societies, except when there are sharp ideological or cultural cleavages within the society, in which case the conflicting groups might disagree on the hierarchy. This was the case, for example, for Islamic versus non-Islamic groups in several countries from the former Soviet Union.

The existence of pervasive discrimination against groups that are the targets of prejudice has been extensively documented. For example, Thomas F. Pettigrew has reviewed the substantial body of research on high levels of prejudice against and discrimination toward the new immigrant minorities of western Europe. Numerous studies have shown the existence of pervasive discrimination against blacks in the United States, despite apparent declines in overt prejudice.

It is interesting that at the group level there seems to be a strong tendency for those groups who are negatively stereotyped and the targets of prejudiced affect to be most discriminated against. This contrasts with the weak relationship obtained between discriminatory behavior and negative stereotypes and the moderate one between discriminatory behavior and intergroup affect at the individual difference level.

Aggression and violence toward out-group members constitute more extreme behavioral expressions of prejudice. Numerous studies have documented the long history of violence against blacks in the United States, and Pettigrew has described the late-twentieth-century and early twenty-first-century upsurge in anti-immigrant violence in western Europe. Much attention has therefore focused on the conditions that lead to prejudice being expressed in violence. Early findings suggesting a correlation between lynching of blacks in the American South and economic hardship have not been supported by subsequent reanalyses and new data. Nor has clear evidence emerged of a relationship between unemployment and hate crimes. Instead, ecological studies have suggested that xenophobic reactions might be particularly likely in situations where "established groups confront outsiders whose growing numbers and social practices challenge the preexisting hierarchy in which they occupied a favorable position" (Green et al., p. 430).

### **The Varieties of Prejudice**

While prejudiced intergroup attitudes should always involve cognitive, affective, and behavioral expressions in the form of

unfavorable stereotypes, feelings of antipathy, and behavioral expressions of prejudice, a somewhat different issue is that of whether different kinds or forms of prejudice exist. This idea originated from research in the United States, which suggested that two different kinds of racism existed there, with one having a more traditional or overt form and the other a newer, more modern, or more subtle form.

***Traditional racism and the new racisms.*** Several theories have proposed that a new more covert or subtle kind of racism emerged in the United States after the desegregation of the South—a form of racism that supplemented or supplanted an older more traditional form characterized by beliefs in black biological inferiority, white supremacy, and the desirability of segregation and formal discrimination. Some important empirical findings stimulated the emergence of these theories. First, findings indicated that despite survey evidence of sharp declines in whites' racial prejudice after the early 1960s, anti-black discrimination and racial inequality did not show corresponding decreases. Second, many ostensibly nonprejudiced whites expressed strong opposition to policies designed to reduce these inequalities. And third, research also indicated that whites' overtly friendly behavior to blacks or apparently nonprejudiced questionnaire responses could be accompanied by covert negative affect revealed by subtle indicators such as voice tone and seating distance or revealed when they were hooked up to a simulated lie detector (the bogus pipeline technique).

There have been four main approaches to this new racism: symbolic or modern racism, subtle versus blatant prejudice, ambivalent racism, and aversive racism. These four approaches have varied in their conceptualization of this new racism, but their essential features seem similar. The most important of these approaches is that termed symbolic or modern racism by David Sears. It has been described as a blending of antiblack affect with traditional Protestant ethic and conservative values. Thus blacks are disliked because they are seen as violating basic moral values, such as self-reliance, individual responsibility, and the work ethic. The modern racism scale was developed to measure this dimension and has tended to be highly correlated with measures of traditional racism yet factorially distinct from them. Numerous studies have found that the modern racism scale is a markedly more powerful predictor of whites' racial policy preferences and candidate preferences in racialized election campaigns than measures of traditional racism, political preference, or conservative ideology.

The second approach to the new racism was subsequently developed by Pettigrew and Roel Meertens, who constructed a set of scales to measure constructs very similar to symbolic and traditional racism that they have used extensively in European countries to measure prejudice against local minorities and outgroups. Their first component, "blatant prejudice," was assessed by subscales of "threat" and "rejection" and seems essentially equivalent to traditional racism. Their second component, "subtle prejudice," was assessed by three subscales of "defense of traditional values," "exaggeration of cultural differences," and "lack of positive affect," and is clearly similar to symbolic racism.

Third, Irwin Katz and R. Glen Hass took the new versus old racism distinction a step further by suggesting that white

Americans' racial attitudes could involve not just a new symbolic or subtle racism but also racial ambivalence. Their findings suggested that many whites could simultaneously hold antiblack and problack attitudes, and the resulting ambivalence could account for highly polarized responses to blacks, with "desirable" behavior by blacks eliciting particularly positive responses and "undesirable" behavior eliciting particularly negative and discriminatory responses.

The fourth approach, that of aversive racism, also emphasizes ambivalence in American whites' attitudes to blacks, though in a somewhat different form. It proposes that most whites acquire egalitarian beliefs and a nonprejudiced self-image at an overt and conscious level. At the same time, however, their exposure to a society characterized by black-white differentiation and inequality generates underlying covert negative feelings to blacks. This ambivalence results in whites generally behaving in an overtly nondiscriminatory manner toward blacks in order to preserve their nonprejudiced self-images while also behaving in a discriminatory manner in more ambiguous situations where the discrimination can be rationalized away or excused.

The concept of new racisms has not been without controversy. Critics have asserted that symbolic racism has been conceptualized and measured inconsistently over time and that the varying themes identified with it have not yet been coherently articulated or adequately measured. It has also been suggested that the "new" racisms are not really different at all but simply more subtle and socially acceptable expressions of the same old racism.

***Implicit and explicit prejudice.*** During the 1990s the idea of the existence of new forms of prejudice was taken a step further. The distinction was now made between explicit prejudice, operating at a conscious level and therefore including both traditional and modern racisms, and implicit prejudice, which was assumed to be automatically activated by target persons and to operate largely unconsciously.

A variety of measures of implicit prejudice have been used. Some are indirect or covert behavioral indices of prejudice, such as linguistic biases, eye contact, or nonverbal behaviors, which could be subject to intentional control but typically would not be. Others are truly implicit measures of automatic cognitive or physiological responses that cannot readily be intentionally controlled. The most common have been "priming techniques," which measure how quickly positive or negative stereotypes can be activated after individuals are briefly exposed to a group or social category label, and variations of that procedure, such as the Implicit Association Test (IAT), which assesses how strong the temporal association is between a group or social category label and positively or negatively evaluative terms.

It was initially assumed that these implicit measures might provide more accurate information about peoples' real attitudes, but research findings have suggested a more complex picture. Generally whites have shown markedly greater negativity toward blacks on implicit measures of racism than on explicit measures, as would be expected. The difficulty with the concept of implicit prejudice, however, has been that dif-



ferent measures of implicit stereotyping and prejudice have tended to be only weakly correlated with each other, suggesting that they might not be measuring a single dimension at all, and they have also tended to be uncorrelated with explicit measures of prejudice or behavioral indices of discrimination.

One possible reason for the discrepancies between implicit and explicit measures is that they might reflect different response systems. Dovidio et al. have shown that automatically activated implicit evaluative stereotypes predict people's spontaneous interracial reactions (such as eye contact and rate of blinking) but not their more deliberative, controlled interracial judgments or behaviors (overtly expressed attitudes, interview evaluations, or judgments of guilt in simulated court cases). Explicit prejudice measures such as the modern racism scale on the other hand predicted deliberative responses but not spontaneous reactions.

Two theories of prejudice have been used to explain why there might be considerable discrepancies between individuals in their explicit and implicit prejudice against a particular group. Both suggest this discrepancy might arise from individuals acquiring values that motivate them to attempt to control prejudiced attitudes or stereotypes that were acquired earlier in socialization and that are therefore automatically activated by target persons. However, the nature of the values and motives proposed by the two theories differ in certain crucial respects. The theory of aversive racism suggests that many whites have underlying, covert racist attitudes but adopt and express egalitarian attitudes at an overt level in order to maintain a self-image of themselves as nonprejudiced and egalitarian. Because of their covert racism, they will act in discriminatory ways in situations in which they can rationalize or excuse it and will do so without guilt. Patricia Devine's theory suggests that whites acquire negative stereotypes of blacks during socialization. Later some whites come to internalize explicitly antiracist values, which are genuine and deeply held. As a result, their underlying and automatically activated prejudiced reactions engender guilt and are therefore inhibited whenever they are under conscious control.

These theories, and most of the research on implicit prejudice, have assumed that implicit prejudice and stereotypes are stable evaluative orientations that are automatically activated in response to stigmatized group members. Recent research, however, has shown that implicit prejudices seem to be malleable and fluid and to vary markedly in response to situational cues and motivational influences. Andrew Karpinski and James Hilton have therefore suggested that implicit attitudes reflect the evaluative associations with out-groups that people have been exposed to in their environment and not the degree to which they endorse these associations. One implication of this is that because these "implicit" associations have not been consciously articulated and organized in "explicit" form, the actual evaluative out-group associations elicited in any situation may be markedly influenced by the nature of the activating cues, procedures, and situation. This could explain the variability in implicit prejudice across situations and measuring techniques and the weak correlations between different implicit measures and between them and explicit measures of prejudice.

### Explaining Prejudice

There have been a number of historical shifts in the dominant explanations of prejudice, and it is possible to identify six distinct periods in the way in which prejudice has been understood by social scientists. These paradigmatic shifts in explanation have been influenced by social and historical circumstances making particular questions or issues about the nature and causation of prejudice salient at the time as well as by empirical research findings. Different social-policy approaches to prejudice have therefore characterized each of these six periods. These six historical periods, their dominant theoretical and conceptual approaches to prejudice, and their social policy emphases are summarized in Table 1 and briefly described below.

**Race theory: Up to the 1920s.** During this period, racist attitudes were largely viewed as natural responses of "advanced" Western peoples to "inferior" or "backward" colonial peoples or "racially different" minorities. These attitudes had their logical social-policy expressions in justifying the political domination of these "backward" peoples, their segregation (formal or informal), and discrimination against them.

**Race prejudice: The 1920s and 1930s.** After World War I, however, as Western colonial rule was increasingly challenged and a black civil rights movement emerged in the United States, the idea of the inferiority of other "races" came to be rejected, at least by intellectual elites and social scientists. This stimulated a dramatic reversal in the way in which racist attitudes were conceptualized, from natural responses to the inferiority of other races to race prejudice—that is, as unjustified, unfair, and irrational negative intergroup attitudes.

The dominant explanation of prejudice that emerged during this period was the psychoanalytically derived frustration-displacement theory. This approach saw prejudice as an unconscious defense through which social stress and frustrations were displaced through the scapegoating of out-groups and minorities. This seemed to explain both the irrationality and unfairness of prejudice and its social pervasiveness.

This explanation of prejudice had its logical expression in the social policy of assimilation. The typical targets of prejudice and scapegoating were those viewed as different from and "less developed" (socioeconomically, culturally, ethnically) than the dominant majority. Thus assimilation of these minorities and colonial peoples would "civilize" or "uplift" them socially and economically, and with this, prejudice and discrimination against them should gradually erode.

**Ideology and personality: The 1940s and 1950s.** After World War II the dominant explanation of prejudice shifted, driven largely by the need to explain the Holocaust and anti-Semitism in Nazi Germany. It did not seem conceivable that these could be acts of normal persons, so prejudice came to be seen as the expression of disturbed or authoritarian personalities propagating antidemocratic and authoritarian ideologies. The social-policy implication of this approach was that both racial and political tolerance would arise out of the spread of liberal democratic values and institutions and the defeat of authoritarianism in all its variants.

### Historical shifts in dominant theoretical and social-policy approaches to prejudice

Social and historical context and issues	Concept of prejudice and dominant theoretical approach	Dominant social policy orientation to prejudice and discrimination
Up to the 1920s: White domination and colonial rule of “backward peoples”	Prejudice as a natural response to the deficiencies of “backward” peoples: Race theories	Domination, discrimination, and segregation are natural and justified social policies
The 1920s and 1930s: The legitimacy of white domination and pervasive prejudice challenged	Prejudice as irrational and unjustified reaction to people who are different: Psychoanalytic and frustration theories	Assimilation as a gradual process as minorities and colonial peoples become westernized and “uplifted”
The 1940s and 1950s: Nazi racial ideology and the Holocaust	Prejudice rooted in anti-democratic ideology and pathological needs within authoritarian personalities	Democratic and anti-authoritarian social structures and values will erode intolerance and prejudice
The 1960s: The problem of institutionalized racism in the American South	Sociocultural explanations: Prejudice rooted in the social norms of discriminatory social structures	Desegregation and anti-discriminatory laws will lead to intergroup contact, which will erode prejudice
The 1970s: The problem of informal racism and discrimination in the North	Prejudice as an expression of dominant-group interests in maintaining intergroup inequality	Reducing intergroup inequality through affirmative action and minority empowerment
The 1980s to the 2000s: The stubborn persistence of stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination	Prejudice as an expression of universal cognitive-motivational processes: social categorization and social identity	Multicultural policies to provide minorities with esteem and foster positive nonthreatened identities and tolerance for all groups

SOURCE: Courtesy of the author

**Culture and society: The 1960s.** At the end of the 1950s a new paradigm shift occurred, as public attention increasingly focused on the campaign for civil rights in the American South. It did not seem feasible to explain racism in the American South—where ordinary “good citizens” holding democratic values were racist and supported discrimination—in terms of disturbed or authoritarian personalities. The explanatory paradigm that emerged saw racial prejudice as rooted in social structures in which segregation and discrimination had been legally institutionalized and had become social norms that were taught to individuals during socialization and maintained by conformity pressures and lack of interracial contact.

The social policies necessary to reduce prejudice flowed logically from these assumptions. Segregation and discriminatory practices must be abolished. Schools and workplaces must be desegregated. The guiding principle was the “contact hypothesis”: that racial segregation and unfamiliarity would perpetuate racial prejudice, while desegregation and intergroup contact under the right conditions would reduce it.

**Group interests and racial inequality: The 1970s.** The optimistic assumption that racial integration would eliminate racism in American society rapidly faded in the late 1960s and the 1970s. As the institutionalized segregation and old-fashioned racism of the South disappeared, it was simply replaced by informal discrimination and segregation and the more subtle “modern” racism of the North. The paradigm that emerged saw racism and discrimination not just as a problem of the South but as being rooted in the power relations and inequality between white and black in American society as a whole.

The new paradigm of the 1970s therefore viewed racial prejudice as expressing the interests of the dominant white group in maintaining racial inequality and keeping blacks as a disadvantaged and powerless underclass. This was accompanied by a shift in the social policies most needed to reduce

prejudice. To eliminate racism, the social, economic, and political inequalities between black and white would have to be changed, most notably through affirmative action and the political empowerment of blacks in American society.

**Group identity and multiculturalism: The 1980s and beyond.** By the late 1970s the stubborn persistence of American racism and discrimination, albeit in subtle and modern rather than crude and traditional forms, had been powerfully documented. In addition research findings have shown that simply classifying individuals in completely arbitrary “minimal” groups results in them engaging in intergroup discrimination and in-group favoritism. During the 1980s it began to seem that more fundamental and perhaps universal cognitive and motivational human processes might underlie intergroup bias, discrimination, and even prejudice. The social-cognitive approach that emerged then and became the dominant approach to understanding intergroup relations and attitudes saw universal human cognitive processes functioning to simplify the social world through social categorization, that is, classifying people as group or category members and stereotyping them as members of their groups or categories. Categorization would also result in people identifying with their social groups and categories to form valued social identities, which they would then be motivated to try to differentiate positively from others generating intergroup competition and in-group favoritism.

The inevitability of group differentiation and its expression in distinct group identities challenged the explicit or implicit assimilationist assumptions underlying policies such as integration and even affirmative action. Multicultural policies emerged logically from this new paradigm. These policies rest on a view of cultural and social diversity as both inevitable and valuable in their own right and have the explicit objectives of accepting, recognizing, and supporting subcultural and minority identities and tolerance for them.

### Conclusion

A number of different theoretical approaches to explaining prejudice dominated social scientific inquiry at different stages during the twentieth century with each having distinctive social policy implications. These different approaches seemed to emerge in response to specific historical circumstances that made particular questions about the nature or causation of prejudice salient for social scientists. The study of prejudice has therefore provided an interesting case study in how values and social milieu interact with and influence social scientific concepts and explanations.

See also *Apartheid; Discrimination; Diversity; Race and Racism; Segregation; Social History, U.S.*

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**PRESENTISM.** *Presentism* is a neologism coined to identify today's preoccupation with the present age as the essential temporal referent in historical interpretation. (One notes that the term does not appear in the earlier edition of this *Dictionary*.) As a perspective on the meaning of historical time, it accords the present a privileged status. Presentism therefore stands as a counterpoint to the historicist idea of "progress," which dominated thinking about historical time during the modern age in its greater valuation of the future. As a stance on historical interpretation, moreover, presentism takes issue with the proposition that historical knowledge of the past should be pursued for its own sake, and offers instead the call for interpretations of the past that contribute to morally responsible critical perspectives on the present age.

### Historical Time

In his classic essays on the time of history, the Enlightenment philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) proposed a unified narrative framework for recounting the way humankind over time had come to understand its own predicament, a saga with a conjectural beginning, middle, and end. Modern historical writing has for the most part played out this portrayal of history's script as a sustaining, all-encompassing "grand narrative." But presentism challenges the proposition that history



may be plotted on a single, continuous timeline. More and more, historians of our own day would prefer to divide the time of history into “regimes of historicity,” by which they refer to changing conceptions of historical time in different epochs of history.

***Favoring the past.*** The regime of historicity in antiquity tended to favor beginnings. Thenceforth, at least until the age of the Renaissance, historians in the Western world presupposed a golden age shining forth as a guiding beacon out of humankind’s primordial past. As a lost Eden, it was a time to revere. The precedents of origins—ways of life as they were in *illo tempore*—served as models for emulation in the present. In interpreting the meaning of the past, this notion of a time of origins denotes a fullness of human experience then to which life now can never measure up. Humans may approach that past in their imaginative longings, the ancients argued, but only as a simulacrum of what it once was. Accordingly, they believed that historical time moves in circles in the repetitious search for a lost harmony, played out in the rise and fall of nations, the ebb and flow of human affairs. Implicit in such a notion of time is a fatalism about the future course of events, governed as they are by an all-knowing Providence. The classic formulation of this conception of time in the Western tradition was St. Augustine’s (354–430) speculation on the fortunes of the City of Man after the fall of humankind (*The City of God*, 427 C.E.). In modified versions, such a view of history had apologists as late as the mid-eighteenth century, notably Giambattista Vico (1668–1744), who formulated a philosophy of history based on the “course and recourse” of civilizations in his *New Science* (3rd ed., 1744). The notion of an archetypal golden age appears as well in a broad array of non-Western cultures.

***Favoring the future.*** Historians of the modern age (i.e., from the Enlightenment well into the twentieth century), by contrast, assigned the future a favored status. Essential to such a notion of time is the proposition that humankind fashions its own destiny, and so has some measure of control over its own fortunes. Implicit in such a conception is the prospect of a better way of life to be attained over time. In its various depictions, such a vision of a more perfect society in the making incited rising expectations. In this view, historical time moves in a linear direction toward a transcendent future. Throughout the modern age, optimistic theories of progress (for example, Kant, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Jules Michelet, Karl Marx), and by the early twentieth century more disillusioned ones of decline (such as Oswald Spengler, Arnold Toynbee), became the fashion. On a timeline projected toward what was anticipated to be a transforming future, the present marked only a stage along the way. In early formulations of this conception of historical time, the process of historical change proceeds teleologically—toward the fulfillment of a process that was implied in its beginning. While the deterministic apparatus of metahistorical design was discarded by the late nineteenth century, the presumption of humankind’s advance into a better future, inspired by practical achievements in scientific technologies and rational reforms in social and political institutions, remained implicit in a great deal of historical writing about the course of Western civilization.

***Favoring the present.*** But just as historical interpretation had been divested of its once profound reverence for past precedent, so it has been disabused of its more recent great expectations for the future. As a regime of historicity, the present age is distinctive for its preoccupation with its own predicament. The distinguishing trait of today’s historians of the present age is their newfound confidence that they can acquire a critical perspective on a present age in which they themselves are immersed. The early-twentieth-century pragmatism of American historians Charles Beard (1874–1948) and Carl Becker (1873–1945) prepared the way for this perspective by pointing out the subjectivity of the historians’ choices about questions to ask of the past. But the larger significance of presentism as a new historical perspective on time was signaled in the emerging distinction between a modern and a postmodern age as a basis for identifying an epochal change in the mid- to late twentieth century. Some philosophers of history have recently offered an alternative formulation of this reorientation in their notion of an “end” to history, conceived not as the eschatological end of time but as the end of the modern regime of historicity.

The philosopher who contributed most to this new way of historical thinking was Michel Foucault (1926–1984). Foucault rejected the historicist claim that the historians’ task is to return to the origins of the phenomenon under investigation to assess its meaning in light of its initial context, and then to trace modifications of its meaning in the ascent from that past into our present. Foucault reversed the interpretive process. Rather than search for the sources of language, he preferred to plot the genealogical descent of modes of discourse backward from the present age in order to appreciate the discontinuities revealed in disruptive and unexpected meanings encountered along the way. From this perspective, he explained, one recognizes that old forms of discourse are easily invested with new meanings, to be redeployed in unrelated ways. Linguistic forms are continually and often abruptly reinvented in the present to suit the needs of changing configurations of political and social power.

***The present in historical interpretation.*** But the historians’ newfound attention to the present as the privileged temporal referent has come with a price, for it has destabilized the place of the present in historical interpretation. To privilege the past was to provide a solid ground for a world in which precedent was a reassuring guide to present action. To privilege the future was to provide a sense of direction for actions intended to hasten the coming of an unfulfilled destiny. But as past and future recede as horizons of transcendence, the historical meaning of the present becomes more elusive. Until very recently, historians were reluctant to approach the present age in their interpretations. Most of them ruled out historical assessments of the most recent fifty or sixty years (roughly the time of living memory) as a prudent hedge against missing patterns hidden in the flux of contemporary events, for unforeseen factors continually intrude to upset the most wisely conceived interpretive judgments about the historical meaning of the present age.

In light of the presentist perspective, therefore, the meaning of the present as a moment in historical time has come to

be characterized by its indeterminacy. The diminished faith of the present age in the past's precedents and the future's promise has dissolved the sense of continuity essential to the idea of a single timeline of history. History is no longer conceived as a grand narrative, but as a host of discrete, and not necessarily congruent, narratives that proceed from the particular topics historians choose to address in their random travels back in time. Such a perspective breaks up the sense of continuity that informed the understanding of historical time in the modern age. If the past is no longer perceived to exercise an inertial power, its uses in the present are understood to be more open-ended. The horizons of the present age are wider, even if expectations of the future are no longer as clear. The past is thereby revisited as a resource for re-visioning the future in terms of its infinite possibilities. As the future becomes less predictable, however, so too does the past. It becomes strange, a "foreign country" to be entered in more tentative ways.

Presentism, its apologists therefore contend, should not be charged with anachronism—that is, accused of interpreting the past as if it were just like the present. Rather, it underscores the differences between past and present, and the more discerning judgment needed to make sense of them in historical interpretation. It introduces as well the notion of the relativity of historical time. In other words, it not only discriminates among regimes of time, but also alters perception of the tempo at which time flows. The punctuation of time in historical periodization depends on the nature of the phenomenon addressed. While the plotting of political events lends itself to a perception of a rapid pace of change, that of social mores appears to proceed more slowly, whereas that of environmental change is rarely perceptible in living memory. In its geological depths, history becomes almost "immobile".

### Concerns of History

As the dominant historical perspective on time in the contemporary age, presentism speaks to the urgency of the concerns of today's historians, notable among them:

***A pessimism about the near past.*** The Holocaust and other egregious atrocities of the mid- to late twentieth century have rendered the idea of history as a continuous narrative problematic. The motives behind such acts have been so incomprehensible as to defy ready historical explanation. As historical assessment is postponed, gaping holes in previously accepted narratives begin to appear (as in the problem of assessing the place of the Third Reich in the history of modern Germany, or of the Soviet Union in the history of modern Russia). Nor has the wealth produced through capitalist economic expansion and the unprecedented affluence of Western society inspired unqualified optimism about the human prospect at the turn of the twenty-first century. Their benefits are measured against the deleterious effects of a seemingly insatiable consumerism, with its legacy of environmental destruction and overuse of natural resources critical for the future well-being of humankind. The outlook, moreover, is complicated by present-day problems that have proved intractable, among them: fulminating and unsustainable population growth; the pollution of the biosphere; and the pervasive tenor of violence in global politics, exacerbated by media-driven publicity. If the

techniques of enhancing the quality of life in the present age are vastly superior to any that have gone before, widespread human suffering remains persistent as the divide between rich and poor nations widens.

***The eclipse of Eurocentrism.*** Given historical change whose dynamics are global in scope in the present age, the Eurocentric timeline of modern history has lost much of its meaning as a referent for interpreting today's problems. The time of history, previously conceived in light of the adaptation of the people of the world to a Western conception of civilization's advance, is now reconceived to consider the effects of encounters among diverse cultures, for good or ill. Such a vision of history reinterprets the past in terms of changing global patterns of equilibria and disequilibria. World historians showcase the assessment of political, cultural, and economic interchange, and so discard the once dominant model of history that focused on developments within the matrix of Western civilization.

***The media revolution.*** The advent of media culture has given a new power to imagery as a mode of publicity. It has effaced continuities between past and present in its constant creation, re-creation, and recycling of images. It reveals the degree to which linear thinking about time was inextricably intertwined with the protocols of the print culture of the modern age. Therein images of the past were fixed securely in their places in time. Media, however, continually reinvents the images of human experience and mobilizes them in ways that intensify the public's desire for present-minded interpretations. These tend to dismiss the preoccupations of the past as extraneous to present concerns. A present-minded perspective serves the needs of a consumer-oriented mass culture, while obliterating the traditions of the past and thereby losing sight of the complex, richly layered textures of societies in times past.

***The acceleration of time.*** The revolution in the technologies of communication has multiplied exponentially the publicizing of events, and so has reinforced present perceptions of the ever more discrete segmentation of time. The effect has been to create the impression that time is speeding up (a perception made manifest, for example, in the *Timetables of History* [3rd ed.; Bernard Grun, ed.], a popular reference of historical chronology since the beginning of recorded historical time but heavily weighted toward the events of the present age).

Symptomatic of presentism as a new regime of historical time is the historians' current obsession with history's relationship to collective memory, for memory displays all of the traits that betoken the sense of urgency about interpreting the meaning of the present age. Memory is present-minded. It is also protean, unreliable, easily and quickly remodeled. The shapes that collective memories assume reflect constellations of social or political power. In the process, the importance of some memories is exaggerated, others diminished. The study of the politics of memory has made historians more aware of the frequent misrepresentation of the past in what is officially remembered and what is thereby ignored and forgotten. It has also made manifest how commemorative monuments and rituals are used to further present-minded political ends. The historians' concern, therefore, is to tame memory—to expose its



distortions, repressions, and politics in more refined, comprehensive, and discriminating historical interpretations. At the same time, the interest in memory has made historians more sensitive to their own motives, presuppositions, and biases.

But historians have also come to understand that imagination is the reverse side of memory, and that they cannot evade moral responsibility in the choices they make about how the past should be rendered in the histories they write. In an age that has lost the consoling faith in a transcendent past or future, the responsibility of revisiting the past to make sense of the daunting problems of the present age has become more momentous. For this reason, the present vis-à-vis the past appears to today's historians as an expanding presence in their efforts to understand the nature of historical change. Historians are thus faced with a puzzle—the dilemma of how to reconcile the imposing demands of memory's immediacy with their own need for more deliberate and discerning judgment.

See also **Historiography; Memory; Narrative; Progress, Idea of**

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**PRIMITIVISM.** See **Arts.**

**PRIVACY.** The volume of studies on privacy has increased tremendously since the 1970s, especially in the United States, and their geographical spread has become wider. These studies

address new topics, including celebrity privacy for political and other public figures and privacy rights in international human rights law. Developments in advanced technology, such as electronic storage and DNA testing, have added increasing urgency to the debate, while overt and covert surveillance has become the major concern of Internet sites on privacy issues.

Debates on privacy are conducted on all levels. Personal, governmental, and commercial interests are all engaged, and academic arguments are informed by perspectives from almost every discipline in the humanities and social sciences, including philosophy, politics, geography, law, economics, sociology, social policy, anthropology, literature, language, and history. Journalists and the general public profess an intuitive understanding of what constitutes privacy, but decades of research suggest that there is a wide range of meanings even within a nation-state or common language. Within given communities, variations in attitudes can be related to age, gender, economic and social standing, and ethnic origin, but significant variations can also be found among individuals where these factors are roughly the same. Nevertheless, modern societies share an understanding that privacy is intelligible as a concept among the population at large and, as such, should be explicitly protected by law or custom as a valuable or even essential attribute of civilized life.

Privacy also appears in popular journalism and academic studies as a component of subjects that range across human experience, such as a sense of self; gender and body; private space and family life; intimacy and exclusion; and the impact of globalization on local and communal identity. Privacy studies tend to focus on one or more of the following aspects: (a) a sense of privacy, as experienced by people from different countries, times, and backgrounds; (b) distinctions between public and private realms; (c) rights of privacy in national and international law; (d) the role of advanced technology in privacy protection and intrusion; (e) the functions and values of privacy.

#### A Sense of Privacy

The existence of a sense of privacy across different cultures and times is frequently asserted or denied on little evidence. One of the most influential studies to encourage the belief that a sense of privacy is specific to the modern Western world was *The Civilizing Process: The History of Manners and State Formation and Civilization* (originally published as *Über den Prozess der Zivilisation* in 1939) by Norbert Elias (1897–1990). Elias did not take privacy as his subject, but his comments on shame, embarrassment, delicacy, and modesty are frequently quoted by writers on privacy. His work examines the process by which a code of polite manners was formulated and disseminated between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries in Europe, starting with the publication of *De civilitate morum puerilium* (On civility in children) by Desiderius Erasmus (1466?–1536) in 1530. Erasmus dealt with the changing etiquette of familiar and social life, ranging from snot (how to handle a handkerchief before and after blowing one's nose) to urination (someone inadvertently seen urinating should not be greeted).

A large part of polite manners focused on how to accord personal space (physical or mental) to individuals (or groups of people) in which to carry out desirable or necessary activities

### PRIVACY AND POPULAR FICTION

Habermasian concepts were so much part of British cultural life by the 1970s that readers of middle-brow fiction were deemed to be a knowledgeable audience for the novel *The History Man* (1975) by Malcolm Bradbury, whose protagonist Howard Kirk is writing a sociological treatise called *The Defeat of Privacy*. Throughout the novel, Kirk repeatedly attacks the notion of privacy as outmoded while in the last resort guarding his own privacy in his writing and sexual life. A hugely successful satire on academic sociology in contemporary Britain, *The History Man* was repeatedly re-issued throughout the 1970s and 1980s.

The academic sociologists and social psychologists who take part in one key scene in *The History Man*, a departmental meeting, are described by the author as “sophisticates of meetings, readers of Goffman.” Although the Canadian writer Erving Goffman restricts himself in works such as *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1956) to discussing “Anglo-American” behavior, his analysis of the psychological functions of privacy or “backstage behavior” are widely applicable.

without embarrassment to themselves or to onlookers. Elias did not assume that privacy as a goal of etiquette was unique to Europe; commenting on how meat is served and eaten, he notes that the concealment of carving behind the scenes was effected much earlier and more radically in ancient China than in the West.

Critics whose knowledge was largely confined to European and American history regarded a sense of privacy as peculiar to a specific Western economic and cultural environment. In a 1965 essay, “Literature and Post-History,” the American literary critic George Steiner (1929– ) related the rise of the Western novel and its audience to the domestic privacy, leisure, and reading habits of the mercantile class of the eighteenth century, claiming that printed fiction and individual privacy were alike products of the typographical revolution. If typography is a measure of impersonality and privacy, then it would be reasonable to regard late imperial China, where moveable type was invented and where printed fiction flourished, and Korea, the first country in which moveable type passed into common use, as founders of the sense of privacy in the modern world. Historians of English literature nevertheless continued to site the development of a sense of privacy alongside long prose fiction in the eighteenth century. Works such as *Privacy and Print: Reading and Writing in Seventeenth-Century England* (1999) by Cecile M. Jagodzinski and *Privacy: Concealing the Eighteenth-Century Self* (2003) by Patricia Meyer Spacks also identified privacy as a special attribute of women, a theme that appears in many cultures under different guises, despite ample evidence to the contrary.

Anthropologists, on the other hand, produced evidence that privacy is a universal human condition whose expression is not necessarily verbal and is adaptable to specific circumstances.

Interest in the existence of universal traits in human behavior peaked in the early 1980s, when conventional assumptions on cultural differences that formed research methodology from the 1920s onwards were undermined by new research in the late 1960s and 1970s that showed the differences had been exaggerated and similarities had largely been ignored; new research in linguistics and in brain-mapping gave added support.

A summary of this debate and of traits that can be categorized as universal are contained in Donald L. Brown’s *Human Universals* (1991). Among the characteristics of what Brown calls “Universal People” (UP) are standards of sexual modesty, sex generally in private, and discreetness in elimination of body wastes. Universal people possess a concept of the person: “They distinguish self from others, and they can see the self both as subject and object. . . . They know that people have a private inner life, have memories, make plans, choose between alternatives, and otherwise make decisions” (p. 135). Most but not all of the lists of universal characteristics compiled by anthropologists since 1945 and summarized by Brown include privacy.

The anthropologists’ evidence became part of the background to discussions on privacy in the 1980s and 1990s. Still the belief persisted among non-anthropologists that a distinctively modern sense of privacy was an attribute of post-industrial societies. Even a philosopher as sensitive to ethnocentricity as Charles Taylor in 1981 and again in 1985 identified a sense of privacy as a defining characteristic of a specifically modern (and by assumption therefore Western) concept of self-identity. In premodern societies, according to Taylor, “One’s life was led before everyone else, and hence shame and its avoidance played a big role in people’s lives. There was no space, not just physically but psycho-socially, to

### PRIVACY AND POPULAR FICTION

Rights to privacy in the United States have been heatedly debated in issues such as abortion, especially for minors, and the personal conduct of candidates for or persons elected to high political office. These concerns form the basis of two novels by the best-selling author Richard North Patterson: *No Safe Place* (1998) and *Protect and Defend* (2000). Underpinning a fast-paced narrative on electoral pressures, congressional trade-offs, abortion, adultery, domestic violence, and presidential privacy is thorough research on U.S. law and the advocacy of parties on all sides. Despite his even-handedness, the author comes down strongly against a bill requiring parental permission for the late termination of a minor's pregnancy in *Protect and Defend*. The fictional bill is defeated in the novel; three years later, President George W. Bush signed a similar bill into law.

withdraw into the privacy of one's own self-estimate, or the opinions of a circle based on affinity. . . . With the rise of the modern identity, this intensely public life withers. The community retreats, and the nuclear family achieves privacy" (pp. 261–262). In modern societies, Taylor concluded, privacy has become a requirement for the good life, a space for family affection and individual fulfillment.

Barrington Moore's *Privacy* (1984) was a unique contribution to the debate in examining four widely different types of premodern societies: primitive societies, classical Athens, Hebrew society as revealed in the Old Testament, and ancient China. Much of his discussion about ancient Greece and China is on the mutual obligations of government and the populace at large, and he records the Confucian distinction between the separate realms of the state (public) and the family (private), as well as information in early texts on courtship, the family, and friendship. Starting from a narrow definition of privacy, Moore found that rights to privacy in early Confucian China were weak in comparison those enjoyed in fourth-century B.C.E. Athens. He concluded that privacy of communication was possible only in a complex society with strong liberal traditions and that in the absence of democracy, private rights are either few or undeveloped.

The spread of globalization and the inclusion of privacy rights in international law has rendered almost irrelevant the argument about Western and non-Western or modern and premodern societies, as governments in all parts of the world strive to identify themselves as modern, democratic, and based on the rule of law. Although speculation in popular opinion, journalism, and conservative nationalism continues to dwell on which societies or ethnic groups do or do not enjoy a sense of privacy, the academic debate in the 1970s and 1980s shifted to distinctions between public and private realms.

#### Public and Private Realms

One of the earliest modern studies of privacy was by Hannah Arendt (1906–1975), who noted the blurring of the public

and private realms after Roman times. Jürgen Habermas (1929–) systematized and developed her concept of social and public life since Greek and Roman times in *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit* (1962), which became the chief source for discussion of public and private realms from the 1960s on (the English translation, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, appeared in 1989). Habermas was primarily interested in the public realm but found its vitality dependent on an organization of private life that enabled and encouraged citizens to rise above private identities and concerns. Drawing on literary evidence as well as philosophers and political writers, Habermas focused on the development of the modern European polity. His distinction between mutually interpenetrating public and private spheres within a general private realm (i.e., as opposed to the state) has led to considerable confusion, but his main thesis, that modern society has undergone a transformation in which the expansion of the public sphere within the private realm has taken place at the expense of the private sphere, became a dominant theme in Western culture in the late 1960s and 1970s. To his more radical followers, the apparent triumph of the public sphere represented a post-Marxian liberation from the petty concerns of private life.

The rise of communitarianism in the late 1980s further complicated the public versus private debate, aligning the public interest with conservative values rather than political reform. The American sociologist Amitai Etzioni's *The Limits of Privacy* (1999) depicted privacy in the United States as a highly privileged state that needed to be modified for the sake of common interests in public safety and public health. Paradoxically, his evidence showed that intrusions on privacy came chiefly from the private sector and that the privacy of individuals was best protected by granting more powers to governments.

The interface of public and private realms in modern Western societies is most strikingly evident in debates concerning abortion, domestic violence, and the private lives of public officials. Contrary to popular belief, no serious academic study has been able to draw a strict line between public and private realms, for

## TERMINOLOGY

The English words *private* and *privacy* come from the Latin *privatus*, meaning “withdrawn from public life, deprived of office, peculiar to oneself,” and the generally negative sense is continued into the early understanding of the English word *private*, whose first recorded appearance goes back to 1380. The substantive *privacy* is not recorded until 1450, and its further meanings of “personal relationships,” and then “intimacy” and “confidential relationships” developed even later in succeeding centuries. By the end of the nineteenth century, *privacy* had begun to refer to legal and political rights, associated with modernity and advanced civilization, and attributed relatively or very high value. These associations were not transferred to *private* in its meanings of selfish interests or property rights or access. Near-synonyms for *private* as a descriptor in English in other contexts include *individual*, *personal*, *familiar*, *family*, *domestic*, *secret*, *confidential*, *secure*, *inner*, *interior*, and *intimate*; an Elizabethan

equivalent term for *privacy* *avant la lettre* is *contemplation*.

Many European languages do not have exact equivalents of the terms *private* and *privacy*. In Dutch, for example, the words *eigen* (cognate with “own”) and *openbaar* (cognate with “open”) are used with reference to property or access where English would use “private” and “public.” Swedish has a close equivalent for *private* (*privat*), but not for *privacy*. The Finnish words related to *privacy*, such as *yksityisasia* (“private or intimate affairs”), *yksityinen* (“private as opposed to public”) and *yksityisyydensuoja* (“private data protection”) are derived from the word *yksi* meaning “one” or “single.” Despite this etymological diversity, few English-speakers would wish to claim on linguistic grounds that concepts of privacy in the Netherlands, Sweden, or Finland are radically different from those held in the United Kingdom or United States.

reasons related to methodology and terminology. It is inherently unreasonable, for example, to expect that hard and fast borders are possible in such complex matters of political and social relationships. Studies in English, in particular, are typically confused by an ambiguity that is not necessarily present in other European languages (i.e., meanings of the attributive “private” that do not carry over into the substantive “privacy”). Attempts in the United States to incorporate a defense of privacy into law in the 1980s highlighted problems of terminology and definition.

**Rights of Privacy in National and International Law**

The principle of a right of privacy was traced back to ancient Jewish law in Samuel H. Hofstadter and George Horowitz’s influential *The Right of Privacy* (1964). Hofstadter, a justice of the New York Supreme Court, and Horowitz, a law professor, also cited case law from European and British Commonwealth countries to show the range of codified legal rights (or their absence) current at the beginning of the 1960s. This state of affairs gradually changed after the General Assembly of the United Nations “took cognizance” of the rights of privacy as formulated in English in Article 17 of the International Covenants on Human Rights in 1960. The text of Article 17 declared that “(1) No one shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to unlawful attacks on his honour or reputation;” and “(2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.”

Most works on privacy written after 1960 referred at least in passing to privacy as a universal human right, despite different legal systems. For practical reasons, however, discussions on legal aspects of privacy—as in Ruth Gavison’s often-quoted study in *The Yale Law Journal*, “Privacy and the Limits of the Law” (1980)—tend to be country-specific. Studies of rights to privacy in law also accepted nation-states as imposing significant boundaries; although to some extent common law in England corresponds to common law in the United States, the different legal systems of Scotland and continental Europe, not to mention other parts of the world, appear to be too remote for realistic comparison. Gavison’s methodology utilized a framework distinguishing *status* (privacy as a situation of an individual vis-à-vis others, rather than a claim, a psychological state, or a form of control) and *characteristics* (related to secrecy, anonymity, and solitude) to establish what she calls “a neutral concept of privacy” that might be used for cross-cultural comparison. This attempt at a legally acceptable definition has been criticized in principle and shown to be unworkable in practice.

Rights to privacy in law and their political and ethical implications in Britain and its colony Hong Kong have been exhaustively studied by Raymond Wacks, professor of law at the University of Hong Kong, in *The Protection of Privacy* (1980), *Personal Information: Privacy and the Law* (1989), and *Law, Morality, and the Private Domain* (2000). A collection of essays published as a special issue of the *European Human Rights*



## DEFINITIONS

Producing an adequate definition of privacy is one of the most intractable problems in privacy studies. A University of Edinburgh Ph.D. dissertation by Katherine J. Day, "Perspectives on Privacy: A Sociological Analysis" (1985), listed more than a hundred examples. One of the oldest definitions remains influential: Samuel Warren and Louis Brandeis's 1890 declaration that privacy is the right of the individual to be left alone. However, its negativity and stress on the individual as the locus of privacy have had unfortunate consequences.

Alan F. Westin's 1967 definition of privacy is the most commonly cited, but strictly speaking his is not so much a definition as a two-tier description of privacy states and privacy functions. Julie Inness's 1992 attempt combines the aspects of control over access and the intimate nature of

privacy in a three-fold definition, but it requires further definition of what is meant by "intimate" and fails to cope with non-intimate instances of privacy.

Ruth Gavison highlighted the difficulty of legal definitions of privacy in 1980, and Raymond Wacks further explored the issue in 1989. Wacks concluded that the term was so overlaid with assumptions and ambiguous in terms of its use that conceptual coherence was an unreachable target. The proliferation of definitions and their unsuitability for legal purposes have therefore led some legal scholars to avoid the term *privacy* in formulating laws for its protection. It is highly unlikely, however, that the term will disappear from common use, since most people are content to muddle along with an imperfect but workable understanding.

*Law Review* in 2003, edited by Jonathan Cooper, raises cross-cultural issues such as transsexual marriage, policing, and the protection of privacy in the workplace as well as surveillance and constitutional rights. The most exhaustive global survey on rights under national and international laws is David Banisar's *Privacy and Human Rights 2000: An International Survey of Privacy Laws and Developments*, jointly published by the Electronic Privacy Information Center in Washington D.C. and Privacy International in London. Both organizations operate invaluable Web sites that include news, archives, and bibliographies. Inevitably, their emphasis is on ways in which advanced technology opens up new avenues for intrusions into privacy and for its protection.

#### Advanced Technology: Privacy Protection and Intrusions

Alan F. Westin's *Privacy and Freedom* (1967), a comprehensive work whose descriptions of privacy states and functions are cited and elaborated upon by most subsequent writers on privacy, was prompted by concern about new technologies for invading privacy in the hands of government and commercial agencies. As professor of public law and government at Columbia University, Westin occupied an influential position from which to propose changes in U.S. law. Calling for greater protection to the ordinary citizen, Westin pointed out that the tradition of limiting the surveillance powers of the authorities over the private activities of individuals and groups goes back to ancient Greece. He then dedicated over a decade's research to collecting data and investigating attitudes towards privacy in the United States.

In *Databanks in a Free Society* (1972), one of the first books linking data collection with privacy, Westin and his co-author Michael A. Baker found that the scope of information collection about individuals had not yet significantly expanded as a direct result of computerization, but a National Science Foundation conference in 1979 in which Westin was a key speaker concluded that this was no longer the case. A Harris survey directed by Westin in 1979 on attitudes towards privacy in the United States, which addressed the potential abuse or misuse of personal information by business or government, identified growing public concern about the perceived erosion of privacy in the early 1970s in the United States.

Inspired by Westin's advocacy to make the issue of data protection and privacy his life's work, David H. Flaherty produced two pioneering surveys, *Privacy and Data Protection: An International Bibliography* (1984) and *Protecting Privacy in Surveillance Societies: The Federal Republic of Germany, Sweden, France, Canada, and the United States* (1989). The former lists 1,862 Western-language works (books, articles, and government reports) published between 1978 and 1983 concerning Canada, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Sweden, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the rest of the world. An impressive number of U.S. works on threats to information privacy followed, including *Managing Privacy: Information Technology and Corporate America* (1994) by H. Jeff Smith, *Privacy and Its Invasion* (1995) by Deckle McClean, *The Culture of Surveillance* (1997) by William G. Staples, *Technology and Privacy: The New Landscape* (1997) edited by Philip E. Agre and Marc Rotenberg, and *The Electronic*



## CELEBRITY PRIVACY

The issue of celebrity privacy goes back at least to the nineteenth-century growth of newspapers, but came to dominate discourse on privacy at the end of the twentieth century and beginning of the new millennium. In the United Kingdom, the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, in 1997 was regarded by many as due in part to media intrusion, enabled by the use of new surveillance equipment, and also due in part to press refusal to observe conventions on personal privacy for public figures.

In the United States, President Bill Clinton's impeachment in 1999 for having denied on oath improper sexual relationships became unavoidable when DNA analysis was carried out on his semen. Responding to the constitutional crisis that then arose, Thomas Nagel, professor of philosophy and law at New York University, made a plea for the protection of presidential privacy. In what he called "the disastrous erosion of the precious but fragile conventions of personal privacy in the United States over the last ten or twenty years," Nagel lamented that "American society has lost its grip on a fundamental value, one which cannot be enforced by law alone but without which civilization would not survive. . . . The division of the self protects the limited public space from unmanageable encroachment and the unruly inner life from excessive inhibition. . . . The growth of tolerance does not make the collapse of

privacy significantly less damaging" (*London Review of Books*, 4 February 1999, p. 3–6). The support given to the president throughout the unsuccessful impeachment hearings in the spring of 1999 suggests that despite his admissions of wrongdoing, the U.S. electorate sympathized with Clinton's plea that even presidents have private lives.

A transatlantic case that came to trial under English law was the claim for damages by the film stars Catherine Zeta-Jones and Michael Douglas against *Hello!* magazine in 2003. The prosecution claimed that their right to privacy had been breached by the magazine's unauthorized publication of photographs from their wedding. Both sides claimed a vindication of sorts when Zeta-Jones and Douglas were granted the relatively small sum of £14,600 (US\$23,360), including £3,750 each for emotional hurt, in compensation for what the judge ruled was a breach of confidence, since the couple had granted publication rights to another publisher. The judge rejected the couple's complaint about invasion of privacy since there was no privacy law in England. Commenting on the verdict, many British newspapers described the issue as one of control rather than privacy, thus illustrating nicely the gap between popular understanding and academic research on privacy.

*Privacy Papers* (1998) edited by Bruce Schneier and David Baniser. Most of these works regarded surveillance and data collection as necessary evils in modern life against which the citizen should be warned and equipped with appropriate measures, including individual acts of resistance as well as pressure on corporate and stage agencies.

The most aggressive defense of privacy against intrusion from government and corporate interests was Gini Graham Scott's *Mind Your Own Business: The Battle for Personal Privacy* (1995). It contains detailed accounts of privacy cases in the United States since the 1960s, relating to employment, police surveillance, media intrusion, medical and health issues, and medical and insurance records. Scott is unequivocally opposed to court decisions that favor employers, the media, schools, the law courts, and the police. He alerts readers to grounds on which privacy may or may not be protected in law, provides an appendix listing computer privacy

bulletin boards, and gives his own address for further communication.

Compared to the United States, pressure groups in the United Kingdom were slow to react to privacy intrusions. Although one of the first works on the subject, *Private Lives and Public Surveillance* (1973) by James B. Rule, warned of the consequences, public safety concerns permitted the proliferation of surveillance technology, so that by the end of the twentieth century more closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras were installed in shops and public places in the United Kingdom than anywhere else in the world. A guide to the new Data Protection Act of 1984 by Richard Sizer and Philip Newman noted that the act does not mention privacy as an issue, and that privacy was not a legal right under English law. Attempts to incorporate a bill of rights, including privacy rights, into law in the 1980s and 1990s were rebuffed with claims that English common law afforded greater protection. However,

works such as *The Governance of Privacy: Policy Instruments in Global Perspective* (2002) by Colin J. Bennett and Charles D. Raab show that by the beginning of the twenty-first century the mood had changed dramatically in the United Kingdom as well as in countries throughout the world.

New privacy issues arose in the 1990s with the adoption of DNA technology in preventive and forensic medicine. Mark A. Rothstein's *Genetic Secrets: Protecting Privacy and Confidentiality in the Genetic Era* (1997) and Graham Laurie's *Genetic Privacy: A Challenge to Medico-Legal Norms* (2002) are ground-breaking investigations on matters such as the disposal of body parts by hospitals for medical research and the status of the right to know—or not to know—one's individual medical records by the person concerned, by their families, by insurance companies, or by other interested agencies. Public outrage at intrusions into genetic privacy in the United States and United Kingdom demonstrates its close relation to questions of personal identity and the body, an area distinctly more emotional than intrusions via databases, surveillance devices, and Internet tracking. It is hardly surprising that the last three decades before the turn of the twenty-first century saw an unprecedented level of scrutiny of the nature, value, and functions of privacy.

### **The Psychological Functions and Philosophical Values of Privacy**

According to the most prominent researcher on philosophical aspects of privacy, Ferdinand Schoeman, there was no major philosophical discussion on the value of privacy until the late 1960s. By 1968, another philosopher, Charles Fried, noted that the literature on privacy was "enormous," as psychologists and sociologists joined in the debate. Hannah Arendt's *The Human Condition* (1958) set out some of the basic functions of privacy: Privacy guarantees psychological and social depth, containing things that cannot withstand the constant presence of others on the public scene; it undergirds the public by establishing boundaries, which fix identity; and it preserves the sacred and mysterious spaces of life. Some phenomena are different if they are not private: confessions of shame or guilt made public become boastful; over-disclosure becomes false; terror, a guilty secret; love and goodness are destroyed.

Westin's *Privacy and Freedom* (1967) refined Arendt's analysis by introducing a two-tier definition of privacy, combining personal and social dimensions and consisting of four states (anonymity, reserve, solitude, and intimacy) plus four functions of privacy (personal autonomy, emotional release, self-evaluation, and limited and confidential communication). Westin is a firm universalist: Margaret Mead's famous proclamation that Samoans lacked a sense of privacy or shame is shown to be based on a restrictive understanding of the varied mechanisms of privacy, where speaking softly is as valid a mechanism as physical avoidance. Westin pointed out that that even animals seek periods of individual seclusion or small-group intimacy. He also acknowledged rights of privacy to organizations in areas such as medical and business confidentiality, jury deliberations, executive privilege, and the secrets of the confessional.

Writing in 1977, Carl D. Schneider related the sense of privacy to the sense of shame in his *Shame, Exposure, and*

*Privacy*. He listed phenomena where privacy is related to dignity: the use of nicknames or formal names; the names of relatives; things that carry the weight of the individual's identity or autonomy; faces and other body parts; things needed to care for the body such as soap, towels, and combs. The open display of bodily functions (defecating, great pain, the process of dying) threatens dignity, revealing an individual vulnerable to being reduced to bodily existence; the function of privacy and shame is to preserve wholeness and integrity. Bodily functions (sexual activities, sleep and excretion; illness, suffering, and eating) are rarely physiological processes alone. People invest all their activities with meanings, so that the physiological is invariably permeated with the human; the obscene is a deliberate violation of the sense of shame and privacy. Human relationships demand a pattern of mutual and measured self-disclosure. The private world is both a realm that is valued for oneself as a retreat, and one of which we are suspicious in other people; it is of lesser value than the public world. Totalitarian regimes are opposed to respect for persons, and thus deny privacy; when society does not provide for privacy, being apart will take the form of hiding.

*The Private Me* (1980), by June Noble and William Noble, anticipated the obsession with "me" that is said to characterize the 1980s. It is a crusading work, seeing privacy under threat from intrusions by family as well as government and society, and offering advice on ways to foster privacy through developmental programs including encounter groups and other forms of self-taught or group therapy. Among examples of modern devaluations in privacy, Noble and Noble noted that until the late twentieth century, diaries, letters and biographies were regarded as private legacy bequeathed by the deceased to family, and chart the growth of straight autobiography as distinct from the novel as fictionalized autobiography. They deplore compulsive self-disclosure (glamorized as candor) and over-disclosure, not only because it becomes boring, but also because it looks for sympathy as against creating intimacy or developing self-awareness. Reticence, on the other hand, encourages limited or protected communication, while privacy keeps emotions and acts from being trivialized: What is important is kept private (for example, lovemaking). Children develop a sense of privacy from the age of eight years on and need privacy to develop fulfilling sex lives.

Noble and Noble emphasized the link between privacy and power: Privacy allows or asserts power, and power confers privacy. Privacy in modern America has become a luxury, indicating status; lack of privacy among the poor and in the workplace leads to stress, and lack of assertiveness means that important boundaries cannot be established. Privacy is resisted by calling it "selfishness"; shyness in modern America is regarded as synonymous with worthlessness but can be seen instead as sensitivity and perceptiveness.

The most original attempt to provide a comprehensive account of privacy in the 1990s was *Privacy, Intimacy, and Isolation* (1992) by the philosopher Julie Inness. Inness constructed a definition of privacy from data on cases under tort and constitutional law in the United States, covering three areas: access to intimate information about the agent; access to

intimate aspects of the agent's person; and autonomy in the agent's decisions about intimate matters. Although it requires further definition of what is meant by "intimate" and fails to acknowledge nonintimate dimensions of privacy, the emphasis on control and access makes it one of the most useful definitions to date.

Inness is also unusually systematic on the question of values, stressing that privacy is rarely if ever given primary status in conflict with other values. Arendt and Westin both had previously pointed out limitations to privacy. According to Westin, "the individual's desire for privacy is never absolute, since participation in society is an equally powerful desire" (1967, p. 7). Inness adds a feminist perspective, pointing out that privacy protection may act as a mechanism for maintaining the dominance of groups or individuals in power and enforcing silence and helplessness on others.

With some outstanding exceptions, most researchers on privacy are located in the United States and focus on contemporary U.S. experience; relatively little has been produced about other modern societies, Western or otherwise. A countertrend may be starting with the publication of three books on privacy in China: *Private Life Under Socialism: Love, Intimacy, and Family Change in a Chinese Village, 1949–1999* (2003) by Yan Yunxiang; *Chinese Concepts of Privacy*, edited by Bonnie S. McDougall and Anders Hansson (2002); and *Love-Letters and Privacy in Modern China: The Intimate Lives of Lu Xun and Xu Guangping* (2002) by Bonnie S. McDougall. Among insights raised by these studies is the often-ignored fact that privacy is more frequently a condition shared by lovers, families, or friends than one experienced alone by a single individual. As concluded in the preface to *Chinese Concepts of Privacy*, "The apparent chaos in privacy studies is a reflection of real-life complexity and will not be resolved by including more cultures in the debate. But by taking Chinese and other non-Western cultures into account, a global understanding of privacy will help to clarify crucial issues such as universal awareness of privacy and universal privacy rights" (McDougall and Hansson, p. 24).

See also **Human Rights; Liberty; Public Sphere; Society.**

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Bonnie McDougall

**PRIVATIZATION.** The American economist Steve Hanke defines privatization as “the transfer of assets and service functions from public to private hands. It includes, therefore, activities that range from selling state-owned enterprises to contracting out public services with private contractors” (p. 4). At one extreme, privatization might entail the wholesale transfer to the private sector of both ownership and management and service delivery functions formerly undertaken by the public sectors; at another it might entail the transfer of management and service delivery functions to the private sector while ownership remains with the public sector. Various intermediate arrangements can also be found whereby various degrees of government or public ownership are combined with different forms of management transfer to the private sector. In the early twenty-first century the term has been broadened to include normal administrative public sector functions as well.

Thus, the notion of privatization has resulted in a wholesale questioning of the role of the public sector in the economy, thereby raising a number of technical and philosophical issues pertaining to economic, social, and political organizations across countries and over time. For developing and transitional economies the commitment to privatization as a policy has become, in the eyes of developed market economies and prospective foreign investors, symbolic of a country’s commitment to an unfettered, free enterprise economy, which in its wake is expected to open doors to inflows of foreign investment and foreign aid.

### World Trends in Privatization

Privatization has indeed become a core mantra of neoliberalism or market fundamentalism and received its strongest political support from British prime minister Margaret Thatcher (who served from 1979–1990), U.S. president Ronald Reagan (1980–1988), and Chilean president Augusto Pinochet (president from 1974–1990), who were all strong proponents of market fundamentalism. The collapse of the Soviet bloc strengthened the trend toward privatization as the state apparatus of the former socialist regime was systematically dismantled and privatized. Since 1990, privatization has been implemented to one degree or another in the developed economies of the West, the transitional economies of the former Soviet bloc, and in the developing countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The enthusiasm by which privatization was embraced is illustrated by the following statement by M. Peter McPherson:

The development approaches of the past, based on large-scale government bureaucracies and centralized, government-controlled economies, have been discredited by their failure. Privatization is forging economic success and stability. Privatization works because it focuses on the entrepreneur, encourages individual initiative, and promotes market-oriented policies. More and more developing countries are discovering that privatization produces wealth for their economies and greater opportunities for a broader spectrum of their people. (Hanke, p. 20)

Toward the end of the twentieth century, it was apparent that the policy of privatization had mixed results and that in some countries it had generated significant opposition, apart from the fact that its theoretical premises were also being credibly challenged as well.

### The Role of the State

Since privatization is aimed at reducing the role of the state, and by the same token expanding that of the private sector, it is useful to recall the various reasons why governments have taken on the functions that they do that are later targets for privatization. First, governments are expected to provide the necessary regulatory, legal, and security environment for the private sector to undertake its functions. Staunch neoliberals see this as the only major function that should be performed by the state. Crucial among these functions is the need to guarantee property rights, free disposal of property, and appropriation of the fruits arising from its use, and the facilitation and protection of contractual obligations. The second function relates to the provisions of pure public goods and services such as those related to security and defense, basic health, education, and sanitation and water. The third function concerns the provision of goods and services, such as the low level of development, market failures, missing markets or value chains, the small size of the local market, or excessive costs of production.

The fourth function has arisen as a result of strategic considerations, such as national security, the desire to be self-reliant, the need to develop infant industries, and the desire by some governments to influence the course of growth and development over time by seizing command of key industries or economic activities, especially at earlier levels of development and in order to effect rapid economic transformation and development as has been often the rationale for nationalization or government ownership. Finally, equity and welfare considerations, or the desire on the part of government to prevent a monopoly private sector outcome following privatization has led some governments to assume production of certain goods or provision of certain services.

Historically, governments have played an important role in the economy beyond the first function indicated above. The actual legacy of the nature of government participation has differed considerably between developed and developing nations and within each of these groupings. The increased adoption of Keynesianism and the growth of socialism had the effect of stimulating government participation in the economy especially after World War II, but even under these conditions,

there was an undercurrent of dissent in favor of privatization and a minimal role of the state which persisted and gained its prominence during the ascendancy of neo-liberalism following the recession of the 1970s. By the middle of the 1980s, L. Gray Cowan was able to observe the following:

Worldwide interest in reducing the role of the public sector in national economies is a phenomenon of the past four to six years. The growing movement to privatize industries, services, and agencies and the changed conception of government's role are products of pragmatism: the state-owned sector is not working, and enormous subsidies to maintain money-losing enterprises and services only get bigger. The conviction is growing that private entrepreneurs can manage industries more effectively and operate services more efficiently and at lower cost to the public than can government. Evidence supporting private enterprise over public ownership has emerged in areas of every continent. (Hanke, p. 8)

The collapse of the Soviet bloc and the wholesale privatization of public enterprises that followed in these countries leading to their being labeled "transition economies," the liberalization of economic activities in China, and initial bold privatization initiatives in the United Kingdom and Chile fueled the trend in support for privatization. By the mid-1990s, the call for privatization was no longer one of mere pragmatism. It had become a coherent ideological agenda and a major theoretical paradigm.

### The Case for Privatization

The case for privatization has been based on a number of reasons. On a theoretical level economists in support of privatization have attempted to show that outside of the first function indicated above, the private sector is either a more efficient provider than the public sector or that the failures of the private sector are much lower than those of the public sector. This argument has increasingly been applied to justify the privatization of all of the functions listed above except the first one. At an empirical level, what Cowan refers to as "pragmatic" level attempts have been made to show the benefits and costs of public versus private ownership, management and service delivery of given activities under given circumstances. The evidence here has been mixed and areas of difference have related to methodological issues to philosophical ones as to the legitimacy of the criteria used to assess the relative performance of the two sectors. While at the microeconomic or enterprise level, analysis of costs and benefits of the production of goods and the provision of services by either sector has been straightforward enough and the analysis of net social benefits and costs in both dynamic and static terms has been inadequate to settle the issues at stake. The case for privatization has also been justified on the basis of the need to establish "sound" or "good" macroeconomic fundamentals conducive to the efficient and undistorted operation of domestic and global market forces related to capital, trade, and labor markets as demanded by global imperatives supported by neoliberalism. A final rationale for privatization has been an ideological or political one grounded

in the theoretical and macroeconomic rationales above. The political rationale sees privatization as a policy stance that sends the right message regarding a country's commitment to free enterprise to existing and prospective entrepreneurs and investors. It signals to domestic and international markets that the government is committed to protecting property rights and contractual obligations demanded by capitalism and the market.

### Critics of Privatization

Nonetheless, at the start of the twenty-first century, privatization has been challenged on all fronts. On theoretical level, advances in the New Institutional Economics which have attempted to show that the ideal relationship between these two sectors cannot be settled a priori and universally for all time as its advocates are prone to imply, but very much depends on the specific social and economic circumstances prevailing in a given country. Similarly, Bruce Greenwald and Joseph Stiglitz have shown that the presumed efficiency of the market is highly compromised by the existence of externalities, imperfect information, and imperfect markets. At the empirical level there is now substantial evidence that the presumed efficiency and growth benefits of privatization have not been forthcoming, and that in general, privatization, more often than not, has tended to result in increasing unemployment and inequitable access to key assets and social services. With respect to the role of the state, various studies of the roles undertaken by government in a number of countries, particularly in East Asia, have shown that government involvement in the economy has yielded major long-term social and economic benefits in these countries. More generally, there is an emerging consensus that it is the quality of the state rather than the fact that assets are owned by the state that matters more, and that for developing countries with extensive market and information failures the state should play an important role in promoting equitable development over the long run. At the political level privatization has been challenged by workers affected by attendant retrenchments and the restructuring of internal and external labor markets consequent upon privatization that has resulted in increased worker vulnerability, and by consumers who have often been negatively affected by increased prices based on cost recovery pricing regimes instituted as a consequence of privatization, or by reduction in service provision arising from "efficiency enhancing" measures as a consequence of privatization.

In developing countries in particular, privatization appears to have resulted in the weakening of the state without the necessary substitute in form of a strengthened private sector emerging. This outcome has occurred while growth has become elusive, and while large segments of the population are being socially and economically marginalized and excluded. The euphoria over privatization, if there was ever one, outside of the Bretton Woods Institutions (the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund) and the prospective beneficiaries among a narrow circle of prospective domestic and foreign entrepreneurs, is diminishing as countries seek to find more creative ways of combining the activities of the private and public sectors in a manner that maximizes inclusive growth and generalized welfare gains in the long term. In addition, lessons from the past have been drawn upon to stipulate other conditions under which privatization is likely to succeed.



Some of these conditions relate to process, by requiring that stakeholder involvement be undertaken; the legal/regulatory environment, by requiring that an appropriate legal and regulatory environment needs to be in place prior to privatization to avoid abuse of the process and outcome by benefiting entrepreneurs; to the need for an overall development strategy within which privatization initiatives are undertaken is important especially for developing countries; to the need for social protection, by requiring that social safety nets be in place to protect the losers resulting from privatization; to the need for viable capital markets, by requiring that a country ensure that efficient capital markets are in existence before state assets are privatized.

See also *Capitalism; Economics; Neoliberalism*.

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Guy C. Z. Mhone

**PROBABILITY.** "Probability is the very guide of life," Bishop Butler wrote in 1736. Probability judgments of the efficacy and side effects of a pharmaceutical drug determine whether it is approved for release to the public. The outcome of a civil trial hinges on the jurors' opinions about the probabilistic weight of evidence. Geologists calculate the probability that an earthquake of a certain intensity will hit a given city, and engineers accordingly build skyscrapers with specified probabilities of withstanding such earthquakes. Probability undergirds even measurement itself, since the error bounds that accompany measurements are essentially probabilistic confidence intervals. We find probability wherever we find uncertainty—that is, almost everywhere in our lives.

It is surprising, then, that probability arrived comparatively late on the intellectual scene. To be sure, a notion of randomness was known to the ancients. Epicurus, and later Lucretius, believed that atoms occasionally underwent indeterministic swerves. The twelfth-century Arabic philosopher Averroës's

notion of "equipotency" might be regarded as a precursor to probabilistic notions. But probability theory was not conceived until the seventeenth century, in the correspondence between Pierre de Fermat and Blaise Pascal and in the Port-Royal Logic. Over the next three centuries, the theory was developed by such authors as Christian Huygens, Jacob Bernoulli, Thomas Bayes, Pierre Simon Laplace, the Marquis de Condorcet, Abraham de Moivre, John Venn, William Johnson, and John Maynard Keynes. Arguably, the crowning achievement was Andrei Kolmogorov's axiomatization in 1933, which put probability on a rigorous mathematical footing.

#### The Formal Theory of Probability

In Kolmogorov's theory, probabilities are numerical values that are assigned to "events." The numbers are non-negative; they have a maximum value of 1; and the probability that one of two mutually exclusive events occurs is the sum of their individual probabilities. Stated more formally, given a set  $\Omega$  and a privileged set of subsets  $F$  of  $\Omega$ , probability is a function  $P$  from  $F$  to the real numbers that obeys, for all  $X$  and  $Y$  in  $F$ , the following three axioms:

$$A1. \quad P(X) \geq 0 \quad (\text{Non-negativity})$$

$$A2. \quad P(\Omega) = 1 \quad (\text{Normalization})$$

$$A3. \quad P(X \cup Y) = P(X) + P(Y) \text{ if } X \cap Y = \emptyset \quad (\text{Additivity})$$

Kolmogorov goes on to give an infinite generalization of (A3), so-called countable additivity. He also defines the conditional probability of  $A$  given  $B$  by the formula:

$$P(A|B) = P(A \cap B) / P(B), \quad P(B) > 0$$

Thus, we can say that the probability that the toss of a fair die results in a 6 is  $1/6$ , but the probability that it results in a 6, given that it results in an even number, is  $1/6$  divided by  $1/2$  equals  $1/3$ .

Important consequences of these axioms include various forms of Bayes's theorem, notably:

$$P(H|E) = [P(H)/P(E)] P(E|H) = P(H)P(E|H) / [P(H)P(E|H) + P(\sim H)P(E|\sim H)]$$

This theorem provides the basis for Bayesian confirmation theory, which appeals to such probabilities in its account of the evidential support that a piece of evidence  $E$  provides a hypothesis  $H$ .  $P(E|H)$  is called the "likelihood" (the probability that the hypothesis gives to the evidence) and  $P(H)$  the "prior probability" of  $H$  (the probability of the hypothesis in the absence of any evidence whatsoever).

Events  $A$  and  $B$  are said to be independent if  $P(A \cap B) = P(A)P(B)$ . If  $P(A)$  and  $P(B) > 0$ , this is equivalent to  $P(A|B) = P(A)$  and to  $P(B|A) = P(B)$ . Intuitively, information about the occurrence of one of the events does not alter the probability of the other. Thus, the outcome of a particular coin toss is presumably independent of the result of the next presidential election. Independence plays a central role in probability theory. For example, it underpins the various important "laws

of large numbers,” whose content is roughly that certain well-behaved processes are very likely in the long run to yield frequencies that would be expected on the basis of their probabilities.

While the mathematics of Kolmogorov’s probability theory is well understood and thoroughly developed (a classic text is Feller), its interpretation remains controversial. We now turn to several rival accounts of what probabilities are and how they are to be determined (see Hájek for more detailed discussion).

### Interpretations of Probability

The classical interpretation, historically the first, can be found in the works of Pascal, Huygens, Bernoulli, and Leibniz, and it was famously presented by Laplace (1814). It assigns probabilities in the absence of any evidence and in the presence of symmetrically balanced evidence. In such circumstances, probability is shared equally among all the possible outcomes—the so-called *principle of indifference*. Thus, according to the classical interpretation, the probability of an event is simply the fraction of the total number of possibilities in which the event occurs. This interpretation was inspired by, and typically applied to, games of chance that by their very design create such circumstances—for example, the classical probability of a fair die landing with an even number showing up is  $3/6$ . Notoriously, the interpretation falters when there are competing sets of possible outcomes. What is the probability that the die lands 6 when tossed? If we list the possible outcomes as  $\{1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6\}$ , the answer appears to be  $1/6$ . But if we list them as  $\{6, \text{not-}6\}$ , the answer appears to be  $1/2$ .

The logical interpretation retains the classical interpretation’s idea that probabilities are determined a priori by the space of possibilities. But the logical interpretation is more general in two important ways: the possibilities may be assigned unequal weights, and probabilities can be computed whatever the evidence may be, symmetrically balanced or not. Indeed, the logical interpretation seeks to determine universally the degree of support or confirmation that a piece of evidence  $E$  confers upon a given hypothesis  $H$ . Rudolf Carnap (1950) thus hoped to offer an “inductive logic” that generalized deductive logic and its relation of “implication” (the strongest relation of support).

A central problem with Carnap’s program is that changing the language in which hypotheses and items of evidence are expressed will typically change the confirmation relations between them. Moreover, deductive logic can be characterized purely syntactically: one can determine whether  $E$  implies  $H$ , or whether  $H$  is a tautology, merely by inspecting their symbolic structure and ignoring their content. Nelson Goodman showed, however, that inductive logic must be sensitive to the meanings of words, for syntactically parallel inferences can differ wildly in their inductive strength. So inductive logic is apparently not of a piece with deductive logic after all.

Frequency interpretations date back to Venn (1876). Gamblers, actuaries, and scientists have long understood that relative frequencies are intimately related to probabilities. Frequency interpretations posit the most intimate relationship of all: identity. Thus, the probability of heads on a coin that

lands heads in 7 out of 10 tosses is  $7/10$ . In general, the probability of an outcome  $A$  in a reference class  $B$  is the proportion of occurrences of  $A$  within  $B$ .

Frequentism still has the ascendancy among scientists who seek to capture an objective notion of probability independent of individuals’ beliefs. It is also the philosophical position that lies in the background of the classical approach of Ronald A. Fisher, Jerzy Neyman, and Egon S. Pearson that is used in most statistics textbooks. Frequentism faces some major objections, however. For example, a coin that is tossed exactly once yields a relative frequency of heads of either 0 or 1, whatever its true bias—the infamous problem of the single case. Some frequentists (notably Hans Reichenbach and Richard von Mises) go on to consider infinite reference classes of hypothetical occurrences. Probabilities are then defined as limiting relative frequencies in infinite sequences of trials. If there are in fact only finitely many trials of the relevant type, this requires the actual sequence to be extended to a hypothetical or virtual infinite sequence. This creates new difficulties. For instance, there is apparently no fact of the matter of how the coin in my pocket would have landed if it had been tossed once, let alone an indefinitely large number of times. A well-known problem for any version of frequentism is that relative frequencies must be relativized to a reference class. Suppose that you are interested in the probability that you will live to age eighty. Which reference class should you consult? The class of all people? All people of your gender? All people who share your lifestyle? Only you have all these properties, but then the problem of the single case returns.

Propensity interpretations, like frequency interpretations, regard probability as an objective feature of the world. Probability is thought of as a physical propensity or disposition or tendency of a given type of physical situation to yield an outcome of a certain kind, or to yield a long-run (perhaps infinite) relative frequency of such an outcome. This view, which originated with Karl Popper (1959), was motivated by the desire to make sense of single-case probability attributions, particularly those found in quantum mechanics, on which frequentism apparently foundered (see Gillies for a useful survey).

A prevalent objection is that it is not informative to be told that probabilities are propensities. For example, what exactly is the property in virtue of which this coin, when suitably tossed, has a “propensity” of  $1/2$  to land heads? Indeed, some authors regard it as mysterious whether propensities even obey the axioms of probability in the first place. To the extent that propensity theories are parasitic on long-run frequencies, they also seem to inherit some of the problems of frequentism.

Subjectivist interpretations, pioneered by Frank P. Ramsey (1926) and Bruno de Finetti (1937), regard probabilities as degrees of belief, or credences, of appropriate agents. These agents cannot be actual people, since, as psychologists have repeatedly shown, people typically violate probability theory in various ways, often spectacularly so. Instead, we have to imagine the agents to be ideally rational. Ramsey thus regarded probability theory to be the “logic of partial belief.” Underpinning subjectivism are so-called Dutch Book arguments. They begin by identifying agents’ degrees of belief with their

betting dispositions, and they then prove that anyone whose degrees of belief violate the axioms of probability is “incoherent”—susceptible to guaranteed losses at the hands of a cunning bettor. Equally important, but often neglected, is the converse theorem that adhering to the probability axioms protects one from such an ill fate. Subjectivism has proven to be influential, especially among social scientists, Bayesian statisticians, and philosophers.

A more general approach, again originating with Ramsey, begins with certain axioms on rational preferences—for example, if you prefer  $A$  to  $B$  and  $B$  to  $C$ , then you prefer  $A$  to  $C$ . It can be shown that if you obey these axioms, then you can be represented by a probability function (encapsulating your credences about various propositions) and a utility function (encapsulating the strengths of your desires that these propositions come about). This means that you will rate the choice worthiness of an action open to you according to its expected utility—a weighted average of the various utilities of possible outcomes associated with that action, with the corresponding probabilities providing the weights. This is the centerpiece of decision theory.

Radical subjectivists such as de Finetti recognize no constraints on initial (or “prior”) subjective probabilities beyond their conforming to axioms (A1) to (A3). But they typically advocate a learning rule for updating probabilities in the light of new evidence. Suppose that you initially have credences given by a probability function  $P_{\text{initial}}$ , and that you become certain of  $E$  (where  $E$  is the strongest such proposition). What should your new probability function  $P_{\text{new}}$  be? The favored updating rule among Bayesians is conditionalization, where  $P_{\text{new}}$  is related to  $P_{\text{initial}}$  as follows:

$$\text{(Conditionalization)} \quad P_{\text{new}}(X) = P_{\text{initial}}(X|E) \\ \text{(provided } P_{\text{initial}}(E) > 0)$$

Radical subjectivism has faced the charge of being too permissive. It apparently licenses credences that we would ordinarily regard as crazy. For example, you can assign without its censure a probability of 0.999 to your being the only thinking being in the universe—provided that you remain coherent (and update by conditionalization). It also seems to allow fallacious inference rules, such as the gambler’s fallacy (believing, for instance, that after a surprisingly long run of heads, a fair coin is more likely to land tails). A standard defense (e.g., Howson and Urbach) appeals to famous convergence-to-truth and merger-of-opinion results. Their upshot is that in the long run, the effect of choosing one prior rather than another is attenuated: successive conditionalizations on the evidence will, with probability 1, make a given agent eventually converge to the truth, and thus initially discrepant agents eventually come to agreement. Some authors object that these theorems tell us nothing about how quickly the convergence occurs; in particular, they do not explain the unanimity that we in fact often reach, and often rather rapidly.

### Some Recent Developments

Since the late twentieth century, some subjectivists have canvassed further desiderata on credences. For example, we might evaluate credences according to how closely they match the

corresponding relative frequencies, according to how well “calibrated” they are. Also under consideration are “scoring rules” that refine calibration. Various subjectivists believe that rational credences are guided by objective chances (perhaps thought of as propensities), so that if a rational agent knows the objective chance of a given outcome, her degree of belief will be the same as the objective chance. There has been important research on the aggregation of opinions and the preferences of multiple agents. This problem is well known to readers of the risk-assessment literature. Moreover, in light of work in economics and psychology on bounded rationality, there have been various attempts to “humanize” Bayesianism, for example, in the study of “degrees of incoherence,” and of vague probability and decision theory (in which credences need not assume precise values).

Since the late twentieth century there have also been attempts to rehabilitate the classical and logical interpretations, and in particular the principle of indifference. Some objective Bayesians appeal to information theory, arguing that prior probabilities should maximize entropy (a measure of how flat a probability distribution is), subject to the constraints of a given problem. Probability theory has also been influenced by advances in theories of randomness and in complexity theory (see Fine; Li and Vitanyi), and by approaches to the “curve-fitting” problem—familiar in the computer science, artificial intelligence, and philosophy of science literature—that attempt to measure the simplicity of theories.

While Kolmogorov’s theory remains the orthodoxy, a host of alternative theories of probability have been developed (see Fine; Mückenheim et al.). For instance, there has been increased interest in nonadditive theories, and the status of countable additivity is a subject of lively debate. Some authors have proposed theories of primitive conditional-probability functions, in which conditional probability replaces unconditional probability as the fundamental concept. Fertile connections between probability and logic have been explored under the rubrics of “probabilistic semantics” and “probability logic.”

### Some Applications of Probability

Probability theory thus continues to be a vigorous area of research. Moreover, its advances have myriad ramifications. Probability is explicitly used in many of our best scientific theories, for example, quantum mechanics and statistical mechanics. It is also implicit in much of our theorizing. A central notion in evolutionary biology is “fitness,” or expected number of offspring. Psychologists publish their conclusions with significance levels attached. Agricultural scientists perform analyses of variance on how effective fertilizers are in increasing crop yields. Economists model currency exchange rates over time as stochastic processes—that is, sequences of random variables. In cognitive science and philosophy, probability functions model states of opinion. Since probability theory is at the heart of decision theory, it has consequences for ethics and political philosophy. And assuming, as many authors do, that decision theory provides a good model of rational decision-making, it apparently has implications for even mundane aspects of our daily lives. In short, probability is ubiquitous. Bishop Butler’s dictum is truer today than ever.

See also *Game Theory; Logic and Philosophy of Mathematics, Modern; Mathematics.*

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Alan Hájek

**PROGRESS, IDEA OF.** The idea of progress—the idea that human society can be made ever better by conscious effort, or that society is becoming ever better by spontaneous laws of history—is relatively new. The idea was virtually unknown in classical antiquity. In each of the three greatest books of that period, what we think of as progress is explicitly denied. In Plato's *Republic*, even the best possible political regime, based on the rule of the philosopher-king, is subject to inevitable decay and descent into tyranny. In the *Politics*, Aristotle argues that while frequent change is good in the arts and

sciences it is not good in matters of politics and law. And Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War* begins with the famous "archaeology" meant to remind the reader of the oblivion into which even the mightiest human empires must inevitably fall. In the classical mind, the prevailing view was that the courses of time and the motions of the universe consist of endless cycles of rise and fall—creation is always followed by dissolution. It took the coming of the Bible for the courses of time to be understood as a story with a beginning, a middle, and an end. But with the Christian doctrine of sin and redemption in the heavens and not on this earth, it was many centuries before the biblical understanding of history was reinterpreted in the direction of human redemption on this earth and by secular means.

### The First Prophet of Progress

Not even the coming of the Renaissance in Europe paved the way for the idea of progress. One could argue, in fact, that Renaissance humanism, with its focus on and reverence for classical antiquity, made it harder to conceive of progress, since the rebirth of learning in the Renaissance required looking backward from a condition of contemporary decay. This was certainly the view espoused by the first great thinker to broach the idea of progress as we know it: Francis Bacon (1561–1626). Bacon was, according to the biologist E. O. Wilson, the "grand architect" of the Enlightenment, the intellectual movement of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that gave birth to the idea of progress. According to Bacon, classical thought had infected Christian learning—especially in the form of Scholasticism—and had thus long retarded real progress of knowledge. The much revered "ancients" (in particular Plato and Aristotle) had, in Bacon's view, confused theology and natural science and as a result had spun out a teleological and speculative natural science that took nature to be a kind of God and revealed nothing of what nature really is. The humble and anonymous invention of the compass, said Bacon, did more to advance the human race than all the contemplative philosophy of the ancients, who prided themselves on respecting "theory" over mere "practice." Until the debilitating yoke of classical thought was removed from the human mind the real lesson of the Christian faith could not be followed up: the world is not a God and is but the object of divine art, wisdom, and power—and, ultimately, the object also of *human* art, wisdom, and power. Once the human mind was freed from the spell of the ancients, and once metaphysical speculation was replaced by knowledge based on experience and induction and organized by clear and regular methods, the real courses of nature could be revealed and nature could be conquered "for the relief of man's estate." In Bacon's view, when the harsh constraints of nature were removed from the human body, so too would be removed the vain illusions that disturb the soul and roil political life. On the foundation of modern science would rise the rational and secular state, whose business is progress.

The discovery of the humble compass, as Bacon pointed out, doubtless expanded massively the horizon of navigation, and advancements in shipbuilding must soon have followed. But there is an important difference between such facts of technical progress and the *idea* of progress—the idea that such inventions will necessarily lead to greater human happiness and



justice, or the idea that society can be ordered so as to produce such inventions and such happiness with ever increasing speed and to ever increasing good effects. The idea of progress as an organized and benevolent project was first broached by Bacon, who was revered by the figures of the later Enlightenment of the eighteenth century.

Although ideas may be the real queens of the world, they do not work their effects in immediate or in smooth and direct ways. So for a hundred years after Bacon's death in 1626 a literary and philosophical dispute called the quarrel between the ancients and moderns was waged in France and England over the issue of whether human thought and knowledge had degenerated from its height in classical antiquity, or whether modern times were more intellectually advanced, if only because of the accumulated wisdom of longer historical experience. In his 1688 pamphlet entitled *Digression on the Ancients and the Moderns*, the French philosopher Bernard Le Bovier de Fontenelle argued that indeed progress in the arts and sciences is both open-ended and necessary and proceeds according to laws of its own, having nothing to do with the efforts of particular thinkers. Fontenelle's argument added a significant new dimension to the idea of progress. Bacon's conception was voluntaristic, in the sense that a conscious reformation of the mind would produce the deliberate establishment of scientific and political institutions to produce material and moral progress. With Fontenelle we see the first appearance of the idea that progress is an historical process that moves as a force on its own, independently of human will, and that it can be traced in the record of human history and seen in one's own time.

### Inevitable Progress

This new dimension introduced by Fontenelle was to become very important later on, but was often based more on faith than on clear evidence of the superiority of contemporary life. This dependence on faith sprang from a reason revealed by Fontenelle himself: the progress of knowledge and science, even if necessary and unending, did not in Fontenelle's mind lead necessarily to the amelioration of society and to increased human happiness. At the very least, it is not always obvious that progress in the arts and sciences leads to moral progress or to greater justice in society. Along with the compass, Bacon had mentioned the invention of gunpowder as among the most important discoveries in the practical arts. It is by no means clear that the invention of gunpowder was an unmitigated blessing. All the more reason, then, to see progress as inevitable but visible only retrospectively. It takes such faith to think that technological and social change, which are often violent and unsettling as we experience them, are necessarily for the better. At any rate, it was still some time before the Baconian theme of social transformation by science and reason became an active public project, enshrined in the famous *Encyclopédie*, published in France between 1751 and 1772. The *Encyclopédie* was edited by Denis Diderot and contained work by the dazzling group of thinkers called the philosophes, a group that included the likes of Voltaire, Charles-Louis de Secondat, baron de Montesquieu, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Jean Le Rond d'Alembert, Georges-Louis Leclerc de Buffon, Anne-Robert-Jacques Turgot, and François Quesnay. Its purpose was to present a compendium of existing knowledge in popular

form, and it was meant as well to disclose the irrationality and defects of existing society and to trumpet the crucial-for-progress doctrine that human nature is sufficiently malleable to be reformed. With the publication of the *Encyclopédie*, the Enlightenment project for progress became a clarion call.

It was not long after that France and the whole of the West was convulsed by the French Revolution, the Reign of Terror, and the Napoleonic aftermath. In one of the great ironies of modern history, the first full-fledged work to broach explicitly the doctrine of progress was written by a victim of the revolution he supported. Marie-Jean Caritat, marquis de Condorcet—one of the brilliant minds of the French Enlightenment and a contributor to the *Encyclopédie*—wrote his famous *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind* while in desperate flight from the Jacobin radicals. Condorcet died in prison after having been discovered and beaten by an angry mob. Even so, Condorcet was convinced that the American Revolution and the spreading opposition to slavery were signs of moral progress visible in his time, and from this perspective he argued that the whole of human history is a connected series of stages in which the human mind has progressed, and as the mind progresses so too do the possibilities of material progress and moral and political reform. Human history is not a jumble of meaningless accidents, but moves and changes slowly for the better according to knowable laws. With Condorcet, the Baconian project, which linked scientific and moral progress, was derived from inexorable laws of history as much as from conscious human action and invention. Absent his "demonstration" of these laws, it might have been difficult for the suffering Condorcet to retain his optimistic spirit.

In the four or so decades after the publication of Condorcet's *Sketch* in 1795, the idea of progress was developed by two French thinkers into a school of thought known as positivism. The first, Claude-Henri de Rouvroy, Comte de Saint-Simon (1760–1825), was a founder of French socialism and a writer, pamphleteer, and journalist who worked out a theory that claimed to unearth the necessary laws of historical and social change. According to Saint-Simon, human history is characterized by alternating and advancing periods. Social and intellectual forms are first built and made to cohere, and this is followed by revolutionary criticism and change. Not the least of the critical periods was the Enlightenment and the subsequent French Revolution. For Saint-Simon, the alternating historical periods were stages of mental development. As the mind progresses to the present time, it becomes possible to grasp both the physical and social worlds in terms of scientific knowledge involving no speculation or metaphysical assumptions, and hence both nature and society can be illuminated by "positive" knowledge. Those who have such knowledge will organize those who do not, and in particular the wise in positive science will organize a socialist society that will benefit the working classes. Indeed, the wise in the positive sciences will become a new clergy for a new, positive age.

Saint-Simon's theory received its full exposition at the hands of Auguste Comte (1798–1857), the self-professed founder of positive sociology. Again, the history of the human race is occasioned by transformations in ideas, progressing



from the theological to the metaphysical, and then to the positive and scientific. With this conceptual scheme in mind, it is possible to divide human history into more specific periods marked by different religions and movements against them. In the present age the social world will be organized by sociologists according to the positive laws of sociology, and the eventual result will be a rational world without war and injustice.

Along with the rise of French positivism and sociology, the idea of progress grew as well, and in a different vein, in Germany. Even before Condorcet's *Sketch*, the philosopher Immanuel Kant published (in 1784) an essay entitled "Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose." A year later he published another essay entitled "Perpetual Peace." According to Kant, our practical reason impels us to postulate historical progress toward a point where happiness and morality coincide, and to look for signs that such progress has in fact occurred. Moreover, the means by which that progress takes place is antagonism and the "unsocial sociability" of men. Without the discordance between the selfish individual and society, humankind would have remained in an Arcadian sleep. The human powers and talents unleashed by antagonism are the means used by history to develop, over time, a form of civil society and a peaceful world order that will make universal justice possible. With Kant, we see an important new dimension of the idea of progress: the notion that history or nature uses human conflict for ultimately good ends. This notion came later to be expressed as the cunning of reason in the thought of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831), one of the most important figures in the history of the idea of progress.

According to Hegel, the history of the human race is produced by the dialectical contention among conflicting ideas of freedom and recognition. The movement is dialectical because each stage of history contains the conditions for its own demise and replacement by the next. Human history concerns the dialectical development of mind, and its stages proceed from the world in which it is thought that one man is free and all others are not, to one where it is thought that a few are free and all others are not, to a world where it is thought that all are free. In each case, what is thought is what is embodied in concrete institutions and social practices. The last stage has, in Hegel's mind, been reached and is embodied in the modern state characterized by equal rights, the rule of law, and the harmony among the separate spheres of expert political administration, economic and private life, and religion. With Hegel, we see another important dimension of the idea of progress: the end of history. For Hegel, human history is the story of progress, but that progress—and so history as we know it—not only comes to an end but has come to an end in his time. There will, therefore, be no new struggles between forms of moral, political, and social life.

Hegel is important in his own right, but also because his thinking influenced perhaps the single most important theorist of progress: Karl Marx (1818–1883). Hegel's followers divided between the Old Hegelians and the Young Hegelians. The issue concerned the extent to which Hegel's system did or did not reconcile reason and religion. Marx was influenced

by the Young Hegelians, who thought that the system required further critique of religion, but Marx rejected the idea of a dialectic of mind and replaced it with dialectical materialism. (And he accordingly derided the French socialism of Saint-Simon as utopian. Marx's associate Friedrich Engels, too, criticized Saint-Simon for trying to "evolve the solution to human problems out of the brain" rather than from material conditions.) According to Marx, the course of history is determined by the internal contradictions and class conflicts embedded in succeeding arrangements of the means of material production. As capitalism and the bourgeois monopoly of the means of production advance, traditional and rural forms of life are swept away. But as the productive power of revolutionary capitalism advances, so too does the impoverishment of the industrial proletariat, and inevitable crises of overproduction combine with that impoverishment to produce a revolution by the Communist Party that acts politically for the proletariat. With the coming of the revolution, the means of production are socialized, and with this oppression and inequality disappear, as does the coercive political state that will in time "wither away." Needless to say, Marxism was the most powerful political embodiment of the idea of inevitable progress in the twentieth century. Critics of the idea of progress might point out that more human beings perished at the hands of communism, which failed, than from any other idea or cause in the entire course of human history.

### The Idea of Progress in the Anglo-American World

While the idea of progress was first announced by Francis Bacon in England, and while English philosophers (including Bacon, Thomas Hobbes, and especially John Locke) played an important role in the French and German Enlightenments, the idea of progress developed in more moderate and practical forms in England and America. There were English utopian thinkers in the nineteenth century, such as William Godwin (1756–1836) and Robert Owen (1771–1858), who broached theories of progress, human perfectibility, and socialism (Owen formed unsuccessful utopian communities in the United States). And in England by the end of the nineteenth century a strong socialist movement was in place. But socialism in England was far less revolutionary and utopian than its European counterparts, and in general the grand theories of historical progress were imported into England from the Continent. There is no doubt, however, that the idea of progress was important in the American political founding. Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790) and Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826) were zealous Baconians and, as is often noted, the Declaration of Independence owed much to the second treatise of Locke's optimistic *Two Treatises of Civil Government* (1690). But in America the idea of progress grew more from the Baconian idea that, given the right intellectual and political conditions, nature could be conquered "for the relief of man's estate." Progress was understood more as a real opportunity and fact of life than as some deep force at work in world history since the dawn of civilization. America represented a new world and a new hope and as such could stand as a light unto other less fortunate nations. Indeed, as Abraham Lincoln said in 1863 in the Gettysburg Address, and as he believed, the issue in the American Civil War was not just slavery, but whether democratic government

would be a real possibility in the world. For the most part, however, the new world was thought to have left the old one behind, mired in misery and oppression, and on its own and with little help to be expected from progress.

In America's first century, the dominant intellectual focus was, for the most part, on limited government and the expansion of liberty, more than it was concerned with social transformation and equality of conditions. By the 1890s, however, immigration and industrialization and the practice of laissez-faire economics gave birth to a movement that unabashedly adopted the idea of progress as its name: "progressivism." The Progressive Era spanned the period roughly between 1890 and 1914, but it made a lasting mark on American politics (including the New Deal and beyond) and American political thought. One of the most influential exponents of progressivism was Herbert Croly, a thinker and journalist (and cofounder and editor of the *New Republic*), whose two books, *The Promise of American Life* (1909) and *Progressive Democracy* (1914) were widely read and especially appreciated by Theodore Roosevelt. Croly was influenced by Hegel and by the American pragmatist thinkers, especially the American philosopher and educator John Dewey (who also appreciated Hegel). Croly's view of progress focused on the need to reform political institutions to cope with modern conditions—conditions that in his view were radically different from the world of the American constitutional framers. For Croly, the U.S. Constitution reflected a now outdated and "reactionary" legalism that stood in the way of social reform and the moral development of the American community. While the constraints of constitutional legalism were appropriate to the nation's childhood—when moral immaturity and impulsiveness require legal restraint—it is not appropriate for a more mature national community. As a consequence of this view, Croly and progressives in general disapproved of the Constitution and favored more direct forms of democracy tied to a more powerful and centralized government. And they favored as well the strong role of administrative and intellectual elites, including social scientists, in the formation of national policy and the fashioning of national character. In this they harked back to the views of the French positivists. The progressives' distinction between "progressive" and "conservative" is still acknowledged in the twenty-first century—as is the essential difference between them. The progressive position sees more democracy as the cure to problems of democracy, likes change for its own sake, and favors state action to promote increased equality. Progressives tend to think that the march of history is on their side. The conservative position is distrustful of direct democracy, fears change for its unintended consequences, and sees the increasing power of the state as a danger to liberty. Thus conservatives have little faith in the healing power of history.

### Whither the Idea of Progress

The twentieth century was not kind to believers in the idea of inevitable progress. One could say without exaggeration that between World War I and the collapse of the Soviet Union and communism, the West, bosom of the Enlightenment and the idea of progress, was convulsed by sanguinary madness unparalleled in the whole of human experience. Baconian progress produced the rifled barrel and the machine gun, and

the latter were used by the Western "isms"—nationalism, colonialism, communism, and fascism—to transform Europe, Russia, and much of Asia into a charnel house. It is thus not surprising that in the twentieth century, intellectual currents began to challenge the idea of progress. The most fashionable of these currents included some forms of radical feminism and postmodernism. The two great thinkers of postmodernism were Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) and Martin Heidegger (1889–1976), although their influence in America came more indirectly by way of the French thinkers, especially Jacques Derrida, influenced by Heidegger. According to postmodernism, the idea of the necessary progress of reason is incoherent because reason—especially modern positive science—cannot rationally justify the rule of reason over life. This fundamental limit of reason is itself a discovery made by reason. Reason learns that reason is itself but a way of life and projection of the will, and as such reason is one such projection (and a patriarchal one in the eyes of radical feminism) among many possibilities.

There is absolutely no doubt that science and technology now progress at geometrical speed. One need think only of genetic engineering and the computer to realize that the material world will be quite different very soon. As Benjamin Franklin predicted, some day humans will live three or four hundred years and old age will become a curable disease. But as the advent of postmodernism suggests, it will not be easy to predict what moral forms these long lives will adopt, or whether, if we could see into the future, we would see them as evidence of moral progress. In the United States, postmodernism is generally allied, perhaps paradoxically, with progressive or liberal movements such as multiculturalism and feminism. But postmodernism could just as easily be allied (as indeed it was in the case of Heidegger and the literary theorist Paul de Man) with illiberal political irrationalism, or even with a new age of faith. As Nietzsche argued, the demise of reason as an ideal takes place at the hands of reason. If Nietzsche is correct, then the terminus of progress is the end of the "idea" of progress.

*See also Cycles; Enlightenment; Hegelianism; History, Idea of; Marxism; Postmodernism.*

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Jerry Weinberger

**PROGRESSIVISM.** See **Progress, Idea of.**

**PROPAGANDA.** Since the twentieth century, *propaganda* has largely had pejorative associations. The term continues to imply something sinister; synonyms for *propaganda* frequently include *lies*, *falsehood*, *deceit*, and *brainwashing*. In recent years unfavorable references have been made to “spin doctors” and the manner in which “propaganda” has devalued democratic politics. The psychologists Anthony Pratkanis and Elliot Aronson intended their book *Age of Propaganda* (1992) to inform Americans about the “sophisticated use of propaganda techniques” and how to “counteract” its “effectiveness.” A widely held belief is that propaganda is a cancer on the body politic, which manipulates our thoughts and actions and should be avoided at all costs.

If propaganda is to be a useful concept, it first has to be divested of its pejorative connotations. The ancient Greeks regarded persuasion as a form of rhetoric and recognized that logic and reason were necessary to communicate ideas successfully. Throughout history leaders have attempted to influence the way in which the governed viewed the world. Propaganda is not simply what the other side does, while one’s own side concentrates on “information” or “publicity.” Modern dictatorships have never felt the need to hide from the word in the way democracies have. Accordingly, the Nazis had their Ministry of Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda, the Soviets their Propaganda Committee of the Communist Party,

while the British had a Ministry of Information and the Americans an Office of War Information. The Allies in both world wars described the opinion-forming activity by the enemy as propaganda, while claiming that they themselves only disseminated the truth.

The origin of the word *propaganda* can be traced back to the Reformation, when the spiritual and ecclesiastic unity of Europe was shattered, and the medieval Roman Catholic Church lost its hold on the northern countries. During the ensuing struggle between forces of Protestantism and those of the Counter-Reformation, the church found itself faced with the problem of maintaining and strengthening its hold in the now non-Catholic countries. A commission of cardinals set up by Pope Gregory XIII (1572–1585) was charged with spreading Catholicism and regulating ecclesiastical affairs in heathen lands. A generation later, when the Thirty Years’ War (1618–1648) had broken out, Gregory XV in 1622 made the commission permanent, as the Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide (Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith); it was charged with the management of foreign missions and financed by a “ring tax” assessed on each newly appointed cardinal. Finally, in 1627, Urban VII established the Collegium Urbanum or College of Propaganda to serve as a training ground for a new generation of Catholic propagandists and to educate young priests who were to undertake such missions. The first propaganda institute was therefore simply a body charged with improving the dissemination of a group of religious dogmas. The word *propaganda* soon came to be applied to any organization with the purpose of spreading a doctrine; subsequently it was applied to the doctrine itself, and lastly to the methods employed in undertaking the dissemination.

From the seventeenth to the twentieth century propaganda continued to be “modernized” in accordance with scientific and technological advances. During the English Civil War (1642–1646), propaganda by pamphlet and newsletter became a regular accessory to military action, Oliver Cromwell’s army being concerned nearly as much with the spread of religious and political doctrines as with victory in the field. The employment of propaganda increased steadily throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, particularly in times of ideological struggle, as in the American War of Independence and the French Revolutionary Wars. The Girondists, for example, distributed broadsheets among enemy troops offering them rewards for desertion, and American revolutionary propagandists were among the most eloquent in history, their appeal on behalf of the Rights of Man striking a chord in the minds of the people that resonates to this day. From the end of the Napoleonic Wars to the outbreak of World War I in 1914 there were no great wars of revolution, but the new visual “language” of political cartoons and satirical prints continued to feature prominently in propaganda campaigns. Historically, therefore, propaganda became associated with periods of stress and turmoil, in which violent controversy over doctrine accompanied the use of force.

It was, however, during World War I that the wholesale employment of propaganda as a weapon of modern warfare served to transform its meaning into something more sinister.





British World War I propaganda poster seeking to recruit women to the war effort, c. 1915. The first world war represented the advent of propaganda on a massive scale, as the participating countries realized the importance of public opinion and the need to keep morale high. © HULTON-DEUTSCH COLLECTION/CORBIS

Toward the end of the nineteenth century the introduction of new forms of communication had created a new phenomenon, the mass audience. The means now existed for governments to mobilize entire industrial societies for warfare by quickly disseminating information (or propaganda) to large groups of people. One of the most significant lessons to be learned from World War I was that public opinion could no longer be ignored as a determining factor in the formulation of government policies. The Great War was the first “total war,” in which whole nations, and not just professional armies, were locked in mortal combat. Propaganda was an essential part of this war effort, developing in all the belligerent countries as the war progressed.

The rival alliances anticipated a violent but short war. Instead, the relative parity of the opposing forces resulted in a military stalemate and a protracted war. With civilians required to participate in a “total war” effort, morale came to be recognized as a significant military factor, and propaganda began to emerge as the principal instrument of control over public opinion; both control of the mass media and propaganda were seen as essential in maintaining support for national war aims. The press, leaflets, posters, and the new medium of film were utilized, censored, and coordinated (arguably for the first time) in order to disseminate officially approved themes.

At the start of the war most of the belligerent states had only embryonic propaganda organizations. Such institutions developed piecemeal, with local initiatives later being centralized. In Britain, which is largely credited with disseminating the most successful propaganda, the Ministry of Information (MOI) was established in 1917 under Lord Beaverbrook, with a separate Enemy Propaganda Department under Lord Northcliffe. The basic British approach, known as “the propaganda of facts,” was for official propaganda to present events as accurately as possible, but with an interpretation favorable to British war aims. Upon entering the war in 1917, the United States copied the British policy of stressing facts whenever possible, establishing its own Committee on Public Information (CPI), known also as the Creel Committee after its director, George Creel (1876–1953). CPI activities were intended to “sell the war to the American people” and included poster campaigns and war bond drives. By comparison the German effort was controlled largely by the army. Contrary to received opinion, however, the German government had, from an early stage in the conflict, developed a sophisticated notion of propaganda and its reception by different publics and had established a national network of monitoring stations to provide feedback on the “pulse of the people.” But, having constructed the means to read the mood of the people, the German authorities failed to act accordingly. Moreover, as a result of the militarization of the society, German propaganda was too closely tied to military success. Austria-Hungary and Russia made little use of organized propaganda, although the Bolsheviks after 1917 regarded it as essential to their revolutionary effort.

All sides supplemented military engagement with propaganda aimed at stimulating national sentiment, maintaining home front morale, winning over neutrals, and spreading disenchantment among the enemy population. The British are credited with having carried out these objectives more suc-



U.S. Navy recruitment poster by Howard Chandler Christy, 1918. In the United States the Committee on Public Information was formed in 1917 as the official disseminating agency of propaganda. The committee sought to present the facts surrounding the war in a way that was favorable to the image of the country. © SWIM INK/CORBIS

cessfully than any other belligerent state. Britain’s wartime consensus is generally believed to have held under the exigencies of the conflict—despite major tensions. One explanation for this is the skillful use made by the government of propaganda and censorship. After the war, however, a deep mistrust developed on the part of ordinary citizens who realized that conditions at the front had been deliberately obscured by patriotic slogans and by “atrocities propaganda” that had fabricated obscene stereotypes of the enemy and their dastardly deeds. The population also felt cheated that their sacrifices had not resulted in the promised homes and a land “fit for heroes.” Propaganda was now associated with lies and falsehood, and the Ministry of Information was immediately disbanded. A similar reaction took root in the United States. In 1920 George Creel published an account of his achievements as director of the CPI, and in so doing contributed to the public’s growing suspicion of propaganda; this created a major obstacle for propagandists attempting to rally American support against Fascism in the late 1930s and 1940s.



Fledgling dictators in Europe, however, viewed war propaganda in a different light. The experience of Britain's propaganda campaign provided the defeated Germans with a fertile source of counterpropaganda aimed against the postwar peace treaties and the ignominy of the Weimar Republic. Writing in *Mein Kampf* (1925–1927), Adolf Hitler devoted two chapters to propaganda. By maintaining that the German army had not been defeated in battle but had been forced to submit due to disintegration of morale, accelerated by skillful British propaganda, Hitler (like other right-wing politicians and military groups) was providing historical legitimacy for the “stab-in-the-back” theory. Regardless of the actual role played by British propaganda in helping to bring Germany to its knees, it was generally accepted that Britain's wartime experiment was the ideal blueprint for other governments in subsequent propaganda efforts. Convinced of its essential role in any movement set on obtaining power, Hitler saw propaganda as a vehicle of political salesmanship in a mass market. It was no surprise that a Ministry of Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda was the first to be established when the Nazis assumed power in 1933.

The task of propaganda, Hitler argued, was to bring certain subjects to the attention of the masses. Propaganda should be simple, concentrating on a few essentials, which then had to be repeated many times, with emphasis on such emotional elements as love and hatred. Through the continuity and uniformity of its application, propaganda, Hitler concluded, would lead to results “that are almost beyond our understanding.” The Nazis though, unlike the Bolsheviks, did not make a distinction in their terminology between agitation and propaganda. In Soviet Russia, agitation was concerned with influencing the masses through ideas and slogans, while propaganda served to spread the communist ideology of Marxism-Leninism. The distinction dates back to Georgi Plekhanov's famous definition of 1892: “A propagandist presents many ideas to one or a few persons; an agitator presents only one or a few ideas, but presents them to a whole mass of people.” The Nazis, on the other hand, did not regard propaganda as merely an instrument for reaching the party elite, but rather as a means to the persuasion and indoctrination of all Germans.

If World War I had demonstrated the power of propaganda, the postwar period witnessed the widespread utilization of lessons drawn from the wartime experience within the overall context of a “communication revolution.” In the years between 1870 and 1939 the means of communication were transformed into mass media. In an age in which international affairs became the concern of peoples everywhere, governments could not afford to neglect the increasingly powerful press. But there was now more than just the press to contend with. Governments sought to come to terms with the mass media generally, to control them and to harness them, particularly in time of war, and to ensure that as often as possible they acted in the “national interest.” During the 1920s and 1930s the exploitation of the mass media—particularly film and radio—for political purposes became more common. Totalitarian states such as the Soviet Union, Fascist Italy, and Nazi Germany provide striking examples of media being conscripted for ideological purposes. These developments had grown to such proportions by the mid-1930s that, for example, the



**Radio broadcast.** With the rise in popularity of mass media in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, new vehicles for the dissemination of propaganda were utilized, especially by the governments of totalitarian states. © H. ARMSTRONG ROBERTS/CORBIS

British government established (1934) the British Council and inaugurated (1938) British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) foreign language broadcasts in an attempt to combat the perceived challenge to democracy.

## World War II

According to Philip M. Taylor, World War II “witnessed the greatest propaganda battle in the history of warfare.” All the participants employed propaganda on a scale that dwarfed that of other conflicts, including World War I. Britain's principal propaganda structures were the MOI for home, Allied, and neutral territory and the Political Warfare Executive (PWE) for enemy territory. The programs of the BBC proved an asset long after the war had ended. When Sir John Reith (1889–1971), the former director general of the BBC, was appointed minister of information in 1940, he laid down two fundamental axioms, that “news is the shock troops of propaganda” and that propaganda should tell “the truth, nothing but the truth and, as near as possible, the whole truth.” Although Hitler believed implicitly in the “big lie,” Joseph Goebbels, the Nazi propaganda minister, claimed that propaganda should be as accurate as possible. Similarly, in the early part of the twentieth century Lenin had proclaimed that “in propaganda, truth pays off”; this dictum has largely been accepted by propagandists.

During what is known in Russia as “The Great Patriotic War,” propaganda played a central role in rallying the population to resist the Nazi invasion. Soviet propaganda was supervised by the Directorate of Propaganda and Agitation of the Central Committee under A. S. Shcherbakov and administered by the newly established Soviet Information Bureau. The story of American propaganda during World War II can be divided into two phases: a period of neutrality from September 1939 to December 1941, during which debate raged among the population at large, and the period of U.S. involvement in the war, when the government mobilized a major propaganda effort through the Office of War Information (OWI). The United States used propaganda to orient troops (most famously in the U.S. Army Signal Corps film series *Why We Fight*) and to motivate its civilian population. In all phases of war propaganda the commercial media played a key role.

The extraordinary level of government and commercial propaganda during the war continued during the period of economic and political hostility between communist and capitalist countries known as the Cold War (1945–1989). Propagandists on all sides utilized their own interpretations of the truth in order to sell an ideological point of view to their citizens and to the world at large. U.S. president Harry S. Truman described (1950) the conflict as a “struggle above all else, for the minds of men.” The Soviet leadership under Joseph Stalin (1879–1953), untroubled by the negative connotations of propaganda, viewed the role of the media as mobilizing and legitimizing support for expansionist policies. Stalin’s determination to control the countries “liberated” by Soviet armies led to a growth in arms production and strident anticapitalist propaganda, which contributed to growing tensions. The Department of Agitation and Propaganda (Agitprop) of the Central Committee of the Communist Party fed official propaganda to the media, closely scrutinized by the Soviet censors, while the Communist Information Bureau (Cominform) in September 1947 began a systematic campaign, masterminded by Agitprop, to marshal international support for Moscow against the West.

In the United States, the Smith-Mundt Act (1948) created the legal framework for a permanent overseas information effort, using the media, exchange programs, and exhibitions to counter the massive disinformation campaigns launched from Moscow to discredit the United States. From the mid-1950s, U.S. policy-makers believed that cultural diplomacy would successfully complement psychological warfare and that in the long term it might prove more effective. From the 1950s the export of American culture and the American way of life was heavily subsidized by the federal government and was coordinated by the United States Information Agency (USIA), which operated from 1953 to 1999. Cultural exchange programs, international trade fairs and exhibitions, and the distribution of Hollywood movies were some of the activities designed to extract propaganda value from the appeal of America’s way of life, particularly its popular culture and material success. From the 1960s the Voice of America (VOA) utilized the popularity of American rock music with audiences behind the Iron Curtain, using the music to boost the standing of the United States. While radio remained an important weapon in waging psychological warfare against the Soviets, broadcasting was also



**Soviet poster, c. 1941–1945.** During World War II, the use of propaganda reached a fever pitch amongst the warring countries. In the Soviet Union, the war was known as “The Great Patriotic War,” and the country’s propaganda was managed by the Directorate of Propaganda and Agitation of the Central Committee. © CORBIS

seen by American authorities as a means by which the United States could win hearts and minds throughout the world through a long-term process of cultural propaganda. Throughout the Cold War, the United States was also able to call upon the appeal of products of private and multinational concerns such as Coca-Cola, McDonald’s, and others. The universal popularity of such symbols of “Americanization” testified to the success of this approach. Such “cultural imperialism” was designed to convert the world into a “global village” dominated by American values.

The far-reaching impact of the Cold War led to new political and sociological theories on the nature of man and modern society—particularly in the light of the rise of totalitarian states. Individuals were viewed as undifferentiated and malleable while an apocalyptic vision of mass society emphasized the alienation of work, the collapse of religion and family ties, and a general decline in moral values. Culture had been reduced to the lowest common denominator and the masses were generally seen as politically apathetic, yet prone to ideological fanaticism, vulnerable to manipulation through the media—particularly the new medium of television—and through the



Poster celebrating China's Fifth National People's Congress, 1978. Propaganda seeks to evoke thoughts and actions that are desirable to those seeking sway over the public. The goal is to narrow viewpoints until they are in line with those of the propagandist. © BETTMANN/CORBIS

increasing sophistication of propagandists. Accordingly, propaganda was viewed as a “magic bullet” or “hypodermic needle” by means of which opinions and behavior could be controlled.

This view was challenged by a number of American social scientists, including Harold Lasswell (1902–1978)—a pioneer of propaganda studies—who argued that within the context of an atomized mass society, propaganda was a mechanism for engineering public opinion and consent and thus acted as a means of social control (what Lasswell referred to as the “new hammer and anvil of social solidarity”). In recent years the French sociologist Jacques Ellul (1912–1996) has taken this a stage further and suggested that the technological society has conditioned people to a “need for propaganda.” In Ellul's view propaganda is most effective when it reinforces already held opinions and beliefs. The “hypodermic” theory was largely replaced by a more complex “multistep” model that acknowledges the influence of the mass media yet also recognizes that individuals seek out opinion leaders from their own class and sex for confirmation of their ideas and in forming attitudes. Many early twenty-first-century writers agree that propaganda confirms rather than converts—or at least that it is more effective when the message is in line with the existing opinions and beliefs of its consumers.

The second wave of the feminist movement in the second half of the twentieth century is an example of this. Known as “women's liberation,” radical feminism developed in the United States and Britain in the 1960s among a group of women involved in a series of protest movements that challenged social norms and traditional values. Women began forming organizations to address their role and status, applying tactics of social agitation. In particular, they focused on employment and pay issues, child care, sex discrimination, and childbearing. Feminism became more mainstream during the 1970s and was addressed by a number of government-backed propaganda initiatives such as the International Women's Year (1975). As divisions within the movement appeared, a backlash of antifeminist propaganda from the media and right-wing politicians began in the 1980s, particularly in the United States.

The spread of television as a mass medium from the 1950s opened up the possibility of a radical new level of exposure of civilian populations to the “realities” of war. The term *media war* came into common usage during the Gulf War in 1991. In the Kosovo war (1999) both sides in the conflict understood the importance of manipulating real-time news to their own advantage. Moreover, the war witnessed the first systematic use of the Internet to disseminate propaganda, including



its use by nongovernmental players. Kosovo highlights the forces of change between the pre–Cold War era and the current globalized information environment. The centrality of propaganda was apparent once more in the terrorist attacks against the United States on September 11, 2001, which were planned for their media impact, as acts of propaganda by deed. Propaganda became a major feature of the “war against terrorism” that followed. The war to remove Saddam Hussein as leader of Iraq began on 19 March 2003 with an invasion by the United States and Great Britain. Officially, this was part of the campaign against international terrorism, but it also became a plan for the “liberation” of Iraq by “Coalition Forces,” the latter a propaganda device placing the U.S. and British military in a flattering light. Media coverage of this war and the war’s psychological dimension were of particular concern to the student of propaganda: it produced a number of innovations, particularly the decision to “embed” reporters and television journalists as members of the invasion forces, on the one hand allowing an immediacy never before possible, on the other introducing a new intensity of information overload.

### Defining Propaganda

With rapidly changing technology, definitions of propaganda have also undergone changes. Propaganda has meant different things at different times, although clearly the scale on which it has been practiced has increased in the twentieth century. What are the characteristic features of propaganda, and how can it be defined? Propaganda (and deliberately excluded here are purely religious propaganda and the commercial propaganda we call advertising) is a distinct political activity, one that can be distinguished from cognate activities like information and education. The distinction lies in the purpose of the instigator. Put simply, propaganda is the dissemination of ideas or images intended to convince people to think and act in a particular way and for a particular purpose. Although propaganda can be unconscious, this entry is concerned with the conscious, deliberate attempts to employ the techniques of persuasion for specific goals. Propaganda can be defined as the deliberate attempt to influence public opinion through the transmission of ideas and values for reasons consciously thought out, and designed to serve the interest of the propagandist, either directly or indirectly. Whereas information presents its audience with a straightforward statement of facts, propaganda packages those facts in order to evoke a certain response. Whereas education (at least in the liberal notion of education) teaches the recipient how to think, so as to make up his or her own mind, propaganda tries to tell people what to think. Information and education aim to broaden the audience’s perspectives and to open their minds, but propaganda strives to narrow and preferably close them. The distinction lies in the purpose.

The importance of propaganda in the politics of the twentieth century should not be underestimated. When we speak of propaganda we think of the media as conventionally conceived—press, radio, cinema, television—but propaganda as an agent of reinforcement is not confined to these. Propaganda can manifest itself in the form of a building, a flag, a coin, a painting, even a government health warning on a cigarette pack. The role of commemoration in reinforcement propaganda is often overlooked; yet what better way of reinforcing

the present and determining the future than commemorating the past? It is no coincidence that London has its Waterloo Station and Paris its Gare d’Austerlitz!

Propaganda may be overt or covert, good or bad, truthful or mendacious, serious or humorous, rational or emotional. Propagandists assess the context and the audience and use whatever methods and whatever means they consider to be the most appropriate and most effective. We need, therefore, to think of propaganda in much wider terms: wherever public opinion is deemed important, there we shall find an attempt to influence it. The most obvious reason for the increasing attention given to propaganda and its assumed power over opinion is the broadening base that has dramatically transformed the nature of political participation. The means of communication have correspondingly broadened, and the growth of education and technological advances have proved contributory factors. The early twenty-first century is witnessing the proliferation of “information superhighways” and digital data networks, and legitimate concerns have been expressed about the nature of media proprietorship and access and the extent to which information flows freely (the question of what Noam Chomsky has referred to as the “manufacture of consent”). Propagandists have been forced to respond to these changes; they must, as before, assess their audience and use whatever methods they consider most effective. If we can widen our terms of reference and divest *propaganda* of its pejorative associations, the study of propaganda will reveal its significance as intrinsic to the political process in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

*See also* **Censorship; Communication of Ideas; Language and Linguistics; Media, History of; Nationalism; Patriotism; Totalitarianism; Truth; War; War and Peace in the Arts.**

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David Welch

**PROPERTY.** “There is nothing which so generally strikes the imagination, and engages the affections of mankind, as the right of property; or that sole and despotic dominion which one man claims and exercises over the external things of the world, in total exclusion of the right of any other individual in the universe” (p. 2). So wrote Sir William Blackstone (1723–1780), the great English jurist, in his *Commentaries on the Laws of England*. Blackstone exaggerated: romantic love, sexual desire, and spiritual purity engage human creative attention as much as ownership of things. Yet Blackstone does not

overstate the importance of property among human institutions. Property joins the family, the state, and the church as the most basic and universal structures of human society; and among these four, it is likely the most indispensable. A society might persist without kinship, kings, or priests, but it will not survive without distributing to its members stable control over its resources.

The significance of property can be appreciated by considering whether there is anything around you that is not owned by someone. This book, certainly (although the owner of the paper and ink—or the computer screen—will not be the same person as the copyright holder). The chair in which you are sitting and all of the objects around you, the walls of the room, the surrounding building and the land on which it rests. Even the mineral deposits deep below and the airspace high above are owned by someone. Human beings themselves might be exceptions to this universal rule of ownership—although many think that there is a sense in which each person owns himself. And perhaps no one now owns the heavens. Yet if it is true that no one owns the planets and the stars, one feels that this is merely because humans have not reached them yet.

### The Nature of Property

What is property? One will search in vain for its essence. Modern ideas of property are the product of millennia of change, their boundaries being stretched and cut to fit a long series of ideologies and social forms. One is left not with one definition of the term but rather with a variety of usages, some overlapping and some aloof. The sadistic boss uses the language of property when he says to the employee, “I own you,” as does the plaintive lover who cries, “You belong to me.”

The variety of meanings of the term may be demonstrated by considering cases in which it is not certain whether something is property or not. Is one's passport one's property? What of one's vote, one's entitlement to social security payments, or one's lungs? Do people own their appearance, or their reputation? People will disagree on these cases; most will say that there is a “sense in which” each is property. This is the point that is being emphasized here. There are many “senses” of property, each of them attracting us with its own gravitational pull.

The American legal theorist Thomas Grey has alleged that the dispersal of meanings has gone so far that it should be said that the concept of property has disintegrated completely. Not only are there a range of concepts in ordinary speech, but specialists such as lawyers and economists have defined their own discontinuous usages. Grey's thesis goes too far. There is a core of meaning to the idea of property, and at this core is found a prototype against which all other instances are measured.

The vital first insight into the nature of property distinguishes property from mere physical possession. Being in contact with an object is neither necessary nor sufficient for ownership. As the English jurist Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832) observed: “A piece of stuff which is actually in the Indies may belong to me while the dress I wear may not” (p. 133). The ownership relation is not a physical relation between a person and the property, but a moral or legal relation among persons



with respect to the property. Property is to possession as marriage is to mating.

As Bentham asserted, the relation of ownership is not material but metaphysical. What then is that relation? In all instances of ownership there are three variables: some *owner* has certain *rights* over the *property* that is owned.

Any number of entities can fill in the third, *property*, variable. Houses, steel factories, palaces, oil deposits, and interplanetary-exploration vehicles can all be property, as can taxi medallions, dividends, parts of the broadcast spectrum, works of fiction, and even forms of life themselves. The things that are property have almost infinite variety.

The types of *owners* of property sort themselves into familiar categories. The public owns public property, the government owns government property, and private persons—either individuals or “artificial” persons such as corporations—own private property. There are also sometimes special rules for certain kinds of owners: for example, couples share rights over joint property, and in some countries church property is exempt from tax. Since the past five hundred years have seen the torturous rise of private property to predominance, private property will be the particular focus here.

It is the *rights* that define the relation between owner and owned that distinguish the different senses of “property” from each other. The most basic rights that define most kinds of ownership are the rights of *exclusive use*. An owner has the right to use the property, and others may not use that property without the owner’s permission. Beyond these rights of exclusive use, there are other rights that define various senses of “property” related either to the owner’s control or to the property’s value. An owner may have the right to transfer the property (if so, the property is alienable). An owner may have the right to sell the property (if so, the property is a commodity). An owner may have the right to receive a stream of income from the property (if so, the property is an asset).

These categories nest or overlap. Not everything that an owner may exclusively use may be transferred: one may not legally transfer one’s prescription drugs to anyone else. Not everything that can be transferred may be sold: for example, United States law allows the transfer, but not the sale, of eagle feathers. Nor is everything with economic value something that the owner has the right to sell. Trust funds and tenured professorships are assets, but they are assets that cannot be sold.

The core meaning of property is that of a commodity: that is, of an object of salable rights of exclusive use. The commodity is the prototype of property, and sets the paradigm against which we measure less central senses of ownership. There is a “sense in which” one’s lungs are one’s property, since one has exclusive rights to use them. Yet there is also a sense in which they are not, since one cannot legally sell them to others. Similarly with one’s reputation. One’s reputation can be a financial asset, but there is little sense in saying that one has rights to exclusive use of it. Reputation can be considered a type of property, but its distance from the prototype makes it property of a particularly attenuated sort. The

commodity is at the core of current ideas about property, and, as will be seen, debates over what should be put into this crucial category have been some of the most heated.

There are also secondary rights and liabilities that accompany ownership in most of its senses. An owner has a right to compensation should another damage his property, and an owner is liable should her property cause harm to someone else. These secondary aspects of ownership tend to be taken for granted, yet they can be of the first importance for innovative approaches to property-related problems such as environmental protection.

### Global Variation and Convergence

When people discuss global variations in property, they are usually speaking either about differences in how property is distributed, or about differences in how property rules are formulated.

***Inequality.*** The question of the distribution of property is the question of inequality. There is no one factor that explains why some countries have more equal property distributions than others, as can be seen by taking income as the representative measure for all property. Some of the most egalitarian countries in the world (such as Hungary and Slovakia) have a tradition of equality that has persisted throughout large transformations in their political and economic systems. Other countries, for example those in Scandinavia, achieved greater equality through determined political reform. The most remarkable decline in inequality in the twentieth century was accomplished in socialist Cuba, which under Fidel Castro, who came to power in 1959, leveled its property holdings to a degree unparalleled in the Americas.

Among the major economic powers, Japan has the most equal distribution of income and the United States the most unequal. Inequality increased in the United States during the period of conservative ascendancy that began in the 1970s, and this growth of inequality appears to be related to a general strengthening of property laws. Latin America, dominated by entrenched landowning elites, is the most consistently unequal region of the world. Many African countries, struggling with failed governments, are also highly unequal in their distributions of property—as is South Africa, which in the early twenty-first century was only slowly recovering from decades of apartheid. Several nations in Southeast Asia are marked by inequality that runs along ethnic lines, with the greater riches of minority ethnic Chinese communities being a perennial source of social friction.

Finally, the world itself is a very unequal place. The level of inequality across the globe is greater even than the inequality within the most unequal large country (Brazil). According to the economist Branko Milanovic the richest 10 percent of individuals in the world control fifty times more of global income than do the poorest 10 percent of individuals, and the richest 1 percent of humankind receives more income in a year than does the poorest 50 percent. There are lively debates over whether this global inequality is increasing or decreasing, and over the impact of globalization on inequality. The only safe

conclusion to be drawn from these debates is that different conclusions about trends and impacts will be reached depending on the data that are used and the income brackets that are compared.

The distribution of property has a profound influence on almost all aspects of human life. One window into this conclusion is the robust causal connection between levels of inequality and human health. There are reliable data from within the wealthiest countries showing the influence of inequality on health outcomes. In all rich countries, the rich are much healthier than the poor. Moreover, the more unequal a country is in its property distribution, the more unequal it will be in the distribution of health. Interestingly, “middle” groups in rich countries with high inequality are less healthy than middle groups in rich countries with low inequality. Moreover, creating a more equal distribution of property makes the poor healthier without making the rich less healthy. When considering the global correlation between inequality and health, it is evident that the citizens of rich countries are on average much healthier than the citizens of poor countries. Further, as the medical anthropologist Paul Farmer has shown, poor individuals are much less healthy than rich individuals wherever they live. Regardless of where in the world they live, the poor tend to die younger from infectious diseases and violence, while the rich tend to die older from chronic conditions.

**Property rules: capitalism.** Beyond the question of the distribution of property is the question of global variations in how property rules are formulated. Looking at the world as a whole, by far the most important change in political economy since World War II is the transition to the near-universal acceptance of the legitimacy of private property in the means of production. This is a tremendous intellectual shift. The contrast between communist and capitalist countries, which defined half a century of world history, has vanished in most places and is vanishing in the rest. Even the Chinese constitution in the early 2000s requires that the right of private property be secured. The fates of the many millions of people who have made (and are making) the transition from a communist to a capitalist economy have been varied. On the one hand, the rapid privatization of state property in the former Soviet Union has been accompanied by a plunge in living standards to levels that are shocking within Europe. On the other hand, the gradual introduction of private property norms into the Chinese economy since the late 1970s has resulted in what is probably the greatest aggregate increase in well-being in human history.

The explanations for this remarkable global convergence on the legitimacy of private property in the means of production cluster around two poles: the political and the economic. Private property is associated with certain kinds of individual political freedom. One type of explanation for the transition to capitalism, emphasized by the historian Richard Pipes, is that the central control characteristic of communist states became intolerable to those wishing more individual control over the politics and less political intrusion into private life. The other cluster of explanations is economic. Communism is simply less efficient than is capitalism at generating the goods and services

that people want. The leading theorist of the inefficiency of communist economies was the Austrian economist F. A. Hayek (1899–1992). Hayek’s central insight was that the information about how and what an economy should produce is dispersed among millions of individuals, and that it is much less efficient to attempt to move this information to a central source of economic control (as state ownership systems do) than it is to disperse economic control to the individuals who have the information (as private property systems do).

**Property rules: inheritance.** Even though private property in the means of production has emerged as the global norm, there are still major variations among countries regarding more specific property rules. One of the most revealing dimensions of variation runs through the laws of inheritance. Inheritance laws are the site of several conflicting values. Parents tend to want to pass their property along to their children, either because this property is special to the family’s history or because the parents wish to increase their children’s economic security. Yet inheritance laws also permit or even require various forms of inequality to persist across generations, the most significant of these being inequalities between families and between genders. The way that a society frames its laws of inheritance reveals much about its social priorities.

The Islamic law of inheritance derives from the pronouncements of the Prophet in the Koran, which have spurred highly elaborated interpretations. All of the schools of interpretation agree that Islamic law requires a daughter to be given part of an inheritance (a very progressive rule in the Prophet’s day), but restricts her share to one-half of what a son receives (which does not satisfy liberals in the early twenty-first century). Also notable in Islamic law are the strict limitation of inheritance to blood relations, and the prohibition on Muslims either bequeathing to or inheriting from those outside the faith. In countries where Islamic law is the basis of national law, one interpretation or another of the Koranic injunctions is codified. In India, on the other hand, the Islamic law of inheritance applies within Muslim communities but not elsewhere. The inability of India to generate a uniform civil code that would bind both the Muslim minority and the Hindu majority (as well as Buddhists, Jains, and Sikhs) is a symptom of the deep social differences that continue to divide this vast and sometimes volatile nation.

Among the Tswana tribes of Botswana, the rules of inheritance perpetuate the prevailing economic, familial, and gender relations. Most of the tribes are patrilineal, meaning descent is traced through the males. In these tribes the wealth of the family (mostly cattle) is kept within the family by passing most of it to the eldest son. Interestingly, in some of these tribes the rule is that ownership of the family home passes to the youngest son, thereby ensuring that a widowed mother will be supported even if the eldest son moves away, and so that the traditional family homestead will be preserved. Other Tswana tribes are matrilineal. In these tribes it is still a male who inherits the cattle, but it is the oldest son of the oldest sister, not the son, who receives the main inheritance. Here again is seen the property rules sustaining, and even defining, the most basic social relationships over time.

Primogeniture (which vests ownership of land in the oldest son) is especially rewarding as a subject for investigation, because its presence correlates to important features in a society's economy. A Marxist thesis states that changes in political and economic rules will tend to follow developments in methods of production: as Karl Marx (1818–1883) himself said, the hand mill gives you society with a feudal lord, the steam mill, society with the industrial capitalist. The history of primogeniture tends to bear out this hypothesis. In the English feudal period arable land was the most productive asset, yet land was limited and required large estates to be worked effectively (to divide it was to ruin it, as the Scottish economist Adam Smith [1723–1790] remarked). Primogeniture ensured that an estate would remain intact, instead of dissipating the land into inefficient smaller parcels by dividing it among sons. These same economic facts also obtained in Japan during the period of domination by the samurai class, and again in Japan primogeniture defined the rules of inheritance. By contrast, primogeniture was never widely adopted in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century American law. This can be explained by the much greater availability of arable land in America (reducing the need to require a specific form of inheritance) and the increased importance there of industrial and financial capital (the ownership of which can be divided without similarly reducing productive efficiency).

The form of inheritance laws in a society are not only responsive to epochal trends in methods of production, they are also of first importance for explaining the specific character of that society at any time. For example, at the turn of the twenty-first century blacks in the United States faced far greater risks of poverty, unemployment, and imprisonment than did whites. The sociologist Thomas Shapiro argues in a 2004 book that the main explanation for this is that these blacks inherited much less wealth than did their white counterparts. Because blacks inherited less, their opportunities were fewer and they were less likely to be able to withstand the economic shocks that are a part of life in a modern economy. Moreover, this racial disparity in wealth can be expected to increase over time, as whites build up greater capital between generations at a much faster rate. Different rules of inheritance would produce different patterns of social inequalities between the races.

### The Values of Property

As has been seen, the nature of property is complex. The values that bear on property are similarly complex. Indeed as the political theorist Alan Ryan has emphasized, the long history of the debate over the legitimacy of private property can be viewed as a succession of major theorists stressing the benefits or the burdens of this institution. The goods and the bads that these theorists have emphasized can be arranged along three dimensions: the values pertaining to individuals' relation to private property, the values arising from an owner's relation to other persons, and the values generated in a society where private property predominates.

**Personal values.** An owner has many advantages because of his relation to what he owns. As Bentham never tired of pointing out, owning property gives one a secure access to resources that may be essential to carrying out one's plans over

time. Ownership also allows one to enjoy and preserve items of personal value, such as a mother's wedding ring. A Hegelian point elaborated by the legal theorist Jeremy Waldron is that ownership also improves the owner. As an owner works on his property (for example, paints a picture) his self-awareness increases as he sees his personality reflected in the world, and he comes to develop prudence as he realizes that the changes he makes in his property on one day will determine what he starts work with on the next day.

The critics of private ownership have stressed the corresponding disadvantages. Marxist critics have worried that owners will fetishize what they own and come to believe that ownership of consumer goods can substitute for satisfying personal relationships or deserved self-regard. Nor do Marxists celebrate individuals' externalizing their personalities into the property on which they work, since in a capitalist system these individuals will have to sell the objects to others in order to make a living. Finally, nearly all critics of private property have made the mirror-image point to Bentham's concerning the owner's security. Those who do not own property, they note, can expect to be excluded from what they want and need, which makes their prospects predictably wretched.

**Interpersonal values.** The interpersonal benefits of private ownership are many. Property secures for an owner a protected sphere in which he is free to do as he likes. He may protect his privacy by keeping others out, and he may increase intimacy by allowing selected others to enter his private zone. Moreover, as Hegel saw, ownership brings with it social recognition: everyone must acknowledge that the owner's will is decisive over the disposition of the object of ownership. Aristotle also noticed that private ownership increases opportunities for generosity—it would be much harder to give gifts if no one owned anything that could be given.

Yet these benefits also have flip sides. The same rights that bring freedom and privacy can also foster disconnection, loneliness, lack of fellow-feeling, and antisociality. Further, as Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) bemoaned, private property makes each person dependent on others for not only their material wants but for their very self-conception. In a capitalist system one depends for the satisfaction of one's needs on others who may have no concern for one's welfare, and one comes to evaluate one's self-worth mostly by reference to the property one has accumulated.

**Societal values.** Finally, the bitterest battles have been over the societal values attaching to a private property system. On the one hand, private ownership is often superior to common ownership for effective stewardship of resources. ("If everyone owns everything, then no one will take care of anything.") Private property economies encourage each person to work hard to satisfy the wants and needs of others, and so are likely to be more innovative and prosperous. Widespread property ownership is conducive to social stability, since those "with a stake in the society" are less likely to favor revolution or war. And private ownership, as the American economist Milton Friedman (b. 1912) argued, is the best bulwark against the overweening state power that the twentieth century gave so much cause to fear. On the other hand, the pathologies of

private ownership systems have been thoroughly documented. Private property economies foster competitive and exploitative relations, in which each sees the other as only a rival or a master, a servant or a dupe. Private property turns intimate relations into commercial relations (as one sees at weddings and Christmas). Markets multiply false needs and a blank consumerism, wasting resources and leading to uncontrolled environmental damage. Furthermore, a private property economy results in inequalities in almost every important aspect of human life, from political power to opportunities for meaningful work and leisure to life expectancy itself.

The complexity of the values surrounding private property has led all modern societies to frame commensurately complex property laws in an effort to capture the benefits of property while avoiding its burdens. For example, the law may allow the owner of a shopping mall to profit from renting space to popular stores but also forbid him to exclude protesters peacefully handing out political pamphlets. The law may allow a homeowner complete freedom of interior decoration but restrict her freedom to paint the exterior in garish colors so as to protect her neighbors' property values. Private property law in every legal system has become an intricate web of regulations, as each society has struggled to balance all of the countervailing values at stake.

### Contemporary Debates

Within the framework presented here, private property rights are *instrumental* to achieving a *variety* of diverse values. This is by far the predominant framework among those who devise national and international property rules. Within the academy, however, the period since the early 1970s has seen two alternative paradigms emerge. Both of these paradigms tend toward libertarianism, which models politics as the interactions among private property owners and argues that property rights should be robustly resistant to state interference. Although these two paradigms converge on a libertarian political program, they reach it by quite different routes.

**Academic debates: Nozick and law and economics.** Robert Nozick's extraordinary *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (1974) declared that property rights are not instrumental, but are rather morally fundamental. Respect for persons requires, Nozick claims, not only that one respect their rights to life and free movement, but that one respects their rights to their legitimately acquired property as well. A just social order will no more recognize an overall principle for distributing wealth than it will recognize an overall principle for distributing marriage partners. To tax someone's earnings and give these earnings to someone else is on a par with enslaving that person for someone else's benefit—it is a fundamental violation of the taxpayer's rights. The only justifiable state is a minimal one that protects people's property rights against encroachment; beyond this, individuals must remain free to use and sell their property (including themselves) as they choose.

Nozick here develops and radicalizes the theory of the English philosopher John Locke (1632–1704), who argued that private property rights are conceptually and historically prior to political institutions, and that political power cannot

legitimately be used to deprive individuals of the rights they have independently of the existence of the state.

The brilliance of Nozick's arguments stimulated an entire generation of philosophers to respond to the idea that property rights might be fundamental. Within the legal academy a second movement was also reaching consistently libertarian conclusions, albeit from a different set of assumptions. This movement, known as law and economics, holds that property rights are indeed instrumental, but that they are instrumental in achieving a single value: wealth. There are actually two separate law and economics theses: one is that the laws as they exist *do* generally work to maximize wealth, and the other is that the laws *should* work to maximize wealth. The maverick leader of the law and economics movement, Richard Posner, has advanced both theses.

The law is and should be framed, Posner argues, so as to maintain an efficient allocation of resources—meaning an allocation wherein those who are the most willing and able to pay for the various resources have control over those resources. For most resources, the law can achieve an efficient allocation by assigning strong property rights to owners. If someone besides an owner values a resource more than does the owner, they can then simply buy it from that owner. The main role of the state is again simply to enforce these strong property rights. However, there are some cases in which it is more efficient for the law to assign somewhat weaker property rights. For example, if a public use of a resource would bring more wealth than does a private use (building a highway through private ranches, for example), then the state may simply take the resource without entering into expensive negotiations with each private owner.

This wealth-maximizing paradigm has proved a powerful framework for explaining why the law is as it is within capitalist economies. Yet, clearly, even in capitalist economies not all laws work to maximize wealth, and legal economists have advocated a gamut of reforms that they believe would make these economies more efficient. They have generally argued that efficiency would be increased with stronger property rights, a less redistributive state, and, most notoriously, with a wider application of property rules. For example, legal economists have claimed that treating body parts, votes, and even babies as salable property would increase total social wealth. This last argument is one that leads this discussion out of the academy and into the more general public debate over commodification.

**Commodification and progressive property-based arguments.** The question of commodification is: What should be for sale? Disputes have focused on objects and activities that are particularly sensitive for human identity and contemporary morality: blood, organs, psychoactive drugs, sexual services (prostitution) and gestational labor (surrogate-motherhood contracts). The debates over whether these things should be commodities have had a certain structure. On the pro-commodification side, it is often said that commodification allows those who want something (sex or a baby) to get what they otherwise could not. Moreover, commodification tends to increase the supply of scarce goods (there would be few waiting



lists for organ transplants if there were a market for organs). Many pro-commodification arguments simply assert that restrictions on sales (of, for example, drugs) are insultingly paternalistic restrictions on harmless personal freedom. Some also argue that commodification allows the renegotiation of outdated cultural norms: for example, that legalizing surrogacy would show that women are in control of their own reproductive lives. Moreover, it is hard to limit anti-commodification arguments to their intended targets: Why is it wrong to sell one's services as a prostitute, but not as a nurse, a cellist, or a priest?

Anti-commodification arguments have revolved around harms to well-being, status, and community cohesiveness. It is said that allowing markets in, for example, organs would inevitably lead to exploitation of the poor and the desperate, and so exacerbate existing social inequalities. Moreover, legalized prostitution and surrogacy only reinforce the stereotypes of women as properly sexually subordinate or as baby factories. More subtly, it is argued that commodifying people's bodies, or their sexual or reproductive lives, would instill in them a degraded self-image as they came to view themselves as repositories of economic value instead of beings of dignity. Finally, as English social theorist Richard Titmuss found with blood donation, a society that gives gifts instead of making sales fosters the kind of altruism that is crucial for holding a community together.

Anti-commodification arguments have been one standard of the political Left during a period in which the political Right has eliminated everything from state ownership of industry to rent control. The collapse of Marxist ideology, and a new popular presumption against traditional taxation and redistribution schemes, has disrupted leftist politics. Only slowly is the Left learning to deploy property arguments toward progressive causes. One example is in environmental regulation, where it is argued that "dirty" industries should be held liable for the harms (pollution) that their property causes. The Peruvian economist Hernando de Soto, has launched a different kind of progressive-based argument from the Right by claiming that strengthening the property laws in developing countries would allow the many poor who work in the "shadow" economy to take advantage of the resources (houses, land) that they now control but cannot use as legal assets.

### Intellectual Property

Intellectual property brings together many of the themes from the discussions above: conceptual complexity, global variation and convergence, and lively debates over values. Intellectual property rights are rights to control the use or transmission of intellectual creations. There are three basic categories. Copyright covers "expressive" works (such as books, musical compositions, films, paintings, computer programs) as well as performances, sound recordings, and broadcasts. Patents protect inventions. Trademarks and marks of geographical origin (for example, "Champagne") make distinctions among the goods and services that are brought to market. The wide historical variation in intellectual property law across the globe narrowed in the 1990s when intellectual property standards (such as that a copyright endures for fifty years after the death of the author, and patent protection lasts for twenty years)

were built into the treaties establishing the World Trade Organization.

The origins of copyright law lie in the desire of the English crown in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to censor publications by granting printing monopolies to selected publishers; patent monopolies over inventions emerged in Renaissance Italy. In the modern era the main justifications for intellectual property rights have been three. By far the dominant justification (enshrined, for example, in the U.S. Constitution) is that the prospect of exclusive control gives creators *incentives* to create works that will be pleasing and useful to others. A secondary justification, usually associated with continental Europe, is that intellectual property rights protect the *personality* interests of artists in the integrity of their expressions. A third justification, relating mostly to trademarks and geographical marks, is that these rights *assure* consumers by associating a product with known producers.

Global intellectual property law has become extraordinarily elaborate as its framers have tried to balance all of the values at stake. Many disputes remain. For example, many have argued for weakening the patent protection of pharmaceuticals so that sick people in poor countries can get the medicines they need. The pharmaceutical industry has countered that such weakening would lessen the incentives they have to create new life-saving drugs in the future. Another dispute has been over emerging technologies such as the Internet, whose potential, as legal theorist Lawrence Lessig maintains, is shackled by national regulations designed to favor powerful industries.

Given that the fates of millions of lives, the rate of global economic progress, and huge profits drive controversies such as these, it is not surprising that they have moved from the legal into the political arenas. On these issues, as with so many other issues concerning property, the most basic interests and values are at stake.

*See also Capitalism; Class; Equality; Gift, The; Human Rights; Poverty; Wealth.*

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Leif Wenar

**PROPHECY.** The root of the English word *prophecy* is derived from the Greek *prophēteia*, Latin *prophetia*. The root of *prophēteia* is derived from *prophēmi*, which means to speak before or for someone or something. A cognate Greek word is *prophētazō*, which indicates the reception of the gift of interpreting the will of the gods—that is, the gift of prophecy. The gift of prophecy apparently is a universal attribute since many civilizations and their religions claim to have experienced divine revelation through those who have received the gift of prophecy.

Prophecy is one of the ways God communicates with humankind and may be a continuous process. God speaks but the human must hear and comprehend; only then can he or she speak for God as his messenger—that is, as God's prophet. A prophet reveals God's intention for the future but also for the present. Moses is a prototype of the prophet who speaks for God in regard to the present as well as to the future.

### Hebrew Prophecy

The religion of the Hebrews was a prophetic religion from the beginning. The gift of prophecy was a distinctive mark of communion with the divine among the Semites. In the Old Testament theophanies and oracles were predominant in the earliest stages of God's revelation of himself. Before a war or the signing of a treaty, the Hebrew people would "consult" God through its seers and especially its priests. Gradually a

distinction emerged between dreams that truly revealed God's communication with prophets (Num. 12:6; Deut. 13:1–2) and those of professional seers (Jer. 23:25–32; Isa. 28:7–13).

The covenant revealed to Moses on Mt. Sinai became the apogee of God's revelations. Through this covenant God (Yahweh) became the head of the Hebrew people (Israel) and delivered them from Egypt. In return the people Israel promised fidelity to the Law (the Decalogue), which reveals the divine will. The prophets used the covenant in regard to events in their own time. The word of God spoken through his prophets summons Israel to have faith in the Decalogue and the covenant.

The Hebrew word for prophet (*nabhi*) implies that the subject is being acted upon and retains the character of that which has acted upon it. The verb *nibba* means "to make an announcement" and also "to display excessive excitement." *Nabhi* means one subject to the inspiration of a god or demon and designates the behavior associated with a prophet. Thus the word *prophet* could be applied to the prophets of the Bible and to the devotees of Baal. The dark aspects were surely present among the Hebrews, as witnessed by God's destruction of almost all of his creation because of humanity's sinfulness. Because of one man's devotion to God, however, humankind was given a second chance. Noah becomes symbolic of righteousness and of God's promise that he would not again destroy his creation by flood. Noah's story is a prophetic story that offers hope for humankind, who listens to God's voice and heeds it. While Noah himself was not considered a prophet in the strict sense, his faith in and obedience to God established the prophetic tradition among the Hebrews. Noah called upon his contemporaries to repent, hoping that their turning away from sin would secure their safety. Noah was called a righteous man because he obeyed God and served his fellow people. He brought aid to humankind by introducing plows, axes, sickles, and other implements that would lighten their labors, according to the Haggadah (folk legend, in distinction from law, in the Talmud). The Haggadah states that "wherever it says 'a righteous man' the meaning is of one who forewarns others." Therefore in the Haggadah Noah is regarded as a "prophet, a truthful man, a monitor of his generation, a herald persecuted for his rebukes and honesty."

In the last phase of Hebrew prophecy the word *nabhi* took on only the meaning of announcing. The Hebrews used another word in addition to *nabhi* when they spoke of prophets: "Now in time past, in Israel when a man went to consult God he spoke thus: 'Come, let us go to the seer [*ro'eb*]. For he that is now called a prophet [*nabhi*], in time past was called a seer" (1 Sam. 9:9). "Second sight" is a description of the ways in which prophets arrived at their forecasts of the future and appears to be a universal phenomenon. Seeing and hearing are the principal means by which the Hebrew prophets received commands from the invisible God. Whereas seeing God was an important part of God's revelation of himself, hearing God's word as revealed in history was of equal if not greater importance. The "second sight" of the prophet is seeing that which is unseen by others and hearing that which is unheard by others. The Greek word *oida* reflects this association. *Oida* means

literally “I have seen;” because “I have seen,” therefore “I know.” What the prophet has seen becomes for the prophet knowledge from God. A prophet has seen and consequently knows. An ordinary person has seen only.

The divine will might be manifested indirectly through the sights and sounds of physical nature, such as the rustling of trees (2 Sam. 5:24), the movements of clouds (Exod. 14:19–20), the power of the winds (Exod. 14:21–22), the consulting of lots, or even the movement of entrails of animals offered in sacrifice (Ezek. 21:19–21). God spoke directly through certain ministers chosen to be his prophets. Communication between God and humans was varied. Sometimes the prophet dreamed dreams (Numbers 12:6; 1 Sam. 28:6); sometimes the prophet’s inspiration came from music (2 Kings 3:15). Numbers 12:2–8 sets forth the distinctions God himself made about the types of prophecy and the reasons behind these types. When Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of their jealousy, they complained, “‘Is it through Moses alone that the Lord speaks? Does he not speak through us also?’ And the Lord heard this.” God then summoned Moses, Aaron, and Miriam to come out to the meeting tent. All three obeyed. “Then the Lord came down in a column of cloud, and standing at the entrance of the tent, called Aaron and Miriam. When they both came forward, He said ‘Now listen to the words of the Lord: Should there be a prophet among you in visions, will I reveal myself to him, in dreams will I speak to him; not so with my servant Moses. Throughout my house he bears my trust; face to face I speak to him, plainly and not in riddles. The presence of the Lord he beholds.’” Since God chose Moses as the one to whom he would speak directly and face-to-face, Moses represented the highest order of prophecy, indeed the “prophet of prophets.” God had appeared to Moses in a burning bush in the land of Horeb and had bade Moses to lead the Hebrew people out of its bondage in Egypt. On Mount Sinai God spoke face-to-face. Moses towers above all in the Old Testament as a prophet and as a national leader, forging a captive people into a nation, Israel.

In *The Guide of the Perplexed*, Moses ben Maimon (*Maimonides*; 1135–1204) states that “the prophecy of Moses our Master is distinguished from the prophecy of those who came before and who came after him. . . . The same applies, in my opinion, to his miracles and to the miracles of others, for his miracles do not belong to the class of the miracles of the other prophets. The proof taken from the Law as to his prophecy being different from that of all who came before him is constituted by His saying: ‘And I appeared unto Abraham . . . but by My name, the Lord, I made Me not known to them.’”

Moses was the mediator between God and Israel in explaining the responsibilities of the covenant confirmed at Sinai. His significance as prophet, lawgiver, nation builder, and intermediary cannot be overemphasized. His wonders performed on behalf of Israel far exceeded those of any other prophet. Prevailing over the mightiest force of nature, he activated God’s power. He could speak with God at will, “mouth to mouth.” He is called God’s servant, his chosen; on occasion he is called “the man of God,” which is a prophetic epithet. In Deuteronomy (34:10–12) he is compared to other prophets: “Since then no prophet has arisen in Israel like Moses, whom

the Lord knew face to face. He had no equal in all the signs and wonders the Lord sent him to perform in the land of Egypt against Pharaoh and all his servants and against all his land, and for the might and the terrifying power that Moses exhibited in the sight of all Israel.”

Numbers (11:25–30) relates that God bestowed some of the spirit taken from Moses on the seventy elders in the meeting tent. Two men who had remained in the camp, Eldad and Medad, also received the spirit of the Lord, and they prophesied in the camp. An aide to Moses asked Moses to stop them from prophesying, but Moses replied: “Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all the people of the Lord were prophets! Would that the Lord might bestow his spirit on them all!” (Num. 11:29). From this passage it is clear that God bestows the gift of prophecy upon whomever he wills. It is also clear that Moses had all the qualities necessary to be “the man of God.” Therefore Moses can justly be called the archetype of a prophet.

The history of Israel could be said to demonstrate the significance of prophecy in the life of the nation. In Sirach (39:1) the sage sets forth for his contemporaries the essential nature of the Law and of prophecy. “How different the man who devotes himself to the study of the Law of the Most High! He explores the wisdom of the men of old and occupies himself with the prophecies.” The prophets who preceded the period of exile that began with the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 587 B.C.E. conceived of themselves as defenders and guardians of the covenant. Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakkuk, and Jeremiah called Israel to fidelity and service to God and his covenant; because of Israel’s frequent failure to observe the covenant, the prophets warned of divine punishments. Amos emphasized the role of prophet: “For the Lord God doth nothing without revealing his secret to his servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7). Prophets were not always well received by the people, however, and Amos was urged to go into the land of Judah and prophesy because he had proclaimed that Jeroboam, the king of Israel, would die by the sword and Israel would be carried away from its land (7:10–11). Amos steadfastly maintained that his words were God’s words. He also warned of a famine more severe than a famine of bread and water: the cessation of hearing God’s word.

The prophecies of Isaiah, the son of Amos, warn of the punishment of Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem, indeed of all the lands that had forgotten the Lord. The prophet’s language is beautiful, even as he enumerates the sins of the people. In spite of his reproofs against the people, he offers hope that Jerusalem will be restored: “And many people shall go, and say: Come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall come forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge the Gentiles, and rebuke many people: and they shall turn their swords into plowshares, and their spears into sickles: nation shall not lift up sword against nation” (Isa. 2:3–4). Isaiah often expresses optimism, emphasizing the peace that will follow true repentance and a turning to the words of the Lord.

Jeremiah occupies an important place among the prophets because it was he who tried to determine criteria by which the

word of God could be recognized: the authentic word of God would be known when the prophet's words were fulfilled (Jer. 28:9, 32:6–8); the prophecy would demonstrate faith in God and the traditional religion (23:13–32); and the heroic witness of the prophet himself would validate the prophecy (26:11–15). In contrast to Isaiah, who inferred that God needed his holy city and a people for his self-expression in the world, Jeremiah believed that God could establish his word among men with or without Israel (44:28). However, Jeremiah held that a remnant of Israel must survive to carry on the tradition and that Jerusalem, God's city and the seat of his worship, could not be allowed to be destroyed; but the deliverance of Israel would come from God himself, not from any human agent.

Whereas Jeremiah prophesied doom and Isaiah consoled, Ezekiel, whose name appears to mean "may God strengthen," began with doom and ended with consolation. He is perhaps the most colorful of the Hebrew prophets. The dramatic opening of Ezekiel's prophetic book sets the tone for the prophet's experiences. He writes that the heavens opened, and he saw visions of God: "And I saw and behold a whirlwind came out of the north, and a great cloud, and a fire infolding it, and brightness was about it: and out of the midst thereof, that is, out of the midst of the fire, as it were the resemblance of amber" (Ezek. 1:4). This divine chariot was borne by four creatures who had four faces with the likeness of humans, and all had four wings. After this awesome experience the Lord expressed the responsibility that he had placed upon the prophet: "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman to the house of Israel: and thou shalt hear the word out of my mouth, and shalt tell it them from me" (3:17). Ezekiel spoke for God in his denunciations against false prophets who follow their own spirit and see nothing, against the abominations of Jerusalem, against the ineffectiveness of the princes of Israel, and against the apostasies of Israel. Ezekiel's denunciations and his calls for repentance are based upon his insistence on the justice of God. Ezekiel was the only prophet since Moses to lay down a plan and law for the future. His plan envisioned true repentance and obedience to God as essential for a restored Israel. Then God in his justice would provide a permanent reconciliation with his people. Ezekiel followed the earlier prophetic view that God's special holiness, grace, and protection are reserved for Israel, although God rules over all the world.

Messianic expectations are also not missing in Ezekiel. Because of the wickedness and greed of the shepherds of Israel, who neglected their flock, the Lord will drive out the evil shepherds: "And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David: he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I the Lord will be their God" (34:23–24). This passage is extremely significant for the association of the shepherd with the house of David and its subsequent centrality in the messianic expectations concerning Jesus of Nazareth. In the Gospel of Matthew (1:1–17), the gospel writer traces the lineage of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the Lord's appointed shepherd, from Abraham to David and from David to Christ.

### **New Testament**

Although the influence of prophecy declined after the time of the Hebrew prophets, the ancient belief in the word and

symbolic act maintained its efficacy because of humanity's need of God and of communion with him. The sacraments of the Christian Church exemplify the belief in this concept of the power of word and acts. When Hebrew prophecy was stilled for a long time, new prophets were inspired by the divine voice to proclaim the good news about a child, soon to be born to a virgin, who would be the savior of the people. The Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, telling him that the Holy Spirit had touched his betrothed and that she would bring forth a son to be called Jesus, "for He shall save His people from their sins" (Matt. 1:18–25). John the Baptist called the people to repentance, for "the kingdom of heaven is at hand." He proclaimed Jesus as the one of whom Isaiah spoke.

Luke records the story of the angel who appeared to Zacharias, a priest, as he was burning incense in the temple. The priest's wife, Elizabeth, was barren, but the angel spoke to Zacharias with astonishing words: "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for thy petition has been heard, and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son and thou shalt call his name John. . . . [He] shall be filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb." (Luke 1:13–15). When Zacharias asked the angel how this was possible, since he and his wife were elderly, the angel identified himself as Gabriel, "who stands in the presence of God; and I have been sent to speak to thee and to bring thee this good news. And behold, thou shalt be dumb and unable to speak until the day when these things come to pass, because thou hast not believed my words, which will be fulfilled in their proper time" (Luke 1:18–20). The prophecies of the angel Gabriel were fulfilled: Zacharias was dumb until the birth of the son, John, who was to be the forerunner of Jesus. Gabriel also appeared to Mary, a virgin, telling her that she had found favor with God and that she would bring forth a son from the Holy Spirit whose name was to be Jesus: "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of David his father, . . . and of His kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:32–33). Prophecy clearly was the foundation of Christianity and continued the messianic expectations of the Hebrews who believed that the Messiah, accompanied by Elijah the prophet, would usher in a national regeneration. In Christian belief Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah who would both regenerate the nation and bring salvation to the whole world.

Isaiah is a favorite prophet among Christians because his prophecies are considered to proclaim a prince of peace who will be the Messiah. The prophet proclaimed that a virgin would conceive and bear a son whose name would be Emmanuel (Isa. 7:14). "For a child is born to us, and a son is given to us, and the government is upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counselor, God the Mighty, the Father of the world to come, the Prince of Peace" (9:6). This prophecy is the heart of Christian belief in Jesus Christ as Prince of Peace and Messiah. The epithets of Jesus—prophet, priest, and king—also have their roots in Isaiah: "His empire shall be multiplied, and there shall be no end of peace: he shall sit upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom; to establish it and strengthen it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth and forever: the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this" (9:7). The Servant Songs (Isaiah 42 and 49)



also proclaim a message of salvation and deliverance that can be associated with Israel and in Christianity with Jesus as the suffering servant. Isaiah and Christian prophecy both emphasize universalism.

One of the most significant examples of Christian prophecy was on the day of Pentecost, when after the Crucifixion the apostles were gathered together and were astonished when a sound like a strong wind came down from heaven; then “parted tongues of fire” settled on each of them, and all were filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in foreign tongues (Acts 2:1–4). The universality of the languages used represented the universality of the message of salvation and redemption. Peter’s discourse makes clear the point of the speaking in tongues: “this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel: ‘And it shall come to pass in the last days, says the Lord, that I will pour forth of my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. And moreover, upon my servants and upon my handmaids in those days will I pour forth of my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. . . . And it shall come to pass that whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved’” (Acts 2:16–21).

As the history of Israel was dependent upon the word of God as spoken through his prophets, Jesus Christ was the epitome of revelation and the fulfillment of the Law, according to the New Testament and Christian teaching. As Paul expressed it, “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, last of all, in these days has spoken to us by His Son, whom he appointed heir of all things” (Heb. 1:1–3). Paul describes Jesus as a superior mediator, superior to the angels and to Moses. In Judaism and in Islam Jesus is considered a prophet; in Christianity he is superior to all prophets as the Son of God and Messiah, who by his death brought salvation to all who would live according to the will of God and accept his sacrifice as expiation of humanity’s sins.

In Christianity apocalyptic motifs are also strong, especially in the Gospel of Mark (13) and in the Book of Revelation (Apocalypse), which is “the revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave him to make known to his servants the things that must shortly come to pass and he sent and signified them through his angel to his servant John” (Apoc. 1:1). The apostles were witnesses and messengers of Christ and proclaimed what they had seen and received. To Paul revelation is “manifested now through the writings of the prophets, according to the precept of the eternal God, and made known to all Gentiles to bring about obedience to faith—to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be honor forever and ever” (Rom. 16:26–27). In the Gospel of John, Christ reveals God and is God revealed (John 1:18; 14:6–7).

### Islam

Islam is also a prophetic religion, since the angel Gabriel revealed the divine message to the prophet Muhammad, who in turn communicated it to humankind. In the Koran every prophet of God is called a Muslim, and this is said to indicate that Islam is the true religion for the whole world. The prophet

Muhammad is the last and most perfect of the prophets who preached Islam among different nations at various times. Islam is said to contain within itself all religions that came before it, all of which have been revealed by God. Consequently, Islam believes not only in the prophet Muhammad but in all the other prophets. The Koran is said to be a combination of all the sacred scriptures of all religions. In Islam revelation is seen as a factor necessary in human evolution and is the universal experience of humanity; in prophetic revelation God has bestowed this gift on all nations of the world. According to the Koran, prophets were sent to all nations and peoples. The Koran expresses the paths of devotion and the forms of worship and the means by which humankind may attain communication with God. The relationship between human beings in all their experiences on earth is also defined in the Koran, which establishes rules for the progress of individuals and for society at large. The aim of Islam is to unify humankind in a universal brotherhood, and religion is the most efficacious force in accomplishing this unity. “All men are a single nation” (Koran 2:213). The Koran teaches that divine revelation has three forms: “And it is not vouchsafed to any mortal that Allah should speak to him, except by revelation or from behind a veil, or by sending a messenger and revealing by His permission what He pleases” (42:51). The third mode is the highest form of revelation, exemplified by Gabriel’s message to the prophet Muhammad, and is limited to the prophets of God.

Prophets also received the lower forms of divine revelation. Before Muhammad received the first revelation of the Koran, he had visions and heard voices. The details of the law were instilled in his mind as an “inner revelation.” Revelation is granted to righteous people who follow the Prophet and also to others. The highest form of revelation, which only the prophets enjoy, requires a passing from one world to the other while the prophet is fully awake. This revelation works a profound change in the prophet that is visible to those who see the prophet. The Koran was revealed to Muhammad by Gabriel in stages, and its arrangement is considered part of the divine plan; the word *Koran* indicates “he collected together things” and also means “he read or recited.” Islam teaches that God has sent to every nation prophets whose responsibility was to uplift the morals and regenerate the religion of each nation. In contrast, Muhammad was a prophet for the world.

According to Islam, a new age of prophecy was born with Muhammad. The Koran establishes the concept of world prophet when speaking of Muhammad: “We have not sent thee but as a bearer of good news and as a warner to all mankind” (48:9). (All scholars of Islam, however, are not in agreement about Muhammad as world prophet.) The Koran places prophecy as the greatest of all miracles and pronounces that Islam will be triumphant and spread to the farthest corners of the earth. Ultimately Islam would be supreme over all the religions of the world. In the tenets of Islam “prophethood” came to a close with Muhammad, but divine revelation continues as a gift of the righteous. The world does not need a new prophet, according to Islam, because there is the Koran, the perfect law. Still, in each century it is believed that a reformer will arise to remove any errors and to elucidate the religious truths of Islam in changing circumstances.



### Greece and Rome

In ancient Greece and Rome oracles abounded. The primary meaning of the word *oracle* is “the response of a god to a question asked of him by a worshipper.” The word also indicates the college of priests who manage an oracular shrine or the shrine itself. Since there were many gods in the Greco-Roman world, there were many shrines, several of which were widely known. In each shrine the god was consulted in fixed procedures, and in the most primitive oracles the god revealed answers by means of the casting of lots, by observation of signs, the rustling of leaves in a sacred tree, the marking or entrails of victims sacrificed upon the altar of a god, or the movement of objects tossed into a spring. At healing oracles such as that of Asclepius at Epidaurus, the consultant slept in the shrine and received a vision after having performed preliminary sacred rites. At the most important oracles, the god spoke through a male or female intermediary who had spent hours in purification. At Delphi, for example, the Pythian priestess of Apollo drank from the sacred spring and chewed laurel leaves before taking her seat on the tripod in the temple, from which she in a trance heard the questions asked of her by the pilgrims to the shrine. Her responses were probably incoherent to the questioner, but a priest of the temple translated her utterances into understandable language. It was customary for the consultants to present questions in writing, and responses would be returned in written form. Many gods gave oracles at their shrines, but Apollo was the most famous and was considered an oracular god. He had important shrines at Delphi, Didyma, and Claros, as well as in Boeotia, Troas, and Lycia. Zeus was also an oracular god, with shrines at Dodona and Olympia.

For those seeking freedom from pain and disease, prophetic incubation was practiced among the Greeks and Romans, who believed that sleeping within the precincts of a temple would result in revelations, visions, and freedom from sickness. Speaking in dreams was common to all the gods, but only some were believed to be aroused by specific acts to give responses or perform certain functions. In the second century C.E. Pausanias described the emotional experience received by the devotees at the oracle of Trophonius as they descended into the earth and visited the god. Incubation was used especially at the temples for bringing about cures. At Epidaurus the cure was effected mainly by faith healing; however, in the *Orations* of Aelius Aristides (117–187 C.E.) and in later inscriptions, medical prescriptions were revealed. The great oracles were Greek, but there were also oracles in Syria, Egypt, and Italy. The oracle of Ammon at Siwa, although an Egyptian deity who was worshipped in Nubia, Syria, and Libya, was known to the Greeks in the seventh century B.C.E. and became so famous in the Greek world that it rivaled Delphi and Dodona. Ammon was portrayed on Greek coins with the head of Zeus and the curling horns of Ammon.

Prophets and prophetesses played a significant role in Greek literature from the time of Homer. The mythological blind prophet Tiresias was an infallible source of information for the Greeks and appears frequently in Greek tragedy. Most memorable is his warning in Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* to Oedipus, king of Thebes, that he was the land's pollution. In this drama

the prophet Tiresias spoke the truth about Oedipus, who did not believe him. Yet the prophet's words—“God within, reckon that out, and if you find me mistaken, say I have no skill in prophecy”—provide the denouement of the tragedy, as the angry Oedipus begins his painful search for the truth about himself. The female prophetess Cassandra has a significant role in the *Agamemnon* of Aeschylus, when she, speaking with the chorus, predicts the death of Agamemnon at the hands of his wife, Clytemnestra. She also sees her own death, soon to come. Cassandra is an example of a prophet who was disbelieved, though she spoke the truth, because Apollo had placed this curse upon her, since she had refused his love. The significance of prophecy in Greece can be well documented from a study of Greek tragedy.

In Italy various prophetic sites provided the petitioner with numerous types of responses. The sibyl, a prophetess usually associated with Rome and Cumae, spoke from various localities and was known as early as the Greek philosopher Heraclitus (c. 540–c. 480 B.C.E.). At first she was a lone female prophet, but later her name, Sibylla, was made plural (Sibylle), and she flourished in various parts of the world. Ancient authors speak of different numbers of sibyls. Marcus Terentius Varro's naming of ten sibyls has been generally adopted. The ten sibyls resided in Persia, Libya, Delphi, Cumae in Italy, Erythrae, Samos, Cumae in Aeolia, Marpessa, Ankara, and Tiburtis. Of all the sibyls the Cumaean Sibyl in Italy is the most famous and was immortalized in Virgil's *Aeneid*. To learn of his fate in Italy, Aeneas was advised by Helenus to seek out the sibyl at Cumae: “When you have sailed here and have arrived at the city of Cumae and the divine lakes and Avernus resounding with its forests, you will see the frenzied prophet who sings the fates from the depths of the cliff and commits her signs and symbols to leaves. Whatever songs the maiden has written down, she arranges them in order and leaves them set apart in the cave.” (*Aeneid* 3:441–446).

Noted historians of the Roman republic reported that one of the sibyls offered nine volumes of her prophecies to Tarquin the Second, who refused the high price she asked. She then burned three of the books and asked the same price for the rest. Tarquin again refused but finally bought the last three, since the sibyl had burned all but these. The sibyl then disappeared, and her books were preserved and were called the Sibylline Verses. These prophetic books were revered by the Romans, and a college of priests was in charge of safeguarding them in the temple of Jupiter on the Capitoline Hill. When the Capitolium was burned in 83 B.C.E., the Sibylline Verses were destroyed. Verses were sought in Greece to replace those destroyed. Although eight books of Sibylline Verses remain, they were probably composed in the second century C.E. by Christians. The Renaissance humanist Guillaume Postel wrote a commentary on Virgil's fourth eclogue often referred to as the “Messianic Eclogue,” in the preface to which he indicated that if the eclogue were read as “Sibylline Enthusiasm,” which he equated to the most divine inspiration of the Holy Spirit, it would be worthy of the bishop of Clermont, to whom Postel dedicated the work. In his commentary he wrote that from the judgments of Janus, the sibyls, and the holy men of the Gentiles, among whom he included Job, prophecies developed

in a continuous tradition. He argued that the final age of the Cumaeian song, which all antiquity awaited, depended upon the instauration of a golden age that also had been proclaimed by the sacred vow of the sons of Shem under Christ.

In both Greece and Rome ordinary people in the historical period were sometimes inspired to prophecy. In Greek those inspired people were called *chēsmōdoi* and in Latin *vates*. In *De divinatione* (Concerning divination) Cicero (106–43 B.C.E.) notes that Romulus did not establish the city of Rome until the auspices were taken and that Romulus, the parent of the city, was said to be the best augur. In Rome a college of augurs took the signs, usually from the flight of birds. Observations were taken before every public action. Cicero also indicated that the knowledge of augury came from the Etruscans. In *De divinatione* he identifies two methods by which “souls were aroused without reason and knowledge, by their own movement, spontaneous and free; one was raging, the other dreaming; the augurs believed that the divination of fury was contained especially in the Sibylline Verses.” They selected ten men from the state to interpret the Sibylline Verses. Virgil was considered a *vates* in subsequent centuries not only because of his so-called Messianic Eclogue but because of his *Aeneid*, the grand epic of Rome, which detailed the great glory that was to come to this small settlement on the Tiber. It seems worth noting that perhaps the greatest Roman authors, Cicero in prose and Virgil in poetry, understood the significance of prophecy in the lives of men and in the life of the state.

Among other significant oracles in Italy was the oracle of the dead at Avernus, a deep lake near Puteoli. Because of its great depth, the dark woods that surrounded it, and the offensive exhalations that Avernus spewed forth, this spot was considered by the ancients the entrance to the underworld. It was to Avernus that the Cumean Sibyl led Aeneas so that he might enter the underworld, meet his father, and learn his fate and that of his offspring. At Tibur there was an incubation oracle of Faunus. The goddess Fortuna had an oracular shine at Praeneste, where a boy would throw billets of oak wood (*sortes*) on which sentences had been inscribed. These randomly tossed billets might provide the consultant with advice for his own situation.

### Middle Ages

Saint Augustine (354–430) considered the Psalms of David to be prophetic songs inspired by the Holy Spirit. He made reference to Christ’s command: “It is necessary that all things be fulfilled which have been written in the Law of Moses and in the Prophets and in the Psalms about me” (*Luke 24:44*). He also noted “The more open [the Psalm] seems, the more profound it is accustomed to be seen.” His belief that God spoke through his prophet David in the Psalms is quite clear in *De civitate dei* (The city of God). He accepted David’s authorship of all the Psalms “because the prophetic spirit was able to reveal even the names of future prophets to King David as he was prophesying, so that anything which could be appropriate to their person could be sung prophetically.” To Augustine the Psalms seemed to contain all the prophetic ideas found in the Law and Prophets individually. In a gloss on Psalm 18:15, when the psalmist wrote “the foundations of the world have

been revealed,” Augustine made clear the significance of prophets: “And the Prophets have been revealed, who were not being understood, upon whom the world, believing in God, would be built.” Tertullian and Jerome also ascribed prophetic mysteries to the Psalms.

As Rome waned and life in Europe became very difficult, prophecies began to abound. In fact, prophecy is often seen as a major, if not the major, theme in the literature of the Middle Ages. It is difficult to present even a small fraction of the “visions of the end,” as Bernard McGinn has aptly described them. A text called *The Tiburtine Sibyl* appeared in the fourth century and became an important prophetic voice that attempted to relate events of the Christian empire to a new apocalyptic vision. This work was renewed in the early eleventh century and had a continuing influence, since its universalism and the universalism of the Christian message transcended historical boundaries. Prophecies abounded about the antipope, who led the people of God away from his calling. The antipope would ultimately be replaced by an angelic pope, who would restore the church to its pristine purity and unity. The Great Schism and the Black Death were events that prompted prophetic utterances.

The influence of Joachim of Fiore (c. 1135–1202) was very significant in the Middle Ages and continued into the Renaissance. His prophetic admonitions for reform of the church were influential in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, especially in Venice. There was a tradition that Joachim had a small room in the upper section of the Basilica of San Marco, in which he designed the mosaics of the basilica. His prophecies were known from those designs and also from beautiful editions of his works, many of which were published in Venice. An important book of prophecies, *Expositio magni prophete Ioachim in librum beati Cirilli de magnis tribulationibus et statu Sancte Matris Ecclesie* (Exposition of the great prophet Joachim on the book of the blessed Cyril about the greatest tribulations and the state of the Holy Mother Church), was published in Venice in 1516. Although this work contains the prophecies of Telesphorus of Cosenza, John of Paris, Ubertino of Casale, and the author of the so-called Mestre prophecy, it is Abbot Joachim’s likeness that is seen on the title page. The heading “Abbas Ioachim magnus propheta” appears above a beautiful woodcut showing Joachim seated at his desk with head turned slightly and with his left hand held to this ear, while with his right hand he records the prophecies from God. In the *Expositio* Joachim expresses great expectations of an angelic pope, chosen by God for his sanctity. Joachim wrote that the patriarch of the Venetians would warn the flock about their sins and that the Venetians would be reformed from their iniquities. The reform would continue until the Day of Judgment, so much so that “not such good men among all nations of Christians will be found, as Merlin says in his own revelations.” Joachim also noted that before the Antichrist should come, a certain man, chosen by God, would come forth in Italy, though he was not an Italian, and would help to free Italy from her servitude to Lombardy. The prophecies of John of Paris contain the famous Mestre prophecy, which is filled with political overtones about France and Germany and the need to reform the church and follow in the train of Joachimite prophecy.

### Renaissance

The diarist Marino Sanudo the Younger, in an entry for 30 May 1509, recounted the prophecies of Piero Nani, a Venetian patrician and a brother of the Order of Charity. Nani warned the patricians that Venice would lose all of its dominance because of sin, and the flagellation would last twelve years. He had a great supply of prophecies that predicted hunger and famine. Sanudo reports that Nani then remarked: "The people at present pay much attention to prophecies and go into the Church of San Marco, seeing the prophecies in mosaic which the Abbot Joachim made." In the Basilica of San Marco two unnamed figures in mosaics, designated only as *sancti*, were studied for their presumed messianic connotations. Under one figure were the words, no longer visible, "Fiet unum ovile, et unus Pastor." The figure, clothed *pontificalmente* in brown and carrying a bishop's staff, was believed to represent the angelic pope, according to Francesco Sansovino (1521–1586), the author of *Venetia città nobilissima*. Also influenced by the expectation of the angelic pope and "one sheepfold," Sansovino wrote a prophetic poem, still in manuscript, entitled *A principi Christiani*, in which he describes the evils of his day. After many troubles are endured, there will be a renovation of the church.

Francesco Sansovino has not been generally associated with prophecy, and prophecy has not usually been considered an important aspect of Renaissance thought after 1530. Research during the 1990s, however, demonstrated that prophecy was a continuing tradition throughout the sixteenth century, especially in Italy. The sack of Rome in 1527 by the forces of the Holy Roman Empire spawned prophets, and "inspired preaching" continued in spite of restrictions imposed by the Lateran Council and the Roman Inquisition after 1542. There were numerous preachers throughout Italy, and none more famous than Fra Girolamo Savonarola (1452–1498). Giovanni Nesi, one of the disciples of Marsilio Ficino, followed Savonarola's call for a *renovatio mundi* and glorified him as a prophet in the tradition of Hermes Trismegistus. Savonarola, however, denied any relation between the prophet and his prophecy, since prophecy was a gift from God, and humans had no power of prophecy without divine infusion. His prophetic preaching expressed his unfaltering belief in the necessity of reform on all levels of society and especially in the church, and his audiences were spellbound by his sermons, which often lasted for many hours.

Cardinal Egidio da Viterbo declared in his inaugural address to the Fifth Lateran Council of 1512 that he had preached for twenty years about the times prophesied in the Apocalypse. The strength of his convictions about prophetic preaching is all the more significant since the Lateran Council in 1517 prohibited "free and inspired preaching" and prophesying about the last days. One of the most influential books circulating in Italy during this period was the *Mirabilis liber* (1524; Wondrous book), a compilation of many prophecies from various ages that contained predictions about the reform of the church and the conversion of the enemies of Christianity. In the second decade of the sixteenth century, Father Zaccaria Ferreri wrote a devotional tract entitled *De reformatione ecclesiae* and sent it to Pope Adrian VI. On the

title page Father Ferreri includes the prophetic question "Are you the one who will come, or are we awaiting another?" The question reminds the pope that he should become the angelic pope who would reform the *Ecclesia militans*.

In European literature of the sixteenth century, visions of the Antichrist and the universal judgment were commonplace. In 1525, in the two nights preceding Pentecost, the painter Albrecht Dürer dreamed that the end of the world had arrived with a dire flood that encompassed the world; even the sky was obscured by a huge column of water. The dream made such an impression that next morning he painted his vision in watercolors and annotated various aspects of the dream in the margins.

Many prophets were women who proclaimed the need to practice works of charity and to aid in the reformation of the church. The messages of female prophets differed very little from their male counterparts. Francesco Zorzi (1466–1540), a Venetian friar and the author of *De harmonia mundi* and the *Problemata*, among other famous works, was deeply influenced by a mystical woman, Chiara Bugni, whose ecstasies, according to Zorzi, had revealed to her the mysterious secrets of divine will and endowed her with prophetic knowledge. Her renown in the monastery of San Sepolcro was so great that she was elected superior of the monastery. She accepted this responsibility only after God had revealed to her a "remarkable sign." Her fame was enhanced by Zorzi's confidence in her profound spirituality, which seemed to prepare the way for the ecstasies that engulfed her. Zorzi's belief in an angelic pope who would reform the church may have been influenced by Chiara Bugni. There are many accounts of the miracles, ecstasies, and visions that were attributed her.

Another important prophetess of Venice was called simply the Venetian Virgin because she did not choose to recall the name of her family. She said to the great French humanist Guillaume Postel that "no one knows from whence I am." The great sanctity of her life and her unceasing works of charity so inspired Postel when he first met her that he called her the Mother of the World. Her given name was Giovanna, and Postel said she was given this name more from divine will than from the will of her parents. The name Giovanna is the feminine form of Giovanni (John), who heralded the coming of the Messiah. Postel wrote often of her many miracles and her prophecies. She experienced a miraculous change in her person when she experienced the presence of Christ descending into her. She prophesied that the reformation of the world would begin in Venice; the Turks would soon be converted and would be the best Christians in the world; all who had faith in God and love for all would be blessed by Christ; ultimately all sinners would be restored as if the first parents had never sinned; and human nature would be led to such perfection that all men would be as Christ except for his divinity. The life and prophecies of the Venetian Virgin influenced Postel to the extent that they became for him a foundation for the restitution of humankind and for a universal monarchy under the rule of God. After his encounter with the Venetian Virgin, Postel proclaimed himself the Virgin's "little son," who would endeavor to set in motion the restitution of all things she foretold.



Postel was not the only humanist who turned to prophecy. Indeed, many humanists followed the same course, becoming reformers within or outside the Roman Church. Anabaptists following Jakob Hutter listened for the voice of prophecy that would proclaim the next installation of God's kingdom on earth. Erasmus wrote in 1526 in one of his *Colloquia* that the "Antichrist is awaited." The wars among Christian princes, popular uprisings, the collapse of Christian unity, and the threat of the Turks made it appear that the last days were at hand.

A French humanist who called himself Dionisio Gallo arrived in Venice on the feast of Pentecost in 1566. He was rector of the College of Lisieux until he experienced a mystical anointment by the Virgin Mary, who told him that he had been chosen by God to summon the princes to help him, God's servant and messenger, reform the church, society, and the universities. He was unsuccessful in gaining the help of the king of France, Charles IX, whose advisors claimed that the prophet was mad. Sometime in 1565 he left France for Italy, where he visited Duke Cosimo de' Medici of Florence. He composed a long work on prophecy while in the duke's household, as well as a work in which he laid out the program for the reformation of the church that the Virgin had given to him. He spent time in Ferrara as the guest of Francesco d'Este, marquis de Masse, and Duke Alfonso II, to whom he read his *Legatio*, the title that he gave to his program of prophetic reform. When he arrived in Venice, he lived in the home of a Venetian magistrate and was befriended by a Venetian patrician. Preaching for three days in the court of the Palazzo Ducale before his incarceration for preaching without a license, Dionisio urged the Venetians to assume the responsibilities bestowed upon them by God. He urged all three princes and the doge and Senate of Venice to aid him in his grand enterprise to help reform the church, since the pope and cardinals seemed unable or unwilling to accomplish this task, though it was ordained by divine decree. Dionisio remained in prison in Venice for about eighteen months and was finally released and put on a boat headed for Ferrara. Dionisio's prophetic message and his choice of "sacred space" in the ducal palace revealed his clear understanding of the connection between prophecy and politics in the sixteenth century.

See also *Christianity; Futurology; Islam; Judaism; Millenarianism; Miracles; Mysticism; Religion.*

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**PROTEST, POLITICAL.** *Protest*, in the context of this entry, is understood as more or less public visual dissent from an official governmental authority or from customs sanctioned socially by the dominant classes. The protesting voice may be that of a minority or a majority but is here defined, following historiographical and ethical norms, as being directed toward "good causes": democracy, civil rights, justice for all, equalization of resources within societies and between countries (e.g., North and South), halting ecological destruction, freedom from repression, and especially (in the twentieth century) a world without war or fear of war. The lack of these qualities has been most vigorously protested in the so-called Western democracies, where a certain freedom of speech is offset by governments' control of the major media of printed press



## Passional Christi und



## Antichristi.



**Realistic cartoon.** *Entry of Christ into Jerusalem/March to War of the Pope* (1521) by Lukas Cranach.

and television. The avenues of protest discussed in this entry include cartoon, comic strip, painting, mural, and especially poster; the latter are most conspicuously mobilized in mass demonstrations, such as those found worldwide in the early twenty-first century opposing the U.S. war in Iraq. This peaceful expression of public opinion, uniting literally millions of bodies in one place at one time, may be the most powerful manifestation of the lack of democratic access to the approved organs of power and information, that is, major communications media and government itself.

Those opposed to the goals of the iconography of protest, when they cannot ignore it, characterize it as the propaganda of the ignorant, and insofar as such iconography constitutes “art” (if not “Art”), critics set up false dichotomies between aesthetic merit and political message, between form and content, the former falling in value in inverse proportion to the strength or immediacy of the latter. The best “visual dissent” is remembered, indeed is immortalized as such, on aesthetic as well as moral grounds, the two aspects being inseparable. While visual protest is here being considered as a mass medium, that is, as imagery available to large numbers of people at one time and over time, new ideas generate new media. To the major public vehicles of visual protest cited, one may add such minor and individual political manifestations as graffiti, a banner unfurled over a freeway, the message chalked on walkways, lapel buttons, refrigerator magnets, bumper stickers, and, above all, T-shirts. Moreover, the poster fixed on an office wall

or a newspaper cartoon pinned to a bulletin board may have a social afterlife or ripple effect long after the event that occasioned it has been forgotten.

### Cartoon and Caricature in Early Modern Europe

Before the invention of printing, nonmilitary expression of resistance to authority was limited. The evidence for visual protest before the sixteenth century is sparse and fragmentary. It may be, however, as recent scholarship has claimed, that the eleventh-century Bayeux tapestry contains in its margins and elsewhere, through representations of incidental cruelty to civilians, subversion of its overt purpose, which was to justify the Norman invasion of England. In the later European Middle Ages, alternative, critical, and satirical views were expressed in the marginalia of religious manuscripts and in the sculpted misericords and capitals of churches, which mocked aberrant ecclesiastical behavior and the abuse of sacred rituals, as well as human foibles. Absent a connection to wider currents of opposition, it is safer to see these as expressions of playfulness and mild irreverence toward the human, in the context of unwavering respect for the eternal verities of the divine and the fundamental structures of belief.

The invention of printing allowed for new modes of dissent and popular expression; henceforth, visual and literary protest marched hand in hand, the visual (readable by semi-literate and illiterate) acting as a means of popularization, a true international vernacular. The satirical engraving and





Polemical against Spanish domination. *The Duke of Alba, and the Three-Headed Beast of the Cardinals de Guise, Granvelle and Lorraine*, Dutch, c. 1570.





Allegorical cartoon. *The Donkey Pope of Rome* (1523) by Lukas Cranach.

woodcut, virtually coeval with the invention of printing from movable type in the middle of the fifteenth century, first came into its own as a polemical tool during the Reformation, fostered directly by Martin Luther (1483–1546) himself and executed in large numbers in separate single-leaf prints (broadsheets) and as illustrations to the Bible and other religious texts by the Saxon court artist Lucas Cranach (1472–1553). They were crude in style and rude in intent and probably as effective as any cartoon campaign has ever been. Two examples illustrate different modes of operation of the “cartoon” (the word itself did not come into use until the mid nineteenth century): realistic representations confronting the ideal and real (*Passional*), and the fantastic/grotesque, or allegorical (*Pope-Ass*). Since the propaganda was waged intensively on both (or all) sides, it is remarkable that the Lutheran cartoon enjoyed qualitatively and quantitatively complete supremacy against its Catholic counterpart. This is because the established church eschewed and despised woodcuts, which it considered vulgar and subversive, like as any uncontrollable means of expression generated from below.

Later in the sixteenth century the Dutch used allegorical-polemical engravings in their fight for religious and political

independence from Spain; their old habit of close visual and moralizing observation of social reality became a satirical reflex in the seventeenth-century Golden Age of Dutch painting and engraving, which abounded in political as well as social critique of all kinds. Meanwhile, in Germany, a great painting tradition had subsided in the course of the Thirty Years’ War (1618–1648) into pathetic complaint against war in word and graphic image, such as broadsheets complaining about the devastation of Germany by foreign armies. The best visual record of this period, however, is that of Jacques Callot (1592–1635), who protested the military abuses of his prince, the duke of Lorraine, in his *Miseries of War* (1633), and also military cruelty to civilians in general. His denunciation of war, artistically nonpareil at the time, was unequalled until *The Disasters of War* by Francisco José de Goya (1746–1828), also a great satirist of the mores, clerical and lay, of his country and age. A comparison of the two series illustrates how style is bound by time and country: Callot’s soldiers and peasants, in their sparkling elegance, add up to no less a heartfelt denunciation than the gritty, visceral etchings of Goya. Both were court artists secure enough to dissent, although Goya’s etchings denouncing the Napoleonic invasion were not published until 1863, and his work was censored.

People tend to honor the moral value of dissent by its willingness to confront censorship, but the definition of censorship is a difficult one, and dissent in the great democracies in the early twenty-first century is often stifled by internal censoring or self-censorship, apathy, and largely government-influenced or corporate major media of newspaper, television, and commercial advertising. In the early modern age, all European governments sought control of publication, but this occurred perhaps least of all in the Netherlands. Toward the end of the seventeenth century, antiwar art was best represented in the engravings of the Dutch artist Romeyn de Hooghe. The wars and massacres he opposed were those of Louis XIV of France, the national enemy, and he expressed his opposition in the spirit of Protestant and Dutch patriotism.

Rich as the eighteenth century was in satire of all kinds, a new technique, caricature, first nursed innocently in Italian art studios of the seventeenth century, gave new force and direction to visual protest. William Hogarth (1697–1764), painter and engraver, was certainly a key figure, but he was primarily a social rather than a political satirist, and he wanted to be thought of as the master of character, not caricature, which is constituted, properly and historically speaking, through exaggeration of the personal features of an individual. When the cartoonist attacks the individual (or the individual’s party) rather than the cause, it is often understood that by subverting or eliminating the peccant politician, something essential will change. This is especially the case when similar governments are constantly reshuffled, as in the two-party systems of the United Kingdom and United States.

### Nineteenth Century

The extraordinarily prolific golden age of caricature (c. 1780–1820) was a peculiarly English phenomenon, arising out of a tradition of relatively free debate, party rivalries, imperial-industrial-economic growth, and the fear of the French



Abbildung des vnbarmerhertigen/ abschewlichen/ grausam, vnd gewulichen Thlers/  
**W**elches in wenig Jahren/ den grössten Theil Deutsch-  
 landes erbärm- vnd jämmerlichen verheeret/ außgezehret vnd verderbet. Veneben einem Bericht/  
 woher dasselbe seinen Ursprung/ wer solches erzogen/ ernehret/ ic. Endlich durch was Mittel  
 seiner wieder loß zu werden. Männiglich an Tag gegeben.



**E**inem Wolfe/ im Walde grühen/ vnd auff brei-  
 tet / Erden /  
 Der Mensch vnd Vieh / terreit in Ert um vnd  
 die Schaf zerstreut/  
 Ein Löwen / Einem wilden Hef / man sehr wenig trauet/  
 Ingleichen einem Menschen / so mit böß / der sein Sün beraubt/  
 Schlang / Endern / Natten vnd Kröten / man sehr fürcht / thut  
 Bringen die Menschen oft in Nöthen / auch vmb Leib vnd Gut  
 Ihrs gleichen ander schädlich Vieh / einem Himmel hoch/  
 Welche den Menschen spaz vnd frue / zu Schadn schleichen  
 nach/  
 Willich seind diesen Bestien allen die Menschen feindlich gram/  
 Keines man leben lassen soll sie / dem wo man kan/  
 Aber abt solche liebten thut / außzueich vnd ernehret/  
 Demselben ist an Leib vnd Gut / viel Anglück beschert  
 Der Mensch so nun auf dieser Welt / sein Creutz vnd Anglück/  
 Mit allem Rieser selber holt / vnd regis auß dem Nüet/  
 Ob er sich dessu kunn entschlagen / b' ghehrs aber nit zuhumb/  
 Wenn will er dann sein Schadn / laagn / den er blömbt darv/  
 Solt man dan auch jeg in Teuschland / dergleichen Leute sindu?  
 Ach Gott es ist zu sagen ein Schand / daß s' voll fern vnd hünd/  
 Dan wie geschwind ist teinn herfür / in vnser liebe Teuschland/  
 Von allen Quälten / ein Thier / der Bestien vorgnant.  
 Dß Thier laufft außgerichet ember / mit zornigem Gesicht/  
 Wie ein Löwe / Wolf vnd Dier / teins Menschen schoner  
 nicht.  
 Mit Furcht vnd Schrecken / in der Zeit / die armen Leute mit  
 Hauffu  
 Machn sich in der Flucht bereit / dem Thier zuentlauffu /

Was nun diß Thier ergriffen thut / Stab Dßer land vñ leut  
 In die Menschen mit Leib vnd Gut / machet es ihm zur Deut/  
 Dann es einen Wolfesraden hat / der nicht ist zufrühen  
 Mit Gold vnd Geld frue vnd spaz / muß man sein Betz stillen.  
 Zur Eert / hat es eine Menschen Hand / mit Feuer / Viech /  
 Spiess / Degen/  
 Verheeret ver derbet leut vnd land / was ihm kömbt erzeign.  
 Des Löwenis Kunn zur lincken Seit / thut scharr vmb sich  
 greiffu /  
 Machet viel arm / in kurzer Zeit / mit durchzueich vñ Erzeiffu  
 Wer sich ihm wiedersehen thut / muß es schwerlich büßu /  
 Verleurt außleich Leib vnd Gut / wird vntzueit mit Füßu  
 Die Truch / so kaum auß der Ert / in volk / Viecherlahn /  
 Verderbt es wie ein wilds Pferd / das niemand halten kan.  
 Et hat ein giftig Naturschwanz / mit viel Würmern vñ ein /  
 Die im Abzug verderben ganz / was noch könniglich seyn.  
 Ihm folgt auf dem Fuß geschwind / Hunger s' noch vnd die  
 Pest/  
 Die raumt weg diß auff den Grund / was sich noch finden  
 leß.  
 Wie nennet man dann dieses Thier? Es wird Arlez genant/  
 Von wo man in sommer es dann her? Auß vnserm Bar' land/  
 Der Mensch Sünde in gemein / diß böß Thier gebären/  
 Welche selbst thut die Ert sein / vnbarbarerst verzeihn/  
 Wer hat aber diß schrecklich Thier / biß daher außgezogen?  
 Es hat / sag ich gewiß / all' her / vñ all' Driff' geleign/  
 Wer hat dich in Thier grausam / geboln auß die Wein/  
 Thier vnd Thier weit außzueichan? wir all' groß vnd klein/  
 Aber weilt diß recht verheeren / das Gort Straff nit vñ?  
 Die Welt dencket es thut geschick / obn' geht vñ in / wunder.  
 Weil die Menschen in Sünd verharnt sein / Weßlung zu  
 spieren  
 Daß auß' recht bleibt Gort's Arm / die Straff ernt / wirn  
 Wird nun die Sünde nicht erkent / Gort vñt' Gnad' gebett'  
 Vnd besser sich ein jeder Stand / wie es hoch von nit' den/  
 Wird Gort / wie er g'han gar viel / dem Thier sein Willn  
 labn/  
 Mit vns den gar auß' zufrühen / welche niemand hindra kan/  
 Alleine wahre Dier vnd Duff / wer ein Müet' gut/  
 Daß Gort von seinem Born ablies / wänd von vns sein' Nuth'  
 So könn wir ein gnädig Gort / durch frem' merdn erlangen  
 Würden bald diß Thier leben tod / verderbu vnd vntzagan/  
 Es würde sich mit seinem Schwert / selbst würgen vnd ledm/  
 Also Teuschland geholn werden / aus diesen Jammer vñnd  
 Nöthn  
 Daru alle / was es verschlungen / heuffig wieder außzueichn/  
 Drüber viel Arm verjagt vertrungen / sich würdn' berglich  
 freun  
 Durch diß Mittel würden wir bald / von Gort' Hilf' er' r' den/  
 Wo nicht / müßn wir gleich' Gestalt wie ander ganz' verdr' den/  
 Der ist nun weit vnd wegliebet / wird selig g' d'aim.  
 Der sich an andr' leut' Schaden feyrt / habn' g' was die h'el' /  
 Aitn.

**E R D E.**

1618

A graphic reaction to the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648). *The Monster of War*, German, c. 1630.



Revolution and Napoleon. Napoleon Bonaparte (1769–1821) became (with help from other countries) the single most satirized figure in history. The masters James Gillray (1756–1815) and Thomas Rowlandson (1756–1827) and, later, George Cruikshank (1792–1878), when not engaged in patriotic propaganda, took on a wide social range, scurrilously attacking individual political and social personalities. At this point, “protest” as embodied in caricature became a kind of social and political game played on shifting and not always honorable grounds. The broadsheet caricatures, often colored, were exhibited as conversation pieces in homes and became immediate collectibles whose seditious edge very occasionally landed artists and their publishers in jail. But to the degree to which the caricatures, some beautifully fashioned and labor-intensive (unlike the often rudimentary contemporary scribble), were entirely independent of the literary text, one may speak of a form of visual protest and satire sui generis, the equivalent of which in the early 2000s, in terms of its physical and moral independence, is the poster, not the newspaper cartoon, which, notoriously, is subject to being dropped or never being carried at all, if it might offend the newspaper’s owners or advertisers. The freedoms of the artists were in fact greater than those of the writers, and the attacks of Gillray and others on the British royal family were of a virulence approached (but not surpassed) only during the 1960s. In Gillray’s time the Royal family was embroiled in party politics, and attacked with a bias accordingly; and the Prince Regent, whose personal vices became a favorite butt, could only buy up copies of the caricatures against him, and hope to buy off the artist himself. Later, the anti-Royal cartoon was considered simply unpatriotic, and until the 1960s, in addition tasteless or cowardly in its attack upon a person or an institution not set up to respond in kind.

In terms of sheer recklessness, vulgarity, and, indeed, scatology, it may be that British caricature overreached itself, for the Victorian age demanded a quieter, more balanced, and less violent tone. Cruikshank is the transitional figure from Regency license to Victorian prudery, and Charles Dickens (1812–1870), whose literary art tried to subsume the pictoriality of the English satiric tradition, and who confessed himself a great admirer of Hogarth, could not afford his great predecessor’s sexual openness. The reform movements of the 1830s and Chartism were the last fling of pictorial satire, which by the 1830s was beginning to infiltrate newspapers and magazines. Henceforth, after early years in radical opposition, the weekly *Punch* (founded 1841), standard-bearer of the humorous cut and the political cartoon (the word derived from an Italian art term, *cartone*), settled into a cozy commentary of bourgeois mores and dignified allegories (by John Tenniel at their best) of current affairs, always “patriotic” when international. Like the *New Yorker* (founded in 1925) in the United States, *Punch* became a kind of “official” magazine of humor and critical commentary until it was superseded by the truly radical, muck-raking magazine *Private Eye* (founded 1961) in the United Kingdom.

*Punch* called itself “the London Charivari” after the Parisian magazine that spearheaded a great satiric movement of graphic opposition to King Louis-Philippe and his betrayal of the Rev-



Caricature of British King George IV. *A Voluptuary under the Horrors of Digestion* (1792) by James Gillray. PHOTO CREDIT: VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM, LONDON / ART RESOURCE, NY. IMAGE REFERENCE: ART 113206

olution of 1830. As a form of virulent and hilarious visual dissent against politics and politicians, the French satirists, led by Honoré Daumier (1808–1879), Jean-Jacques Grandville (Jean Ignace Julien Gerard; 1803–1847), Edouard Traviès (1809–1865), and many others were stopped in their tracks by draconian press laws of 1835 and forced to confine their efforts to comment on the social scene. Not all their art was comic. It is ironic that the French demanded a freedom of the press modeled on that of the English at the very moment when the English were no longer exploiting it as they had earlier; so that French “caricature” for a long period (after 1835), while no longer personal-political, is much stronger, more socially dissident, and more broadly based than the English (such as the staid John Leech or George du Maurier in *Punch*), who became the amused “illustrators” of a status quo they condoned. The French were also more artistically ambitious, and the caricature magazines aimed to give “art prints” (usually lithographs) that were more supple in tone, striking and simply larger in format, than the modest woodcuts of the English. Muzzled under Napoleon III (r. 1852–1871), political fury returned in France with the Franco-Prussian War, the fall of the emperor, and the Paris Commune, the disaster of which excited both sympathy and revulsion.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the humorous illustrated magazine caricature, and its important offshoot, the comic strip, achieved status as distinct cultural phenomena,



**Depiction of a government massacre.** *Rue Transonain, 15 Avril 1834. A murdered family* (1834) by Honore Daumier. Lithograph. PHOTO CREDIT: ERICH LESSING/ART RESOURCE, NY

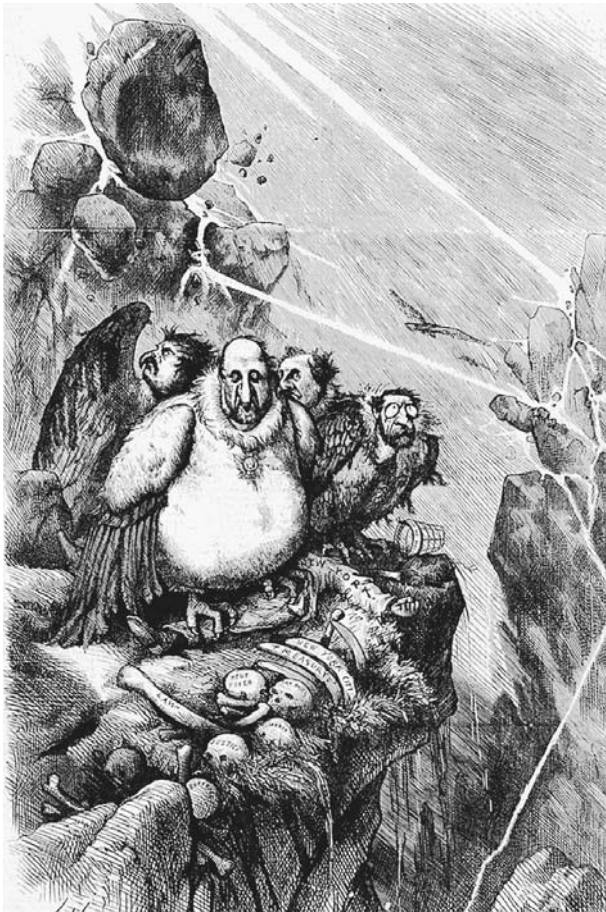
and was well established in Western European countries, Latin America, even Russia and the Slavic nations. One may ask whether the idea of actually changing political systems survived this social institutionalization. Did the cartoon aim merely to raise a chuckle over morning coffee? Was it a Band-Aid over social wounds, an anesthetic against social pains, like religion, an “opiate of the people”? Was it merely a safety valve permitted—even encouraged—by governments adept at co-opting social discontent? The advent of potentially revolutionary and actually revolutionary movements gave a new edge to graphics. Socialism and anarchism, then female suffragism, regenerated protest graphics and joined with a new art, larger than even the full-page cartoon of old—the posters. In the United States the cartoon achieved a moment of glory with Thomas Nast (1840–1902), the pro-Union, antislavery crusader who was credited by his political enemy William Marcy (“Boss”) Tweed (1823–1878) with having thoroughly exposed him in the eyes of the populace; it was through Nast’s cartoons that Tweed was identified and returned for trial from Spain to the United States on embezzlement and corruption charges. Second to Nast was Joseph Keppler (1838–1894), founder of *Puck* (in 1877), with *Judge* and *Harper’s Weekly* the leading U.S. critical magazine, which joined lustily in the strife caused by political rivalries, monopolies, and the emergent socialist and communist movements. “Dissent” during the whole era of democracy, when not truly radical (trying to uproot), may be defined as simply opposing the party in power from

the viewpoint of its rival (in a two-party system, like that of the United States and the United Kingdom). To be sure, there have always been outstanding syndicated newspaper cartoonists taking on the fundamental questions of the age, but one wonders whether the larger context in which they are allowed to work, as a kind of “licensed jester” at the court of Capital, does not weaken any impact they might otherwise have. The advent in the 1960s of Ron Cobb cartoons in the so-called underground press (“alternative” or “radical” would be a better word), such as the *Los Angeles Free Press* and many college papers, offered drastic, existential views of war and other ills, which have struck deeper into the historical record.

### Twentieth Century

Whether the numerous cartoons and posters produced to celebrate and promote the Russian Revolution (1917) may be counted as “protest” is an open question insofar as they were produced in cooperation with the new government. But patriotic protest existed to counter threats to the Revolution from the Western democracies and the reactionary White armies. In the early 1920s many Russian artists important as formal innovators in the history of art, notably the constructivists such as Vladimir Mayakovsky, Alexander Rodchenko, and El Lissitzky, using a variety of styles, some abstract, some folk-derived, made posters demanding resistance to the enemy, the promotion of literacy, and the building of industry. The Stalin era crushed dissent and vanguard artistic styles, and it was only around 1990,





**Exposing corruption.** Cartoon of Boss Tweed and his associates as vultures (1871) by Thomas Nast. RARE BOOKS AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DIVISION. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

following a period of *perestroika* (restructuring) and *glasnost* (openness), that posters resumed a socially critical (if still largely officialist) function. In the later Soviet era, clandestine art, like the famous clandestine (privately circulated samizdat) literature, flourished. In the generation before the fall of the Soviet Union, impressive posters for peace were officially sponsored by the government agency Plakat, in “protest” one might say against the silent (or actively war-mongering) propaganda of the so-called Free World governments, bent on nuclear supremacy. Here one may speak of “protest” officially sponsored by the militarily weaker of the superpowers, against the officially sponsored war-mongering propaganda of the other.

The posters from World War I produced by governments in the Western countries, in huge print runs and in innumerable different designs, were narrowly focused on winning the war, vilifying the enemy, and demanding sacrifice at home. They are hardly “protest” but become so in *You Back the Attack!* (2003), a book of “remixed” prowar posters from the two world wars, a classic example of using the enemy’s weapons against him. Here, a straight graphic of a heroic pilot stepping into the cockpit of his airplane, adds to the slogan “You Back the Attack! We’ll bomb who we want.” Thus the world of



**Soviet poster advocating resistance to the enemy.** *Against Gen. Wrangel's White Guards* (c. 1920) by Vladimir Mayakovsky. PHOTO CREDIT: SNARK/ART RESOURCE, NY. IMAGE REFERENCE: ART172706

advertising, political and commercial, which has taken over entire public air and street spaces, not to speak of invading living rooms through newspaper and television, is subverted in its own language. “Billboard conversion” (or “correction”) is an illegal pastime of guerrilla artists who “improve” the slogans and images of billboard advertising. For instance, the addition to the egregiously sexist car ad saying “If this car was a lady, it would get its bottom pinched” of the words “if this lady was a car, it would run you down”; or the airline billboard “X airline flies every day to El Salvador” was changed by the substitution and addition of a few letters (fast, to avoid being caught by a passing police car) to read “Reagan lies every day about El Salvador.” It is only very occasionally that a peace group goes to the great expense of renting billboard space in the legal manner.

In the United States during World War I the real protest of the era came from the leftist periodical *The Masses*, which consistently opposed the war, unlike leftist sectors elsewhere in the United States and Europe. *The Masses* and *The New Masses* were dedicated to class struggle in the Marxian sense and used the (unpaid) graphics of brilliant artists such as John Sloan, Boardman Robinson, and George Bellows, who denounced the

prevalent social injustices, especially war and racism. *Masses* stalwart Robert Minor eventually turned from militant art to militant activism. Several painters during the first third of the twentieth century, dedicated to realistic styles and popular subjects, such as William Gropper, Philip Evergood, and Reginald March, are remembered perhaps more for their prints denouncing poverty and other social injustices, which eventually merged into opposition to rising fascism.

The other great foyer of anticapitalist and antiwar dissent came from Germany, where new caricatural and Expressionist styles lent force to the graphics of Johnny Heartfield and George Grosz in their exposés of the bitter conditions of living under the Weimar Republic and the rise of Adolf Hitler. Heartfield established a new medium of satire, photomontage, which in the Germany of the 1980s would undergo a potent revival with new editions of his work, and new photomontages by Klaus Staack and Jürgen Holtfreter. A Heartfield photomontage shows, for instance, Hermann Goering with his real face and body taken from a photograph, but with a butcher's arm around him and a bloody axe in his hand, while the Reichstag burns behind him. Heartfield and Grosz were satirists, using humor and the grotesque; Käthe Kollwitz (1867–1945), by contrast, from the turn of the century onward was always deadly earnest in her graphic manner, deploring the plight of the working classes and the poor. She has left one of the most enduring antiwar icons, the simple, anguished *Nur Wieder Krieg*, reactivated in recent decades.

### Painting, Murals, Photography

Painting, traditionally commissioned and bought by the rich, generally supportive of the political and religious needs of established order, is by its nature less given to popular viewpoint and polemics, but certain figures stand out as exceptions: Hieronymus Bosch (c. 1450–c. 1516), whose paintings are certainly socially-critical of a gamut of personal vices, including those of corrupt lawyers, as seen in his *Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins* (under Avarice), or those of the clergy, male and female, as evident in his *Ship of Fools*. On the other hand, the fascination of this artist lies very much in his works' incomprehensibility to viewers of the early twenty-first century. Others are Hans Holbein's (1497?–1543) *Dance of Death* (1520s–1530s); exposing again the corruption of Law and Church; Pieter Brueghel (c. 1564–1638), whose paintings and engravings condemn the lusts of emergent capitalism and the warring of states; lesser Dutch and Flemish artists making small paintings depicting contemporary (sixteenth to seventeenth century) military abuses of civilians, unique in Europe and intended for an antiwar public; Hogarth, who raised the satirical genre to aesthetic heights, but depended financially on the sale of engravings after the paintings; Théodore Géricault (1791–1824), exposing a great contemporary scandal in *The Raft of the Medusa*; and Eugène Delacroix (1798–1863) celebrating the revolution of 1830 in *Liberty Leading the People*. From the middle of the nineteenth century Gustave Courbet (1819–1877) was pleading for the dignity of the common man, and paid for his real-life (pro-Commune) radical activism with a prison term and exile. These are, however, exceptions in the mainstream development of painting as defined by orthodox

art history, and sculpture hardly plays a role at all, apart from some small bronze busts by Daumier, ridiculing ministers and deputies, which remained, however, unknown at the time. The anarchism that informs the personal philosophy of the impressionist painter Camille Pissarro (1830–1903) is scarcely evident in his paintings, except as a vague sympathy for simple, rustic folk, equally present in the painting of the (earlier) Barbizon and other realist schools.

In the twentieth century the picture becomes wonderfully complicated. While the tendencies of certain late nineteenth- to early twentieth-century art in favor of the worker and the poor, heartfelt but unfashionable, such as the Ashcan School in the United States, seem to yield entirely to the stylistically and philosophically self-regarding—not to say self-indulgent and solipsistic—art that is now designated as avant-garde, this is a matter of ideologically driven historiographical bias. The Eurocentric, male-oriented, art-historical “canon” has been reluctant to admit the so-called “margins” (art of the Third World, minorities, women, lower classes). The caricature and “primitivism” that helped break the bonds of academic formalism also helped—partially or fragmentarily—to break the bonds of class prejudice. The bourgeoisie sought refuge for political revolution in artistic revolution, and drew on imagery from the (subjugated) Third World “primitive” to enrich rather than subvert. The artistic “revolution” of cubism is less socially conscious than those of dada and surrealism, which sought a kind of anarchistic destruction of social as well as artistic conventions. Surrealism particularly attracted communists and political radicals. The greatest artist of the age, Pablo Picasso (1881–1973), grew increasingly narcissistic in his work, except when it came to certain egregious military-political horrors; *Guernica* (1937) and *War and Peace* (1952) both, in different ways, try to universalize a particular incident or a particular war out of historical specificity.

All the great social movements of the century had their artistic responses. Racism, the civil rights movement, the degradation and pride of blacks in the United States are among the themes of Charles White and Jacob Lawrence. Ben Shahn was the great poster maker for human rights. While abstract expressionism in the Cold War 1950s tried to transcend the very idea of social engagement and celebrate the individual-in-isolation, U.S. pop art in the 1960s embraced ironically but not critically the world of rampant consumer imagery, of advertising, and of fashion. Among all the competing “-isms” arising later in the decade, conceptual art was formally most suited to social critique, since it aimed to represent and challenge current ideas and concepts rather than extend notions of art-as-form. Hans Haacke in New York used the language of corporate advertising to expose the sinister links between art and its patronage in industrial corporations. The new feminists, who used a variety of new visual media, conceptual, video, performance, and body art, directed attention to their hitherto unvalidated personal, social, and biological condition, and to the ongoing subordinations of women and women artists. The very idea of an exhibition of all-women artists became a form of protest against historic exclusions. In the world of postermaking, the work of the New York-based Guerrilla Girls gained notoriety, not least through their (illegal) fly-posting on random public



spaces, which was also the tactic of Robbie Conal, who has concentrated on large hostile portraits of politicians, and had many brushes with the law. The text-and-image art of Barbara Kruger, is close to the poster, and constitutes enigmatic and sardonic critique of life under capitalism.

In the postwar era there have been innumerable artists torn by the injustices of war, poverty, and racism; their efforts have been gathered into exhibitions, notably Lucy Lippard's *A Different War* (c. 1990), showing works about the Vietnam experience, by U.S. artists and veterans of the war. Artists have formed into short-lived groupings ("Artists Call Against Intervention in Central America" in the 1980s, led by Claes Oldenburg, a pop sculptor with truly satirical flashes); and the commercial illustrator like Tomi Ungerer was moved, by the Vietnam War, to do some of the most pungent posters of the era.

**Murals.** In Mexico following the revolution (1910–1920) the once-elite and almost forgotten art of wall-painting suddenly became populist, radical, and literally revolutionary: a major weapon in the struggle to preserve Emiliano Zapata's revolution. Diego Rivera (1886–1957) returned from his early and commercially promising phase as a cubist in Paris to dedicate himself entirely to utilitarian, didactic, exhortatory, and critical revolutionary themes. Rivera and his successors, José Clemente Orozco (1883–1949) and especially the politically hyper-activist David Alfaro Siqueiros (1896–1974)—the three are known as *Los Tres Grandes*—laid the basis of an entirely new, socially conscious artistic movement in the very old medium of fresco painting. They revived ancient precolonial art forms, denounced the Spanish invasion, celebrated the war of independence and Benito Juárez, and damned the tyranny of subsequent presidents and the betrayals of the revolution. Their example fomented a conviction in the United States during the Depression years that art should speak to popular needs and hopes; so that a number of artists in the United States (where the three great Mexicans also worked) filled the walls of public buildings with socially relevant themes in a variety of non-abstract, easily legible, more or less social-realist styles. Since they were largely sponsored by the U.S. government's Work Progress Administration (WPA), they could not raise their voices too loud, or communistically; and when Rivera dared to put Karl Marx and Vladimir Lenin into his great anti-capitalist "Man at the Crossroads" mural in New York, the sponsor, John D. Rockefeller, had it destroyed. Printmakers followed the lead: Leopoldo Méndez established a *Taller de Gráfica Popular*, which, like the murals, has resonated ever since.

The Great Depression also saw the rise of a new art form as a means of social agitation: photography. At the turn of the century, Jacob Riis (1849–1914) and Lewis Hine had turned their lens upon the miserable tenement housing and the plight of immigrants. In the Depression years Margaret Bourke-White (1906–1971), Dorothea Lange (1895–1965), and Walker Evans (1903–1975) registered images regarded as artistic masterpieces: the dignity and pathos of the migrant worker, the terrors of unemployment, and the hypocrisy of the United States touting itself as offering the highest standard of living in the world, above a line of miserable and ragged unemployed. In the international domain, photography-as-reportage was

waged by Robert Capa, recording the Spanish Civil War from the Republican side, condemning the Japanese in China, covering World War II, down to Vietnam, where he was killed when he stepped on a mine. Poster makers have made full use of press photographs and photomontage where reality seems to condemn itself.

### **After World War II: The Poster and the Mural**

The years immediately following World War II were deceptively quiescent in the West. By the 1950s, the civil rights movement in the U.S. South and protests against nuclear weapons in Europe generated some oppositional graphics. These were overshadowed in the 1960s by the war in Vietnam, which was the catalyst for the greatest popular mobilization in the United States since the Civil War, and an unprecedented outpouring of first posters and then murals. It has been estimated that perhaps 100,000 different posters were produced during the height of the Vietnam War (1966–1973), by individuals and small groups, usually in association with one of the many antiwar organizations, large and small. The simple artless slogan and design "War is not healthy for children and other living things," conceived for Women Strike for Peace was repeated in every medium and endures. The posters may be regarded as a pictorial arm of the underground press, that alternative press made possible by cheaper printing; but many of the posters, produced in small quantities and silk-screen, testify to a crafts technology and the sacrifice of much



Vietnam War protest. *America Is Devouring Its Children*, poster by Jay Belloli, Berkeley, California, 1970. Silkscreen on paper. COURTESY OF JAY BELLOLI

time and personal money. Many of the more ambitious and professionally designed posters were sold from specialized stores catering to college students. Often unsigned, the posters used an array of styles enlarged by the simultaneous neo-art nouveau, psychedelic, and pop movements, with much reference to current commercial advertising, which it ipso facto subverted. The posters used national symbols such as the U.S. flag and the Statue of Liberty to expose the hypocrisy of the United States and its endeavor to suppress movements of national liberation; they condemned the suffering of civilians, the use of napalm and defoliants in Vietnam, and police brutality, the unfairness of the draft, and the corruption of the politicians at home. Posters took over the traditional role of the cartoon, which seems weak in comparison to the large, aggressive, and sometimes gaudy effects of the poster. Protest posters demanded an end to racism and the oppression of women, and moved ecology into public consciousness with awareness of destruction of the environment by industry.

The most bitter and pathetic of the designs condemn the cruelty perpetrated against Vietnamese civilians, and several of the concepts and photographs used have become classics. Live TV coverage (in color) and press photographs turned popular opinion and eventually opportunist politicians against the war. The photograph of a Vietcong suspect being shot in the head

in broad daylight in a crowded street by an officer of the U.S.-backed South Vietnamese army; that of a ten-year-old girl running screaming and naked down a road, her back on fire with napalm; the Goyaesque heaping of corpses of the My Lai massacre—these images were used again and again. The latter was made and distributed for free by the Art Workers Coalition, an alliance of New York artists. A small number of posters actually called for the victory of the Vietnamese under Ho Chi Minh. The condemnation of the U.S. war in Vietnam, like opposition to the war in Iraq forty years later, was a global protest, and there was hardly a country in the West that did not contribute its share. It is justly claimed that the antiwar movement, which had its own genius for publicity, played an essential role in ending the war by forcing U.S. withdrawal. In France, exasperation with the Vietnam War and the government of Charles de Gaulle led to a unique outpouring of posters in support of the student-worker strikes of May 1968. The “Affiches de Mai” are a stylistically homogeneous number of posters produced by the ad hoc group of students calling itself the Atelier Populaire, which functioned out of the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. The designs were all based on very simple and drastic stencils silk-screened onto the cheapest paper; the style was imitated by students in the School of Environmental Design in Berkeley (1970), where a comparable surge of protest followed the invasion of Cambodia.

Cuba experienced a dramatic vitalization of poster art following the 1959 revolution that was out of all proportion to its size and resources. The production of one organization alone, the Organization of Solidarity with the Peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America (OSPAAAL), which published the magazine *Tricontinental*, into which the posters were at first folded, ran into hundreds in the 1967–1987 period; the wit, ingenuity, and imaginative use of national symbols, in posters designed to support popular movements on three continents, had an impact far beyond the borders of the island nation, especially in the United States. The major dissident silk-screen artist-printmaker Rupert Garcia was much indebted to the Cuban style of posters, which acted on just about every sphere of Cuban life and revolutionary endeavor, consistently socialist, anticapitalist and anti-imperialist. Cuba’s is the best example of officially sponsored anti-imperialist protest art. Perhaps the most enduring icons that emerged from this context are the portraits of Ernesto “Che” Guevara, the immortal matrix for which is based on a photograph by the Cuban photographer Alberto Korda. This has been called the most famous photograph of all time, the Mona Lisa of photography. The image of the communist guerrilla in an apparent moment of serene vision appears with an astonishing ubiquity on T-shirts, buttons, banners, posters, and all manner of consumer objects. There has been a popular transformation of the historic Che (murdered by U.S.-backed Bolivian military in 1967) into a symbol of struggle for social justice, hope for a better world, and the spirit of personal sacrifice. Given the relative lack of native production, the number and variety of OSPAAAL posters for popular struggles of Africa emerging from European colonization and resisting the apartheid-supported wars of Jonas Savimbi, where Cuban soldiers were much involved, offers to North and West the most accessible iconography of African liberation. The Cubans were producing

posters for Nelson Mandela at a time when the United States was still branding him a terrorist; in terms of ubiquity, he stands beside Che Guevara.

The political poster, the graphics of protest, has become the subject of many books, conferences, exhibitions, and collections; political posters are also actively traded on the eBay Internet site and elsewhere. Like the mural movement, political poster-making is a worldwide phenomenon, and much of the subject matter is similar. More like a pamphlet than a book, posters are unattractive to libraries because of their fragility and are distributed in the most random fashion by organizations large and small at public street demonstrations and otherwise informally. The collection of the Los Angeles-based Center for the Study of Political Graphics consists of some fifty thousand works from some one hundred different countries, with many thousands of different items from (or about) Cuba, Nicaragua, and Chile. The “about” is important in such cases where the countries have endured assaults from the imperial power, for the poster is one of the most potent expressions of solidarity, and often uses text in more than one language (OSPAAAL used four). The extraordinary outpouring of posters made in Nicaragua to support the revolution there is matched by the numbers done with the same intent, and particularly to condemn the U.S.-sponsored Contra war, in Europe and the United States; the topics represented, literacy and health for all, the rights of women and children, the right to national sovereignty strike a common chord worldwide. The mural in Nicaragua, again quantitatively and qualitatively exceptional, has likewise been a means of establishing and calling for international solidarity, for about half of the three-hundred-plus murals done in that country between 1979 and 1990, and some of the very best, were done with the skills and materials brought by internationalists from twenty different countries, in cooperation with Nicaraguans. The destruction of many of the murals by the “liberal” post-Sandinista government represented not so much an attempt to wipe out dissidence as such (which was impossible), but rather a demonstration of the will to rewrite history in an anti-Sandinista light.

Murals in the United States appeared in the late 1960s and immediately became more strident and provocative than their Depression-era forbears. They have proliferated to an extraordinary degree, in every U.S. city and even small towns, and worldwide. Their function as “protest art” is harder to define than that of the posters, partly because they have relied on the sponsorship of businesses large and small, and local civic authorities, which tends to soften their subject-matter. Being location-bound, they tend to favor local issues. Some favorite topics, like drug-abuse and AIDS, may hardly be called countercultural. Murals have been more subject to censorship than have posters, and they may be termed ephemeral, liable to destruction by sun and rain and the wrecker’s ball. While it is virtually impossible to earn a living from making protest posters, there are many artists whose livelihood and reputation depends entirely on their skill as muralists.

Spray-can art, often mis-termed “graffiti” (which is something else), is the truly global, emphatically vernacular and irreducibly public mural style of the 1990s and early 2000s. Its explosively calligraphic style, which at its best attains to a

Book-of-Kells-like intricacy of design, is less overtly political than populist in location (abandoned walls, playgrounds, and railway sidings) and in process: a joyous protest against the commercialism of the world of high art, and the burned-and-bombed-out look of inner cities. With its multifarious references to pop culture (such as comic book, punk, hip-hop, and rap), it is both personal to the “writers,” as they are called (or “taggers”), and socially homogeneous in its anarchic, semi-legal, and often illegal way—this amid many attempts to co-opt and institutionalize it.

The poster of protest has been to a degree institutionalized by certain large organizations such as Amnesty International, Greenpeace, and the German Green Party. The international human rights organization Amnesty International has used the talents of artists everywhere for posters, which run the gamut of the beautiful and terrifying (often combining both qualities), and ring changes on the concept of bringing hope to those in jail and suffering torture. An example, sponsored by a major German corporation, testifies to corporate guilt over connivance with or exploitation of injustices, and to the desire to present a morally conscious face to the world. Greenpeace and Green parties have not only defended the environment against its destruction by governments and industry, but also condemned warmongering. Greenpeace activists have also engaged in direct action that branches, such as the Greenham Common protests of the 1980s and 1990s, into theater: in March 2004 two youths climbed the Big Ben clock tower in London with banners denouncing government lies. The government ignored the denunciation, but not the dramatic breach of security.

The Japanese Graphic Designers Association in 1983 launched a worldwide Hiroshima Appeal Poster competition, which resulted in a series of posters; a counterpart was started in the United States by Charles Helmken. In Britain in the late 1950s, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) gave the world the most universal peace or antiwar symbol, and has continued to produce and inspire posters, as have the Quakers and many other religious or spiritual organizations such as the World Council of Churches. Particular events, notably the stationing of U.S. Cruise and Pershing missiles in Europe and the apparent readiness of the United States to consider Europe as a theater of nuclear war, elicited an array of visual protests of various kinds. The encampment of women against the missiles placed on Greenham Common in Berkshire, England, aroused great media attention for their theatrical flair and dogged determination in harsh conditions; the perimeter fence became the stage for both actions and decorations that frustrated and ridiculed the authorities. The demonstrations in Beijing’s Tiananmen Square in 1989 combined a variety of visual effects: posters, banners, and a huge sculpture of the Goddess of Democracy

The German Greens stand at the center of the immense German production of the last decades. Their posters are very large and colorful and reach into all corners of German political and social life. Other major sources are the antifascist organizations (“anti-fa”) resisting fascist resurgence and racism, which is anti-Turkish and anti-foreigner generally. The range

of protest in Germany rivals that of the United States, touching U.S. missiles on German soil, the Berlin Wall, immigration (many posters are in Turkish as well as German and occasionally English), the plight of the homeless, housing, the right to legal abortion, and the rights of women, children, political prisoners, gays, and animals. Pollution, recycling, urban congestion, and every kind of environmental issue, as well as solidarity with popular struggles around the world, especially in Latin America, come under scrutiny. In the United States, Syracuse Cultural Workers have consistently produced designs, but the U.S. scene is more characterized by the sheer multiplicity of ad-hoc antiwar, pro-peace and solidarity organizations producing a design of the moment, often for an upcoming mass demonstration. Poster-making in Australia has also depended much on the consistency of small organizations, such as Tin Sheds (1972–1979), Redback Graphics, and the radical youth group Resistance (since 1967). All were inspired by the anti-Vietnam War movement but have also taken on local targets, especially the maltreatment of the Aborigines.

### Asia

In Japan, emerging in 1952 from strict U.S. censorship, members of the Japanese Students Union (Zen Gakuren) opposed, in word and image, the Joint Security Pact of 1960 and the

continued U.S. occupation and re-militarization of their country. The first and foremost to condemn the destruction of the country by U.S. bombers was the painter Matsumoto Shunsuke. Much protest art has been created by women, dealing with more than “women’s issues”: disarmament, nuclear power, and U.S. bases. In Korea the underground woodblock prints emanating from the Minjung movement, composed of students, workers, and Christian churches, with their simultaneous reference to Western and Chinese traditions, especially the work of Käthe Kollwitz, protested the killings under the dictatorship and the rigging of elections and called for reunification of the peninsula. The artist Hong Song Dam used more traditional religious material.

In China a long tradition in the classical period of Chinese art, of subtle, personal forms of protest in calligraphy and painting, turned to open opposition against the nationalist armies and the Japanese occupation in the 1920s and 1930s. The stark and violent effects of German Expressionist and Russian vanguard graphics were turned to account, while Mao Zedong insisted, at the famous Yan’an forum of 1942, that all art be positive, supportive of the Chinese Revolution, and unambiguous, and so it was from 1949. There were two subsequent periods of protest: post-Mao, and post-Tiananmen. In the post-Mao era many artists exiled themselves to New York, Taiwan, and Hong Kong in order to express their opposition freely. Zhang Hongtu’s 1989 painting depicting Mao Zedong as Jesus along with his disciples, a travesty of Leonardo Da Vinci’s *Last Supper*, intended to mock the cult of Mao and Maoism itself, was completed and exhibited in exile. Since the Tiananmen protest and consequent repression, the openings for protest within China have wavered, with a modest policy of restrained censorship.

India inherited the lively British tradition of cartooning, promulgated in the 1920s and 1930s along with the Gandhian uprising. The cartoon was another form of English lingua franca that served to cut across the boundaries of the subcontinent, where a dozen or more different languages are spoken. Much protest, such as the Kaligat painting that caricatured the British, emanated from Bengal and denounced the ethnic and religious divisions. The high regard placed by leftist and Marxist collectives on the value of propaganda (by word and image), in tune with Gandhi’s insistence of nonviolence and his genius for self-presentation (as in the protest marches), ensured that visual protest in newspapers, posters, and on walls all over the country played a critical role in mobilizing masses against British rule. Since Indian independence, the cartoon has functioned much as it has in the West.

There has been a degree of international graphic solidarity with Palestine in its struggle with Israel. Resistance in the Occupied Territories is of course limited; even the use of the colors of the Palestinian flag has been banned. The work of the Palestinian poster artist Jihad Mansour (Marc Rudin) stands out, and among the many dissenting Israeli voices perhaps the most forceful has been that of the veteran Russian-Jewish Israeli David Tartakover.

### Comic Strip and Graphic Novel

After a long period of sociopolitical quiescence—born of newspapers’ fears of offending subscribers and advertisers—the



comic strip resumed some of its original satiric purpose, which it had shown in the nineteenth century. Walt Kelly's *Pogo* in its innocent-looking, Disneyish, animal-fabulous garb, indicted Senator Joseph McCarthy in the early 1950s. The traditional taboo of the "controversial" was finally broken with Jules Feiffer, whose work was nevertheless confined to the progressive weekly magazine, unlike Garry Trudeau's syndicated *Doonesbury* (commencing in 1970, in the early 2000s the strip appears in four hundred newspapers worldwide). Highly topical and scathing of government lies and deceptions (the Watergate scandal was for Trudeau what McCarthy was for Kelly), and sympathetic to new social movements such as feminism, Trudeau has been called the most influential (and is probably the most regularly censored) cartoonist in the world; he won a Pulitzer Prize for cartooning in 1975. The drawing is stiff, but the dialogue perfectly tuned. His nearest British equivalent is Steve Bell, a principled, caustic, socialist critic of capitalist antics, whose daily "If" has appeared in the *Guardian* newspaper since 1981. His crude, chaotic linear style and composition derive from his background in children's comics. The child-like style, verging on bizarre abstractions, is best exemplified in the poster work of Berkeley artist Doug Minkler.

All kinds of long-established taboos, mainly in the social and sexual realm, were broken by the so-called Underground Comics (or comix) starting in the mid 1960s, led by Robert Crumb. These works heralded the sexual revolution that was also visualized by posters, and celebrated illegal drugs and the hippie lifestyle in a manner that is both hilarious and philosophical. Approaching the pornographic, such work endured brushes with law, and for a time it was easier to find these comics in Amsterdam than in their place of origin, the San Francisco Bay area.

The graphic novel emerged in the 1980s from the old comic book, which was typically a collection of short graphic sequences, related to and often reproducing newspaper strips. It has now become a major vehicle of social and political protest, gaining status from Art Spiegelman's autobiographical Holocaust account *Maus*, which won many prizes and is sold in mainstream bookstores. The genre has lent itself to autobiography laced with radical social critique, as in the feminist advocacy of Marisa Acocella's *Just Who the Hell Is SHE Anyway?* (1993). The comic strip and comic book format, much used everywhere for educational and didactic purposes, found essentially local critical forms in Latin America: the much-censored Rius (Eduardo del Rio) in Mexico, with his *Agachados* (The Downtrodden) and *Supermachos* (The Supermales), cutting a wide swath through the Mexican polis; Roberto Fontanarrosa, with his *Boogie el Aceitoso* (Boogie [from Humphrey Bogart] the Slippery), a crapulous, sadistic C.I.A. thug and U.S.-hired mercenary, whose laconic wit is his only virtue. Another Argentine, Hector Oesterheld, wrote for artist Alberto Breccia and his son Enrique a tragic life of Che Guevara (*Che*, 1968), which was burned and suppressed by the government, and Oesterheld was "disappeared" (murdered).

An example of socialist political comic, which has remained unique, emerged in Salvadore Allende's Chile (1970–1973), an exciting experiment that was aborted by the military coup

of Augusto Pinochet, which banned and burned it. Under the generic title *La Firme* (Steadfast) the series told amusing Chilean-dialectal and dialectical tales in quintessential Chilean working places and locales, serving to explain the need for the socialist transformation that was then in process and under threat. This was undertaken in tandem with the first radical, and enduring, critique of the Disney comic, which was especially hegemonic in Latin America: *How to Read Donald Duck* (1971), by Ariel Dorfman and Armand Mattelart, which was translated into a dozen foreign languages (the English edition, 1975, carried the subtitle *Imperialist Ideology in the Disney Comic*). After Chile's bloody counterrevolution of September 11, 1973, José Palomo, one of the *La Firme* artists, fled to Mexico where he created a tiny, Wizard-of-Id-like dictator, not at all innocuous like his Brant-Parker prototype, under the title *El Cuarto Reich*, published in *Uno mas Uno*. Contemporaneous and exploitative of the poverty and sufferings of his people, and backed by U.S.-trained thugs and death squads, he typifies the Third World dictator, especially in U.S.-dominated Latin America. This gag strip, hilarious as well as mordant, was little exported. Yet it is perhaps the only comic strip in the world about the life of truly immiserated majorities, although in the U.S. Aaron McGruder's *Boondocks* does deal with the impoverished and unemployed black youth, as well as issues of war and peace.

*See also Arts; Avant-Garde; Feminism; Pacifism; War; War and Peace in the Arts.*

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David Kunzle

**PSEUDOSCIENCE.** *Pseudoscience* is a term applied to a field of inquiry by critics claiming that it is a pretended or spurious science because it does not meet established standards.

The term *pseudoscience* is reserved for fields that claim to be a science, that make claims about the world and give explanations of natural processes. Statements of personal values or beliefs are neither scientific nor pseudoscientific, nor are works of art or literature. Religion is not a pseudoscience because it does not make scientific claims, but a faith-based alternative to Charles Darwin's evolutionary theory would be. Freudian psychology is an example of a theory considered pseudoscientific by some and defended as legitimate by others. Since the term *pseudoscience* is general, it is used to dismiss an entire field, rather than a specific study or the work of a particular individual. Alternative medicine might be dismissed, for example, when there are no double-blind controlled studies to support the claims of various treatments.

### Criterion of Meaning

The prefix *pseudo* is taken directly from the ancient Greek, and it has been applied to a multitude of terms. While the labeling of various fields as pseudoscience is especially associated with the philosophers of science of the early twentieth century, the term predates them by eighty years or so. The members of the Vienna Circle and their collaborators, often called logical positivists, embarked on a campaign to rid philosophy, and culture in general, of metaphysical and pseudoscientific elements. The logical positivists focused on meaning, claiming that any word or sentence that did not ultimately connect to some possible sensory experience was meaningless. Thus Rudolph Carnap (1891–1970) would object to the use of pseudoconcepts and pseudosentences. Most famously, he attacked Martin Heidegger's obscurantism, which he felt hid the true social and political situation from the reader. In contrast to his attitude toward Heidegger, Carnap accepted Friedrich Nietzsche's works because of their literary, rather than pseudoscientific, form.

The verificationist theory of meaning was criticized within philosophy and was never found to be a successful way to distinguish science from pseudoscience. Carl Hempel's 1950 article summarizing the arguments surrounding the theory is usually taken to be its death knell. The project of ridding philosophy and culture in general of pseudoscientific elements continued, however, within the philosophy of science, but the focus shifted to what Karl Popper (1902–1994) called the demarcation problem—how to define science and pseudoscience so as to make a clear distinction between the two and show that all of the contemporary and historical cases of “good science” meet the standards of the definition. Although Popper claimed not to be very interested in the project of eliminating metaphysics and pseudoscience, he recognized that his project of characterizing science in general terms is equivalent to the project of demarcation. If science can be accurately characterized, it is easy to separate science and pseudoscience. Every mode of inquiry that fits the definition is science, while any mode of inquiry that makes claims about the nature of the world and the processes in it without fitting the definition is pseudoscience.

### Scientific Method

Popper and other twentieth-century philosophers of science focused on method. They claimed that all of the sciences, as opposed to other fields of inquiry, shared a common methodology

that deserves the name of “the scientific method.” Philosophers disagreed about what this method was, but no one doubted that a single scientific method characterized all of science from the time of the scientific revolution, which they also saw as a single event. According to inductivists, scientists must find data that support a hypothesis or theory. Testing that provides positive results confirms a scientific theory and shows how it is grounded in reality. Thus, in the inductivist model of science, pseudoscience is a system of beliefs unconfirmed by experimental data. On the other hand, Popper and other supporters of the hypothetico-deductive method reject the idea of confirming theories, since there are always alternative hypotheses that can account for the same data and thus can be just as well confirmed. They argue instead that scientists formulate hypotheses and then test them by making predictions on the basis of the hypotheses and checking the validity of their predictions. If the predictions are inaccurate, the hypothesis must be rejected; if they are accurate, the hypothesis is accepted, but only tentatively as a hypothesis that has withstood the test and has not yet been falsified. According to Popper, the mark of a scientist is his or her willingness to subject a hypothesis to refutation. Scientific theories are those in which refuting instances can be specified. Pseudoscience, by contrast, is not refutable, since its practitioners construct an explanation for any data that seem to contradict their beliefs.

The notion that there is a single scientific method that defines science has been severely challenged, especially by historians and sociologists of science. Thomas Kuhn famously argued that each domain and period of science is defined by a “paradigm” that sets up problems to be solved and the methods for doing so. However, we find that the sciences are a diverse and disunified collection of practices and that there is no uniform scientific method common to all paradigms, which makes the task of finding a single definition that defines science and separates it from pseudoscience seem impossible.

### Current Debates

While many philosophers may have convinced each other that the problem of demarcation is unsolvable, scientists feel that there are obvious differences between science and pseudosciences and many want to continue to use the distinction. The editors of the *Encyclopedia of Pseudoscience* (2000) reply to the problem by taking an ecumenical approach that presents differing views on the nature of pseudoscience and includes for discussion almost any scientific claim that has led to controversy. Instead of looking for an essence, it may be possible to show that there is a “family resemblance” among genuine sciences and clear differentiation between science and pseudoscience in many cases.

There are extremely strong practical reasons to make a general distinction between science and pseudoscience. First, we cannot investigate everything. Much of our knowledge is simply taken on authority. Scientists immediately dismiss certain kinds of claims in order to spend more time on what they hope will be more productive research. Stephen Braude complains that it seems almost impossible to conduct an open inquiry into psychic phenomena because most scientists insist that there is no good evidence for the existence of such

phenomena, without even looking at evidence that has been published. These dismissals of evidence seem more like close-minded prejudice than open-minded scientific inquiry, but they may be necessary to allow effective allocation of resources to projects that are considered more fruitful. The difficult issue is to know when to open an area for investigation and when to stop investigating and consider an issue settled. We inevitably take many majority opinions as fact, without question. As William James put it, “Our knowledge lives on the credit system.” Second, to settle some issues, we must make some principled distinction between science and pseudoscience. Given that the United States Constitution forbids government-established religion, attempts to require the teaching of creationism (an alternative to Darwin from which overt references to religion have been removed) force courts to decide whether creationism really is science or pseudoscience. Having politicians determine which scientific theories to teach in schools is problematic, but requiring the teaching of religion in disguise is unconstitutional.

*See also* **Creationism; Hermeneutics; Paradigm; Practices; Science.**

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**PSYCHOANALYSIS.** In a 1928 entry on the subject for the *Handwörterbuch der Sexualwissenschaft* (Concise dictionary of sexual research), Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) defined psychoanalysis as “the name (1) of a procedure for the investigation of mental processes which are almost inaccessible in any other way, (2) of a method (based upon that investigation) for the treatment of neurotic disorders and (3) of a collection of psychological information obtained along those lines, which is gradually being accumulated into a new scientific discipline” (Freud, vol. 18, p. 235). Freud’s description understates the



immense richness and complexity of his achievements in the study of the workings of the ungovernable impulses of the mind, which have had far-reaching and lasting impact on humanities thinking about itself, and whose many facets can only be hinted at here below.

### Overview

Initially trained as a neurologist, Freud began working with hysterical and neurotic patients as an outgrowth of his private medical practice beginning around 1883. In 1895, in *Studies on Hysteria*, co-written with his mentor Josef Breuer, Freud first formulated the theories and method that would later become psychoanalysis. In 1899, after a decade of working with such patients amid ridicule and isolation from the Viennese medical establishment, Freud published *The Interpretation of Dreams*, his major work. Though it sold only six hundred copies during the five years following its release, by 1910 Freud had attracted a number of students, mostly physicians, from throughout Europe to the practice of psychoanalysis, and succeeded in establishing the International Psychoanalytic Association. Among the most prominent of these early psychoanalysts were Karl Abraham (1877–1925), Sándor Ferenczi (1873–1933), Ernest Jones (1879–1958), and Carl Jung (1875–1961). Jung, a Swiss psychiatrist, enjoyed a particularly close relationship with Freud, and was for a time his anointed successor to the leadership of the analytic movement, until their relationship dissolved in 1912–1913 over Jung’s denial of the centrality of sexuality in neurotic conflict. Jung went on to formulate his own ideas, including the notion of a collective unconscious governed by a universal symbolic order (“archetypes”), as “analytical psychology.”

Freud continued to work and publish right up until his death from cancer in September 1939, revising and significantly expanding his theories; increasing numbers of psychoanalysts throughout Europe joined him in this effort. Psychoanalysis continued to flourish, in Europe and the United States, until the outbreak of World War II forced many analysts to flee their homes in Europe. Following the war, analytic institutions continued to expand, and became especially vital in the United States, England, and France.

### Psychoanalytic Theory of Mind

In *Studies on Hysteria*, Freud wrote that “hysterics suffer mainly from reminiscences,” and with those words summed up the fundamental insight of psychoanalysis. Through his work with his neurotic patients, and later, through his own self-analysis, Freud became convinced that the symptoms from which they suffered—which ranged from hysterical blindness to obsessive thoughts and behaviors, to near-catatonic states—were the result of conflicts in the mind between unacceptable ideas and wishes that sought expression, and forces in the mind opposing that expression. Unable to find an outlet in consciousness, these unacceptable, “repressed” wishes manifested themselves in other, compromised ways, in neurotic symptoms, slips of the tongue, and dreams. To explain how this came about, Freud devised a revolutionary concept of how the mind works.

Freud was influenced by the biological and physical sciences of his time, and his first theory of the mind was governed by

a principle of energy discharge. Conceiving of the mental apparatus as an organism, Freud postulated a system whose purpose, as in a biological nervous system, was to maintain its equilibrium by reducing energy (or tension) in it—an imperative Freud called the *pleasure principle*.

Later, based on this model, Freud distinguished two modes of thinking, which he termed the *primary* and *secondary* processes, which were identified respectively with *free* and *bound* energy (with energy ultimately coming to mean *libidinal*, or sexual energy), and the workings of the *pleasure* and *reality principles*. These antagonistic pairs were the starting point for the conflictual, dynamic perspective from which Freud consistently viewed mental processes.

**Conscious, preconscious, and unconscious.** To demonstrate his theory of mental functioning, Freud devised a topographical model made up of three connected systems—*conscious*, *preconscious*, and *unconscious*—which set up a stratified, differentiated relation among psychic contents, on a continuum from surface/conscious to depth/unconscious. The unconscious represents the largest set, comprising all sensory perceptions, both internal and external. The preconscious encompasses all those perceptions that have been perceived but not excluded from consciousness by repression. Finally, conscious perceptions are those that have come into awareness.

In this first model, the unconscious is identified with the primary process, whose purpose is the free discharge of energy; the *preconscious/conscious system* (the two agencies were often functionally united), on the other hand, is identified with the secondary processes, and with the binding of energy. Freud supposed that mental conflict was the result of antagonism between unconscious psychic contents pressing for discharge (according to the pleasure principle), and the censorship “guarding” the preconscious/conscious system (reality principle). When successfully kept out of consciousness, the repressed impulses continued to seek discharge, eventually succeeding through the “compromise formations” of dreams, slips of the tongue, and neurotic symptoms.

**Repression.** *Repression* was the name Freud gave to the *defensive* warding off of unacceptable thought contents from consciousness. This process was the result of the dynamic conflict within the mind between opposing forces of instinct and “reality,” and the agencies that housed them: the unconscious and the preconscious/conscious systems.

In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud likened the agent of repression to a censor. The function of this censor—and of repression itself—is to keep from consciousness psychological contents that, though in their discharge (or expression) are pleasurable in themselves, must come into conflict with other exigencies, typically those that proceed from the external world, morality, or the person’s own wishes.

Freud came to regard neurotic illness as the result of conflicts between the drive of unconscious products toward expression and their repulsion by the defenses of censorship. He saw repression as the cornerstone of all these defensive processes, and considered other defensive processes to be derived from



it. It thus became the essential task of psychoanalysis to undo the effects of repression, to bring the unacceptable unconscious contents into awareness, and through this discharge to free up the psychical energy that was absorbed in the prevention of that discharge (in neurotic symptoms).

**Fantasies.** In his earliest work with the neuroses, Freud supposed them to originate either in constitutional factors or in the traumatic effect of actual sexual seduction. In 1897, however, Freud concluded that the majority of the accounts of seductions he had from his patients had little basis in reality. To account for this conclusion, to the existing two “predispositions” to neurosis Freud added a third cause: repressed wishes for instinctual gratifications, which manifested themselves in *fantasies*. These fantasies, typically sexual (and incestuous) in nature, which Freud initially took for real events, actually belonged to the province of psychical reality and had the traumatic force of “material” reality. Because of their unacceptable nature, these fantasies, originating in the unconscious, threw the psychic apparatus into turmoil when they came up against the censor and were repressed, able to assert themselves only in the compromise formations of dreams and neurotic symptoms. Freud came to believe that it was these fantasies of unacceptable wishes that were the determining factor in the majority of neuroses.

### Infantile Sexuality and the Oedipus Complex

This was so because of infantile sexuality, the discovery of which Freud was led to by his abandonment of the *seduction theory*. Freud’s original theory of traumatic seduction as a two-phase process—in which the initial seduction was experienced passively, often without any traumatic significance, and registered only as traumatic and repressed as a result of a later event (often without sexual significance), typically during adolescence—prepared the way for Freud to understand the sexual desires (and autoerotic activities) of infants, which were themselves uninhibited until their repression at the time of the Oedipus crisis, and which were concealed behind the fantasies of seduction.

According to Freud, the establishment and eventual destruction of the *Oedipus complex* was the necessary, biologically determined culmination of the infant’s progress through the psychosexual phases of development, and his initiation into the object world (the social order). These phases—*oral*, *anal*, *genital*, and *phallic*—were characterized by the development of the child’s capacity for libidinal satisfaction (through the discharge of tension) from primitive autoerotism to object-(person-) oriented love, as well as the child’s increasing psychic complexity. Each of these phases was rooted in the infant’s physiological development, as well as in the development of the infant’s relation to the world. The *oral* phase was modeled on the importance of eating, and the infant’s relationship to its mother through the incorporation and refusal of her breast; the *anal* phase centered on the infant’s struggles for control over bodily functions, as well as for autonomy from his or her parents; and the *genital* and *phallic* phases involved the discovery first of genital satisfaction, then satisfaction through others, and later of symbolic satisfactions outside one’s own body.

Freud emphasized the psychological importance of the infant’s first tie from birth (or before) with its mother, a quasi-symbiotic unity that gave way in stages to differentiation and autonomy. This tie to the mother was primary irrespective of gender, but left the child of each gender with a different imperative. For the male child, in order to reproduce, and in obedience to the incest taboo, he needed to give up his tie to and desire for his mother in favor of other, female objects. For the female child, she must give up her attachment to female objects altogether.

Around three to five years of age, in consequence of his approach and attainment of genital sexuality (which is also to say, object-related sexuality), the child experiences sexual desire for his parents. In the *positive* Oedipal situation, the male child feels desire toward his mother, and jealously regards the father as a rival; Freud assumed that most children had direct knowledge of this rivalry through witness of the *primal scene* of intercourse, either between their parents, or from another source (such as the sight of animal copulation). Freud also assumed that the child had by this time become aware of the anatomical difference between the sexes, and from this discovery, inferred the threat (or in the case of the female, the fantasized “fact”) of *castration*—the loss of the penis as punishment for his incestuous wishes.

The conjoining in his mind of these factors, of his rivalry with his father for his mother’s love and the threat of castration, awakened in the male child an intense anxiety, and set in motion the repression of the child’s incestuous desires, and a subsequent switch in identification from the now dangerous mother to the powerful and punishing father. Significantly, the male child did not at the same time renounce his sexual desire for the opposite sex.

As a result of the dramatic repression of the Oedipus complex, the child unconsciously internalized the Oedipal situation, and especially the punitive idea of the father, as a way to ensure continued protection from castration. These new internalized others collectively became the new superego, which henceforth governed the child’s object-oriented actions, and superintended his sense of morality.

In the female child, the discovery of the “reality” of her castration led to *penis envy*, and with it a hatred of her mother, a sense of rageful betrayal at having been left unmade, unfinished. In her anger, Freud postulated that she would turn toward the father, and seek from him a penis—his penis—and later a baby.

Freud believed a girl’s sexuality was initially dominated by her clitoris, her “little penis.” Only with the move to vaginal sexuality was a woman’s sexual maturation complete. Freud himself, however, remained unconvinced as to the motives for this change.

The “phallic” nature of the Oedipus complex had far-reaching consequences for female development. Without the threat of castration, the girl’s movement toward heterosexual object choice is not characterized by the same intensity of repression as the male’s, and consequently, Freud believed,

the superego development that was the legacy of the Oedipus complex was less developed.

Freud also suggested the presence in both genders of a *negative* Oedipus complex, involving the opposite series of identifications. In the male child, the father became the object of his (passive) sexual desire, fostering a sense of identification with his mother who was the father's sexual object. This constellation, too, required repression, and if this was insufficiently accomplished, Freud believed, it could serve as an important foundation for homosexual object choice.

Much of the rationale for the Oedipal struggle is rooted in the sexual, animal child's acceptance of the moral order of "civilized" culture, and it is often on this basis that it is criticized. Nevertheless, Freud believed that the Oedipus stage was central, not only because of its implications for the infant's psychosexual development, but also because it marked the infant's attainment of human subjectivity. With the Oedipus conflict the child also attained the capacity for "triadic relationships" (in which the child was able to regard others not simply from her own frame of reference, but as existing outside of and independent of her needs and wishes—and hence different from and at odds with her own) and with it the complex capacity for symbolism that was the precondition for language and for thought itself, as well as for the *free association* that was at the heart of analytic work.

In later years, many aspects of the Oedipus theory have received critical scrutiny. Emphasizing pre-Oedipal aspects of childhood development, female sexuality, and the degree to which the Oedipus complex was ever really abolished, many theorists have revised and extended the conception of the Oedipus complex and how it is used in clinical practice in the early twenty-first century.

Among the most vital of these contributions have been those of Hans W. Loewald, who came to regard the Oedipal conflict as an unending struggle perpetuated in the superego against the internalized *imagos* (unconscious representatives) of one's parents. Equally important are contributions from Karen Horney, Jessica Benjamin, and others, which emphasize the differences in female sexual development from those of the male, and question the central importance of the castration complex for girls. Other recent theorists, such as Arlene Kramer Richards, have emphasized the importance of female genital anxieties as a distinct influence on female psychosexual development, thereby further questioning the role of penis envy in the psychology of women.

### Later Revisions: Mourning, Narcissism, and the Beginnings of Object Relations

In 1914 Freud began a series of major revisions of his theory with a discussion of the distinction between normal and pathological mourning, the latter of which he termed *melancholia*. The difference is this: In normal mourning, one gradually lets go of the love one has lost, piece by piece, and the *libido* (love) invested in them is taken back into oneself (into the ego) so that it can be used again, either for new love or for other creativity. In melancholia, the mourner holds on to the loved one's love like a phantom limb, refusing to let go, so that the libido never returns to its source, and is thus depleted,

leading to the familiar symptoms of depression: exhaustion, loss of appetite, and lack of interest in the world. (The refusal to let go happens, according to Freud, because a person turns the anger felt toward the lost one upon oneself.)

This discussion extended the idea, already present in *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1905), of the role of the *object* in human psychic development and function. The theory of *object relations* was to have far-reaching impact on psychoanalytic theory, especially through the work of Melanie Klein.

In the *Three Essays*, Freud described two main aspects of sexual striving, the *aim* and *object* (*pressure* and *source* were additional, largely biological aspects of the instinct). *Aim* named the kind of gratification pressed for by the instinct, determined by the oral, anal, or genital desires of the infant that engendered it; this aim sought its satisfaction from an *object*.

Freud described objects (loved ones) as either *anaclitic* or *narcissistic*. Anaclitic objects took their model from an infant's parents or caregivers—those the infant relied on for survival. Narcissistic objects, on the other hand, were taken from the model of one's self and body, the original sources of satisfaction and pleasure.

Freud believed narcissism played a vital role in healthy development, and was the source of healthy striving and ambition, as well as camaraderie and nationalism. In pathological cases, however, the narcissist was unable to form or maintain relationships with others or with the outside world.

Freud thought narcissism originated in infancy, when the child took his own body as his first object (this he called *primary narcissism*). In normal development, narcissistic satisfactions were gradually replaced by anaclitic ones, as an infant became attached to, and then differentiated from, his caregivers. Far from disappearing however, narcissistic strivings were taken into the psyche as a vital component of a person's sense of self, eventually laying the foundation for the *ego ideal*, which was the individual's compass for his ambitions and strivings, for the self as he wished it to be, and which would reward him with new editions of the satisfactions he had taken in infancy from the pleasures of his own body. Later, as the child moved into the genital, adult phase of sexuality, it was the danger to the narcissistic object (the penis), that ushered in the castration complex, the Oedipus complex, and the whole order by which adult mental life is governed.

Narcissism, and the entire process of the formation of object relations in infancy, became increasingly important to psychoanalysis, as disturbances of these early processes came to be seen as the root of the most severe kinds of psychopathology—including (in current terminology) narcissistic personality disorder, borderline personality disorder, and the psychoses—which Freud had already termed the "narcissistic neuroses."

### The Dual Instinct Theory/The Death Drive

In 1920 Freud opened *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* with a comparative discussion of the behavior of soldiers suffering from traumatic war neuroses (what would later be called post-traumatic stress disorder) and a child's game. In each of these

situations, Freud observed behavior, such as the dreams of soldiers that compulsively reprised the occasion of their injury, or an infant's repetitive tossing away and retrieval of an object in symbolic enactment of her parent's departure, which seemed to contradict the impulse to satisfy and reduce tension. From these observations of the workings of the *repetition compulsion*, Freud adduced the existence of a force in human nature that operated against the pleasure principle and its imperatives of human self-preservation and gratification. Freud called this counterforce the *Todestrieb*—the *death drive* (or *instinct*).

The death drive was an extension of Freud's earliest writings, having to do with conservation of energy in the organism, and was also the latest version of the dualism that was a constant in his work. In his earlier thinking, mental conflict had originated among *component instincts* of the libido—ego and object libido, self-perservative and erotic instincts. In the new conception, all these previous instincts were subsumed under the libido, or *Eros*, and opposed to the death instinct. According to the logic of the pleasure principle, energy was to be conserved at all costs. In view of the repetition compulsion, Freud amended his view: On the one hand, energy was to be conserved; on the other, according to the logic of the death drive, the reduction of tension demanded that energy be reduced to nothing, returned to a state of rest—a return to the inorganic stasis that Freud (borrowing from the science of his time) believed to be the original condition of all matter.

Freud saw evidence of the death drive in his observations of primary masochism and of hate, which he thought preceded any feeling of love. In these phenomena and others, Freud believed that the death drive was expressed as (or even synonymous with) aggression, and that it was frequently joined (*fused*) to libidinal energy. Though evidence of aggression and the death drive were readily observable in these “fused” forms, Freud was unable to isolate pure expressions of the death drive. And indeed the operation of the drive remained opaque, “mythical,” in contrast to the workings of the libido, which Freud had observed and described in detail.

Because of its opacity and apparent remoteness from clinical practice (Freud himself acknowledged the “speculative” nature of its origins), the death drive became perhaps the most controversial aspect of Freud's theoretical corpus. A number of analytic theorists continued to explore its implications following Freud's death, especially Melanie Klein, in whose work the death drive figures prominently.

### Later Revisions: The Structural Theory

In 1923, in the wake of his revisions of the theory of instincts on the one hand, and of object relations on the other, Freud published *The Ego and the Id*, and with it sharply revised his original theory of the mind. In his new model, commonly called the “structural theory,” Freud introduced three new agencies—*ego* (“I”), *id* (“It”), and *superego* (“Over-I”)—to represent intrapsychic mental functioning. The *ego* referred to the self, as the executive agency of the psychic system, governed by the secondary process, and responsible for conscious thought, fantasy, defense, and symptom formation. The *id* was the realm of the unconscious processes and thoughts, governed by the

instincts (libido and aggression) and the primary process. The *superego* represented the conscience, the critical (and also loving) internal representation of one's parents or caregivers that was the internalized legacy of the repression of the Oedipus complex. These new agencies reflected the increased prominence of object relations and the pervasive nature of conflict in the system, and a recognition that the essential goal of psychoanalysis was not merely to make the unconscious conscious, but to bring instinctual impulses under the sway of the ego.

### Theory of Anxiety and Affects

*Anxiety* is at the core of the psychoanalytic theory of *affects* (feelings), and from the beginning of psychoanalytic thought has been recognized as central to an understanding of mental conflict (for it is through bad feelings that conflicts are felt and known). In his early work, Freud, in keeping with his early discharge model of mental function, considered anxiety to be a “toxic transformation” of undischarged libido. This failure of discharge could either be physiological (“realistic”), as in *coitus interruptus* or other incomplete or unsatisfactory sexual practices, resulting in “actual neuroses” or “anxiety neuroses”; or it could arise from repression (or its failure), as a symptom of the continued pressure of unacceptable desires, which led to the “psychoneuroses”—hysterias and obsessions.

In 1926 Freud radically revised his ideas about anxiety, abandoning the distinction between neurotic and realistic anxiety, and the claim that repression caused anxiety. In this new theory, Freud distinguished two types of anxiety, a traumatic, reality-oriented “automatic” anxiety in which the system was overwhelmed, and a secondary, “neurotic” anxiety in which reprisals of these situations were anticipated, thus setting in motion defensive processes. “Automatic anxiety” was an affective reaction to the helplessness experienced during a traumatic experience. The prototype for this experience lay in the helplessness of the infant during and after birth, in which the danger proceeded from outside, and flooded a psychic system essentially unmediated by the (as yet unformed) ego.

The second form of anxiety originated within the psychological system and was mediated by the ego. This “signal anxiety” presaged the emergence of a new “danger situation” that would be a repetition of one of several earlier, “traumatic states.” These states, whose prototype lay in birth, corresponded to the central preoccupations of different developmental levels, as the infant's needs become progressively abstracted from the original situation of immediate sensory overload to more sophisticated forms of need regulation capable of synthesizing the many elements facing it (from the reality and pleasure principles and the object world). These moments—*loss of the object*, *loss of the object's love*, *the threat of castration*, and *the fear of punishment by the internalized objects of the superego*—which were experienced serially during the developmental process, could reemerge at any time in a person's subsequent adult life, typically brought on by some conflation of reality and intrapsychic conflict, as a new edition of anxiety.

This new way of conceptualizing anxiety was an outgrowth of Freud's late revisions of his theory (c. 1923) with the structural theory and his formulation of the mediating agency of



the ego, and it had the effect of shifting clinical work on anxiety into the realm of the ego. The correlation of the dangerous situations with developmental stages also suggested a diagnostic aspect to anxiety, with the earlier types of anxiety indicating earlier fixations. In the work of later theorists, the presence of the earliest anxieties in clinical work were thought to be indicative of pre-Oedipal disturbances in development, and of corresponding structural deficits in the ego.

Despite his later formulations, Freud never explicitly abandoned his first idea of anxiety, and the two theories continued to coexist uneasily in Freudian metapsychology long after Freud's death.

### Melanie Klein and Object Relations

Probably the most influential analytic thinker after Freud, Melanie Klein (1882–1960) articulated a prehistory of childhood development, whose history in Freudian thought commenced with the Oedipus crisis. Following Freud, the sequence of events she outlined had as its main theme the integration of the chaotic desiring world of the infant with the real world.

According to Klein, the infant's world was threatened from the beginning by intolerable anxieties, whose source she believed to be the infant's own death instinct (whose central importance she forcefully affirmed, in opposition to many other contemporary theorists). These "persecutory" anxieties, which were felt in the infant's own bodily needs as well as from the external frustrations to those needs, were overwhelming to the infant, and in order to combat them the infant resorted to defenses whose aim was to isolate her from them. Through these primitive defenses—*projection, denial, splitting, withdrawal, and "omnipotent control"* of these objects—the infant put threatening, "bad" objects, outside herself and into the external world; simultaneously, she preserved the "good" objects, both within herself and externally, by splitting them off from their malevolent counterparts.

Perhaps the most fundamental of these processes were *projection* and *introjection*, which described the infant's first, primitive attempts to differentiate himself from the world, inside from outside, self from other, based on the prototype of oral *incorporation* (and spitting out) and the infant's relation to his first, nurturing/frustrating object, the mother's breast. The first objects were not the mature, "whole" objects of Oedipal development, but primitive "part" objects whose existence for the infant was determined solely by its function in the infant's world.

In the course of maturation, Klein believed that the infant introjected both "bad" and "good" objects, and that through processes of progressive internalization, these fragmentary objects were taken into the self, and became forerunners of the superego. Klein emphasized that this process (of introjection, projection, and re-introjection) was continuous and cyclical, leading to increasing synthesis as the infant gradually attained greater degrees of reality testing, differentiation, and control over her own psyche.

Klein divided *pre-Oedipal development* into the "paranoid/schizoid" and "depressive" positions. She located the

*paranoid/schizoid* position in the first months of an infant's life, a time in which the infant was in helpless thrall both to the outside world and to his own instincts. Deprivation, the experience of need, and frustration, even though emanating from the infant's own body, were perceived during this phase as persecutory, and the infant responded by putting them outside of himself, "projecting" or throwing them away.

The early objects—beginning with the breast—were experienced alternately as "good" or "bad" according to whether they were perceived as nurturing or destructive; and again partly on the model of the breast, the infant took in (introjected) or dispelled (projected) them according to their relative safety or danger. In this way, Klein believed, the infant took in and preserved those feelings in the external world that were felt as "good," while expelling from herself those destructive feelings directed "into" the object that threatened the relation with the object.

In the *depressive* position (roughly corresponding to the second six months of life), the trends established in the first months of life were extended. In this stage, the infant was able to bridge the gap between "good" and "bad" objects, and between his own experiences of love and hate, which created them. He became capable of ambivalence, and his awareness gradually grew to encompass the object world outside himself and his mother, who, in a crucial development, he now perceived as a discrete, whole object. The infant became aware of his own destructive impulses and, fearing the loss of his object's love (by his destructiveness), attempted to inhibit them, to preserve, protect, even resurrect the object that he continually destroyed in unconscious fantasy, or *phantasy*. His anxious awareness of his aggression toward the object/mother (which Klein called *guilt*), and subsequent efforts to contain his own anxieties by curtailing these impulses (efforts Klein termed *reparations*), led the child to an increasing tolerance for ambivalence, and acceptance of a position of mediation between the needed, loved object and his own instincts that threatened to destroy the object, preparing the way for stable object relations, first with the mother and then with other objects.

For Klein, both paranoid/schizoid and depressive positions represented normal developmental phases on the road to mature object relations; her use of the word *position* was indicative both of her view of this developmental scheme as normative and her conviction (derived from Freud) that "fixation" at such positions was the source of later psychopathology. The defenses of early infancy—including projection, splitting, withdrawal, and denial—became the prototype for the defenses of more severely disturbed patients, whose pathology Klein traced to disturbances in early development.

Klein saw the infant's efforts to bind and modify persecutory and depressive anxieties as the central struggle in the infant's development, and as the essential precursor to all subsequent mental development. Through this progressive process, the anxieties were modified, structuralization increased, and the anxieties and impulses that gave rise to them were themselves diminished. She saw all defense as directed against these anxieties, and regarded the earliest defenses, especially splitting, as



the foundation for repression, which she viewed as itself a restricted and refined form of splitting. She also saw forerunners of the Oedipal conflict and the superego in the very first months of life. Indeed, Klein's theory attributed to the infant from the first months of life a range of sophisticated, dyadic and triadic emotions—including greed, envy, and jealousy—that implied an acute sense of others and her relation to them, far earlier than was accepted in Freudian psychology.

### The Evolution of Psychoanalytic Practice

In "On Beginning the Treatment" (1913), in explaining the method of free association, a hallmark of psychoanalytic technique, Freud likened it to a train journey. "Act as though, for instance, you were a traveler sitting next to the window of a railway carriage and describing to someone inside the carriage the changing views which you see outside" (Freud, vol. 12, p. 135). The "landscape" thus revealed was that of the patient's own inner world, its features psychic conflicts; at the heart of the psychoanalytic method is the proposition that *interpretation* of unconscious conflicts, and the subsequent *insight* gained by the patient, are themselves mutations of those conflicts. The patient's fantasies and unconscious desires are thrown upon the person of the analyst, through a phenomenon known as *transference*. Transference, literally the unconscious carrying over into the present of the meaningful relationships of the past, and of the fantasies and repressed wishes that shaped them, is at the core of all kinds of analytic therapy.

But in clinical work, especially with more disturbed patients, many therapists of the early twenty-first century embrace the value of a "therapeutic object," and indeed believe that this kind of work is essential to any kind of therapeutic progress with such patients. The idea of the therapeutic object is related to British analyst D. W. Winnicott's notion of the *holding environment* and to analytic *empathy*, an idea especially prominent in Heinz Kohut's work with narcissistic patients. Both these writers assumed that an infant's development is inescapably bound to her relations with her first caregivers, and that the emergence of the subjective, intrapsychic world coincides with the development of the infant's relations with these early objects. They presume, in different ways, that pathology, particularly more disturbed pathology, results from disturbances in this process, and that it is among the tasks of psychodynamic therapy to supplement the patient's earliest, often deforming, object relationships with newer healthy models, which can be internalized over time. According to this view, by revisiting and remodeling the earliest patterns of relating to the world (through internalization of new objects), lasting change may be effected both in the patient's internal world and in her relationships with new objects in the present.

This point of view is not shared by all contemporary analysts, least of all those "classical" analysts, who maintain that psychopathology is by and large derived from Oedipal and post-Oedipal development, that is, the point at which a patient begins to make symbolic sense of inner impulses and distorts them according to the repression. The classical view tends to play down or deny the importance of structural, ego "deficits" in early (pre-Oedipal) development resulting from inadequate nurture.

### Psychoanalysis and Its Vicissitudes

The fate of psychoanalysis seems emblematic of the whole history of the Western world during the twentieth century. Psychoanalysis first flourished in the final days of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, at a time of unrivaled prosperity and intellectual ferment. World War I disrupted the progress of analytic institutions, but its barbarities may have played a role in Freud's revisiting some of his fundamental assumptions, most notably about the role of aggression in the human psyche, which led him ultimately to the death drive.

World War II forced the mass exile of psychoanalysts from Europe, many of whom, like Freud, were Jews from the occupied nations. Four of Freud's sisters perished in concentration camps, as did many of those analysts who remained in their home countries. Many of the émigrés resettled in England, the United States, and South America, and the field flourished in these areas as a result. Psychoanalysis in each of these regions is marked by its local influences, and the variety of psychoanalytic discourses in the early twenty-first century is such that one group may find the theories and practices of another unrecognizable.

Even within each region, the evolution of psychoanalytic theory and technique since the death of Freud has been marked by discord and schism, perhaps stamped by the Oedipal struggles whose mysteries psychoanalysts seek to plumb. This has been the case since the birth of the field, and the history of psychoanalysis is replete with examples of this: Alfred Adler (1870–1937), Wilhelm Stekel (1868–1940), Jung, Otto Rank (1884–1939), Ferenczi, Wilhelm Reich (1897–1957)—all were close members of Freud's circle, and all broke with Freud, in disputes fueled as much by personal as theoretical tensions.

Later fissures in the analytic community include the secession of Jacques Lacan (1901–1981) from the "classical" French establishment; in London, the intense conflict between adherents of Klein and Anna Freud; and in New York, the divisions that caused Karen Horney (1885–1952), Sandor Rado (1890–1972), Harry Stack Sullivan (1891–1949), and others to leave their places of training to found independent institutes. This discord has persisted into modern times, though the diminished influence of psychoanalysis and the proliferation of rival therapies and theories of mind have muted and submerged the original tensions, even as new voices constantly emerge to challenge their predecessors.

Though its impact has been felt most strongly in the West, analytic ideas have traveled around the world. By the early twenty-first century, analytic institutes had been founded in India, Korea, and Japan.

### Impact on Other Disciplines

The influence of psychoanalytic theory upon contemporary thought is difficult to overstate, and equally difficult to quantify. Fundamental concepts of a dynamic unconscious, repression, ego, infantile sexuality, and the Oedipus complex have passed into popular discourse. Psychoanalysis is the root of all contemporary forms of psychotherapy, and as a clinical modality has had an enormous impact on the treatment of mental illness and on the fields of psychology and psychiatry,

though this influence has been challenged in recent years by the rise of biological psychiatry. Though the scientific validity of its methods and premises has been hotly disputed, neuroscientists, including Mark Solms, Antonio Damasio, Jaak Panksepp, and Joseph LeDoux, were actively conducting research in the early twenty-first century to correlate psychoanalytic ideas with the latest findings in brain science.

In the humanities, psychoanalytic theory has strongly influenced approaches to literary texts, biography, history, creativity, and sociology. Freud himself was the first to apply psychoanalytic principles to the arts, through readings of Wilhelm Jensen's novel *Gradiva* (1903), Ernst Theodor Amadeus Hoffmann's "The Sand-Man" (1817), and several of William Shakespeare's works; and through psychobiographical essays on Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Shakespeare, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, and Leonardo da Vinci. Freud also explored the implications of his ideas upon anthropology, history, and, perhaps most famously, religion, which Freud considered a primitive, quasi-psychotic projection, and which he considered at length in *The Future of an Illusion* (1927) and *Moses and Monotheism* (1939). The poet Wallace Stevens characterized Freud's influence as "a whole climate of opinion," and the writings of Freud and other analysts, especially those of Jacques Lacan, have inspired countless artists and thinkers, including André Breton, André Gide, Benjamin, Thomas Mann, Rainer Maria Rilke, Jean Cocteau, Salvador Dalí, Jackson Pollock, Lionel Trilling, Edmund Wilson, Jacques Derrida, Gilles Deleuze, and Slavoj Žižek; and cultural movements such as surrealism, dada, existentialism, deconstruction, and postmodernism.

See also *Consciousness; Mind; Psychology and Psychiatry*.

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**PSYCHOLOGY AND PSYCHIATRY.** Psychiatry in the United States has undergone a number of sweeping changes since the middle of the twentieth century. The settings in which psychiatrists practice, the range of diseases they seek to treat, their theoretical understandings of these diseases, and the treatments they apply are all radically different from those of their predecessors. These changes have had an impact not only on the psychiatric profession but on cultural understandings of the mind as well, altering how people make sense not only of mental illness but of their everyday feelings and behaviors.

What is remarkable is not that such changes occurred, for radical transformations in medical practice and understandings have come to be expected, but that they occurred in the way they did and for the reasons they did. Despite enormous changes, researchers have not identified the root cause of a single psychiatric disease or developed a single definitive cure. This is not to say that understandings and treatment of psychiatric illness have not improved, but simply to say that psychiatry's revolutions cannot be traced to the kinds of scientific breakthroughs that one might imagine, but rather to the interaction of a number of historical developments within psychiatry, medicine, and American culture as a whole.

This article traces the history of psychiatric theory, therapeutics, and clinical science since the mid-1900s, exploring the ways in which their interaction has shaped the course of psychiatry. This history covers three major transformations in psychiatry: an about-face in its theoretical orientation, characterized by the postwar rise and fall of psychoanalysis and the subsequent rise of biopsychiatry; the redefinition of the practice of psychiatry that followed the discovery of psychotropic drugs; and the changes in the clinical science of medicine as a whole that reinforced psychiatry's biological shift.

### Psychiatric Diagnosis: From Psychosis to the "Psychopathology of Everyday Life"

The years following World War II were a time of unprecedented growth in the scope of psychiatry in the United States. In a transformation that reflected an increase in outpatient psychiatry rather than a decrease in state hospital treatment, the percentage of psychiatrists working in outpatient settings, a slim minority before the war, grew to more than half by 1947 and to an astounding 83 percent by 1957. Accompanying this shift was a similarly dramatic expansion in the kinds of ills that led patients to seek psychiatric care, inside or outside of the state hospital system. Psychiatrists began caring for an entirely new type of patient, one who suffered from "psychoneurotic" ills instead of severe mental illness.

**Diagnostic expansion.** Throughout the twentieth century, psychiatrists divided psychiatric illness into two main classes: "organic" and "functional." They classified organic illnesses as those in which there was an obvious cause (e.g., intoxication) or brain lesion (e.g., dementia), whereas the functional disorders, those most commonly associated with the practice of psychiatry, had no ascertainable biological cause. Toward the end of the twentieth century, psychiatrists increasingly criticized this division between functional and organic, arguing that all psychiatric illness is, at its root, biological. In 1994, the distinction was entirely dropped from the fourth edition of the American Psychiatric Association's (APA) *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM)*. However those disorders with known organic causes tend to fall under the domain of neurology, while psychiatry continues to tend primarily to disorders that fall under the traditionally functional category. These disorders are subdivided into two categories—psychotic disorders and nonpsychotic disorders—that are then further divided into specific diagnoses.

In 1952 the APA published the first edition of the *DSM (DSM-I)*, replacing the collection of diagnoses endorsed by the APA in 1933. *DSM-I* was heavily influenced by psychoanalytic theory and by Adolf Meyer's emphasis on individual failures of adaptation to biological or psychosocial stresses as the cause of psychiatric illness. The diagnoses enumerated in *DSM-I* indicate a major enlargement in the ways in which nonpsychotic illness could be experienced and named.

This change reflected not a simple recategorization of existing patients, but rather a redrawing of the line between "diseased" and "normal" distress that resulted in the creation of entirely new patients. The years following the war witnessed a staggering increase in the number of patients seeking psychiatric

care for their troubles in everyday living, either by voluntarily admitting themselves to state psychiatric hospitals or by hiring the services of a psychotherapist. This explosion of psychiatric concerns and practice is owed in large part to two related phenomena: the psychiatric profession's reaction to World War II, and the increasing dominance of psychoanalytic theory and practice.

World War II was the single most important factor in propelling psychodynamic psychiatry to the forefront of American psychiatry. Most fundamentally, the war reinforced the belief "that environmental stress contributed to mental maladjustment and that purposeful human interventions could alter psychological outcomes" (Grob, p. 427). Of the 18 million men screened for induction, nearly 2 million were deemed unfit for military service because of severe emotional difficulties. Despite flaws in the screening process (especially its cursory nature and the broad criteria used for rejection), this huge rejection rate highlighted the ubiquity of psychiatric disorder in the community.

The war provided a means for addressing this new concern by greatly increasing the number of physicians with experience treating psychiatric disorders. Between 1941 and 1945, the number of Army Medical Corps physicians working in psychiatry increased from 35 to 2,400. Psychoanalytic theory and therapy figured centrally in much of the training they received, and many of these physicians went on to practice psychiatry as well as psychoanalysis after the war. Moreover successfully treating wartime neuropsychiatric casualties with psychosocial interventions strengthened psychiatrists' convictions in the efficacy of psychotherapy based in psychodynamic principles.

The proportion of psychiatrists following psychodynamic tenets rose to a third by the late 1950s, and to half by the early 1970s. Psychoanalysis and psychodynamics dominated the curriculum of medical schools and residency programs, as well as the orientation of many academic departments, through the mid-1960s. The 1968 publication of the second edition of the *DSM (DSM-II)* reflected this. Like *DSM-I*, *DSM-II* presented a psychosocial view of psychiatric illness. Psychiatric illnesses were reactions to stresses of everyday living, not discrete disease entities that could easily be demarcated from one another or even from normal behavior or experience. From this perspective, naming a disease was of much less consequence than understanding the underlying psychic conflicts and reactions that gave rise to symptoms.

**Diagnoses as disease entities.** Diagnosis, relegated to the periphery of psychiatric concerns from the 1950s through 1970s, has since taken center stage. *DSM-III* (1980) and *DSM-IV* (1994), as well as *DSM-V* (planned for release in 2011), reflect American psychiatry's embrace of a biomedical model of disease, complete with discrete illness categories that are distinct both from one another and from that which qualifies as "normal." Unlike *DSM-I* and *DSM-II*, the subsequent revisions have been major undertakings of central scientific importance to the field. Whereas *DSM-II* had consisted of a paltry 119 pages, *DSM-III* was 494 pages long and listed 265 distinct subdisorders—a number that would grow to nearly 400 with the publication of *DSM-IV*. Many disorders came to



exist for the very first time when they made their appearance in print, the end product of six years' effort and of endless debate and compromise within committees assigned to each major disease category.

Unlike previous editions, *DSM-III* was intended to actively guide psychiatrists in assessing and diagnosing patients. The need for such a guide arose largely from psychiatry's place within larger contexts. The whole of medicine had experienced a cultural shift, one that was characterized by reliance on standardized knowledge rather than clinical expertise; statistical knowledge based on groups rather than individuals; and an increasingly reductionistic view of disease in which biology was paramount. This shift occurred within psychiatry as well: The availability of pharmacological treatments for psychiatric disorders, combined with a desire to remain part of an increasingly scientifically rigorous medical realm, led psychiatry to trade psychoanalytic theory for a new biopsychiatry that largely rejected a disease model rooted in individual biographies, psychological conflict, and psychosocial stressors. Shifting fiscal realities also contributed to psychiatry's need for greater diagnostic certainty and accountability for outcomes, as the percentage of outpatient psychiatric care paid by third-party payers (either private or public) in the United States rose from almost zero in the 1950s to nearly a quarter in the 1960s, and continued to rise steadily in the 1970s. The antipsychiatry movement of the 1960s, which critically viewed psychiatry's diagnostic categories as labels constructed by society in order to silence social deviance, created additional pressure on the discipline to define its targets in biological terms.

The diagnostic manual that grew out of this transition from psychodynamics to biopsychiatry was explicitly "atheoretical" with regard to etiology, but most of the diagnostic categories enumerated in the *DSM-III* were underpinned by an implicit assumption that biology and not psychological conflict was their primary cause. Symbolic of this was the excision of the word "reaction" from many diagnoses: thus a patient who would have been diagnosed with a "psychotic depressive reaction" prior to 1980 was now diagnosed with "major depression with psychotic features." Each diagnosis was thought of not only as stemming from a unique biological cause, but also as being made up of a unique (and determinant) set of symptoms—a marked departure from the psychodynamic view of disease, in which a given set of symptoms, depending as they did on the individual's life history and beliefs, could result from any number of underlying conflicts. *DSM-III* and *DSM-IV* have been heavily criticized for their approach to diagnosis, in which the presence of a minimum number of symptoms from a list determines the presence or absence of the disorder in question. However this approach is perhaps the best that can be expected from a field in which symptoms are generally thought to be direct reflections of an underlying disease of presumed, but as yet unknown, biological cause. As a means by which to increase diagnostic consensus, facilitate research into the efficacy of disease-specific cures, and justify insurance reimbursement, *DSM-III* and *DSM-IV* have been largely successful, and the *DSM* remains the dominant system of psychiatric classification in the United States and most other countries.

**Implications.** While psychoanalytic treatments have largely fallen from grace, psychoanalytic theory and language continue to influence American psychiatry and culture. Since the late-twentieth century, American psychiatry has traded this language for the language of biology and brain, but the expanded definition of psychiatric illness—one that includes problems formerly seen as inevitable parts of life—remains. Intriguingly while these problems originally were recast as psychiatric illnesses by virtue of their psychosocial etiology, beginning in the late twentieth century their status as disorders has them readily subject to purely biological interpretations and cures.

### **Therapeutics: From Behavioral Control to Biological Disease**

The nature of psychiatric care has changed immensely since the early-twentieth century, shaped not only by prevailing psychiatric theory but also—and often more importantly—by practical realities such as setting, needs, and resources. State hospitalization and outpatient psychotherapy both largely have been replaced by a proliferation of psychotropic drugs, with considerable implications for how society views mental illness, as well as how people make sense of more everyday aspects of human feelings and behaviors.

**Somatic therapies and behavioral control.** In the early twentieth century, American psychiatry was almost exclusively institutionally based. Nineteenth-century asylum founders had created these institutions as a means of providing a psychologically therapeutic environment in combination with physical treatment regimens, but by the turn of the century their optimism had worn off, replaced by a biological fatalism regarding the patients' chances of improving. By the early twentieth century, state mental hospitals—a designation that had replaced that of asylum—were vastly overcrowded institutions for the care of severely ill patients, many of whom became permanent residents.

In such a setting, where a handful of psychiatrists often cared for thousands of patients, patients were categorized not by diagnosis but by behavior and prognosis, and were housed in wards with labels such as "acutely excited," "chronic quiet," "chronically disturbed," and "convalescing." Disordered behavior was the primary target of psychiatric interventions, which consisted almost exclusively of somatic therapies: hydrotherapy (e.g., continuous baths or wet-sheet body wraps), insulin-induced comas, electroconvulsive therapy, and lobotomy. These treatments were believed to be therapeutic by virtue of their success in subduing out-of-control (diseased) behavior; and behavior, not diagnosis, determined the need for a particular somatic cure.

**Psychotherapy.** As the overcrowding of state hospitals suggests, there was little place for psychotherapy in institutional psychiatry. It was not until the rise of psychoanalysis and outpatient psychiatry that psychotherapy became an important intervention within the field. Though psychoanalysis was largely a treatment sought by well-to-do and well-educated individuals suffering from everyday anxiety, unhappiness, or boredom, in the 1950s analysts began treating not only those suffering from neurotic ills but also traditional psychiatric patients with



severe psychotic disorders such as schizophrenia. These efforts led to significant controversy in the ensuing decades, contributing to psychiatry's abandonment of psychotherapy in favor of more biological approaches. For the most part, however, the demise of psychotherapy within psychiatry can be attributed to two causes: the advent of psychotropic drugs in the 1950s and competition from the growing fields of psychology and social work in the 1960s and 1970s. By the 1990s psychiatry had largely ceded matters of the mind to psychology, content to concern itself with matters of the brain.

***Psychopharmacology and biological disease.*** Though psychiatrists have long had at their disposal a number of drugs capable of sedating patients (for example bromides, barbiturates, hyoscine, and chloral hydrate), these drugs were never seen as therapeutic but rather as “chemical straitjackets.” The age of psychopharmacology did not begin until the 1950s with the discovery of chlorpromazine, the first of what have come to be referred to as the antipsychotic drugs. Other classes of drugs followed, inducing a veritable therapeutic revolution in psychiatry. Since the last third of the twentieth century, the major classes of psychotropic drugs include antipsychotics, antidepressants, anxiolytics, mood stabilizers, and a miscellaneous assortment of other medications, and their use has largely displaced psychotherapeutic interventions as the mainstay of psychiatry practice.

Unlike the somatic therapies and psychotherapy, psychotropic drugs carry with them an implied diagnostic specificity: separate classes of drugs for psychosis, depression, anxiety, and bipolar disorder. Much as psychoanalytic theory and treatment went hand-in-hand (a psychodynamic cure for a psychodynamic ailment), the implied specificity of these drugs fits well with biopsychiatric thinking: a specific neurochemical cure for each neurochemical trouble. As with psychoanalysis, the language of biopsychiatry has heavily pervaded American culture, carrying with it both a scientific logic that links psychiatry to the rest of medicine and a compelling description of human experience that allows people to see themselves readily in biological terms, much as people in the twentieth century readily saw their present troubles as the product of their troubled personal pasts.

***From “major tranquilizers” to antipsychotic drugs.*** The early stages of the psychopharmacologic revolution began in the 1930s and 1940s, when researchers began modifying phenothiazine compounds in an effort to develop synthetic antihistamines. Henri Laborit, a French military surgeon, was interested in these drugs for their analgesic, sedative, and hypothermic properties, believing that they might be of benefit in preventing shock associated with anesthesia. In 1949 he noted that promethazine—a phenothiazine derivative—produced a “euphoric quietude” in patients, prompting chemist Paul Charpentier, of the pharmaceutical company Rhône-Poulenc, to search for phenothiazine derivatives with even greater effects on the central nervous system. The result was chlorpromazine, a compound that would eventually become known as the first antipsychotic drug.

Initially Rhône-Poulenc believed that chlorpromazine might have a variety of applications, for conditions ranging

from nausea to itching, and they named it Largactil to emphasize its many uses. By 1951, however, physicians began recognizing its ability to calm agitated patients without overly sedating them. Smith, Kline & French bought the North American rights in 1952 and received U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval to market it under the trade name Thorazine in May 1954. By 1956, 4 million patients in the United States had taken chlorpromazine—primarily for psychiatric applications—yielding \$75 million in profits in 1955 alone.

Psychiatrists began referring to these drugs as antipsychotics in the mid 1960s, but until that time they were generically referred to as the “major tranquilizers,” and psychiatrists considered them useful for most types of mental disorder. Smith, Kline & French recognized that state hospitals, housing more than half a million captive potential consumers, represented an enormous market. The introduction of chlorpromazine did away with the use of lobotomy almost overnight: The drug was easy to administer; rapidly and therapeutically eliminated recalcitrant, hostile, and violent behavior; and ostensibly produced relatively minor side effects. Perhaps more importantly for the course that psychiatry has taken since, physicians also prescribed it for the nonpsychotic patients who had so recently made their way into state hospitals and outpatient care, thus cementing the medical status of these new diagnoses. It was not until the mid-1960s—by which time the success of Thorazine had led to a proliferation of similar drugs—that psychiatrists winnowed down the application of these drugs primarily to the treatment of psychotic disorders, a fact reflected in the increasing use of the term antipsychotic. This transformation from tranquilizer to antipsychotic, implying the discovery of a biological cure for a specific psychiatric disease, reinforced the conviction that schizophrenia (and, by extension, most psychiatric illness) was at its root a biological disorder of the brain.

The discovery of a drug that seemed effective in treating a specific disorder—or at least in controlling its particular set of symptoms—provided researchers with a major opportunity to explore the workings of the disordered brain. Basic science research into the biological action of antipsychotic drugs laid the foundation for the remarkable progress that has taken place in the neurosciences since the mid-twentieth century. In the late 1950s, Arvid Carlsson discovered the neurotransmitter status of dopamine and demonstrated that antipsychotic drugs block dopamine receptors in the brain, research for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize in 2000. His discoveries also led researchers and psychiatrists to formulate the “dopamine hypothesis” of schizophrenia: since antipsychotic drugs work by blocking dopamine, the cause of schizophrenia must be an excess of dopamine. This bit of logic, compellingly simple and yet disturbingly circular, has been repeated with other classes of psychiatric drugs and the disorders that they seem to ameliorate. Research into the action of apparently effective drugs has been the source of many accepted models of psychiatric illness, largely because scientists lacked better ways of making sense of what goes on inside the living brain—an unfortunate reality that many hope to remedy thanks to the advent of high-quality brain imaging.

The basic nature of antipsychotic drugs changed little in the decades that followed, and the initial optimism that the drugs possessed antischizophrenic properties was increasingly tempered as the drugs' limitations became more apparent. By the late 1960s and 1970s, psychiatrists also began to notice that the drugs produced a number of untoward side effects, foremost among them being tardive dyskinesia, a late-appearing, difficult-to-reverse disorder characterized by involuntary movements of the tongue, jaw, limbs and/or trunk. Psychiatrists continued to prescribe the drugs widely, however, largely because they were simply the best available treatment for a terrible and incurable disease.

In the 1980s, a new era in antipsychotic drugs began, coupled with new hopes for better outcomes. Clozapine, a drug that was actually synthesized in the late 1950s and used briefly until clinicians discovered that it could cause a fatal blood disease called agranulocytosis, was "rediscovered" in the mid-1980s. A number of large, multicenter studies found clozapine to be highly effective in treating refractory patients—that is, patients whose condition responded poorly to other antipsychotic drugs. Clozapine was approved for use in 1989 under the trade name Clozaril and reintroduced alongside a system for carefully monitoring patients for any signs of agranulocytosis. Clozaril became the first of a number of "atypical" antipsychotic drugs, which cause markedly fewer motor side effects compared to the older drugs but, as is increasingly evident, produce a wide range of other problems, most notably severe weight gain and insulin-resistant diabetes. Because these new drugs—six of which are on the market in the United States as of 2004—do much more than simply block dopamine receptors, their success has led scientists to rethink the dopamine hypothesis of antipsychotic drug action and of schizophrenia, but also has reinforced broader claims for the biological basis of psychiatric illness and hopes for more successful cures to follow.

***Psychopharmacology and the psychopathology of everyday life.*** Antipsychotic drugs are in many ways the most important class of psychotropic drugs, given their relative success in managing the most striking and debilitating psychiatric symptoms as well as their role in the early history of psychopharmacology. However they make up a relatively small share of the prescriptions written for psychiatric indications (though they are among the most profitable of all drugs, psychotropic or otherwise). The bulk of the psychotropic drug market, oddly enough, is devoted to the kinds of diagnoses that might never have made it onto the psychiatric landscape if not for the expansive territory staked out by psychodynamic psychiatrists in the mid-twentieth century.

Thanks to the widespread diagnosis and medical treatment of disorders like depression, anxiety, and attention deficit disorder, biopsychiatry has become as vital a part of American culture in the early twentieth century as psychoanalysis was a half-century earlier. As with antipsychotic drugs, the drugs used to treat these disorders were discovered to work only by accident, and the biological explanations for the disorders were gleaned from the actions of the drugs that seemed to treat them. When Prozac, the first of the selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), was introduced in 1988, it was not

long until the SSRIs (a class of drugs that also includes Paxil, Zoloft, and Celexa) became the leading treatment for depression. Less than two decades later—thanks in no small part to direct-to-consumer drug advertising—the belief that depression is caused by a serotonin deficiency had become an established bit of cultural knowledge.

***Polypharmacy and off-label use.*** Intriguingly, in spite of the apparent biological specificity of the drugs on the market, psychiatric practice does not adhere neatly to the categories for which drugs are named (and approved by the FDA). Psychiatrists often prescribe multiple drugs for a single patient with a single diagnosis, and this polypharmacy often combines drugs from different classes of drugs. It is not uncommon for a patient with a diagnosis of schizophrenia or bipolar disorder to be prescribed one or more antipsychotic drugs, a mood stabilizer, an antidepressant, and an anxiolytic, the combination of which is intended—in some unarticulated and scientifically unproven way—to improve the management of their disorder. Off-label prescribing—that is, the prescription of a drug for a condition other than that for which it is approved—is increasingly common. For example, psychiatrists routinely prescribe atypical antipsychotic drugs for patients with non-psychotic diagnoses, including children diagnosed with conduct disorders—a practice that is reminiscent of the widespread use of antipsychotic drugs in the state hospitals of the 1950s. It remains to be seen whether these practices will be validated by clinical research and, if so, what sort of biological explanations will be used to explain their effectiveness.

***Importance.*** Since the mid-twentieth century, there has been a massive transformation in the understanding of how to treat psychiatric disease and, therefore, the understandings of its causes. For psychiatrists who cared for severely ill patients, antipsychotic drugs initially represented a different, albeit better and more efficient, means of treating behavioral symptoms, while for other psychiatrists the new drugs were merely adjuncts to the more important therapeutic task of psychological understanding and interpretation. As biological theory became more compelling, pharmaceutical marketing more effective, and cost-effectiveness a more essential determinant of therapeutic practice, drug therapy increasingly became the primary, and often only, means of psychiatric intervention. In a dramatic reversal of fortune, psychotherapy in the early-twenty-first century is at best an adjunct to pharmacotherapy and at worst a wasteful use of scarce health care resources.

### **Science: From Clinical Expertise to Randomized Controlled Trials**

Since the mid-twentieth century, American psychiatry has been characterized by increasing efforts to appear both medical and scientific, in terms of the reliability of its diagnostic criteria, the biological specificity of its treatments, and the methods by which these treatments are legitimated. Such efforts suggest the image of a laggard field attempting to play catch-up with its more scientific medical colleagues, but such a characterization ignores major transformations in the science of medicine as a whole over this time period. These transformations, most notable among them the development of the randomized controlled trial (RCT), coincided both with psychiatry's brief

psychoanalytic deviation from a biological approach to mental illness and with the advent of psychotropic drugs. Together these developments created the conditions and need for many of the changes that have characterized subsequent psychiatric history.

**The RCT.** Prior to the mid-twentieth century, physicians rarely resorted to experimental methods as a means to prove whether or not a treatment worked. Instead the determinant of legitimate therapeutic knowledge was expert clinical opinion, exercised through historical case controls, open trials, and clinical judgment. These means of evaluating treatments have since been replaced by the RCT.

The basic elements of the RCT—blinding, controls, randomization, and placebos—each have their separate histories. Research psychologists have actively employed experimental methods since the mid-nineteenth century, using randomization and controls much earlier than did the clinical sciences, psychiatry included. From the point of view of medical science, however, the formal birth of the RCT was in 1946, when these features were brought together in the streptomycin trials of the British Medical Research Council.

The design of the RCT is intended to ensure that perceived treatment outcomes are in fact due to the treatment under investigation, rather than to external factors or bias. Thus a basic RCT consists of two groups, an experimental group (given the treatment under investigation) and a control group (given another treatment or a placebo). Patients are randomly assigned to these groups to prevent their individual characteristics from biasing the results, and all participants—researchers, clinicians, and patients—are blinded as to which group a given patient is in, so that they do not bias the results of the experiment.

**The RCT and psychiatry.** Like all scientific methods, the RCT presupposes certain facts about the nature of the world, and thus circumscribes the questions that can be asked and the answers that can be extracted from nature. The RCT views treatment outcomes as data that are independent from the subjective opinions of both doctors and patients. Thus the RCT has arguably supported the turn toward a biological view of psychiatric illness and cure, including the development of discrete diagnostic categories and diagnostically specific treatments.

The influence of the RCT on psychiatry has been practical as well as philosophical. As much as any other medical professionals, psychiatrists wanted better methods of determining whether the methods they employed actually worked. Chlorpromazine was one of the first psychiatric interventions to undergo RCT evaluation, with successful outcomes. However subsequent evaluations of psychiatry's older somatic treatments ended in dismal failure, no doubt reinforcing psychiatrists' enthusiasm for the new pharmaceutical cures. Many other forms of psychotherapy have fared poorly as well when subjected to RCTs, though many psychiatrists have been more skeptical of these outcomes, given the ill fit between the reductionistic design of the RCT and the more context- and relationship-dependent nature of psychotherapeutic cures. In spite of these reservations, by the late 1960s and early 1970s, most

psychiatrists and clinical scientists had accepted the RCT as the best means of judging whether a treatment works.

**Critiques of the RCT.** Since the mid-1990s, the RCT has come under increasing scrutiny. A growing number of researchers have argued that the method favors biological treatments over psychological ones, and that it cannot assess the role that psychosocial factors (for instance, contexts and doctor-patient relationships) and individual factors (for example, the meanings a patient gives to a particular remedy) play in shaping how well the intervention works. Others contend that the clinical experiment is so unlike the unpredictable world of actual clinical practice that it may not provide a reliable gauge of whether a treatment will work in actual practice. Some critics have also challenged whether the RCT actually succeeds in eliminating bias. A number of literature surveys have found that the greatest predictor of an RCT's outcome is who funded it. Beginning in the late 1990s, a series of editorials and articles in major medical journals such as the *Journal of the American Medical Association* and the *New England Journal of Medicine* have wrestled with the problem of how financial interests shape, direct, and, at times, subvert the science of clinical evaluation, lamenting that the RCT, no matter how well it is executed, is vulnerable to the very biases it was designed to expunge.

### Conclusion

Since the mid-twentieth century, psychiatry has undergone revolutionary changes in how psychiatrists diagnose patients, how they treat them, and how they evaluate whether a treatment works. These changes have brought with them major advances, especially in the neurosciences. But this history also suggests that psychiatry has lost something as it has narrowed its focus mainly to the brain and psychotropic drugs. Though psychiatrists are now trained to expertly manipulate a patient's drug regimen, they have become increasingly less able to situate a patient's suffering within a psychological and social context, and the doctor-patient interaction is often reduced to a querying and reporting of diagnostically sanctioned symptoms. Psychiatry, long charged with caring for those suffering from largely chronic conditions, has become focused on the diagnosis and cure of disease. This focus may someday bear therapeutic fruit, but until true cures are actually forthcoming it is important that the role of care not be lost. Like many of the shifts that psychiatry has undergone, these concerns are not unique to psychiatry, but are part of larger changes within medicine and the culture in which it is situated.

*See also* **Consciousness; Medicine; Mind; Psychoanalysis.**

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**PUBLIC SPHERE.** The term *public sphere* is the English translation of the German term *Öffentlichkeit*. This term's significance in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century stems initially from its use in Jürgen Habermas's *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit* (The structural transformation of the public sphere) in 1962. In spite of its foreign origin, the term *public sphere* actually represented an attempt to more adequately articulate those aspects of Anglo-American liberal culture associated with the formation of public opinion and popular sovereignty. The term *Öffentlichkeit*, which literally translates as "public-ness," can be taken to communicate two interconnected sets of meaning, one set involving the notion of "the public" as an actual physical entity, and a second set involving the concept of "publicity" or "openness." (This dual aspect is also found in the Russian *glasnost*.) Hence the term is meant to imply not merely the intellectual exchange present in the notion of a "marketplace of ideas" but also the embodied process of forming otherwise private people into a

public via various means of communication. Yet the term connotes not simply the physically existing public but rather the radically democratic openness implicit in public discourse. The ambiguity inherent in the term *public sphere* enables it to encompass both the rationality implied by open discourse and the sovereignty associated with an actual public.

The public sphere is neither merely the public nor simply the conditions of equality and universal access that permit the free exchange of ideas; it also encompasses the actual process through which private individuals come together to form public opinion. The notion that individuals are "private" is meant to indicate that rank or status should have no standing in the formation of public opinion. What makes an opinion "public" is not merely the accident of its popularity but also its accessibility and ability to withstand public scrutiny. The process through which private individuals come together as a public in the generation of public opinion involves achieving a critical distance from rank, status, or mere popularity in the assessment of opinion—in practice oftentimes accomplished through the private consumption of commodities (pamphlets, books, or programs) produced for the public market.

### Controversies

Habermas's formulation of the concept of the public sphere was intended from the beginning to be controversial. The concept was conceived as a reproach to positivist social science and more specifically to the notion that scientific polling represented the last word in researching public opinion. Habermas sought through his conceptualization of the public sphere to reintroduce notions of reason and rational discourse into discussions of public opinion, in contrast to the pollster's practice of collecting unreflective responses. This approach has become an accepted criticism of public opinion polls, even while it has not appreciably lessened the reliance of marketing experts upon polls. This lack of impact can be attributed in part to a difference in aims between polling practitioners, who are simply looking for a current snapshot of public opinion, and social theorists, who seek to explain the differences between more or less legitimate examples of public opinion.

An important feature of Habermas's analysis was his claim that the public sphere did not represent a timeless aspect of society. Rather, the bourgeois public sphere had a history: it arose early in the eighteenth century and was subject to a "refeudalization" or transformation that commenced during the middle of the nineteenth century. The "liberal model" of the public sphere was to be sharply distinguished from the ancient publics of the Greek poleis, societies where the private realm was one of necessity and the public characterized by rhetorical competition for glory—not unlike an oral "Olympics" (Arendt). The feudal "representative public-ness" that preceded the liberal model was characterized by Habermas as a form of publicness that one encounters in a medieval court—publicness as a form of display, not as a subject of dispute. The "mediatized public" that followed the decline of the liberal model can likewise be understood as a form of mediated display, with the public as an audience reading, listening, watching—but in essence consuming—the mass media performance, whether it be in the form of print, radio, or television.



The German suffix *lich* is akin to the suffix “ly” in English insofar as it modifies the root word, rendering it an adjective (for example, *brüderlich* = brotherly). In a similar manner, the German suffix *keit* that follows *lich* can be thought of as analogous to “ness” in English, transforming the adjective into a noun that signifies the quality manifest in the adjective. *Brüderlichkeit* translates as “brotherliness” or “brotherly feeling or sentiment.” Another example is the triad *Ehre*, *ehrlich*, and *Ehrlichkeit*, which translate as “honor,” “honest,” (“honor-ly” being rather awkward) and “honesty.” This parallels the changes found in *offen*, *öffentlich*, and *Öffentlichkeit* (“open,” “public”—although one may discuss things “openly,” the English adjective is typically rendered “public”—and “publicity”/“the public”). As in the previous cases, the German suffix *keit* transformed the adjective form into a noun, but a noun with a different meaning from the

original root term (brotherliness vs. brother, honesty vs. honor, “publicness” vs. open). Unfortunately the English term *publicity*—which at first glance would seem the best noun form for translating “the quality of openness or being public”—is burdened by negative connotations through association with the advertising industry. The term *public sphere* avoids both the negativity of the term *publicity* and the narrow concreteness implied by “audience” (which in any case corresponds to *Publikum*). By encompassing both the quality of “public-ness” (“publicity” in the positive sense) and “the public,” the term *public sphere* also focuses attention on the nature and necessity of the relationship between the private consumption (of the audience) and the public market for production or performance (publicity). The existence of such a relationship is essential for the development of a critical public sphere.

The ideals of equality, inclusiveness, and rationality that lay at the heart of the liberal model rested upon the cultivation of a critical subjectivity that occurred within the intimate sphere (*Intimsphäre*) of the bourgeois conjugal family. The bourgeois family, which propagated an ideology of the family as a voluntary, loving community supportive of individual development, “raised bourgeois ideology above ideology itself” (Habermas, 1989, p. 48) by inculcating within its members the experience of humanity or “purely human” relations. The transference of the attitudes fostered within the private sphere to topics of public concern—first literary, then political—resulted in the rise of a critical public sphere. The subsequent collapse, beginning in the latter half of the nineteenth century, of the distinction between public and private—the “structural transformation” of Habermas’s title—exposed the fictive unity of the experience of humanity central to bourgeois ideology, thereby undermining the critical function of the public sphere.

The notion of “collapse” is meant to indicate the intervention of the state into what, under the liberal model of society, were previously considered “private” matters, for example, with regard to economic regulation and social programs, as well as the adoption of quasi-public powers—through the consolidation of market power—by powerful trusts and corporations. Notions of public and private did not disappear, but they changed. They no longer denoted completely independent spheres, one—the public—of coercion, and the other—the private—of mutual exchange. The “collapse” is not meant to imply the complete dissolution of the concepts of public and private, but rather the blurring of previous boundaries as regards appropriate spheres of action, as

manifest by the exercise of public power by private interests and concern over what were previously considered private economic circumstances on the part of the state. For example, the privacy of the family has become subject to regulation by child welfare services, and corporations have come to employ market power as a means of dictating public policy.

The dependence of this model of the public sphere upon the development of bourgeois civil society and in particular the bourgeois family was controversial. Although Habermas was well aware of the ideological nature of the rhetoric concerning the bourgeois family, his explanation of how the false synthesis of the abstract rights of *citoyen* (the citizen) and the economic necessities of *homme* (man, or the economic individual) “transcended” the temporal circumstances of bourgeois society by means of the concept of humanity left many unconvinced. Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge made the questionable idealizations concerning the nature of the bourgeois public sphere—particularly with regard to class—the basis for their important contributions to the concept of the public sphere in their 1972 book *Öffentlichkeit und Erfahrung* (Public sphere and experience). Although Negt and Kluge essentially adopted many of the premises behind the bourgeois public sphere (for example with regard to origins, history, and gender), they did question the idealization of the bourgeois public sphere as the only public sphere. The term *counter public* (*Gegenöffentlichkeit*) illustrated their claim that the public sphere as posited by the bourgeois model had always existed in a state of tension with those excluded from it. According to Negt and Kluge, these exclusions were rendered ideologically invisible by the very abstract principles of universality that previously had been

idealized. Hence the growth of exclusions from public debate that Habermas depicted in the “refeudalization” of the bourgeois public sphere did not mark a departure from the underlying principles but rather an extension of their application. Rather than a singular, unified public sphere, there had always existed a variety of (counter) public spheres, each rooted in the experiences that as a whole make up the “context of living” (*Lebenszusammenhang*) of various individuals.

Feminist scholars also found the bourgeois model’s dependence upon a rigid division between public and private questionable. They held that the bourgeois model uncritically reproduced the very same emphasis upon the “intimate sphere as schoolhouse” that had been placed upon it during the eighteenth century by those who sought to disseminate an ideal of femininity that restricted women’s activities to the rearing of male citizens, thereby gendering the public as “masculine” and the private as “feminine.” According to this reading, the biases exhibited by the tendency of the literary sphere to be populated by women and the political sphere by men were not simply an accidental aspect of the bourgeois public sphere—such biases were fundamental elements in its construction and maintenance. The central role gender biases played in the maintenance of the bourgeois “masculinist” public sphere was further confirmed by the connection between its collapse and the collapse of the public-private distinction—a circumstance that Habermas would later term the “colonization of the lifeworld.” Observations such as these on the central role played by exclusions in the construction of the bourgeois public sphere have led feminist scholars such as Nancy Fraser to reject other aspects of the bourgeois public sphere: the notion that economic differences can ever be successfully bracketed; the assumption that the existence of multiple public spheres is regressive; the stricture that public discussions exclude expression of “private” interests; and the belief that a democratic public sphere requires a strict demarcation between civil society (weak publics) and public aspects of the state (strong publics).

Habermas has not been deaf to criticism and has creatively incorporated much of it into his later formulations concerning the public sphere. His work on universal pragmatics and discourse ethics during the late 1960s and 1970s prepared the ground for a less parochial model of the public sphere. Although never explicitly disavowed, the rather narrow foundations of bourgeois privacy were supplanted by the expansive, quasi-transcendental philosophical foundation of an always-already-presupposed ideal speech situation manifest within the everyday conversations that make up the lifeworld (*Lebenswelt*). This “conversational model” of public spheres, although subject to cooptation, was not extinguished with the passing of its bourgeois incarnation, but rather continued to reside in the communicative interstices of modern civil society. This conversational model was further modified through the attempt to integrate electronic media into the concept of the public sphere in a less negative, more productive fashion. Whereas previously the mass media was considered merely a “pseudo-public,” in later work the concept of the public sphere was acknowledged to include “abstract publics” composed of individuals only brought together by means of the mass media.

However, in seeking to project a more sociologically up-to-date depiction of the public sphere that fully incorporates electronic media, Habermas left himself open to accusations of alternately devaluing the normative prescriptions previously associated with the concept of the public sphere—in effect palming them off to civil society—or, in reaffirming the normative impulses that lay behind the initial formulation of the public sphere, rendering incoherent the description of the mass media as part of the public sphere.

These conceptual difficulties stem from the fact that the public sphere was initially conceived as an outgrowth of bourgeois civil society. The norms associated with the bourgeois public sphere or conversational public spheres were assumed to result from the conversations conducted within civil society. The normative status of such conversations derived from either the ideal of humanity, in the case of the bourgeois public sphere, or the ideal speech situation, in the case of conversational public spheres. In both cases, however, mass media were presumed to subvert the normative influence of such ideals by circumventing the medium of conversations in civil society through which such norms are presumed to be inculcated. As long as the conversational medium of civil society is considered the key factor in fostering the norms of the public sphere, the attempt to provide a sociologically accurate description of the public sphere that includes the mass media risks incoherence. One must either depict the public sphere as void of normative resources—contradicting thirty years of research on the subject—or exclude the mass media from the public sphere by definition. It can be argued that there are examples of both in Habermas’s *Between Facts and Norms* (1996).

The close link that is often presumed to exist between the public sphere and civil society lies at the root of the last controversy to be explored. Many social scientists and historians have found the concept of the public sphere to be useful and have sought to adapt it to their chosen field of study. Yet Habermas has argued that the public sphere has a specific historical origin and hence cannot be applied to earlier eras without doing violence to the very concept of the public sphere. The reasoning behind this position is fairly straightforward: if the public sphere represents the conversational matrix of (at least initially) bourgeois civil society, how could the public sphere possibly antedate civil society? A public sphere that predated civil society would by necessity differ conceptually from either the bourgeois or conversational models, both of which depend upon the conversations of civil society to inculcate the proper communicative ethics. Yet it is precisely this position that some have embraced: that the public sphere needs to be reconceptualized separately from civil society, in part in order to adequately account for prior developments in communications and the growth of the marketplace for textual commodities. A “mediated” concept of the public sphere would stress how mediated communications are capable of subverting hierarchy—thereby fostering autonomy of judgment and freedom of conscience—and emphasize the historical importance of literacy, commercial activity involving textual commodities, technological innovation, and the growth of textual (or imagined) communities.

### Influence

The concept of the public sphere has had an important and lasting influence in virtually every social scientific field, as a brief perusal of the affiliations of the various contributors to Craig Calhoun's *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (1992) amply demonstrates. However, given the centrality of public opinion and the process of its formation to the legitimacy of modern democratic forms of government, the concept is most influential for debates involving the intersection of modern communications, opinion formation, and democracy. Such debates range over a wide variety of topics. Some fields are dominated by the conversational model; these include theoretical explorations of the concept of civil society (Cohen and Arato) and arguments concerning the value and feasibility of deliberative forms of democracy (Bohman and Rehg). Other fields of inquiry, such as historical examinations of the modern origins of the democratic ethos (Zaret), are more conducive to a mediated concept. Some have sought to apply the concept of the public sphere to different societies and social conditions—for example, in analyses of the public sphere in Chinese history—whereas others have sought to use the concept as an aid in assessing the future impact of the Internet. Every application of the concept of the public sphere involves a tension between sociological description and normative prescription. This productive tension—which spans the gap between actual and potential—is what has rendered the concept so fruitful and useful, and what promises that the concept will continue to provoke both interest and insight for many years to come.

See also *Civil Society; Equality; Media, History of; Privacy.*

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**PUNISHMENT.** Punishment is best defined as an authorized agent or institution intentionally inflicting pain on an offender or depriving the offender of something in response to an offense or crime the offender is said to have committed. But definitions, however broad, need to be approached with caution, since it is impossible to perfectly capture the myriad constellations of social practices labeled punishment over time and throughout the world. It is helpful to keep in mind Friedrich Nietzsche's (1844–1900) distinction between the forms of punishment (which have maintained a level of continuity) and the meanings of punishment (which have been numerous over time). Indeed, until Nietzsche, philosophical concern with punishment had been almost completely devoted to delineating the justifications of social sanctions. Although many philosophers, especially since the Enlightenment, have seen the great question as why anyone should be allowed to intentionally inflict harm at all, this need to justify the practice has been relatively recent. The more historically resonant need has not been to legitimate punishment itself but rather to distinguish punishment from revenge and justice from mere retribution.

### Vengeance and Punishment

Because the figure of vengeance hovers behind punishment as a threat of lawlessness, some of the most common characteristics of punishment since classical Greece are most easily identified by contrasting them with revenge, as they are in Aeschylus' *Oresteia* trilogy. First, revenge is personal, an act of private justice taken by individuals for wrongs done to them or to those close to them, usually blood relatives. Punishment thus commits itself to impersonality, where the response to an offense is assumed by an authorized third party, typically the state. Second, revenge is based on a subjective sense of injury, which may arise out of something that is neither a crime nor even a tangible harm at all. Within a culture of honor, for example, a well-timed snub may be felt and treated as seriously as a physical assault. In contrast, punishment must be dispassionate and based on the commission of well- and previously defined crimes. Third, revenge is fueled by the desire for the offender to suffer as the victim has, and because of this element of passion it is impossible to ensure that the revenge will not greatly exceed the initial harm. Punishment must thus be proportionate, balancing the appropriate punishment and the severity of the crime. Fourth, revenge often spirals out of control, leading to blood feuds that implicate members of an extended family and continue for generations. Punishment commits itself to harming only the individual perpetrator of the initial harm. Fifth, revenge is not public nor is the avenger committed to requiring similar harms done to others.

Punishment must be a form of public policy, based in a violation of known laws, with consistent enforcement.

### Retribution and Consequentialism

The philosophical justifications of punishment have tended to fall into two broad categories: retribution and consequentialism. Arguments based in retribution look backward toward the initial crime itself, justifying punishment as what the criminal deserves for his or her initial act. The earliest retributivist ideal, the *lex talionis* (literally, “law of the same kind”), is found in numerous ancient Near Eastern law codes, including the Code of Hammurabi (c. 18th century B.C.E.) and exemplified in the Old Testament formula of an “eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot” (*Deut.* 19:21; see also *Exod.* 21:24, *Lev.* 24:23). The principle of the *talionis* has often been compared to vengeance, and indeed the emotional satisfaction of the victim plays a large part in retributivist accounts, especially in the symbolic similarity of the punishment to the crime. However, retributive justice is meant to place a strict limitation on the extent of requital, disrupting potential blood feuds and ensuring both proportionality and a conclusion to strife. By offering an image of justice based in rebalancing a harmony that has been upset, retribution assumes the justness of the initial status quo and punishment invites a return to that initial stage.

The second common category of justification is consequentialism, which looks toward the future rather than backward toward the crime. For the consequentialist, retributivism is nothing more than a compromise with revenge, and no punishment can be legitimated without knowing that it will bring forth good effects. The good effects that are considered to derive from punishing the offender vary but have included (a) reducing the amount of crime by removing criminals from public circulation; (b) deterring others from committing crime through example and threat; and (c) reforming and rehabilitating the criminal.

In demanding that punishment have effects beyond harming an offender, the consequentialist theorist must often turn away from the criminal act itself and look toward the criminal or the socioeconomic environment, which leads to charges that consequentialism effaces the evil of the crime. Consequentialist theories are also often troubled by a lack of conformity between the guilt of the punished and the usefulness of the punishment. For example, punishing an innocent person may still serve as a deterrent, whereas punishing a truly remorseful criminal who committed an offence no one witnessed may be superfluous. Because punishment may serve goals that are often extraneous to the law, such as providing socially beneficial labor or edifying examples of redeemed guilt, or generating social cohesion, consequentialism often seems to be an affront to the strict rule of law.

Plato (428–389 B.C.E.) embodies the rehabilitationist aspirations of consequentialism. “The purpose of the penalty is not to cancel the crime—what is once done can never be made undone—but to bring the criminal and all who witness his punishment in the future to complete renunciation of such criminality, or at least to recovery in great part from the dreadful state” (p. 934). For Plato, it was important to redefine *dikē*

(punishment as justice) in a way that clearly distinguishes it from *timōria* (punishment as vengeance). Punishment is undertaken for the sake of the guilty party, as part of a cure for the injustice that diseases the criminal’s psyche. Since criminality harms the offender even more than the victim, and since one would never knowingly harm oneself, criminal acts cannot strictly be understood as voluntary. Plato nevertheless accepted many traditional forms of punishment involving suffering without clearly explaining how suffering is the best way to cure someone of injustice.

A secondary concern in justifying punishment has been the identity of those bodies authorized to punish. The primary solution, at least since early modernity, is for the sovereign state to claim exclusive authority, an assertion exemplified by Thomas Hobbes’ *Leviathan*. However, this claim has always been controversial, for religious organizations have often claimed the authority to punish parishioners for their sins. The medieval Catholic Church was often responsible for lessening the severity of punishments, especially in reducing the number of death sentences, since the Church primarily saw the criminal as a sinner in need of repentance. But this also meant that a number of acts of moral turpitude demanded punishment by religious authorities, regardless of civil law. This drawn-out conflict over penal sovereignty helped precipitated the critiques of the Enlightenment.

### The Enlightenment

The Enlightenment’s contribution to both the philosophical justifications of punishment and to concrete penal reforms cannot be underestimated. Voltaire (1694–1778), Charles-Louis Secondat, baron de Montesquieu (1689–1755), Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832), and others challenged both the penal practices of the day and their justifications. These reformers were strongly consequentialist in orientation. “All punishment is mischief,” according to Bentham’s famous dictum, and could be admitted only on the basis of its future utility. The only just reason for punishment is to protect society lawfully by preventing future crime rather than to seek retribution or display the overwhelming power of the king. They argued that punishment must only result from violations of civil law, not of religious edicts, and that crime must be distinguished from sin. Voltaire condemned punishment for violations of religious ceremony or dogma, sarcastically calling them “local crimes” as opposed to acts universally condemned. They also criticized the lighter punishments meted out to the aristocracy and the arbitrary sentences handed out by judges with overly wide discretion. Violent but irregular punishments were not helpful and, as Montesquieu noted, witnesses to such ceremonies become inured to the sight. To be effective, they argued, punishment must be swift and must not be arbitrary. This requires that legislatures clearly define criminal law rather than allowing judges wide discretion—a point that was central to Bentham’s peneology.

Most of these reform proposals are collected in a slim, influential treatise by the Italian jurist Cesare Beccaria (1738–1794), *On Crimes and Punishments* (1764). Beccaria condemned the secrecy of criminal justice and demanded an end to the use of judicial torture. However, his most famous



proposal was to abolish the death penalty. He argued that not only is capital punishment ineffective as a deterrent but that it cannot have been agreed to as part of an original social contract. Thus, while the purpose of punishment may be the protection of the society, there are limits to how far that protection can extend.

Enlightened reformers moved away from corporal punishment, seeking to design a penal system that would make punishment more useful, edifying the prisoner while simultaneously repairing the damage the prisoner had inflicted upon society. Central to these plans were work and imprisonment. Work was a common corrective technique, and many reformers believed the regularity and discipline of labor would lead to the moral rejuvenation of the wrongdoer while serving social needs at the same time. During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, distinctions between the prison and the workhouse were cloudy, and prisons were often structured akin to factories. Other potential penalties could include transportation, sending convicts to work in overseas plantations as indentured servants for the duration of their sentence.

If retributivist theories did not disappear under the weight of the eighteenth century's legal reforms, neither were retributivists unaffected by the Enlightenment's powerful critique of traditional practices and justifications for punishment. Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), the Enlightenment's greatest retributivist, criticizes Beccaria as overly compassionate toward humanity. Punishment must relate only to the crime, he argued, and cannot be concerned with any other extraneous goals, such as reform or deterrence, for such utilitarian goals treat persons as mere things. Yet neither must punishment serve the emotional satisfaction of the injured; punishment must neither be passionate nor unpredictable, neither overly humane nor desirous of revenge. Kant did not justify his full embrace of the *lex talionis* as a controlled form of revenge but rather as a dispassionate principle of universality and equality. Thus his theory of punishment seeks fairness not only for the victim or for society but for the perpetrator of the crime as well.

For Kant, the *lex talionis* served not only to justify punishment but also as a guide to proper proportionality. The punishment must resemble the crime itself; not only retribution but similarity is required. For example, murder can only be punished through the death penalty and Kant dismissed Beccaria's critique of capital punishment as mere "sophistry and juristic trickery." Nevertheless, Kant still argued that a mother guilty of killing her illegitimate child should be excused from the death penalty on the grounds that the law has not recognized the birth and thus the mother stands in a "state of nature" in relation to her child. As this example suggests, Kant's theory of punishment is not simply the juridical translation of his moral theory. His complex reworking of the tradition of the *talionis* continues to have difficulties in separating from the ideal of revenge, yet despite these difficulties—or perhaps because of them—Kant's theory of just punishment featured strongly in the revival or redistribution in the United States and Britain during the 1980s.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831), on the other hand, was a retributivist who rejected the *lex talionis* and

considered punishment a right of the criminal. Crime, he argued, is an affront to the very structure of legality and criminals have metaphorically torn the mask of legal personality from both their victims and themselves, revealing the naked contingency of the law. Punishment "annuls" the crime by reasserting the proper status of both parties as legal subjects. Thus punishment is a right of the criminal as much as of the victim (which does not mean that the criminal desires it). In a reflection of Plato, Hegel viewed punishment as a form of education, in which the criminal is taught how to behave in a manner worthy of his status as a person.

### From Justification to Explanation

Implicit in Hegel's theory of punishment is the socially vital role of both the criminal and the act of punishing; far from being an unfortunate aberration, punishment is a constitutive force of social life and proves the law's force. This idea that crime and punishment play a necessary role was emphasized by a number of social thinkers at the beginning in the late nineteenth century. In the late nineteenth century, an alternative set of philosophical and historical speculations arose, which were more interested in explaining and examining the function of punishment within a social system than in justifying or legitimizing any particular set of practices.

This shift in philosophical attention came from multiple and not always reconcilable directions. Three key exemplars are the sociological analysis of Émile Durkheim (1858–1917), the Marxian tradition, and the genealogical method of Nietzsche and Michel Foucault (1926–1984). Despite their differences, these approaches have important similarities. First, these theorists did not see crime and punishment as aberrant, but as having the power to construct a larger social order. Thus, rather than intimately linking crime with punishment, they saw both within the context of a greater social and economic environment. Second, they were skeptical, if not outright dismissive, of the two conventional theories of penal justification. Third, all three showed an interest in the philosophical ramifications of taking seriously the historical changes in penal practices.

In *The Division of Labor in Society* (1893), Durkheim rejected the contention that punishment must break its ties with either vengeance or the emotional satisfaction it provides. For Durkheim, the social function of punishment is to give effect to the emotional outrage of a society whose norms have been breached by the criminal act. A criminal act is identified as that which shocks the social conscience; criminality functions as a way to clarify the moral boundaries of the social group. Punishment is the reciprocal effect of society's moral outrage, generating and maintaining a solidarity that society cannot readily do without.

Calls for restorative justice are one contemporary manifestation of Durkheim's theory of social solidarity. Rather than in placing either the crime or the criminal at center stage, this theory focuses on the injuries and needs of the victim and of the community as a whole. Offenders must be held accountable to these victims, and part of their penalty may involve direct restitution, apologies to the victims, and community

service. The goal is begin a process of restoring the trust and solidarity that is broken by a criminal act, and although restorative justice draws on both retributivism and therapeutic consequentialism, it offers a clear alternative to both theories by concentrating on the social relationships that are harmed in the wake of crime.

Marxist analysis of crime has often emphasized the political economy of penology and sought to strip the practices of punishment from their juridical justifications. Although he wrote infrequently on legal matters, Karl Marx (1818–1883) criticized the failure of penal theory to consider the social factors, especially economic inequality and poverty, that underlay criminal activity. Using this framework, Georg Rusche (1900–1950) and Otto Kirchheimer (1905–1965), in *Punishment and Social Structure* (1939), examined the development of various forms of punishment in the context of the labor market's fluctuating needs, from the Middle Ages through to the modern day. Imprisonment, for example, functions both as a useful source of cheap labor for the state and, during periods of high unemployment, as a useful way of clearing the streets of potentially dangerous subversives who have little to lose. Less deterministic in the way they linked the economy and penology were the works of British historians and sociologists led by E. P. Thompson (1924–1993), whose *Whigs and Hunters: The Origin of the Black Act* was published in 1975. In this important work, he used the relationship between capital punishment and property laws to examine how the law in general legitimates economic inequalities and mediates relationships between economic classes.

By looking at the social context of crime, skeptics inside and outside of the Marxist tradition have challenged the unequal distribution of punishment along racial lines, pointing to, for example, the disproportionate number of racial minorities filling prisons in the West and the statistical correlation between the severity of punishments (especially the death penalty) and the race of the victim. Criminologists studying the sociology of deviance have also examined the phenomenon of the “moral panic”—exaggerated responses to perceived outbreaks of deviance or criminal behavior.

In *On the Genealogy of Morals* (1887), Nietzsche sought to disrupt the ahistorical tendencies of utilitarian histories of punishment that conflated the current function of punishment with its origin, “just as one formerly thought of the hand as invented for the purpose of grasping” (Second Essay, Section 13, p. 79). He offered an alternative origin of penal practices in a primitive economic version of the *lex talionis*, in which the physical tortures associated with juridical punishment were associated not with a guilty subject but rather only with the pleasure a creditor took in harming a debtor with an outstanding bill.

The genealogical perspective has been most importantly taken up by the French historian Michel Foucault. In *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1975), Foucault explains how imprisonment emerged out of a wide array of potential penalties in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to become almost the sole means of punishing criminals. He describes a shift away from sovereign authority acting publicly against those who transgressed its laws and

toward a complex and fractured form of power exercised through the techniques of discipline and centered in the controlled spaces of the prison, away from public sight. In describing this movement, Foucault challenges the Enlightenment's representation of itself. Whereas eighteenth century European penal reformers argued that they sought to humanize punishment by making its exercise equal, consistent, and beneficial to all of society, Foucault argues that they helped bring forth a new economy of power, one that shifted the emphasis away from the crime and onto the “moral” reform of the criminal. Bentham's Panopticon prison design is emblematic of this system of social knowledge gained through surveillance and a careful arrangement of the body in time and space. The prison, in Foucault's eyes, becomes not only the site of disciplinary mechanisms but also a sign of a how the incarceration model of punishment has bled into many other social institutions, including schools and the workplace. Perhaps the most important ramification taken from Foucault's work is a radical reconceptualization of how power operates in society. Rather than modeling power on the top-down physical coercion of a sovereign, Foucault conceives of power relations as derived from the mutually reinforcing links between social practices such as punishment and systems of scientific knowledge such as penology. Ironically, this radical critique of the therapeutic model occurred at the same time that retributivist arguments favoring greater use of imprisonment gained a new lease on life, indicating a dearth of new justifications for prisons combined with a practical lack of penal alternatives.

No other penal issue has attracted such controversy since the mid-1970s as the death penalty. Abolitionists argue that morally it is inhuman and practically it is ineffective in deterring crime. Abolitionists also argue that it grants the state too much power, and is too often used as a tool of political terror, or used unequally upon minority communities. While some supporters of capital punishment argue from consequentialist principles that the death penalty is a deterrent to crime, most adopt a modern version of the *lex talionis*. By the end of the twentieth century many Western nations, especially throughout Europe, had banned this practice. The United States, along with many regimes in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, continues to apply the death penalty. While the practice has been challenged as a violation of individual civil liberties, its popularity in the United States remains strong in the early twenty-first century.

See also *Natural Law; Society; Virtue Ethics*.

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**PURITANISM.** Puritanism is the set of religious beliefs and practices retroactively ascribed to Puritans by modern scholars. Since *Puritan* was originally a term of abuse toward people considered excessively, narrow-mindedly, or hypocritically religious, not an embraced identity, the definitions of both *Puritan* and *Puritanism* have been and remain inescapably vague. Roughly, we may take the term *Puritans* to refer to the fervently religious, “godly” fraction of the English nation who, dissatisfied with England’s imperfectly Reformed status quo, between the 1560s and the 1640s pushed for a further reformation of England as a corporate whole toward more fully Reformed ecclesiastical practice and for the infusion of their own ardent religiosity in the faith, worship, and daily life of all Englishmen. Puritanism, therefore, encompasses Puritans’ theology and practical divinity, the quite divergent religiopolitical goals of successive generations of Puritans, and, more loosely, the cultural, social, and economic habits scholars have since identified as corollaries of Puritan religiosity and belief.

### Religious Practice

Puritanism began simply as a full-blooded articulation of Reformed theology, which strongly emphasized that the course of human events depended upon God’s omnipotent providence and that the soul’s salvation depended upon both human faith and God’s absolute and predestining power to save and to damn. Certain aspects of this belief were characteristically but not exclusively Puritan and were shared by most English Protestants. Many Puritans emphasized these more congenial aspects of Puritanism, seeking to unite the Protestant nation as much as possible. This soft-edged Puritanism promoted Reformed catechetical education, the support for a learned and godly ministry, the encouragement of ministerial preaching, the setting of psalms and hymns to popular song tunes, a unifying culture of providentialism among Englishmen that emphasized the possibility of saving grace, a fervent emphasis on anti-Catholicism rather than on the precise

details of Reformed theology, and the vision of England as an elect nation, collectively destined for salvation. This branch of Puritanism was essentially “hot Protestantism”—distinctive in its enthusiasm more than in its beliefs.

Other Puritans embraced a Puritanism that created a distinctive way of life alongside of distinctive religious beliefs. First, this Puritanism enjoined an ascetic variant of English culture that rejected as “ungodly entertainments” the songs, dances, and sports enjoyed by most Englishmen, and replaced them with sermon-going, Bible study, prayer, and (most unpopularity) the proselytization and coercive enforcement of this reformation of manners among their fellow Englishmen. Second, Puritanism faced squarely God’s predestining power to save and to damn, brought it into everyday religious practice and worship, and made this “experimental predestinarianism” central to their practical divinity and emotional connection with God; and so it focused on the search for ways to assure oneself of one’s soul’s salvation. Hence, Puritanism transformed Reformed providentialism into a search for this-worldly signs of God’s beneficial providence that would provide reasonably sure guarantees of other-worldly salvation and stressed the emotional, joyful assurance that came when one knew that God had predestined one’s soul for salvation. Third, since Puritans did not have the full coercive resources of the state at their command, Puritanism promoted “voluntary religion” that operated by persuasion rather than by compulsion. Puritan works of practical divinity therefore instructed ministers how to preach so as to bring listeners voluntarily to live a godly life, and instructed the Puritan laity how to order their own lives in a godly manner. Reformed manners, experimental predestinarianism, and the practical divinity of voluntary religion are the three most noteworthy characteristics of this branch of Puritanism.

### Ecclesiology and Politics

Puritanism became a political issue around 1570, as Elizabeth began to resist demands for further reformation of the English Church. Political Puritanism at first denoted the party counseling Elizabeth to change her mind and resume the transformation of England toward the practices of more fully Reformed polities, such as Geneva and Scotland. These Puritans’ main desires were to eliminate England’s bishops and replace them in the Church’s governing structure with both a presbyterial-synodal church structure and a system of consistorial discipline, and to eliminate the vestments, liturgy, and church decoration that preserved aspects of England’s Catholic tradition. Puritan relations with Elizabeth became increasingly acrimonious, as by the end of the 1580s it was clear that her halt was meant to be permanent. Since first Elizabeth and then James remained adamant in their resistance to full national reformation, Puritanism from the 1590s to the 1610s chose two tactics by which to express their opposition. Most Puritans made the necessary obeisances to the forms of the English Church, but worked quietly to reform the church at the local level, while waiting for a chance to resume national reformation. A few radicals separated from the Church rather than acquiesce in its imperfect reformation; these ministers and laity, intermittently persecuted, generally abandoned the urge to create a national Church, and instead founded Congregationalist, Baptist, and other sects.



The onset of the Thirty Years War upset this political situation. As England's bellicose Reformed ministry urged intervention in the war, opposing James I's pacific policy, first James and then Charles I began to patronize more deferential "Arminian" bishops, who added to their respect for royal authority a shift from the traditional Reformed emphasis on faith and predestination toward an emphasis on tradition and ritual, and sought accordingly to move the Church even farther from the Reformed ideal. Puritanism therefore transformed itself in the 1620s and 1630s from an urge toward further reform to a defense of such reform as had already been achieved in the Church against Arminianizing changes. At the same time the actions of Charles and the Arminian bishops greatly radicalized Puritanism. Among those Puritans who still wished to take part in a national Church, the number of Puritans willing to tolerate episcopacy diminished drastically; and the sectarian impulse and the desire to emigrate to fully Reformed New England also rose sharply among Puritans in these decades. As his command of the nation broke down in the early 1640s, Charles confronted a radicalized Puritanism, which three generations of royal policy had made bitterly hostile to royal authority and extraordinarily receptive to radical political practice and thought.

### Capitalism

In retrospect scholars have associated Puritanism with almost every "modernizing" development in early modern European history. At the heart of this mountain of theorizing is the thesis propounded by Max Weber that Protestantism transmuted the idea of a religious calling into this-worldly achievement in the service of God, Reformed theology especially emphasized this transmutation, and Puritanism in particular made possible England's pioneering transition to modern industrial capitalism and a pervasive, secularized Puritan work ethic. Studies of Puritanism in its classic development up to the 1640s therefore have often focused on attempts to prove or disprove Weber's thesis as it applies to the political, economic, and cultural aspects of Puritanism. At this point in time the latest scholarship hesitantly supports the idea that Puritanism did have a disproportionate appeal toward artisanal guild members and the literate, that Puritanism did help inspire middling Englishmen toward new, coercive policies of social control and welfare toward their poorer brethren, and that by focusing religious salvation upon individual faith and God's predestining power Puritanism did allow Puritans engaged in economic activity to act relatively unconstrained by the inhibitions of a traditional "moral economy." If this is so, Puritanism does correlate significantly with the prerequisites for the development of a modern economy and society; but this thesis is highly qualified, and remains strongly contested. This latest word ought not to be taken as the last word on the subject.

See also *Reformation; Religion; Religion and the State.*

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David Randall

**PYTHAGOREANISM.** The most central teaching of the Pythagorean school—that there is an underlying mathematical structure to the universe—is a foundational idea of Western civilization, particularly in the sciences. Because of this, the entire history of Western scientific and cosmological thought has been intertwined with Pythagorean ideas. Certainly many of the greatest physicists and mathematicians have embodied a kind of Pythagorean worldview, especially those who have emphasized the elegant, mathematical harmonies of nature and the human mind's ability to grasp the underlying world order.

The first person to call himself a *philosopher* or "a lover of wisdom," the historical Pythagoras was born on the Greek island of Samos circa 570 B.C.E. According to his biographers, he traveled to Egypt and Babylonia before founding his philosophical school in Croton, in South Italy. The school included men and women, and was influenced by the Greek mystery religion of Orphism, which taught reincarnation and stressed the purification of the soul. Like the other Presocratics, for Pythagoras there was no differentiation between philosophy and natural science. The Pythagoreans conceived of philosophy as a total, integrative "way of life," and the purification of the soul was achieved through study and contemplation, rather than through religious ritual.

### Number, Cosmos, and Harmony

While Pythagoras left no writings, the central focus of Pythagorean teachings remains clear. Number is a universal archetype, "the principle, source, and root of all things." More specifically, everything is composed of "the elements of number," which the Pythagoreans identified as the Limited and the Unlimited. The Pythagoreans engaged in the study of number theory or arithmetic (number in itself), geometry (number in space), harmonics or tuning theory (number in time), and astronomy (number in space and time). These descriptions correspond well with the modern definition of mathematics as "the study of patterns in space and time."

Since number and its qualities such as polarity, harmony, and proportion are archetypal principles that underlie physical manifestation, mathematics is discovered rather than invented, and possesses the power to reflect the essential nature of reality, rather than just modeling it or describing it. Moreover, in the Pythagorean view, because number is universal, it is also divine. While modern science is conceived in experimental terms, ancient Greek science was mathematical; and while mathematics has practical applications, Pythagoras's approach elevated mathematics to a study worth pursuing above any purely utilitarian ends for which it had previously been employed.



Pythagoras was the first person to call the universe a *kosmos*. The Greek term, which is the root of the word *cosmetic*, refers to an equal presence of order and beauty. The universe is a *kosmos* because the phenomena of nature embody geometrical form and proportion. These proportions allow things to unfold and function in the most elegant and efficient ways (which is a fact of nature), but also give rise to beauty (which is a value). In this way, the worlds of “fact” and “value” are not separate domains, but inherently related. In a larger sense, all things are related through whole–part and proportional relationships (*analogia*), as in an ecosystem. Because of this, the classical Pythagorean metaphor likens the universe to a living organism rather than an inanimate machine. Plato describes the Pythagorean view well when he describes the cosmos as “one Whole of wholes” and as “a single Living Creature which encompasses all of the living creatures that are within it” (*Timaeus* 33A and 30D).

The Pythagoreans (among whom Plato must be counted) perceived a fundamental relationship between proportion and the principle of justice, in which “each part of the whole receives its proper due.” They believed that the essential nature of justice could be understood through the study of continuous geometrical proportion (*analogia*) and through the study of the mathematical ratios of the musical scale, in which the two extremes of the musical scale are bridged through various types of mathematical proportion. Central to the Greek concept of proportion is the idea of finding “means” or types of mediation between extremes. In tuning theory, the Pythagoreans identified the arithmetic, geometric, and harmonic means which underlie the musical scale, as well as the perfect consonances of music, which are mathematical ratios: the octave (1:2), the perfect fifth (2:3), and the perfect fourth (3:4). The Pythagoreans likened a just and well-ordered society to a well-tuned lyre. While each note retains its individuality, all are proportionally linked together in a larger whole to form a musical scale, and all are interdependent in terms of their reliance on one another. (See Plato, *Republic* 443D–444). Justice is present in any well-functioning organism, society—and also the soul.

In Pythagorean thought, number gives rise to proportion, and proportion gives rise to harmony. The Greek word *harmonia* means “fitting together” or “joining together.” Harmony and justice is the result of good proportion made manifest, and the *kosmos* itself is a harmony in which all of the parts are proportionally bound together. While every organism—including the cosmos—is a unity, it is harmony that allows the parts to function together as an integrated whole. Harmony, justice, and proportion relate to Greek medical theory, because healthy organisms possess a type of dynamic balance in which the various elements work together; when lack of harmony prevails, illness will result.

Understanding the cosmos is essential for self-understanding, because humanity is a microcosm, a reflection of the entire world-order in miniature. To know the powers present in the greater cosmos—including the divine powers of order, beauty, and reason—allows humans to become aware of the divine, universal principles reflected within our own being. Science was thus envisioned as a spiritual undertaking, because contemplation of the cosmic pattern aids in the assimilation of the soul to the divine. Once again Plato makes the point clearly

when he writes that “a man should come to resemble that with which it delights him to associate. . . . Hence the philosopher through the association with what is divine and orderly (*kosmios*) becomes divine and orderly (*kosmios*) insofar as a man may” (*Republic* 500C).

Pythagoreanism, with its emphasis on attuning the soul to a vision of the deepest level of reality through the study of mathematics and proportion, lies at the heart of Plato’s educational program described in the *Republic*. Plato had personal contact with members of the Pythagorean school, including Archytas of Tarentum; the spirit of Pythagoreanism animated Plato’s works and was transmitted through the later Platonic tradition. Where Plato parted company with Pythagoras was in his overwhelming emphasis on the transcendent. For Pythagoras, the divine order is immanent in the cosmos, where it may be encountered; but Plato emphasized a transcendent metaphysics of forms or examples, only accessible to the purified intellect, divorced from the phenomena of nature. In either case, both Pythagoreanism and Platonism stressed an epistemology in which human beings can know the deep structure of the world because of the mind’s essential kinship with its archetypal structure.

Pythagoreanism remained active in medieval philosophical, scientific, and aesthetic thought, influencing the symbolism and architecture of the gothic cathedrals. It similarly influenced Islamic cosmological thought and architecture through the universal encyclopedia of the Brethren of Purity (*Ikhwan al-Safā*), compiled in the tenth century C.E. But it was with astronomer Johannes Kepler (1571–1630) that the Pythagorean tradition made its most spectacular triumph at the dawn of the modern era, in Kepler’s discovery of the three laws of planetary motion.

Motivated by a belief that divine harmonies animate the celestial order, Kepler finally proved Plato’s assumption that there was an elegant mathematical order underlying planetary motion despite the seeming, observed irregularities of retrograde motion. In this way, Kepler reconciled the mathematical science of the Greeks—and the Pythagorean spirit—with an absolutely rigorous empiricism that became the hallmark of modern physics.

See also **Geometry; Greek Science; Mathematics; Neoplatonism; Platonism.**

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David Fideler



# Q

**QUANTUM.** The German physicist Max Planck (1858–1947) introduced the quantum of action  $h$  (Planck's constant) into physics in his successful theory of blackbody radiation in 1900 and thus started quantum theory, one of several revolutionary discoveries that occurred in physics at the turn of the twentieth century. Others were Albert Einstein's (1879–1955) special theory of relativity, his theory of the light quantum, and the experimental proof of the existence of atoms and molecules, based on Einstein's theory of Brownian motion, all published in the single year 1905. These theories and the general theory of relativity distinguish modern physics from the classical physics that was dominant in 1900.

The desire to formulate physics in terms of observable quantities motivated Einstein's special theory of relativity, which eliminated the unobservable ether assumed by James Clerk Maxwell (1831–1879) and his followers. The "new quantum theory" of the 1920s was also supposed to be a theory of observables, as it eliminated the visualizable orbits of the "old quantum theory" that preceded it, but the new version introduced concepts such as Erwin Schrödinger's (1887–1961) wave function ( $\psi$ -function) that involves the imaginary number  $i = \sqrt{-1}$ . Quantum mechanics and quantum field theory employ other mathematical concepts that are far from the observable realm.

While other developments of modern physics, such as relativity, can be seen as generalizing classical physics, quantum mechanics makes a much stronger break with the past. Even the basic notion of measurement is problematic in quantum theory. One of its consequences is a fundamental indeterminacy that prevents, for example, the simultaneous determination of the position and momentum of a particle. That brings into question the entire epistemology on which classical physics is based. The  $\psi$ -function of an atom, for example, is the solution of a differential equation that is linear in the time variable, and once given,  $\psi$  is determined for all time. The  $\psi$ -function thus provides a deterministic description of the system, but from this complete description one can predict with certainty the outcome of only special "compatible" measurements; for most measurements, only the probability of a given result can be calculated.

The implications of quantum theory are so profound that even its creators, such as Planck and Einstein, found it difficult to accept and wrestled with its concepts all their lives. Skeptical physicists devised ways to avoid the apparent contradictions, and these proposals have led to experimental tests. All of the tests performed so far have confirmed the predic-

tions of quantum theory, although its laws are subject to differing physical interpretations.

### Planck's Paper of 1900

As the nineteenth century drew to a close, many physicists felt that the fundamental laws of physics were well understood, and would be a permanent part of humanity's worldview. Although new experimental results, such as the recent discoveries of X-rays, radioactivity, and the electron, could modify the view of the microworld, it was felt that classical mechanics, electromagnetism, thermodynamics, and statistical mechanics, based on classical ideas, would sooner or later provide a satisfactory account of the new phenomena. When William Thomson (Lord Kelvin; 1824–1907) gave a talk at the Royal Institution in London in April 1900 concerning two clouds over the theories of heat and light, he referred not to the recent discoveries but to problems with the ether and the failure of the classical theorem that heat energy should be distributed uniformly among the various possible motions of molecules.

Einstein's relativity theory disposed of the ether (at least for the next century), while the more obscure problems of molecular motion would find their solution in a new mechanics that was born in 1900 from the revolutionary reasoning of a conservative middle-aged physicist, Max Planck. In 1860 Gustav Robert Kirchhoff (1824–1887) had shown that the relative amounts of energy emitted at different wavelengths from any surface was the same for any material and dependent only on the temperature. He also argued that the ratio of the emissive power to the absorptive power of any given material was constant. Kirchhoff conceived of an ideal blackbody that absorbed all the radiation that fell upon it, and he saw that this situation could be realized by an enclosure at constant temperature (such as the interior of a furnace). The radiation from a small hole in such an isothermal enclosure would not depend upon the size or shape of the enclosure or upon the material of the walls. Therefore it had a universal character that called for a fundamental explanation, one that was independent of theories regarding the structure of matter (which were essentially unknown). The spectrum, and hence the color, of the radiation depends only upon the temperature, whether the source be a furnace, the filament of an incandescent lamp, or a glowing star in the sky.

Planck found that explaining the spectrum of blackbody radiation was especially challenging, and hoped to understand its intensity as a function of wavelength  $\lambda$  or frequency  $\nu$  (the two being related by  $\lambda \nu = c$ ,  $c$  being the velocity of light in

vacuum). Born in 1858 in the Baltic city of Kiel to an academic family, he studied in Munich and Berlin, where one of his professors was Kirchhoff, to whose chair he succeeded in 1887 after receiving his Ph.D. in Munich in 1879. Planck lived a long and productive life, undergoing terrible personal losses in both world wars and also during the Nazi period. He died in 1947, after suffering the execution of his younger son for participating in a plot to kill Adolf Hitler.

Planck's Ph.D. thesis dealt with the second law of thermodynamics, which says that heat does not flow from a cooler body to a hotter body (one of several formulations). The first law of thermodynamics expresses the conservation of energy. Planck was attracted to the laws of thermodynamics because they were held to have a universal significance. From about 1897 on he devoted himself to understand the laws of blackbody radiation from the standpoint of thermodynamics. Another motivation for him was that experimental scientists at the *Physikalisch-Technische Reichsanstalt* (the German Bureau of Standards) in Berlin were making an accurate determination of the form of the blackbody spectrum. Using reasoning based first on thermodynamics and then on the statistical mechanics of the Austrian physicist Ludwig Boltzmann (1844–1906), Planck derived a formula that gave precise agreement with the latest experimental results, although even its author, who spent more than a decade afterward trying to improve it, later questioned its original derivation.

Planck's formula for  $u_\nu$ , the energy per unit volume of radiation in a cavity at frequency  $\nu$ , reads:

$$u_\nu = (8\pi h \nu^3 / c^3) (1 / \exp(h\nu / kT) - 1)$$

where  $T$  is the absolute temperature and  $k$  is called Boltzmann's constant. Plotted against  $\nu$ , the curve for  $u_\nu$  rises from zero at  $\nu = 0$  to form a curved peak with its maximum near  $h\nu = 3kT$ , and then falls exponentially to zero for large  $\nu$ , where the "1" in the denominator becomes negligible. The peak position that determines the color of the radiation thus increases linearly with the absolute temperature.

The important things to notice about Planck's formula, which he published in 1900, are that it gives the correct spectrum of blackbody radiation and that, aside from the variable quantities frequency and temperature, it contains only the fundamental physical constants  $h$ ,  $c$ , and  $k$ . Boltzmann's constant  $k$ , which was first introduced by Planck, is the so-called gas constant per mole divided by the number of molecules in a mole (Avogadro's number) and its significance is that  $kT$  is a molecular energy. (A monatomic gas molecule has energy  $(3/2) kT$ .) The universal constant  $c$  is the velocity of light in vacuum. Planck's constant is  $h = 6.626 \times 10^{-34}$  Joule-seconds. Its dimension of energy times time is called "action," and  $h$  is called the quantum of action. Evidently Planck's  $h$  is a very small quantity and, like  $k$ , its most important role is in atomic and molecular physics. The laws of motion of baseballs and planets do not depend upon  $h$ , but without it one cannot understand anything about the microworld; its size sets the scale for the elementary particles of which the world is built.

### Einstein's Light Quantum

In deriving his blackbody formula Planck assumed the complete validity of classical electromagnetism and, not having any theory of atomic structure, used the fact that the radiation was independent of the material of the radiator to assume that it would be sufficient to consider the cavity walls as modeled by a collection of simple harmonic oscillators, each capable of absorbing and emitting a particular frequency. He then calculated the average energy of such an oscillator in equilibrium with the cavity radiation, using a method previously developed by Boltzmann for the statistical treatment of an ideal gas. As an aid to calculating the various possible "partitions" of the total energy among the gas molecules, Boltzmann had assumed each to have one of a discrete set of energy values, but afterward had let the separation of the values tend to zero, so that the molecules could have a continuous range of energy. However, Planck found good agreement with the experimental frequency distribution only when the oscillator energy values, separated by  $h\nu$  in his theory, remained separated by that amount, with  $h$  retaining the finite value that we have given above.

Several physicists criticized Planck's derivation, claiming that he had misapplied Boltzmann's method to his problem, and pointing out that Boltzmann had treated his molecules as distinguishable from one another. Planck's treatment implied that oscillators of a given frequency were indistinguishable. Einstein's view was that the derivation was questionable, but the formula was undoubtedly correct and this brought into question certain aspects of Maxwell's electromagnetic theory. Einstein also had other grounds for questioning Maxwell's theory. In the photoelectric effect, radiation (e.g., ultraviolet light) falls on a metal plate and ejects electrons. Below a certain threshold frequency, dependent on the metal, no electrons are ejected. Above that threshold, electrons are ejected with kinetic energies that increase linearly with the difference of the light frequency from the threshold. At a fixed frequency, increasing the light intensity causes more electrons to be emitted, without increasing the energy per electron. This phenomenon is best explained by assuming that the light consists of concentrations of energy that can be transferred to individual electrons, as in a collision of particles. However, that picture is totally inconsistent with the smooth continuous wave picture of Maxwell's electromagnetic theory of light.

Einstein conjectured that the cavity radiation treated by Planck was like a gas consisting of "particles" called light quanta, each having energy  $h\nu$ . (In 1926 the American chemist Gilbert N. Lewis named these particles "photons.") Arguing this way, Einstein obtained Planck's formula without having to make any arbitrary assumption concerning the cavity walls, such as their being modeled by simple harmonic oscillators. Einstein also regarded that this particulate aspect belonged to radiation in general, whether in an enclosure or in free space. That amounted to a revolutionary modification of the existing theory of optics and electromagnetism. Planck and others found Einstein's proposal very difficult to accept. Although it explained phenomena that were otherwise mysterious, it was hard to see how such optical phenomena as refraction or diffraction (the spreading of light around a sharp edge) that since the early nineteenth century had been treated with a wave

theory of light, could be reconciled with almost Newtonian particles of light. For at least two decades, the quantum achievements of Planck and Einstein were regarded with suspicion. The Nobel Prize Committee recognized Planck's great discovery only in 1918; Einstein's in 1921 (but awarded the prize in 1922).

### Neils Bohr and the "Old Quantum Theory"

In the same year (1922) in which Einstein was awarded the Nobel Prize, largely for his explanation of the photoelectric effect, the Danish physicist Niels Bohr (1885–1962) received the same recognition for his quantum theory of the structure of atoms and their radiations, first put forward in 1913. Before Bohr, the quantum of action had been associated with heat radiation and light. It had also dissipated (in the hands of Einstein and others) one of Kelvin's clouds hanging over physics, that of the specific heats. Bohr seized upon the quantum to make a durable model of the atom itself.

In 1909 the New Zealander Ernest Rutherford (1871–1937), a professor in Manchester, England who was famous for his work in radioactivity, asked one of his students to study the absorption of alpha particles in a thin foil of gold. As an atom was supposed to be a sphere of diffuse positive charge with electrons stuck in it, able to vibrate in response to light or to emit light when set into vibration, Rutherford expected the alpha particle, a high speed helium nucleus, about eight thousand times heavier than the electron, to pass through with only a small deviation. Instead, many alpha particles suffered deflections by large angles, and some were even reflected in the backward direction. After verifying this amazing result and analyzing it mathematically, in 1911 Rutherford announced that the atom, about  $10^{-8}$  cm in radius, was almost entirely empty, that the positive charge was concentrated in a region no larger than  $10^{-12}$  cm (the nucleus), and the electrons (79 in the case of gold) circled the nucleus as the planets circle the sun.

Niels Bohr came from a well-known academic family in Copenhagen, his father a professor of physiology and his mother belonging to a rich and cultivated Jewish family. Niels's brother Harald (1887–1951) became a famous mathematician and his son Aage (b. 1922) also won a Nobel Prize in physics. Born in 1885, Niels Bohr received his Ph.D. from the University of Copenhagen in 1911 and traveled for further study to England, first to Cambridge to work with Joseph John Thomson (1856–1940), who had discovered the electron in 1897. Thomson was responsible for the atomic model that was replaced by Rutherford's planetary picture. After a short time, Bohr moved to Manchester to work with Rutherford and began to think about atoms.

Comparing Rutherford's model of the simplest atom, hydrogen—one light electron circling a heavy positive nucleus—with a simplified solar system containing only the earth and the sun, the mechanical picture would seem to be nearly identical, with the inverse square electrostatic force in the atom replacing the inverse square gravitational force in the solar system. However, atoms that continuously interact and collide with other atoms (e.g., in a gas) remain remarkably stable, retaining their size and shape, which is not true of solar

systems. Moreover, according to classical electromagnetic theory even an isolated atom would be unstable, as the electron in its orbit accelerates toward the nucleus, it should radiate energy like a small antenna. Within a small fraction of a second, the electron should spiral in toward the nucleus and be absorbed. Yet atoms appear to be almost indestructible under ordinary conditions.

In 1913 Bohr published an atomic theory that solved these difficulties, but it required the acceptance of two very new principles. The electrons revolve around the nucleus, but only in certain well-separated orbits called "stationary states." In these allowed states, the electron does not radiate, but in passing from state of energy  $E$  to another of lower energy  $E'$  it emits a light quantum of energy  $h\nu = E - E'$ . Similarly it absorbs such a quantum (if present) in passing from the state of lower energy to the higher. In the case of hydrogen, the allowed energy states are circular orbits that are restricted by the condition  $mvr = nh/2\pi$ , where  $m$  and  $v$  are, respectively, the mass and speed of the electron and  $r$  is the radius of the circular orbit. The "quantum number"  $n$  is a positive integer. One can then show easily that the energies of the stationary states are given by  $E_n = -(1/n^2) me^4/2(h/2\pi)^2 = -13.6/n^2$  electron volts. (The negative energy means that the electron is in a bound state. An electron with positive energy is outside of an atom.)

In 1860, Kirchhoff and Robert Bunsen (1811–1899) at the University of Heidelberg started systematic investigations of atomic spectra and showed that the frequencies of the spectral lines were characteristic of elements, even when those atoms formed part of a chemical compound. Any good theory of atomic structure would have to explain those frequencies. For the case of hydrogen, combining Bohr's two principles gave the result  $h\nu = E - E' = -13.6(1/n^2 - 1/n'^2)$  electron volts. With  $n' = 2$ , Bohr's expression gave the Balmer formula for the hydrogen lines in the visible part of the spectrum, known since 1885. Other hydrogen lines predicted to be in the ultraviolet were found, as well as those of another "one-electron" atom, namely once-ionized helium. Another success was the prediction of X-ray lines arising from heavier elements, which gave an accurate determination of the element's atomic number and hence its correct place in the periodic table of the chemical elements. This showed that there was a "missing" element, with atomic number 43, still to be discovered.

The analysis of the spectra of heavier elements was not so simple, and even the observed hydrogen spectrum showed more structure than Bohr's first model allowed. Bohr himself attacked this problem, as did others, especially Arnold Sommerfeld (1868–1951) of the University of Munich. Besides Bohr's  $n$ , the "principle quantum number," Sommerfeld introduced an "angular momentum quantum number"  $l$ , which could take on the integer values from 0 to  $n - 1$ , and a "magnetic quantum number" with integer values from  $-l$  to  $+l$ . With their help, Sommerfeld could account for many spectral lines, including the "splitting" into several components, an effect known as "fine structure." Even the hydrogen lines showed fine structure, and Sommerfeld was able to account for small relativistic effects.



Because the Bohr-Sommerfeld model had electrons following definite visualizable orbits, however restricted, including ellipses as well as circles, the model could be described as semiclassical. In the calculation of the probabilities of transitions between stationary states, which give the relative brightness of the various spectral lines, Bohr used another semiclassical idea, to which in 1923 he gave the name “correspondence principle.” According to this, the classical radiation theory is valid whenever the quantum numbers have large values, so that both the frequency and the intensity of light emission is that which would arise classically from the electron’s acceleration in its orbit.

### The New Quantum Mechanics of Heisenberg, Schrödinger, and Dirac

From 1925 to 1927 three equivalent new versions of quantum mechanics were proposed that extended the Bohr-Sommerfeld theory, cured its main difficulties, and produced an entirely novel view of the microworld. These new theories were the matrix mechanics of Werner Heisenberg (1901–1976), the wave mechanics of Erwin Schrödinger (1887–1951), and the transformation theory of Paul A. M. Dirac (1902–1984), the last being a more general version that includes both of the other versions. The three physicists were awarded Nobel prizes in physics at a single award ceremony in Stockholm in 1933, Heisenberg receiving the prize for 1932 and Dirac and Schrödinger sharing the prize for 1933.

In his Nobel address, Heisenberg stated:

“Quantum mechanics . . . arose, in its formal content, from the endeavor to expand Bohr’s principle of correspondence to a complete mathematical scheme by refining his assertions. The physically new viewpoints that distinguish quantum mechanics from classical physics were prepared . . . in analyzing the difficulties posed in Bohr’s theory of atomic structure and in the radiation theory of light.” (*Nobel Lectures in Physics*, p. 290)

The difficulties were many, including that of calculating the intensities of spectral lines and their frequencies in most cases (hydrogen being an exception) and in deducing the speed of light in various materials. In classical theory an atomic electron would emit radiation of the same frequency with which it orbited a nucleus, but the frequencies of spectral lines are practically unrelated to that orbital frequency and depend equally upon the final and initial atomic states. Heisenberg argued that the electron orbiting the nucleus was not only “unobservable,” but also “unvisualizable,” and that perhaps such an orbit did not really exist! He resolved to reformulate the theory following Einstein’s procedure in formulating the theory of relativity, using only observable quantities. Heisenberg started, therefore, with the spectral lines themselves, not an atomic model, and introduced a transition “amplitude”  $A_{if}$ , depending on an initial state  $i$  and a final state  $f$ , such that the line intensity would be given by the square of  $A_{if}$ . That is analogous to the fact that light intensity in Maxwell’s optical theory is given by the square of the field intensity. (Actually,  $A_{if}$  is a complex number, involving the square root of  $-1$ , so in

quantum mechanics we use the absolute square, which is a positive real number.)

In calculating the square to produce the light intensities, Heisenberg found it necessary to multiply amplitudes together, and he discovered that they did not behave like ordinary numbers, in that they failed to commute, meaning that in multiplying two different  $A$ ’s the result depended on the order in which they were multiplied. Heisenberg was working in Göttingen under the direction of Max Born, and when he communicated his new result, Born realized that the mathematics involving arrays of numbers such as  $A_{if}$  was a well-known subject known as matrix algebra. Born, together with his student Pascual Jordan (1902–1980) and Heisenberg, then worked out a complete theory of atoms and their transitions, known as matrix mechanics. Born also realized that the matrix  $A_{if}$  was a probability amplitude, whose absolute square was a transition probability. This meant that the law for combining probabilities in quantum mechanics was entirely different from that of classical probability theory.

Heisenberg was only twenty-four years old when he made his major discovery. The son of a professor of classics at the University of Munich, he received his Ph.D. under Sommerfeld at Munich in 1923, after which he went to work with Born and later with Bohr. He had an illustrious career, not unmarked by controversy. The author of wave mechanics, Erwin Schrödinger, on the other hand, was already in 1926 an established professor at the University of Zurich, holder of a chair once held by Einstein, and an expert on thermodynamics and statistical mechanics. He was born in Vienna to a wealthy and cultured family and received his Ph.D. at the University of Vienna in 1910.

Schrödinger’s theory was based on an idea that the French physicist Louis de Broglie (1875–1960) put forward in his Ph.D. thesis at the University of Paris in 1924. Einstein had advanced as further evidence of the particle character of the photon that it had not only an energy  $h\nu$ , but also a momentum  $p = h\nu/c$ . The American experimentalist Arthur Compton (1892–1962) showed in 1923 that X-rays striking electrons recoiled as if struck by particles of that momentum. Photons thus have wavelength  $\lambda = c/\nu = h/p$ . De Broglie conjectured that all particles have wave properties, their wavelengths being given by the same formula as photons, with  $p$  being given by the usual particle expressions ( $p = mv$ , nonrelativistically, or  $p = mv\beta$  in relativity, with  $\beta = (1 - v^2/c^2)^{-1/2}$ ). C. J. Davidson and L. H. Germer in America and G. P. Thomson in England in 1927 showed the existence of electron waves in experiments. An important application is the electron microscope.

Schrödinger’s theory merged the particle and wave aspects of electrons, stressing the wave property by introducing a “wave function,” often denoted by the Greek letter psi ( $\psi$ ), which is a function of space and time and obeys a differential equation called Schrödinger’s equation. Psi has the property that its absolute square at a certain time and place represents the probability per unit volume of finding the electron there at that time. The stationary atomic states of Bohr are those whose probability density is independent of time; the electron in such

a state is spread out in a wavelike manner, and does not follow an orbit. The real and imaginary parts of the one-particle wave function are separately visualizable, but not for  $n$  particles, as it exists in a  $3n$ -dimensional space.

Although the pictures of Heisenberg and Schrödinger are totally different, Schrödinger (and others) proved that their experimental consequences were identical. In 1926 the English physicist Paul Dirac showed that both pictures could be obtained from a more general version of quantum mechanics, called transformation theory, based on a generalization of classical mechanics. When he did this work, the basis of his doctoral thesis in 1926, he was the same age as Heisenberg. Dirac was born in Bristol, the son of an English mother and a Swiss father. The latter taught French language in the Merchant Venturers' School, where Dirac received his early education, going on to earn his Ph.D. at Cambridge. The influence of Dirac's treatise *The Principles of Quantum Mechanics*, published in 1930, has been compared by Helge Kragh to that of Newton's *Principia Mathematica*.

### Uncertainty, Exclusion Principle, Spin, and Statistics

One of the striking consequences of the quantum theory is the noncommutation of pairs of "operators" representing physical quantities, such as position and momentum (whether regarded as matrices, derivatives acting upon the psi-function or, as Dirac would put it, abstract algebraic quantities). If  $p$  and  $q$  are two such operators, their commutation relations read:  $pq - qp = \hbar/2\pi i$ , where  $i$  is the square root of  $-1$ . From this condition Heisenberg proved that  $q$  and  $p$  cannot be simultaneously measured with arbitrary accuracy, but that each must have an error, the product of the errors exceeding  $\hbar/2\pi$ . Since an exact knowledge of the initial conditions is necessary in order to make predictions of the future behavior of the system in question, and since such exactness is in principle impossible, physics is no longer a deterministic science. Even in classical physics, exact knowledge is not usually possible, but the important difference is that quantum mechanics forbids exactness "in principle." Heisenberg's uncertainty relations and other "acausal" predictions of quantum mechanics have given rise to an enormous amount of philosophical debate, and Einstein and other prominent older physicists never accepted the so-called Copenhagen interpretation, developed by the school of Bohr and Heisenberg. Bohr's principle of complementarity states that the world (or the part being studied) reveals itself to experimental probing in many different guises, but no one of these pictures is complete. Only the assembly of all possible pictures can reveal the truth.

One of the great aims of the Bohr-Sommerfeld quantum theory was to explain the periodic table of the chemical elements in terms of atomic structure, especially the periods 2, 8, 18, 32, and so on, having the general form  $2n^2$ , where  $n$  is an integer. Bohr and others made great progress in this direction, based on the quantum numbers of the allowed stationary states, except for the "2" in the formula. Wolfgang Pauli (1900–1958), who had worked with Born and Bohr and was studying the classification of atomic states in the presence of a strong magnetic field, suggested in 1925 that the electron

must possess a new nonclassical property, or quantum number, that could take on two values. With this assumption he could describe the atomic structures in terms of shells of electrons by requiring that no two electrons in the atom could have identical quantum numbers. This became known as Pauli's "exclusion principle."

A short time after this, two young Dutch physicists, Samuel Goudsmit and George Uhlenbeck, found Pauli's new property in the form of spin angular momentum. This is the analog for an elementary particle of the rotation of the earth on its axis as it revolves around the sun, except that elementary particles are pointlike and there is no axis. However, they do possess a property that behaves as and combines with orbital angular momentum and that can take on values of the form  $s(\hbar/2\pi)$ , where  $s$  can be zero, integer, or half-integer. That was a totally unexpected development, especially the half-integer quantum numbers. The electron is one of several elementary particles that has  $1/2$  unit of spin, while the photon has spin of one unit.

The subject of quantum statistics, as opposed to classical statistical mechanics, is an important field. (Recall that  $\hbar$  entered physics through Planck's analysis of the statistics of radiation oscillators.) It is found that identical stable elementary particles of half-integer spin (electron, protons) form shells, obey the exclusion principle, and follow a kind of statistics called Fermi-Dirac, worked out by Dirac and the Italian-American physicist Enrico Fermi (1901–1954). Other Fermi-Dirac systems are the conduction electrons in a metal and the neutrons in a neutron star. On the other hand, identical elementary particles of integer spin, such as photons of the same frequency, tend to occupy the same state when possible, and obey Bose-Einstein statistics, worked out by the Indian physicist Satyendranath Bose (1894–1974) and by Einstein. This results in phenomena that characterize lasers, superfluid liquid helium at low temperature, and other Bose-Einstein condensates that have been studied recently.

### Relativistic Quantum Theory and Antimatter

The effects of relativity are large when the speed of a particle approaches that of light or, equivalently, when its energy is an appreciable fraction of its rest energy  $mc^2$ . This occurs in atomic physics only in the inner shells of heavier elements and plays a relatively minor role even in the physics of atomic nuclei. However, in treating such problems as the scattering of X-rays and gamma rays (the Compton effect), relativity and quantum theory are both important. In 1928 Dirac used his transformation theory to deduce for the electron a relativistic analog of the Schrödinger equation with remarkable properties. He found that it required four associated wave functions, where Schrödinger used only one. Dirac's equation automatically endowed the electron with its observed spin of  $1/2$  ( $\hbar/2\pi$ ), and gave it its observed magnetic moment and the relativistic fine structure of spectral lines. That accounted for one doubling of the number of wave functions. The second doubling resulted from the formalism of relativity and was very troubling, as it allowed electrons to have negative energy, which in relativity implies meaningless negative mass. After several years of pondering the problem, Dirac suggested an interpretation

of the theory that predicted the existence of a positive electron, capable of annihilating with a negative electron, the result being gamma rays, an example of the transmutation of mass into energy. A year later, in 1932, the positive electron (anti-electron or positron) was found in the cosmic rays and then was produced in the laboratory. All particles have been found to have antiparticles (some are their own antiparticles) and so there exists a world of antimatter.

### Quantum Field Theory and Renormalization

Although the quantum theory began with the study of radiation, it took more than two decades before the electromagnetic field itself was quantized. The results obtained before 1928 used semiclassical approaches such as Bohr's correspondence principle. Dirac first made a fully quantum theory of electrons interacting with photons in 1927. Heisenberg, Pauli, and later Fermi, extended the theory, but although it produced valuable results not otherwise obtainable, it was found to be mathematically unsound at very high energy, and predicted infinite results for the obviously finite charge and mass of the electron. The problem was solved only in the late 1940s by the renormalization theories of the American theorists Richard Feynman, Julian Schwinger, Freeman Dyson, and the Japanese theorist Sin-itiro Tomonaga. Elementary particle physics in the twenty-first century is dominated by a so-called Standard Model, which is based entirely on the use of renormalized quantum fields.

See also *Physics; Relativity; Science*.

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Laurie M. Brown

**QUEER THEORY.** Since the early 1990s, the term *queer* has been strategically taken up to signify a wide-ranging and unmethodical resistance to normative models of sex, gender, and sexuality. Although this use of queer marks a process of resignification as new meanings and values are associated with what was once a term of homophobic abuse, there is always an important sense in which queer maintains, even in changed illocutionary circumstances, its original charge of shame. Despite such a short history, the accelerated rise of queer as a critical term demonstrates the significant impact it has had on understandings of the cultural formations of gendered and sexual identities and practices, both in activist and academic circles.

The term *queer* is necessarily indeterminate, taking on different—and sometimes contradictory—meanings in different articulations. Sometimes queer is synonymous with *lesbian* and *gay*, for which it becomes a convenient shorthand. At other times, it refers to a generational or even fashion-led distinction between old-style lesbians and gays and new-style sexual outlaws. Yet again, it can signify a coalition of nonnormative sexual identities—most often conceptually rather than materially realized—which might include lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people. In other deployments, queer denotes not an identity as such but the taking of a critical distance from the identity-based categories of modern sexuality—in particular a distance from the identity politics central to traditional understandings of the lesbian and gay communities: “instead of theorizing queer in terms of its opposition to identity politics, it is more accurate to represent it as ceaselessly interrogating both the preconditions of identity and its effects” (Jagose, pp. 131–132). This last sense is taken up by queer studies, which uses the term to draw attention to various incoherencies in the supposedly stable and causal relations between sex, gender, and sexual desire.



### Origins of Queer Theory

Perhaps the most prominent—certainly the most respectable-sounding—use of queer can be seen in its frequent coupling with theory. Teresa de Lauretis, an academic and critical theorist, has been credited with coining the phrase *queer theory*. In 1991 she edited a special issue of the feminist cultural studies journal *differences* entitled “Queer Theory: Lesbian and Gay Sexualities.” In explaining her use of the term, de Lauretis indicates that she means it to indicate at least three interrelated critical projects: a refusal of heterosexuality as the benchmark for all sexual formations; an attentiveness to gender capable of interrogating the frequent assumption that lesbian and gay studies is a single, homogeneous object; and an insistence on the multiple ways in which race crucially shapes sexual subjectivities. De Lauretis suggests that the threefold critique she imagines might be drawn together under the rubric of queer theory makes it possible “to recast or reinvent the terms of our sexualities, to construct another discursive horizon, another way of thinking the sexual” (de Lauretis, p. iv).

It is important to remember the speculative framing of de Lauretis’s coining of the term, since the rapid institutionalization of queer theory has tended to conceal the fact that—insofar as it espouses no systematic set of principles, has no foundational logic or consistent character—queer theory is not really a theory at all. While it might seem paradoxical in a dictionary entry to insist on this resistance to definition, queer theory’s refusal to specify itself has been widely recognized as one of its tactical strengths. Resisting defining itself in relation to any specific material content, queer theory might be thought of less as a thing than a definitional field or network, “a zone of possibilities in which the embodiment of the subject might be experienced otherwise” (Edelman, p. 114). Since queer’s opposition to the normative is its one consistent characteristic, it has the potential to invent itself endlessly, reformulating whatever knowledges currently constitute prescribed understandings of sexuality.

It is not possible to trace a chronological history of queer theory without doing violence to its multiple origins and influences. Single, linearly organized narratives have difficulty capturing a sense of the sometimes inchoate energies of the various orders of political and scholarly work that made the rise of queer theory possible, necessary, perhaps even inevitable. The risk of telling the story of queer theory as if it were the latest critical turn in sexuality studies is that vital contributing forces to queer theory are written off as superceded, anachronistic, or irrelevant. It remains important to narrate the emergence of queer theory in terms of various critical and cultural contexts, including feminism, radical movements of color, the lesbian and gay movements, various sexual subcultural practices such as sadomasochism and butch-femme stylings, post-structuralism, postcolonialism, and AIDS activism.

### AIDS and Queer Theory

For instance, strategies devised in relation to AIDS activism in the 1980s and 1990s reformulated many axiomatic understandings of sexuality in ways that were significant for the parallel development of queer theory. In the face of homophobic governmental responses to the health crisis (particularly in

North America), activists worked to contest dominant representations of HIV/AIDS as a gay disease and to develop and deliver safer-sex education programs to a dispersed population with no common sexual identity. In the context of AIDS activism, many commonsense understandings of knowledge, power, identity, and community were radically reworked in ways that coincided with queer theory’s denaturalization of sexuality. Advances in safer-sex education initiated a shift from thinking about risk populations to risk practices, reconceiving sexuality less in terms of sexual identities than sexual acts and allowing for meaningful discrepancies between sexual being and sexual doing. Likewise the ad hoc, direct-action, and decentralized character of much AIDS activism was marked by a coalitional rather than a separatist politics that enabled a consideration of identity in terms of affinity rather than essence. So, too, the urgent negotiations over epidemiology, public health, and scientific research implicit in contesting dominant representations of AIDS demonstrated that sexuality is an important nodal point in networks of power and its resistance.

### Limits of Identity

Another way in which political activism has historically informed queer theory can be seen in the influential critiques of the identity politics that customarily underpin traditional leftist social movements. In this respect, the queer critique of lesbian and gay identity politics takes place in a wider frame that also includes, for example, postcolonial problematizations of “race” and problematizations of “gender” as feminism’s foundational category. One of the most substantial criticisms leveled at lesbian and gay politics relates to its insistence on sexual orientation as the most important index of personal identity and its consequent inability to register sexuality’s contextualization within a network of power relations productive of manifold and conflicted identity effects. Radical men and women of color, for example, pointed out that the identity politics model of the lesbian and gay movements ensured that any analysis of race and ethnicity in relation to sexuality would remain a secondary consideration. Exposing covert and overt racism in the mainstream lesbian and gay communities, they argued for the importance of thinking about the inextricable ways in which race inflects sexuality and vice versa, a perspective that continues to both inform and challenge queer theorizing in important ways.

Insofar as it assumed that sexuality was determined principally or solely by the gender of one’s sexual object choice, lesbian and gay identitarian politics naturalized the dominant system of sexual classification and its unexamined reliance on the reified categories of heterosexuality and homosexuality. This model was challenged in different ways from the perspective of various nonnormative sexual identities or practices that had been further pathologized by the legitimation of lesbian and gay paradigms. In arguing for the validity and significance of various marginalized sexual identities and practices, articulated around such things as bisexuality, transvestism, transsexuality, pornography, and sadomasochism, such critiques pushed for recognition of what Gayle Rubin describes as “a pluralistic sexual ethics” organized around “a concept of benign sexual variation” (Rubin, p. 15).



From the perspectives of racially marked and sexually non-normative subjects, it can be seen that the very processes of stabilization, consolidation, and mass recognition that enabled lesbians and gays to represent themselves as a relatively coherent and unified community generated disaffection among other populations newly disenfranchised from the struggle for sexual rights. The limitations or even failures of identity much debated across the 1980s largely hinge on the inevitable inadequacy of any single descriptive rubric to articulate the complex affective structures that constitute identity. Frequently enough, the initial demand for recognition of marginalized or plural identity categories was rearticulated as dissatisfaction with the categories of identification themselves. This questioning of the efficacy of identity categories for political intervention was a major inspiration for queer theory.

The self-evidence of identity has also been profoundly questioned in poststructural thought with its decentering of the Cartesian subject, the rational and autonomous individual, its emphasis on the plurality of interpretation, and its insistence that there is no outside to the discursive structures that produce cultural meaning. Destabilizing the commonsense assumption that identity is a natural and self-evident characteristic of any human subject, poststructuralism is a significant intellectual context for queer theory's anti-identitarian critiques.

### Michel Foucault

Given his interest in the history of sexuality and his radical denaturalization of dominant understandings of sexual identity, Michel Foucault is a key poststructuralist influence on the development of queer theory. Foucault's understanding that sexuality is a discursive production, rather than an essential human attribute, is part of his larger conceptualization of power as less repressive and negative than productive and generative. That is, rather than characterize power's operation as suppressing our free sexual expression—this misrecognition of power's operation is so widespread that Foucault refers to it as “the repressive hypothesis” (p. 15)—Foucault instead argues that power operates through discourse to produce sexuality as a hidden truth that must be rooted out and specified in all its manifestations:

The society that emerged in the nineteenth century—bourgeois, capitalist, or industrial society, call it what you will—did not confront sex with a fundamental refusal of recognition. On the contrary, it put into operation an entire machinery for producing true discourses concerning it. Not only did it speak of sex and compel everyone to do so; it also set out to formulate the uniform truth of sex. (p. 69)

Identifying this conflation of sex and truth as key to the modern invention of sexuality, Foucault refuses the idea that sexuality can be authoritatively defined, focusing instead on the discursive production of sexuality within regimes of power and knowledge: what is said about it, what relations it generates, how it is experienced, what function it has historically played.

In arguing, first, that sexuality is not an essentially personal attribute but an available cultural category and, second, that it is the effect of power rather than its preexisting object, Foucault's work has been key to the development of queer theory, particularly its capacity to understand itself as a mode of analysis without a defined object.

### Gayle Rubin

Foucault's constructivist understanding that sexuality is an effect of the discursive operations of power underwrites Gayle Rubin's important essay “Thinking Sex.” Often identified as one of queer theory's foundational texts, Rubin's essay follows Foucault's rejection of libidinal or biological explanations of sexuality in order to think about the way in which sexual identities and behaviors are hierarchically organized through systems of sexual stratification. Calling for the recognition of “the political dimensions of erotic life,” Rubin demonstrates the way in which certain forms of sexual expression are valorized over others, licensing the persecution of those who fall outside the narrow frame of what constitutes sexual legitimacy (p. 35). As part of her project of specifying the regulation and stratification of sexuality, Rubin argues against the feminist assumption that “sexuality is a derivation of gender” (p. 33). While she acknowledges that gender relations have been an important context for the articulation of the sexual system, she argues that sex and gender are not synonymous, and hence the rubric of gender cannot account for sexuality in its entirety. Rubin's critical interest in sexual variation that exceeds any hetero-homo differentiation demands “an autonomous theory and politics specific to sexuality” (p. 34).

### Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick

Rubin's call for an analytic distinction to be made between gender and sexuality proved productive for Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, whose groundbreaking *Epistemology of the Closet* combined feminist with antihomophobic methodologies: “In twentieth-century Western culture gender and sexuality represent two analytic axes that may productively be imagined as being as distinct from one another as, say, gender and class, or class and race. Distinct, that is to say, no more than minimally, but nonetheless usefully” (1990, p. 30).

Arguing for the absolute centrality of sexuality to understandings of modern culture—“an understanding of virtually any aspect of modern Western culture must be, not merely incomplete, but damaged in its central substance to the degree that it does not incorporate a critical analysis of modern homo/heterosexual definition” (1990, p. 1)—Sedgwick demonstrates that the homo-hetero distinction at the heart of modern sexual definition is fundamentally incoherent for two reasons. On the one hand, there is the persistent contradiction inherent in representing homosexuality as the property of a distinct minority population (Sedgwick refers to this as “a minoritizing view”) and a sexual desire that potentially marks everyone, including ostensibly heterosexual subjects (Sedgwick refers to this as “a universalizing view”). On the other hand, there is the abiding contradiction in thinking about the gendering of homosexual desire in both transitive and separatist terms, where a transitive understanding locates that desire as originating in

some threshold space between gender categories while a separatist understanding takes it as the purest expression of either masculinity or femininity.

Just as Foucault understands sexuality not as “a kind of natural given” but “a historical construct” (p. 105), so too Sedgwick understands that the critical task at hand is not to decide which of these contradictory modelings accurately describes homosexuality but to analyze instead the knowledge effects such contradiction puts into circulation. Assuming that “the most potent effects of modern homo/hetero sexual definition tend to spring precisely from the inexplicitness or denial of the gaps *between* long-coexisting minoritizing and universalizing, or gender-transitive and gender-intransitive, understandings of same-sex relations” (1990, p. 47), Sedgwick’s attention to the irresolvable inconsistencies of available models for thinking about homosexuality enables her to denaturalize current complacencies about what it is “to render less destructively presumable ‘homosexuality as we know it today’” (1990, pp. 47–48).

As part of her denaturalizing project, Sedgwick points up the historically circumstantial and conceptually unnuanced way in which modern definitions of sexuality depend fairly exclusively on the gender of object choice, assuming that one’s gender and the gender of those one is sexually attracted to mark the most significant facet of human sexuality. Noting that “sexuality extends along so many dimensions that aren’t well described in terms of the gender of object-choice at all” (1990, p. 35), Sedgwick argues for a closer attention to “the multiple, unstable ways in which people may be like or different from each other” (1990, p. 23). Rather than assume the monolithic differentiation effected by the homo/hetero distinction, Sedgwick focuses on the myriad of everyday differences that distinguish between people sexually but are not considered epistemologically significant:

For some people, the preference for a certain sexual object, act, role, zone, or scenario is so immemorial and durable that it can only be experienced as innate; for others, it appears to come late or to feel aleatory or discretionary.

For some people, the possibility of bad sex is aversive enough that their lives are strongly marked by its avoidance; for others, it isn’t.

For some people, sexuality provides a needed space of heightened discovery and cognitive hyperstimulation. For others, sexuality provides a needed space of routinized habituation and cognitive hiatus. (1990, p. 25)

Sedgwick’s insistence on the incoherence of current definitions of sexuality coupled with her fine-grained description of sexual variations that cannot be subsumed by the major axes of cultural differentiation (such as sex, class, and race) have been taken up in queer theoretical projects that work against the normalizing discourses of heterosexuality and homosexuality not only to consider sexual formations that fall outside this binary but also to emphasize the heterogeneous, unsystematizable elements of particular sex-gender identities.

### Judith Butler

The theorist most prominently associated with analyzing the normative effects of dominant understandings of sex and gender is Judith Butler. Drawing explicitly on Foucault but with an attention to the workings of gender almost entirely absent from his work, Butler argues that gender, like sexuality, is not an essential truth derived from the body’s materiality but rather a regulatory fiction: “Gender is the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being” (1990, p. 33). Focusing on the discursive production of gender, Butler analyzes what cultural work is secured by the representation of gender as the natural expression of the sexed body, arguing ultimately that the status of heterosexuality as the default setting for sexuality generally depends on the intelligibility of gender:

The notion that there might a “truth” of sex, as Foucault ironically terms it, is produced precisely through the regulatory practices that generate coherent identities through the matrix of coherent gender norms. The heterosexualization of desire requires and institutes the production of discrete and asymmetrical oppositions between “feminine” and “masculine,” where these are understood as expressive attributes of “male” and “female.” (1990, p. 17)

As a performative effect of reiterative acts, the discursive production of gender naturalizes heterosexuality, insofar as heterosexuality is the proper outcome of normative relations between sex, gender, and sexual desire.

Following Foucault’s understanding that there is no utopian outside to power and consequently that resistance is possible only within the same discursive circuits through which power operates, Butler takes up the possibility of gender performativity as a strategy of resistance, citing as examples the parodic repetition of gender norms evident in the “cultural practices of drag, cross-dressing, and the sexual stylization of butch/femme identities” (1990, p. 137). For Butler, such practices contest the current conditions of cultural intelligibility for sexed-gendered subjects through a demonstration of “the utterly constructed status of the so-called heterosexual original” (1990, p. 31). In a later book, *Bodies That Matter*, Butler is careful to emphasize that performativity is not synonymous with performance. Far from being a playful or voluntarist enterprise, gender performativity is a reiterative process that constitutes the subject as a subject. “In this respect, performativity is the precondition of the subject” (Jagose, p. 86). Drawing attention to “new possibilities for gender that contest the rigid codes of hierarchical binarisms” (1990, p. 145), Butler’s work has been taken up, both enthusiastically and critically, in queer theoretical investigations of non-heteronormative subject positions.

### Queer Theory and Difference

Although queer theory is prominently organized around sexuality, its critical pursuit of nonnormativity means that it is potentially attentive to any order of difference that participates

in the regimes of sexual normalization and deviance. Rather than separating sexuality from other axes of social difference—race, ethnicity, class, gender, nationality, and so on—queer theory has increasingly structured inquiry into the ways in which various categories of difference inflect and transform each other, an approach that considers “all the disparate factors comprised in the registration of various social identities and in their adjudication against the standard of social normativity” (Harper, p. 24). A vital strand of this discussion is concerned with the capacity of queer theoretical models to address substantive questions of race and ethnicity in the constitution of the queer subject.

Race-based critiques and activism have long been part of the feminist and lesbian-gay contexts crucial to the evolution of queer theory, particularly in their persistent challenge to the reification of allegedly foundational identities such as women or homosexuals. Recent work on the formation of sexuality alongside race, ethnicity, nationality, citizenship, and diasporic identities challenges queer theory not only to consider the significant ways in which sexual and racial identities are inextricable but also to abandon its self-representation as “the neutral ground on which the identities, cultures, and social movements of people are ‘explained’” (Quiroga, p. 135). Reciprocally, queer theoretical models have sometimes effected significant transformations in the traditional formations of academic fields organized by the rubric of racial or ethnic identities. Noting this mutually transformative relation, Jasbir K. Puar writes: “Envisioning and expanding on queer diasporas as a political and academic intervention not only speaks directly to the gaps around sexuality in ethnic studies, Asian American studies, and forms of postcolonial studies; it also points gay and lesbian studies, queer studies, and even women’s studies . . . toward the need to disrupt the disciplinary regimes that continually reinvent bodies of theory cohered by singular, modernist subjects” (pp. 405–406).

### Thinking Transgender

The suspicion that normative models of identity will never be adequate to the representational work demanded of them provides the conditions of intelligibility not only for thinking about the emergence of queer theory from the identity-based models of the feminist and lesbian-gay movements but also for understanding twenty-first century and frequent announcements of the death of queer theory, most significantly from radical transgender perspectives that cast queer as complacently partisan, committed to notions of performativity that refuse cross-gender identifications in anything other than a parodic or figurative register.

Primarily through an extended reading of Butler but with reference to de Lauretis and Sedgwick among others, Jay Prosser notes that queer theory’s foundational texts have figuratively relied on the concept of transgender—an identification across genders—in order to destabilize received understandings of sexual and gendered identities. Queer theory’s annexation of transgender for its own critical project has, Prosser notes, tended to recuperate it “as the sign of homosexuality, homosexuality’s definitive *gender style*” (p. 30). Even when queer is understood not as a synonym for homosexual-

ity but as a term that denotes the performativity, nonreferentiality, and incoherence of the dominant sex-gender system, the queer theoretical valorization of transgender works against the legitimization of the specifically transsexual subject: “What gets dropped from transgender in its queer deployment to signify subversive gender performativity is the value of the matter that often most concerns the transsexual: the *narrative* of becoming a biological man or a biological woman (as opposed to the performative of effecting one)—in brief and simple the materiality of the sexed body” (p. 32). Noting that transgender negotiates its significance in delicate relation to both “transsexuality’s investment in the materiality of sex and a queer refiguration of gender into sexuality,” Prosser suggests that queer theory pay more attention to the lived differences of the constituencies it might be expected to represent (p. 176).

Similarly calling for a sensitivity toward the material practices of queer sex, not simply their allegorical formulation, Jacob Hale references the North American leatherdyke scene in order to argue that queer theory should complicate its own, less nuanced models of sex, gender, and sexuality by studying those elaborated within specific sexual subcultures:

Here’s the lesson, in a nutshell: if, minimally, you don’t understand the personals and other sexually explicit expressions of desire in queer and transgendered sex radical/leatherqueer publications (including homegrown ones), you don’t understand the margins, the edges, of our dominant cultural expressions of sex, gender, and sexuality. . . . if you don’t understand gendered life on the edge, you don’t understand gendered life at the center. (p. 118)

While these recent debates about the relevance of queer theory to marginalized sex-gender identities and practices are sometimes represented as territorial disputes, queer theory’s reluctance to specify its proper object means that its future directions might be productively determined by its present tense omissions or paradigmatic weaknesses.

### Queer Futures

In organizing itself around the resurrected vitality of queer, queer theory has staked its paradoxical claim on something that is at once all future and no future. For every scholar who represents the critical impulse of queer as future-directed and open-ended, there is another who represents it as washed up and already exhausted: “In the short shelf-life American marketplace of images, maybe the queer moment, if it’s here today, will for that very reason be gone tomorrow”; “Queer may soon lose all affectivity as a word, a marker, or a threat (it may already have done so)”; “Queer politics may, by now, have outlived its political usefulness” (Sedgwick, 1993, p. xii; Halberstam, p. 256; Halperin, p. 112). This sense of queer theory’s built-in obsolescence might be read as evidence less of queer theory’s inevitable decline than its transitory and always transformational potential. Indeed suspicion about the ongoing usefulness of queer theory is a better measure of its viability than widespread institutionalization and normalization. The most valuable capacity of queer theory, after all, is not to

prove that it has been right all along but to hold open non-referentiality as a political strategy for thinking about a future that will be nonterritorial, demotic, and provisional but that remains for the present unimaginable.

See also *Gay Studies; Gender; Sexuality: Sexual Orientation; Structuralism and Poststructuralism*.

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# R

## RACE AND RACISM.

This entry includes four subentries:

*Overview*

*Asia*

*Europe*

*Reception of Asians to the United States*

### OVERVIEW

The interrelated terms of race and racism should be examined separately before their connection is explored. This entry defines both terms and explores their meanings and new approaches to these concepts in the twenty-first century.

### Defining Race

Race can be understood as a concept that signifies and symbolizes sociopolitical conflicts and interests in reference to different types of human bodies. Although the concept of race appeals to biologically based human characteristics (so-called phenotypes), selection of these particular human features for purposes of racial signification is always and necessarily a social and historical process. There is no biological basis for distinguishing human groups along the lines of “race,” and the categories employed to differentiate among these groups reveal themselves, upon serious examination, to be imprecise. Although they refer to corporeal characteristics like skin color, hair texture, and eye shape, these categories acquired their significance for sociohistorical reasons, not because they have any “natural” importance. For this reason the boundaries of racially defined groups are both uncertain and subject to change. Indeed whole groups can acquire or lose their racialized character as historical and social circumstances shift.

### Dilemmas of Meaning: The Concept of Race

Few ideas have been so fraught with controversy, or have provided as much occasion for discussion and debate, as that of race. Race is a highly contradictory notion. Although deeply intertwined with the development of the modern world and intimately involved with the rise of Enlightenment-based rationalism, the idea of race also preserves fundamentally pre-modern and irrational characteristics. It is frequently dismissed today as an illusion (“There is no such thing as race”; “There is only one race: the human race”; etc.). Yet race continues to demarcate and stratify the world’s peoples in striking ways. Indeed, at the same time as it is dismissed, race is also taken for granted. While on the one hand constituting a fundamental aspect of human identity, something recognized across the

world, on the other hand race identity has very different meanings in particular societal and cultural settings, such that a person who is identified as belonging to one racial category (“white,” for example) in country A, may not be afforded that same racial status in country B.

From a logical point of view this situation is at the least very peculiar, since the wide variations just discussed do not in general undercut the near-universal acknowledgment of racial identity, racial hierarchy, and racially stratified status, such that lighter skin is perceived as “better” or “more attractive” than darker, for example. So how can these problems be explained? Is race an illusion or an objective reality? Is racial identity (or racial difference) a natural or sociohistorical attribute? Is race an atavistic holdover from an earlier epoch of conquest, colonialism, and African slavery—which were all organized along racial lines—or is it a more-or-less permanent means of organizing inequality and domination on both a local and global scale? What makes the racialized body so indispensable as a marker of socioeconomic difference? And why does race continue to operate so well at the crossroads of identity and social structure? After all, despite contemporary reluctance to recognize the continuing significance of race, race still operates as a social fact (in the Durkheimian sense of that term). It links the micro-social dimension of human existence (at which are located the personal, the experiential, the direct interactions by which we know ourselves and each other); and the macro-social dimension of human existence (at which institutions, markets, nation-states, and social stratification operate).

### Defining Racism

In the wake of the civil rights movements of the 1950s and 1960s, racism has come to be seen as having three dimensions. *Prejudice* refers to unfounded and usually negative *beliefs and attitudes* about racially defined groups and individuals: stereotypes, ethnocentrism, xenophobia, and the like. *Discrimination* directs attention toward preferential or detrimental actions taken toward racially defined groups and individuals because of their race. Finally *institutional* (or *structural*) *racism* refers to the endemic character of racial injustice and inequality. As a social structure racism is understood to be a product of the systematic allocation of resources, privileges, and rights differentially by race: it is distributed across the whole range of social institutions both historically and in the present, and it does not require intention or agency to be perpetuated.

### Dilemmas of Meaning: The Concept of Racism

As a world-historical phenomenon, racism is so large and so diverse that no definition can encompass all its varieties. The

term's origins are themselves quite modern: its earliest use, in the late 1930s, directed attention chiefly toward anti-Semitism. Of course, awareness of race prejudice and racial discrimination preceded that coinage.

The prejudice/discrimination/institutional racism trichotomy still effectively encompasses many aspects of the complex and varied phenomenon of racism. That synthetic view was without doubt an advance over previous conceptions, and embodied many of the hard-won understandings of the 1960s movements for racial justice and emancipation. Notably, its emphasis on the structural dimensions of racism allowed it to address the intransigence which racial injustice and inequality continued to exhibit, even after discrimination had supposedly been outlawed and bigoted expression stigmatized.

Yet, on closer examination the trichotomy also seems problematic. As Robert Miles has argued (1989), it tended to "inflate" the concept of racism to a point at which it lost precision. If the institutional component of racism is so pervasive and deeply rooted, this makes it difficult to recognize what accomplishments antiracist movements have achieved or what progress civil rights reforms concretely represent. How, under these conditions, could one validate the premises of political action aimed at racial justice and greater substantive social equality? If institutional racism is ubiquitous, it becomes difficult to affirm the existence of any democracy at all where race is concerned. The result is a leveling critique, which denies any distinction between the Jim Crow era (or even the whole *longue durée* of racism beginning with European conquest and leading through racial slavery, imperialism, "Jim Crow," apartheid, and the like), and the present. Similarly, if the prejudice component of racism is so deeply inbred, it becomes difficult to account for the apparent racial hybridity and cultural interpenetration that characterizes civil society both in the United States and across the globe; this is evidenced not only by the shaping of popular mores, values, language, and style, but also by the social practices of the millions of people, white and black (and neither white nor black) who occupy interstitial and ambiguous racial positions. The result of the "inflation" of the concept of racism is thus a deep pessimism about any efforts to overcome racial barriers: in the workplace, the community, or any other sphere of lived experience. An overly comprehensive view of racism, then, potentially serves as a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Yet the alternative view, which surfaced with a vengeance in the 1970s and urged a return to the conception of racism held before the movement's discovery of institutional racism, is equally inadequate. This is the neoconservative project (see, for example, Gerson 1997), which deliberately restricts its attention to injury done to the individual as opposed to the group, and to advocacy of a "color-blind" racial policy. Such an approach almost entirely neglects the continuing organization of social inequality and oppression along racial lines. It denies the continuity of racism in cultural and political life, particularly in the United States, but also in other societies in "cognate" forms such as racial "differentialism." Worse yet, such views tend to rationalize racial injustice as a supposedly natural outcome of group attributes in competition or of intractable national or cultural differences. Neoconservatism and parallel racial reactions have

thus rearticulated the demands for equality and justice made by antiracist and anticolonialist movements in a conservative discourse of individualism, competition, and laissez-faire. It is this "new right" discourse which is hegemonic in the early 2000s; in these terms racism is rendered invisible and marginalized. It is treated as largely an artifact of the past.

In the post-civil rights and postcolonial era the world has undergone a substantial modification of what were previously far more rigid lines of exclusion and segregation. The late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries have witnessed some real mobility for more favored sectors (that is, certain class-based segments) of racially defined minority groups. The entire post-World War II era also featured substantial demographic diversification as North America, Europe; other regions as well experienced new waves of immigration, notably from the global South and East. In the United States, for example, the 1965 reform of immigration laws (a civil rights measure in itself) occasioned large and continuing inflows from Asia and Latin America. In both the United States and Europe panethnic phenomena—the process by which new racial identities develop through alliance or convergence of previously distinct but socioculturally similar groups, such as Latinos/Hispanics or Asian Americans in the United States, or Muslims/Arabs/Turks in Europe—have increased throughout the global North (and elsewhere as well). This has reconfigured European and North American racial dynamics, moving them away from the former bipolar frameworks (white/black, European/ "native") and toward multipolar frameworks (multiculturalism, diversity, and the like). No longer is race a largely black-white issue in the United States; no longer is race in Europe a postcolonial confrontation between former settler and former native. Racial identity has also been problematized (at least somewhat) for whites—a fact which has its dangers but also reflects progress.

Yet at the same time, by almost every conceivable indicator researchers can bring forward, the same racial inequalities—or shall we say the same "structural racism"—that existed in the past continues in the early twenty-first century: modified here and there perhaps, but hardly eliminated and not even much reduced in scope, for example in terms of U.S. black-white disparities, or in terms of French-North African distinctions in contemporary France. This is not the place to inventory the data, but whether we look at wealth/income (in)equality, health, access to/returns to education, segregation by residence or occupation, rates of surveillance or punishment by the criminal "justice" system, or many other indicators that compare racial "life-chances," we find strikingly persistent patterns.

### New Patterns

Given the thoroughgoing and persuasive empirical data available on the persistence of racial inequality, discrimination, and prejudice it is difficult to sustain claims that racism is a "thing of the past" or that racial identities and categories have become less salient at the turn of the twenty-first century than they were at the turn of the twentieth, whose problem, as W. E. B. Du Bois (1868–1963) famously proclaimed in the early twentieth century, would be that of the "color-line."

The great achievements of the movements that challenged racism in the twentieth century, and that largely overthrew

colonialism as well (a fundamentally racist system), were revealed to be partial and contradictory as the twenty-first century dawned. There is no gainsaying the transformations that have been wrought in the undoing of Jim Crow segregation in the United States or the apartheid system in South Africa, and in the restoration of some degree of self-rule in the global South and East. Yet the racial categories and racist social structures produced by centuries of white supremacy retain a great deal of force. It is more than ironic—it is a rather bitter truth—that racial rule has been strengthened in some ways by the reforms it has undergone. Racism has developed from domination to hegemony: to the extent that it incorporates its subjects it defuses their opposition. Thus in the United States, the European Union, South Africa, Brazil, and indeed in most of the world, racial repression and exclusion continue in practice while simultaneously being disavowed as doctrine (see Winant, 2001).

These racial conditions, however, are no more stable than those of the past. Injustice and inequality necessarily produce opposition. The movements of the early twenty-first century have learned the lessons of the twentieth century at least as well as the states and elites they are challenging. Once again “the wretched of the earth” assert their claims: as landless groups and workers; as women, gays, and students; as slum- and shantytown-dwellers, as prisoners and indigenous peoples. This time they have far more resources at their disposal, supporters in key positions, and indeed white allies (although far too few). All the old traditions of refusal, subversion, and racial solidarity remain available. The legacies of past cycles of resistance are never lost; they are reinterpreted, rearticulated, and put to use once again.

In the twenty-first century the task is no longer to recognize the problem of race, the problem is the color line. Rather, it is simultaneously to affirm and transcend the color line. To challenge racism is at last to be both citizen and subject.

See also *Apartheid; Discrimination; Ethnicity and Race; Multiculturalism, Africa; Prejudice.*

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#### ASIA

To discuss race in Asia, race must first be defined. Changes in definitions of race over the centuries in the West make this difficult. The earliest uses of race in sixteenth-century Europe usually focused on differences arising from common ancestry, descent, or origin. These were perceived in kinship and lineage relationships, physiological differences, or even religious or mythical ancestors. The rise of science in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries brought new methods for ascertaining these differences. Social Darwinism suggested that there were races that were more or less advanced. In the name of science, research pursued observational studies that sought to create taxonomies establishing the hierarchies and differences among races. This shifted again in the mid-twentieth century due to

the horrors of the Nazi Holocaust and developments in science. Although voices critical of biological definitions exist as early as the 1930s, in the 1960s and 1970s especially, scientific research undermined post-Darwinian, “scientific” notions of race. While genetics is involved in the perceived physical differences of people, research showed that many of these phenotypical differences that divide people along perceived racial lines are less significant than the greater genetic similarities and differences that suggested groupings altogether quite different from the commonly perceived racial groupings. This undermined definitions of race that presented the criteria as objective and natural. Although, for these reasons, some have argued that race no longer represents a useful analytical category, the historical consequences of these ways of viewing the world as well as the continuing efficacy of the term in contemporary discourse makes the word useful and necessary for analysis. Most scholars no longer accept the assumption that objective genetic and physical distinctions play a dominant role in defining different races. Increasingly, race is defined as a socially and culturally constructed concept of a common ancestry.

Discussions of racism in Asia must also first consider differing definitions of racism. Although there is a general sense of what racism or racialism is—belief, theories, or effects privileging one race over others—there is considerable debate over definitions that are salient for discussing racism in Asia. Some have defined racism narrowly as being inherently a “white” phenomena, intrinsically associated with “the West,” to which the history of Western slavery and colonialism attest. Such arguments can rightly emphasize historical, cultural, and institutional factors, and power relations, that should not be ignored when discussing European-American racism. Moreover, it is reasonable to consider—without falling into extreme nominalism—that there may be phenomena in other societies that do not neatly match Western conceptualizations. Such definitions, however, assume that there are no equivalents to Western racism, and force the coinage of new terms for every particular manifestation that could be seen as equivalent in a variety of ways. A more plausible variant defines racism as occurring only among dominant groups. This avoids some of the weaknesses of the position defined above and certainly has some merit, but it insufficiently describes situations when those usually considered minorities become the majority in a smaller context and embrace hateful attitudes and behavior. It also insufficiently describes instances when multiple parties act with similarly hateful intentions and behavior toward one another in a situation where power relations shift over time. In contrast, some definitions of racism have been expansive, sometimes describing as racist situations where such intentions were or are nonexistent. The following discussion defines racism, or racialism, as intentions of disregard, ill will, or hatred toward groups with presumed common ancestry, often closely associated with ideologies that assume that racial differences are fundamental to the fabric of reality and with effects that disadvantage particular racial groups.

### Race and Racism in China

Common ancestry is a common theme in Chinese history. Recognized as having one of the world’s oldest civilizations, China’s

history shows the rise of a common sense of culture and identity early in its history. A common legend believed by many Chinese is that they (Han Chinese who form the dominant ethnic group in contemporary China) are descendants of the “Yellow Emperor” (Emperor Huang-ti), who is said to have ruled in the fifth millennium B.C.E. The focus on patrilineal descent—clearly discernible in the seventeenth century (late Ming, early Qing) but clearly existing before—has been another component of this racial focus. Indeed, Chinese descriptions of themselves as a “yellow” race predated European use of such terms. Evidence from Chinese scholars and common folk notions in the early Qing period suggest that the color harked back to their common descent from the “Yellow Emperor.” With connotations of purity and imperial grandeur, this was used to claim the superiority of the Chinese to other races in the early Qing period. Such definitions of the “yellow race” usually included the Manchu and did not threaten the legitimacy of their rule. Both Confucian and folk notions of patrilineal descent supported such racial aspects of Chinese identity.

This theme continued and became central to Chinese debates over identity in the modern era as evidenced by the thought and behavior of nineteenth-century elites. Ideas of some reformers such as Kang Youwei (1858–1927) in the late nineteenth century show the extent to which indigenous and Western notions of race shaped his view of domestic and global affairs. Kang selectively appropriated Western racial categories and created a taxonomy of hierarchical races according to “white,” “yellow,” “red,” and “black” skin colors, but presented the former two as superior to the latter two. The use of the same term for lineage and race (*zu*) aided the combination of both indigenous and foreign concepts. Others, while depending less on the language of scientific racism, conceived of fundamental issues nevertheless in racial terms. For example, Zhang Binglin (1868–1936), a more radical opponent of the Qing regime, understood the problem facing China as caused by the failure to protect the pure descent of the *Hanzu* (Han lineage-race) from the Yellow Emperor. In this view, the Manchu (Qing) were the culprits responsible for Han degeneration. While Zhang’s notion of race differed somewhat from the notions then dominant in Europe focusing on blood purity, it remains language firmly ensconced in the language of ancestry.

Racial discourse continued in republican China after the fall of the Qing in 1911. With the decline of Confucian discourse, science was seen as the new discourse that would establish the nature of things. Clearly imbibing from the scientific racism of the West, intellectuals turned to embryology and genetics to argue for the need to rejuvenate the yellow race. Myths were combined with so-called scientific studies such as craniology to bolster notions of Chinese superiority vis-à-vis their neighbors as well as darker-skinned races. Eugenics would become a dominant part of the discourse during this period.

In the early communist era (starting in 1949), the emphasis on class as a universal unifying concept and the notion of racial theory as a tool of Western imperialism, restrained racial discourse. Still, the state defined the minority groupings as organically connected to the Han race. While on the one hand



extolling the equality of groups, Maoist China still relied on the notion of a superior Han race, which would be the vanguard of the revolution and the embodiment of civilization that would lead the less advanced people. After the death of Mao in 1976, scientific discourse on race was granted more legitimacy, this time in the service of Chinese nationalism. Anthropology has sought to show that the earliest ancestors could be found in China competing with common assertions of the original hominid ancestor being in Africa. Serology has sought to show the intimate connections between the minority groups to the Han. Medicine has encouraged eugenics programs. Discrimination against the minority ethnic groups in contemporary China remains significant. While race is only one among many competing and complimentary discourses of nationalism and ethnicity, it remains a significant theme underlying Chinese identity in the modern era.

### Race and Racism in Japan

The linguistic connections between Japanese and the Ural-Altaic language family have led many to suggest that the Japanese migrated from North Asia, though others have argued the possibility of migrations from Southeast Asia and the South Pacific. In any case, migrations of what constitute the majority of Japanese today over the centuries brought them into conflict with other ethnic groups already inhabiting the archipelago. For example, there is record of conflict against the Emishi of northeastern Honshu in the ninth century. Better known are the Ainu—a people ethnically distinct from the majority Japanese—whose culture had grown in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The Japanese gradually pushed the Ainu north so that by the early Tokugawa period (early seventeenth century) they had either been eliminated or pushed to northern Hokkaido.

The existence of such ethnic groups and the history of their gradual territorial marginalization suggest the existence of racial identities, but they do not seem dominant among commoners. Lacking a strong central government for much of its medieval period, and probably because such contact existed mostly on the periphery, most of the commoner population were more concerned with the associations that governed daily life—relationships with kin, village, temple, and the regional lord. Indeed, there is some evidence of fluidity between ethnic groups where there was such contact: Under certain circumstances, some Japanese in Hokkaido identified themselves with “barbarians,” and some “barbarians” blended into mainstream society by becoming loyal imperial subjects.

During the Tokugawa period (1600–1868), however, there are indications that racial identities were recognized and nurtured at least among ruling elites and perhaps those living and working in close proximity to such ethnic groups. At least in Hokkaido, distinctly “Japanese” and “Ainu” identities formed during this period with clear discriminatory intentions. This was true also with the Ryukyans down south. Many in Tokugawa society also differentiated themselves from those classified as *eta* (outcaste) and *hinin* (nonpersons) who, though phenotypically no different from the majority population, were ostracized by society and forced to do menial or dirty work. Intermarriage was avoided, and the children born into these

groups were marked for life. Despite little “biological” difference, Tokugawa society perceived here a problem of ancestry and discriminated against them.

Japan’s modern era began with foreigners helping to open the country to a world dominated by Western influence. Western notions of race including Social Darwinism would deeply impact Japanese racial thought. The Meiji Constitutional order established the state based upon the notion that the Emperor was a direct descendant of the original Yamato clan, and that the Japanese people were in some way “organically” related to the emperor, thus creating the notion of a single, homogeneous racial identity. These ideas would provide a powerful foundation for nurturing an intense nationalism.

The speed of Japan’s development led leaders to envision an empire that would prove notions of Western superiority wrong. At the same time, many viewed Japanese civilization and race as having something to offer to the “less developed” peoples of Asia. This would lead to imperial expansion abroad and oppression at home. After the Meiji Restoration (1868), the government incorporated Ainu land and implemented assimilation policies. The Ryukyans, now Okinawans, were also expected to assimilate into mainstream culture. The term *burakumin* (hamlet people) replaced the terms *eta* and *hinin*, but such semantic changes did little to stop discriminatory practices. Japan’s extended empire also gave rise to a domestic Korean population who also experienced severe discrimination.

Prewar conceptions regarding the peculiar uniqueness of the Japanese race continued in postwar Japan. Likewise, racial discrimination continues to exist in the postwar era. Although the post–World War II constitution has granted equal rights, and Japan has participated in international agreements to respect minority rights, it was only in 1991 that the Ainu were recognized as a minority people with individual rights and 1997 that the government recognized them corporately as an indigenous group with rights to defend their distinctive culture. Laws have not addressed the history of discrimination, nor those living outside of Hokkaido. Discrimination against Koreans residing in Japan and against the Okinawans since the modern period as a result of Japan’s expansionism earlier in the century has also remained an issue throughout the twentieth century.

### Race and Racism in India

Hints of the caste system can be seen in the *Rig Veda* written in the late second millennium B.C.E. It was clearly in place by the time of the later Vedic texts (c. 1000–500 B.C.E.). These Sanskrit texts are generally seen as products of an Aryan migration or invasion, and they teach a sacrificial religious system known as Brahmanism or Vedism, which would in later centuries develop into Hinduism. Deeply concerned with issues of purity and pollution, the Vedic texts divided people into different groupings called *varnas* (“colors”) at the top of which was a priestly caste called to set themselves apart from the others. In the early Hindu period (c. 300 B.C.E.–500 C.E.), the Sanskrit epics the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* were incorporated into the tradition. These texts laid out four hierarchical *varna* classes (Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya, and

Shudra), which eventually became the larger groupings, which would encompass caste (*jati*) clusters. Although Hinduism does include elements of non-Vedic and non-Aryan sources, Vedic literature and Aryan civilization is seen as being at the core of the tradition.

Racial identities were fundamental to the development and continuation of this system. Those claiming Aryan heritage clearly stood to benefit. Orthodox scholarship interpreted the role of the Aryan in Indian society as the importer of high civilization, bringing Sanskrit, the Vedic Hindu texts, and the caste system. They constituted the Brahmanic class. The system was racial also in the sense that castes were based upon lineage. The family to which one was born usually determined one's social status for life with discriminatory social, political, and economical impact on the lower castes. It limited the range of occupations lower caste members could fill, kept them from gaining positions of power, and forced them to practice social rituals that demeaned and oppressed them.

The influx of Western notions of race further racialized the population. European discourse, however, held peculiar salience for India and had distinctive impact there. Since the late Renaissance, philologists had noted linguistic connections between Sanskrit and European languages. By the Enlightenment, such studies had been made a science, and in the nineteenth century, many Europeans believed in an Indo-European connection through a common, Aryan, ancestral race. Ideas of "the Aryan race" with its assumptions regarding, and potential for, high civilization captured the European imagination. Spurred by Orientalist fascination with the caste system, and the desire to standardize laws while yet respecting traditional Indian laws, the British established guidelines for caste employment and governance that ironically helped to solidify caste statuses where previously relations had been more fluid. The consequences of this process, in some cases, were tantamount to ethnogenesis, as groups maneuvered to protect their interests.

Notions of the Aryan race also pervaded nineteenth-century discussions among Indian reformers, suggesting how the concept could not be avoided when seeking any fundamental reshaping of Indian society. For example, Dayanand Saraswati (1824–1883), a radical reformer, criticized contemporary Hinduism and argued that it had distorted the virtues of Aryan civilization. While Dayanand defended the caste system as a system that worked out the complementary needs of society, he argued that these classes were to be attributed by merit and not by the hereditary status. Swami Vivekenanda (1863–1902) presented a different perspective. He argued that the revitalization of India could only occur if people returned to the Aryan virtues found in Vedic texts. Attributing Aryans with distinct physiological attributes, he strongly favored the maintenance of racial and caste divisions. The Aryan race language is central even among those championing the cause of the lower castes, such as B. R. Ambedkar (1892–1956). In sharp contrast to more orthodox reformers above, Ambedkar questioned the canonicity of the Vedic texts, and presented the Aryans as a race that brought moral decay to Indian society. He questioned the physiological characteristics that had long been attributed to the group.

In the postindependence era (1947–), the Indian Constitution has banned discrimination and ostracism of the scheduled castes, creating seats set aside only for them in parliament. But discrimination remains pervasive in Indian society. Gandhi, for example, chose to call them "*harijan*" (children of God), but they have seen this as paternalistic and many have preferred to go by the term *Dalit* (the oppressed).

### Conclusion

Racial concepts, as well as racism, existed in Asia prior to the arrival of the West. Here, the temptation may be to assert that such an argument ignores the peculiarities of indigenous systems of conceptualization. But an overemphasis on the actual English words is misleading. These concepts need not be so static and narrowly defined that they cannot encompass commonalities across cultures. Nor does a focus on commonalities necessarily ignore the particularities of these societies. To argue that there were racial and racist elements in Indian, Chinese, or Japanese thought and behavior is not the same thing as reducing those concepts to only those qualities.

And yet, clearly, the arrival of the Western concepts did uniquely impact Asian thought and behavior. Some of this clearly victimized the Asians—who had to face Western racism and seek ways to counter it. Moreover, as in the example of the British in India, Western colonialism could exacerbate and solidify social divisions that had existed previously in more fluid form. In these cases, the agents were Westerners.

However, indigenous individuals also incorporated Western notions into their analysis and used them to construct arguments—against notions of Western superiority, as they nurtured nationalism, as they defended caste interests, or as they criticized the dominant system. A narrow definition of racism that pinpoints only the Western impact on the non-Western world would result in a skewed portrayal of "the West" as peculiarly imbued with a malady. It also denies non-Western individuals and societies agency and responsibility.

See also *Ethnicity and Race; Occidentalism; Orientalism; Prejudice; Social Darwinism.*

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## EUROPE

Of the ideas that have appeared in Europe over the centuries, race remains one of the most politically charged and difficult to define. Almost all scholars agree that race is a social construction, signifying no actual or important human difference. Yet, no one would argue that racism, or the process of viewing human groups as defined by inherited differences and acting in such a way as to reinforce and discriminate on the basis of these differences, is a quite tangible phenomenon. To best understand how the imagined and the real—the idea and the practice—come together, a historical view of the concept of race is instructive. The story of race and racism in Europe is at one time a study of the very origins of the idea itself and an example of the need to understand the application of racism in different contexts and across different time periods. Part of racism's malleability is rooted in the fact that race and racism have always emerged tethered to other important concepts—such as nation, class, and gender—that tended to reflect local tensions and prejudices. Yet, race, wherever it emerged, added biological weight to other forms of identity. Race was permanent, indelible, and inheritable. Race told of one's past, present, and future.

### The Beginning

Linguists argue that the word *race* entered Europe in the twelfth century through the Arabic term for head or chief, *rās*. By the sixteenth century, French, German, Spanish, Italian, and English each had a similar sounding locution that connoted some kind of difference within species or breeds. Even though the arrival of the term seemed to coincide with European contact with wider areas of the world, recent scholarship has tended to dismiss the idea that the contact between Europeans and others prior to the 1400s produced any semblance of a racial concept. Instead, race is seen as emerging alongside the idea of the nation as a way of establishing cultural and social boundaries and political authority in medieval Europe. Ironically, racial thought appeared in Europe not when difference was so visible but rather when it disappeared.

This disappearance occurred most clearly in medieval Spain with the mass conversion of Jews (and others) into Spanish Christian society. Beginning in the 1300s, this conversion was the by-product of a burgeoning national consolidation of political authority in the Iberian Peninsula. The creation of a centralized bureaucracy, the sense of a cohesive territory that had been "reconquered" from eighth-century Arab invaders, and the attempt to forge religious and cultural homogeneity



signaled Spain's arrival as one of the first nation-states. Yet, the conversion of religious minorities to Catholicism placed increasing pressure on Spanish society to assimilate these "new" populations—the largest group, the Jewish *conversos*, alone surpassed 500,000 people—who were now free of legal proscriptions against "upward mobility." Converts had access to land and business ownership, to the university, and even employment within the powerful church—avenues that had long been closed to Jews. Attempts to regain some control over this group led to the passage of the blood-purity statutes (*estatutos de limpieza de sangre*), which barred those of "impure" blood from service in the church, from employment in public office, and from military service, especially in Spain's new colonies. The statutes presumed that converts were imbued with an inherent, immutable mark that rendered them all equally and unalterably different; conversion changed nothing.

Also, as legal statutes, the blood-purity conventions affected all of Spanish society. Thus, "old" Christians and converts alike were required to prove their lineage. Whether this system functioned as efficiently or monolithically as the statutes required has been a matter of continuing debate. But many scholars believe that the recourse of the Spanish state and church to blood was not merely a metaphor but reflected a new belief in intrinsic aspects of identity. Thus, the blood-purity laws have come to symbolize Europe's first foray into racial thinking. Yet, what scholars term "modern racism" depended on a number of other historical developments.

### Making Race and Racism Modern

The Enlightenment, the Romantic movement, and the development of the modern nation-state in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries all played important roles in the unfolding of race and racism in Europe. The Enlightenment of the 1700s marked an intellectual shift defined primarily by an enthusiasm for organizing and understanding the world through secular reason. This shift coincided with a geopolitical expansion that made Europeans far more cognizant of human differences throughout the world. The Enlightenment impulse drove Europeans to categorize the diversity of life on Earth, especially in the arrangement of human difference. The first to use the term *race* to connote categories of people was François Bernier in 1684. For Bernier, race was entirely a physical distinction: people who looked different were clearly members of different races.

Others took up racial studies in an attempt to identify the exact number of races in the world. The most definitive efforts of the era were Carolus Linnaeus's 1735 four-part division of humanity ("White European, Red American, Dark Asiatic and Black Negro") and Johann Friedrich Blumenbach's 1776 division into five races ("Caucasians [a term he introduced], Mongolians, Ethiopians, Americans, and Malays"). Others countered that there were some thirty to eighty races. How thinkers distinguished between races mattered less than what united each of their approaches. Each definition used physical features as the primary measure of human difference. This physical basis relied on a hierarchical notion of proper development that was rooted in the Enlightenment's exaltation of the classical world as the epitome of beauty and ideal



**Michelangelo's *David* (1501–1504).** In the ancient art of Greece and Rome, gods and other notable figures were frequently depicted as possessing very pale or white features. This classical trend could also be found in art during the Enlightenment and the Renaissance. © SCALA/ART RESOURCE, NY

physical form. Thus, the statuary of ancient Greece and Rome was seen to depict the apex of humanity. The result was that the "milky whiteness of marble and the facial features of the Apollos and Venuses" created a standard against which most other people would be measured, and found deficient (Fredrickson, p. 59).

These early formulators of the concept of race did not actively ascribe the other important trope of racism—the correlation of talent, success, and value—to these physical differences. The qualitative differences between races arose when enlightened theorists sought to explain the source of human differences and the varieties of societies that Europeans were encountering. Most Enlightenment thinkers saw distinct races developing over time as a result of environmental influences, such as climate and soil, which ultimately determined the nature and success of different races.

Charles-Louis de Secondat, baron de Montesquieu, was one of the first, in his *Spirit of the Laws* (1748), to present human history as composed of stages, introducing the idea that races of people had developed their own legal and political systems



rooted in their climate and their temperament, or, as he called them, their race. Politics and race ran together; different races created the political systems only they were capable of creating. Other thinkers, like Immanuel Kant in his *On the Different Races of Man* (1775), aligned peoples' characters with their physical appearance. Now, behavior and appearance ran together; one could assess peoples' potential solely by looking at them. For the most part, however, Kant, like others at this time, used the term *race* loosely, without any real concern for scientific precision or exactness. Such systems provided a vocabulary for distinguishing between people based on (supposedly) natural differences that determined people's abilities and justified differing applications of rights and liberties. Yet, the rise of natural sciences and the modern nation-state gave racism its modern, more violent and dangerous character.

### The French Revolution and the Nation

The ultimate lightning rod for racial hierarchies and the dividing of relative worth came after 1789 and the rise of modern nationalism in Europe. After the French Revolution, many European countries became nations, defined particularly by the fact that citizenship would now be based on birth, residency within national territory, and allegiance to law or a constitution. Nationalism, in a sense, was a great equalizer, placing all those living within the national territory on an equal footing as Englishman, Frenchman, Spaniard, Italian, German, Pole, Dane, and so on. Social and economic class, it was believed, would not matter; all citizens would be equal, based on their rights as human beings. Yet, defining inclusion in the nation was also invariably a process of exclusion. Nationalists of the 1800s, even deliberately nonracist ones like Johann Gottfried von Herder, worked very hard to define not only who belonged but, by default, who did not. Behaviors, attitude, language, dress, and appearance all played roles in assessing who was of the nation and who was not. This kind of cultural nationalism, and the rise of Romanticism that sought to explore the passionate, irrational side of humanity—not just the rational side that the Enlightenment promoted—worked together to fashion the ethnic nation. A state defined by ethnicity saw itself as a spiritual entity, with citizenship tied to a soul that one was born with and to an uncontrollable, indelible personal drive to act, think, and feel in a particular way. Even more important, this belonging was natural, transmitted down through the ages, so that one was connected inimitably to one's forebears. In the mid- to late nineteenth century, the *Rechtstaat* (state defined by rights) transformed into the *Volkstaat*, more an imagined ethnic community than an actual historical or territorial entity.

One of the first and most important thinkers of the nineteenth century to elaborate this view of society was Joseph Arthur de Gobineau, who began publishing his *L'essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines* (Essay on the inequality of the human races) in 1853. Gobineau's history presented human development for the first time as a contest of races. His book was heavily researched in an attempt to draw together the most up-to-date scholarship of the new realms of science, especially German archaeology and philology and French anthropology. He concluded that contemporary nations were the patrimony

of a racial past defined by the conquest of weaker races by stronger ones. He posited three great races, the white, the black, and the yellow, that engaged in constant battle. For Gobineau, the victor and true driving force of human history was the white, or European, race. Yet, this victory came always at a price. Lesser races never disappeared. Instead, they mixed into the conquering races, leaving a weaker whole. The mixture, in fact, elevated lower races, in which he included the yellow and the black and their lingering influence among European peasantry and urban working classes, while the white race was degraded.

Gobineau's racial vision also demonstrates how dependent racial thought was on historical context. Gobineau saw racial strength in social stability, the absence of class and political conflict that dominated his era, and especially in his own national context of France. Not surprisingly, therefore, the racial future that Gobineau foresaw was quite bleak. The history of human existence was a story of racial decay: even the Aryan, the most dominant among Europe's white races, lost something by intermixing with the rest. Later European thinkers would brighten Gobineau's pessimistic vision for human history. Further intellectual and scientific development, including the rise of Darwinism, positivist science, and more extreme nationalist movements, would give rise to a more optimistic belief that this degeneration could be reversed.

The rise of Social Darwinism and European imperialism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries provided the impetus for more proactive racial thought. Although Darwin's theory of evolution did not offer a racial understanding of human development, some of his interpreters immediately began explaining aspects of Gobineau's view of human history as a conflict between the races, with Darwin's notion of conflict as the undercurrent of species survival. These interpretations fueled the Social Darwinism that underscored social thought in late-nineteenth-century Europe. These thinkers explained not only differences in national strength but also the differing levels of social, economic, and political success among individuals within those nations. New positivist sciences, such as physical anthropology, psychology, and ethnology, which relied on measurement and testing rather than speculation, all injected into the idea of race a sense of heredity and transcendence. Racial sciences now supposed a biological link across generations that subsumed other forms of national identity into a physical standard that others could never adopt. Head shapes, cranial capacity, and indices of different measurements all emerged as the telltale stigmata of racial identity. This explosion of measurements allowed scientists to perceive what they thought was an expanding number of races within Europe.

Georges Vacher de Lapouge, in his study of European skulls in 1888, saw three European races and ordered their quality and value: European Man, Alpine Man, and Homo Contractus. He argued that none of these races directly correlated with a specific nation, but his descriptions of their behaviors and religious ideas were clearly meant to correspond to Germany, Southern Europe, and the population of European Jews. The naturalized German citizen Houston Stewart Chamberlain wrote in 1899 that the German race struggled to maintain its

purity because of the Darwinian form of natural selection that caused Germans to feel a revulsion toward intermixing with lesser races. Overall, this putative science of race uncoupled nationalism from its liberal roots, implying that those who lived within a national community did not necessarily belong. One could act, speak, or feel German or French but never *be* German or French.

In a sense, the expansion of parliamentary democracies, the emancipation of minority groups like Jews, and continued social unrest in Europe all helped bring politics and race together in the form of political parties and movements in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These movements made race—and combating an internal enemy—a matter of public concern and state intervention. Edouard Drumont, much like Gobineau before him, saw his France as decadent because of the intermixture of external groups and the absorption of internal threats, like French Jews, through emancipation. The Dreyfus affair in France summarized this newly minted racial notion of national identity. Alfred Dreyfus, a captain in the French army and a Jew, was convicted of treason in 1894. That Dreyfus ultimately was acquitted in 1906 did not satisfy his opponents in France who had decided that, because he was Jewish, the fact of his French nationality did not matter. As Maurice Barrès wrote during the affair, he knew Dreyfus was “capable of treason . . . [simply] by knowing his race” (Mosse, p. 109–110).

The racist movements and political leagues that sprouted after the Dreyfus affair took hold throughout Europe. In Austria, Georg Ritter von Schönerer saw the Slavic races from the south and east as the greatest threat to recreating not merely a great Austrian nation but a greater ethnic German Empire. Wilhelm Marr, who coined the term “anti-Semitism,” wrote in 1879 that the greatest threats to the newly unified German state were the corrupt natures of internal elements, like the Jews, or intermixing with neighboring “races” such as the eastern Slavs. He, like others, ominously warned of a final racial conflict that would decide the fate of nations. Different interpretations of Darwinism, or even the denial of Darwinian evolution, did not necessarily leave nations free of racial thought. Environmental, or neo-Lamarckian (after French naturalist Jean-Baptiste-Pierre Lamarck) forms of racism saw race as slightly more mutable: race was not always a matter of visible differences, but of behaviors, practices, and ideas that were acquired in one lifetime and then passed on.

In newly unified Italy, northern Italians in Lombardy saw the threat of southern peoples, the Sicilians or Neapolitans, as racially enervating. They were thought to be different because of their hot-blooded, less rational characters—elements believed to emanate from their hotter climate and their proximity to Africa. Similar ideas existed in Spain toward those from the south, in particular Andalusia. In northern Spain, notions of racial purity became important adjuncts of the Basque nationalist movement that sprang up in the late nineteenth century. The presence of foreign guest workers, or *maketos*, from other parts of Spain, was perceived as a threat to Basque purity. Sabino Arana, an early founder of Basque nationalism, proposed miscegenation laws in 1901 to prohibit the marriage of Basques to Spaniards.

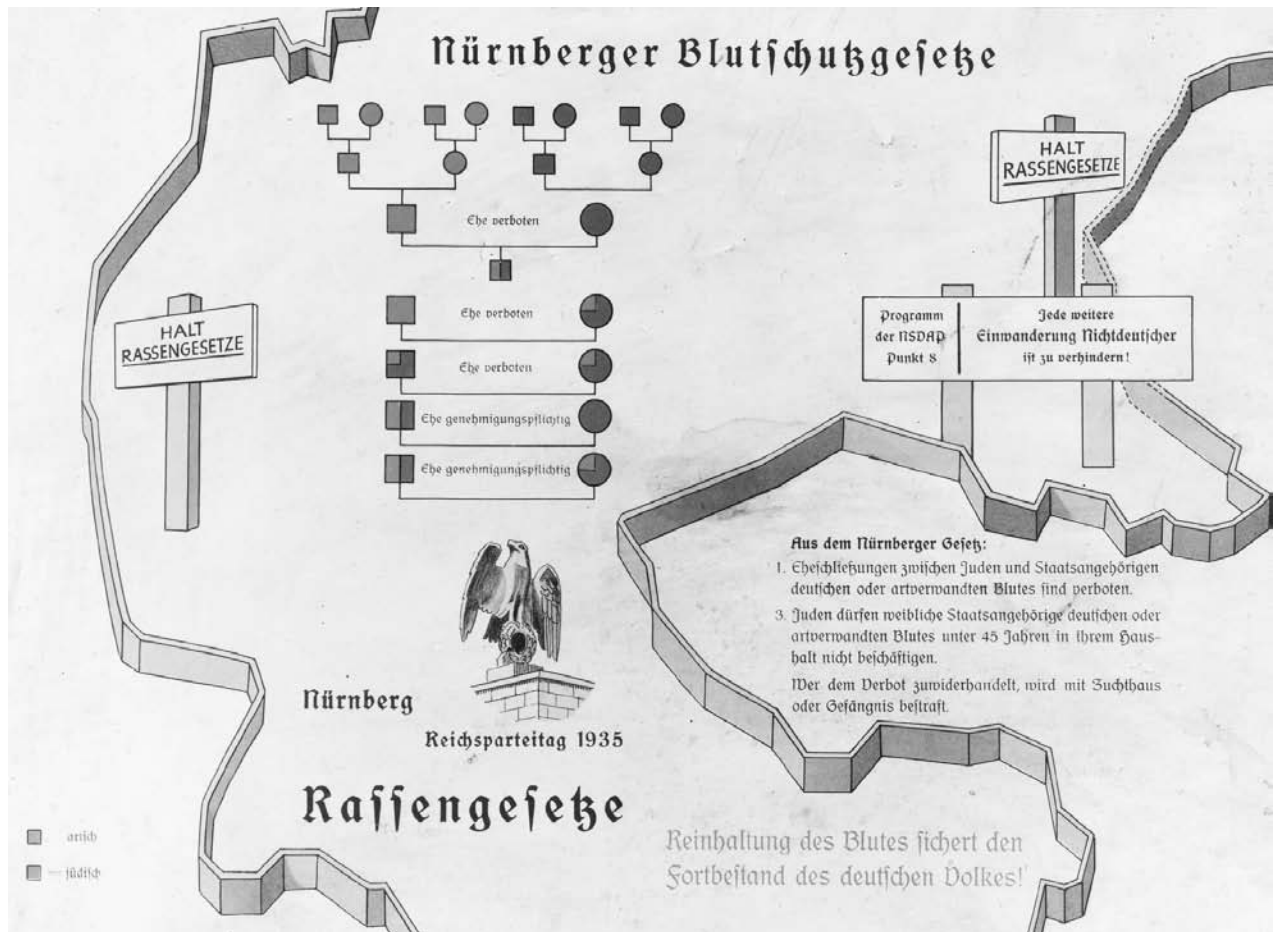
The rise of European imperialism further coarsened racial thought. Contact with and subjugation of different peoples in Asia, Africa, and the Pacific seemed to verify both the Enlightenment notion of human development as taking place in stages, and the Social Darwinist view that national success was predicated on conflict and conquest. This inequality of development came to justify any mistreatment of non-European peoples, especially in the “scramble” for Africa that placed almost the entire continent under European dominion by 1900.

Imperialism helped solidify a view of the world as a hierarchy of races with Europeans at the zenith and all others arrayed below. One ugly symbol of this worldview was the “human zoo” that appeared throughout fin de siècle Europe in international fairs and other public spectacles. This kind of menagerie, replete with dioramic portrayals of humans living in their “typical” habitat, produced wide-eyed amazement among Europeans of the late nineteenth century and established racial hierarchy not just as an elite, scientific view of history but also as a popular one. By the 1880s and 1890s, race existed as a concrete idea recognizable to any European. Race became an essential element of national strength—and required defense and protection.

The practical application of these racial ideas followed in the early twentieth century. The racial hierarchies so easily defended in imperialist language were also easily applied to European populations as well: if Europeans so easily conquered others, what made a European so dominant? How does society perpetuate this strength? What might threaten it? The eugenic policies developed in part by Francis Galton beginning in 1883 that defended sterilization, imprisonment, and marriage proscriptions, for example, relied on a basic biologicistic assumption that the social or national body could be weakened by the presence of debilitating agents. The “virus” in the eugenic model was certain kinds of people, and here race theories developed alongside other notions of difference, like class and gender, to locate the nation’s racial enemies. “Degenerative” forces like the poor, alcoholics, criminals, the handicapped, and prostitutes all were viewed as suffering from an internal weakness bred through the generations from a racial atavism. Research over the last few decades has demonstrated that eugenic policies took many forms in early-twentieth-century Europe, from the pro-natalist policies of France that encouraged population growth to the sterilization policies of Germany to the marriage restrictions and immigration quotas of England. Driving all of these policies was the same basic view: in the struggle for survival, the state had to engage in proactive social “medicine” to destroy or minimize “atavistic” or degenerative agents.

### The Nazis, the Holocaust, and Others

Read in this context, the Nazis’ efforts to persecute and then to exterminate European Jewry and other supposedly threatening populations did not represent a radical departure from the ideas and practices that had long been evident in European history. What made the Nazis unique was the barbaric scale and geographical reach of their policies. Perhaps Michael Burleigh and Wolfgang Iyer said it best when they argued that the Nazis’ uniqueness rested in their desire to create



A poster titled “The Nuremberg Law for the Protection of Blood and German Honor” (c. 1935) with chart outlining which marriages were forbidden. The Nazi desire for a pure Aryan race placed many restrictions upon the German populace, as well as the citizens of the countries they invaded. In some cases, intercourse between Aryans and non-Aryans was outlawed. UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM, COURTESY OF HANS PAULI

a racial state in which all facets of state policy, and the organization of society, were enacted with the promotion of racial purity in mind.

The Nuremberg Laws of 1935 codified German citizenship as the product of German blood, as defined by German anthropologists, biologists, and doctors. They also outlawed sexual intercourse between “pure” Germans and German Jews, and the employment of women under forty-five by Jews. In the Nazi mind and model, as in the eugenic one, procreation was the locus of racial protection. These laws affected German and foreigner alike. In fact, the list of racial threats expanded with the German Third Reich: Pole, Czech, and Slav all became racial threats as Germany entered Poland, Bohemia, southeastern Europe, and Russia. Suspect populations also lived among people who otherwise saw themselves as German. Political deviants, in particular, were seen as threats to the race and many ultimately followed paths to the concentration camp and gas chamber along with the Nazis’ Jewish victims. Socialists, communists, homosexuals, and Jehovah’s Witnesses all

came to represent biological threats to the pure Aryan, and their removal from society was justified along racial lines.

Yet, perhaps most importantly, the Nazis proved that race and racism were not merely products of the irrational, intemperate mind, but also dependent on a mind-set defined by respect for law and a rigidly organized view of the world. The horror of the Nazi regime arises from the fact that while the goals of German racial policies led to the Final Solution—extermination and mechanized killing in the death camps—their policies continued to be expressed in the seemingly rational language of problem-solving. In his essay “Deutschland und die Deutschen,” the German writer Thomas Mann described the Nazi mind-set as “highly technological Romanticism,” which encapsulates a sense of racial thought throughout Europe, a product of both passionate hatred and cold bureaucracy. Racism, in this reading, was the product of some of Europe’s greatest triumphs—the Enlightenment and the reverence for science and reason—and its darkest moments—the thirst for conquest, subjugation, and murder.



The opening stanza of Rudyard Kipling's  
"White Man's Burden" (1899)

Take up the White Man's burden  
Send for the best ye breed  
Go bind your sons to exile  
To serve your captives' need  
To wait in heavy harness  
On fluttered fold and wild  
Your new-caught, sullen peoples  
Half-devil and half-child

encapsulates the idea of proper inheritance and European supremacy over other races that drove the racist imagination of the late nineteenth century.

This view has allowed scholars to explore racial thought in areas where it was not previously believed to have existed. Some examples include the forced migration of populations in the Soviet Union, motivated by ethnic or racial concerns, and previously viewed as anathema to socialist policy. Spanish and Italian fascists have attracted attention for supposedly eugenic practices to weed out political opponents defined not just by intellectual differences, but by a genetic predisposition to certain political attitudes. The general reliance on biological metaphors in twentieth-century Europe has also widened the scope of racial studies, placing it within a larger nexus of social categories that include class and gender. For example, the focus on women's bodies as the template for racial production has expanded scholarly notions of what makes official policies racist. In an area not normally associated with racial thought, the Spanish Fascist policy of the forced adoption of children born to the wives of political opponents during the Spanish Civil War shared the same impetus as eugenic policies elsewhere and prove that race and racism were attractive ideas in a number of times and places.

### Race and Racism Today

Since World War II, debates about race in Europe have remained rooted in the same tensions that drove European racism of the past. The incorporation of foreign-born immigrants emerged in the 1960s and 1970s as a result of the economic expansion that followed World War II and the decolonization of former European imperial holdings. Attacks on immigrant workers in most European countries have proved that the old conflict between liberal notions of the nation as one of rights of all citizens and ethnic notions of the nation as a community of similar-looking, similar-acting, and similar-sounding people still exists.

Yet, racism in Europe today also reflects some of the same tensions that define it elsewhere. Racism festers when the

economic future is cloudy or desperate, when more people seem to be vying for fewer social services, and when the state seems to struggle to meet its obligations. In fact, the harshest attacks against immigrants have taken place where social protections and guarantees are strongest. Race riots in Brixton and Nottinghill Gate in England in the 1970s and 1980s, or the attacks on Turkish workers in Rostock, Germany, in the 1990s and, most recently, on West African immigrants in El Ejido, Spain, all indicate that racism relies on a sense of threatened stability. Immigrant peoples are perceived as drains on the system; those who "don't belong" are more than an economic threat and are seen as enemies who weaken national strength from the inside. Hence, fights over cultural assimilation in France involving the wearing of headscarves in secular French public schools and the granting of citizenship to multigenerational families of Turkish guest workers in Germany maintain the racial component of the "outsider" as inherently different and dangerous. Yet, the real cause of concern is no longer the notion of physical differences signifying biological weakness in the national stock; the racial conflict remains a struggle over national identity and the basic definition of citizenship. In the words of Enoch Powell, a conservative member of Parliament in England who became infamous for racist diatribes against foreign guest workers in England in the 1960s and 1970s, "Racism is the basis of nationality."

In many ways, the particular historical experience of racial thought, especially as embodied in the Holocaust, has given an added weight and sense of foreboding to events that unfold today in Europe. Incidences of anti-Semitism and the rise of ultranationalist political parties that base national membership on an ethnic sense of nationalism, like Jean-Marie Le Pen's National Front Party in France, Jörg Haider's Freedom Party in Austria, or the Northern League of Italy, all have energized much public concern and debate. Yet, the most important lesson of European history is that race and racism are rooted in that continent's best traditions such as the Enlightenment, science, and social welfare, and its application in the most murderous and barbaric of ways both inside and outside the European continent.

*See also Anti-Semitism; Discrimination; Enlightenment; Human Rights: Overview; Other, The, European Views of Race and Racism: Asia; Race and Racism: Overview.*

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Joshua Goode

#### RECEPTION OF ASIANS TO THE UNITED STATES

*Asian America* is a meaningful social construct in understanding and analyzing Western colonialism in Asia, and immigration policy and racial hierarchy in American society. As a group identity, *Asian-American* is an externally imposed label because it is based on race rather than culture. The most misleading reference to Asians is the term *Oriental*. Derogatory in nature, the term refers to people anywhere east of the Suez Canal, blurs cultural differences within Asia, and defines many different peoples as one racial group. Beginning in the nineteenth century, Asian countries were subjected to the political and economical encroachment of Western imperialist powers. India became a colony under Britain after the 1813 Charter Act. China was almost dismembered after the Opium War in 1839–1842. Japan was opened up by the American commodore Matthew Perry in 1853. The Philippines became a U.S. territory after the Spanish-American War of 1898. Korea was annexed by Japan in 1910.

#### Asian Immigration

Asian migration to America was a result of colonialism in Asia and a response to the labor shortage in the American West. Global capitalism brought almost one million Asian immigrants to America. Asians became an “Oriental problem” when they arrived in American society. Racist rhetoric in California described Asian immigrants as “undesirable coolies” or as the “yellow peril” unable to assimilate into American culture. Perceived as “strangers from different shores” and denied equal protection under American law, Asians were often victims of racial harassment and violence. Regardless of their cultural differences, Asians’ experience in America is similar in nature. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 prohibited Chinese labor migration. The Gentlemen’s Agreement of 1908 stopped the Japanese. The Barred Zone Act of 1917 banned Asian Indians. The Tydings-McDuffie Act of 1934 excluded Filipinos. Subject to exclusion and ineligible for citizenship, Asian immigrants lived under the shadow of institutionalized racism.

**Chinese.** Racial profiling of Asians began with the Chinese, as they were the first Asian group to arrive in the United States. During the peak of Chinese immigration in the late nineteenth century, union rallies, political election campaigns, and editorials in newspapers and journals all denounced the Chinese as a “degraded people with low civilization,” and as a “perpetual, unchanging, and unchangeable alien element.” Bret Harte’s poem “The Heathen Chinese” and its popularity best manifested the fear of Chinese in America. Travel accounts of American diplomats, missionaries, and merchants also described the Chinese as an inward-looking, superstitious, and devious race. In response to such anti-Chinese frenzy, the early Chinese community actively advocated their interest, engaged in lobbying and legal activities as a form of resistance, or appealed for better protection from the Chinese government. As early as 1852, a Chinese merchant named Norman Asing wrote a letter in smooth English rejecting Governor John Bigler’s description of the Chinese as “unassimilated and dishonest” and emphasizing the significant contribution the Chinese made to American society and their great cultural traditions. Mary Tape in 1885 made an angry protest when the San Francisco Board of Education banned her daughter from attending a public school. A Christian and an educated woman, she sued the board of education and the principal. When the superior court decided in the family’s favor, the board appealed to the California Supreme Court. The superintendent of schools then lobbied the legislature, which passed a law establishing separate schools for “children of Mongolian or Chinese descent.” This law was not repealed until 1947.

During the exclusion period (1882–1943), incoming Chinese immigrants were detained and interrogated at the Angel Island immigration station from several days to several months. Waiting in bitterness and frustration, Chinese immigrants inscribed hundreds of poems on the wall to express their resentment and to protest against racism. Chinese immigrants linked their suffering in America to a divided and weakened China. After Congress voted to bar Chinese immigration permanently in 1904, Chinese in America joined their countrymen in China to launch a vigorous boycott movement in 1905 against American imports to China. Interestingly, Harriet Beecher Stowe’s novel *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* was translated into Chinese in the same year and became an immediate hit as the Chinese related the African slaves’ misery to their own suffering. Though the boycott did not get the Chinese a better immigration policy, it forever linked the treatment of Chinese in America to Chinese nationalist consciousness.

**Japanese.** Arriving shortly after the Chinese were excluded, Japanese immigrants inherited much anti-Asian sentiment. Racial slurs in the American West were quickly switched from “chink” to “Yellow Jap.” However, the Japanese had better protection from their government than did the Chinese. When Japanese-American children were rejected from public schools in San Francisco after the 1906 earthquake destroyed “Little Tokyo,” Japan quickly protested and interfered. Writings from the missionary Sidney Gulick and the Japanese scholar Yamato Ichihashi, who was fluent in English, also assured the American public that Japanese immigrants were assimilating. Though the Gentlemen’s Agreement stopped labor immigrants, it

allowed Japanese women to enter America as “picture brides.” Allowed to develop family life, the Japanese-American community did not become a “bachelor society” like the Chinese and Filipino communities. Still, confronted with racial antagonism, Japanese immigrants pursued assimilation. Kyutaro Abiko, a wealthy labor contractor and publisher of a Japanese language newspaper, urged Japanese immigrants to consider permanent settlement and give up the *dekaseginin* (sojourner) mentality. Some Americanized Japanese immigrants like Takao Ozawa applied for citizenship. Ozawa argued that he was American by heart and that the Japanese belonged to a superior race, as they had absorbed many Caucasian qualities. Even his skin color appeared whiter than the dark-skinned Italians, Spanish, and Portuguese. However, in the case of *Ozawa v. the United States* of 1922, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that “white person” means Caucasian—a race that the Japanese did not belong to. Congress later passed the 1924 Immigration Law, which totally stopped Japanese migration to America. Nationalistic mass rallies were held throughout Japan, and protesters called 1 July, the effective date of the law, “National Humiliation Day.” Japanese-American newspapers all criticized the law as racist.

**Asian Indians.** The racial identity of Asian Indians was perhaps more challenging to American racial discourse than that of any other Asian group (though only about eight thousand Indians arrived in America around the 1910s) because they were considered Caucasian. The San Francisco-based Asiatic Exclusion League argued that although Asian Indians shared similar ancestry with Europeans, they were eastern Aryans and “slaves of Creation.” The U.S. attorney general in 1907 declared that under no condition were those British nationals to be granted U.S. citizenship. After the Court denied Ozawa’s application for citizenship, the Indian immigrant Bhagat Singh Thind applied for his citizenship the following year. He cited many anthropological sources to prove the similarity of physical features between Indians, Englishmen, and Germans, and declared himself a member of the “pure Aryan race.” The Court replied that the definition of “white” had to be based on the “understanding of the common man.” Since the popular perception of the Caucasian race was based on skin color, the Court ruled that Asian Indians were Caucasians but not white. With this ruling, racial ideology placed Japanese and Asian Indians in the same racial category.

**Filipinos.** Filipino immigrants represent a different type of challenge to American racial ideology. Coming from a U.S. territory, Filipinos were American nationals who pledged allegiance to the American flag and could travel freely within the territories of the United States. Filipino men were also recruited into the American merchant marine and the U.S. Navy. As colonial subjects, however, they were treated as an inferior race. The English writer Rudyard Kipling described them as “half devil and half child” and called them “the White Man’s Burden,” which typically illustrates the racial image of Filipinos in the eyes of white Americans. The political, economic, and cultural relationship between the Philippines and the United States constituted the context in which the immigrants developed their identity. They spoke English, wore Western style clothes, and knew American culture. Many Filipino immigrants felt that they had already been somehow Americanized before their

arrival. The immigrant writer Carlos Bulason published his autobiographical novel entitled *America Is in the Heart*. Coming from a racially diverse society, Filipino men frequented dance halls and socialized with white women. Racial discourse on Filipinos often centered on “the threat of Filipinos to white racial purity.” A San Francisco municipal court judge wrote that it was “a dreadful thing when these Filipinos, scarcely more than savages, come to San Francisco, work for practically nothing, and obtain the society of these [white] girls” (cited in Takaki, p. 328). Dr. David P. Barrows, former president of the University of California, testified before Congress that social problems of Filipinos were based almost entirely on their sexual passion. An antimiscegenation law in California prohibited interracial marriage between whites and “Negroes, mulattoes, or Mongolians.” In 1933, Salvador Roldan and three other immigrants discovered a loophole in this law. Before the Los Angeles Superior Court, Roldan argued that Filipinos belonged to the Malay rather than the Mongolian race. Shortly after they obtained their marriage licenses, the California legislature amended the antimiscegenation law and added the Malay race to the restricted category. The following year, the Tydings-McDuffie Act granted the colony commonwealth status, permitted a ten-year transition period to independence, defined Filipinos as “aliens” though still owing allegiance to the United States, and allocated an annual immigration quota of fifty. Since the minimum quota for a country was usually one hundred, racial ideology degraded the Philippines as a semi-nation-state.

**Koreans.** Korean migration to America from 1902 to 1905 was a result of American missionary activities in Asia and the Japanese occupation of Korea. Fewer in number, Korean immigrants viewed themselves as exiled fighters for national liberation from Japan. While nationalism shaped Korean immigrants’ identity, Christian churches played a key role in community organization. The first Korean language church—the Korean Evangelical Society—was established in Hawaii in 1902. The Bible had already been translated into *hangul*, a script that replaced Chinese characters in late-nineteenth-century Korea. By 1918, there were thirty-three Korean Protestant churches in Hawaii that provided Sunday school and Korean language classes. Korean books and periodicals were imported as the immigrants maintained a distinct ethnic identity and resisted assimilation. In Hawaii, they organized *tong-hoe* (village councils) in each locality with more than ten Korean families. Their grass roots organizations later developed into the Korean National Association. Representing all Koreans in North America, the organization had 116 local branches and chapters in Manchuria and Siberia. In 1913, fifteen Korean farm workers were driven away by several hundred Caucasian workers in the small town of Hemet, California. When the Japanese ambassador in Washington, D.C., filed a protest on their behalf, the Korean National Association sent a telegram to the Department of State claiming that they were Koreans, not Japanese, and that the investigation made by Japanese diplomats was illegal. Preservation of Korean identity and culture became their patriotic duty.

### Landmarks in Asian-American History

World War II was a watershed for Asian-American identity. Japan bombed Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941. The next

day, the United States and China together declared war on Japan. The mainstream media began to portray the Chinese as honest and hardworking and the Japanese as treacherous and cruel. A *Time* magazine article on 22 December 1941 was intended to assist American society at large to physically distinguish the Chinese from the Japanese. According to the article, Japanese men were “broader hipped” than Chinese men; and the Chinese expression was likely to be “more placid, kindly, open while Japanese were arrogant, hesitant and nervous in conversation” (cited by Takaki, p. 370). In 1943, all Chinese exclusion acts were repealed; a quota of 105 was granted; and Chinese immigrants became eligible for citizenship. In 1946, Congress also extended the privilege of naturalization to Filipinos and Asian Indians with an annual quota of 100 respectively. The policy change was in fact a response to Japanese war propaganda, which often criticized racial discrimination against the Chinese in America. When the House delayed the repeal bill in June 1943, Japanese radio immediately challenged the sincerity of the American government in ending the racial disparity. During the war, magazines, journals, and newspapers defined Japanese-Americans as the “Fifth Column” and “potential spies or espionage agents” and called for mass internment. Shinto and Buddhist priests and Japanese-language teachers and newspaper editors were arrested as “enemy aliens.” Based on popular sentiment rather than on “military necessity,” Executive Order 9066 placed 120,000 Japanese Americans in ten internment camps without a legal procedure. In February 1943, the U.S. government required all internees to answer a loyalty questionnaire. Question No. 27 asked draft-age males about their willingness to serve in the U.S. armed forces while Question No. 28 required them to swear unqualified allegiance to America. Racial ideology embodied in the questionnaire implied that Japanese were not loyal. Minoru Yasui, Gordon Hirabayashi, and Frederic Korematsu challenged the constitutionality of the internment policy in court when they were ordered to go to the camps.

The 1965 Immigration Reform Act is another landmark in Asian-American history. Growing political consciousness among Asians in the late 1960s through participation in the civil rights movement, anti-Vietnam War protests, and student strikes demanding ethnic studies courses on university campuses laid the theoretical foundation for Asian-American identity. *Asian America* became a meaningful political term. Asian population in America also grew dramatically since the law removed racial criteria from immigration policy for the first time in American history. In 1965, Asian-Americans numbered about one million, or less than 1 percent of the U.S. population. In 2002, their numbers had increased 72 percent in a decade, and in 2004 they numbered almost 12 million, representing 4.2 percent of U.S. population. In December 1966, *U.S. News and World Report* published an article entitled “Success Story of One Minority in the United States.” This and many other articles on “Model Minority” myth commended the economical rise of Asian-Americans in spite of historical discrimination and accused African-Americans of making unreasonable demands for government assistance. Post-1965 racial rhetoric presents Asian-Americans as a minority with high educational attainment levels, high median family incomes, and low crime rates. Some Asian-American

scholars and leaders strongly disagree with this Model Minority theory, for it downplays historical racial discrimination against Asians and creates misunderstanding and conflicts between Asians and other groups. But there are many Asians who take a more nuanced view toward it. In any case, the “glass ceiling” is still a major obstacle to the career mobility of many professional Asian-Americans, and the “sweat shop” job is often the only option for working-class immigrant Asian women. More importantly, a high percentage of contemporary Asian-American families, especially the refugee immigrants from Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, still live below the poverty line, and the Model Minority theory has disqualified Asians as racial minorities from important social remedy programs in education and employment. Asian-Americans have a long way to go in their pursuit of racial equality.

*See also Asian-American Ideas (Cultural Migration); Identity, Multiple: Asian-Americans.*

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Haiming Liu

**RADICALS/RADICALISM.** *Radix*, the Latin word for root, is the origin of the word *radical*. In contemporary political philosophy, the term describes activists who challenge established views and who operate outside the parameters of social convention to achieve political aims, sometimes employing extreme or violent methods in that pursuit.

The concept of political radicalism evolved out of the language and logic of the scientific revolution when educated intellectuals began to view the world in scientific, secular terms.



It gained popularity during the Enlightenment as social theorists employed the new method of critical thinking to challenge traditional religious and political dogma.

### Radical Liberalism

Political liberalism emerged in the seventeenth century, most notably in the work of John Locke (1632–1704). It spread to colonial America and France and became part of political discourse by the early eighteenth century. Locke's theory of government—that is, that the governed are sovereign and have the right to replace a dysfunctional, tyrannical government when needed—provided the intellectual basis for the American Revolution of 1776 and was the motivating force behind the French Revolution of 1789. A child during the English Civil War, Locke was aware of the execution of England's King Charles I (1600–1649) and the subsequent establishment of the Commonwealth under Oliver Cromwell (1599–1658). Thirty years later, Locke himself participated in toppling the government of King James I (1566–1625) during the bloodless, Glorious Revolution of 1688.

The term *radical* took on political connotations in the years prior to the French Revolution when contemporary social thinkers attempted to apply scientific logic to political affairs. By 1792 the word was used to describe the extremist policies and zealous political activity of the revolutionary government, the most radical stage of which began on 10 August 1792 when the Parisian *sans-culottes* stormed the king's palace and toppled the throne of Louis XVI. A period of government-sanctioned mass executions followed, lasting from 1792 to 1794—a phase of the revolution known as the Terror.

The French and American Revolutions were an outgrowth of intellectual transformation that began during the Enlightenment. Many social thinkers who adopted the “scientific” perspective during this period embraced Locke's philosophy of self-determination. Two who proved crucial to future political developments were Thomas Paine (1737–1809), an Englishman of common birth, and Voltaire (1694–1778), a popular French playwright with a talent for political satire. In America, Paine became a primary figure in the struggle for American independence, publishing most notably *Common Sense* (1776), a radical if not treasonous tract that advocated American federalism and a permanent split with England. A penchant for political activism led Paine to France in 1792 where he became a member of the French National Convention. In 1793 the radical arm of the revolutionary government imprisoned Paine because of his relationship with a faction of liberal moderates. During his incarceration, Paine wrote *Age of Reason* (1795), a criticism of church theology, for which Americans later ostracized him.

In France, Locke's philosophy of individual freedom surfaced in intellectual circles via the work of Voltaire who had acquired knowledge of Locke's treatise on labor, government, and human knowledge while living in exile in England. Voltaire disseminated Locke's liberal philosophy in hilarious if subversive plays and novels that exposed corruption and misuse of power among the clergy. When Denis Diderot (1713–1784)—editor of the *Encyclopédie* (1751–1780), a thirty-five-volume

work with antiauthoritarian content—likewise undertook to change the common way of thinking, he found a number of like-minded liberals, Charles-Louis de Secondat, baron de Montesquieu (1689–1755), author of *De l'esprit des lois* (1748), among them, who were willing to criticize the old regime of France. Thereafter, liberalism, which called for toleration and liberty, became the new revolutionary creed.

Of all the philosophes to emerge from the French Enlightenment, Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) was perhaps the most influential political thinker. By 1792, Rousseau's *Social Contract* (1763) had become the bible for radical revolutionaries. Maximilien Robespierre (1758–1794), a powerful leader in the Committee of Public Safety, embraced Rousseau's anti-Lockean model of direct democracy, which required the surrender of individual rights to the interest of the common good. Where Locke supported individual freedom, Rousseau argued for forcible imposition of the general will. Of all the eighteenth and early nineteenth-century revolutions—which began in America, spread to France, and subsequently to Italy, Spain, Greece, Prussia, the Caribbean, and Latin America—the French Revolution proved most radical because of the Terror, and the excesses aimed largely against French citizens. Robespierre based the use of terror on Rousseau's theory of just coercion. Since that time, liberal politics on the Continent has been associated with revolutionary radicalism.

The association of radicalism and the political left can also be traced to the layout of the French Revolutionary legislature, an arrangement that led to divisions of the left, right, and center—political designations that continue to this day. In 1789 when the Convention moved to the Tuileries, representatives (for reasons known only to them) grouped themselves according to political sympathies, sitting in semi-circular tiers facing a rostrum. To the speaker's left sat the radical contingency, or the *Montagnards*, who jokingly referred to themselves as the Mountain because of the height of their seats. To the right sat moderates *cum* conservatives, a loose association of men known as the *Girondins*. Between them both sat the vast majority, the Marsh or the Plain, who sided with neither party. The deputies came increasingly into conflict, first over the fate of the king and then over issues of war, property, rights, and the use of terror. In the spring of 1793 left-wing representatives in the Convention joined forces with the radicalized *sans-culottes* and staged an attack against the Girondins, the majority of which were arrested and later guillotined. With the opponents silenced, the Jacobins, as the new coalition was called, were free to enact any legislation they deemed fit. As the Terror intensified, in June 1794, these deputies dictated the Law of Prairial (10 June 1794). Its stated purpose was the extermination of the enemies of the republic. The Law of Prairial initiated a state of political radicalism known as the Great Terror in which crimes were defined as any word, deed, or appearance of guilt that threatened the revolution. In a space of six weeks more than 1,300 persons were beheaded under this law before the Terror was finally brought to an end with the execution of Robespierre on 10 Thermidor (28 July) 1794. The conservative reaction that followed ended terrorist legislation, but it also opened the way for retribution of a different sort as anti-Jacobins took revenge against their previous tormentors.



In England, meanwhile, liberals formed their own party and began to address social ills caused by the excesses of industrial capitalism. Poets William Blake (1757–1827) and William Wordsworth (1770–1850) condemned the modern factory culture in their writing while political philosopher Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832) and his so-called band of radical philosophers—David Ricardo (1772–1823), Thomas Malthus (1766–1834), and James Mill (1773–1836)—instigated reform via social theory based on modern economic philosophy. Bentham’s formula for addressing public ills was based on the utilitarian principle of “the greatest good for the greatest number” (Bentham, p. 505; Mill, p. 509).

Despite such efforts, working-class militancy in Great Britain increased in 1830 and 1845. Luddites staged attacks upon unprotected factories and machinery, destroying property and threatening bourgeois industrialists. That strategy changed with the Chartist movement of 1838 as workers employed petitions to demand universal male suffrage and better work conditions. While workers did not immediately realize their political objectives, such outbursts signaled class-consciousness in formation. Militant liberals, vanguards of this movement, helped bring about duty-free importation of wheat and limited suffrage in 1850. By 1884, with the Third Reform Bill, liberals could add male suffrage and labor laws to their list of accomplishments. As liberalism in England became less radical, with gradual reform replacing political extremism, socialists and militant nationalists branched off and formed more politically aggressive factions.

### Radical Nationalism

Early advocates of nationalism drew from the French example and sought republican freedom and unification. Most were liberals in the Enlightenment tradition. The exceptions, however, East Central Europe and the German states, rejected the liberal-rational tradition, preferring a folk community where emotion trumped reason and where the needs of the individual merged nicely with those of the state. In Germany, Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744–1803), philosopher and close friend of Goethe, denied the universal nature of man and insisted upon the uniqueness of *Volk* or culture. Rationalism, he argued, ran counter to the German spirit.

Other Europeans with pro-nationalist sympathies shared similar desire to unite divided territory. Such sympathies led in 1815 to 1840 to nationalist revolts in Italy, Spain, and Greece. Only in Greece did the effort succeed, in 1830. Nevertheless, the demand for self-government did not die. In 1848 a workers’ revolution in France, which forced the abdication of King Louis-Philippe (r. 1830–1848), inflamed the imagination of nationalists everywhere, spurring a new round of insurrections. In Bonn, Carl Schurz (1829–1906), a student radical compelled to write from the safety of Switzerland, described reaction upon hearing the news. “We were dominated by a vague feeling as if a great outbreak of elemental force had begun,” he wrote (pp. 157–158). Indeed, it had. In 1848 revolution spread to nearly every state on the continent. In Italy, Giuseppe Mazzini (1805–1872) responded to the Paris uprising by writing subversive articles aimed at inciting the Italian

masses. “Every privilege which demands submission from you . . . is a usurpation and a tyranny which you are bound to resist and destroy,” he declared (p. 562). Mazzini’s radicalism manifested itself in his political activity; between 1844 and 1858, he plotted the overthrow of Austrian rule in Italy.

Revolution in Paris, Germany, and Italy failed and conservative forces regained control. Nationhood did not come for Italy until 1860 when another political subversive, Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807–1882), led a guerrilla army against Austria. The German Empire took shape in 1870, after a victorious war against France led to increased feelings of Teutonic greatness and superiority. Due to the farsighted vision of Otto von Bismarck (1815–1898), Germany adopted a federal constitution that included male suffrage. As a result, conservative nationalism subsequently replaced radical nationalism and the new state embraced the idea of German destiny.

Meanwhile, political radicalism emerged in Ireland between 1845 and 1849, the result of the potato famine and deliberate inaction on the part of the British government to feed the starving populace. In the summer of 1848, Irish republican nationalists attempted a revolution against England. The revolt failed, but the experience increased Irish radicalism, spawning the Fenian movement of 1858. In 1873 the Fenians became the Irish Republican Brotherhood, then the Irish Volunteer Force, and, in 1919, the Irish Republican Army (IRA), a paramilitary faction dedicated to the overthrow of British rule and the unification of Ireland. Beginning in 1970 the IRA, yet to achieve national independence, resorted to terrorist tactics while its political arm, Sinn Fein, made use of the ballot. In 1998 a splinter group, the “Real IRA” bombed the town of Omagh.

An inherent weakness in nationalist extremism was a tendency to divide the world into “them and us,” a process that postmodernists call Othering. After 1871 that predisposition caused governments to conflate national pride with militaristic goals, leading in June of 1914 to the assassination of Austria’s heir-apparent by militant Serbian nationalists. The murder of Archduke Francis Ferdinand and his wife Sophie was an act of political radicalism that provided the pretext for World War I.

The incredible cruelty of World War I—trench warfare, the horrendous effects of mustard gas, and sheer loss of life—caused intellectuals to lose faith in the idea of progress and to abandon their liberal ideals. Fascism and communism rose to fill the vacuum and a new sort of radicalism got underway. In Soviet Russia, that process began with Vladimir Ilyich Lenin (1870–1924) who established the first totalitarian dictatorship in 1917. In 1922 Benito Mussolini (1883–1945) seized power in Italy and formed the first fascist government. In Germany, militancy coupled with state-worship and the election of Adolph Hitler in 1933 gave rise to Nazism. In all three places, human rights, individual freedom, and social justice gave way to abuses, compulsory labor, and political terror. In terms of violence and challenge to conventional thinking, totalitarianism proved every bit as radical as any previous political movement. It peaked between 1927 and 1953, with the regime of Joseph Stalin (1879–1953).

### Radical Socialism

Utopian socialism emerged as a rejoinder to liberal policies and practices during the Industrial Revolution and assumed different forms between 1816 and 1848. In England, Robert Owen (1771–1858) a civic-minded reformer experimented with planned communes in pursuit of the perfect socialist community. Owen's strong social consciousness and his belief in the power of science to create a better world led him in 1834 to found the Grand National Consolidated Trades Union, England's first national labor organization. Like Owen, the social theories of Count Henri de Saint-Simon (1760–1825), Charles Fourier (1772–1837), Auguste Comte (1798–1857), and Karl Marx (1818–1883) assumed the possibility of a perfect society. Such thinkers believed in progress and the ability of science to end scarcity and establish a better world, a perfect community supported by moral political institutions.

In France, utopian socialism grew out of the economic ideology of the revolutionary *sans-culottes* and the social criticisms of Saint-Simon and Fourier. A child of the revolution himself, Saint-Simon envisioned a world where parasites stepped aside and allowed doers to organize a planned community. In that same spirit of progress, Fourier championed sexual freedom and female emancipation. In 1830 he criticized arranged marriage, likening it to prostitution. Such a challenge to conventional thinking marked Fourier as dangerous if not subversive.

Utopian socialism appealed to the working classes primarily because of socialist opposition to laissez-faire capitalism. French workers adopted either a socialist political outlook or an egalitarian republican one. In June 1848 the two factions united against the French king Louis-Philippe, hoping to replace monarchy with a popular democratic government. Within days of accomplishing this goal, class warfare erupted in Paris (primarily over the issue of national workshops), and workers took to the streets. When the army quelled the riot, liberals returned with a constitution featuring a strong executive. Even so, working-class radicalism remained strong. In 1871 workers again stormed the capital (after national elections returned a majority of conservatives to the Assembly), set up the Paris Commune, and demanded the right to govern without interference. At the behest of Adolphe Thiers (1797–1877), the army smashed the rebels and destroyed the Commune. France was slowly stabilizing when in 1898 to 1899 an anti-Semitic controversy, the Dreyfus Affair, once again pitted the old and traditional—Catholics, racists, and the army—against democratic republicans. Under threat of yet another revolution, the government severed ties with the Catholic Church. The literary realist, Émile Zola (1840–1902) played an influential role in exposing the lie and reviving animosity against the church.

On the heels of the Dreyfus Affair came war with Germany. Brutalized by Germany's threat to "bleed France white" during World War I, survivors of the bloody conflict lost faith in reason and turned a curious eye toward totalitarian regimes. With the Great Depression of the 1930s, an innate weakness of capitalism lay exposed causing widespread panic to set in. As workers began to migrate toward fascism and communism,

socialists led by Léon Blum (1872–1950) responded, forming an alliance between radicals and communists in opposition to conservatives and fascists. The Popular Front, the result of this alliance, failed when rapid inflation curtailed Blum's efforts at reform. Blum resigned in 1937, leaving the French to choose between Stalinist Russia and Fascist Germany. The *Parti Républicain Radical et Radical Socialiste* shifted toward the moderate center.

### Marxism

While a genuine socialist movement existed in France prior to the publication of the *Communist Manifesto* in 1848, the real founder of modern socialism is Karl Marx. Marx's contribution to economic-political theory—the theory of surplus labor—drew from French socialism and Hegelian philosophy and posited that profits were wages stolen from laborers by those who controlled the means of production. The solution to the problem of exploitation, Marx held, was a workers' revolution. A second concept in the *Communist Manifesto* was the idea of class struggle, which Marx maintained would end only when the proletariat united against the bourgeoisie. With this understanding, Marx penned the words that set socialism on a radical path: "Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communist revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Working men of all countries, unite!" (p. 179).

During the Soviet period in Russia, Marx's social theory became the ideological basis of the radical Bolshevik party. Only the anarchists proved more radical. Lenin, a staunch defender of violent revolution, introduced a changed form of radical socialism to Russia in 1917, altering the basic Marxian formula by bringing revolutionary peasants into the proletariat fight against capitalism and by creating a one-party system of communism. While undeniably radical, some historians deny that the Lenin-Stalinist regime was actually Marxian.

After Lenin's death, Trotskyites in the West rejected the notion of gradual social change, preferring the older concept of permanent revolution. In 1960 followers of Leon Trotsky (1879–1940) reinvigorated the social ideals of the Communist Party while other neo-Marxists such as György Lukács (1885–1971) and Antonio Gramsci (1891–1937) endeavored to revive the classical aspect of Hegelian Marxism. Gramsci's stress on the importance of intellectuals in the struggle against capitalist hegemony encouraged other intellectuals to take up the fight. One such scholar, Herbert Marcuse (1898–1979) of Frankfurt School fame, helped formulate popular political opinions using a Marxist interpretation of Freud—a theory of surplus repression and performance principle, which he used to criticize U.S. capitalism. Marcuse's preoccupation with the politics of emancipation made him an ideal spokesperson for the New Left during the politically explosive decade of the 1960s. Under his leadership, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), the radicalized arm of the New Left, undertook a campaign of violence against American imperialism.

In London, meanwhile, the philosopher and political activist Bertrand Russell (1872–1970) linked forces with the New Left in 1960 after resigning as president of the *Campaign*

for *Nuclear Disarmament* (CND). Russell then launched the Committee of 100, a confrontational political organization that instigated political activism in Europe and the United States. The political reach of leftist politics spread, surfacing again in Paris in 1964 where Jean-Paul Sartre's (1905–1980) combination of Marxism and existentialism captured the imagination of French students. By 1968 radical violence engulfed France, Germany, Mexico, and Spain. Even Japan experienced student riots. Ostensibly, the New Left acted in the name of workers, fighting to overthrow capitalism and introduce socialism. In the 1970s, however, antiestablishment political factions, the Weathermen in the United States, the Red Brigade in Italy, the Red Army Faction (Baader-Meinhof) in Germany, the Angry Brigade in Great Britain, and the Action Directe in France, began a campaign of terror. In 1974 the Red Army Faction killed twenty-six and injured seventy-one unsuspecting travelers in Israel's Lod airport. In 1967 London's Angry Brigade attacked the U.S. Embassy, and in 1971 they bombed the home of U.K. minister of employment. Both groups cited militant liberation as motivating factors for these attacks. Marxian socialism was not the goal.

### Radical Feminism

By definition all feminist movements are radical because they challenge established views. Nevertheless, most feminists would agree that modern radical feminism began with the women's movement in France and the United States during the 1970s and 1980s. The publication of Germaine Greer's (b. 1939) *The Female Eunuch* (1970) and Simone de Beauvoir's (1908–1986) release in 1949 of *The Second Sex* (*Le Deuxième Sexe*), led to the politicization of sexuality. Greer's book invited debate on issues of female sexuality and the role of patriarchal influence in shaping female destiny. Both Greer and de Beauvoir cited Freud's (1856–1939) study of female sexuality as a sample of male hegemony, which empowered men at the expense of women. The theory of universal patriarchal dominance over women, the primary issue upon which many feminists agree, is the intellectual foundation for radical feminist thought. In England, the feminist critique of Freud was not widely accepted. Juliet Mitchell (b. 1940), for example, argued in her 1974 publication of *Psychoanalysis and Feminism* that Freud had merely analyzed the biological relationship between mental life and sexuality and did not intend a misogynistic model of human development. In linking the unconscious to economic and political ideologies that oppress women, Mitchell, like Marcuse, offered a psychoanalytical reading of Marx. Her views influenced British feminists through the 1980s. In France, the *féministes révolutionnaires* shared the growing interest in the role of psychology in shaping attitudes, but they looked to the work of Jacques Lucan (b. 1947) and Jacques Derrida (b. 1930), who emphasize the role of language in shaping attitudes. Hélène Cixous (b. 1937) borrows from both traditions, employing Derrida's binary system to demonstrate ways in which male/female opposition in language is used to subordinate the female to the male and Lucan's theory of objectification through looking. Luce Irigaray (b. 1932) shares a similar conviction that language produces sexual difference at the psychic level. Irigaray holds that Freud contributed to the creation of a phallogocentric mind-set.

### Radicalism in the Twenty-First Century

Since the 1990s, antiglobalization protestors have appeared throughout Europe and the United States. In June of 1999 demonstrators vandalized the city of Cologne, Germany, during the G8 Economic Summit and managed to disrupt business by staging a five-hour cyber attack upon computers. Financial districts were the target. Protestors repeated those tactics in November and December of 1999, at the meeting of the World Trade Organization in Seattle, and again in April of 2000 in Washington when student activists joined forces with environmentalists, labor leaders, and human rights advocates to strike against the International Monetary Fund. Protesters accused large corporations such as Nike, Gap Inc., and Starbucks of union-busting and unfair labor practice, and they indicted McDonald's, Monsanto, and Shell Oil for paying low wages and minimal health benefits, using unsafe pesticides, creating ecological damage, and "colluding with repressive regimes" (CSIS, p. 3). "Underlying the antiglobalization theme," according to the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, "is criticism of the capitalist philosophy." The largest of these, a group called *Third Position*, a European organization with both conservative and liberal members, has achieved notoriety for violence and destruction of property. This group and others communicate via Internet and, according to intelligence reports, are funded partially by organizations such as *Direct Action Network* and *Alliance for Global Justice* (CSIS, p. 9).

Terror is the extreme form of radicalism. On 11 September 2001, Islamic fundamentalists, who dreamed of restoring a religious caliphate, flew planes into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, killing thousands of innocent civilians in pursuit of that aim. Meanwhile, in Spain, Basque separatists employed similar tactics in their fight for the creation of a single Basque nation. Both used terror to create and exploit a climate of fear—a means of advancing political goals. Whether conservative or extreme leftist, radicals of every generation have often been willing to employ unconventional methods to achieve political objectives.

See also *Anarchism; Conservatism; Fundamentalism; Liberalism; Revolution; Terrorism, Middle East.*

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**RASTAFARIANISM.** See **Religion: African Diaspora.**

**RATIONAL CHOICE.** People constantly make choices or decisions in an uncertain world: should I buy life insurance, marry, change jobs? Rational decision making is an important topic in the social sciences, cognitive science, and philosophy, and for many years classical decision theory has dominated competing accounts of decision making.

**Classical Decision Theory**

Most of classical decision theory was developed over the first sixty years of the twentieth century. The theory focuses on instrumental rationality, that is, on reasoning about how agents can best achieve their desires in light of their beliefs. Decisions take place under three conditions: certainty (outcomes of actions are certain), risk (outcomes are not certain but their probabilities are known, as in some games of chance), and uncertainty (probabilities of outcomes are unknown). There are various ways of handling decision-making under uncertainty, but it is usually reduced to decision-making under risk by using the agent's subjective probabilities, and it will be the focus here.

Figure 1.

	Outbreak	No outbreak
Shot	No flu, sick one day	No flu, sick one day
No shot	Flu, sick for a week	No flu, not sick

SOURCE: Courtesy of the author

**Building blocks of the classical theory.** The following example is illustrative: Tom must decide whether to get a flu shot. Allergic to the vaccine, he realizes that getting the shot means he will be sick for a day. He also believes there may be an outbreak of flu that would make him very sick for a week.

**Actions, conditions, and outcomes.** Decision theory starts with three fundamental concepts:

1. **Actions.** These are the options an agent ponders (here getting a flu shot or not). Actions are often represented by rows in a table.
2. **Conditions.** These are how things turn out independently of actions (e.g., whether there is a flu outbreak or not). Conditions are represented by columns.
3. **Outcomes.** These are the states that result from actions under various conditions (e.g., getting sick for a day in the absence of a flu outbreak).

**Desires and beliefs.** Classical decision theory represents agents as having preferences over outcomes that capture their desires. For example, Tom prefers health to illness, and less illness to more. Preferences are mathematically represented by subjective utility functions, subject to certain constraints (e.g., the expected utility of one outcome is greater than that of a second only if the agent prefers the first to the second).  $U(A,S)$  is the utility of the outcome of action  $A$  in condition  $S$ . Many sets of numbers can reflect the same preferences, as long as the intervals among them reflect analogous relationships among intensities of desires.

Classical decision theory also represents agents as having degrees of belief about conditions. For example, Tom might believe that a flu outbreak is less likely than not. Degrees of belief are mathematically represented by subjective probability func-

Figure 2.

	Outbreak	No outbreak
Shot	(.4)(1)	(.6)(-1)
No shot	(.4)(-6)	(.6)(3)

SOURCE: Courtesy of the author



tions that specify how likely the agent thinks various outcomes would be.  $P(S|A)$  represents an agent's degree of belief that condition  $S$  will come about given that he performs action  $A$ . For example, Tom might surmise that  $P(\text{flu outbreak} | \text{shot})$  is 0.4. Probabilities are represented by the first member of a pair of numbers in a cell, and utilities by the second number in Figure 2 (which has a hypothetical set of numerical values).

**Expected utility.** The subjective expected utility of each action is the sum of products in each cell in the action's row.

- Shot (row one):  $(.4)(1) + (.6)(-1) = (.4) + (-.6) = -.2$
- No shot (row two):  $(.4)(-6) + (.6)(3) = (-2.4) + (1.8) = -.6$

Here the first action has a higher expected utility than the second (in symbols):  $EU(\text{shot}) > EU(\text{not shot})$ , and decision theory reveals that getting a shot is the rational thing to do. There is often a compromise between beliefs and desires; for example, it is frequently often more rational to do something likely to lead to a moderate payoff than to pursue a higher payoff with less chance of success.

There can be more than two actions or situations, and the general formula is:

$$EU(A) = \sum_i P(S|A) \times U(A, S_i)$$

The fundamental claim of decision theory is that a rational decision is one with the highest subjective expected utility (there may be more than one due to ties). And the centerpiece is a representation theorem proving that any agent whose beliefs and desires conform to certain plausible constraints (e.g., whose preference ranking is transitive) behaves as if she were maximizing expected utility.

**Interpretations of classical decision theory.** Some see utility maximization as a descriptive claim; people in fact behave pretty much as the theory says they should. Others see it as a normative claim: a rational person should choose a utility maximizing action.

### Descriptive Interpretations of Decision Theory

Descriptive interpretations of classical decision theory are supposed to provide (at least some) information about how people actually behave. These interpretations lie at the heart of modern economics and related social sciences.

**Arguments for descriptive interpretations.** Many arguments for descriptive interpretations of classical decision theory are based on the claim that the theory provides sound normative guidance, together with the view that human beings are pretty good at making decisions. Moreover, it is sometimes added, natural selection should favor creatures that are more rational than their dimmer conspecifics, so that bit by bit the human species has become more rational.

**Objections and replies.** One objection to empirical interpretations is that people simply cannot do what the classical

theory requires. People rarely have definite probabilities and utilities, and even if they did, their working memory and computational capacities are too limited to perform the required calculations (or even to run through processes that would allow them to behave as if they performed such calculations). Moreover, while natural selection may favor better reasoning over worse, there is little reason to suppose it could attune individuals to the subtleties of calculating expected utilities.

Another objection to empirical interpretations is that people behave in ways that are inconsistent with the classical theory. Every history book chronicles follies that are dreadful by the agents' own lights. Furthermore, decades of intense empirical investigation suggest that people simply do not act in the way descriptive decision theory says they do. For example, people's preferences are highly sensitive to how options are described, even where the theory says they should not be.

One response to these criticisms is that people sometimes have something close to definite utilities and probabilities and the relevant calculations are not always too demanding, so people are sometimes capable of maximizing utility. Another response is to scale back the claims made for decision theory. Many economists, for example, hold that it predicts well enough at the aggregate level, even if it only approximates individual behavior.

### Normative Interpretations of Decision Theory

Normative interpretations of classical decision theory are supposed to show how people should behave. A rational person, in this view, will take the action with the highest expected probability.

**Arguments for normative interpretations.** Many arguments for the claim that decision theory is a good normative model for decision making portray irrationality as self-subversion. If an agent violates the theory, he will, over the long run, act in ways that undermine his very own desires. For example, if someone's subjective probabilities do not conform to probability theory, he will be susceptible to "Dutch book" (a series of bets he is guaranteed to lose, no matter how things turn out).

**Objections and replies.** It has been pointed out that Dutch book arguments and their kin rely on unrealistic assumptions and that there are other ways to avoid self-subversion besides conforming to classical decision theory. There is also a problem suggested by difficulties that beset empirical interpretations. Utility maximization cannot be an appropriate prescription if one lacks the cognitive capacities to follow it. One reply to these criticisms is that even if researchers fall short of classical decision theory's guidelines, rationality requires that is necessary to get as close to them as possible.

Another criticism is that some of the principles of the classical theory do not make sense as normative guidelines. For instance, they would enjoin people to prefer a chance at something with a high payoff to a smaller guaranteed payoff where the former had a higher expected utility, but it often seems quite rational to prefer the sure thing. Cases like this are intended to

show that rationality does not always require utility maximization. Advocates of the classical account counter that intuitive “violations” of the theory often result from simplistic (mis)applications of its principles. These issues remain a matter of controversy.

### Extensions and Alternatives

There are various friendly amendments to classical decision theory; for example, there is now more focus on the role of causation in decision making and on plans and sequences of decisions. Other work involves larger departures. For example, some behavioral decision theorists argue that desires and beliefs are not captured by the classical account. Tversky’s and Kahneman’s prospect theory, the pioneer behavioral account, replaces utilities and probabilities with value functions and decision weights, both of which are constructed to capture the behavioral evidence. A competing approach, due to Gigerenzer and his coworkers, is based on “fast and frugal heuristics”; he holds that human behavior results from the application of a number of simple rules that are adapted to the situations people typically face and that this allows them to achieve good results with minimal use of computational resources. Alternative normative accounts of rationality have also been proposed, many of which demand less than do normative interpretations of the classical decision theory.

See also *Economics; Game Theory; Probability*.

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Chris Swoyer  
Stephen Ellis

**RATIONALISM.** In the final section of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Immanuel Kant distinguishes empiricism and rationalism:

In respect of the origin of the modes of “knowledge through pure reason,” the question is as to whether they are derived from experience, or whether in independence of experience they have their origin in reason. Aristotle may be regarded as the chief of the empiricists, and Plato as the chief of the noologists [rationalists]. Locke, who in modern times followed Aristotle, and Leibniz, who followed Plato . . . have not been able to bring this conflict to any definitive conclusion. [Kemp Smith, trans.]



***The School of Athens* (1510–1511) by Raphael.** In Raphael's fresco, Plato is pointing towards the heavens, indicating what he saw as the unchanging truths of knowledge, while Aristotle points downwards, symbolizing his belief that learning came from human experience. SCALA / ART RESOURCE, NY

Kant's vision of a conflict between empiricism and rationalism remains to this day the organizing principle for discussions of early modern metaphysics and epistemology. Kant may have overstated the extent to which there was a conflict between empiricists and rationalists: it has recently been suggested that both may be seen as pursuing the common project of defining the scope and limits of human knowledge. It has also been charged that the very distinction between empiricism and rationalism should be rejected. I believe that the distinction usefully captures certain defining features of early modern philosophy and that the terms *rationalism* and *empiricism* should be retained.

### Rationalism Defined

Kant's characterization of rationalism is generally accurate. One addition must be made. Like most early modern philosophers, the rationalists conceived of the human cognitive faculties as distinguished into the pure intellect, the senses, and the imagination. The pure intellect was the faculty that enabled human beings to gain knowledge. Rationalism may be defined as the view that substantive truths about the nature of reality may be

derived from the pure intellect alone, operating independently of the imagination and the senses.

### The Roots of Rationalism

It was by no means idiosyncratic for Kant to take Plato and Aristotle as prefiguring the opposition between rationalism and empiricism; this opposition is, for example, the organizing principle of Raphael's Vatican fresco *The School of Athens*. Plato points up, to the realm of Forms, the unchanging objects of the pure intellect; Aristotle points to the earth, thereby indicating the experiential origin of knowledge. Plato's commitment to the existence of unchanging truths, sharply contrasted with the variable images of the senses, marks him as the grandfather of early modern rationalism.

Approximately five hundred years later, Saint Augustine synthesized Plato's philosophy with the Christian religion in order to provide the latter a philosophical underpinning. Augustine found in Plato a remedy for the vagaries of sense experience that threatened the truth of Christianity; his work remained seminal for the early modern rationalists: Descartes, Leibniz, and Malebranche, believers all, explicitly hearkened



back to Augustine. Aristotle's work, however, held its importance for medieval philosophers. He became known as "the Philosopher," and his thought, especially as interpreted by Aquinas, became the official philosophy of Christianity.

### René Descartes

Descartes formulated his conception of philosophy in explicit opposition to the Scholastic Aristotelians' emphasis on sense-based experience. The *Meditations* are best understood as a series of cognitive exercises that train the meditator to discover truths about the world by the use of pure intellect, independent of the senses. Beginning by purging the self of intellectual preconceptions, by doubting all knowledge hitherto received through the senses, the meditator rebuilds knowledge, achieving clear and distinct ideas of the nature of the soul, God, and body.

The *Meditations* was not a complete system of philosophy; it only laid the foundation for Descartes's broader philosophical project. Descartes explains in a letter to his friend Marin Mersenne that "my little book on metaphysics contains all the foundations of my physics." The point of the *Meditations* was to reconceptualize the physical world as a realm of extension, governed by laws of motion, and therefore amenable to mathematical investigation. Descartes envisioned his physics very broadly, extending his view from celestial bodies to terrestrial bodies, the operations of animals, and the nature of the human being. He meant for his scientific project to culminate in the *Principles of Philosophy*, which remained unfinished, although the broad lines of Cartesian science may be derived from other works.

Although Descartes turned to philosophy (metaphysics) in order to ground science and thought that the only genuine knowledge that human beings could achieve derived from the intellect operating independently of the senses, he nevertheless retained an important place in science for the senses. General truths about body only specify the possible range of explanations of physical phenomena; in order to determine the particular explanations, one must appeal to sense experience. Cartesian rationalism remains limited to the most general truths about the universe.

### Benedict Spinoza

Spinoza is the only Jewish thinker among the rationalists. He was excommunicated from the Jewish community of Amsterdam, possibly on account of the heretical views that he held about the nature of God and the immortality of the soul, views later elaborated in his great systematic work, the *Ethics*. Spinoza's philosophical system is the purest example of rationalism.

Other rationalists remained committed to the truths of revealed religion; Spinoza maintains that the Bible does not contain the word of God, but is a work of men that serves the sociopolitical ends of establishing and securing the commonwealth. In his *Theological-Political Treatise*, Spinoza therefore argues that human beings should be free to hold whatever religious views they like, provided they do not upset the established civil order.

This work is a prolegomenon to the *Ethics*, where, on the basis of reason alone, Spinoza radically reconfigures traditional notions of God, nature, and morality. Rejecting all sensory inputs as mere "random experience" that do not reveal the nature of the world, he says there is only one substance, which he strikingly calls "God or nature." All existing things must be understood to be merely modifications of that single substance, not substances in their own right. One of the most provocative aspects of Spinoza's vision of the universe, which drew sustained criticism from his contemporaries, is his claim that all events are determined by God to occur. Indeed, he maintains, even God does not freely choose to create the world—this in sharp contrast to traditional views of God as creator—but is determined by his own nature to produce what exists in the world. This determinism renders the structure of nature intelligible to the human intellect.

By understanding the necessary and eternal order of the world, humans may come to understand both their place in the world and what they ought to do in the world. By achieving this understanding, they may achieve a kind of nontheological immortality. Their reason, which grasps the unchanging and eternal order of nature, enables them to achieve a kind of immortality as well.

### Nicolás Malebranche

Malebranche's philosophical system is a synthesis of Cartesian philosophy and Augustinian theology. In *The Search after Truth*, Malebranche seeks to remedy human ignorance by presenting the nature of the human mind and showing that it is only by heeding the perceptions of the pure intellect that human beings may achieve knowledge. In the course of elaborating this view, Malebranche develops his two most distinctive doctrines: the vision in God and occasionalism.

The vision in God is Malebranche's account of human knowledge of truths about the world. He claims that human beings may cognize general truths because they have access to those truths in God's mind; they must have access to truths in God's mind because general truths are eternal and infinite and therefore could not be contained in the finite human mind. Occasionalism is a general account of causation, according to which no finite being (whether a mind or a body) is the real cause of any change in the world. Malebranche maintains that a real causal connection must be one that is necessary; however, there is a necessary connection only between God's will and some effect. Consequently, apparent causes are merely occasions for the exercise of God's causal power in accordance with the natural laws constitutive of nature.

In the *Treatise on Nature and on Grace*, Malebranche deploys these doctrines in order to explain God's action in the created world. He seeks to show that the seeming imperfection of the natural world manifest in natural disasters and the birth of monsters, and the apparent inequality in God's distribution of grace, are merely apparent defects. Because God acts in accordance with general laws, and does not intervene directly to produce particular events, his action in the realms of nature and grace is essentially limited. Malebranche believes that God must act in accordance with general laws because if he were to intervene at



every moment in the world, he would not act in accordance with his own nature. Moreover, the world would thereby cease to be intelligible to human beings. Occasionalism, consequently, guarantees the intelligible order of the universe.

### Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz

Leibniz's philosophical system reflects an overarching commitment to the idea that there is a rational order to the universe that can be grasped by human minds. This commitment is manifest both in his more general epistemological and metaphysical views on display in works like the *Monadology* and in the philosophical theology contained in the *Theodicy*.

The foundation of Leibniz's philosophy is simple, soul-like substances, *monads*, which Leibniz believes are the only genuine substances in the universe. His argument rests on the claim that genuine substances must be simple, something he takes to be immediately evident to the human intellect. All other things—bodies, human beings, and animals—may be broken into their component parts; only minds are indivisible, and therefore only minds are substances.

Substantive metaphysical conclusions follow. Leibniz maintains that there may be no genuine causal interaction between substances, because genuine causal interaction would require that substances could be changed from without, thereby contravening their simplicity. Apparent changes are actually internal changes of substances. Because all changes are correlated with the states of all other monads, this "pre-established harmony" guarantees that apparent causal interactions will be grounded in actual changes in monads.

The idea of harmony lies at the heart of Leibniz's metaphysics. There is a preestablished harmony among the changes of substances; there is also a harmony between the order of nature and the order of grace, which ensures that the moral order will be realized. This point emerges clearly in Leibniz's claim that this is the best of all possible worlds. Here Leibniz seeks to defend God's goodness against the apparent visible evidence of all the evil in the world. According to Leibniz, this evil merely seems to tell against God's goodness. We know that God is a perfect being, and we know that a perfect being may act only in the best way. Consequently, the fact that God created this world reveals that it is the best of all possible worlds. The appearances that seem to tell against this are merely appearances, and we may therefore have confidence in the goodness and intelligibility of this world.

### The Destiny of Rationalism

Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* definitively limited the rationalists' pretensions to achieve knowledge of substantive truths by means of the intellect alone. Kant argues that knowledge is limited to the appearances presented to us by the senses; no extension of knowledge is possible to the "supersensible" or intelligible realm to which the rationalists, like Plato, purported to have access. Consequently, the rationalist belief in the capacity of the pure intellect to achieve knowledge of truths about the universe is revealed to be unfounded. Indeed, Kant's critique revealed that the rationalist commitment to pure intel-

lect that can operate independently of the senses was untenable. Moreover, recent developments in science further reveal that the rationalist conception of the world as an intelligible order was overstated. Nevertheless, the rationalist commitment to the power of reason remained alive for Kant, particularly in his practical philosophy. Rationalism encouraged women to use their own reason in philosophy: Princess Elizabeth of Bohemia and Damaris Masham directly engaged Descartes and Leibniz, respectively, in correspondence; Margaret Cavendish and Anne Conway worked out a rationalist paradigm. Finally, from a historical standpoint most significantly, rationalism inspired Enlightenment thinkers to trust in human abilities without reliance on divine illumination.

See also *Empiricism; Epistemology; Metaphysics*.

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Sean Greenberg

**READING.** The question “Who read what—and how?” is fundamental to intellectual history. No idea can have a history until someone reads it somewhere, and its impact on society will depend on the readings of individual readers. It was inevitable, then, that the historiography of ideas would turn toward the historiography of reading. That trend picked up momentum in the 1980s, when postmodern critics raised provocative theoretical questions about canon formation, the indeterminacy of texts, and the role of the reader in making meaning. Those critics, however, mostly failed to produce empirical studies of actual readers in history. That gap would be filled by scholars working in the emerging field of “book history,” taking their inspiration from Robert Darnton's 1986 manifesto “First Steps Toward a History of Reading.”

### How Historians Study Reading

How can the historian recover something so private, so evanescent as the inner experience of the reader? Darnton conceded that documentary evidence was hard to come by, but he did not consider the problem insurmountable. In fact, since 1986 innovative historians of reading have located and used a broad range of primary sources, including memoirs, diaries, personal correspondence, library borrowing registers, wills (which often list books owned), booksellers' ledgers, reports filed by book peddlers and salesmen, minutes kept by literary societies, authors' fan mail, oral interviews, sociological surveys, marginalia, and iconography (the portrayal of readers in medieval manuscripts can be remarkably illuminating). Especially for the nineteenth century, when many newspapers were largely reader-written, one can look to published letters to the editor (and, more revealing, letters that were never published). Exceptionally valuable are the records of inquisitors and secret policemen, who obligingly asked precisely the questions that intellectual historians want to ask—questions about how individuals select, obtain, interpret, share, and discuss books. In *The Cheese and the Worms*, Carlo Ginzburg used the proceedings of the Inquisition to investigate the reading habits of Menocchio, a sixteenth-century Italian miller.

Menocchio was a strikingly idiosyncratic reader. Somehow he acquired a vernacular Bible, Giovanni Boccaccio's (1313–1375) *Decameron*, travel books, and perhaps the Koran. From these texts he drew highly independent conclusions about metaphysics, religion, the origins of the universe, social equality, and the economic basis of the Catholic Church. This is

what Roger Chartier has called *appropriation*: the tendency of readers to interpret and adapt texts to serve their own interests and uses. Other historians of reading, along similar lines, make use of Erving Goffman's “frame analysis,” where a frame is defined as a set of interpretive ground rules adopted by the reader. Either approach recognizes reading as a creative act rather than the passive absorption of the author's intended message. Thus the general thrust of the historiography of reading has been very different from Frankfurt School, Marxist, semiotic, and feminist criticism, which tended to treat the common reader as the passive victim of mass culture, capitalism, or patriarchal discourses.

Historians of reading inevitably take into account the influence of race, class, and gender, but often with unexpected results. Female readers are more likely than male readers to choose and identify with female authors: that appears to be a broad tendency, which cuts across time and culture. But beyond that, most recent studies have revealed that men and women read less differently than many researchers imagined. In Victorian Britain prison inmates devoured sentimental fiction, while Kate Flint found middle-class women who were tackling philosophy, politics, and the hard sciences. In the fan letters received by middlebrow Canadian novelists, Clarence Karr discovered that men as well as women were moved to tears, and women as well as men were inspired to rational critical analysis. After a generation of critics dismissed the traditional literary canon as elitist, Jonathan Rose revealed a large and passionate audience for the classics among the British working classes, and Elizabeth McHenry recovered a tradition of African-American literary clubs that discussed established white authors as well as new black authors. Priya Joshi found that readers in colonial India enthusiastically embraced the English novel, though the novel as a genre was not indigenous to the subcontinent. This was not a matter of the colonized slavishly mimicking the colonizer: Indian readers selectively read novelists that resonated with them, including some (notably G. W. M. Reynolds) that metropolitan critics considered hopelessly trashy.

Some historians of reading, such as Carlo Ginzburg, intensively study the experiences of a single reader. Others reconstruct the literary life of entire communities, as Christine Pawley did for Osage, Iowa, in the 1890s, or as William J. Gilmore did for a corner of rural Vermont in the early American republic. Still others show how print communicates the information needed to negotiate urban life (see David M. Henkin's *City Reading: Written Words and Public Spaces in Antebellum New York* and Peter Fritzsche's *Reading Berlin 1900*). Historians of literacy once merely measured whether people could read; more recently David Vincent has explored the actual uses of reading skills in nineteenth-century England. Ronald Zboray explained how reading habits in antebellum America were transformed by a vibrant market economy, which called into existence new methods of printing, illumination, transportation, marketing, book distribution, and literacy education. On the other hand, Stephen Lovell has described the very different impact of a command economy on reading choices in the Soviet Union, explaining why it created an extraordinary demand for classic literature.

“Reception histories” track the critical responses to individual texts or authors, a method particularly useful for historians of ideas. James Secord’s *Victorian Sensation* treated the controversy surrounding Robert Chambers’s *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation*, a popular precursor of Charles Darwin’s *The Origin of Species*. John Rodden reconstructed the intellectual history of the Cold War through responses to George Orwell, showing how liberals, conservatives, neoconservatives, Marxists, social democrats, anarchists, New Leftists, Jews, Catholics, Germans, and Russians variously appropriated his work.

### Some Models

Many historians have used Jürgen Habermas’s (1929–) model of the “public sphere” to explain the dissemination of ideas among eighteenth-century readers. The vast body of research on this subject has been synthesized by James Van Horn Melton in *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe*. The general assumption behind these studies is that only Western societies with mature printing industries could develop true public spheres, but C. A. Bayly questions that. In *Empire and Information*, Bayly argues that eighteenth-century North India nurtured what he calls an *ecumene*, similar to what Habermas observed in Europe, except that it arose in a preprint culture. Relying on circulated manuscripts and oral performances, Indian readers were able to follow and participate in public debates about politics, religion, law, society, literature, history, and aesthetics.

In addition to borrowing historical models, historians of reading have invented some of their own. In 1974 Rolf Engelsing argued that a “reading revolution” (*Leserevolution*) swept through the North Atlantic world around 1800. This involved a threefold shift: from reading aloud to private reading, from predominantly religious reading to predominantly secular reading, and from “intensive reading” (close and repeated study of a few canonical texts, such as the Bible or *Pilgrim’s Progress*) to “extensive reading” (rapid and continuous consumption of a large intake of ephemeral texts, mainly newspapers, magazines, and novels).

Engelsing’s hypothesis is still widely debated. Though the shift to private reading clearly did take place, it has come to appear much more drawn out than he suggested. Cecile Jagodzinski contends that in England reading became more private during (and as a result of) the religious conflicts of the seventeenth century, and reading aloud was still common in working-class households as late as 1900. Nevertheless, it may be that the “reading revolution” may be treated as researchers have learned to treat the Industrial Revolution: as a rough generalization about a ragged and uneven process, a concept that has some usefulness as long as it is borne in mind that reading habits (like industrialization) evolved along different paths in different societies.

### But What Exactly Is Reading?

That question raises some intriguing anthropological issues. One could say that reading is retrieving information encoded by making marks on a material base, but that begs yet another question. As Germaine Warkentin has noted, some indigenous peoples of North America seem to have recorded

information on wampum belts, birch-bark scrolls, stone cliffs, and (among the Git’ksan of British Columbia) ceremonial cloaks. But linguists cannot read these texts (if indeed they are texts) as they might decipher and read Egyptian hieroglyphics, or the glyphs on a Mayan stela. In some cases they must be read—or, more accurately, performed—by an authorized member of the native nation. And different native “readers” may read different significances into the same inscription. One might conclude that a Git’ksan cloak is more like a work of abstract expressionist art than a document: it is supposed to be suggestive rather than precise. Yet a member of the Git’ksan nation will probably insist that the cloak is “written,” not “painted.” True, its meaning is radically indeterminate, but a generation of postmodern critics have argued that all texts are wide open to interpretation. Given all that, can one truly “read” a cloak?

One way of coping with this quandary is to go back to the original meaning of the word. Laurel Amtower makes the point that in Old English, *raedan* could refer to any kind of “interpretation and glossing of signs in a world in which all was text.” It might involve reading a *boc* (an Anglo-Saxon term that included all sorts of documents, not just books *per se*). But one could also read things that were not (strictly speaking) documents, for example “Ic raede swefn” (I read dreams) (Amtower, ch. 2). That wider meaning survives in colloquial English in the early twenty-first century, as in “How do you read this situation?” A new methodology, “audience history,” treats reading in that expansive sense, reconstructing (as far as possible) the entire cultural diet of a given group of individuals. Thus *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes* considers not only how workers read books, magazines, newspapers, and advertising bills, but also how they “read” films, radio programs, musical performances, and school lessons.

Broadly, then, the history of reading has become the history of interpretation. Historians have become all too aware of the epistemological questions they encounter whenever they try to make sense of texts, and some of them have concluded that the most fruitful approach to those questions is a historiography of reading, which asks how readers in the past made sense of texts. The importance of the subject is clear: wars have been fought over different readings of treaties, scriptures, and intelligence reports. If, as Erving Goffman put it, people are always “reading” the sensory data that showers in on them, always asking themselves “What is it that’s going on here?” then cultural historians must inevitably address “reading” widely defined.

*See also Education; Language, Linguistics, and Literacy; Literature; Oral Traditions.*

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Jonathan Rose

**REALISM.** Realism was a movement in nineteenth century Western culture that claimed to represent ordinary people and their everyday reality based on accurate observation. It challenged centuries of tradition when the highest art as-

pired to idealized pictorial forms and heroic subjects. Supporters considered its visual veracity to be an indication of an artist's "sincerity." Realism acquired a democratic political dimension from its inclusiveness and the accessibility of its imagery to ordinary people unversed in the classics but capable of recognizing "truth." Its moral appeal was informed by progressive attitudes and an empirical concept of knowledge. Social theory and scientific epistemology, as in the writings of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809–1865) and Auguste Comte (1798–1857), converged in what was called Positivism. The leader of artistic Realism was the French painter, Gustave Courbet (1819–1877). Its advent revolutionized the history of art.

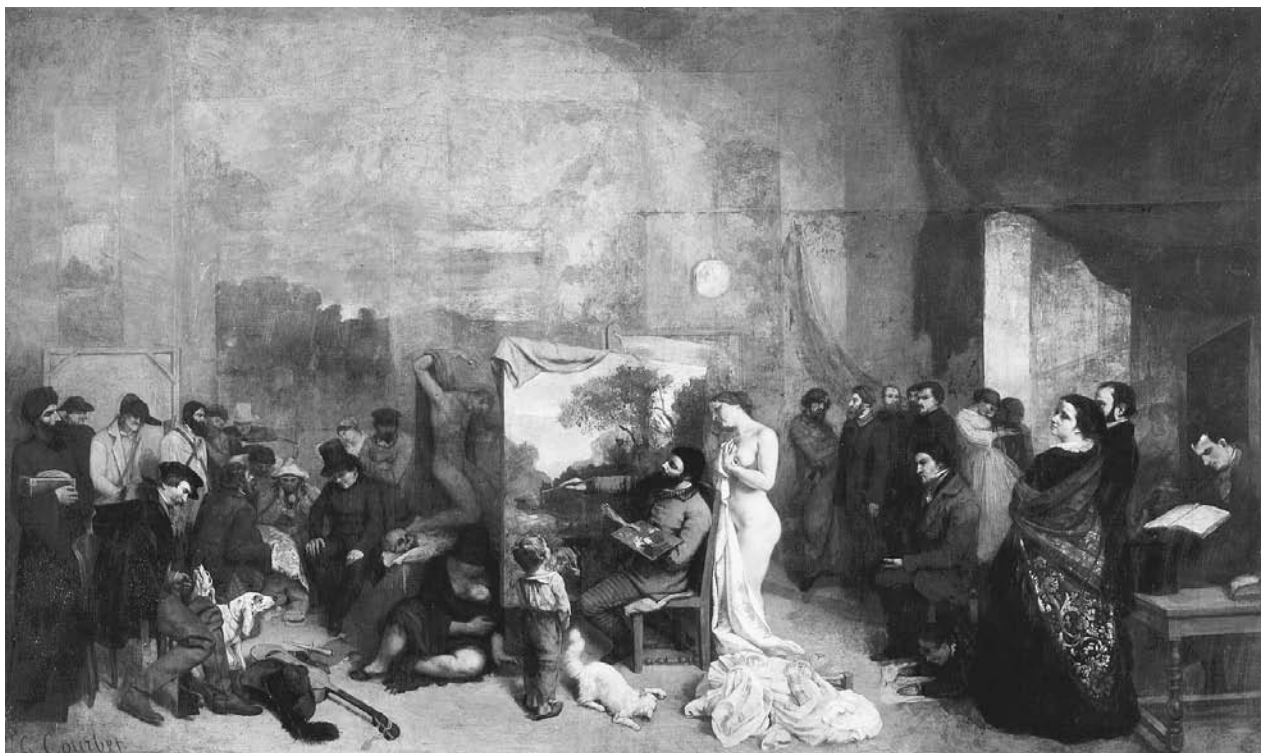
The artistic movement Realism must be distinguished from "realism"—the latter an aspect of most figurative art throughout time. In its general meaning, the word can refer to optical realism (in which forms or details are based on nature, as in Pre-Raphaelitism or Photo-Realism); psychological realism (in which sometimes distorted forms convey emotion, as in Expressionism); or illusionism (in which careful technique makes even imagined forms seem present, as in Surrealism). Realism paralleled the invention of photography in 1839, which introduced a new standard for optical realism while also being a technological response to the same conditions as artistic Realism. A later term, Naturalism, was developed as a more scientific-sounding, less politicized alternative by the novelist Emile Zola and the art critic Jules Castagnary.

Realism's most coherent artistic manifestation was in mid-nineteenth century France. It followed Romanticism, which encouraged artistic freedom and self-expression, looking to nature as their source. In his *Realist Manifesto*, Courbet stated his aim as: "to translate the customs, the ideas, the appearance of my epoch according to my own appreciation." Linking faithful portrayal of his times with artistic independence (from teachings based on imitations of classical art), he made both elements the basis for the movement of which he became the undisputed leader.

In the 1840s, Courbet's generation drew on two related artistic trends. First was the Barbizon School of landscape painters, who studied people and places from a recognizable countryside, usually near Paris. Second was the recent popularity in literature and art of provincial and rural life. As a contrast to urban materialism and its inequities, the virtues and innocence of country folk were extolled in novels by George Sand and stories by Courbet's friend Champfleury (Jules Husson). Painters such as the Leleux brothers and Jean-François Millet embodied this ethos in their representations of peasants. In addition, simple, often crude folk art and poetry were admired as naïve expressions of popular culture and the working class.

The difference between Courbet and these artists was that, beginning with his *Stonebreakers* (1849, Dresden, Kunstmuseum, destroyed, World War II), Courbet's people, places, and activities appeared specifically contemporary, devoid of anti-modern nostalgia, whereas his predecessors evoked a timelessness associated with Romantic innocence and virtue. Courbet's workers alluded to the harsh conditions of the 1840s, when





*The Painter's Studio: A Real Allegory of Seven Years of the Artist's Life* (1854–1855) by Gustave Courbet. Oil on canvas. Adherents of Realism, such as Courbet, stressed in their works the accurate representation of everyday reality as well as freedom from the constraints of classical art. MUSÉE D'ORSAY, PARIS. © THE ART ARCHIVE/DAGLI ORTI

failing harvests drove many off the land into day-wage labor. They were providing raw materials for modern infrastructure—roads, railroads, housing, and industry. Courbet's direction was encouraged by the left-wing Revolution of 1848, and thereafter his work was associated with Socialism.

*A Burial at Ornans* (Paris, Musée d'Orsay) painted in 1850, showed a ceremony outside Courbet's hometown in the region of Franche-Comté, near Switzerland. Against their rugged landscape, some thirty odd friends and neighbors gather at the open grave of a respected citizen. Courbet portrays death as a prosaic, literally "down-to-earth" event whose meaning goes no further than laying the body in the ground. Lacking the traditional apparatus of pictorial composition or religious interpretation, Courbet's picture would normally have been considered a genre painting—lower on the scale of values than academic history painting—his rows of mourners seemed merely additive rather than dramatically coherent, hence related to folk imagery. Yet the huge canvas with life-sized figures flaunted Courbet's challenge to assumptions about what was worthy of large-scale artistic representation, and his ostensibly coarse technique evoked a worker's handicraft. Both the *Stonebreakers* and the *Burial* earned Courbet heated criticism, making him a public figure and Realism a powerful force.

In 1855, Courbet challenged authority in a solo exhibition outside the grounds of the Universal Exposition of 1855. The

central painting in his "Realist Pavilion" was *The Painter's Studio* (Paris, Musée d'Orsay) in which he showed himself at the easel, supported by friends on the right and facing on the left a mix of figures embodying various ideas he considered outdated. The purpose of this much-interpreted painting was a declaration of artistic freedom, accompanied by the "Realist Manifesto," mentioned earlier.

Elsewhere, Courbet declared "Realism is the negation of the ideal" and that through it, he would "arrive at freedom." He saw Realism as a liberation of human consciousness from false ideology in order to take control of one's destiny. His ideas drew on the writings of his countryman and acquaintances, the radical philosopher Proudhon, who introduced materialist social thought to France in the 1840s, at the same time as Karl Marx's early writing.

Realism was associated with Impressionism when the latter first appeared, since Impressionism took up the commitment to modern life and contemporary surroundings. Edouard Manet was guided by these principles, although he looked to the example of Spanish realism and concentrated on urban leisure rather than rural labor. The young Claude Monet was friendly with and drew upon Courbet and his technique, as did several other Impressionists. But the greater legacy of Realism was to free artists to paint "sincerely,"—from their personal vision. Realism successfully undermined doctrinal academicism

by legitimizing images of modern life, heroic or anecdotal, rural or urban, and painted as the artist chose. Realism even entered sculpture, as in the work of Jules Dalou.

The response of establishment artists was to employ their labor toward a finished optical realism, as in Léon Bonnat, or to incorporate occasional free paint handling, as did Jules Bastien-Lepage. In other countries, Realism reinforced existing trends in genre painting, as in Holland (such as Jozef Israëls) and England. I Macchiaoli in Italy paralleled Realism and Impressionism, especially in outdoor scenes. Verismo in opera followed later. In Germany, where Courbet was popular, Realist images acquired a grander scale and avant-garde technique, as in William Leibl and Max Liebermann. The United States adopted Realism, as in Thomas Eakins, then Impressionism, as national styles, though usually without the avant-garde connotations. Later Realisms were often ostentatious, as in Richard Estes's displays of photograph-like technique, or Eric Fischl's Suburban Psycho-Realism.

Courbet's militancy during the Paris Commune led to exile in Switzerland, where he died. In an effort to rehabilitate him, writers even during his lifetime minimized Realism's politics in favor of an aesthetic of the sincere and natural eye. Around the mid-twentieth century, Meyer Schapiro and Linda Nochlin pointed out the historical origins of Realism, with its links to popular imagery and Dutch art implying its democratic cast. Nochlin's general book on Realism remains the standard. In the mid 1970s, Marxist art historian T. J. Clark's work on Courbet and his contemporaries faced the political issues directly, launching a revitalization in art history referred to as the Social History of Art. Since then, various noted scholars have sought to rehabilitate as Realists the many painters of contemporary life who were overshadowed by Courbet.

Whatever its manifestations, Realism continues to have a grip on consciousness thanks to its claim to represent "reality" more truthfully than other forms of art.

See also *Impressionism; Naturalism; Naturalism in Art and Literature; Periodization of the Arts.*

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James H. Rubin

**REALISM, AFRICA.** Realism in Africa is often expressed as a concern with the authentic and full representation of African cognitive, experiential, historical, and cultural reality, focusing on the fundamental nature of African identity as expressed in its thought, art and culture.

#### Realism in African Philosophy

In African philosophy, the very existence of such a discipline forms an important topic of discussion, as aptly captured in titles like Paulin Hountondji's *African Philosophy: Myth and Reality* (1983) and D. A. Masolo's *African Philosophy in Search of Identity* (1994). The central problem is whether there exists a separate discourse of philosophical reasoning that is specifically African. If at all it exists, what are its procedures? Can they be elaborated in a way that is distinctly African? Given that the term *philosophy* itself is a product of African cultural and historical contact with the West, does its adoption indicate the impossibility of such a discipline existing outside the symbolic order bequeathed to Africa by its colonial heritage? Various authors have taken different positions in the debate, with significant overlaps at times.

Some have challenged the very distinction between African and Western philosophy, contending that, since Egypt contributed substantially to the rise of Greek philosophy and, since Egypt—whatever the debate about the racial identity of its ancient inhabitants—is an African country, Africans should not be apologetic about the existence of an African philosophy—there has been an African philosophy for millennia. Others argue, that even without regard to the African origins of Western African philosophy, it can be amply demonstrated that there is a distinct African philosophy that is based on the elaboration of the traditional cosmology and belief systems of Africa. This is the position developed by John Mbiti, Alexis Kagame, and Placide Temple, for example. For V. Y Mudimbe in *The Invention of Africa* (1988), it is impossible to speak of Africa as if it were an unproblematic concept, since, as an idea it has been produced within the historical encounter with the West. Thus the very reality of Africa as a formation itself, let alone that of its philosophy, is under question or at least perceived as in need of clarification before being used as a secure ground for a pure and autonomous African reason.

Paulin Hountondji (b. 1942) considers Mbiti and others as practicing "ethnophilosophy" rather than professional philosophy. Hountondji argues that ethnophilosophy is characterized by the presupposition that the worldviews of African ethnic groups can be uncritically transposed into philosophical discourse. That is seen as a return to the colonial paternalistic view of African culture as separate and prelogical. He also maintains that such a transposition would be equivalent to Greek philosophers abstracting their philosophy from Greek cosmology, which is the very thing that the founding Greek philosophers deliberately refrained from in order to launch philosophy as a distinct secular, and for Hountondji, scientific discipline. (It should be noted that Louis Althusser [1918–1990] heavily influenced Hountondji's notion of science.) Henry Odera Oruka concedes that the kind of philosophy practiced by Mbiti and similar scholars is indeed a form of

ethno-philosophy. Oruka agrees with Hountondji and Kwasi Wiredu that African philosophy is what professional post-colonial African philosophers, or in his view, rationalist philosophers, who have been exposed to Western philosophy (such as they themselves) do, but he allows for the possibility of the existence of unlettered African sages in traditional society in the manner of Socrates in ancient Greece. In his view, ethnophilosophy presents traditional African society as one where individuality of outlook and thought is not only disallowed, but impossible, making the formation appear static rather than as dynamic and open to change as revealed by historical research. African society is shown as providing for the emergence and sustained presence of individual and critical consciousness rather as singularly engaged in promoting adherence to a consensual and collective view of reality. The African sage is thus capable of reflecting on the fundamental problems of philosophy such as the nature of reality. More radically, Oruka believes that philosophy does not need to be written down—it can be produced orally as in the case of the sages of Kenya he and his colleagues studied. Nevertheless, philosophical sagacity does not necessarily imply that African sages are the same breed as their Western-trained counterparts, but neither does it suggest that they are an utterly distinct species—they elaborate the first order of concepts whereas their university-trained counterparts grapple with both first and second order conceptualization. Like Oruka, Kwasi Wiredu accepts the validity of a traditional African philosophy, but he regards it as markedly distinct from postcolonial African philosophy. Wiredu observes, “There is a traditional African philosophy, and there is an emerging modern philosophy. A modern philosophy will appropriate whatever there is of value in [Western philosophy] and domesticate them and it will seek also to make contributions to them” (p. xi). Thus, Western problems of philosophy can still form the basis of African philosophical practice without compromising its capacity to promote the modernization of the continent as well as the advancement of philosophy as a global discipline, contributing simultaneously to the particular and the universal.

One general problem Wiredu investigates is the relationship between language and representation. Focusing on the Akan language group of Ghana, he examines the difference between logical and mystical statements and concludes that the two differ fundamentally in their adherence to the law of consistency. Whereas the former abide by the principle of non-contradiction, the latter follow that of contradiction. Nevertheless, the contrast between the two forms of statements does not correspond to the differences between African and Western society. Both societies have their fair share of the both logical and mystical statements. Wiredu shows how the Akan respect the law of noncontradiction in the domain of knowledge, but will accept its nonobservance in the sphere of mystical articulation. This leads him to conclude that fundamental structures of language are not necessarily a reflection of the culture of a given society, but of universal logical structures. It is with this in mind that Wiredu cautions against the argument for the uniqueness of African philosophy in terms of its focus, for in the end, its distinctiveness is less a matter of its object of knowledge, but more of the cultural and environmental location of the philosopher. Location may deflect the

philosopher’s view of universal problems of philosophy, but does not thereby consign his or her observations to the status of the mystical utterings of the sage of an ethnic group. Thus, the philosophical study of African languages reveals fundamental universal laws rather than those of a particular language, undermining the perception that language is simply a reflection of a given ethnic cosmology. For him what makes translation possible between languages is the universality of their underlying logical structures, observing, “unless different languages share basically the same logic, it would be impossible to translate one into another” (Oruka, *Trends*, 1990, pp. 149–148). More research on the general laws of African languages has been conducted by theoretical linguists, some of whom have used Noam Chomsky’s (b. 1928) notions of transformational generative grammar and universal language as well as H. P. Grice’s pragmatics to study African languages. While this research represents a serious advance on the early studies of African languages, especially in its examination of the general laws of meaning in the languages, its theoretical categories are borrowed from Western linguistics without much concern with the underlying compatibility between African culture and Western knowledge. This lack of concern exhibits the universalism of the rationalist school of African philosophy. Literary and cultural critics such as Ngugi wa Thiong’o (b. 1938), as shall be discussed later, are much more sensitive to the ethnocentricity of what passes off as objective universal philosophical categories and consequently emphasize the political character of language and its use.

The classic problem of appearance and reality has also been examined in African philosophy. Wiredu, for instance, locates it within a commonsense view that is modulated by his dual subject position within the Western philosophical tradition and the contemporary African experience, which is a hybrid of traditional African cosmology, such as the Akan worldview, and Western modernity. From this perspective, in the debate between, on the one hand, the idealists such as George Berkeley (1685–1753) and Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) who believe that reality is a function of perception, and, on the other, the empiricists or phenomenologists, such as John Stuart Mill (1806–1873), who believe that there is a reality that is independent of perception, Wiredu steers a middle course, formulated as “to be is to be apprehended,” rather than “to be perceived,” as Berkeley had asserted. Wiredu contends “it is the existence of an object not the object itself that consists in being known” (p. 132). He sees his reformulation of the old problem of the argument from illusion as restoring the “cognitive relation to [the perceiver’s] relation to reality.” That is what underpins Wiredu’s theory of knowledge, summarized as “truth is nothing but Opinion” (p. 123). Oruka has criticized its implicit relativism, proposing instead the restatement “Truth is nothing but belief” (*Trends*, 1990). Nevertheless, according to Wiredu, the principal strength of his theory is that it enables the grounding of the validity of African philosophy in philosophical logic rather than the politics of identity and anti-imperialism, since African philosophical opinion is now a matter of a general law of perception and epistemology.



What is equally noticeable is the proximity of Wiredu's view to the idea that "Existence precedes essence" propounded by existentialists such as Jean-Paul Sartre (1905–1980). Ironically, this also brings Wiredu to the more radical view of African philosophy advanced by the younger generation of African philosophers, especially those of the Marxist-existentialist persuasion who regard the study of "being in the world," the contingent African contemporary world, as the primary object of African philosophical practice. As Tsenay Serequeberhan argues, "African philosophy is a historically engaged and politically committed explorative reflection on the African situation aimed at the political empowerment of the African people" (1990, p. xxi). Here, African reality is transformed into a politicized space, whereby the concerns of philosophy are not only the pursuit of abstract truth, but also the transformation of that reality. African philosophers, as much as literary and cultural critics, have been profoundly influenced by Karl Marx's (1818–1883) view that philosophers have hitherto merely interpreted the world, but the aim must be to change it.

This strand of philosophy is part of a broad Marxist approach to African culture, history, politics, and literature. Its presence within African philosophy has enabled the discipline to extend its object of analysis to the work of politicians such as Kwame Nkrumah (1909–1972), Amílcar Cabral (1924–1973), Sekou Toure (1922–1984), and Julius Nyerere (1922–1999); and of cultural and political theorists such as Franz Fanon (1925–1961), as well as that of African writers and artists.

### Reality in African Aesthetics and Literary Criticism

One of the concerns of aesthetics has been the refutation of the colonialist definition of African aesthetics. A particular area of debate has been the negative assessment of African art, such as the claim that the category of realism does not apply to African art. William Abraham argues, "When critics like Gombrich say that the African artists were incapable of realistic representation, they quite miss the point of African art. If they seek life-like representation, they should turn to secular art, the art which was produced for decorative purposes or the purposes of records, rather than moral art, the art whose inspiration is the intuition of a world force" (p. 113). Ernst Gombrich (1909–2001) had only looked at one particular African art form, and proceeded to make inferences about the general character of African art. Abraham observes, "The Ashanti wooden maidens, which epitomise epitomize the Ashanti ideal of female beauty . . . were reasonably life-like." (p. 111), thus demonstrating that African art is both realistic and figurative, depending on its specific social function. Abraham's broad concern is to show African culture, including African art, as expressions of an essential African cosmology. For that reason, despite being a pioneer of professional or rationalist African philosophy, he is nevertheless classified as an ethnophilosopher (Oruka, 1990, p. 151).

Yet, Abraham's position is typical of African aestheticians whose objective is mainly to elaborate the general aesthetic laws of African art. This effort has been significantly extended in what is known as Black Aesthetics, a movement rooted in the 1960s anticolonial movements in Africa and the civil rights

struggles in the United States. The work of diasporic scholars, such as Addison Gayle's *The Black Aesthetic* (1972), was vital to the process of defining African aesthetics, as it offered a set of clearly defined theoretical tools for the analysis of black arts for their distinctive aesthetic qualities. According to Oruka Black Aesthetics is bound up with the black person's awareness of a negating social reality and his/her attempt to negate that reality by means of a counter-reality, that of the values of black people. The operative assumption is that in a racialized world, literary and other artistic norms and values themselves bear the stamp of racial ideology and cannot be applied uncritically to works of art produced by a people who are denigrated within that social and political formation. Thus the aim is to found a set of aesthetic principles which will do justice to the quality of Black works, and then use such principles and artistic works to foster a collective Pan-African consciousness. It is in this instance that the slogan "Black is beautiful" emerges. The quest achieves its most prominent public emblematic form in the FESTAC festivals (Black and African Festival of African Arts and Culture). Marxist critics such as Onafume Onoge view this movement as flawed since all it does is substitute race for class analysis without addressing the complexity of the real power relations of postcolonial societies.

Largely, this quest for an essential Pan-African culture is what animates one of the earliest and most persistent cultural movements of the twentieth century. Negritude, begun in the 1930s in France by Léopold Sédar Senghor (1906–2001) and Aimé Césaire (b. 1913), among others, sought to define and represent the essential core of African values as embodied in African spirituality and experience. In Senghor's case, this took the form of a preoccupation with the representation of the ancestral presence in literature and a positive revalorization of black identity. Additionally, for Senghor, African art is conceived as inherently committed because it is intrinsically social and communal, as opposed to the individualism of European art. Senghor is also famously quoted as having proclaimed "Emotion is [Black], as reason is Greek." Clearly, Senghor's is an affective mimesis.

This view has not gone down well within the community of African scholars. As for the rationalist philosophers, with their commitment to the idea of reason as universal, negritude is seen as a fundamentally unphilosophical characterization of both African and Western reason. Oruka regards what he describes as "Negritude's mythological consciousness" as a phase in the development of a colonized consciousness toward a more liberated postcolonial consciousness of a different and better reality. Marxist critics too dismiss Senghor's negritude as staging a bourgeois reification of the real conditions of postcolonial existence, describing it as a mystical affirmation of African identity that transposes the real into a cultural collective that offers little possibility of fundamental change in the social and political order. Onoge contrasts Senghor with Aimé Césaire whom he commends for offering a more radical version of negritude, one that is predicated on a revolutionary affirmation that goes beyond the validation of the integrity of African culture. For Wole Soyinka (b. 1934), negritude's major weakness is that it articulates rather than enacts its radical identity. As Soyinka says, "A tiger does not pronounce its tigritude, it pounces" (Feuser, p. 559).



Its influence is evident in the whole ideology of Black Consciousness and in particular in some of the radical attempts to produce anticolonial African aesthetics such as that of the self-proclaimed Bolekaja critics, Chinweizu, Onwuchekwa Jemie, and Ihechukwu Madubuike. They are particularly concerned with the dominance of what they term Euro-Modernism in African writing and criticism. They cite what they call the Ibadan school of writing, Wole Soyinka and Christopher Okigbo included, as the arch progenitor of this tendency. Soyinka retorted by describing them as Neo-Tazarnists, that is, critics who are bent on disseminating neo-primitivist ideas about the nature of contemporary African reality. However, Soyinka's commitment to developing a distinct African aesthetic is one of the most ambitious among African writers. He produces a cosmological aesthetic from his reading of Yoruba culture mediated by Friedrich Nietzsche's conception of Greek mythology in *Birth of Tragedy*, fashioning his own theory of tragedy that is both hybrid and authentically African. According to Soyinka, Yoruba art is both mimetic and transformative of the structure of traditional Yoruba cosmology. Furthermore, he argues that African reality can be best understood as a simultaneous inhabitation of the world of the living and the dead as well as the present and the past. It is the tension between all these coordinates that is the primary object of mimesis for African art, but in a way that turns the artwork itself into an active formative agency of the very reality it imitates. Thus, Soyinka's theory of mimesis works with a more complex idea of reality than we are offered in the founding text of mimetic theory, Aristotle's *Poetics*. On the whole, though, he encapsulates both the ethnophilosophic and rationalist traditions of African philosophy.

Ngugi's *Decolonising the African Mind* (1986) is another major attempt at grounding African literature and culture in the historical worldview of Africa, in the belief that the only way this can be done effectively is by producing literature in African languages instead of the received colonial languages. Ngugi argues that language is bound up with a people's being; it "is a carrier of the history and culture of a [given community], . . . a collective memory bank of a people (1993, p. 15). Ngugi uses the reflectionist view of language, seeing it as a mirror of a people's belief system. In light of this, he can be placed squarely within the Afrocentric camp, but perhaps not so easily within that of the ethnophilosophers.

In literary criticism, indeed in cultural theory generally, the term *realism* is usually employed to describe a concern with the way in which literary and artistic representation reflects African reality. Here the fictional universe is judged in relation to its verisimilitude or *vraisemblance* to the actual world. Thus, the application of the concept is not dissimilar to the way it is understood and used in the European critical tradition. This is a result of the very particular history of African critical and cultural criticism. African criticism has, like post-colonial African philosophy, developed within the terms of Western theory. There have been calls for a distinctly African critical language and some serious attempts have been made in this regard, for instance, Wole Soyinka's cosmological aesthetic and Henry Louis Gate's African-American vernacular theory. However, for the most part, like their counterparts in

philosophy, African writers and critics see their primary task as that of using all available meta-languages to illuminate the fundamental character of African cultural and artistic production, but in a way that adapts these various conceptual tools to the particular conditions of African reality.

Chinua Achebe's fiction is regarded as the supreme example of African literary realism, especially his novel *Things Fall Apart* (1958). Achebe's fiction can also be described as historical realism, especially when he seeks to recover the African past from its suppression in colonial discourse. He describes himself as practicing "applied art," suggesting that realism is also a politically committed and transformative form as opposed to the tradition of "art for art's sake." For Abiola Irele, it is this concern with historical and sociological reality that makes African literature a more accurate and comprehensive account of contemporary African reality than sociological or political documents. However, some critics such as Dan Izebaye see that as the very fault of contemporary African writing, with its emphasis on the social function of literature constricting its formal possibilities. Izebaye hopes that "as the literature becomes less preoccupied with social or national problems and more concerned with the problems of men as individuals in an African society, the considerations which influence critical judgement will be more human and literary than social ones" (Haywood, p. 30) Izebaye is perhaps the closest to a universalist Platonic idealism in African literary criticism and aesthetics. His concept of humanity seems to be based on a transcendence of the experiential and the contingent.

According to Onoge, realism in African literature can be further subdivided into critical realism and socialist realism. The first, which is evident in the work of Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, and a host of other African writers, is principally characterized by an accurate description of the condition of modern Africa, but without proffering a clear solution to the problems identified. However, the latter takes the socialist transformation of the continent as a matter of historical and political necessity and as the only way in which the legacy of colonial and imperial capitalism and their neocolonial manifestations can be eradicated in order to create an alternative political and economic formation. Writers such as Sembene Ousmane, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, and Femi Osofisan are exemplars of socialist realism. Georg Gugelberger advises against using the term, given its negative connotations arising out of its association with the propagandist writing produced in the 1930s in the Soviet Union. He suggests that Amiri Baraka's more radical concept, populist modernism, be adopted instead to describe progressive African literature. In his view, the word *populist* has an additional advantage, for instance, unlike *socialist*, it cancels the artificial contradiction between Marxism and modernism that has beset mainstream Marxism. Deconstructive critics such as Kwame Appiah argue that realism is the artistic expression of African nationalist ideology and is thus complicit with nationalism's superficial resolution of the underlying difficulties facing Africa. It no longer functions subversively—for that, one should turn to what he defines as postrealist or postnativist writing such as Yambo Oueloguem's *Le Devoir de Violence*, texts that interrogate the nationalist's imaginary and portray it as merely a reversal of the very race-

centered European ideology it set out to dislodge. This kind of writing is similar to postmodernist writing, questioning established totalizing narratives and their regimes of truth.

What Appiah describes as postrealist is also part of the general trend referred to broadly as nonrealist modes of representation, but more specifically as magical realism, the best example of which is Ben Okri's *The Famished Road* (1990). This type of writing, like its Latin American counterpart, involves the deliberate violation of the conventions of realism, for instance the transgression of the boundary between the real and the fantastic. Some critics feel uncomfortable about this label as it suggests African writing imitating alien forms. Other argue that the worldview depicted in such texts is inherent in the contemporary African Weltanschauung in which the elements of traditional African culture coexist with those of modernity. It is as a way of emphasizing the indigeneity of the form that Harry Garuba substitutes it with the term animist realism.

As can be seen, the concept of realism is used diversely in African philosophical and cultural practice. It is used in its traditional sense as a concern with art as a mirror of reality, but also in relation to the requirement for epistemological, cultural, and representational authenticity. It is noteworthy that the term realism is applied to a variety of realities and to different methods of representing the real. Even deconstructionists ultimately cannot avoid employing the traditional meaning of the word, of connoting the degree of representativeness or accuracy of artistic as well as philosophical and critical practice. What is also significant is that the philosophical attempt to define the real and realism often overflows the rather rigid categories set up by the African rationalist philosophers, proving that their concepts, rigorously defined as they are, cannot themselves fully represent the diversity of intellectual reflections on realism in Africa in the early twenty-first century. Perhaps even universal philosophy is particular after all.

See also *Black Consciousness; Negritude; Pan-Africanism; Philosophies: African; Postmodernism; Sage Philosophy.*

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Mpalive-Hangson Msiska

**REASON, PRACTICAL AND THEORETICAL.** Aristotle relates that Socrates brought philosophy down from the heavens and into the cities of humans. More prosaically, Socrates invented the problem of practical reason by asking whether reasoning could guide action, and, raising the stakes, whether a life devoted to reasoning could be the best way to live. Aristotle closes the *Ethics* by ridiculing a too-close connection between reasoning and virtuous action and character. He notes, as Socrates had done, that those who are regarded as virtuous do not teach virtue, and those who pretend to teach it, do not possess it. Can reasoning guide action?

#### Definitions and Relationships

Theoretical reason tries to assess the way things are. Practical reason decides how the world should be and what individuals should do. A theoretical proposition is good if it conforms to reality, while a practical proposition has more complicated and

debatable standards, (For the idea of “direction of fit” see John Searle’s 1983 *Intentionality*.) While practical reason decides what to do, it cannot remake reality any way it likes. The successful practical agent must take into account truths about the world. Some have inferred from this that practical reason consists largely (or entirely) in using such knowledge for practical purposes. Similarly, while theoretical reason tries to conform to the world, its proceedings are influenced by the practical needs of inquirers. Some have concluded from this that theoretical reason is the specification of the norms of practical reason to the practical project of theoretical inquiry. How individuals ought to believe is then a practical question.

Some of the interest in practical reason comes from trying to understand its failures. Theoretical irrationality is simply a mistake. But practical irrationality may invite more detailed explanations than theoretical irrationalities, because there is more to explain. (The most influential modern discussion of weakness of will is in Donald Davidson’s 1980 “How Is Weakness of the Will Possible?” For Aristotle on *akrasia*—literally “without power over oneself,” but often translated as weakness of will—see Dahl.)

Formally, there are four possible relations between theoretical and practical reason. Penetrating philosophers cannot always be so easily categorized, but these possibilities set the agenda for philosophers trying to understand the relation between theoretical and practical reason.

First, in Plato’s representation of Socrates, theoretical and practical reasoning are only superficially distinct. Truth and goodness are convertible, as are the modes of reasoning that lead to apprehension of truth and goodness. To know the good is to desire it. The good life is the philosophical life, characterized not by knowledge but by eros. Anyone who fully understands the good must try to achieve it; no one can know the better, yet choose the worse. Vice is a practical form of ignorance.

Second, theoretical reasoning is a form of practice, judged by practical standards of effectiveness, appropriateness, and productivity. This position has reappeared in history under different names—sophism among the Greeks, humanism in the Renaissance, and now pragmatism and anti-foundationalism. The myth of Prometheus that Protagoras recounts to Socrates in Plato’s *Protagoras* sees that the only difference between the knowledge of justice and piety and the knowledge embodied in the arts is that practical reason is universally distributed, while the arts are more specialized. Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) and Giambattista Vico (1668–1744) stress, in different ways, that one can only know what one has made. Theory is a moment in practice, sometimes a means of avoiding action and sometimes a means of domination. Theoretical reasoning is what happens to practical reasoning when one temporarily abstracts from the usual conditions of practical decision—limited information, time constraints, a need to be responsive to desires and opinions, even those that are not well-grounded. Max Weber’s essay, “The Profession and Vocation of Politics,” can be taken as an exemplar of this version of theory and practice. Practical reasoning, for Weber, requires a distinction between an ethics of conviction—which too closely mirrors

theoretical reasoning—and an ethics of responsibility. If the virtuous do not teach virtue, maybe the fault lies in their teaching ability, not in their virtue. If reason does not always rule, maybe it shouldn’t—maybe the competing claims of tradition or emotion should prevail.

Third, practical reason is the application of theoretical reasoning and its conclusions to concrete, practical situations. Even theoretical reasoning needs practical judgment to reach definite conclusions. Practical reasoning is instrumental, calculating how to achieve an end that is not itself rationally determined. To be practically rational is intelligently to pursue one’s interest. “Reason is, and ought only to be, the slave of the passions” (Hume, p. 415), and it is not irrational to “prefer the destruction of the whole world to the scratching of my finger” (p. 416). If reason is a slave of the passions, then practical reasoning is simply the name for reasoning that concerns itself with desires and the means of satisfying them. Practical reasoning does not differ from theoretical reasoning except in content: it is reasoning that is about preferences, desires, obstacles, and resources. If good people do not teach virtue, it is simply because they choose not to pass on their cleverness; virtue is taught by conditioning or persuading people to desire and take pleasure in the right things. This conception of the relation of theoretical to practical reason can argue that it is only through progress in the sciences that the emergence of democracy and human freedom can take place. The more one can calculate, the less one has to argue. But there is a problem within this line of thought. Without objective ends, goals are not rationally justified. Therefore, only means are justified and rational. But only ends motivate. This leaves a gap between justification and motivation. Sensing that gap, Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) sets a new problem for practical reason when he asks how a free act of will can create obligations: what motivation could a free being have for entering a world in which he must justify what he does?

Finally, practical and theoretical reasoning are distinct forms of reasoning. Science and practical wisdom are irreducible to each other, and each, in its own sphere, gives orders to the other. In Aristotle, politics decides which sciences are studied but metaphysics determines truths according to which practice operates. Political science “prescribes which of the sciences ought to be studied in cities” (*Ethics*, I.2). “Phronesis is not in authority over wisdom or the better part of the intellect, any more than medical science is in authority over health. Medical science does not control health, but studies how to procure it; hence it issues orders in the interests of health, but not to health” (*Ethics*, VI.13). Aristotle also takes up Socrates’ challenge that knowing the better yet choosing the worse is impossible, and provides (*Ethics*, VII) logical and physical explanations for *akrasia*.

Aristotle argues that practical reasoning infers in the opposite direction from both theoretical reasoning and the deliberation involved in productive activity. In the arts, barring chance, the inference from product to artist is secure: looking at a painting can tell the observer if it was skillfully produced, while courageous or just acts do not always indicate the presence of a virtuous agent. On the other hand, a virtuous per-



son can be counted on to act virtuously; the virtuous person, unlike the artist, cannot say, “I could have acted virtuously but I didn’t want to.” The virtues are not rational in that way.

Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), too, sees both theoretical and practical reason as supreme, each in their own way. He states that everything acts according to laws, but “only a rational being has the capacity of acting according to the conception of laws, that is, according to principles” (*Critique of Pure Reason*, G412). Practical reason understands laws of freedom. In Kant, theoretical reason has priority because it can have knowledge where practical reason merely has conviction and belief. At the same time, practical reason has priority because the knowledge of theoretical reason is only knowledge of phenomena—how things appear to us—while practical reason orients itself to things as they really are. Moreover, even theoretical reason depends on practical reason, since Kant insists that “reason has no dictatorial authority; its verdict is always simply the agreement of free citizens” (A738–9/B766–67).

Kant’s “critical philosophy” asks how both theoretical and practical reason are possible. It takes for granted the existence and successful operations of theoretical reason in the sciences, and thus the *Critique* asks for the conditions that could justify this use of reason. At the same time, the *Critique* exposes as empty the claims of theoretical reason to transcend the empirical conditions that make scientific knowledge possible. The situation for practical reason is different. It cannot take some existing practices of practical reason as data to be explained. It is only by transcending the empirical conditions that limit practical reason to an instrumental role that one discovers, in pure practical reason, the legitimate moral employment of rationality. It is known that desires cause actions. Kant asks whether reason can lead to action on its own, and not only concludes that it can, but argues that actions caused by reason alone are identical with morally good acts.

For a final example, John Stuart Mill begins *Utilitarianism* (1863) by noticing this difference between theoretical and practical reasoning: “Though in science the particular truths precede the general theory, the contrary might be expected to be the case with a practical art, such as morals or legislation. All action is for the sake of some end, and rules of action, it seems natural to suppose, must take their whole character and color from the end to which they are subservient. When we engage in a pursuit, a clear and precise conception of what we are pursuing would seem to be the first thing we need, instead of the last we are to look forward to” (Ch. 1, para. 2).

### Investigations of the Types of Reason

In the early twenty-first century, there are three sets of problems concerning practical reason: one that mostly relies on Aristotelian resources, a second that bases its inquiries on Kantian problems and texts, and a final group that derives from Machiavelli and Hobbes. The Aristotelian branch of the problem seeks to revive notions of phronesis, prudence, or practical wisdom by showing how practical rationality is not reducible to theory or to instrumental reasoning. Aristotelian practical reason is concerned with the virtues of practical reason, and their rela-

tion to the virtues of character. It looks to knowledge of particulars, rationality that does not exclude emotion. It tries to interpret Aristotle’s enigmatic sentence: “Thought by itself moves nothing, but only thought directed to an end, and dealing with action” (*Ethics*, VI.2.1139b1). Practical reason here is substantive, and therefore the challenge is in seeing whether it is not confined to codifying what the supposedly virtuous person already embodies, and therefore whether it is not parochial. Much of the Aristotelian revival tries to use Aristotle to confront problems beyond the scope of his original concerns. It seeks to overturn the modern distinction between moral and prudential reasoning. It asks whether, and how, practical reason can maintain its autonomy in the face of the increased domination of scientific reasoning in our lives, and without the strong practical conditions Aristotle imputed to the polis, such as confidence that ordinary political judgments were reliable enough that moral reasoning can defer to the ultimate authority of the person of practical wisdom. (Seminal here is Alasdair MacIntyre’s 1984 *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*. See also Eugene Garver’s *Aristotle’s Rhetoric: An Art of Character* [1994] and *For the Sake of Argument: Practical Reasoning, Character, and the Ethics of Belief* [2004].)

The different ways Kant poses the question of critical philosophy for theory and practice reflects the success of science. The scientific revolutions of the seventeenth century apparently made progress by changing the idea of theoretical reason from a substantive one, in which scientific reasoning succeeded by tracking or imitating the rational structure of the universe, to a procedural one, in which something new, called the “scientific method,” succeeded just because its neutrality and purity allowed it fairly to interrogate nature. After such progress, practical reason, too, was tempted to become procedural. Therefore, the Kantian side of the current investigation of practical reason instead asks how reasoning can transfer motivation from an initial desire along the chains of reasoning to a conclusion about what to do.

The Kantian investigation of practical reason asks not about virtues but capacities and possibilities. “A practically rational person is not merely capable of performing certain rational mental operations, but capable also of transmitting motive force, so to speak, along the paths laid out by those operations” (Korsgaard, p. 320). Corresponding to skepticism about theoretical reason, the Kantian inquiry asks whether all the motivating force of reasoning must come from an irrational source, or whether practical reasoning can itself be motivating. Practical reason here is procedural, and so from the beginning the challenge to Kantian practical reason is whether it can give specific guidance. The analogy to logic is clear. If logic is pure procedure, it can detect fallacies and justify inferences, but it cannot generate truths of its own. Can practical reason tell one anything one does not already know by desire or other sources of ends?

Even before the scientific revolutions of the seventeenth century, philosophers had to change the terms in which they thought about practical reason because of the earlier revolution, instituted most dramatically by Machiavelli and Hobbes, of separating ethics from politics and therefore the practical



reasoning of the individual moral agent and of the state or the politician. Unfortunately, the separation of ethics from politics has resulted in these three research programs concerning practical reason having little communication among them. The Kantian, and most of the Aristotelian, explorations of practical reason concentrate only on the practical reasoning of the individual moral agent. There is a rich but distinct literature concerned with how individuals can, or cannot, coordinate their choices and actions through such research programs as game theory. Finally, problems of “dirty hands” and the relation between political morality and “real” or individual morality form a research program of their own.

In Isaiah Berlin’s influential formulation, Machiavelli inaugurates a new era in practical reason by denying the existence of a single highest good, claiming instead that not all good things can coexist. Regardless of whether Berlin’s account accurately describes Machiavelli, it rings true as a description of the contemporary predicament of practical reason. Toleration and compromise head the agenda for practical reason. Stoics once wondered whether someone could be happy on the rack; the readers of modern philosophy ask instead whether happiness is possible in the face of abundance.

*See also Aristotelianism; Language, Philosophy of; Modern; Moral Sense; Philosophy; Platonism.*

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**REBELLION.** *See Resistance.*

**RECAPITULATION.** *See Development.*

**RECIPROCITY.** *See Gift, The.*

**REFLEXIVITY.** Reflexivity first entered into anthropological discourse in the late 1970s in response to several problematics that had emerged in the previous decade, but its use in the humanities and in sociology has a longer history. In the words of Barbara Myerhoff and Jay Ruby, two of its advocates, reflexivity “describes the capacity of any system of signification to turn back on itself, to make itself its own object by referring to itself” (p. 2). In the fields of literature, theater, and film, the term is used to describe formal devices by which cultural artifacts call attention to their own production. In the early twentieth century, reflexivity (also known as self-reflexivity, metaliterature, or metatheater) was particularly associated with experimental attempts to undermine the realist conventions of mainstream productions by inserting films (or film production) within films, having literary characters address their readers, and so on. Important early examples would include the work of Samuel Beckett (1906–1989), Luigi Pirandello’s (1867–1936) *Six Characters in Search of an Author* (1921), or Dziga Vertov’s (1896–1954) film *The Man with a Movie Camera* (1929). While it is still associated primarily with experimental works, reflexivity is also found in mainstream cinema and theater.

#### Reflexivity in Sociology

The term’s history in the social sciences has been somewhat more complex, as it has been used by different theorists to refer to different phenomena according to what both the object and subject of reflection is understood to be. The concept of reflexivity has a longer history in sociology than in anthropology. As a sociological term, it first appears in the work of Talcott Parsons where it refers to the capacity of social actors in modern societies to be conscious and able to give accounts of their actions. This usage was further developed by Anthony Giddens, who argues that one of the main characteristics of late modernity is a heightened importance of reflexivity in this sense, both at the individual and the societal level. In late modernity, he argues, most aspects of social activity are subject to constant revision in the light of new information or knowledge (sociology itself is a major source of such reflexivity at the level of the society). Individual social actors likewise must constantly revise their identities in light of the changing social categories at hand. A second meaning of the term in sociology is traceable to the work of Harold Garfinkel who used the term to mean the process by which social order is created through ad hoc instances of conversational practice. A third sense of the term is in the context of “reflexive sociology.” The term was coined by Parsons’s student Alvin Gouldner, who called for a sociological examination of the discipline itself as

part of a liberatory “radical sociology.” The theorist most closely associated with reflexive sociology in this sense is Pierre Bourdieu. In his work, reflexivity is understood as a strategic agenda, that of utilizing the tools of the discipline in order to demystify sociology as a power saturated social practice.

### Reflexivity in Anthropology

Although reflexivity appears somewhat later in anthropology than it does in sociology, its impact has been far greater. It became a central theoretical (and practical) concern during the mid-1980s in response to a distinctive conjunction of events both within and outside of the discipline, which problematized the production of ethnographic texts. Like sociological reflexivity, reflexivity in anthropology encompasses several distinct, identifiable but related styles.

The first of these, chronologically speaking, is associated with Victor Turner and his students, and focuses on the study of reflexive moments in social life. Turner was interested in the ways in which social action was accomplished through the manipulation of symbols. Reflexivity, in Turner’s sense, refers to moments in which social actors become conscious of and can reflect upon social life in ritual and other cultural performances which are “*reflexive in the sense of showing ourselves ourselves . . . arousing consciousness of ourselves as we see ourselves.*” (Myerhoff, p. 105; italics in original). Of greater influence within the discipline, however, have been styles of reflexivity, broadly associated post-modernism that reflect upon the disciplinary practices of anthropology.

The so-called reflexive turn in anthropology came as the outcome of three distinct disciplinary crises, beginning in the early 1970s. The first crisis came out of the recognition and subsequent critique of the discipline’s complicity with structures of inequality wrought by European colonial expansion and its aftermath. These concerns were articulated in two publications of the period, Dell Hymes’s collection *Reinventing Anthropology* in the United States and Talal Asad’s *Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter* in Britain. Bob Scholte’s contribution to the former (echoing Gouldner’s call for a reflexive sociology) called for anthropologists to analyze the practice of ethnography as an instantiation of colonial power relations.

The second crisis was produced by the intersection of the feminist movement with anthropology. The feminist critique of the discipline’s androcentric bias problematized the notion of the objective, neutral observer. The feminist intervention in particular led to an emphasis on positionality—that is, a reflexivity that is enacted through the explicit acknowledgment and theoreticization of the “situatedness and partiality of all claims to knowledge” (Marcus, p. 198) and the ethnographers position in relation to his or her interlocutors. This has been particularly important in the work of “halfie” anthropologists—anthropologists working in communities in which they have ambivalent claims of membership (or at least commonality).

The 1967 publication of Bronislaw Malinowski’s field diaries (*A Diary in the Strict Sense of the Term*) constituted a third disciplinary crisis insofar as they undermined the seeming transparency of the relationship between fieldwork practice and the

production of ethnographic texts. In this spirit, a strain of ethnography more directly concerned with experiments in rhetorical styles emerged by the end of the 1970s. Three ethnographies in particular, Paul Rabinow’s *Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco*, Vincent Crapanzano’s *Tuhami* and Kevin Dwyer’s *Moroccan Dialogues* utilized writing strategies that challenged the conventional distinction between subjective and objective styles of writing. These were followed by two 1986 collections, Michael Fisher and George Marcus’s *Anthropology as Cultural Critique* and James Clifford and Marcus’s *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, which focused attention on rhetorical strategies by which ethnographies produce their effects and called for a re-thinking of, and reflexive experimentation with writing strategies such as dialogue, pastiche, and memoir.

Reactions to the reflexive turn varied, even among its advocates. Marcus and Clifford, for example, were critical of the lack of formal experimentation in writings by feminist anthropologists. Feminist anthropologists, such as Ruth Behar and Deborah Gordon, responded, accusing them of insufficient reflexivity regarding their positionality. Others in the discipline, such as Clifford Geertz and Nancy Scheper-Hughes, expressed the following concern: the fact that ethnographic authority is constructed through rhetorical strategies is, ultimately, of limited relevance to the anthropological project (Geertz), and too much attention to the politics of representation could lead to a sort of politico-ethical paralysis on the ground (Scheper-Hughes). By the 1990s, however, most elements of the reflexive critique had been incorporated into the mainstream of U.S. cultural anthropology. At minimum, this consisted of the convention of introducing ethnographic works with brief biographical statements, designed to lay out the ethnographer’s personal history and stakes in his or her problem or subject. Other works incorporated reflexive concerns or strategies to broader ends, using them to interrogate the relationship between writing and theory or to problematize the role of ethnography in the construction of ethnographic subjects.

*See also Anthropology; Cinema; Ethnography; Theater and Performance.*

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Heather Levi

## REFORM.

This entry includes two subentries:

*Europe and the United States*  
*Islamic Reform*

### EUROPE AND THE UNITED STATES

Reform, from the Latin *reformare*, to recast or reshape, denotes the overhaul of an existing state or condition with a view to its improvement. Until the eighteenth century the terms *reform* and *revolution* were used interchangeably. In the wake of the French Revolution, however, they took on distinct meanings. *Reform* came to denote substantial change through an orderly and lawful process; *revolution* described a radical change through violent and illegal means. In modern usage, a reform executed with striking speed and success may be apostrophized as a revolution, as for example in Peter Jenkins's *Mrs. Thatcher's Revolution* (1987) or Martin Anderson's *Revolution: The Reagan Legacy* (1988). This "upgrading" of a lawful process to a "revolution" may be regarded as a figure of speech and serves the purpose of demarcating a historical period. In the twentieth century further nuances to the concept of reform were introduced through the use of the term "protest." The word denotes collective action aimed at reform (for example, strikes and sit-ins), which avoids the violence associated with a revolution, yet transgresses normally accepted limits of social behavior. In the late twentieth century scholars noticeably shied away from the use of the term "reform," favoring instead value-neutral descriptions of the process of change. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, reform is an alteration "for the better." Such normative labeling is now seen as problematic. Marxists, for example, would deny that a reform from within the prevailing power structure produces betterment and would argue that this type of reform is in fact counterproductive to the socialist revolution they envisage. In academic discourse, therefore, the term *reform* has been largely replaced by *change* or *shift*. *Reform* remains the term of choice, however, in popular literature and in the propaganda of special-interest groups lobbying for change.

### Categories and Theories of Causation

Already in antiquity we find theories of a "natural" reform—that is, an ongoing reform process or cumulative historical development. In the fifth century B.C.E., the Greek historian Herodotus discussed constitutional change in terms of a natural, cyclical reform: when monarchy deteriorates into tyranny, it is replaced by aristocracy; when aristocracy becomes corrupt, it is replaced by democracy; when it turns into mob rule, it is replaced by a monarchy. Thus the cycle begins anew. The idea of a linear progression, from a flawed earthly to a perfect heavenly life, was central to medieval Christian thinking. In the fourth century the church father St. Augustine of Hippo (354–430) postulated that God had implanted in humanity the capacity for advancement. The idea of linear progress was also promoted by secular philosophers, although they differed from Christian writers in attributing the cause of advancement to human reason rather than a divine plan. Enlightenment philosophers spoke of a maturing of the human mind and a progressive improvement of the human condition through science and reason. Expanding on Enlightenment thought, philosophers from Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831) to Karl Marx (1818–1883) embraced the idea of progressive historical change through the actualization of the human rational capacity. Marxists introduced the idea that social and economic conditions were instrumental in bringing about reform or revolution. Similarly, sociologists in the twentieth century spoke of a "technological imperative" driving social change.

More frequently, however, reform is seen not as "natural" or circumstantial but as prompted by human agency and deliberately advanced by groups or individuals for ideological reasons. In this category, we must distinguish institutional from personal reform. The latter is an aspect of religion or education and is more appropriately discussed under that heading. This article focuses on institutional reform—that is, social and political changes. The personal may of course become political, as for example in the sixteenth century, when both Martin Luther (1483–1546) and Desiderius Erasmus (c. 1466–1536) depicted the invading Ottoman Turks as "the scourge of God" and insisted that repentance and personal reform must precede successful political action. Similarly, Islamic jihad, meaning "struggle," combines the notion of self-purification or striving against one's evil inclinations with political-theocratic ideas and the struggle for the preservation and dissemination of Islam through military means. In modern Western history, however, reform movements have been and are largely secular and concerned less with the emancipation of the individual than with societal change.

### Principles of Validation

In modern usage reform is linked to innovation, a concept that is also used to validate it. Throughout antiquity and the Middle Ages, however, the idea of innovation lacked the positive connotation it acquired later on. In classical Latin the expression *cupidus rerum novarum* (keen on new things) was an idiomatic expression for "rebellious" and was invariably used in a deprecatory sense. Innovation was seen as dangerous, an assessment that remained the norm even in the Renaissance. Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1527), for example, emphasized the



dangers of changing the status quo and described the process of establishing a new order of things as risky and therefore to be avoided. In the premodern age, and as long as tradition remained a powerful validating principle, would-be reformers therefore shied away from associating their cause with innovation. Instead, they regularly claimed to revert to a preexisting condition and restore a corrupt state to its original pristine state. Innovation was openly advocated only in utopian literature. There, reform proposals were presented in a whimsical or paradoxical manner and given a deliberately eccentric or unrealistic setting. This device, employed by authors from Plato (c. 428–348 or 347 B.C.E.) to Jonathan Swift (1667–1745), was often used to circumvent censorship and to air ideas in closed societies, which offered no effective legal channel to bring about change. Incentives to resort to satire and utopian fiction were especially strong when stable political and institutional alignments protected the status quo.

The Reformation of the sixteenth century, epitomized by Martin Luther, evinces the typical characteristics of a successful reform movement: a well-developed ideology, a conscious intention of overthrowing the status quo, and, given the stigma attached to innovation in early modern Europe, an appeal to a preexisting condition and a promise to restore the corrupt church to its original state. The Reformation also exemplifies the political circumstances favoring success. It enjoyed broad popular support and benefited from an unstable political climate. This allowed Protestants in Germany and Huguenots in France to align themselves with dissenting secular authorities. In Germany, the reformers were supported by cities and principalities that opposed the centralizing tendencies of the Catholic emperor. In France, Huguenots benefited from the power struggle between court factions in the dying days of the Valois dynasty. Similar crisis conditions allowed reformers and reforming groups in the seventeenth century to realize their goals. A new idea, however, emerged at that time and came into its own in the eighteenth century: the idea that the common people had not only duties but also rights. This was the theory underlying the 1649 Leveller's Agreement of the People and was the basic assumption of the 1776 Declaration of Independence as well as the French charter of rights drawn up in 1789. Its slogan, "freedom, equality, brotherhood," associated reform/revolution with freedom from religious and secular hierarchical power.

Although the revolutions of the eighteenth century shared with the sixteenth-century Reformation the rejection of traditional authority and references to individual responsibility, philosophers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries appealed to reason rather than the divine will as the source of life-structuring norms. René Descartes (1596–1650) first presented the reductionist theory that dictated rejection of values based on tradition and experience unless they could be fitted into a rational context. His thought supplied the basic motivation for reform until Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (1820–1895) substituted material and economic conditions as initiating factors. Even they, however, presented reform as a rational attempt to achieve change.

It was only in the eighteenth century, the Age of Enlightenment, that the negative connotation of innovation was over-

come. The French philosophes unabashedly offered new ideas, which were taken up by European rulers, especially in Prussia and Austria, and found their way into parliamentary debates.

### Agencies of Reform

Popular support has always played an important role in successful reforms, but there is a noticeable shift in the nineteenth century in the structures that serve as a means of galvanizing popular support and promoting bonding. Until then collective action to further reform and the intellectual solidarity on which it is predicated were promoted by kinship groups, regional networks, and religious congregations. The goals were specific and parochial, with the action typically arising from particular circumstances and ceasing when the specific objectives had been achieved. From the nineteenth century on, the role of these groups was increasingly taken over by governments, political parties, firms, or unions and involved long-range, sometimes cosmopolitan, goals. Realizing such goals required a permanent organization and planned action and often involved either coercion or reward for the participants. Already in the eighteenth century, major social and economic reforms were introduced from above, through the agency of "enlightened despots" like Frederick the Great of Prussia (r. 1740–1786) and Joseph II of Germany (r. 1764–1790). The civil service they created to implement the reforms may be seen as a harbinger of the developments in the nineteenth century, which saw a large number of reforms passed through legal channels and mediated by politicians and political parties. Indeed, "reform" became the watchword of socialist parties and was generally associated with their platform. In England, for example, the Tories who were dominant between 1770–1830 were opposed to reform, whereas the Whigs promoted and enacted a succession of reforms (for example, the Reform Act of 1832, which expanded suffrage). In the twentieth century reform was associated in Britain with the Liberal government before 1914 and the Labour government after 1945. In the United States, administrative reforms were seen as the result of the Progressive movement in the nineteenth century and associated with the Democratic Party and more specifically with the presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882–1945) in the twentieth century. In the USSR the term "reform" was applied to Mikhail Gorbachev's efforts to restructure key state institutions and to bring about a fundamental change in social values through glasnost.

In the second half of the twentieth century, however, reform movements began to transcend class and party lines as well as other traditional groupings and increasingly signified personal choice and self-identification (for example, as gay, disabled, or black). On a broader level, reformers appealed to the communal good and a global human fellowship (for example, environmental, disarmament, anticonglomerate, and civil rights movements). The move from adherence to a cause determined by incidental membership in a group (class, gender, nationality) to a cause that was personally meaningful and from reform initiated by political parties to nonaligned protest organizers or organizations (for example, Ralph Nader, Greenpeace) was accompanied by a shift of authority from "without" to "within." This shift may be seen as a consequence of two



recognized social trends in the twentieth century: the encouragement of individualism and the rejection of ritualization.

### Academic Approaches to Reform: Methodology and Conceptualization

Reform ideas were traditionally regarded as the bailiwick of political philosophers and intellectual historians. In the twentieth century, however, reform became the object of study of a newly formed discipline: sociology. The shift from philosophy to sociology was accompanied by a shift in focus. Sociologists examining the concept of change were more interested in the origin and dynamics of reform, the conditions that facilitated or impeded change, and strategies of mobilization that brought about reform than in the content of the reform program or the outcome of the movement. They avoided the value judgment inherent in gauging the success of a movement and shied away from stating whether its outcome was the result of a reform movement or a matter of cultural milieu. An example of this development in methodology is the rise and decline of the theory of “modernization,” which was based on the idea of progressive historical change. “Modernization” was first advocated by social historians and sociologists in the 1950s. Proponents like Daniel Lerner and Alex Inkeles regarded the characteristics of the modern society as preferable to traditional societies, equating it with more political freedom, higher income, better health, better education, and the triumph of science and reason over superstition. Western societies were thought to furnish the template for the modern society and expected to become the standard of other societies. The modernizations introduced in Turkey by Kemal Atatürk (1881–1938) in the 1920s were seen as the prototype of such a development. By the 1980s, however, the concept of modernization was recognized as problematic and was eventually discredited. Objections were raised against its ethnocentricity, facile optimism, and attempt at leveling cultural differences. Although globalism remains a buzzword today, social and intellectual historians have found it difficult to accept the idea of globally common dynamics and have generally come to favor pluralism over theories emphasizing uniformity. In the context of pluralism, reform is seen as an initiative of special-interest groups, usually antiestablishment, whose goals range from specific concessions to a large-scale overhaul or even a reordering of society.

Sociologists studying reform have drawn up a schema or typology of reform movements: They are often associated with pragmatic goals (as opposed to revolutions, which are informed by radical ideologies). They may be regarded as the second stage of a revolution, with an overtly radical movement ebbing into a reformist movement. Revolutions and/or reforms are generally launched in crisis situations and as the result of political malaise. Conversely, protest movements are less likely to make headway when political, social, and economic conditions are reasonably good and the prevailing powers are therefore able to defuse resentment. Effective government and moderate prosperity will generate a reluctance to harm vested interests for fear of losing the benefits already enjoyed. Support for a change of the status quo is also less likely when the group in power has been successful in public relations, promoted an image of success through self-congratulatory rhetoric, and created a sense of common in-

terest. Such conditions generally impede a society’s ability to recognize the need for change or develop a desire for it.

In the 1980s, theories about reforms and their desirability were jolted by postmodernists like Jean-François Lyotard in the field of political philosophy and Michel Foucault (1926–1984) in the field of social studies and ethics. They promoted a skeptical attitude toward the traditional assumptions of Western thought, among them the belief in the inevitability of progress, the power of reason, and the value of originality/innovation. One might associate their critique with the move away from authority and toward individualism that characterizes modern reform movements. The fundamental thrust of the postmodernists, however, is antiauthoritarian. Overtly, at any rate, postmodernists do not advocate political stances or social causes. Indeed, Ernesto Laclau has rejected “foundational” reform movements, whose leadership would become the new authority and issue a blueprint for a society reorganized along rational principles. In other words, the radical social and cultural relativism of postmodernists renders the concept of reform problematic if not senseless. A reaction against postmodernism has set in, however. Indeed, Jürgen Habermas notes the tendency of the critical impulse consuming the movement itself.

*See also History, Idea of; Modernity; Revolution; Secularization and Secularism.*

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## ISLAMIC REFORM

Contemporary Islamic reform movements often trace their roots to the founding era of Islam. Several verses of the Koran encourage reform (*islah*), and a statement of the prophet Muhammad predicts that a renewer (*mujaddid*) will arise in each century to reform the community of Muslims. Among the scholars cited by various reform movements as fulfilling this prediction are Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazali (Iran-Baghdad, 1058–1111), Taqī al-Din Ahmad Ibn Taymiyya (Anatolia-Damascus, 1263–1328), Shah Wali Allah al-Dihlawi (India, 1703–1762), Muhammad Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab (Arabia, 1703–1792), and ‘Uthman dan Fodio (West Africa, 1754–1817). These and other prominent reformers shared a scripturalist desire to return Islam to the tenets of the sacred texts, as well as a corresponding distaste for popular practices and contemporary religious hierarchies that they viewed as deviating from these tenets. These recurrent movements for reform had varying impacts on Islamic thought. Some reformers, such as al-Ghazali, were incorporated into the orthodoxy of Islamic scholarship; others, such as Ibn Taymiyya, were largely ignored for centuries.

During the nineteenth century, a new wave of reform movements emerged as part of the resistance to European imperial expansion, on the proposition that this domination was due to Muslims’ religious laxity. Prominent movements and individuals included Hajji Shariat Allah and the Fara’idi movement in Bengal, Ahmad Brelwi in India, Imam Shamil in the Caucasus, ‘Abd al-Qadir in Algeria, and Muhammad Ahmad in the Sudan.

The nineteenth century also witnessed the rise of a new strain of Islamic reform, one that appealed to European models. Like earlier reformers, these modernists called Muslims to return to the sacred texts of Islam; unlike other reformers, however, they identified a happy coincidence between the spirit of these texts and contemporary European values and institutions. This coincidence accounted for Europeans’ power, and the adoption of these ways would restore the glory of Islam. For example, Sayyid Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (Iran, c. 1838–1897), one of the most influential figures in this movement, famously wrote, “I cannot keep from hoping that Muhammadan society will succeed someday in breaking its bonds and marching resolutely in the path of civilization after the manner of Western society” (Kurzman, 2002, p. 108).

One aspect of contemporary Western civilization that modernist Islamic reformers particularly appreciated was the Protestant Reformation, which they interpreted as a move toward the ideals of Islam. Muhammad ‘Abduh (Egypt, 1849–1905), Afghani’s student and another major figure in the movement, described Protestantism as “calling for reform and a return to the simplicities of the faith—a reformation which included elements by no means unlike Islam” (Browsers and Kurzman, p. 3). Similarly, the most prominent South Asian Islamic modernist, Muhammad Iqbal (India, c. 1877–1938), suggested that Protestantism emancipated Europe from religious and political absolutism and embraced human goodness as opposed to original sin—“the basic propositions of Islam, as of modern European civilization” (Browsers and Kurzman, p. 3).

In the middle of the twentieth century, the analogy was reversed: instead of measuring the Reformation by the yardstick of Islamic ideals, Muslim reformers measured Islam by the yardstick of the Reformation. Iqbal came to feel that Muslims “are today passing through a period similar to that of the Protestant revolution in Europe” (Browsers and Kurzman, p. 5) Abduh’s influential disciple, Muhammad Rashid Rida (Syria-Egypt, 1865–1935), phrased the analogy in exhortatory terms, citing the need for Muslims to combine “religious renewal and earthly renewal, the same way Europe has done with religious reformation and modernization” (Kurzman, 2002, p. 80).

Also in the mid-twentieth century, Islamic reformism split into two strands: one that upheld the equation of certain Western and early Islamic ideals, and one that rejected Western precedents. The liberal Islamic movement defended Western values such as democracy, human rights, and gender equality, using Islamic justifications—either specific injunctions from sacred texts on behalf of these positions, or silences in the texts that leave these matters to human invention, or the necessity and desirability of reinterpreting the texts within changing social contexts. A leading representative of this final approach, ‘Abd al-Karim Soroush (Iran, b. 1945), has argued that religious interpretation must take account of intellectual developments outside of the sacred sources: “No reform can take place without re-shuffling the traditional suppositions, and no re-shuffling can emerge unless one is masterfully acquainted with both traditions and the newly developed ideas outside the sphere of revelation” (Kurzman, 1998, p. 250).

The second strand adopted certain modern values and practices but denounced their European provenance. For example, Hasan al-Banna (Egypt, 1906–1949), founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, the first and largest revivalist organization of the twentieth century, called for modern-style “social reform” including mass education, a war on poverty, and public health measures, yet his definition of reform associated all ills in Muslim societies with the rise of Western influence (al-Banna, pp. 14–17 and 126–129). More recently, Usama bin Ladin’s Advice and Reform Committee, the Saudi Arabian opposition group that he founded while in exile in the Sudan in the mid-1990s, railed against political oppression and espoused the doctrines of human equality, rule of law, freedom of the press, human rights, and economic development, using the latest technologies to spread its message—while rejecting the notion that anything positive could be learned from the West.

Both strands of contemporary Islamic reform emerged largely from modern state school systems—Soroush was trained in pharmacology and philosophy, al-Banna in modern education, bin Ladin in engineering. With the expansion of secular education, the traditional seminary (*madrasa*) scholarship has lost the near-monopoly over religious interpretation that it attempted to enforce in earlier eras.

Among the beneficiaries of educational expansion have been women, who were almost entirely excluded in earlier eras from advanced training in religious matters. As more Muslim women have gained secular education, small Islamic feminist movements have emerged in numerous countries. These move-

ments criticize patriarchal cultural practices that they consider to be foreign to the original message of Islam, as well as patriarchal interpretations of the message that they consider to be a product of ongoing efforts by men to monopolize religious scholarship.

One of the common themes of Islamic reform movements, in the early twenty-first century as in past centuries, remains the denunciation of the seminaries' obscurantism and subservience to state authorities. This subservience has only been enhanced by the seminary reform projects of numerous colonial and postcolonial states.

At the same time, the proliferation of Islamic authorities beyond the seminary has generated such a large variety of liberal and radical Islamic movements, all of them espousing "reform," that the word has been rendered almost meaningless. The term is so elastic, and so positively charged, that it is difficult in the early 2000s to find Muslim statements that reject reform in principle—even as criticisms of any particular reform are legion.

*See also Anticolonialism: Middle East; Education: Islamic Education; Feminism: Islamic Feminism; Islam; Reformation; Sacred Texts: Koran; Westernization: Middle East.*

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**REFORMATION.** The Reformation was a movement in Europe of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that broke the monopoly over religion held by the Roman Catholic Church since the later years of the Roman Empire and that created a new set of alternative Protestant churches that have henceforth helped supply the needs of Christians in Western Europe and in countries influenced by Europe. Each of these churches developed a set of ideas drawn from the common Christian tradition to justify its separate existence, and the Catholic Church restricted itself to yet another set of received ideas. Some of these new churches called themselves Evangelical. They looked to Martin Luther (1483–1546) for their pri-

mary inspiration. Others called themselves Reformed. Beginning in a second generation, they looked to John Calvin (1509–1564) for their primary inspiration. An independent Church of England created its own middle way. A variety of radical churches, many of them called by their opponents Anabaptist, had trouble gaining toleration. Meanwhile, the Roman Catholic Church responded to the challenge by reforming itself.

#### Lutherans

The Reformation began in 1517 when Martin Luther, an Augustinian friar and professor of biblical studies at the relatively new university of Wittenberg in Electoral Saxony, posted a set of ninety-five theses inviting anyone to debate a number of propositions about the promulgation of indulgences by the Roman Catholic Church. Indulgences were documents that promised to give a remission of temporal punishments for anyone who genuinely regretted a sin he or she had committed. They were for sale and were vigorously promoted by a number of peddlers, of whom the most notorious was a Dominican friar named Johann Tetzel. Luther argued that the sale of these indulgences made people think they could buy eternal salvation. The publication of his theses provoked a tremendous uproar. That argument quickly developed into a broader one about the ways in which Christians could gain salvation. Luther argued that salvation had to be by faith alone, without any reliance on good works, like indulgences. The Catholic Church insisted that faith had to be supported by works before one could gain salvation. Luther further argued that the only authority that could resolve this dispute was the Bible, while the Catholic Church insisted that the Bible had to be supplemented by tradition, of which the church held custody. Luther also insisted on the priesthood of all believers, arguing that believers could gain salvation by themselves, rather than relying on priests as intermediaries. Luther was excommunicated by the Catholic Church, and new churches were quickly established that followed his leadership and refused to recognize the traditional authority of the pope and his appointees. Luther continued teaching in Wittenberg. He prepared a fresh translation into German of the Bible and wrote an enormous number of works, ranging from learned biblical commentaries to inflammatory polemical pamphlets, developing further his theology. He became one of the most popular published scholars of all time.

The churches Luther had inspired were supported by local governments within the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, the political entity controlling most of what we would call Germany and more. Some of these governments were run by princes, including the government of Electoral Saxony, where Luther lived, and the government of Hesse in western Germany. Many of them were run by city councils, within imperial free cities that had received charters from the imperial government to run their own affairs. Luther also gained support in neighboring kingdoms, particularly in Scandinavia.

#### The Reformed

A few cities in southern Germany and Switzerland followed the somewhat different leadership of Huldrych Zwingli (1484–1531), the principal preacher in the most important church in Zurich, within the Swiss Confederation. So did some of the



principalities in that area, as well as people in other countries. One particularly zealous group of religious reformers developed within France. They followed Zwingli especially in his sacramental theology, in his insistence that in the central Christian sacrament of communion, Christ was present only in spirit. He rejected the notion that the body and blood of Jesus could be transubstantiated into the elements of bread and wine served in this sacrament, as Catholic theologians claimed, or could even exist “in, with, and under” the elements as Luther and his followers claimed. Either interpretation of what happened was to Zwingli a form of idolatry, an invitation to people to adore man-made objects like bread and wine as if they were gods. And idolatry, the Bible makes clear, is condemned by God himself. In 1534, posters attacking the Catholic Mass as a form of idolatry were posted throughout France, even on the door of the king’s own bedroom. That posting led to savage persecution, with substantial numbers of the Protestants who had supported this argument put to death as heretics or forced to leave the country.

One of those who left France was John Calvin, a highly educated French lawyer and humanist who had become a Protestant. He fled to Basel in Switzerland, where he taught himself theology and wrote a book summarizing the Protestant position, called the *Christianae religionis institutio* (1536; *Institutes of the Christian Religion*). That book won him a new job, after one false start, directing the Reformed Church of Geneva. Geneva had revolted from the government of a prince-bishop and had become an independent republic in alliance with the Swiss cantons. Calvin persuaded the Genevans to create a new form of church government and a new liturgy, and before long a new institution of higher education, an Academy, in which he became a leading teacher. Like Luther, he also became a best-selling author, writing learned biblical commentaries and inflammatory pamphlets, as well as expanding and revising his *Institutes*. Meanwhile Zwingli had died at a relatively young age, as a chaplain to troops belonging to Zurich engaged in a war with Swiss Catholics. Calvin became the most prominent spokesman for the Reformed branch of Protestantism.

Calvin is probably best known as a theologian for his commitment to predestination, the doctrine that God deserves the sole credit for choosing eternal salvation for every individual who gains it. He added to that relatively orthodox doctrine the idea that God also deserves the sole credit for choosing eternal damnation for every individual who receives it. In other words, he taught double predestination, predestination of the saved and of the damned. He also taught that God had made his decision on whether or not to save or damn each individual before the beginning of time, before these individuals were even created.

Calvin is also known as a church leader for his insistence on discipline, his belief that every individual Christian must not only adopt true belief but also behave in a truly Christian manner. To that end he insisted that Geneva create a new institution charged with maintaining discipline, called the Consistory. And he insisted that this new institution must have real powers, the power to excommunicate any sinner who misbehaved,

without any provision for appeal, and to recommend expulsion from the city of sinners who refused to repent and reconcile themselves with the Consistory. This insistence on discipline became a mark of the true church to many of Calvin’s followers. Lutherans and Zwinglians said that the only marks of a true church are the teaching of true doctrine and the correct observation of the sacraments. Many Calvinists insisted that there had to be a third mark, the mark of discipline. Calvinism became the most influential form of Protestant Christianity in much of Switzerland, parts of Germany, the Netherlands, Scotland, Hungary, and selected parts of France.

### Other Confessions

The Church of England broke with Rome over an entirely different issue. King Henry VIII (r. 1509–1547) wanted Pope Clement VII to annul his marriage with Catherine of Aragon and leave him free to marry another woman, Anne Boleyn. Catherine had been his brother’s wife, and Henry felt that his marriage to her, which was against church law but permitted by an earlier pope, was the reason she had produced no male heirs. Clement refused to act on this request, so Henry’s government broke all connections with the papacy, and, with the 1534 Act of Supremacy, made the king head of the Church of England, which remained Catholic in other respects. The government of Henry’s son, Edward VI (r. 1547–1553), went a step further and made the Anglican Church truly Protestant, basically Zwinglian in theology. Edward was succeeded by his sister Mary (r. 1553–1558), whose government tried to return England to Roman Catholicism. Mary was succeeded by yet another sister, Elizabeth I (r. 1558–1603), whose government returned England to Protestantism, now basically Calvinist in theology, but retaining much of Catholic liturgy and also retaining ecclesiastical government by bishops, rather than creating government by representative church councils called presbyteries, or classes, or synods, which most of the Reformed preferred.

Another group of early Protestants called themselves names like “Brethren,” but were often called by their enemies “Anabaptists” and are generally called by modern scholars “radicals.” They insisted on using the Bible as the only guide to religious observance, and among the biblical customs they insisted on was the practice of baptizing people into the church as adults, as believers who understood what they were accepting, rather than as infants who were presented by their parents and godparents. Infant baptism had become customary through the Middle Ages, in part because of a growing belief that everyone is born with the taint of original sin, and that this taint must be washed away by baptism before there is any hope for salvation. Any person who remained unbaptized on death, therefore, ran the risk of damnation without any hope of salvation, or perhaps, in the minds of some theologians, to relegation to a place called Limbo that was neither heaven nor hell. Infant baptism also had the advantage of making all individuals immediate members of the community, without any period of probation. By insisting on believers’ baptism, Anabaptists changed both the theological and the social meaning of baptism, and that upset a good many people. Anabaptists were often savagely persecuted for their beliefs, beginning in



Zwingli's Zurich where an early group of them emerged. They seldom gained the protection of any government. Numbers of them also known as Mennonites, who became ardent pacifists, managed to survive in the Netherlands and neighboring parts of Germany, tolerated but not permitted to participate actively in society.

Meanwhile, Roman Catholics reacted to all these changes by digging themselves in and drawing the lines of permissible belief more strictly than ever before. That work was accomplished primarily in the Council of Trent, which met between 1545 and 1563, under close direction from a series of popes, and prepared a set of theological decrees and disciplinary canons. Most of the decrees adopted ways of defining Catholic beliefs originally developed by Thomas Aquinas, in preference to alternative views originally developed by William of Ockham, Duns Scotus, and other medieval theologians that been widely accepted before the Reformation. The canons required organizational reforms.

One doctrine of particularly wide practical consequence that Catholics refused to abandon was celibacy. They believed that it was a higher way of life for those who could manage it. They insisted that all secular priests remain celibate, and they also wished to continue communities of contemplative monks and nuns, as well as active friars and sisters, that devoted themselves entirely to the work of the church and did not establish families. Almost all Protestants found the lifestyle of celibacy both unnatural and unnecessary. They wanted their ministers to marry and lead normal family lives, to join society and no longer live in a legally separate caste. And Protestant governments confiscated monasteries and convents, turning them into schools or hospitals, or simply selling the properties. This reduced the range of lifestyle options open to the general population in Protestant lands, particularly for women, who now had little choice but to marry and become housewives. Protestants also changed the institution of marriage in several ways. It was no longer permanent, and could be dissolved in divorce, either for adultery or desertion, at the request of either the husband or wife. In practice, however, divorce remained relatively rare.

### Confessionalism

By the end of the sixteenth century each of the surviving religious groups identified itself with a succinct statement of belief called a confession. For Lutherans it was the Augsburg Confession, first advanced in 1530 at a meeting of the Diet, the representative body governing the Holy Roman Empire. It was further expanded and refined late in the century in a statement promulgated in 1577, called the Formula of Concord. For the Calvinists there were a variety of national formulations, including the Heidelberg catechism of 1563 in Germany, and Confessions for the Swiss (1566), the French (1559), the Dutch (1561), and the Scottish (1560). For Anglicans it was the Thirty-Nine Articles adopted in 1563. For Anabaptists there were a variety of local doctrinal statements, for example the Schleithem Articles of 1527. For Catholics there were the decrees and canons of the Council of Trent, as promulgated by popes after 1563. The promulgation of

confessions and the insistence on their use to control the belief of government employees, clergymen, and teachers, became one of the distinguishing features of the religious landscape in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. It helped states to consolidate their power, both against their neighbors and against supranational institutions like the Holy Roman Empire and the papacy. It made of this period an era of confessionalism and confessionalization. The resulting tensions led to a number of religious wars, in France between 1562 and 1598, in the Netherlands between 1568 and 1648, and within the Holy Roman Empire between 1618 and 1648. Only when governments stopped making decisions on religious grounds and moved to making them on more secular grounds, by 1648 in most areas, did this age of confessionalism end. Pockets of confessionalism remained in parts of Europe, however, and some of them survive into the present. It can be argued that the Reformation has not as yet completely ended.

See also *Christianity; Religion; Religion and the State.*

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**REGIONS AND REGIONALISM, EASTERN EUROPE.**

It would be difficult to find two people today—even two historians or political scientists—who would completely agree on the meaning of the phrase *Eastern Europe*. Unlike such phrases as *Great Britain, the former Yugoslavia, or the Baltic states*, *Eastern Europe* varies widely in what it denotes. The variation occurs in part because what the phrase denotes has changed frequently over time, and in part because in any given era it has carried a multitude of different meanings depending on a host of factors, from the intellectual context to the political orientation or ethnic identity of the speaker. Finally, it occurs because Eastern Europe refers not to an accepted geopolitical reality (like the collection of territories, with recognized boundaries, that used to be included in an entity called “Yugoslavia”) but rather to a region. Regions, which enjoy no formally, legally recognized geopolitical status, are notoriously slippery in their definitions. Eastern Europe serves as an excellent illustration of the dynamics of the concepts of regions and regionalism.

During the Cold War period, the phrase *Eastern Europe* was commonly used in political discussions to refer specifically to Yugoslavia plus the Warsaw Pact countries (that is, Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, and Romania), excluding the Soviet Union. But in the years since World War II, it has also been used variously to refer to all of Europe east of East Germany, excluding the Soviet Union, Scandinavia, and Greece; to all of Europe east of East Germany, including Russia but excluding Greece; and to a number of other collections of nations and territories. In Jewish studies, Eastern Europe can mean (among other things) Hungary and the primarily Slavic-speaking areas between, but not including, modern-day Germany and the former Soviet Union (roughly corresponding to what is today Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary); it can mean those same territories plus modern-day Russia; it can mean those same territories, modern-day Russia, and such territories of the former Soviet Union as once held significant Jewish populations (Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine, and Moldova); and it can mean various other combinations of territories without Russia.

The broadest definition of Eastern Europe may well be the one that the School of Slavonic and East European Studies at University College, London, uses to describe the region to which its activities are devoted. That institution’s Web site includes this definition: “all the countries of Central and Eastern Europe from Finland in the north to the Balkans in the south [inclusive], and from Germany and Austria in the west to Russia in the east [inclusive].”

**Regions and Nations, Regionalism and Nationalism in Modern Europe**

There are at least two histories of the concept of Eastern Europe, both holding important implications for the broader concepts of regions and regionalism. The first imposes on Europe a regional division that is modern in design but that attempts to describe a historical reality dating back many centuries. The other recounts the emergence and development of the consciousness of Eastern Europe as a region.

The first history was told originally by the Hungarian historian and social theorist István Bibó in an article titled “The Distress of East European Small States” (1946). More recently, in 1983, the historian Jenő Szűcs revised his compatriot’s ideas and wrote a revised account in “Three Historical Regions of Europe: An Outline.” Szűcs’s implicit view of regions is devoid of ethnic or national considerations, resting instead on an observation concerning attitudes toward political power and its application in Europe. Western Europe, in Szűcs’s view, has been characterized for almost a millennium by the “structural—and theoretical—separation of ‘society’ from the ‘state.’” Despite what we are commonly taught, the notions of natural law, the social contract, and popular sovereignty first appear some five centuries before Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) and John Locke (1632–1704), and they derive, surprisingly, from western European feudalism and the Roman Catholic Church. By the twelfth century, a distinctive political and social culture had set apart a region known as *Europa Occidens*, whose eastern boundary runs from the lower Danube through the Eastern Carpathians and into the Baltics. West of this line, Szűcs says, society was subordinated to the secular state (that is, the secular state asserted power over society but left it with some measure of freedom); east of the line, society was nationalized (in the sense in which modern totalitarian regimes nationalized industries by incorporating them into the state). In this formulation, what makes a region is primarily the relationship between governing power and the governed, and though religion and social mores clearly have something to do with this relationship, Szűcs treats these factors as mere data and is reluctant to use them as a basis for broad judgments of ethnic or national groups.

The second history is far more complicated because it involves popular attitudes—at various educational and social strata—toward cultures and toward categories (ethnic, national, religious) of people. Larry Wolff’s *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (1994) approaches the topic of regionalism in Europe from a postcolonial perspective heavily indebted to the work of such theorists as Antonio Gramsci, Michel Foucault, and Edward Said. Gramsci and Foucault gave Wolff his understanding of power hierarchies; Said (who drew heavily on the first two) gave him his understanding of the cultural myth called “Orientalism,” by which the West (in its broadest sense, not confined to Europe) has allegedly investigated, classified, and subjugated any number of regions—either inside or outside Europe and generally but not always lying literally to the east—that it regards as other.

Whatever one might think of the charge that the West’s attitude toward what it has regarded as the East has been founded on domination or a desire to dominate, Wolff offers a compelling account of the emergence and subsequent history of Eastern Europe as a regional concept. In his view, the emergence takes place in the Enlightenment. The north–south axis, separating Europe into a culturally superior West and a culturally inferior East, Wolff says, replaced the Renaissance’s east–west axis, which separated Europe into a culturally superior South and a culturally inferior North.

The “invention” of Eastern Europe may well have been the work of Voltaire (1694–1778). His *History of Charles XII* (1731) gives an account of the Swedish monarch’s wars with the Russian tsar Peter the Great in the early eighteenth century. As Wolff sees it, Voltaire’s contribution to regionalism was to emphasize Russia’s position astride Europe and Asia. It would become increasingly clear during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that Asia was primarily the source of Eastern Europe’s “easterness” and that the two poles of Asia in Europe were Russia and the Ottoman Empire (together, at any given moment in history, with the Ottoman Empire’s former and then-current territorial possessions in Europe). To the extent that Orientalism in Europe was associated with the Ottoman Empire, it gave rise to a fascination with Islam and with the exotica connected in the western European mind with that religion. Such fascination tended to focus on the Balkan Peninsula. The enormous complexity of the Balkans as a regional construct is the subject of Maria Todorova’s *Imagining the Balkans* (1997). Todorova places particular emphasis on the Ottoman Empire as a source of Eastern cultural elements that, in the minds of western Europeans, characterize the Balkan region. To the extent that Orientalism was associated with Russia, it gave rise to a fascination with things Slavic, encouraging some adventurous and moneyed western Europeans to travel to points east (and northeast) and other less adventurous souls (Voltaire, for example, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau [1712–1778]), who wrote an important book on the Polish constitution) to write about eastern lands without ever bothering to visit them.

In the early to mid-eighteenth century, a trend arose in European thought that would develop side by side with the trend toward regionalism. It began with the scientific classification of living things, developed into the concept of race, and culminated in the nineteenth-century geopolitical theory of nationalism. By 1735, Carolus Linnaeus (1707–1778) had recognized the existence of physical and mental variations within the human species, though he attributed such variations to environmental factors rather than to heredity. In midcentury, Georges-Louis Leclerc de Buffon (1707–1788) defined species as the smallest groups whose individual members could produce offspring and subdivided the human species into smaller groups to which he applied the word *race*.

It was Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) who introduced scientific rigor into the subclassification of species. In three articles published between 1775 and 1788, he provided a definition of race that recognized the principle of interfertility among members of various races, he offered a division of the human species into four original races, and he asserted that racial characteristics are hereditary, not acquired. Though Kant regarded skin color as the most reliable indicator of racial origin, he did not hesitate to describe the four races according to their moral characteristics.

Kant’s taxonomy was necessarily broad and classed all Europeans in a single race (the “whites”). Not until later in the nineteenth century, with the advent of Darwin’s theory of natural selection and a rudimentary theory of genetics, was racial thinking given the elaborate scientific (some would say pseudoscientific) basis that led to the detailed classification of groups

within Europe’s borders. But even as Kant was publishing the last of his three essays on race, his countryman Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744–1803), in *Ideas Toward a Philosophy of the History of Man* (1784–1791), was explicitly rejecting the category of race, proposing instead a classification of peoples (*Völker*) by nation, a concept based on spiritual rather than on physical heredity. In Herder’s eyes, the dominant factors in the formation of nationhood are “national formation” (*Nationalbildung*) and language (which he describes as “the peculiar means for the formation [*Bildung*] of man”).

All that remained was to link *nation* in this spiritual sense to *nation* in the political sense. This fell to Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762–1814), who in 1807 and 1808 delivered his *Addresses to the German Nation* in French-occupied Berlin, describing to his beleaguered compatriots the nation as the ultimate expression of the character of a people (*Volk*) and pointing to the features of the German people that set it apart from—and above—the other peoples of Europe, particularly the French. These addresses firmly established the basis for European nationalism, defined by Ernest Gellner in 1983 as “a theory of political legitimacy, which requires that ethnic boundaries should not cut across political ones, and in particular, that ethnic boundaries within a given state . . . should not separate the power holders from the rest” (p. 1). It was not until much later in the century, of course, that this concept arose with such consequential force in lands to the east and south of where Fichte stood as he rallied his countrymen.

The eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries thus show an oddly split attitude on the classification of people and places in Europe. As Wolff shows, when western European writers turned their attention eastward in the eighteenth century, they had a marked tendency to see ethnic and even linguistic homogeneity spread out over broad areas where the more discriminating outlook of nineteenth-century nationalism would judge that such homogeneity did not exist—thus regions rather than nations. A case in point is the common use of the proper adjective *Slavic* (Sclavic, Slavonic, Sclavonic) to designate the people and languages in Russia and virtually all European territories east of present-day Germany and Austria, including the Balkans (but not Greece). Visitors to Poland, Bohemia, Russia, and even Hungary commonly referred indifferently to the languages spoken there as Slavic, as if they were all identical. At the same time, however, writers in the West had discovered two criteria, inherited physical traits and common language, that would increasingly encourage the division and narrower classification of people within broad regions—thus nations.

### Central versus Eastern Europe

To confuse the regional issue further, the nineteenth and twentieth centuries presented the competing concept of Central Europe, itself almost as fluid and unstable as Eastern Europe. As is well known, the rise of nationalism and the corresponding ideal of the ethnically homogeneous nation-state gave rise to centripetal and centrifugal geopolitical forces in nineteenth-century Europe. The final unification of Italy in 1870 and of Germany in 1871 represented the culmination of a centripetal process of unification, while events in the Balkan Peninsula and the non-German territories of the Habsburg Empire led



to a centrifugal process of secession and fragmentation. One result was the broad regional configuration that would remain in existence until the end of World War I. From the time of the Congress of Vienna in 1815, “Central Europe” (Mittleuropa in German) referred essentially to the German Confederation (created at the Congress of Vienna and corresponding in its borders very roughly to present-day Germany, Austria, the Czech Republic, and Slovenia). This was the Austrian prince Metternich’s dream of a Europe dominated by a central core of German-speaking territories. In 1915, in the middle of World War I, the German theologian and liberal democrat Friedrich Naumann published a work titled *Mittleuropa*, in which he called for an economic federation to be established after the war. Naumann’s idea was that the federation would have at its center Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire but would also include all European nations outside the Anglo-French alliance, on one side, and Russia, on the other. This large territory would be Mittleuropa.

Naturally the political settlement at the end of the war, in particular the division of Germany into two separate pieces divided by the Danzig Corridor, made Naumann’s plans unrealizable. But events in European intellectual life in the early 1980s revived the concept of Central Europe and the debate about its definition and its broader significance. The process began in 1984, with the publication of Milan Kundera’s “The Tragedy of Central Europe” (though Kundera had written some pieces on the topic as early as 1981). It culminated with the publication of two collections of writings, immediately before the downfall of Soviet Communism in 1991: *In Search of Central Europe* (edited by George Schöpflin and Nancy Wood) in 1989 and a special issue of *Daedalus*, titled “Eastern Europe . . . Central Europe . . . Europe,” in the winter of 1990. Curiously, the principal actors in the resurrection of Central Europe, Kundera, Václav Havel, and Czesław Miłosz, were not from Germany or Austria but from areas that might just as easily be classified as Eastern Europe: Czechoslovakia and Poland. But in his 1984 essay, Kundera seemed to have in mind territories that, with respect to the Mittleuropa of Metternich and Naumann, were marginal (which is to say, non-German speaking): Central Europe, he thought, was a region “culturally in the West and politically in the East,” and the nations he referred to were Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Poland.

There can be no doubt that this debate over Central Europe was largely motivated by the social and political consciousness of groups living between the two Germanys, on one side, and the Soviet Union, on the other—groups, in other words, mindful of their exclusion from the ranks of historically more prominent and powerful neighbors. As Patrick Hyder Patterson put it, “Mittleuropa emerges as a means for a people worried about their own European credentials to retrieve a place at the heart of European politics and culture” (p. 128). The Hungarian historian Péter Hanák, in 1989, dealt with the regional/definitional issue by simply declaring Eastern Europe to be Russia and then comparing the historical progress of Central Europe with that of the West. In the same year, the Slovak political scientist Miroslav Kus’ got around the regionalism issue by speaking wryly of “Central-European East Europeans,” a group that included East Germans, Hungarians, Poles, Czechs, and Estonians.

Such reflections on Central Europe took on an entirely new meaning, of course, as soon as the Soviet Union collapsed. For many observers, they simply became irrelevant. But they serve as a good reminder of the considerable extent to which regional categories in Europe at any given moment are tied to power configurations.

### The Future of Eastern Europe

The geopolitical conditions that have had such a profound impact on the regional concepts of Central Europe and Eastern Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—essentially the political fallout of the Napoleonic era and the two world wars—are now a thing of the past, and some specialists today think that *Eastern Europe* has outlived its usefulness as a phrase. The expansion of NATO in 1999 to include Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Poland, and in 2004 to include Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia has erased boundaries that appeared fixed before the collapse of the Soviet Union. The American-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 led to at least a temporary reconfiguration of relations between the United States and various European NATO members. The traditional Cold War Continental allies, France and Germany, found themselves brushed aside by the United States in favor of Eastern European nations more supportive of American foreign policy.

To put it very simply, Eastern Europe began in the eighteenth century as something defined by contrast with England, France, and, to a lesser extent, the German-speaking territories. It then came to be something defined by its position between these same Western powers, on the one side, and Russia (and subsequently the Soviet Union), on the other. With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the expansion of NATO, the Cold War dynamic that made it possible for Eastern Europe to denote “Warsaw Pact Countries plus Yugoslavia but not the Soviet Union” ceased to exist, and the concept lost the small measure of precision that, at least in certain contexts, it had enjoyed for a half century.

See also *Europe, Idea of; Maps and the Ideas They Express; Nationalism; Orientalism; Other, The.*

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Steven Cassedy

**REINCARNATION.** See *Immortality and the Afterlife*.

**RELATIVISM.** Although relativism is most often associated with ethics, one can find defenses of relativism in virtually any area of philosophy. The following article first discusses the general structure of relativist positions and arguments. It then examines several influential ideas concerning relativism in the late twentieth century. Finally, it ends by considering the rise of relativism in one area outside of ethics: epistemology.

### What Is Relativism?

Relativism about some property *F* can be divided into a number of different theses. One relativist view is that there exists a plurality of standards of *Fness* associated with different places, people, cultures, or times. Call this *descriptive relativism*. A different relativist thesis is that there is no single universally valid standard of *Fness* for all places, people, cultures, or times. Call this *philosophical relativism*. In this view, a plurality of standards of *Fness* provides the only frames of reference against which the truth of claims that something is *F* can be evaluated. Such claims thus cannot be evaluated unless and until a framework is specified. A third and further relativist thesis is that we should be tolerant of those who, for some *F*, use standards of *Fness* different from our own; each standard is appropriate for its own culture or time. The claim that we ought not pass judgment on those deploying alternative frameworks is often dubbed *normative relativism*. Although these three relativist doctrines are distinguishable from one another and can be consistently held in various combinations, all three quite often go together.

Most people are and ought to be relativists about some things—etiquette, for instance. Is it rude to call one's colleagues by their first names? Yes and no; yes in Japan and no in the United States. The truth or justifiability of judgments of rudeness can be evaluated only relative to the prevailing standards of etiquette, and it would be absurd to insist that one's own standard is closer to the right way of doing it; it is just different, not better. There is no "universal" standard of etiquette against which each act of rudeness can or should be measured. Relativism about what is funny, edible, or delicious seems reasonable as well. One's own sense of humor or one's tastes are just different, not better, than those of others. Some may feel less confident saying that one's own standard of beauty is just different, not better, than others, but few would press the issue.

About some things, however, it is difficult to defend relativist positions. Few think that arithmetical truths such as  $7 + 5 = 12$  are only true relative to some arithmetical framework to which there are alternatives that are just different, not worse. There are necessarily no acceptable alternative mathematical frameworks in which  $7 + 5 = 12$  is false. The ordinary view of moral judgments is that they lie somewhere in between etiquette judgments on the one hand and arithmetical judgments on the other. Some think they are closer to etiquette, others to arithmetic.

It is important to hold agreement on non-*F* facts fixed to determine whether there is a genuine difference in standards of *Fness*, and whether a given philosophical view is truly relativist. *Parametric universalism* (so dubbed by T. M. Scanlon) allows that what is *F* in one place or time might not be *F* in another. However, it is not a relativist view, since it allows opposed judgments of whether a given action or activity is *F* to be generated from a single universal standard of *Fness* due to different circumstances. Diversity of judgments about *Fness*, according to the parametric universalist, are traceable to differences in non-*F* facts, rather than different standards of *Fness*. Only a view that allows different standards in a given area of concern to be in some sense equally valid is a genuinely relativist view.

### Issues and Arguments Relating to Relativism

As obvious as it may seem that we ought to be relativists about some things, late-twentieth-century philosophical discussions of relativism spent a surprising amount of time simply trying to state the view coherently. The ethical relativist familiar to most of us, for instance, combines all three above relativist theses in a way that best illustrates the problem. He will begin with the innocent observation of a diversity in moral practices, infer that therefore there is no single universal moral standard, and then confidently wrap up with the conclusion that therefore no person should judge the actions of those from other cultures or times. As Bernard Williams points out, although this crude bit of reasoning is obviously self-contradictory (the conclusion asserts a universal moral requirement the existence of which the premises deny), avoiding this kind of incoherence has proved surprisingly difficult.

Second, philosophers have also been concerned with the extent of defensible tolerance. For any outlook, sincerely hold-

ing that outlook seems incompatible with regarding it as merely one among a number of outlooks, each different, but not better, than the others. How, for instance, could morality have the grip on us that it does if it does not lead us to condemn those who, however distant from us in time and place, radically violate its deepest tenets? The normative relativist requirement of tolerance apparently can only be taken seriously by those who have no sincere moral convictions. Thus the basic relativist dilemma is this: either the “ought” in the claim that we ought not to condemn standards radically at odds with our own is a relative “ought” from within our own standards or an “ought” tied to an absolute standard. The former is incompatible with sincerely embracing and living within a standard. The latter is incompatible with relativism.

Third, does relativism about a given F require skepticism? Skepticism about F holds that there are no good grounds for believing anything really is F. The question is whether relativism about Fness undermines any good grounds for believing that there really is such a thing as Fness. Size, for instance, is relative to some frame of reference, such that a given whale might be tiny while a mosquito huge; but this seems compatible with claiming that the tiny whale *really* is tiny and the huge mosquito *really* is huge. Suppose what we morally ought to do is relative to the culture or era in which we find ourselves; is this compatible with claiming that what we ought to do is what we *really* ought to do? Some, such as J. L. Mackie, have argued that it is not. Moral beliefs, in his view, are beliefs about an absolute standard of conduct. If what exists are multiple standards, each no better than the others for its context, then it follows that there really is nothing answering to our moral beliefs. Others, such as David Wong, argue that moral beliefs are not about absolute standards but about prevailing standards. Hence there is something answering to these beliefs in his view.

The most powerful consideration philosophers have mobilized in favor of the claim that there is a plurality of equally correct standards of Fness is that it provides the most satisfying explanation of existing differences over the question of whether something is F. If relativism explains existing differences—differences that persist even against the background of agreement on non-F facts—then we should be relativists about F. Consider the question whether, for instance, C’s “thumbs-up” to D was a rude gesture. Suppose A from one culture and B from another agree on all the nonetiquette facts: C gestured toward D with his fist out and thumb extended skyward. A thinks this was rude. B denies it. One explanation for the dispute is that they have yet to uncover some further fact about the gesture, its deeper etiquette nature. But there is a better one available: A is judging relative to standards from his culture according to which the thumbs-up is rude, while B is judging relative to a different standard according to which the thumbs-up is not rude. Indeed, A and B will likely conclude this quickly. B will say “In *my* culture, the thumbs-up is a sign of encouragement,” while A will say *in his* it is not.

Of course, it does not follow from the fact that different frameworks for judging Fness exist or have existed that no single correct universal standard of Fness exists. Different frameworks might be assessable as more or less close to some

all-encompassing universal standard. Perhaps because of its complexity, it is simply difficult to understand or know the correct universal standard of Fness. But it may be that the existence of different frameworks could be explained by the absence of a universal standard. It also does not follow from the fact that there appear to be different frameworks for judging Fness that there are in fact different frameworks. The parametric universalist in moral standards, for instance, holds that diversity is a result of the application of a very general but universally shared standard to locally diverse conditions. If that view is right, then the philosophical relativist position that there is no such universal standard—sometimes referred to as “metaethical” relativism—lacks its main support, as an explanation of moral diversity.

### Shared Motivational Attitudes

Gilbert Harman has argued for philosophical relativism about what he calls “inner” moral judgments. These are moral judgments that imply that the agent has certain motivating reasons to do something, and the person making the judgment and his audience endorse those reasons. For instance, the claim that S ought to do some action is an inner moral judgment. Harman claimed that relativism about such judgments is a “soberly logical thesis” about “what makes sense” and what does not in our moral language (1975, p. 3). The motivating reasons implied, Harman argued, are those that derive from an implicit agreement reached by bargaining between people of differing powers and resources. Such moral judgments are thus relative to this agreement. This agreement, in turn, may differ from society to society, each being different but not better than the other agreements. In a society with slavery but no agreement that speaks against it, for instance, it is false that the slave owners ought to free their slaves. Even if we would condemn such a society, Harman’s view implies that it would be “inappropriate to say that it was morally wrong of the slave owners to own slaves” (1975, p. 18). The agents involved are not parties to an agreement that would give them the relevant motivations.

In fact, the claim that slave owners are doing something wrong ought to be a logical mistake, if Harman’s relativism is a “soberly logical thesis.” But it is hard to see how this could be so. Surely it makes sense to say of slaveholders in a slaveholding society of the sort Harman envisions that they are doing something wrong. Perhaps we should not blame someone for an act if she had no chance to avoid it, and a person brought up in a slaveholding society might have had no chance to see slaveholding as wrong. Perhaps we should not blame her, if saying that she did wrong is a form of blame. But that such judgments, at least under some circumstances, might be inappropriate does not make them contrary to a soberly logical thesis.

In later works, Harman has elaborated his view so that it combines four theses: (1) there is a plurality of moral frameworks, none more correct than any other; (2) moral judgments are elliptical for more complex judgments whose truth conditions include one of these frameworks; (3) morality should not be abandoned; and (4) even if relative, moral judgments can play a serious role in practical thought (Harman and Thomson, pp. 3–19). The second thesis is an important adjustment: Relativism

is, he argues, not a claim about “what makes sense” in our moral statements but a claim about their truth conditions. What we are saying when we say the slaveholder is doing something wrong makes sense. It is just that we are saying something false because the slaveholder is not party to an agreement giving him motivation to act accordingly. But the third thesis runs into the relativist dilemma. What sort of “should” would we be invoking in saying that morality should not be abandoned? Suppose “morality” refers to some moral framework: We “should” have some morality or other. Then either there is some absolute framework that makes this “should” true, or there is no standard at all that makes this true. From within the point of view of one morality, it is not true that some other morality should not be abandoned.

### Real and Notional Confrontations

Bernard Williams was concerned to come up with some way of stating normative relativism such that it is coherent and does not fall victim to self-contradiction. Recall that the self-contradictory ethical relativist view is the claim that since there are no universal moral standards, no one ever ought to condemn the practices of other cultures. The main issue is whether philosophical relativism can coherently be grounds for normative relativism. Coherent normative relativism requires recognizing the absence of a vantage point from which one can make meaningful evaluative comparisons between alternative frames of reference for judging Fness. Such a vantage point would result in what Williams calls a “real confrontation” between systems of belief (1981, pp. 132–143).

The idea is this: the possibility of normative relativism arises only when some action or practice is the locus of disagreement between holders of two self-contained and exclusive systems. Two systems of belief, S1 and S2, are exclusive of one another when they have consequences that disagree under some description but do not require either to abandon their side of the disagreement. When groups holding S1 and S2 encounter one another, this can result in a confrontation between their systems of belief. A real confrontation between S1 and S2 occurs when S2 is a real option for the group living under S1. In a notional confrontation, S2 is not a real option. S2 would be a real option for a group living under S1 if two conditions held. First, those in S1 could “retain their hold on reality” living under S2, in the sense that they would not, for instance, need to engage in radical self-deception. Second, they could acknowledge their transition to S2 in the light of a rational comparison to S1. If the conditions for a real confrontation are not met for holders of S1, however, then there is only a notional confrontation with S2 and there is no “point or substance” to considerations of whether S2 might be a better or worse system of belief than S1. If a member of S1 does not regard the confrontation with S2 as a real confrontation, then “the language of appraisal—good, bad, right, wrong and so on . . . is seen as inappropriate, and no judgments are made” (Williams, 1985, p. 161). The suspension of such judgments amounts to adopting normative relativism about S1 and S2.

The language of appraisal is appropriate regarding S2 only if those in S1 could “go over” to S2. The *hoi polloi* who pursue the pleasures of so-called “low” culture may judge that

there is little of value in a life crowded with the elite activities of “high” culture. It is a real possibility that they could learn to love opera and lose their taste for country music, so they may evaluate doing so in their own terms. Those from the low culture judge high culture to be boring; those from high culture judge low culture to be tacky and lacking depth. However, Williams observes, “the life of a Bronze Age chief or a medieval samurai are not real options for us: there is no way of living them” (1985, p. 161). They are too alien to permit us to make the same judgments made between culture mavens.

In this respect, however, Williams’s account, like Harman’s, fails to deliver what it set out to—a coherent normative relativism. For it is not clear in what sense it would not be “appropriate” to appraise these moralities as less morally enlightened than our own. If appraisals of S2 are inappropriate, then they must be inappropriate according to some S. Can S1, then, forbid appraising other Ss? It is difficult to see how it could, if, as we assume, a system of belief requires having a grip on the thinking of those within it that prevents taking an external view of it. Suppose Williams thinks that a “real option” is an option that would be as good or better from a point of view external both to S1 and S2—say, the point of view of human well-being. This would be to abandon relativism. For according to the relativist, there is no S external to particular systems such as S1 or S2, a universal standard from which one could judge that appraisal is inappropriate. To measure S2 and S1 by human well-being would be to hold human well-being up as a universal standard. Alternatively, suppose Williams is thinking, like Harman, that this is a “soberly logical thesis”; it is just nonsensical to judge medieval samurai morals to be better or worse than our own. Williams himself denies this claim, saying that the vocabulary of appraisal in such cases “can no doubt be applied without linguistic impropriety” (1981, p. 141). But if he were to accept that this was a logical or linguistic impropriety, then he, like Harman, would have to explain how this could be so, given it seems intelligible enough to say that their morals were worse in many respects than our own.

### Pluralism

With respect to some areas of thought and discourse, unbridled relativism will be less attractive than a relativism that requires certain boundaries be respected. As we have seen, it is difficult to see how tolerance about alternative standards of Fness can be maintained unless we suppose there is some viewpoint independent of these alternative standards from which to evaluate them. Many philosophers have come to the conclusion that there is such a viewpoint, although it can only be a very broad standard imposing limits on the range of acceptable standards. Some such philosophers, such as David Wong and Michael Walzer, do not shun the label “relativists,” but they are perhaps better described as “pluralists.” Pluralism holds that a range of different standards of Fness exists and can be tolerated, but only within limits. One sort of pluralism might be based on a kind of indeterminacy among acceptable standards: Begin with a universally valid framework for any acceptable standard, including, for instance, demands such as that any valid standard must treat like cases alike. Such a framework alone is not itself a standard for Fness and so cannot



provide any kind of guidance. It is, rather, a second-order standard, or a standard for any acceptable first-order standard Fness. Suppose, further, this framework marks off a “range” property of standards, in the sense that no standard fits the framework any better than any other standard fits the framework (as when, for a given circle, no point within the circle is more within it than any other) (see Rawls, p. 508). As long as a given standard fits the framework, it is acceptable, but an indefinite number of different standards could meet it. This case offers no grounds for judging that any standard of Fness is “better” or “worse” than any other, based on the second-order framework, except to say that either a standard fits the framework or it does not. Limited tolerance, then, would amount to approving of those standards within the range that fit the framework and disapproving of those outside of that range, based on the second-order standard of acceptability provided by the framework.

A different sort of pluralism would be based simply on epistemic modesty (i.e., a justifiable reticence to assert claims that one does not know to be true). One can even combine this with parametric universalism: a single universally valid framework yields standards that deliver opposed conclusions in a given case depending on the circumstances. Modesty implies that even if there is a determinate answer to the question whether, for any given thing, it is F or not, it may not be possible to be confident enough of this in any case. Suppose, then, no one can be confident that he or she knows how that framework is to be put into practice in any particular culture or time. That is, she does not know which of the available standards that fit the framework is best given the circumstances. Then, where one is not confident, one should be tolerant.

Whether pluralism of either kind can meet the challenge of developing a coherent defense of tolerance is not clear. For one thing, pluralism based on epistemic modesty implies a kind of diffidence in the face of alternative standards that is sufficient to prevent the modest judge from condemning the alternative standards. Yet it must also leave one confident in the importance of one’s own standard. Moreover, although pluralism based on indeterminacy allows one to see one’s own standard as acceptable based on meeting a sort of minimum, this is hardly the sort of endorsement that can sustain its grip on us in the face of a variety of equally acceptable alternative standards.

### **Contextualism and Relativism in Epistemology**

By far the most discussed form of relativism is ethical relativism. However, relativist issues arise quite frequently in almost every area of philosophical research. One of the most significant trends in late-twentieth-century epistemology has been the rise of views that are broadly either relativist or pluralist and are loosely collected under the banner “contextualism.” Contextualists hold that the truth of sentences attributing knowledge, such as “S knows that p,” like the truth of sentences attributing tallness, such as “S is tall,” depends on the contexts of their use. In particular, the speaker’s context determines which standards of epistemic justification are in play. Hence, A’s statement “Stella knows that Stanley loves her” may be true, while B’s seemingly contradictory statement “Nobody ever knows any-

thing at all” might also be true, since their contexts of utterance might invoke quite different standards of justification. A’s may be a conversational context; perhaps Stella has told A about Stanley’s having confessed his feelings to her, A knows that Stella is a good judge of dissembling, and so on, so A can rule out the possibility that she is ignorant. In A’s context, that possibility is not salient. B, on the other hand, has been studying Descartes and in that context the possibility that everyone is being tricked by an all-powerful evil demon is very salient. In A’s context, the demon hypothesis is out of place. That “Stella knows” is true relative to one context of A’s statement that she does, but not relative to B’s context.

In effect, contextualism amounts to a kind of speaker relativism, in which the standards in play are determined by the person making knowledge claims. Standards are relative to contexts, and the context is set by the speaker. A certain standard is appropriate for each context. A speaker then “picks out” the relevant standard when making knowledge claims that then determine the truth conditions of the claim. However, it may be better to classify contextualism as a kind of pluralism, because any contextualist will hold that there are standards of justification no lower than which can be gone in any circumstance. For instance, there are no contexts in which simply having a belief that something is so counts as knowledge. Thus a range of standards exists, each appropriate for some context, but all are subject to a certain baseline minimum of justification.

It also seems as if contextualism could be regarded as a parametric universalist view. For instance, evidentialism is the view that S knows p only when S’s belief fits the evidence. When someone says that S knows that p, the evidentialist who is a contextualist will say that this will be true only when, according to the speaker’s context, there is enough evidence and the belief fits it well enough. What varies here, then, is not the standard of justification; the standard is that a justified belief must fit the evidence. It is the degree of fit that varies according to context, and that is not a matter of standards varying.

Steven Stich, however, defends an unambiguously relativist view of knowledge. In his view, it doesn’t make sense to think that there are standards of rational belief formation independent of those that happen to be accepted in a given place and time. Standards of rationality in belief formation vary from locality to locality. And this, it seems, is grounds for holding there is no universal standard. But someone knows something only if her beliefs about it are rationally held—formed for good reasons. Since the standards vary, knowledge varies with it. Hence, according to the prevailing standards of rationality in one locality, a belief may be held for good reasons, while in another those selfsame reasons may not be good enough.

Stich’s statement of epistemological relativism appears to conform to Harman’s original model. In particular, it conforms to Harman’s view that “there is no sense attached to” judging dimly the practices of someone who conforms to standards other than our own. Because of this, it also inherits the difficulty of explaining why that kind of judgment seems to make sense. There is no apparent confusion about what someone is saying when she says that those people over there have no reason to believe what they believe, even though they think



they do. We may think it morally inappropriate to make such judgments, but it is not nonsensical. Indeed, we may even think our condemnation to be epistemically rash. But just as in the case of ethical relativism, if we do think it epistemically rash to condemn the epistemic practices of others, it must be based on some standard of rationality. If it is based on our own standards, however, it is not clear how we can maintain confidence in those standards when forming beliefs on their basis. If it is not based on our own standards, then we must be invoking some nonrelative standards. It seems that relativism in epistemology faces the same dilemma that ethical relativism faces.

### Conclusion

Normative relativism in a given area counsels tolerance of practices that conform to alternative standards prevailing in the area. The paradigm of acceptable tolerance is clearly the case of etiquette. Here we have grounds for a defensible and thoroughgoing relativism. And here the relativist doctrines we have discussed fit: Clear-eyed judgments that the practices in a different culture conforming to standards of etiquette prevailing there are rude are, indeed, puzzling. What could such judgments mean? It is true both that such judgments make little sense and that we ought not to try to engage in them. But what distinguishes etiquette from other areas is its relative lack of importance in our thinking and behavior. We can maintain our manners even while taking an external view of them as simply one standard of etiquette among others. When we turn to claims about what is of value or what is rational, for example, the subject matter itself raises the stakes. Once the stakes are raised, we seem less able to take an external view, to maintain our views about what is morally worth doing, or what it is reasonable to believe. Future work on relativism will no doubt bring new ways of thinking about such difficulties.

See also *Philosophy: Historical Overview and Recent Developments*; *Philosophy, History of*; *Philosophy, Moral: Modern*; *Skepticism*.

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Robert N. Johnson

**RELATIVITY.** The first thing to note about the theory of relativity is that there are two different theories of relativity, the special theory put forward in Albert Einstein's (1879–1955) famous 1905 paper, "On the Electrodynamics of Moving Bodies," and the general theory, completed in November 1915 and first presented systematically in a review article published in March 1916.

Special relativity extends the principle of relativity for uniform motion, known in mechanics since the days of Galileo Galilei (1564–1642), to all of physics, in particular to electrodynamics, the field out of which the theory grew. Although the key contribution was Einstein's, several other scientists deserve credit for it as well, most importantly the Dutch physicist H. A. Lorentz (1853–1928), the French mathematician Henri Poincaré (1854–1912), and the German mathematician Hermann Minkowski (1864–1909).

General relativity, by contrast, was essentially the work of one man. It was the crowning achievement of Einstein's scientific career. Its name, however, is something of a misnomer. The theory does not extend the principle of relativity for uniform motion to nonuniform motion. It retains the notion of absolute acceleration—that is, acceleration with respect to space-time rather than with respect to other bodies. In this sense, general relativity is no different from Newtonian theory or special relativity. Absolute acceleration, however, is much more palatable in general relativity than in these earlier theories.

From the point of view of modern physics, the question to what extent general relativity fulfilled Einstein's original hopes of relativizing all motion is of secondary importance. What matters most is that general relativity is a powerful new theory of gravity, based on the insight, called the equivalence principle, that the effects of gravity and those of acceleration ought to be described by one and the same structure: curved space-time.

### Special Relativity

Special relativity grew out of problems in electrodynamics. In 1862 James Clerk Maxwell (1831–1879) first published the set of equations named after him, providing a comprehensive

description of all electric and magnetic phenomena that had been studied up to that point. He also made a new prediction. The equations allow electromagnetic waves propagating at the speed of light. Maxwell famously concluded: “*light consists of the transverse undulations of the same medium which is the cause of electric and magnetic phenomena*” (Niven, vol. 1, p. 500; italics original).

**The luminiferous ether.** As the quotation above illustrates, it was taken for granted in the nineteenth century that both light waves and electric and magnetic fields need a medium to support them. This medium, which was thought to fill the entire universe, was called the *luminiferous* (light-carrying) *ether*. Most physicists believed that it was completely immobile (for discussion of the reasons for this belief, see Janssen and Stachel). Ordinary matter, they thought, would move through the ether without disturbing it in the least. Earth, for instance, would zip through the ether at a velocity in the order of 30 km/s, the velocity of Earth’s motion around the sun. On Earth there should therefore be a brisk ether wind blowing in the opposite direction. This *ether drift*, as it was called, could not be felt directly, but ever since the resurgence of the wave theory of light at the beginning of the nineteenth century, attempts had been made to detect its influence on light from terrestrial and celestial sources. To be sure, such effects were expected to be small. The velocity of light, after all, is ten thousand times greater than Earth’s velocity in its orbit around the Sun. Yet optical experiments were accurate enough to detect such effects. All attempts to detect the elusive ether drift failed, however, and optical theory had to be adjusted to account for these failures.

The combination of Maxwell’s theory and the concept of an immobile ether likewise faced the problem of how to explain the absence of any detectable ether drift. When Maxwell found that his equations predict electromagnetic waves propagating with the velocity of light, he quite naturally assumed that this would be their velocity *with respect to the ether*. As long as one accepts classical ideas about space and time as everyone before Einstein tacitly did, it trivially follows that their velocity *with respect to an observer on Earth* is the vector sum of the velocity of propagation in the ether and the velocity of the ether drift on Earth. This, in turn, meant that Maxwell’s equations could only hold in a frame of reference at rest in the ether: in a moving frame, electromagnetic waves would have different velocities in different directions. The frame of reference of Earth is such a moving frame. One is thus driven to the conclusion that Maxwell’s equations do not hold in the frame in and for which they were discovered. Experiments with electricity and magnetism were not accurate enough to detect any possible deviations from Maxwell’s equations, but experiments in optics were. The failure of such experiments to detect ether drift thus posed a problem for the theory.

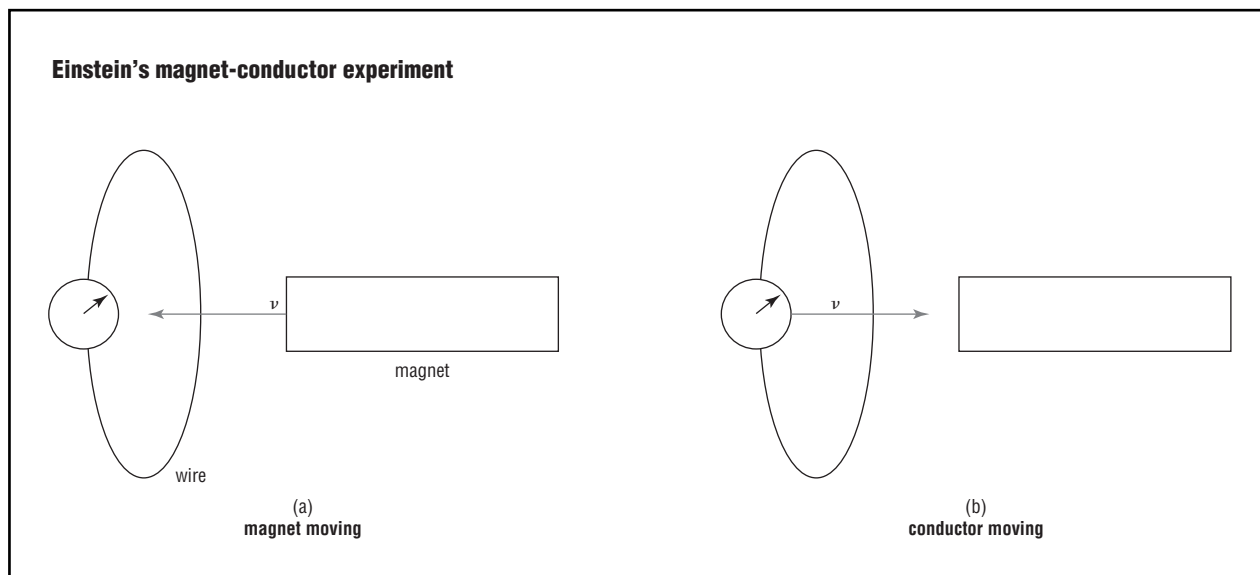
**Lorentz invariance.** In the 1890s Lorentz set out to explain the absence of any signs of ether drift on the basis of Maxwell’s theory. Tacitly using classical notions of space and time, Lorentz first determined the laws that electric and magnetic fields obey in a frame moving through the ether, given that they obey Maxwell’s equations in a frame at rest in the ether. He then replaced the components  $(E_x, \dots, B_x, \dots)$  of

the real electric and magnetic fields  $\mathbf{E}$  and  $\mathbf{B}$  by the components  $(E'_x, \dots, B'_x, \dots)$  of the auxiliary and, as far as Lorentz was concerned, purely fictitious fields  $\mathbf{E}'$  and  $\mathbf{B}'$ . The components of these auxiliary fields mix components of the real electric and magnetic fields (e.g., in a frame moving with velocity  $v$  in the  $x$ -direction,  $E'_y \approx E_y - vB_z$ ). He did the same with the space and time coordinates. In particular, he replaced the real time  $t$  by a fictitious variable  $t'$ , which he gave the suggestive name “local time,” because it depends on position (in a frame moving with velocity  $v$  in the  $x$ -direction,  $t' \approx t - (v/c^2)x$ ). Lorentz chose these quantities in such a way that in any frame moving through the ether with some constant velocity  $\mathbf{v}$ , the fictitious fields  $\mathbf{E}'$  and  $\mathbf{B}'$  as functions of the fictitious variables  $(\mathbf{x}', t')$  satisfy Maxwell’s equations, just as the real fields as functions of the real space and time variables in a frame at rest in the ether. Maxwell’s equations, in other words, are invariant under the transformation from the real fields  $\mathbf{E}$  and  $\mathbf{B}$  as functions of the space and time coordinates in a frame at rest in the ether to the fictitious fields  $\mathbf{E}'$  and  $\mathbf{B}'$  as functions of the fictitious space and time coordinates of a moving frame. This is the essence of what Lorentz called the *theorem of corresponding states*. The transformation is an example of what are now called *Lorentz transformations*. Maxwell’s equations are invariant under Lorentz transformations—or *Lorentz invariant* for short.

In 1895 Lorentz proved the first version of this theorem, valid to the first order in the small quantity  $v/c \approx 10^{-4}$ . In 1899 he developed an exact version of the theorem, which he continued to improve over the following years.

With the help of his theorem was able to show in 1895 that, to first order in  $v/c$ , many phenomena on Earth or in any other frame moving through the ether will be indistinguishable from the corresponding phenomena in a frame at rest in the ether. In particular, he could show that, at least to this degree of accuracy, motion through the ether would not affect the pattern of light and shadow obtained in any optical experiment. Since the vast majority of optical experiments eventually boil down to the observation of such patterns, this was a very powerful result.

**Contraction hypothesis.** In 1899—and more systematically in 1904—Lorentz extended his analysis to higher powers of  $v/c$ . He now found that there is a tiny difference between the pattern of light and shadow obtained in an experiment performed while moving through the ether and the pattern of light and shadow obtained in the corresponding experiment performed at rest in the ether. Compared to the latter, the former pattern is contracted by a factor  $\sqrt{1-v^2/c^2}$  in the direction of motion. Lorentz had come across this contraction factor before. In 1887, the American scientists Albert A. Michelson and Edward W. Morley had tried to detect ether drift in an experiment accurate to order  $(v/c)^2$ . They had not found any. Independently of each other (in 1889 and 1892, respectively), the Irish physicist George Francis FitzGerald and Lorentz had suggested that this negative result could be accounted for by assuming that material bodies, such as the optical components in the experiment, contract by a factor  $\sqrt{1-v^2/c^2}$  in the direction of motion. Lorentz’s analysis of



1899 and 1904 showed that this contraction hypothesis, as it came to be known, could be used not only to explain why the Michelson-Morley experiment had not detected any ether drift but also to explain much more generally why *no* observation of patterns of light and shadow ever would.

In modern terms, the hypothesis that Lorentz added to his theory in 1899 is that the laws governing matter, like Maxwell's equations, are Lorentz invariant. To this end, Lorentz had to amend the Newtonian laws that had jurisdiction over matter in his theory. As he had shown in the case of Maxwell's equations, it is a direct consequence of the Lorentz invariance of the laws governing a physical system that the system will undergo the Lorentz-FitzGerald contraction when moving with respect to the ether. From a purely mathematical point of view, Lorentz had thereby arrived at special relativity. To meet the demands of special relativity, all that needs to be done is to make sure that any proposed physical law is Lorentz invariant.

**Concepts of space-time from Lorentz to Einstein.** Conceptually, however, Lorentz's theory is very different from Einstein's. In Einstein's theory, the Lorentz invariance of all physical laws reflects a new space-time structure. Lorentz retained Newton's conception of space and time, the structure of which is reflected in the invariance of the laws of Newtonian physics under what are now called Galilean transformations. It is an unexplained coincidence in Lorentz's theory that all laws are invariant under Lorentz transformations, which have nothing to do with the Newtonian space-time structure posited by the theory.

This mismatch between the Newtonian concepts of space and time (and the invariance under the classical so-called Galilean transformations associated with it) and the Lorentz invariance of the laws governing matter and fields in space-time manifests itself in many other ways. Einstein hit upon a particularly telling example of this kind and used it in the very

first paragraph of his 1905 paper. The example is illustrated in Figure 1.

Consider a bar magnet and a conductor—a piece of wire hooked up to an ammeter—moving with respect to one another at relative velocity  $v$ . In Lorentz's theory it is necessary to distinguish two cases, (a) with the conductor and (b) with the magnet at rest in the ether. In case (a) the approaching magnet causes the magnetic field at the location of the wire to grow. According to Faraday's law of induction, this change in magnetic field induces an electric field, producing a current in the wire, which is registered by the ammeter. In case (b) the magnetic field is not changing and there is no induced electric field. The ammeter, however, still registers a current. This is because the electrons in the wire are moving in the magnetic field and experience a Lorentz force that makes them go around the wire.

It turns out that the currents in cases (a) and (b) are exactly the same. Yet, Lorentz's theoretical account of what produces these currents is very different for the two cases. This is, in Einstein's words, an example of theoretical "asymmetries that do not appear to be inherent in the phenomena" (Lorentz et al., 1952, p. 37). Einstein proposed to remove the asymmetry by insisting that cases (a) and (b) are just one and the same situation looked at from different perspectives. Even though this meant that he had to jettison the ether, Einstein took the relativity principle for uniform motion from mechanics and applied it to this situation in electrodynamics. He then proposed to extend the principle to all of physics.

In 1919, in an article intended for *Nature* but never actually submitted, Einstein explained the importance of the example of the magnet and the conductor for the genesis of special relativity:

The idea that we would be dealing here with two fundamentally different situations was unbearable to me . . .

The existence of the electric field was therefore a relative one, dependent on the coordinate system used, and only the electric and magnetic field taken *together* could be ascribed some kind of objective reality. This phenomenon of electromagnetic induction forced me to postulate the . . . relativity principle. (Stachel et al., Vol. 7, pp. 264–265)

The lack of documentary evidence for the period leading up to his creative outburst in his miracle year 1905 makes it very hard to reconstruct Einstein's path to special relativity (for a valiant attempt see Rynasiewicz). It seems clear, however, that Einstein hit upon the idea of "the relativity of electric and magnetic fields" expressed in the quotation above before he hit upon the new ideas about space and time for which special relativity is most famous. His reading of works of Lorentz and Poincaré probably helped him connect the dots from one to the other.

Once again, consider the example of the magnet and the conductor in Fig. 1. From the point of view of the magnet (b), the electromagnetic field only has a magnetic component. From the point of view of the conductor (a), this same field has both a magnetic and an electric component. Lorentz's work provides the mathematics needed to describe this state of affairs. Einstein came to recognize that the fictitious fields of Lorentz's theorem of corresponding states are in fact the fields measured by a moving observer. (He also recognized that the roles of Lorentz's two observers, one at rest and one moving in the ether, are completely interchangeable.) If the observer at rest with respect to the magnet measures a magnetic field with  $z$ -component  $B_z$ , then the observer at rest with respect to the conductor will not only measure a magnetic field but also an electric field with  $y$ -component  $E'_y$ . This is captured in Lorentz's formula  $E'_y \approx E_y - vB_z$  for one of the components of his fictitious fields.

Maxwell's theory is compatible with the relativity principle if it can be shown that the observer measuring the Lorentz-transformed electric and magnetic fields  $\mathbf{E}'$  and  $\mathbf{B}'$  also measures the Lorentz-transformed space and time coordinates  $(\mathbf{x}', t')$ . Carefully analyzing how an observer moving through the ether would synchronize her clocks, Poincaré had already shown to first order in  $v/c$  that such clocks register Lorentz's local time. A direct consequence of this is that observers in relative motion to one another will disagree about whether two events occurring in different places happened simultaneously or not. Distant simultaneity is not absolute but depends on the state of motion of the observer making the call. This insight made everything fall into place for Einstein about six weeks before he published his famous 1905 paper.

***The relativity postulate and the light postulate.*** Einstein modeled the presentation of his theory on thermodynamics (as he explained, for instance, in an article for *The London Times* in 1919; see Einstein 1954, p. 228). He started from two postulates, the analogues of the two laws of thermodynamics. The first is the relativity postulate, which extends the principle of the relativity of uniform motion from mechanics to all of physics; the other, known as the light postulate, is the key prediction

that Einstein needed from electrodynamics to develop his theory: "light is always propagated in empty space with a definite velocity  $c$  which is independent of the state of motion of the emitting body" (Lorentz et al., 1952 p. 37).

The combination of these two postulates appears to lead to a contradiction: two observers in relative motion will both claim that one and the same light beam has velocity  $c$  with respect to them. Einstein reassured the reader that the two postulates are "only apparently irreconcilable." Reconciling the two, however, requires giving up several commonsense notions about space and time and replacing them with unfamiliar new ones, such as the relativity of simultaneity, length contraction (moving objects are shorter than identical objects at rest), and time dilation (processes in moving systems take longer than identical processes in systems at rest). Einstein derived these effects from his two postulates and the plausible assumption that space and time are still homogeneous and isotropic in his new theory.

Following Poincaré's lead but without neglecting terms smaller than of order  $v/c$ , Einstein showed that the time and space coordinates of two observers in uniform relative motion are related to one another through a Lorentz transformation. Einstein thus introduced a new space-time structure. In the second part of his paper, he showed that this removes the incompatibility of Maxwell's equations with the relativity principle. He did this simply by proving that Maxwell's equations are Lorentz invariant. Since he was familiar with the early version of Lorentz's theorem of corresponding states (valid to order  $v/c$ ), he would have had no trouble with this proof.

In 1908, Minkowski supplied the geometry of the Einstein's new space-time. The geometry of this Minkowski space-time is similar to Euclidean geometry. Frames of reference in different states of motion resemble Cartesian coordinate systems with different orientations of their axes. Lorentz transformations in Minkowski space-time are akin to rotations in Euclidean space. The demand that physical laws be Lorentz invariant thus acquired the same status as the demand that physical laws should be independent of the orientation of the axes of the coordinate system used to formulate them.

In a passage that echoes Einstein's comments about electric and magnetic fields quoted above, Minkowski wrote: "space by itself, and time by itself, are doomed to fade away into mere shadows, and only a kind of union of the two will preserve an independent reality" (Lorentz et al., 1952, p. 73). Different observers in Minkowski space-time will agree on the space-time distance between any two events, but disagree on how to break down that spatiotemporal distance into a spatial and a temporal component. It is this disagreement that lies behind relativity of simultaneity, length contraction, and time dilation, the effects Einstein had derived from his two postulates. In light of this analysis, Minkowski pointed out, the phrase *relativity postulate* seemed ill-chosen:

Since the postulate comes to mean that only the four-dimensional world in space and time is given . . . but that the projection in space and in time may still be un-



dertaken with a certain degree of freedom, I prefer to call it the *postulate of the absolute world*. (Lorentz et al., 1952, p. 83)

Einstein agreed with Minkowski on this point but felt that it was already too late to change the theory's name. However, he initially resisted Minkowski's geometrical reformulation of the theory, dismissing it as "superfluous learnedness" (Pais, p. 152). He only came to value Minkowski's contribution in his work on general relativity.

### General Relativity

Einstein was not satisfied with special relativity for very long. He felt strongly that the principle of relativity for uniform motion ought to be generalized to arbitrary motion. In his popular book *Relativity: The Special and the General Theory* (1917) he used a charming analogy to explain what he found so objectionable about absolute motion. Consider two identical teakettles sitting on a stove. One is giving off steam, but the other is not. The observer is puzzled by this until realizing that the burner under the first kettle is turned on, but that the burner under the second is not. Compare this situation to that of two identical globes rotating with respect to one another around the line connecting their centers. Einstein discussed this situation in his first systematic exposition of general relativity in 1916. The situation of the two globes, like that of the two teakettles, at first seems to be completely symmetric. Observers on both globes will see the other globe rotating. Yet one globe bulges out at the equator, while the other does not. What is responsible for this difference? The Newtonian answer is: absolute space. What makes a globe bulge out is not its rotation with respect to the other globe, but its rotation with respect to absolute space. The special-relativistic answer is the same, except that Newton's absolute space needs to be replaced by Minkowski's absolute space-time. Einstein found this answer unsatisfactory, because neither Newton's absolute space nor Minkowski's absolute space-time can be directly observed. And without an observable cause for the difference between the two globes, we would have a violation of Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz's (1646–1716) Principle of Sufficient Reason. It would be as if the burners under both teakettles were turned on, but only one of them gave off steam.

There is a crucial difference, however, between the Newtonian and the special-relativistic answer as has been pointed out by Dorling). In special relativity, the situation of the two globes is not even symmetric at the purely descriptive level. Because of time dilation, one revolution of the other globe takes less time for an observer on the globe rotating in Minkowski space-time than it does for an observer on the other one. It therefore need not surprise us that the situation is not symmetric at the dynamic level either, that is, that only one globe bulges out. In terms of Einstein's analogy: if the two teakettles do not *look* the same, it need not surprise us that they do not *behave* the same. Absolute acceleration in special relativity thus does not violate the Principle of Sufficient Reason. Einstein failed to appreciate that special relativity had already solved what he himself identified as the problem of absolute motion.

**Einstein's attempt to relativize acceleration.** In 1907 Einstein set out on the road that would lead to general relativity. In the 1919 article quoted in the preceding section, he vividly recalls the initial flash of insight. Immediately following the passage quoted earlier, he writes:

Then came to me the best idea [*die glücklichste Gedanke*] of my life . . . Like the electric field generated by electromagnetic induction, the gravitational field only has a relative existence. *Because, for an observer freely falling from the roof of a house, no gravitational field exists while he is falling.* The experimental fact that the acceleration due to gravity does not depend on the material is thus a powerful argument for extending the relativity postulate to systems in non-uniform relative motion. (Pais, p. 178; see Janssen, "COI Stories" for further discussion of this argument)

This extended relativity postulate, it turns out, is highly problematic. What it boils down to is that two observers accelerating with respect to one another can both claim to be at rest if they agree to disagree about whether a gravitational field is present or not. This curious principle is best illustrated with a couple of examples.

First, consider the unfortunate observer falling from the roof in Einstein's example. For a fleeting moment this person will feel like a modern astronaut orbiting the earth in a space shuttle. Einstein, watching his observer accelerate downward from the safety of his room in the Berne Patent Office where he was working at the time, is at rest in the gravitational field of the earth. For the falling person, however, there seems to be no gravitational field. He can, if he wishes, maintain that he is at rest and that Einstein and the Patent Office are accelerating upward.

As a second example, imagine two astronauts in rocket ships hovering side by side somewhere in outer space where the effects of gravity are negligible. One of the astronauts fires out the engines of her rocket ship. According to the other astronaut she accelerates, but she can, if she were so inclined, maintain that she is at rest in the gravitational field that suddenly came into being when her engines were switched on and that the other rocket ship and its crew are in free fall in this gravitational field. Einstein produced an account of the twin paradox along these lines as late as 1919.

Notice that the "relativity of acceleration" in these two examples is very different from the relativity of uniform motion in special relativity. Two observers in uniform relative motion are physically fully equivalent to one another; two observers in nonuniform relative motion are not. This is clear in both examples. (1) Free fall in a gravitational field (a) *feels different* from resisting the pull of gravity (b). (2) Hovering in outer space (a) *feels different* from accelerating in outer space (b). In both cases, the "relativity of acceleration" is relativity in name only. In fact, the pair (1a)–(2a) and the pair (1b)–(2b) feel the same.

**Equivalence principle.** Einstein's excitement about "the best idea of his life" was nonetheless fully justified. Galileo's

principle that all matter falls with the same acceleration in a given gravitational field cries out for an explanation. Newton incorporated the principle by giving two very different concepts of mass the same numerical value. He set inertial mass, a measure of a body's resistance to acceleration, equal to gravitational mass, a measure of a body's susceptibility to gravity. In Newton's theory this is an unexplained coincidence. Einstein correctly surmised that this equality points to an intimate connection between acceleration and gravity. He called this connection the equivalence principle. It was not until after he finished his general theory of relativity, however, that he was able to articulate what exactly the connection is.

That did not stop him from relying heavily on the equivalence principle in constructing his theory. Since accelerating in Minkowski space-time feels the same as resisting the pull of gravity, Einstein was able to glean some features of gravitational fields in general by studying acceleration in Minkowski space-time. In particular, he examined the situation of an observer on a rotating disk or a merry-go-round in Minkowski space-time. Appealing to the embryonic equivalence principle, the man on the disk can claim to be at rest and attribute the centrifugal forces due to his centripetal acceleration to a centrifugal gravitational field. Suppose the man on the disk and a woman standing next to it are both asked to determine the ratio of the disk's circumference to its radius. The woman will find  $2\pi$ , the answer given by Euclidean geometry. Because of length contraction, which affects the measuring rods placed along the circumference but not the ones along the radius, which move perpendicularly to their length, the man on the disk will find a value greater than  $2\pi$ . This means that the spatial geometry for an observer rotating in Minkowski space-time is non-Euclidean. The equivalence principle says that the spatial geometry for an observer in a gravitational field will then, in general, also be non-Euclidean. This simple consideration, in all likelihood, gave Einstein the idea to represent gravity by the curvature of space-time (Stachel and Howard, pp. 48–82).

Recognizing that gravity is part of the fabric of space-time made it possible to give a more precise formulation of the equivalence principle. The mature form of the equivalence principle is brought out very nicely by the analogy that Einstein sets up but never quite finishes in the 1919 passage quoted above. Special relativity made it clear that electric and magnetic fields are part of one entity, the electromagnetic field, which breaks down differently into electric and magnetic components for different observers. General relativity similarly made it clear that the inertial structure of space-time and the gravitational field are not two separate entities but components of one entity, now called the *inertio-gravitational field*. Inertial structure determines the trajectories of free particles. Gravity makes all particles deviate from these trajectories in identical fashion, regardless of their mass. These are the only marching orders that *all* particles have to obey. In general relativity, they are all issued by one and the same authority, the inertio-gravitational field, represented by curved space-time. Which marching orders are credited to inertial structure and which ones to gravity depends on the state of motion of the observer. The connection between acceleration (or, equivalently, inertia) and

gravity is thus one of unification rather than one of reduction, as with the nominal “relativity of acceleration” discussed above, in which acceleration was being reduced to gravity.

How do the examples of nonuniform motion discussed above fit into the new scheme of things? Free fall in a gravitational field (1a) and hovering in outer space (2a) are both represented as motion along the straightest possible lines in what in general will be a curved space-time. Such lines are called *geodesics*. Resisting the pull of gravity (1b) and accelerating in outer space (2b) are both represented as motion along crooked lines, or *nongeodesics*. Since no change of perspective will transform a geodesic into a nongeodesic or vice versa, there is an absolute difference between (1a) and (1b) as well as between (2a) and (2b). Absolute acceleration survives in general relativity, as in special relativity, in the guise of an absolute distinction between geodesic and nongeodesic motion. This does not violate the Principle of Sufficient Reason, since geodesics and nongeodesics are already different at a purely descriptive or geometric level.

**General covariance.** Einstein did not give up his crusade against absolute motion so easily. Once he had realized that gravity is space-time curvature, he quickly came up with a new (though once again flawed) strategy for extending the principle of relativity from uniform to arbitrary motion. To describe curved space-time, Einstein had turned to the theory of curved surfaces of the great nineteenth-century German mathematician Carl Friedrich Gauss (1777–1855). To describe such surfaces (think of the surface of Earth for instance) one needs a map, a grid that assigns unique coordinates to every point of the surface, and sets of numbers to convert coordinate distances (i.e., distances on a map) to real distances (i.e., distances on the actual surface). These sets of numbers are called the components of the *metric tensor*. In general they are different for different points. The conversion from coordinate distances to real distances is thus given by a field, called the *metric field*, which assigns the appropriate metric tensor to every point.

A simple example may help to better understand the concept of a metric tensor field. On a standard map of the earth, countries close to the equator look smaller than countries close to the poles. The conversion factors from coordinate distances to real distances are therefore larger near the equator than they are near the poles. The metric tensor field thus varies from point to point, just like an electromagnetic field. Furthermore, at one and the same point, the conversion factor for north-south distances may differ from the conversion factor for east-west distances. The metric tensor at one point thus has different components for different directions.

Gauss's theory of curved surfaces was generalized to spaces of higher dimension by another German mathematician, Bernhard Riemann (1826–1866). This Riemannian geometry can handle curved space-time as well. In the case of four-dimensional space(-time), the metric tensor has ten independent components. In Einstein's theory, the metric tensor field does double duty: it describes both the geometry of space-time and the gravitational field. Mass—or its equivalent, energy—is the source of gravitational fields. Which field is produced

by a given source is determined by so-called *field equations*. To complete his theory Einstein thus had to find field equations for the metric field.

Einstein hoped to find field equations that would retain their form under arbitrary coordinate transformations. This property is called *general covariance*. The description of curved space-time outlined in the preceding paragraph clearly is generally covariant. One can choose any grid to assign coordinates to the points of space-time. Each choice will come with its own sets of conversion factors. In other words, the metric field encoding the geometry of space-time will be represented by different mathematical functions depending on which coordinates are used. Riemannian geometry is formulated in such a way that it works in arbitrary coordinates. It provides standard techniques for transforming the metric field from one coordinate system to another. If only Einstein could find field equations for the metric field that retain their form under arbitrary transformations, his whole theory would be generally covariant. In special relativity, Lorentz invariance expresses the relativity of uniform motion. Einstein—understandably perhaps, but mistakenly—thought that extending Lorentz invariance to invariance under arbitrary transformations would automatically extend the principle of relativity from uniform to arbitrary motion.

This line of thinking, however, conflates two completely different traditions in nineteenth-century geometry, as has been argued by John Norton. Minkowski's work with special relativity is in the tradition of projective geometry, associated with the so-called *Erlangen Program* of Felix Klein (1849–1925). Einstein's work with general relativity is in the tradition of differential geometry of Gauss and Riemann. The approaches of Klein and Riemann can be characterized as “subtractive” and “additive,” respectively.

In the subtractive approach one starts from an exhaustive description of space-time with all the bells and whistles and then strips this description down to its bare essentials. The recipe for doing that is to assign reality only to elements that are invariant under the group of transformations that relate different perspectives on the space-time. This group of transformations is thus directly related to some relativity principle. The most famous application of this strategy in physics is Minkowski's geometrical formulation of special relativity. The group of transformations in this case is the group of Lorentz transformations.

In the additive approach one starts with the set of space-time points stripped of all their properties and then adds the minimum geometrical structure needed to define straight(est) lines and distances in space-time. To guarantee that the added structure describes only intrinsic features of space-time, the demand is made that the description be generally covariant, that is, that it not depend on the coordinates used. This procedure can obviously be applied to any space-time. Only in certain special cases, however, will there be symmetries such as Lorentz invariance in Minkowski space-time reflecting the physical equivalence of different frames of reference and thereby some relativity principle. In the generic case there will be no symmetries whatsoever and hence no principle of rela-

tivity at all. This shows that general covariance has nothing to do with general relativity. Comparing Lorentz invariance in special relativity and general covariance in general relativity is like comparing apples and oranges.

***The hole argument and the point-coincidence argument.***

It was not until 1918 that a German high school teacher by the name of Erich Kretschmann (1887–1937) set Einstein straight on this score. This was a few years after Einstein had finally found generally covariant field equations. These equations, first published in November 1915, formed the capstone of his general theory of relativity. For more than two years prior to that, Einstein had used field equations that are not generally covariant. He had even found a fallacious but ultimately profound argument purporting to show that the field equations for the metric field cannot be generally covariant. For reasons that need not be of concern here the argument is known as the “hole argument.” The problem with generally covariant field equations, according to the hole argument, is that they allow one and the same source to produce what look like different metric fields, whereas the job of field equations is to determine uniquely what field is produced by a given source.

The escape from the hole argument is that on closer examination the different fields compatible with the same source turn out to be identical. The hole argument rests on the assumption that space-time points can be individuated and identified before any of their spatiotemporal properties are specified. Reject this assumption and the argument loses its force. The allegedly different metric fields only differ in that different featureless points take on the identity of the same space-time points. If space-time points cannot be individuated and identified independently of their spatiotemporal properties, this is no difference at all.

This comeback to the hole argument—a popular gloss on Einstein's so-called point-coincidence argument—amounts to a strong argument against the view that space-time is a substance, a container for the contents of space-time. The comeback shows that there are many ways to map spatiotemporal properties onto featureless points, all indistinguishable from one another. According to Leibniz's Principle of the Identity of Indiscernibles, all these indistinguishable ways must be physically identical. But then these points cannot be physically real, for that would make the indistinguishable ways of ascribing properties to them physically distinct.

The combination of the hole argument and the point-coincidence argument is thus seen to be a variant of an argument due to Leibniz himself against the Newtonian view that space is a substance. If space were a container, one version of the argument goes, God could have placed its contents a few feet to the left of where He actually placed it. But according to the Principle of the Identity of Indiscernibles, these two possible universes are identical and that leaves no room for the container, which could serve to distinguish the two. Einstein's fallacious argument against general covariance thus turned into an argument in support of a Leibnizian relational ontology of space-time.

***Mach's principle.*** During the period that Einstein accepted that the field equations of his theory were not generally co-



variant, he explored yet another strategy for eliminating absolute motion. This strategy was inspired by his reading of Ernst Mach's (1838–1916) response to Newton's famous bucket experiment. Set a bucket filled with water spinning. It will take the water some time to catch up with the rotation of the bucket. Just after the bucket starts rotating, the water will still be at rest and its surface will be flat. Once the water starts rotating, the water will climb up the sides of the bucket and its surface will become concave. Newton pointed out that this effect cannot be due to the relative rotation of the water with respect to the bucket. After all, the effect increases as the relative rotation decreases and is at its maximum when there is no relative motion at all because the water is rotating with the same angular velocity as the bucket. Newton concluded that the water surface becomes concave because of the water's rotation with respect to absolute space. Mach pointed out that there is another possibility: the effect could be due to the relative rotation of the water with respect to all other matter in the universe. Picture the earth, the bucket, and the water at the center of a giant spherical shell representing all other matter in the universe. If Mach were right, it would make no difference whether the bucket or the shell is set rotating: in both cases the water surface should become concave. According to Newton's theory, however, the rotating shell will have no effect whatsoever on the shape of the water's surface.

In 1913–1914, Einstein was convinced for a while that this was a problem not for Mach's analysis but for Newton's theory and that his own theory vindicated Mach's account of the bucket experiment. It only takes a cursory look at Einstein's calculations in support of this claim to see that this attempt to relativize rotation is a nonstarter. When Einstein calculated the metric field of a rotating shell at its center, he considered a shell rotating in Minkowski space-time. The rotating shell does produce a tiny deviation from the metric field of Minkowski space-time, but nothing on the order needed to make the water surface concave. What Einstein would have had to show to vindicate Mach is that the metric field produced by the rotating shell near its center mimics Minkowski space-time as seen from a rotating frame of reference. In that case the situation of the bucket at rest in this metric field would have been identical to that of the bucket rotating in the opposite direction in Minkowski space-time. But in order to calculate the metric field of a rotating shell, one needs to make some assumption about boundary conditions, that is, the values of the metric field as we go to spatial infinity. Rotation with respect to space-time rather than other matter thus creeps back in.

Einstein's flawed Machian account of Newton's bucket experiment receded into the background when he finally found generally covariant field equations for the metric field in November 1915. As is clear from Einstein's first systematic exposition of the theory in 1916, he still believed at this point that general covariance guarantees the relativity of arbitrary motion. The Dutch astronomer Willem De Sitter disabused him of this illusion in the fall of 1916 (see Stachel et al, vol. 18, pp. 351–357, for a summary of the debate that ensued between Einstein and De Sitter). De Sitter pointed out that

Einstein used Minkowskian boundary conditions in his calculations of metric fields produced by various sources (such as the rotating shell discussed above) and thereby retained a remnant of absolute space-time. By early 1917, Einstein had worked out his response to De Sitter. He eliminated the need for boundary conditions at infinity simply by eliminating infinity. He proposed a model for the universe that is spatially closed. He chose the simplest model of this kind, which is static in addition to being closed. Such a static universe would collapse as a result of the gravitational attraction between its parts. Einstein therefore needed to add a term to his field equations that would provide the gravitational repulsion to neutralize this attraction. This term involved what has become known as the *cosmological constant*. In the late 1920s it became clear that the universe is expanding, in which case the gravitational attraction can be allowed to slow down the expansion and does not need to be compensated by a gravitational repulsion. In the wake of these developments, Einstein allegedly called the cosmological constant the biggest blunder of his life. In 1917, however, he felt he needed it to get rid of boundary conditions.

De Sitter quickly produced an alternative cosmological model that was allowed by Einstein's new field equations with the cosmological term. In this De Sitter world there is no matter at all. Absolute space-time thus returned with a vengeance. In reaction to De Sitter's model, Einstein formulated what came to be known as *Mach's principle*: the metric field is fully determined by matter and cannot exist without it. Einstein was convinced at this point that the addition of the cosmological term guaranteed that general relativity satisfies this principle, despite the apparent counterexample provided by the De Sitter solution.

Early in 1918, Einstein argued that the De Sitter world was not empty after all, but that hidden from view a vast amount of matter was tucked away in it. He concluded that general relativity satisfies Mach's principle and that this finally established complete relativity of arbitrary motion. All motion in general relativity is motion with respect to the metric field. But if the metric field can be reduced to matter, talk about such motion can be reinterpreted as a *façon de parler* about motion with respect to the matter generating the metric field. This certainly was a clever idea on Einstein's part, but by June 1918 it had become clear that the De Sitter world does not contain any hidden masses and is thus a genuine counterexample to Mach's principle. Another one of Einstein's attempts to relativize all motion had failed.

Einstein thereupon lost his enthusiasm for Mach's principle. He accepted that motion with respect to the metric field cannot always be translated into motion with respect to other matter. He also realized that motion with respect to the metric field or curved space-time is much more palatable than motion with respect to Newton's absolute space or Minkowski's absolute space-time anyway. The curved space-time of general relativity, unlike absolute space(-time), is a bona fide physical entity. It not only acts upon matter, like absolute space(-time), by telling matter how to move, but is also acted upon, as matter tells it how to curve (to



borrow two slogans from Misner et al., p. 5). In his lectures in Princeton in May 1921, Einstein reformulated his objection against absolute space(-time) accordingly: it is something that acts but is not acted upon.

Einstein had a deeper reason to abandon Mach's principle. It was predicated on an antiquated nineteenth-century billiard-ball ontology. Einstein thought of matter as consisting of electromagnetic fields, in combination perhaps with gravitational fields. Mach's principle would thus amount to reducing one field to another. As can be inferred from a lecture delivered in Leiden in October 1920 (Einstein, 1983, pp. 1–24), Einstein came to accept that the metric field exists on a par with the electromagnetic field. Just as he had unified the electric and the magnetic field in special relativity and space-time and gravity in general relativity, he now embarked on the quest for a theory unifying the electromagnetic and the inertio-gravitational field. He would spend the rest of his life looking for such a theory.

### Conclusion

Einstein's struggle to relativize all motion, uniform and non-uniform, illustrates the old travelers' saying that the journey is more important than the destination. Although Einstein never reached the destination he originally had in mind, he found many valuable results along the way. For starters, he fulfilled many of his philosophical hopes, albeit in ways very different from what he originally envisioned. Absolute motion survives in general relativity, since there is an absolute difference between moving on a geodesic and moving on a nongeodesic. But motion with respect to curved space-time with a geometry described by a field interacting with matter (itself described by other fields) is a much more agreeable proposition than motion with respect to the absolute space(-time) of Newtonian theory and special relativity. The combination of the hole argument and the point-coincidence argument, moreover, had provided a strong argument against a Newtonian substantialist view of space-time and strong support for the rival Leibnizian relational view.

More importantly, Einstein had found a new theory of gravity, which does away with the artificial split between space-time and gravity of Newtonian theory. This theory opened up such exciting research areas as modern cosmology, black holes, singularities, gravitational waves, and gravitational lensing. Even some of the dead ends in Einstein's crusade against absolute motion led to interesting physics. In 2004, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA) *Gravity Probe B* was trying to detect frame dragging, a phenomenon first investigated in the context of Einstein's misguided attempt to vindicate Mach's account of Newton's bucket experiment. The cosmological constant, originally introduced in the context of Einstein's ill-fated attempt to make general relativity satisfy Mach's principle, has made a spectacular comeback in modern cosmology as a straightforward phenomenological description of the repulsion driving the acceleration of the expansion of the universe discovered through Type Ia Supernovae observations. Einstein's quest for general relativity was a very rewarding journey indeed.

*See also Cosmology: Cosmology and Astronomy; Geometry; Mathematics; Newtonianism; Physics; Science, History of; Science, Philosophy of.*

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Michel Janssen

**RELIGION.**

This entry includes seven subentries:

*Overview*

*Africa*

*African Diaspora*

*East and Southeast Asia*

*Indigenous Peoples' View, South America*

*Latin America*

*Middle East*

**OVERVIEW**

Like all items of culture, words have a history; meanings and usages change over time. So too, “religion,” and the assumption that the world is neatly separated between religious and nonreligious spheres (i.e., Church/State), is a product of historical development and not a brute fact of social life. In the early twenty-first century, long after the modern usage of the word was first coined, it is no longer obvious how it was understood or how it ought to be used. Therefore, contrary to other articles that employ the term *as if* it refers to a universal feature animating those social movements called “the world’s religions”—a term first coined in Europe in the nineteenth century (see Masuzawa)—this discussion will be concerned instead with the history of the idea of “religion.”

**The Beginnings of “Religion”**

The English “religion” has equivalents in other modern languages; for example, in Germany the academic study of religion is known as *Religionswissenschaft* (*Wissenschaft* = systematic study) and in France it is known as *les Sciences Religieuses* (in nineteenth-century Britain the academic study of religion was sometimes called Comparative Religion or the Science of Religion). A cursory comparison reveals that lexicons influenced by Latin and, later, European culture possess something equivalent to “religion.” This means that for pre-contact cultures, or those few that remain unaffected by Europe and North America, there was no necessary equivalent term.

Consider the case of modern India; although “religion” is not a traditional concept there (i.e., Sanskrit long predates the arrival of Latin-based languages), British colonialism ensures that contemporary English-speaking citizens of the Indian nation-state conceive what is called “Hinduism” as their “religion”—although, historically speaking, that which world religions textbooks now call “Hinduism” was understood by its practitioners as *sanatana dharma*: the cosmic system of obligations that impacted all aspects of *samsara* (the almost endless cycle of births and rebirths). Consider another case: even the New Testament is not much help since its language of composition—common, or koine Greek—also predated Latin; its authors therefore lacked the roots from which in the early 2000s are derived the word “religion.” So, although English translations routinely use “religion” or “godliness” to translate such Greek terms as *eusebia* (1 Timothy 3:16; 2 Timothy 3:5), or *threskia* (Acts 26:5; James 1:26, 27), these ancient Greek terms are much closer to the Sanskrit *dharma*, the Chinese *li*, and the Latin *pietas*—

all having something to do with the quality one is thought to possess as a result of properly fulfilling sets of social obligations, expectations, and ritual procedures, not only toward the gods or ancestors but also to one’s family, peers, superiors, servants, and so on. Despite “piety” currently meaning an inner sentiment or affection, to be pious in ancient Athens—what Socrates was accused of *not* being, as the story is told in Plato’s dialogue on defining piety, *Euthyphro* (c. 380 B.C.E.)—meant recognizing and publicly signaling differences in social status. This, of course, is the great irony of the *Euthyphro*: Socrates’ accuser is a young upstart, and Socrates’ teacher is an outright braggart; by their behavior the ancient reader would have known that neither can judge either *eusebia* or Socrates.

If by religion is meant a matter of belief, separable from forms of action and political organization, signified by one’s assent to a creed and enacted in certain ritual behaviors (i.e., worship), then even in Latin the modern term “religion” has no equivalent. For its precursors are thought to have meant, “to bind something tightly together,” “to re-read,” or “to pay close attention.” Recognizing that the term’s history holds no clue concerning how it ought to be used, scholars find a number of questions in need of investigation: If a culture does not have the concept, can “their religion” be studied? Should scholarship only employ concepts local to the group under study? Is the thing to which this word points shared by all people, regardless of their self-understandings (as Shakespeare wrote in *Romeo and Juliet*, “a rose by any other name would smell as sweet”)? Is using the local term as if it were a universal signifier an act of cultural imperialism?

These are important questions for those who attempt to develop a cross-culturally useful definition of this concept, distinguishable from its popular or folk definition. Just as chemists develop a technical vocabulary that enables them to talk about “H<sub>2</sub>O” instead of “water,” so too scholars of religion attempt to develop technical categories capable of working with cross-cultural data. As with anthropologists who study “culture”—yet another Latin-based term—the challenge, then, is to take a contextually specific word and use it in diverse historical and geographic settings.

A religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden—beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a Church all those who adhere to them. . . . In showing that the idea of religion is inseparable from the idea of a Church, it conveys the notion that religion must be an eminently collective thing. (Durkheim, p. 44)

### The Essentials of Religion

A notable early attempt was that of Edmund Burnett Tylor (1832–1917) in his influential book, *Religion in Primitive Culture* (1871); religion, he argued, was to be defined as “belief in spiritual beings.” In this minimalist definition is seen the still common emphasis on an essentially private, intellectual component (religion = *believing* this or that) rather than on, for instance, the behavioral or the social components, as in Émile Durkheim’s (1858–1917) emphasis on public ritual and institution in his still influential study, *Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse* (1912). In Tylor’s onetime popular definition is therefore found the philosophically idealist remnants of an earlier era in European history, when one’s membership within certain groups was thought to be primarily dependent upon whether one believed in something (i.e., a creed). In fact, the presumption persists that “the cumulative tradition” is the deadened expression of a prior, dynamic affectation known as “faith” (e.g., W. C. Smith’s 1962 work, *The Meaning and End of Religion*). In contemporary popular culture, people who distinguish spirituality from the institution of religion are easily found.

With its emphasis on the intellectual component (along with Herbert Spencer [1820–1903] and James G. Frazer [1854–1941], Tylor is numbered among the Intellectualists, a nineteenth-century anthropological tradition), Tylor’s work offers an example of a classic definitional strategy: *essentialism*. Because religions struck such observers as obviously having a number of different characteristics, many of which were understood as mere accidents (i.e., the result of specific cultural, historical, or geographic context), they thought it unwise to define religion based on what they took to be its secondary, external aspects. Instead, Tylor reasoned, one ought to identify “the deeper motive which underlies them.” Belief in spiritual beings, he concluded, was therefore the “essential source” for all religions; accordingly, his naturalistic theory of religion sought to account for belief in spiritual beings. Tylor’s definition are therefore referred to as *essentialist* (also termed *substantivist*): identifying the one essential feature (or substance).

In other words, if, as the German Protestant theologian Rudolf Otto (1869–1937) once argued in *The Idea of the Holy* (1917), that which sets religions apart is the participant’s feeling of awe and fascination when in the presence of what Otto termed the *mysterium tremendum* (the compelling yet repelling mystery of it all), then without this sense of awe and fascination there is no religion. The feeling of awe (a complex combination of fear, trembling, fascination, and attraction) was, for Otto, the essence of religion. Although Tylor’s and Otto’s classic definitions are significantly different (i.e., the former is anthropological, interested only in the fact of a belief, rather than its truth, whereas the latter is theological, presuming the object of the belief to exist and to prompt an emotional response), both went about the task of definition in the same manner: the *inductive method* was used, whereby one compares a number of empirical examples, looking for their underlying similarity. Here is seen the common strategy of employing the comparative method to identify nonempirical commonality, such that difference is understood to be a nonessential feature of contingent history—an approach characteristic of a num-

While there is a staggering amount of data, phenomena, of human experiences and expressions that might be characterized in one culture or another, by one criterion or another, as religious—*there is no data for religion*. Religion is solely the creation of the scholar’s study. It is created for the scholar’s analytic purposes by his imaginative acts of comparison and generalization. Religion has no existence apart from the academy. For this reason, the student of religion . . . must be relentlessly self-conscious. Indeed, this self-consciousness constitutes his primary expertise, his foremost object of study. (Jonathan Z. Smith, p. xi)

ber of scholars, from Frazer’s multivolume *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion* (first edition 1890) to Mircea Eliade’s (1907–1986) *Traité d’histoire des religions* (1949).

### The Functions of Religion

With the *essentialist approach* in mind—an approach adopted by those who presume religions house a core experience that is set apart from all other human behaviors—it may be contrasted with the *functionalist approach*. Consider the thing that appears in many classrooms: a lectern behind which the professor stands while lecturing. What is the difference between a lectern and a pulpit, for the same physical object could easily be identified as both? For the functionalist scholar, there is no one essential feature that unites all things people call “lecterns”; instead, the context into which something is placed, the expectations placed upon it by its users, and the purpose it serves are what cause things to be defined as this and not that. For early twentieth-century scholars, it was this shift from speculating on universal, nonempirical qualities and affectations to observing the role of local, historical context and empirical effects that signified the development of a truly scientific (i.e., historical, documentable) study of religion, in distinction from a well-meaning but, nonetheless, theologically motivated study of religion’s enduring value or groundless speculations on its prehistoric origins and evolutionary development.

In the early twenty-first century, functionalists owe much to such writers as Karl Marx (1818–1883), whose materialist, political economy theorized religion as a social pacifier that both deadened the oppressed’s sense of pain and alienation while simultaneously preventing them from doing something about their lot in life since ultimate responsibility was thought to reside with a being who existed outside history; Durkheim, whose sociological study understood intertwined sets of beliefs and practices to enable individuals to form the idea of a common social identity; and, of course, Sigmund Freud (1856–1939), whose psychological studies led him to liken public ritual to private obsessive-compulsive disorders and myths to the



role dreams play in helping an individual to express symbolically antisocial anxieties in a manner that does not threaten their place within the group. Twenty-first-century scholarship is pressing such classic work in new directions—for example, drawing on materialist scholarship and semiotic theory to study myth (Lincoln); using a social theory to account for such things as the beginnings of Christianity (Mack); and developing a theory of religion based on the findings of cognitive psychology and evolutionary theory (Boyer).

### Religion as an Item of Public Discourse

When it comes to defining religion, there are thus two common approaches: either one inductively browses through the group of things called religion, looking for an essentially shared feature or one sets about looking for the universal function it performs. If one takes the former route, then objects are defined by some feature that is internal to them, more often than not some nonempirical feature judged to be *sui generis* (i.e., self-caused, one of a kind). For instance, because there are innumerable observable differences among the members of the group known as, say, “U.S. citizens,” people often fall back on the assumption that what *really* unites the members of this group is an internal experience, a feeling, an attitude—all things that cannot be tasted, touched, smelled, or heard, but, instead, only felt by the participants themselves and approximated rather crudely by the uninitiated observer. Because for many people religion is assumed to refer to an invisible but all-too-real interior world that is fully experienced only by the believer (a point often associated with Otto’s work), this essentialist approach is still popular, within and outside the academy.

But, if “religion” is to be used in the human sciences as a classification to name an aspect of the observable, intersubjective world, then the essentialist approach is not helpful for it is premised on the priority of a subjective, private world of affectation and aesthetic appreciation. Because the functionalist approach focuses on the use to which something is put, it shifts attention to defining something in light of an observable group of people, their needs, their goals, and their interests (demonstrating the debt scholars of religion owe to such anthropological predecessors as Mary Douglas and her 1966 study of the sociology of classification, *Purity and Danger*). The functionalist approach therefore holds more promise for the academic study of religion practiced as part of a public discourse.

### Resemblances among Religions

A final approach to consider is the one sometimes favored by those who wish to steer a middle path between essentialist and

To define “religion,” to say what it *is*, is not possible at the start of a presentation such as this. Definition can be attempted, if at all, only at the conclusion of the study. (Weber, p. 1)

To define is not to finish, but to start. To define is not to confine but to create something. . . . To define, finally, is not to destroy but to construct for the purpose of useful reflection. . . . In fact, we have definitions, hazy and inarticulate as they might be, for every object about which we know something. . . . Let us, then, define our concept of definition as a tentative classification of a phenomenon, which allows us to begin an analysis of the phenomenon so defined. (Brian K. Smith, pp. 4-5)

functionalist approaches. This is referred to as *the family resemblance approach*, credited to the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889–1951), who asked people to stop and consider how it is that they actually go about classifying things. If they did this, he suggested, they would see that all members of the family called “game” *more or less* shared a series of traits or characteristics, just as no two members of a family are exactly alike but, instead, each *more or less* share a series of characteristics (such as name, hair color, temperament, height, favorite foods, blood type, and so on). Definition, for Wittgenstein, was therefore an activity of choice; it therefore falls to the users of classifications—such as those who seek to define religion—not only to have what an anthropologist, Benson Saler, has termed a prototypical definition, but also to be prepared to make judgmental calls when a cultural artifact meets so few of their prototype’s characteristics that it is questionable whether the artifact can productively be called a religion.

Contrary to both the essentialist and the functionalist scholar passively recognizing either some core feature or purpose served by a religion, Wittgensteinian scholars of religion actively constitute an artifact as religious inasmuch as it does or does not match their prototype. That the family resemblance definition widens in the case of more liberal scholars (either politically or theologically), and narrows in the case of those who are more conservative, should not go unnoticed.

### Classification as a Scholarly Act

Keeping in mind this relationship between classifier, classification, and that which is classified, it may be seen why a number of contemporary scholars have found the essentialist approach to be unproductive inasmuch as its metaphysic presumes a common essence to underlie its varied manifestations—the presumption that motivated an earlier movement known as the Phenomenology of Religion (e.g., van der Leeuw’s 1933 work, *Religion in Essence and Manifestation*). Moreover, just as studies of the politics of scholarship have recently appeared throughout the human sciences, so too in the study of religion once this field was re-conceived as a site constituted by choice



and interests rather than one based on sympathetic spiritual insight (e.g., Fitzgerald, Wiebe). Due to the breadth of his own work and its international influence, the University of Chicago's Jonathan Z. Smith is, perhaps, the best representative of this recent development among scholars of religion who now take seriously that "religion" is their analytic tool and that it does not necessarily identify a universal affectation lurking deep within human nature.

Contrary to Max Weber (1864–1920), who famously opened his now classic *The Sociology of Religion* (1922) by stating that exhaustive description must precede definition, many scholars no longer see classification to be concerned with linking a historical word to an ahistorical trait identified only after all empirical cases have been considered. Instead, classification—like all human activities—is now understood as a tactical, provisional activity, directed by *deductive* scholarly theories and prior social interests in need of disclosure. Classification ensures that some generic thing stands out as an object worthy of describing; for without a prior definition of religion Weber would have had nothing to describe. To paraphrase Jonathan Z. Smith, classification therefore provides scholars with some elbowroom to get on with their work of disciplined inquiry.

*See also Anthropology; Buddhism; Christianity; Free Will, Determinism, and Predestination; Heresy and Apostasy; Hinduism; Islam; Judaism; Mysticism; Orthodoxy; Orthopraxy; Phenomenology; Sufism; Shinto; Zen.*

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Russell T. McCutcheon

#### AFRICA

The modern academic study of indigenous African religions began with the publication of ethnographic, missionary, and travel monographs by Leo Frobenius, R. S. Rattray, H. A. Junod, W. C. Willoughby, Edwin Smith, E. E. Evans-Pritchard, John Middleton, Godfrey Lienhardt, Geoffrey Parrinder, and Marcel Griaule, among others. The African scholars Bolajiji Idowu, John Mbiti, and Gabriel Setiloane also published works on African religious life and practice. These studies explore religious life and the social history of specific communities. Studies that stress the historicity of African religions draw on oral traditions and archaeological records (Terrence Ranger, I. Kimambo, Wim M. J. van Binsbergen, Matthew Schoffeleers, Thomas Blakely, Walter E. A. van Beek, and Dennis L. Thompson).

The encounter with modernity and with other religions such as Christianity and Islam affected African religions in two ways. Positively, this encounter demonstrated that African religions share common features with other religions in the quest for ultimate and communal values. Negatively, the new religions dominated African religions through their massive social services, which they used for conversion. The messengers of the faiths introduced into Africa derided indigenous religions, competed with ritual experts, and were also impatient that changes they demanded in some aspects of African rituals did not take place soon enough. A good example is the case of circumcision among the Kikuyu. Conflicts arose in the Kikuyu area of Kenya because they practiced this rite, and escalated to the point where some mission organizations barred circumcised Kikuyu children from attending schools.

African religions were often seen as *preparatio evangelica* (preparation for the Gospel), and the encounter with modernity sharply curtailed and stunted the growth of African religions. In response, however, Africans continued to practice their religions. Africans converted to the new religions practiced a bricolage, combining elements of their religion with the new faiths. Africans also used their religious beliefs to confront newcomers. In East Africa, the Nyabingi cult of the nineteenth century, the Maji-Maji movement, the Mambo cult in Kenya, the Mwari

cult in Zimbabwe, and the Poro cult in Sierra Leone, all resisted colonial incursion into their territories.

African religions are local faiths and have no sacred book, although scholars have collected texts such as *Sixteen Cowries* and *Ifa Divination* (William Bascom) and *Texts on Zulu Religion* (Irving Hexham). Collections of prayers by John Mbiti and Alyward Shorter, and Marcel Griaule's *Conversations with Ogotemeli*, are also rudimentary religious texts. Although there is no uniformity of African religious thought, it is possible to summarize key components of African religious life and history.

### Myth and Cosmology

African myths sketch a conceptual world presided over by a divinity that is responsible for the emergence of humanity and the development of a community. Myths provide the legitimacy of local authority, settlement, and social organization, and describe the moral universe of the people. Mythic narratives, which Paul Ricoeur describes as primary language, offer religious perspectives on the past and the present and provide an ethos upon which to construct the future. Zulu, Swazi, Xhosa, Tsonga, and some Sotho myths state that people came out of a bed of reeds. Yoruba myths state that the *orishas* Obatala and Oduduwa, representing Olodumare, the Supreme God, created the world and humanity. Elsewhere, Sotho myths hold that Kgobe the High God created the world and that his son Kgobeane created people.

Myths also account for the separation of humanity from divinity and place the responsibility for this separation on human beings. The Batammaliba people believe that Kuiye created the world and gave its people all they needed. Unfortunately, humans complained because God did everything for them. Their complaints forced the divinity to withdraw into the sky; as a result, suffering and death entered the human community. Kuiye was compassionate and provided the Batammaliba with rain and other things they needed to survive under their new circumstances. Batammaliba mythology informs the community's sociocultural practice as well as its architectural designs. In addition, mythology provides a religious view of human conflicts and the human family. According to Dogon myths, Amma the Supreme Deity created the world, but Ogo, one of the first primordial persons, rebelled and polluted the world. Amma rescued the creative process by killing Nommo, the twin brother of Ogo, to clean up the chaos caused by Ogo's act of rebellion.

### Gods and Spirits

Belief in a High God is widespread in Africa. (Zulu: Unkulunkulu, the Great One, or Inkosi Yezulu, the Chief of the Sky; Yoruba: Olurun, King of the Sky, or Olodumare; Wimbun: Nyui; Igbo: Chukwu; Dogon: Amma.) The Zulus believe that in the beginning Unkulunkulu created people, male and female. He also created people of different colors and gave them their own dwelling places: the whites were to live in the water, and the black people in the land now occupied by the Zulu people. Beliefs about God indicate that God is a transcendent and immanent being who controls the universe and is responsible for all things and all human affairs. In some beliefs, God is an androgynous being. Kuiye of the Batammaliba has both male and female genitals and is called "The

Sun, Our Father and Our Mother." In Zimbabwe, Mwari, the god of fertility, also is androgynous. Theologians John Mbiti, E. Bolaji Idowu, and Gabriel Setiloane have articulated African perspectives on God using Christian theological categories.

In the divine hierarchy, divinities and spirits are ranked below God. Yoruba divinities are called *orishas*. God sent the divinities Obatala and Oduduwa to create the world and all things in it. Some of the *orishas* are divinized ancestors; the *orisha* Shango was the fourth king of Oyo. The *orisha* Esu is a trickster who opens the path to other *orishas*. Esu rewards devotees and also punishes them when they go astray. Orunmila is the *orisha* of wisdom and divination while Ogun is the *orisha* of iron and war. The female deity Oshun is the goddess of water and revered as a great mother. Her devotees hold festivals that have become important cultural manifestations in the Nigerian town of Oshogbo.

Evans-Pritchard argued that the Nuer god Kwoth was also a spirit. This theoretical move set up a complicated picture of the nature of gods and spirits. This remains a rich territory for further exploration because Nuer Kwoth is an entity that is both divine and a distinct spirit. Clan divinities among the Nuer and Dinka are believed to have the power to address moral issues and guide interpersonal relationships. These spirits and divinities are all subject to the authority of God and carry out God's will.

Ancestral spirits are also thought to interact with people. People offer sacrifice and pour libations to the spirits to ward off difficulties. Community leaders consult ancestral spirits for guidance; in Zimbabwe, *mhondoro* spirits helped determine succession to office. Chiefs and quarter heads of the Wimbun generally offer wine to the ancestors before they drink. In addition to ancestral spirits who may bless or punish people, there are hosts of other spirits, who may be mainly malicious. Among the Wimbun, some of these spirits are called *nyirr* and often bother people at night.

### Religion and Possession

Spirit possession is a complex spiritual engagement that goes beyond psychological release for marginalized women and occurs in indigenous religions as well as in Islam and Christianity. Yoruba divinities such as Shango, Yemoja, Osun, and Obatala often possess people. In possession, a spirit takes control of an individual for a period of time. Such possession can be sudden and may be induced through music, drumming, or medicines. The possessed individual speaks for the spirit. Illness may indicate the presence of a spirit. Regardless of the duration, possession signifies a bond with the spirit; the possessed are called brides. Such bonds make possession an ecstatic and enjoyable experience. Despite the fact that possession is often described as a marriage between the spirit and the possessed individual, possession remains a symbolic act because there is no physical or genital activity involved, although the sense of pleasure or suffering is real. Possession can also be a violent event, especially possession by the god Shango, who is said to mount a person as a horse. Possession ends when the spirit departs, but the phenomenon of possession remains a constant feature of the spiritual life of the individual. Early lit-

erature on the Zar possession cult suggested that Somali women turned to spirit possession to address marginality. Janice Boddy has argued that possession involves several aspects of the human experience. Edwin Ardener argued that Bakweri female cults expressed positive female values. And Michael Lambek has argued that possession should also be seen as a system of meaning that operates within a given culture.

Possession is important because the spirit that controls the devotee communicates messages to the community through that individual. Possession can also be part of what Jean Buxton described as a call to the healing profession and “a diagnostic technique” (p. 297). The possession experience can be a critical moment in creating self-understanding and personhood. It offers opportunities to resolve contradictions within the self and may be an incentive for people to pay attention to public morality. Spirit possession may also reflect disapproval and discontent with certain political agendas, or express a nationalist ideology—an activity noted in the Zimbabwean revolutionary struggle against the white minority rule of Ian Smith. Belief in spirit possession has not disappeared in the wake of Christian and Muslim attacks on it.

### Religious Authorities

Religious authorities range from heads of households who perform family rituals to prophets, priests, and ritual experts. They serve as intermediaries between the spirits and the people, carry out divination to diagnose problems, and supervise the execution of rituals. Divination in Yoruba religion is carried out by a priest called *babalawo* (a father of secrets) who uses symbols to form a combination of numbers derived from the number 256 that points to a text which provides insights into the problem of the individual. When the diviner has arrived at a combination, he links it to the body of sacred oral verses called the Odu Ifa. The interpretation of a particular *odu* provides guidance for the solution to the problem.

Prophets speak on behalf of divinity and fight for a just society. Douglas Johnson argues that colonial authorities antagonized Nuer prophets and fostered a largely political interpretation of their prophetic role. However, prophets based their power on the spiritual and moral values of the community: neighborliness, generosity, and the peaceful resolution of disputes. People who practiced these virtues had the divinity in them and thus spoke on their behalf. “Evans-Pritchard identifies the *kuaar* as a priest who represents men to divinity by invoking the divinity of his flesh, contrasting with the prophet who, inspired by a divinity, represents divinity to men” (Johnson, p. 59). These individuals acquired special abilities to see and know things beforehand; the gift of prophecy made them spokespersons (*guk*) for divinity.

Ngundeng was one of these people. He was also called Dengkur and regarded as a prophet of the Nuer people. When he died, British colonial officials reported that people liked and feared him. He was just, helped the poor, rejected killing, and opposed colonial domination of the Nuer land in the Sudan. Prophet Kinjikitile led the Maji-Maji rebellion in Tanzania in 1905, inspired by sacred water (*maji*) that he believed would help his people withstand colonial

firearms. Past prophets worked on conflict resolution and promoted peace.

### Worship Spaces

Worship takes place in a variety of sacred spaces and at shrines. A. I. Richards listed six types of shrines: personal huts, village shrines, places of deceased chiefs, natural-phenomena shrines, burial places of chiefs, and places containing the relics and paraphernalia of dead chiefs. Drawing on this, Van Binsbergen distinguished between shrines constructed by humans and natural shrines such as trees, hills, groves, pools, streams, falls, and rapids. Dominique Zahan calls these natural shrines of water, earth, air, and fire, “elementary cathedrals.” Sacred places associated with water include streams, rivers, lakes, and springs. Those associated with the earth include the ground itself, rocks, crossroads, hollows, hills, and mountains, and those associated with air include trees and groves. In the village of Ntumbaw, the burial groves of chiefs are considered sacred ground, and the current chief enters this sacred place only to communicate with the departed chiefs.

Religious activities also take place in the public square. In Nigeria, Oshun festivals take place in the courtyard of the *oba* (king) as well as in the sacred grove of Oshun. Worship also takes place in individual homes. Blier argues that the vertical houses of the Batammaliba (which they consider places of worship) are designed to emphasize their belief that God is the highest one and are oriented in an east-west path to face Kuyiekulie, the dwelling place of Kuyie. Other parts of the house point to their sacrificial relationship to Kuyie’s providence through human procreation, and to other deities in their religious system.

### Rituals and Ceremonies

Recent interpretation of rituals supplements Émile Durkheim’s views that rituals are formalized and symbolic rites—controlled and repeated behavior in the presence of the sacred—which enact society’s separation of the sacred and the profane. In the work of Edmund Leach and Mary Douglas, rituals constitute a system of symbolic actions that communicate values about society. The Manchester School of Manchester University’s Department of Social Anthropology championed a *processual* view that interprets rituals as a symbolic mechanism in which form, content, meaning, and a dynamic process guides, confirms, and reorders individual as well social experience and practices. Victor Turner argued that in Ndembu rituals and rites of passage, symbols are employed to stabilize individuals and society, create new social locations, and anticipate transformation by establishing a *communitas*, or fellowship. Jean Comaroff has argued that rituals reenact the historical and social practices of a community.

Rituals give content and meaning to religious life. Life crisis and developmental rituals are transformative and stabilizing. Life cycle rituals such as funerals honor the dead and prepare them for transition into ancestors; ceremonies honoring dead chiefs take on cosmic proportions. The Wimbun people often suspend farm work for the duration of the celebrations. Rituals of affliction are performed to rebuff a spirit that causes illness, misfortune, failure, and barrenness. Certain afflictions may be a call for the afflicted to become a healer or assume an



important ritual office. In such a case, the afflicted receives ritual treatment from a specialist and is initiated into the practice. Rituals of rebellion offer opportunities for transformation and the creation of alternative social alliances. Religious rituals also involve propitiation of the ancestors and of gods who have the power to remove afflictions.

### Personhood and Morality

Personhood and individuality are recognized in the context of a communitarian ethos. In Yoruba religion, Olodumare creates people and gives each person the opportunity to choose his or her destiny. Individuality is also spelled out in names and in the concept of *ori* (head), which indicates not only the physical head but also an important part of an individual's nature and character (*iwa*). The psychological aspect of the person is *inu*, and a sense of self is conveyed by the word *emi*. Yoruba thought stresses the need for individuals to carry out their obligations in order to fulfill their destiny. Such responsibility is not necessarily a set of rules, but entails living one's life in such a way that one's goals and destiny are accomplished. However, there are prescriptions. People are often advised to avoid witchcraft and shun polluting symbols. Evil is seen as any action that distorts interpersonal relations and brings about harmful social developments. Evildoers misuse magic and witchcraft and inflict violence on others, but that does not mean that witchcraft and other forms of powers are necessarily evil. Ritual specialists, such as diviners, help individuals to determine not only the course of their destiny, but also how to act in a way that will allow them to fulfill their destiny.

### Religion and Art

Engelbert Mveng once described black art as "a cosmic liturgy and religious language." African art is primarily the expression of the artistic and aesthetic imagination of individual artists. However, some works of art carry religious meanings. Festivals often incorporate artistic celebrations because artistic work on materials such as musical instruments, regalia, and headdresses enhances these events. Art objects often point to spiritual and ancestral power. Works of art may be representations of gods and spirits. Art that has religious significance empowers people to live balanced lives and to fulfill their obligations to others. According to Robert Farris Thompson, Yoruba arts are avatars of *ashé* (divine energy) in ceremonial bowls, staffs, and iron sculptures. "A thing or a work of art that has *ashé* transcends ordinary questions about its make up and confinements: it is divine force incarnate" (p. 7). Furthermore, Suzanne Blier argues that *bocio* sculptures, which have been described as "fetishes, idols, *gris-gris*, devils, ill-formed monsters, villainous *maggot*, and *marmouset* (grotesque form) . . . function in conjunction with . . . *vodun* energies . . . they are . . . closely identified with *vodun* power, religious tenets, and philosophy" (1995, p. 4–5).

African art often depicts sacred kingship. Palace construction and royal regalia employ motifs of temple construction. Artworks often convey a sense of security in the community, which can be inferred from the masking tradition that uses reversal to hint at the presence of ancestors and spirits among people, demonstrating a power that can drive away evil. Blier

argues that the etymology of the word *vodun* "constitutes a philosophy which places a primacy on patience, calmness, respect, and order both in the context of acquiring life's basic necessities and in the pursuit of those extra benefits which make life at once full and pleasurable" (1995, p. 40). *Bocio* sculptures also provide protection from witches.

Art celebrates divine beauty and character. Batatunde Lawal argues that Yoruba aesthetics reveal outer and inner beauty of character and the joy of life, which endears an individual to others and to Olodumare. Artists thus possess *iwapele* (gentle character) in the manner of the *Orishanla*, divinities of creation and the primordial artist. Yoruba artists have depicted *aye*, the world of the living, and *orun*, the other world, in a spherical carved gourd. Divination trays are often elaborately carved to depict the wisdom of *Orunmila*, the divinity of divination. *Gèlèdè* headdresses often feature masks that represent "priests and priestesses to recognize publicly their contributions to the spiritual well-being of the community" (Lawal, p. 212). Rosalind Hackett argues that African art focuses on and shapes an individual's understanding of humanity, destiny, death, procreation, secrecy, power, divinity, spirits, and healing. Ritual art objects such as initiation stools, divination materials, staffs, and musical instruments express religious ideas and elevate spiritual life and experience.

### Death and the Afterlife

Ancestor veneration suggests that, contrary to Mbiti's thesis, speculation about the afterlife is strong in African religions. Death rituals, offerings, and pouring of libations to ancestors all point to life beyond the grave. Yoruba proverbs state that life here on earth is transitory; the world is a marketplace and heaven is one's home. All people who die go before Olodumare and Obatala to be judged for their actions here on earth. In Manianga thought, moral and upright people go to Mpemba, the world of the ancestors. Evil people are prevented from entering Mpemba and are barred from meeting and staying with ancestors.

### The Future of African Religions

African religions are alive in the early 2000s but often continue to be described, erroneously, as animism. Indigenous religions face prejudice from other religions—converts to Islam and Christianity still call African religions paganism. Hackett has argued that indigenous religions are being revitalized through the universalization, modernization, politicization, commercialization, and individualization of religious ideas and practices. African religions have a future for many reasons. First, these religions articulate worldviews that continue to provide a basis for morality, supporting what Laurenti Magesa has called "the moral traditions of abundant life." Second, African religions are linked to royal authority, influencing the selection and installation of royals and their system of governance. Third, celebrations and rituals will keep indigenous religions alive. Fourth, the need for healing will keep African religions alive. Fifth, the survival of African religions in the diaspora is testimony to their staying power. Sixth, the scholarly study of African religions could contribute to their survival. Growth depends upon how practitioners address issues in daily life. African religions



have always paid attention to individuals and the community; such attention in the twenty-first century could have a positive bearing on a contemporary society in need of revitalization.

*See also Ancestor Worship; Animism; Arts: Africa; Humanity: African Thought; Immortality and the Afterlife; Masks; Oral Traditions: Overview; Personhood in African Thought; Philosophy, Moral: Africa; Ritual: Religion.*

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#### AFRICAN DIASPORA

The term *African-derived religions* (ADR) is used to identify various religions transplanted to the Americas with the enslavement of Africans. For simplicity, ADR will be used in this entry to denote Afro-Caribbean and Afro-Brazilian religions, whose traditions survived cultural and ideological assault and continued to provide spiritual resources for a civilization rooted in African cosmologies. Wide geographical distribution in the Americas reflects a similar distribution along the coast of West and Central Africa. African-derived religions are both an urban and a rural phenomenon, created in response to the existential realities of slavery and the derision of African spirituality. However, ADR inspired enslaved peoples in Haiti and provided inspiration for their revolution of 1791. ADR survived missionary attacks, ridicule, popular misunderstanding, and attempts to call into question their validity.

George Simpson grouped these religions into five types. First were the neo-African religions—Santería in Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico; Vodun in Haiti; Shango in Trinidad and Grenada; and Candomblé in Brazil—drew from similar concepts and borrowed practices from Catholicism that reminded them of African realities. The second type were religions influenced by Protestant missionary activity in the region: Cumina and the Convince cult in Jamaica, The Big Drum Dance of Carriacou (Grenada), and Kele in St. Lucia. Third were groups influenced by Pentecostal groups from the United States. Religions that emphasize divination, healing, and spirit mediumship were the fourth type: Umbanda in Brazil, the Maria Lionza cult in Venezuela, and Espiritismo in Puerto Rico. The fifth type was Rastafarianism, a twentieth-century religion with a sociopolitical agenda.

*Afro-Caribbean religions* trace their origins to Africa.

- a. Santería, which is practiced in Cuba and in many parts of the United States, is perhaps the most well known of the African-derived religions. It is also called Regla de Ocha or Regla Lucumi.
- b. Regla de Palo, also called Palo Monte or Palo Mayombe, is linked to the religious traditions of

- Angola, Congo, and Gabon.
- c. Regla Arara, also called Gaga, derives from the Dogon people in Mali.
  - d. Nanigo, also called Abakuka, is associated by practitioners with African thought, beliefs, and rituals.
  - e. Vodú (Vodun) is practiced in Haiti and in parts of the United States.
  - f. Kunina is practiced in Jamaica.
  - g. Winti, practiced in Suriname, is a multinational and multicultural religion that incorporates African, Indian, and Christian traditions.
  - h. Shango religion, practiced in Trinidad and Grenada, started in 1849, when indentured African laborers brought in from Ijesha in Nigeria began to practice Yoruba beliefs.
  - i. Kele is practiced on St. Lucia.
  - j. Drum Dance of Carriacou in the Grenadines, where worshippers dance and communicate with ancestors.
  - k. The Venezuelan cult of Maria Lionza draws upon spiritism, Amerindian mythology, and shamanism, as well as the Afro-Cuban Catholic tradition.
  - l. Confa Obeah religion is practiced in Guayana.
  - m. The twentieth-century Rastafarian movement is not an African-derived religion in the strictest sense, but because it considers the Imperial Majesty of Ethiopia a divine personality, members of its community have strong ties to Africa.

The term *Afro-Brazilian religions* is used for religious traditions practiced in Brazil.

- a. Candomblé is a spirit-possession religion with strong ties to Africa and draws on Catholicism, Pentecostalism, Umbanda, and Brazilian mythology. It began when three women living in Bahia—Iyá Dêta, Iyá Kalá, and Iyá Nassô—started a house worship, which they called Engenho Velho. Disputes arose and led to the creation of Grantois and Axé Opó Afronjá. Roberto Motta has argued that Candomblé is being “churchified” through systematization and standardization at different levels and that this is reflected in several discourses and practices seeking to establish which community is authentic, who is the *pureza nagô*, who is the greatest *babalorixá*, which group offers the most social services in urban areas, and which theological literature stresses African roots and African memory and values.

- b. Umbanda grew out of a response to industrialization in Rio de Janeiro in the 1920s and spread to São Paulo. Members seek upward mobility, and their leaders are called *pai-de-santo* and *mae-de-santo*.
- c. Macumba, a syncretistic tradition, traces its roots to the Yoruba world. It is a ritual and dancing community led by priests (*babalorixá*) and priestesses (*iyalorixá*) who provide spiritual and psychological services to adherents.
- d. Scholars question the qualification of Batuque as an African-derived religion because it has few African traits and no strong slave tradition in the area of Belem, where the religion is practiced.
- e. Shango religions were created in honor of the *orisha* Shango.
- f. Tambor de Mina, also called Nago.
- g. Xango in Recife.

Originally, these nondoctrinaire and nontextual religions focused on a rich memory of African deities, rituals, morality, and practices that were passed on to younger generations. There is a wide range of scholarship on these religions, enabling broad descriptions of their spirituality.

### Religious Symbioses

African-derived religions are symbioses of African religious and global culture. Their ceremonies provided social revolutionary inspiration in Jamaica and Haiti and inspired the mythologies behind the patron saint of Cuba, Virgen de la Caridad del Cobre (the Virgin of Charity of Cobre). ADRs maintain an orientation to Africa, but their ceremonies celebrate the rich diversity of the African community in the Americas. Even Rastafarianism lays claim to Ethiopia’s historical and genetic engagement with the biblical world mythologized in the Kebra Nagast. The faithful in ADR evoke a sense of belonging to their particular community similar to the Jamaican *yaad* (practice), and a sense of being at home.

Gatherings at Catholic churches provided a “clearing” for displaced Africans to occupy, enabling them to catch glimpses of African religiosity. Devotion to Catholicism was mandated by the *Code noir* of 1685, which required that slaves be initiated into Christianity. The early meetings of ADR were held in *cabildos*, later called *ile ocha* (house of *orisha*) or *casa templo* (house temple). Later devotees would point to spirits they served such as Santa Barbara, San Lázaro, and Yemayá.

The *patakis* (myths) of Africa provided the inspiration that diasporan Africans needed to create a dynamic life that would defy the realities of slave society. The gods of Africa energized lives, inspired celebrations that honored the *orishas*, and enabled participants to maintain balance and fulfill their purpose in life. Devotees of Candomblé maintained a constant relationship with Africa and organized pilgrimages to Africa. In the early 2000s, followers of African-derived religions serve the

spirits and honor their ancestors in colorful enactments of the ceremonies, dances, arts, and rituals of the African diaspora.

### Divinity

African-derived religions worship a divine being and several divinities. The term *gadu* refers to Winti deities in Suriname. Religious traditions associated with the Yoruba religions call the supreme being Olodumare (Santería, Candomblé, and others). Olodumare is the creator and ruler of all things; he owns character and human destiny. He is also the source of *ashe*, or divine essence, and all other forces at work in the world. In Vodun devotees serve the Bondye (supreme being), who created the world and maintains balance. Divinity in the Rastafarian movement is called Jah Rastafaria.

Devotees serve the *orishas*, who manifest divine energy and are considered part of the community. The *orishas* themselves depend on the members of the community as much as the members of the community depend on them. Vodun devotees serve the *loas* (lesser deities), also called *les invisibles* and *les mysteres*. Among the *loas* (spirit intermediaries), Legba is important because he, like Esu, opens the door to divinity, and must receive a share of all offerings.

### Ancestors

Ancestors are important in ADR because they link worshipers to the *loas*. Devotees affirm: "I believe in the power of ancestors who watch over us and serve us before the *loas*; that they must be remembered and served faithfully" (Desmangles, p. 63). A ceremony called *retirer d'en bas de l'eau*, performed for the dead, allows the soul of the deceased to find peace. This ceremony is considered a third birth for the individual (the first is physical, the second, spiritual) and gives the ancestor a new status and the power to influence life on earth. The ancestors are part of a hierarchy in the spiritual world, but are not considered to be gods.

### Spiritual Assets: *Ase* and *Konesans*

Two central concepts in some African-derived religions are *ase* (or *axe*) and *konesans* (connaissance). *Ase* is the divine force, energy, and power incarnate in the world. Olodumare gives *ase* to everything, including inanimate objects. *Ashe* is the power behind all things in the universe. It enables people to find balance in life. The *orishas* are bearers of *ashe*. *Santeros* (Santería priests) use *ase* to provide blessing and healing to devotees. "*Ashe* is a current or flow, a groove that initiates can channel so that it carries them along their road in life. The prayers, rhythms, offerings, taboos of Santería tune initiates into this flow" (Murphy, 1993, p. 131). In Santería, herbs are impregnated with *ashe*. The color of the Obatala conducts *ashe*. Part of the Vodun initiation ceremonies gives the priest intuitive knowledge, or *konesans*, enabling him to understand people, diagnose problems, and perform healing.

### Leadership

Priests and priestesses in ADR direct, guide, and organize ceremonies. These leaders are not as authoritative as in other religions because they are merely conduits of the spirits. Vodun

leaders are called *oungans* (male) and *mambos* (female) or *mães de santo* and *päis de santo*. A Candomblé leader is called *babalorixa* (male) or *iyalorixa* (female). Santería leaders are known as *santeros* (male) and *santeras* (female). The *orishas* select leaders; those chosen for office go through a three-year initiation that culminates in *asiento*, or *hacer santo*, when the *orisha* who called the neophyte is seated. The neophyte is called *iyawo* (bride). The newly initiated *iyawo* wears white during the first year. Some *santeros* may be initiated into the cult of *Ifá* and receive training from a leader, who imparts a mastery of the texts of divination. Initiation gives the neophyte a new personality as well as responsibility. The rites also link the leader with the first sixteen kings of the Yoruba people.

### Divination and Spirit Possession

Devotees seek divine will and understanding through divination, which also serves as means of diagnosing illness and misfortune. A common divination system is the *dilloggun*, which draws on esoteric texts of the tradition that speak to the problem of the devotee. Guidance is also sought through the oracle.

Spirit possession is an important aspect of ADR. In possession, a spirit takes control of a devotee, provides direction, and imparts knowledge. When possessed, "the individual's executive faculties are temporarily placed in abeyance as the deity takes over . . . habitual functions. When the possession is ended the devotee is again himself with ordinarily no recollection of what has happened" (Walker, p. 36). The spirit would also possess devotees who surrender their lives to a deity or spirit. Thus, possession is a moment for submission to the suggestions of the spirit. In Candomblé, possession by the spirit is described as *incorporar* (to incorporate), *pegar* (to seize or grab), or *manifestar* (to manifest). In Winti religion, spirits control the conscience of an individual and reveal things to him. The spirit that possesses an individual might assume one aspect of that person's personality. Some spirits may appear only to certain people. In Trinidad, Ogun appears only to stout women, while Osian, the quiet god of the forest, appears only to slim men and women.

Songs and drum rhythms can invite possession. Possession can also take place during the initiation of a devotee. The drummer often releases the tension of monotony with breaks. Sometimes possession may come through hypnosis, periods of intense stress, pain, fear, or difficulties, which some interpret as a psychodrama or psychotherapeutic event through which the individual works out life's problems as they interact with other people. Possession may be a wild drama during which the possessed speaks on behalf of the deity, or it may end spontaneously, or when the community shifts emphasis to another deity. Possession establishes a spiritual bond, creating a *comunidades*. In possession, liminality replaces normalcy, making room for public excesses that express social desires, and may offer an opportunity for the spirit, who speaks through the voice of the possessed, to criticize unsocial behavior.

### Rituals and Sacrifices

African-derived religious ceremonies are a service to the spirits. In the Bembé drum dance of the Santería community, the



ceremony is used to communicate with ancestors and summon spirits. Mederick Louis Moreau de St. Mery described Vodun religion as a dance of the Africans in Haiti that summoned the energies of Bondye and his spirits *lwas* and *les morts*. The Big Drum Dance of Carriacou celebrates ancestors through the *nacion* dance and songs. African-derived religious ceremonies also celebrate life, family, people, work, and provide occasion for practitioners to share food, time, and the presence of the spirit. Initiation ceremonies offer opportunities for the faithful to enter different stages of faith and leadership. Some ceremonies include classic ritual stages of separation, seclusion, and reintegration, signaling the birth or rebirth of the initiate into a new role.

Vodun ceremonies take place in the homes of the devotees or in the *oum'phor* (temple), an enclosed place. A significant ritual property is the *poteau mitan*, a supporting post that is a symbolic link and path to Ginen (Africa). Other ritual properties include images of *lwas*, flags, a machete of Ogou that is used for sacrifices, and a drum. Vodun employs four types of initiation rituals: head washing, which feeds the spirit and refreshes the individual; *kanzo*, a ritual of fire that strengthens the individual; *kouche sou pwen*, which strengthens the initiate's relationship with the spirit; and giving the *ason*, or sacred rattle, which qualifies the initiate to heal. Candomblé initiations are presided over by *iyalorixa* or *babalorixa* who help in preparing the shrine and the *otas* (sacred stones) that contain the powers of the *orixa*. The *abia* (initiate) is first isolated; then, during the second stage, learns about his or her spirit and the *atabaques* (drum) rhythms of the spirit. At the final stage, the *abia* is named and rejoins the community.

Devotees serve the spirits and the ancestors with *ebo* (offering or sacrifice). The *orishas* demand services such as feasts, initiations, and purifying baths. *Ebo* refers to offerings of animals, fruits, and vegetables given to the *orishas*. *Ebo* offerings are specific foods preferred by the *orishas*. Ogun, the divinity of iron, likes red and white roosters; Yemaya, the ocean divinity, likes duck, turtle, and goat. The *orishas* eat the *ashe* of the offerings; the rest is then shared among the members of the community. Animals are offered to the *orishas* because animal blood holds *ase*.

### Religion and Healing

African-derived religious ceremonies double as healing sessions for physical and spiritual ailments, addressing concrete issues of the *serviteur* such as pain, disaster, loss, economic difficulties, problems in love, unemployment, and providing support to seek *chans* (luck) and to survive. "Life, in the Vodou view of things, is thus characterized by alternating cycles of suffering and the transient relief from suffering that is called having luck" (Brown, 1991, p. 344). Vodun devotees believe that although magical insects may cause illness, so can bad relationships. Santería devotees also believe that suffering and illness result from bad relationships among good and bad humans, divinities, ancestors, and the *orishas*. A devotee with difficulties consults a diviner to help determine the cause of his or her suffering and prescribe ways of dealing with the problem. The solution involves restoring

broken relationships and finding balance in the community. In Haiti, the *mambo* works with the people to seek healing. In Venezuela, the *curioso*, and the *lukuman* in Suriname practice divination to diagnose problems. Mediums, called *buyai*, practice healing in Belize, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Guatemala.

Herbalists provide remedies for illnesses. In colonial Brazil, people suffered from *banzo*, a condition that led to depression and physical deterioration. Its symptoms were alcoholism, use of narcotics, and the eating of dirt. Healers in the African diaspora were called root doctor, weed woman, magical doctor, or the bush doctor, who was also called *obeahman*. In Brazil, the *benzador* treated people with St. Mary's herb. In Candomblé, healers also use herbs and sacred leaves.

Rituals enable the *serviteur* to relate to a cosmic system, draw strength, and deal with evil. Because an inner miracle may take place in the individual, what happens may not be seen—nevertheless, a miracle strong enough to alter the circumstances of the *serviteur* is believed to occur. Priestesses may also diagnose a problem. Treatment may include, in the case of broken relationships, binding two dolls together. Other treatments involve preparing special food to calm a restive spirit, and giving healing baths using a mixture of herbs and perfumes. In Suriname, *meki wan sweri* is a healing technique in which a winti-man discovers the wishes of Winti and contracts to fulfill those desires and become well.

### Religion and Gender

Women have been active in African-derived religions from the beginning; some of them are leaders. Women were at the forefront of the establishment of Candomblé and in the early twenty-first century women have great responsibility in the estimated 2,000 *terreiros* in Bahia. Members of the Sisterhood of Our Lady of the Good Death (a group in the Barroquinha church) and Iyalusso Danadana and Iyalusso Akala (a woman of Yoruba background) played key roles in the formation of the religion. Gender equality remains an issue where traditions still give men ritual privileges exclusively. For example, in Regla Conga the title *tata ngangá* is reserved for men. Women can attain it only in the postmenstrual years. In Regla de Ocha, or Santería, women do not have access to the divination system of the *babalawo* (priest). Patriarchy exists in the Rastafarian movement: women do not participate in reasoning sessions. There are resources in some ADR that offer opportunity for a reconstruction of gender relations. Female deities such as Yemaja and Oxun, and the androgyny of Oxala, could be explored as a basis for more egalitarian relationships in African-derived religions.

### Religion and the Arts

The arts are integral to the expression of African-derived religions and include chants, dance, rituals, ceremonies, feasts, altar construction, cloth work, beadwork (*collares de mazo*), ritual coverings (*bandeles*), carvings, paintings, and sculptures. The arts bring cosmology and ritual into the quotidian and the ceremonial without losing the profundity of their contextual (and contested) referential meanings. The visual arts come in a variety of media and colors; the drums and div-



ination tools are constructed from a variety of colorful materials. Artistic objects ground *ashe* in the individual and the community.

Artistic representations of the *orishas* depict their *ashe* as well as their *ewa* (beauty). *Orisha* art is *ohun oso* (adornment/ornament), attractive, and calls attention to the gods. *Ase* is often depicted as a bird. Carved ornaments depicting the *orishas* are often placed on the altar and fed with food and blood to give them *ashe*. Altars are constructed and decorated with the colors of a particular *orisha* to depict a divine throne of glory. Art objects also depict the priests and priestesses who go between the *orishas* and the community. The visual arts create a congenial atmosphere for worship. Vodun flags greet the deities—a sign of respect—and invoke the presence of the spirits. The *vévé* blazons drawn with powdered substances on the ground depict a cosmic connection with the gods and goddesses at the top. In Haiti, artistic representation depicts the virtues of self-restraint and steadfastness.

### Conclusion

During their complex history, devotees of ADR have faced a number of challenges. First, Christian missionaries condemned their practices as heathen and demonic. Second, devotees of ADR faced legal challenges: legal restrictions were placed on meetings in Jamaica in 1781, 1784, and 1788. Further restrictions were placed on Obeah practices in 1808, 1816, and again in 1826 and 1827. Legislative acts restricted Africans from preaching and teaching in their assemblies. In Haiti, Catholic priests taught in catechism classes that Vodun was from the devil, the *houngan* a servant of Satan, and their sacrifices sinful. Laws were passed to restrict dancing by Winti devotees. In Paramaribo, the faithful could hold only four ceremonies per year. Rastafarians suffered persecutions on several occasions. In 1960, Claudius Henry was arrested and charged with treason. In 1966, the police destroyed the Back-O-Wall compound, one of the slum areas of Kingston where many Rastas lived on the pretext that the destruction was part of a cleanup campaign, and in 1978, police removed some Rastas from Heroes Park in Kingston, Jamaica.

African-derived religions continue to face difficulties because of their practice of sacrifice. In a recent case, however, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that prohibiting the offering of sacrifices violates the religious freedoms of ADR devotees. African-derived religions continue to grow because they are the celebrations of a world in which the power and benevolence of the gods continuously employ *ashe* to create and shape human destiny. ADR celebrate family, community, and the blessings of life, and offer ways to understand the world and to deal with adversity. These religions offer hope to their devotees that the gods can and do transform, and help make this complex world beautiful.

*See also Africa, Idea of; Ancestor Worship; Communication of Ideas: Africa and Its Influence; Communitarianism in African Thought; Immortality and the Afterlife; Personhood in African Thought; Religion: Africa; Ritual: Religion.*

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*Elias K. Bongmba*

### EAST AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

When speaking of religion in East and Southeast Asia, a series of unique problems arises. What the West views as religion in Asia might well pass as philosophy and vice versa. *The Harper Collins Dictionary of Philosophy* views religion as oscillating between two extremes:

*total reference to supernaturalism* (religion is the belief in and worship of a divine transcendent reality that creates and controls all things without deviation from its will); *total reference to humanistic ideals* (religion is any attempt to construct ideals and values toward which one can enthusiastically strive and with which one can regulate one's conduct). (Angeles, p. 262)

Hence, the philosophy of religion studies a variety of topics from existence of "god" and moral thought to the relationships between church and state, science and religion, and philosophy and religion. Geddes MacGregor explains that the expression "philosophy of religion" arises from the eighteenth-century Enlightenment.

So religion, which Hegel tended to see as a sort of "baby philosophy" using picture-imagery rather than intellectual understanding, called for philosophical inspection along with everything else and was indeed peculiarly deserving of such philosophical scrutiny since it was to be regarded as a sort of kindergarten philosophy. (pp. 483–484)

Julia Ching also struggles with the fuzzy borders of philosophy and religion. She writes:

In discussing the continuum between the heavenly (or cosmic-natural) and the human orders, we are also discussing a theme common to both religion and philosophy. . . . This happens because the lines of demarcation between religion and philosophy are not so clear in the Chinese tradition—the situation resembles that in Europe before the eighteenth century, that is before a

parting of the ways between philosophy and its erstwhile mentor, theology. (p. 8)

Ching tries to resolve this dilemma by use of both a history of religions and history of ideas approach.

Ninian Smart takes religion to a civilizational level with "philosophical" and "doctrinal" dimensions. The ultimate meanings of life are examples of the philosophical dimensions, while daily rituals are part of the doctrinal dimensions (p. 17). Likewise, Willard G. Oxtoby asks the following questions: "Are there not philosophies that share with religion the contemplation of ultimate reality? Do not both enterprises seek to map out the good that people should seek in their conduct?" (p. 454). Oxtoby sees philosophy as an individual intellectual endeavor alongside religion as a collective ritualized force. The Western world invented the word *religion* to correspond to Christianity through the Latin word *religio* (religion), which carried with it the idea of "piety," "faith," and "action" (p. 449). He concludes that religion is

a sense of power beyond the human, apprehended rationally as well as emotionally, appreciated corporately as well as individually, celebrated ritually and symbolically as well as discursively, transmitted as a tradition in conventionalized forms and formulations that offer people an interpretation of experience, a view of life and death, a guide to conduct and an orientation to meaning and purpose in the world. (p. 454)

Rather than a hierarchy between philosophy and religion, the East sees co-constitutive relationships. The Chinese concept of *yin-yang* stood in for a complex crossing of experiences that encompassed rituals of everyday life, ethical behavior, heavens and hells, birth and death ceremonies, ancestors, cosmologies, and ideas about nature, health, and society. Collectively, *yin-yang* served the function of both religion and philosophy. Hence, there could be a religion of philosophy or a philosophy of religion.

The way that *yin* and *yang* are connected is unique to East Asia. Unlike a Hegelian-inspired conflictual world of culminations and overcomings of antipodes, the East embraces mutually conditioning linked opposites that are harmonious in both matter and spirit. The polarities of *yin* and *yang* are fundamental to the relationships within and between Eastern religions/philosophies such as Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. Although Confucianism and Daoism are indigenous to China, they reach throughout Korea into Japan and south into Vietnam. Likewise, Indian Buddhism traversed the Silk Roads in the first century to pass throughout China and Thailand into the Far East.

### **The Daoist Yin-Yang**

The principles of *yin* and *yang* were associated with both the *Yijing* of the twenty-third century B.C.E. and Laozi, the sixth century B.C.E. Daoist philosopher. *Yin* is dark, *yang* is light, *yin* is night, *yang* is day, *yin* is cold, *yang* is hot. One *yin* and one *yang* make the Dao (*yiyin yiyang zhiwei dao*). The Chinese characters tell the tale: *yin* represents the constitution

of the moon while yang represents the constitution of the sun. They are eternal partners in a cosmological relationship that governs every action and event in life. Yin-yang is the clearest expression of an ancient Chinese life of equilibrium. This polar coupling had a profound impact on Confucius and Confucianism, especially in terms of virtues and their coexistence.

Laozi believed that the yin-yang balance was key to the workings of the universe. To be mutable like water was the path to longevity. A single drop of water can go where no army can—through a crack in a mighty wall. In *Dao de jing* (*The Book of the Way and the Book of Virtue*), the philosophy of Dao shines forth. The best leader is the one who lags behind; the best teacher is the one who does not try to instruct anyone. Following his own philosophy, Laozi departed from an overly administered city life for the quiet confines of a mountain retreat far away from the Confucian bureaucracy.

Zhuangzi, a follower of Laozi, explicated many Daoist principles in terms of parables. He embraced Laozi's principle of *wuwei* (nonaction): the best action is no action. Recounting the ebb and tide of life, Zhuangzi tells the story of a trip to the mountains. One day, he sees a gigantic tree with plush foliage. When a woodcutter passed up the tree, Zhuangzi asked why. The reply was that the tree had no use. Zhuangzi concluded that because of its uselessness, the tree could live. Later on, Zhuangzi stopped by a friend's home in the valley. The friend had two geese, one that cackled and one that did not. The friend instructed his son to kill and prepare the goose that did not cackle. The following day, Zhuangzi's students asked of him: "Yesterday, there was a tree on the mountain that gets to live out the years Heaven gave it because of its worthlessness. Now there's our host's goose that gets killed because of its worthlessness. What position would you take in such a case, Master?" (Watson, p. 209). Zhuangzi answers that he might stand halfway between worth and worthlessness: "climb up on the Way and its Virtues and go drifting and wandering, neither praised nor damned, now a dragon, now a snake, shifting with the times, never willing to hold to one course only" (Watson, p. 209). Zhuangzi extols a middle path: "Now up, now down, taking harmony for your measure, drifting and wandering with the ancestor of the ten thousand things, treating things as things but not letting them treat you as a thing—then how could you get into any trouble?" (Watson, p. 210). Following from Laozi and Zhuangzi is a distinction between philosophical and religious Daoism. The study of the classical texts of Daoism caught the court's eye in the Han dynasty, where the term *daojia* (philosophical Daoism) was first introduced. As an exemplar for political rule, philosophical Daoism emphasized following the Dao through both meditation and the union of thought and action. Although Confucianism was proclaimed the official religion/philosophy of the Han, Daoism became popular while leading the path to the development of *daojiao* (religious Daoism) that revered a deified Laozi. Religious Daoism strove for immortality through various practices including meditation, alchemy, breathing, and sexual practices. The intermingling of official classical religions and popular versions is an important point of convergence. Endymion Wilkinson writes:

To the extent that historians are concerned with questions of value and belief, they cannot afford to ignore the history of Chinese religion in all its many forms—popular or elite, public or private, formal or informal, common or esoteric, home-grown or imported, secret or open. (pp. 570–571)

The impact that Daoism had on both Confucianism and Buddhism should not be overlooked. In the Wei (220–265 C.E.) and Jin (265–420 C.E.) dynasties, Daoism emerged again through a melding of Confucian ideas. Daoism may also have paved the way for Buddhism coming into China, especially with its emphasis on meditation. Buddhist monks, Daoist priests, and Confucian masters flourished at Lushan (Lu Mountain). Their interactions were reciprocal, especially in popular forms.

### Three Teachings Are One

In coping with the diverse interweaving of religious and philosophical traditions of both popular and court forms, China originated an amalgamated version called the "three teachings" of Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. This combination filtered through the rest of East and Southeast Asia. In a most general description, Confucianism represented social order and good daily conduct, Daoism represented an ambivalent response to this structure with a focus on longevity, and Buddhism represented a meditative bliss that looked beyond the material world. Although Buddhism is alien to China, it mediated Confucian virtuousness and Daoist cosmology. Stemming from the basic Chinese trinity of heaven (*tian*) earth (*di*) and humanity (*rendao*), three becomes a crucial number. Human beings represent the number three as they stand between heaven and earth (*tiandi zhijian*). Han philosophers saw the first three dynasties of Xia, Shang, and Zhou as aligning with loyalty, respect, and refinement. Although Confucianism was often the official state religion, *sanjiao heyi* (the three teachings are one) became a popular expression throughout Chinese history. Wolfram Eberhard writes: "Confucianism is the religion of filial piety (*xiao*); popular Taoism has to do with the individual's position in the community, with whose ceremonial purification it is charged; finally, Buddhism is a way of looking at death and at the meaning of life in general" (p. 289).

The creative interpolation of Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism in the third to the seventh century found an uncanny revival in the eighteenth-century Qing dynasty, where inquisitive Manchu rulers allowed many religions to exist together. While Buddhism stood between Confucianism and Daoism in the first century, it also disappeared at various times. During the Six Dynasties, especially from 386–587 C.E., Confucian texts were interpreted through Daoism. This is the same time that several Mahayana (Greater Vehicle) Buddhist texts were translated into Chinese. While Daoism was accepted during the late Ming, it was rejected in the Qing in favor of Confucianism and Buddhism. Stephen Little argues that the first Ming emperor, Zhu Yuanzhang (ruled 1368–1398), dissuaded organized religion while promoting the unity of the three teachings: "This concept, namely that Confucianism, Taoism,



and Buddhism were different paths to the same goal, attained increased popularity during the Song [960–1279] and Jin [1115–1234] dynasties, although its roots can be traced to the Six Dynasties period [222–589]" (p. 27).

### Modern China

With the influx of Western colonialism in East and Southeast Asia in the modern era, many Asian countries began to reject religions of any sort. Embracing Marxism, Mao Zedong (1893–1976) saw religion in general as an opiate of the people. It was a dangerous ideology that concealed the true relations of power within society. Ironically some see Marxist-Leninism and Mao Zedong thought as a type of "religious worldview" with rituals and sacred scriptures. Smart sees Mao as creating a new religion that "harnessed some of the emotions and thoughts of Daoism (the anarchism of Laozi, the alchemy of right commitment) and of Buddhism (the Pure Land, but here and now, and Mao as a celestial Buddha but right here in Beijing)" (p. 448). In the early 2000s, hundreds of thousands of Daoist and Buddhist temples that were gutted during the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s were rebuilt in rural China, which still houses 70 percent of the population. With the recent resurrection of the Taishan (Tai Mountain) Daoist temple system that incorporates Confucian morality ledgers and Buddhist hells, China is recovering fundamental elements of its religious-philosophical heritage.

### Korea

The impact of Chinese religion was felt with full force in both Korea and Japan. Korea was under direct Chinese rule from 193 to 37 B.C.E. with an influence that persisted for centuries. Monks such as Wonhyo (617–686) and Uisang (625–702) were crucial to the establishment of Buddhism in Korea. In particular, Uisang had a reciprocal relationship on the Chinese Huayan (Flower Garland) monk Fazang. Korean shamanism blended with both Confucianism and Buddhism. Smart writes:

Korean thinkers also made important contributions to the debates of the Neo-Confucian tradition, especially in the sixteenth century, through the writings of Yi T'ogyegye and Yi Yulgok. The former developed the thinking of Zhuxi arguing that the priority of principle to material force as ethical rather than ontological. Yi Yulgok argued for the determining character of material force and he objected to the notion that *li* [principle] is always unchanging and pure, since it and material force are correlatives. (p. 133)

These strongly ingrained traditional Confucian positions of the classical world were juxtaposed to the modern world with the Japanese invasion and the onslaught of Christian missionaries. During the Choson dynasty (seventeenth and eighteenth centuries) Korean Confucianism forbade Buddhism from entering the capital city, while the Korean court frowned upon Catholicism. After the Korean-Japanese treaty of 1876, Japanese Pure Land Buddhism and Nichiren came to Korea. The Japanese occupation of Korea in 1910 greatly altered the sense of traditional religions. Smart sees a division between "indi-

vidualistic religions" such as *Son (Zen)* Buddhism and Protestantism on one hand and traditional Confucianism on the other. A resulting political split would follow: individual religions tended toward democracy and traditional religions tended toward military dictatorship. Smart also sees this as a way of understanding the fracture between North Korea (traditional) and South Korea (individualistic).

With the popularity of evangelical Protestantism, South Korea saw the rise of Sun Myung Moon in 1954. Smart writes of the Unification Church:

Its tenets involve a reinterpretation of the Bible; loyalty to Mr. Moon as possibly—that is, if he fulfills his destiny—the new Messiah; a new system of marriage designed to unite members in a large Family of which Mr. Moon and his wife are the True Parents; and the hope of unifying the world and the world's religions in a single harmony (in combat however with Communism, which is seen as the present chief manifestation of evil in the world). (pp. 453–454)

### Japan

The long history of Japanese religion held to the anchor of Shinto as a primitive system based upon *kami* (spirits) that inhabited every thing, person, or place. Somewhere between 538 and 552 C.E., Buddhism came into Japan. Prince Shotoku Taishi (574–622) solidified Japan's hold on Buddhism by commissioning scholars to return from China with Mahayana texts including the *Lotus Sutra*. Shotoku combined Confucian court ranking with the Three Jewels of Buddhism (the Buddha, the Dharma, the Sangha) and belief in *kami*. Although Japan mediated political relations with various forms of Buddhism, monastic-level Buddhism also flourished at various times. In the Nara period (710–784), Emperor Shomu ordered the construction of a bronze Buddha at Todaiji Temple in Nara to embellish the imperial capital. With a growing number of Buddhist sects developing in Japan, Buddhist monks came under close government control. Relaxing these laws, Emperor Kammu shifted the capital to Heian. Monks were encouraged to bring new Buddhisms from China in order to bless the new capital. During the Heian period (794–1185), Saicho (767–822) brought Tendai (Celestial Platform) Buddhism from China. As a Mahayana (Greater Vehicle) School, it focused on the *Lotus Sutra* as a source for obtaining buddhahood for all of humanity. Likewise, Kukai (774–835) brought *Shingon* (True Word) Buddhism from China. Appealing to the aristocracy, it emphasized magic and incantations while including *mandalas* (sacred diagrams) and *mantras* (sacred syllables). In the Kamakura period (1192–1333) and beyond, Zen Buddhism appealed to the samurai because of its discipline and meditative search for *satori* (awakening), while Pure Land became the religion of the peasants.

During the *Kokugaku* (national learning) movement in the Tokugawa Shogunate, scholars such as Motoori Norinaga (1730–1801) saw three distinct periods of Japanese religion: a primordial period of purity, a period tainted by foreigners, and a period of the resurrection of the ancient world. After *Chushingura* (the treasury of loyal retainers) in 1703, the stage



was set for the reemergence of Shinto as a state religion and the future restoration of the Meiji emperor. The Ako *ronin* avenged their fallen Lord Asano by killing Lord Kira. In doing so, they upheld the duty of samurai honor that appeared secondary in their minds to Tokugawa's law. Although punished by death, the forty-seven *ronin* motivated townsfolk and onlookers to evaluate seriously the balance of Confucian virtues: property, righteousness, and benevolence. During imperial Japan of World War II, both Shinto and Buddhism were revived as a component of *Bushido* (the way of the warrior), the most notorious wartime manifestation being the kamikaze (divine wind) suicide bombers.

After 1945, Buddhism returned somewhat to a more classical stance, largely through the efforts of thinkers such as Daisetz Suzuki (1870–1966). Alongside this, *Nichiren Shoshu* (followers of Nichiren) reemerged (from the thirteenth-century tradition) with the supreme goal of happiness. Stemming from this, the *Soka Gakkai* (value-creation society) emphasized world peace achieved through chanting and devotion to the *Lotus Sutra*.

### Impact on Southeast Asia

Charles F. Keyes describes mainland Southeast Asia (Burma, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam) as the “crossroad of religions” whereby “a large diversity of autochthonous tribal religions are intermingled with Hinduism, Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Islam, and Christianity, as well as the modern secular faith of Marxist-Leninism” (p. 512). The complex blending of early primitive religious practices and those influenced by China over several centuries were reshaped by political change in the twentieth century.

Because of the Han conquest between 124 B.C.E. and 43 C.E., Vietnam looked to China for religious guidance with the influx of Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. This influence remained long after Vietnam's independence from China in the eleventh century. Vietnam, Cambodia, and Thailand were shaped by Indian Hinduism and Buddhism up to the fifteenth century. Traditional tribal societies that relied on archaic rituals and Sino-Indian religions were slowly changed by Christian missionaries. As new agricultural systems emerged, adherence to folk culture began to wane.

According to James J. Fox, island cultures of Southeast Asia (Malaysia, the Philippines, and Java) were similarly influenced by Chinese and Indian traditions alongside Islam. In the late twentieth century, about 90 percent of Indonesia's population was Muslim, while the Philippines still were predominantly Catholic. Even in the early 2000s, the eclectic blend of religions focuses on a type of animism with the predominance of life force in every creature. In collectively describing the spirit of Southeast Asia, Fox writes:

Equally, the same spiritual premises may promote notions of achievement. A recurrent image of life involves the metaphor of the “journey of achievement.” Myths recount the founding journeys of the ancestors, folk tales extol the attainments of heroic journeys, and dreams and séances can take the form of a spiritual journey. Furthermore, many societies encourage a period of jour-

neying in early adulthood as a means of gaining knowledge, wealth, fame, and experience. (p. 526)

In the twentieth century, various religious movements emerged in the island cultures of Southeast Asia to address the effects of globalization on ancient cultures. James J. Peacock categorizes these movements into three groups: Hindu-Buddhism, Muslim, and Christian movements. For example, Budi Utomo (high endeavor) in Java and Bali sought to reestablish religious beliefs against a growing Western technology and value system that replaced traditional beliefs of Javanist-Hindu-Buddhists. As Peacock relates: “Looking to India's Rabindranath Tagore and Mohandas Gandhi as inspirations in the revival of these traditions, Budi Utomo was controlled by the aristocracy and intelligentsia and never gained a broad popular following, although it had amassed some ten thousand members within a year of its founding [1908]” (p. 527). Much more widespread, the Muslim movements ranged from Indonesia to Singapore, Malaysia, and the Philippines.

Because of the completion of the Suez Canal in 1870, many Asian Muslims were able to travel easily to Mecca in the Middle East. The reciprocal influence of modern interpretations of Islam led to the founding of the Kaum Muda (new faction). With emphasis on textual exegesis, this movement spread from Singapore to Indonesia. With this entrenchment, Christianity gained a strong foothold in the Philippines. Summarizing the complex political interconnections of religious groups, Peacock writes of the early 2000s: “In Indonesia, the Muslims have generally acted as an oppositional force complementing the government, while the Hindu-Buddhist streams have either fed into the Javanist-oriented national culture and government or provided personal fulfillment outside the governmental arena” (p. 529).

*See also Chinese Thought; Christianity: Asia; Confucianism; Daoism; Japanese Philosophy, Japanese Thought; Philosophy of Religion.*

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Jay Goulding

### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' VIEW, SOUTH AMERICA

Unlike Western systems of worship, religious thought and action from South American indigenous perspectives pervade every aspect of existence. As cultural systems, indigenous South American religions encompass quotidian life and become especially salient at times of life crises and during festival and protest activity. With more than three hundred languages grouped into a dozen or more macro families, cultural, and hence religious, diversity is enormous. Such complexity and diversity are compounded by the fact that South American indigenous numinous systems are understudied and the underpinnings of history and archaeology are informative and provocative but inadequate. The European conquest and subsequent colonial era violently introduced hegemonic Roman Catholic Christianity with highly variable affects on indigenous sacrality. Nevertheless, commonalities exist. This entry offers indigenous perspectives on pools of religious elements that adhere and cluster in a multitude of cultural systems ranging across vastly different topographical and ecological zones and boundaries. All elements are not found everywhere, but systems of religious adhesions that constitute native thought and culture expressing ineffable, reverential dimensions of life, death, afterlife, and the cosmos do exist.

### Conceptualizing Space-Times

The cherished Western dichotomy of space (as in geography) and time (as in history) must be set aside in any understanding of native South American religions in favor of a relativistic conceptualization of space-times. Space-times are ancient, historical, modern, futuristic, local, regional, diasporic, and global. They may exist simultaneously, as when beginning-times-places encompass the present time and people seek movement between the two through ritual activity, song, dance, performative drama, fighting, or political protest. Mythic space-time has many phases, typically including an initial stage in which the inchoate actions of sentient entities bring the earth worlds, sky worlds, and underworlds into being, as seen in the Maya Popol Vuh. Such beginnings may be punctuated with catastrophic fire or flood, out of which all things transform radically. Culture heroes emerge and undergo violent deaths, only to reappear, until finally the beginnings of ancestral times-places emerge in different locations.

According to Lawrence Sullivan, all space-times are framed between the Primordium, which includes the prebeginnings and beginnings of everything, and the Eschaton, wherein lies the end of the world, the collapse of the cosmos, and the formation of a new universe of existence. Such a cosmic brink is often portrayed by people in periodic ritual performances, which underline the spatial sense of the Primordium unfolding in the Center of the universe and the Eschaton existing at its edge.

In the cosmic Primordium separations occur, one after another: the separation of earth and sky and then night and day, where night and the moon come to signal disorder as opposed to day and the sun's east-west order. Then comes the differentiation of all species, including humans, then the differentiation of sex, the functions of blood and semen in fertility, fecundity, and danger therein, which leads to a transformation from primordial incest to regulations of sexual relationships and rules of endogamy and exogamy. Eventually one people become differentiated from another people, specificity of territories emerges with centers and peripheries. Cultural coherence emerges in the origins of war, origins of marriage, origins of trade, and systems of marriage-war-trade wherein individual bodies and collective bodies both abuse and venerate one another. A theme running through all of these transformations is that of consumption: who and what may and may not be consumed by whom and what becomes a system of numinous ineffability.

### The Axis Mundi

The axis mundi—an imagined and often represented up-down orientation that extends from earth straight up into the sky worlds and straight down into the underworlds—is framed by a strong east-to-west orientation that occurs when the sun emerges out of primordial water on the edge of the earth to begin its journey over land, moving first northward to cross the apex of the vertical axis at the center, and then back westward, where it goes underwater at the other edge and travels southward and then eastward at night. The spatial representation of the axis together with the cardinal points of reference that radiate from its center are motivated by the daytime sun's temporal movement and the disorderly nighttime movement of the moon. The axis mundi is the center of the universe, constituted by a peoples' territory, village, house, body, and even fighting sticks, all of which are represented aesthetically as a dynamic, living, structure of, and in, particular times-places. The axis mundi is often manifest as a world tree or a tree-of-life that grows and branches, creates diversity of fruits and other beings that, when violently cut down, peppers the earth with its variety of life-giving plants, animals, and diverse human beings that transform eventually into today's people and their living environs. It is also represented as a ladder or stairway coming out of deep earth from underwater, and extended up into sky worlds. Severing of this ladder sets in train more events that eventuate in contemporary people and cosmos.

Indigenous historicity—what people take to be salient in their pasts—is intricately and inextricably bound to the landscape, which is itself a sacred and cosmic phenomenon embodying everything by which people identify as us and other. Shamans travel the routes of landscape and mythopoetic history. There they "see" what others can only know by direct or

vicarious experience. The shaman is “one who knows.” Both male and female shamans exist, though males predominate. All fully human beings, and some focal animals, have something of shamanic power in them, represented as their very own life force that gives meaning to cosmos, landscape, kin, enemies, home, and self. In South America, such focal animals include the anaconda of the water domain, the jaguar or puma of the earth domain, and harpy eagle or condor of the sky domain. Great powers abide in the sky, earth, water, and underworld and are concentrated in special places and objects. Control of these powers lies in the ability of the shaman (and in some areas past and present, a priest)—and counterparts to the shaman, such as artists, speakers, dancers, and ritual specialists—to move in and out of the world of spirits; to cure body, soul, and psyche; and to “see” the everyday world and the cosmos in aesthetic patterns communicated to others through ritual, art, design, speech, drama, poetics, rhythm, and song.

### Shamans and Ritual

Focal shamanic characteristics include the ability to “come and go” from the spirit world and to move in and out of trance states, an ability to “see” the quotidian invisibilities, abilities to cure afflictions and to send afflictions to others. Hallucinogens are often (but not always) used by shamans and others to enhance their powers of ecstatic travel, curative gnosis, and harmful malignity. Prominent among these are soul vine (*ayahuasca*, *yajé*—*Banisteriopsis*) of Upper Amazonia, *Datura* (*Brugmansia*) of Amazonia, Andes, and Southern Cone, Hekura snuff or Yopo (*ebené*—*Anadenanthera*) from Western Amazonas, Epená (*Virolá*) of Northwest and Western Amazonas, and tobacco from all of Amazonia in Mesoamerica and the continental United States as well, a panoply of vision-inducing drugs, including tobacco, as well as fasting and other techniques, were used to achieve spiritual and corporeal transformations.

Concepts of souls and spirits are fundamental to indigenous perspectives on religion in South America. Humans have souls, and so do spirits, animals, plants, and inanimate substances. Also significant and animate are sacred sites such as trees, mountains, caves, waterfalls, cataracts, springs, and underground rivers. All communication necessitates knowledge of soul and spirit essences and substances. Ritual—a system of stylized behavior only partially encoded in indigenous exegesis and performance but discernible through time in indigenous historicity, shamanism, and discourse—is the primary vehicle of religious instantiation. Music, rhythm, poetry, and aesthetic imagery are all part and parcel of shamanic performative dramatic art. During indigenous ritual enactment the cosmology and cosmogony open up to include all peoples of the universe, living and dead, together with animal spirits and souls. Humans take on the roles of other people and other beings, collectively portraying the diversity of life and humanity within their individualities. During ritual activity harmony and acrimony are both enacted on various stages of drama that signal both order and chaos. Lawrence Sullivan places ritual activity in an eschatological category that he calls “diversionary activity” (or “entertainment”) and vividly summarizes the dramas of such activity: “*By turning primordial realities off to one side and historical existence off to another, diversionary enter-*

*tainment rends chaos asunder and stretches open the distance between clashing times*” (p. 681; italics in original).

### European Contact

Beginning in 1492, under the epitomizing banner of Roman Catholic Christianity and Western wealth-production through the forced and violent acquisition, sale, and exploitation of indigenous and African labor to acquire gold, pearls, and spices, indigenous people were confronted not only with unrelenting demands on their bodies and their souls, but also subject to the sustained indignities of an Inquisitorial system that placed their sacred concepts and objects in league with the Christian devil. By the late twentieth century the “globalization of monopoly finance capitalist culture” (Hopkins, p. 8) ushered in an era of sustained indigenous rejection of neoliberalism, privatization, and deregulation.

In the face of conquest, inquisition, terror, slavery, oppression, relocation, reduction, population collapse, and a myriad of violent indignities, indigenous religious change from the fifteenth century through the present times-places is characterized by the fusing of ultimate cosmogonic contexts of the Primordium and Eschaton with the proximate contexts of political, economic, and cultural transformations. Changes in indigenous perspectives on religious phenomena in South America stem from the radical hegemony of the hyper-globalization of Iberian Catholic Church policies and practices syncretized with the Western god Mammon. More recently, North American fundamentalist Protestantism has sustained a Manichean cosmic competition with Roman Catholicism with similar effects.

Indigenous religious systems historically and in contemporary times take on strongly millenarian dynamics as people endeavor to right the universe and re-create a place for themselves in their own times—ancient, past, present, and future—and demarcated in their contemporary and ancestral landscapes. Sullivan writes: “In all the millennial movements . . . the earth is a primordial instrument of change as well as a cosmic object affected by alteration. . . . Eschatological ordeals and stylized performance transform human beings by allowing them to assume the mythic stature and heroic destiny formerly achieved by only a few after death” (pp. 613–614). Examples of indigenous millenarianism include nineteenth-century chiliastic movements in Amazonia, post-conquest movements to transform emerging Spanish society to imagined Incan systems in the Andes, movements by native people to bring a giant anaconda (corporeal beings such as Tupac Amaru or Tupac Katari) to overwhelm the Spanish structures of the Andes, and the emergence and persistence of “dark shamanic” predation on modernity in the Guianas. Contemporary movements in the twenty-first century include, especially, indigenous and Afro-Latin American movements in Ecuador that have recently resulted in the bloodless expulsion of two elected presidents and created a new system of emergent space-times in national politics.

### Conclusion

In summary, religious thought and practice of South American indigenous people are rich and varied, but contain common elements that adhere to one another in recognizable configurations. A common history of extraordinary oppression,



violence, terror, and death has led to an intensification of ineffable cosmological and cosmogonic systems within which indigenous people communicate with one another across vastly different language systems. Indigenous perspectives on South American religion are at the same time a critical metacommentary on history and territoriality and a mechanism of sustained millennial transformation. That which appears to be “political” from Western standpoints comes to be revealed in indigenous numinous thought and praxis as sacred and reverential.

See also *Calendar; Ritual; Religion; Time: Traditional and Utilitarian.*

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#### LATIN AMERICA

Religion is a system of beliefs that explains what happens in the world, justifies order, and (usually) prescribes certain behaviors. In Latin America, the Spanish and Portuguese imported and spread Catholicism, the predominant religion, starting with the voyages of Columbus in 1492. The belief in and practice of Christianity gradually replaced the native belief systems; at the beginning of the twenty-first century, Catholicism itself faced challenges from a new wave of proselytizing and conversion by several Protestant missionary groups operating in the region.

Before the Spanish arrived, tremendous religious diversity marked the region, but animistic, polytheistic, and ancestor worship systems predominated. In tribal societies, every man and woman might feel themselves to have some level of shamanic ability; in large, imperial complexes, there were elaborate systems of priests, temples, and religious specialists, including cloistered women such as the *acllas* of the Inca. Tribal hunter-gatherers found spiritual life in every living thing, while agriculturists often worshiped their ancestors at special tombs belonging to specific lineages. In the Andes, some groups mummified or otherwise preserved the dead so that their remains (or the representation of their remains) might take an active role in ritual observance. The living believed it was their duty to care for and reverence their ancestors, sacrificing to them in return for fertility and health.

Andean religion also included many aspects of geomancy, or the recognition of sacred places; throughout the Americas, buried offerings and astronomical alignments marked important places, whether temples, palaces, or naturally occurring mountain peaks or streams. In central Mexico under the Mexica (Aztecs or Nahuas, following James Lockhart, a scholar dedicated to their study), individual lineages had patron deities. Professional groups such as the merchants also revered specific gods.

Before the rise of the Mexica, Mesoamericans worshipped many different gods, with the rain god as one of the most important. With their rise to power, the Mexica began to call





**Painting of Our Lady of Guadalupe, artist unknown.** Catholicism, with its pantheon of saints, is the predominant religion of Latin America. Our Lady of Guadalupe, the Mexican incarnation of Mary, mother of Jesus, is an important figure to Latin Americans and the patron saint of the Americas. © THE ART ARCHIVE/PINACOTECA VIRREINEL MEXICO CITY/DAGLI ORTI

themselves the people of the sun and to encourage the worship of their own totemic deity, Huitzilpochtli, or the humming-bird on the left, whom they believed had led them from obscurity to greatness. Similarly, the Inca claimed to be the sons of the sun and daughters of the moon, making the imperial religion a form of ancestor worship. They promised that service to the Inca would bring to the vanquished, and those who joined the empire peacefully, protection and subsistence, especially in times of natural disaster or crisis.

Belief in and participation in their cults explained the creation of the dominant group and justified the domination of the dominated. The relationship between humans and the gods was often portrayed as one of mutual nurturance that could take benign form, as when the ancestors brought fertility to their descendants in return for offerings, or more frightening forms in which hungry deities preyed upon hapless humans. In Mesoamerica, long traditions of blood sacrifice to the gods could take the minor form of a few drops of blood from a

pierced earlobe sprinkled on a piece of paper or could reach the horrific extremes of the Mexica, who sacrificed hundreds and perhaps thousands of war captives in public ceremonies. According to the claims of the priests and warriors, these sacrifices were necessary to nourish the sun, and without them, the sun would cease to exist and the world would end. Because brave warriors were the preferred sacrificial victims, the Mexica expanded the empire and fought ritualistic wars (of flowers) to secure prisoners for sacrifice, a belief system that turned humans into tribute. By the arrival of the Spanish, both Mexica and Incas believed that their ruler was a divine successor of the sun and his government a reflection of supernatural will.

Catholic priests accompanied the conquerors and explorers and began the task of conversion. Orders such as the Franciscans and Jesuits established missions on the frontiers. The acceptance of the new faith meant a repudiation of the native belief systems and identities. It involved learning a new language, moral code, religious pageantry, and folkways. Despite some sincere efforts to teach Christianity to the native population, progress was slow. Conversion became more complicated as large numbers of black slaves were imported to work in domestic service, on plantations, and in mining. They came from various African groups or tribes, each with its own language and religious traditions. Over the years, close interaction between natives and Africans and their offspring, all affected to a greater or lesser extent by Catholic doctrines, led to religious syncretism. The fusion of beliefs and rituals gave rise to distinct religions, such as Voudou, Santeria, and Rastafarianism, that continue to be practiced in the early twenty-first century.

The Catholic Church, however, played a large role in colonial life. Because the colonial administration was weak, the church became an important partner in governing. Its roles included educating the youth, especially males and sons of the native nobility; organizing charitable institutions such as hospitals; keeping vital statistics on baptisms, marriages, and deaths; communicating important messages to the populace from the crown and its representatives; and banking—lending capital to property owners for investment and conspicuous consumption. It became a rich and influential institution, despite intrachurch struggles between the secular clergy and the regular orders over mission fields and politics.

After independence was won from Spain, the creole elite split into conservatives and liberals. One of the issues of contention was the status of the Catholic Church. The liberals wanted religious toleration and secularization of some of the church's roles. The conservatives wanted Catholicism to be the official and—in some times, places, and among certain groups—the only religion. In Mexico, conflict over the issue resulted in war and, indirectly, foreign intervention. Tolerance eventually became the order, and new groups with other religions established themselves.

In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the dominance of the Catholic Church has been challenged. Starting in the second half of the twentieth century, liberation theology, an interpretation of the Bible meant to portray Christ as a social activist and empower the poor, threatened the conservative clerical power structure. A second, even greater threat was the

proliferating numbers of non-Catholic groups growing in size and importance. In the cities there were sizeable groups of Jews and Muslims. But Protestant evangelical groups such as the Pentecostals (which experts proclaimed the largest and fastest growing denomination) vastly outnumbered these. Membership of these groups grew from 200,000 in the 1920s to more than 50 million at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

By the year 2050, some predict, the majority of Latin Americans will be Protestants. In countries such as Guatemala and Brazil, the population was 30 percent Protestant in the early twenty-first century, with membership growing at more than 7 percent per year. Some of the reasons given for this phenomenal rate of growth are the use of radios and television to spread the word, the emphasis on family, and help in finding work and raising the standard of living.

*See also Animism; Extirpation; Liberation Theology; Religion: Indigenous Peoples' View, South America.*

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#### MIDDLE EAST

This surveys the religious traditions of the Middle East from the seventh century C.E., with limited attention to earlier developments. By the seventh century the Middle East had largely accepted monotheism in its Jewish, Christian, or Iranian form. This involved the worship of one God, who has created and sustains the universe but is separate from it, and a more or less forceful rejection of other gods. This God is symbolized in male terms and is very much concerned with human moral activities, which he will reward or punish in the afterlife.

#### Islam: Beginnings and Basic Teachings

The Arabian peninsula was one of the last places to accept monotheism, and it did so in a distinctive form that was to dominate the Middle East thereafter. From about 610 until 632 Muhammad, a caravan merchant in Mecca, received verbal messages that he and his followers understood to come from God and that were collected together to form the Koran, the Muslim scripture. The Koran is considered to be the verbatim word of God, but only in the original Arabic language. Muhammad was rebuffed by the leaders of Mecca and, in 622, migrated with his followers to a nearby city thenceforth known as Medina. From here he conducted a campaign involving some fighting and much political maneuvering,

which led to his victorious return to Mecca in 630 and the acceptance of his religion and leadership by the Meccans. His immediate successors effectively moved forth to conquer the neighboring lands, establishing in the course of a century an empire extending from Spain in the west to central Asia in the north to the Indus River in the east. While they established their political rule quickly, it was several centuries in most places before the majority of the conquered peoples embraced their religion.

This religion is called Islam, meaning “submission to God,” and its adherents are Muslims, or submitters. Its key doctrines are summed up the words “No god but God (Allah); Muhammad is the Messenger of God.” The recognition of other divine beings alongside God is called *shirk* and is strongly rejected. Muhammad is understood to be the last of a series of prophets sent by God to humans, beginning with Adam and including biblical figures such as Nuh (Noah), Ibrahim (Abraham), Musa (Moses), and ‘Isa (Jesus). These prophets had missions limited in time and place, and their messages have been lost or altered. Muhammad’s mission, by contrast, is universal, and his message has been faithfully preserved. Jews and Christian are viewed as “people of the scripture” (that is, previous scriptures), having genuinely based but inferior religions. They were granted the status of *dhimmis* (“protected peoples”), having what might be called “second-class citizenship” in Muslim society. In practice, their situation varied with circumstances, and other groups, such as Zoroastrians, were also often granted similar status.

#### Islam: Sunnis, Kharijites, and Shiites

The main divisions among Muslims are based on differing views of the political succession to Muhammad. In the Sunni view the first four caliphs (successors) were legitimately chosen by the community and were the best rulers the community has ever had. With the coming of the Umayyad dynasty, the moral level declined and rulers were sometimes corrupt, but they were usually to be accepted since the dangers of revolt were a greater evil. The Umayyad (661–750) and Abbasid (750–1258) dynasties are generally recognized by Sunnis as true caliphs. In more recent centuries the Ottoman rulers up to 1924 gained wide recognition as caliphs.

The Kharijites held that major sins disqualified a ruler, often seeking to enforce this view by violent revolts. These revolts failed, but the Kharijites contributed to Muslim theological thinking, and small groups of them continue to the present. Modern Islamic radicals have similarities to the Kharijites and are often labeled as such by their opponents.

In the Shiite view Muhammad had chosen his son-in-law and cousin, ‘Ali, as his successor, but the majority passed him over three times. When he finally became caliph (fourth in the Sunni reckoning), he could not stem the moral decline and was soon murdered. After this, his rightful successors, all descendants of his, never ruled although they taught their followers. His second successor, Husayn, led a small army in revolt against the Umayyads and was killed at Karbala’, in Iraq. The commemoration of his martyrdom has come to include emotional and dramatic rituals, and he has become an effective model for revolutionary action since the 1970s, especially

in Iran. The largest group of Shiites, the Twelvers, recognize a line of twelve legitimate rulers, or imams, of whom the last disappeared about 874 and is expected to return in the future as the Imam Mahdi to bring just government to Earth. Sunnis also have the idea of the Mahdi as an ideal ruler, but not necessarily in the line of 'Ali, and conceptions vary considerably.

Another group of Shiites, the Seveners or Ismaili, accept a line of imams that diverges from that of the Twelvers at the seventh imam and continues with imams who are sometimes visible and sometimes hidden. Of the various subdivisions of the Ismailis, the best known in the early twenty-first century are the followers of the Aga Khan. The Ismailis constituted a significant revolutionary movement from the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries and became known to Westerners as the Assassins.

Another group of Shiites is the Zaydis, whose line of imams diverges with the fifth. Of all Shiites, the Zaydis are the closest to the Sunnis in their ideas and practices. A Zaydi imam ruled Yemen from 901 to 1961.

### Islamic Law, Theology, and Philosophy

The primary concern of Muslim religious thinking has been the elaboration of the rules for living, including social and political life. The key concept here has been *shari'a*, the "path" God has laid out for believers to follow, involving the moral evaluation of actions as "obligatory," "recommended," "permitted," "discouraged," and "forbidden." The details of this are worked out in *fiqh* (literally "understanding") by qualified scholars, or ulema. The authoritative sources are the Koran and the sunna (the words and deeds of Muhammad, usually understood as protected from error; for Shiites the words and deeds of the imams are included), and the ulema engage in effort, *ijtihad*, to derive from these sources rules for particular situations. The Sunni view has generally been that whenever they come to a consensus on some issue, this is binding on future generations. Among Sunnis several traditions or "schools" of *fiqh* developed, of which four survive into the twenty-first century, the Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, and Hanbali. Although there have been tensions among them in the past, they are now mutually recognized and in principle a Muslim should follow one of them. Twelver Shiites give less weight to consensus, and the currently dominant form of Twelver *fiqh* stresses the need to follow a living *mujtahid* (one qualified to practice *ijtihad*), or ayatollah. As a result, some ulema acquire a following and have considerable influence. While *fiqh* in principle covers all areas of life, in practice some areas have been more elaborated than others, and the degree to which *fiqh* is applied in practice has varied considerably with time and place.

Theology (*kalam*) in Islam arose, in a considerable measure, out of the challenge of Greek philosophy, which was still very much alive in a Christianized form in the areas the Muslims had conquered. The first major school of *kalam* was the Mu'tazila, who appear to have been influenced by disputations held with Jewish, Christian, and other scholars. Among their better-known views is the claim that the Koran is created and that humans have free will. Al-Ash'ari (873–935) used their ra-

tional methods to uphold the uncreated nature of the Koran and divine determination. Another school, that of al-Maturidi, was similar but somewhat less extreme on the last point. Over against all of these, the Hanbalis largely rejected the venture of *kalam* as an inappropriate probing into the divine. An attempt to impose Mu'tazilism as orthodoxy in the ninth century backfired and the Mu'tazila lost ground among Sunnis, though their ideas continued to be influential among Shiites.

*Kalam* sought to use reason to interpret revelation, but the philosophers sought to build on reason alone and saw themselves in the line of Plato and Aristotle. For them reason gave the purest knowledge but was only for an elite; revelation provided the same basic knowledge in symbolic and concrete form for ordinary people. The greatest of the philosophers was Avicenna (Ibn Sina; 980–1037), who developed a system designed to incorporate all experience and knowledge, from the physical to the psychological to the spiritual. For him reason at its highest level is a divine faculty that leads us to the vision of the divine. The more spiritual side of Avicenna was later developed in Iran into a kind of philosophical mysticism known as *irfan*, whose greatest proponent was Mulla Sadra (d. 1641), and which continues very much alive in the early 2000s. Conceptions drawn from philosophy are also central to the teachings of the Ismailis and most of the esoteric groups mentioned below.

More important than *kalam* or philosophy has been the Sufi movement. From the early centuries individuals such as Rabi'a al-Adawiya (d. 810), Abu Yazid Bistami (d. 874), and al-Hallaj (857/858–922) sought a more direct contact with God and expressed this in sometimes unconventional ways. From about the thirteenth century this developed into large-scale movements, *taruq* ("orders"), which provided spiritual and moral guidance and distinctive rituals (*dhikr*) designed to produce ecstasy. Later Sufi theoreticians made considerable use of philosophical concepts to express their views and experiences. The greatest of these was Ibn al-'Arabi (1165–1240), known for his doctrine of the "unity of being" (*wahdat al-wujud*) in which the Names of God correlate with the visible world in a kind of mutual dependence via a spiritual realm of prototypes.

### Smaller Esoteric Groups Connected with Islam

There are a number of smaller groups, many derived from Shiism, whose teachings and practices are quite distinctive, whose full doctrines are often known only to an elite, and who are quite tightly organized and often do not accept converts. They are often considered non-Muslims by others and have often suffered persecution.

The Druze believe that God is beyond description and that the Ismaili ruler of Egypt, al-Hakim, who died or disappeared in 1021, was his final earthly manifestation. They also believe that human souls transmigrate. The Druze live primarily in Lebanon, where they have played a strong political role.

The 'Alawis (or Nusayris) in Syria and the Alevi in Turkey are quite distinct groups, but both recognize 'Ali as the highest manifestation of the divine. The 'Alawis follow the teachings of Ibn Nusayr (ninth century) and believe in transmigration. The Alevi in Turkey derive from the Shiite Safavid



movement in the sixteenth century and are closely connected to the Bektashi Sufi order. They suffered considerable persecution under the Ottomans.

The Yazidis, a Kurdish sect dating from the twelfth century, believe in a creator God who has delegated the running of the world to seven angels, of which the chief is Malak Ta'us (Peacock Angel), said to have once rebelled against God but repented. This may be the reason they are called "devil worshippers" by outsiders. They believe themselves to have been created in a manner different from other humans, and they believe in reincarnation.

The Ahl-i Haqq, also Kurdish, believe in seven manifestations of divinity, of whom 'Ali was the second and Sultan Sohak (fifteenth century?) was the last. They also believe in reincarnation, in which those souls capable of it will be purified.

The Baha'i movement developed out of Iranian Shiism in the nineteenth century. Baha' Ullah (1817–1892) claimed to be a new prophet for the present age and produced a scripture, *Kitab al-aqdas* (Most holy book), thus moving out of the Islamic orbit and presenting a new religion. Teaching that prophecy has not ended but that each age has its prophet, the movement has stressed its "ecumenical" dimension arising out of its recognition of all the previous prophets and has emphasized human unity. It has gained a considerable following worldwide, as well as still having a significant following in Iran, where it has suffered persecution, especially since the Islamic revolution.

### **Iranian Movements: Zoroastrianism and Manichaeism**

Zoroastrianism looks back to the Iranian prophet Zarathushtra, who may have lived anywhere from 1500 to 500 B.C.E. Central to its view is a cosmic struggle between good and evil in which humans are called to participate. Ahura Mazda (later Ormazd), the creator of the universe, chose the good, while the evil spirit, Angra Mainyu (later Ahriman) chose the evil. These two are both primordial, but Ormazd will defeat Ahriman at the end of time. Its highly developed conceptions of spiritual beings and its eschatology probably influenced Jewish thinking in the later centuries B.C.E. It uses fire as its central symbol, so that the Muslims called the Zoroastrians "fire worshippers." In the third century C.E. Zoroastrianism was reorganized as the state religion of the Sassanian dynasty. After the Muslim conquest, most Iranians became Muslims, but Zoroastrian activity remained vigorous for some time. A small Zoroastrian community continues to exist in Iran and a larger one in India (the Parsis).

The Manichaean movement was founded by Mani (216–277?) and has an extremely dualistic view in which the material world is the realm of evil and darkness. Particles from the world of light have been captured and imprisoned in matter, and knowledge (gnosis) and highly ascetic practices are designed to free them and return them to their heavenly home. The movement spread widely and was strong for some centuries, being the official religion of the Uighur state in central

Asia from 763 to 840. It was severely persecuted by both Christians and Muslims and died out by about the twelfth century.

The Mandaeans, located mainly in southern Iraq, are an ancient Gnostic sect, claiming John the Baptist as their prophet at least since Islamic times. They practice frequent ritual immersions (baptism).

### **Judaism**

By the seventh century most Jews lived outside the land of Israel, a situation experienced as *galut* (exile, alienation) and one that was to be ended only with the advent of the Messiah. In the meantime, they were to live by Torah, a term that in its narrowest sense refers to the first five books of the Bible but in its broadest sense to all authoritative teaching, and in particular by halakah, the practical part of Torah (similar to *shari'a* among Muslims). The main authority, apart from the Bible, was the Babylonian Talmud (completed about 700), a wide-ranging collection of laws, discussions, and commentary. The authority of the Talmud was rejected by the Karaites in the eighth century, and they became a minority sect, surviving in small numbers into modern times.

As *dhimmi*s under Islamic rule, Jews sometimes suffered but often prospered, and many of them participated significantly in the high culture of the Islamic world. This participation included a notable philosophical movement whose greatest representative was Moses ben Maimon (Maimonides; 1135–1204), who was also physician to the vizier of Saladin, then ruler of Egypt. An esoteric mystical movement, the Kabbalah, was very influential from the fourteenth to the eighteenth centuries. Outbursts of messianic fervor occurred from time to time, of which the most tragic was that of Shabbetai Zvi (1626–1676), whose messianic pretensions ended with his conversion to Islam. By this time the cultural and religious leadership of Judaism had largely shifted to Europe.

### **Christianity**

By the seventh century much of the Middle East was ruled by the Christian Byzantine Empire, Armenia was Christian, and there were many Christians in Iran and central Asia. Most of these Christians came under Muslim rule in the seventh century, although the Byzantine Empire did not finally succumb until the fifteenth century. These areas eventually became predominantly Muslim, but Christian communities continued to exist down to the twenty-first century. Many Arab Christians are "Greek" Orthodox or Melchite, continuing the Byzantine tradition, accepting the Nicene and Chalcedonian Creeds and recognizing the seven ecumenical councils, of which the last was at Nicaea in 787. The last of the great Orthodox Fathers, John of Damascus (c. 675–749), lived under Muslim rule and wrote a treatise against Islam. There are four Orthodox patriarchates in the Middle East, those of Constantinople, which has precedence of honor, Alexandria, Antioch (now based in Damascus), and Jerusalem. The latter three are mainly Arabic speaking, and that of Antioch has the largest following.



Several Middle Eastern churches rejected the Chalcedonian formula of the “two natures” of Christ, speaking rather of one “divine-human nature,” and are often called Monophysite (“one nature”). These include the Armenian and the Syrian Orthodox (Jacobite) Churches, as well as the Coptic Church of Egypt and Ethiopia. The Syrians and the Egyptian Copts suffered considerable persecution under the Byzantines and at first welcomed Muslim rule. The Syrian Church continued quite strong through the fourteenth century. The Coptic Church enshrines a strong sense of Egyptian ethnic identity and is characterized by an ascetic and monastic spirituality as well as a veneration for its ancient martyrs. In the early twenty-first century about 10 percent of Egyptians are Copts.

The Nestorian Church, also non-Chalcedonian, was particularly strong in Iraq and eastward into central Asia beyond the Muslim empire. Nestorian scholars were among the main translators of Greek philosophy into Arabic. Many of the Mongols, who devastated much of the Middle East and sacked Baghdad in 1258, were Nestorians, but after the Mongols converted to Islam at the end of the thirteenth century, the Nestorian Church declined rapidly. In the twenty-first century the small Nestorian community in Iraq calls itself “Assyrian.”

Europeans attempted to impose their form of Christianity and their rule in the Crusades, ultimately unsuccessfully and with often disastrous results for local Christians. They received support, however, from the Maronite Church of Lebanon, which dates from about the seventh century and which eventually adhered to the Roman Catholic Church, while retaining many of its distinctive practices. In recent centuries groups from other Eastern churches, known as Uniates, have also adhered to Rome while retaining many of their distinctive practices. Since the nineteenth century, Protestant missionary efforts have resulted in the establishment of small Protestant communities in many Middle Eastern countries.

### Modern Developments

European imperialism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has had a considerable effect on religion as on other aspects of life in the Middle East. For Muslims it has created a crisis that is at once spiritual and political. Muslims have tended to assume that since they had the true religion, God would grant their community material and moral success, and for a thousand years history largely supported this perception. The European success has challenged this perception, and the effort to meet this challenge has given rise to a series of reform efforts. Some seek to limit and control the influence of religion on society in order to clear the way for modernizing (effectively Westernizing) reforms, usually arguing that their reforms are consistent with a properly understood Islam. These reformers have usually adopted a nationalist ideology in which Islam may figure as a subordinate aspect. The best known of these was Atatürk, whose reforms in Turkey included an explicit rejection of *shari'a* law. Another radical nationalism is that of the Ba'ath Party in Syria and Iraq. This approach is called “secularism,” and many Middle Eastern governments are more or less secular. At the other extreme are those who insist on an

even more stringent application of the *shari'a* than was generally true in earlier times and who strongly reject Western culture and values while accepting Western material technology. This position is diversely called Islamic radicalism, Islamism, or Fundamentalism. The Islamic Republic of Iran and the Taliban regime in Afghanistan are prominent but quite different examples. Osama bin Laden and those like him are exceptionally extreme Islamists.

The situation of the Jews in the Middle East changed dramatically in the course of the twentieth century, largely as a result of events in Europe. European Zionists, many of them antireligious, sought to establish a national home in what was then Ottoman-ruled Palestine. The Nazi Holocaust confirmed in many minds the necessity of this. The State of Israel was established in 1948 by European Jews, but most Middle Eastern Jews soon moved there. This has in a large degree shifted the Jewish focus back to the Middle East and shifted the image of Jews from a weak and persecuted to a strong and self-reliant people. Unfortunately the displacement of Arab Palestinians has led to continual conflict and exacerbated tensions in the area. It has increased Muslim antagonism toward Jews generally.

The situation of the smaller groups has varied considerably. Christians often welcomed and sought to benefit from European imperialism or, at least, were quicker than Muslims to take advantage of the educational opportunities offered by the missionaries and others. Traditional church leaders, however, often saw a threat in the missionaries. Arab nationalism took hold first among Christians, and Marxism has appealed more to the Christians than to the Muslims. Helped by a French connection, the Maronites have had a strong position in Lebanese politics. The esoteric groups have fared variously. The Druze have formed an effective political bloc in Lebanon and have been inclined to identify ideologically with Arab nationalism. The Alawis have accepted the Ba'ath version of Arab nationalism and have effectively been in power in Syria since about 1970. The Alevis in Turkey supported Atatürk and have inclined toward secular left-wing politics. Since the 1980s, they have staged a considerable cultural revival. Whether among secularists or Islamists, modern conditions have tended to politicize religious divisions. Virtually all of the groups here considered have experienced considerable out-migration to Western countries, and these diasporas influence the home-country groups in various ways.

*See also Christianity: Overview; Death and Afterlife, Islamic Understanding of; Islam; Judaism; Manichaeism; Millenarianism: Islamic; Mysticism: Islamic Mysticism; Mysticism: Kabbalah; Philosophies: Islamic; Religion and the State: Middle East.*

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William E. Shepard

**RELIGION AND SCIENCE.** Almost every culture in human history has had a religious framework. Almost every religion offers some form of cosmology, some account of the origin of the world and of humanity, and some sort of *scientia*, some wisdom about how to relate to the world.

The reason why the interaction of religion and science has been of such interest since the mid-nineteenth century is that modern Western sciences, as they have developed from the seventeenth century on, seem to have dispensed with the underlying religious basis out of which they grew (which was largely that of Christianity). So this article will concentrate on the interaction between modern Western sciences and theology, predominantly Christian theology, while acknowledging that there have been other very important interactions—for example, between the medieval sciences and Islam and Judaism, and between Chinese medicine and Daoism.

### Historical Review: Galileo and Darwin

The history of the science-religion debate is often told by means of two famous test cases: the Italian mathematician Galileo Galilei (1564–1642) and his interaction with the Roman Catholic Church, and the English naturalist Charles Darwin (1809–1882), whose ideas led to controversies with various (mainly Protestant) theologians. Two cases do not make a history, and John Brooke's work has shown how diverse and particular are the interactions of different sciences with different patterns of religious thought. However, the two cases are highly significant.

Galileo made advances in many areas of mathematics, science, and technology. He is most famous for his adoption of a sun-centered model of the solar system at a time when the church taught that the Earth was the center of the universe. His defense of the sun-centered model, first developed by Copernicus (1473–1543), led ultimately to Galileo being placed under house arrest by the Catholic Church. It is important to recognize, however, that the church was not separate from science but a great sponsor of scientific exploration, and that Galileo was himself a believer and cared passionately about the interpretation of Scripture as well as about the truths of physics. Political and personal tensions played a large part in his denunciation.

The “Galileo affair,” then, was not a simple case of the church suppressing free enquiry by a devoted scientist. Galileo's significance is somewhat different. First, in retrospect religious authorities could see that prevailing theories of the cosmos might undergo gradual change and that this process was one they could not control. Second, Galileo's thought set the tone for the development of physical science from that point. He saw that science would be most effective if it concentrated on measurable quantities and reproducible effects; he also saw that observations of a ball sliding down a slope—a testable, quantifiable system—could be applied to more remote problems such as planetary orbits. Galileo's thought therefore anticipated the massively successful mechanics of Isaac Newton (1642–1727) and the impression Newton's work gave of a mechanical universe, resembling a giant clock. In such a picture of the cosmos, the role of a deity might be restricted (though Newton would not himself have accepted this) to that of the maker and initial winder of the clock.

The thought of Galileo therefore helped to shape not only the particular sciences he studied but the whole scientific method. Modern science has focused very effectively on the reproducible and measurable and on understanding complex systems through simple models. It has rigorously avoided explanations involving a creator with purposes for the creation. However, the sciences do rest on faith commitments. Particularly important is the belief that the universe is ordered and consistent, such that the same laws operate in complex systems remote in time or space from the experimenter—in the center, for example, of a distant star—as operate in model systems.

It has often been argued that the Christian thought-world was particularly propitious to the development of this faith commitment because that thought-world not only emphasized the cosmos as a rational place, created by God through rational commands, but also stressed the distinction between God and the world. A strong motivation among many of those who developed the natural sciences was the desire to investigate the world to see how the creator had designed it. This exploration of “natural theology” went hand in hand with the development of physics and chemistry, especially in England between 1650 and 1800. But the exploration was only made conceivable by the conviction that the world was not in itself sacred. The relationship between physical science and Christian theology (at least in England) in the second half of the seventeenth century has been described as “almost a rapturous love affair.” However, the success and reach of the sciences grew in parallel with developments in Enlightenment thought that enabled thinkers to question the authority of traditional religious teaching. Moreover, previously unexplained phenomena that had been considered “acts of God” turned out to obey scientific laws. Where God's activity had been inserted to plug a “gap” in scientific accounts, gap after gap tended to close, and those studying the clockworklike Newtonian universe found it easier and easier to dispense with talk of the clock maker. Those who resisted this mechanistic worldview, such as proponents of *Naturphilosophie* in Germany, tended to part company with mainstream scientific thought.

In a sense, the process by which theological explanations lost their authority and their partnership with scientific theories reached its climax in the disputes over the thought of Charles Darwin. Very careful observations of the natural world, coupled with consideration of artificial breeding methods and restrictions on population sizes, had led Darwin to his theory of evolution by natural selection: variations occurred at random in biological organisms, and environmental pressures and competition with other organisms “selected” the variants that survived to reproduce themselves. As in the case of Galileo, theologians and scientists alike were divided as to the correctness of these new proposals. Many theologians celebrated Darwin’s theory of “descent with modification” as a sign of God making a world that could make itself. Others resisted Darwinism on the grounds that it eliminated the need for a divine role in the design of individual creatures, and by implication also abolished the distinctiveness of human beings. Evolutionary theory seems to dispense with the need for any sort of “watchmaker,” any sort of rational designer to design the mechanisms of living things. These nineteenth-century Darwinian controversies shaped not only the course but also the nature of modern science because they aided the shift away from the “gentleman amateur” scientist (often a clergyman) to the professionalized model we know today.

### Philosophical Considerations

Two branches of philosophy are central to the analysis of the relationship between religion and science. The first is ontology, the study of what reality is, and the second is epistemology, the study of how humans can know anything about reality. However, there is huge disagreement among religions as to the nature of ultimate reality; there is also much contention among philosophers of science as to the status of scientific explanations of the world. In one sense science and theology are both rational enterprises aimed at exploring the same world, based on motivated faith commitments; in another sense they are utterly different because they operate from such different assumptions. Science aims to make matter an object of study, whereas theology aims ultimately to learn from a self-communicating God.

Much of the epistemological debate in science and religion has centered around “critical realism.” This account of explanation within science and theology has been framed (slightly differently) by Ian Barbour, Arthur Peacocke, and John Polkinghorne. It claims that both science and theology offer accounts of reality that, though they may be partial and corrigible and depend on the use of models and metaphors, nevertheless, by a process of inference to the best explanation, draw progressively closer to a description of things as they really are. This is definitely what most practicing scientists think is the case, and some claim that theology also follows such a method (though encounter with a personal God must always imply a slightly different sort of enquiry). The problem with critical realism is that it is so difficult ever to imagine how we would *know* we were closer to an explanation corresponding to reality. Postmodernism insists that all our formulations are culturally laden and must be treated with suspicion, and the development of science often involves the radical overturning

of previous models (as with the Copernican revolution). Nancey Murphy, writing in Peters and Bennett, concludes that critical realism is not appropriate to a postmodern epistemology but that there still are methodological similarities between science and theology. Wentzel van Huyssteen makes a good case that the science-religion debate is postmodern thought at its most constructive and least corrosive, since it involves two rational communities in conversation about areas of genuine common concern.

### Evolutionary Biology

Evolution remains a contentious subject among conservative Christians, particularly in the United States, and also among many Muslims. Belief in the literal truth of sacred texts, and in the surpassing sovereignty of the divine creator, has led many to reject the theory of evolution, an enormously powerful and generally coherent scientific explanation, in favor of some variety of “creationism.” This polarization of argument about evolution has restricted a very important area of theological exploration, namely how we can understand the activity of a God who seems to have created a system that contains very widespread suffering among animals, and in which over 90 percent of all the species that have ever lived are extinct. Evolutionary theory also raises other issues—in particular to do with the nature and distinctiveness of humanity. The Book of Genesis describes human beings as being uniquely made “in the image and likeness of God” (1:26). If we can explain a great deal about human beings in terms of our evolutionary inheritance, what becomes of these theological claims about humans?

The key phrase here is “a great deal.” Advances in evolutionary explanation have been greatly accelerated by the “modern synthesis” of evolutionary theory with classical genetics, and then by the discovery of the structure of DNA in 1953, enabling us to describe evolutionary patterns at the level of molecular genetics as well as anatomy. It is sometimes thought that understanding genes effectively allows us to account for every aspect of human behavior. This “sociobiological” account of humanity implies that higher-level descriptions of human beings as creatures who worship, who pray, who exhibit self-sacrificial love can all be dispensed with. This kind of dismissal is an example of “reductionism” taken too far. Understanding higher-level properties in terms of simpler systems is part of the power of science—it goes back in a sense to the insights of Galileo—but reductionism has often been used too sweepingly when science has interacted with other types of explanation, such as those given by theologians.

### Psychology

One of the most intensively studied elements of the science-religion relationship is the relation of psychology to the theology of personhood and of agency. Here the theological language of *soul* and *spirit* has had to be clarified in the light of scientific descriptions of mental functioning. There have been claims, again simplistic and reductionistic, that religious experience merely reflects enhanced activity in a particular area of the brain. This claim overestimates our current understanding of the functioning of the brain and of consciousness



and ignores the possibility that brain function can reflect both a complex pattern of the firing of neurons and a human being relating to God. Key areas in this exploration are the question as to what happens to an individual's spiritual state in a case of profound damage to the brain, for example, through Alzheimer's disease, and the scientific evaluation of accounts of "near-death" experiences, in which individuals claim to have seen not only bright and gentle light but also things that could not be perceived by their ordinary senses.

Another contribution psychology has to make to theology is in our understanding of agency. The three great monotheisms, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, all speak of the divine in personal terms; God is a personal agent who interacts with the world. Much energy has been devoted to trying to understand how such interaction relates to the law-governed descriptions of the world that science offers. So psychology can contribute to the theology of providence through the increase in our understanding of agency (as long as it is understood that human, embodied agency is at best a weak analogy with the relation of God to the universe); theology can contribute to psychology through its long study of divine and human freedom.

### Physics

Theologians are much concerned with the relationship between God, time, and human freedom. The development in the twentieth century of first quantum theory and then chaos theory has emphasized the inadequacy of a clockwork model of the universe. In the usual interpretation of quantum mechanics, chance is a genuine and inalienable element in the unfolding of physical systems. Chaos theory, moreover, stresses our inability ever to predict precisely how complex systems will unfold. Theological models have emerged of the universe unfolding according to the interplay of chance with God-given laws, in a way that cannot be predicted by humans and may even not be known precisely by God. There have been various efforts, none of them very successful, to identify these "unclosable gaps" in determinacy and knowledge as loci at which God might act providentially but undetectably on physical systems, so keeping alive both the model of a God who intervenes in the world to effect purposes of divine love and healing and also the model of a God who is faithful to the laws with which God endowed creation.

One of the scientific developments of the twentieth century that seemed most consonant with the Christian tradition was big bang cosmology, with its description of the universe as arising out of an explosion that was extremely violent and yet seems precisely "tuned"—if any one of a number of key parameters had been even minutely different, no life could ever have arisen. There has been a great temptation to insert God into this causal gap at the beginning of time, to suggest that God must have been both fine-tuner and initiator of the big bang. Again this sort of theology has been shown to be inadequate, as cosmological physics has moved into a realm of speculation about the big bang as a random, uncaused frothing-up (perhaps one of many) of a preexisting quantum vacuum. The type of explanation Christian theology offers of the universe

is an ontological one—God as the answer to the question Why—is—there—something—and—not nothing?—rather than an account of God as the first cause in a series of temporal causes.

Astrophysics currently predicts the end of this universe as being its eventual expansion out to a low-temperature, low-density continuum from which all life and structure have disappeared. Here there is evident dissonance from those theological formulations that picture God as gathering up the whole creation into a pattern of new order and goodness. Again, the effect of exploring the dialogue with science is to cause theologians to be more precise about the type of explanation they are giving. Just as the resurrection of Jesus is postulated by Christians to involve a new state of matter, having some continuity with our present bodily state but also being different, incompletely recognizable, so the final state of matter is presumed to involve divine transformation, not a mere unfolding of the present creation.

### Ecology and Ethics

The science-religion conversation as it has been conducted over the last forty years—very much under the influence of Ian Barbour in the United States and the priest-theologians John Polkinghorne and Arthur Peacocke in Britain—has tended to focus on physics in particular, not only as the source of vital data about the beginning and end of all things but also as the paradigm of rationality. Theologians have tended to be in awe of physics, and physicists in turn have sometimes developed an almost religious awe of their subject.

However, environmental science has had a very different conversation with theology. Ecological thinkers have often blamed religious formulas (such as the verse of Genesis cited above) as licensing human abuse of nature; they have also been critical of science as determined to dissect nature and as providing the technology used to accelerate ecological abuse. This criticism ignores the vital point that it is science that provides the diagnosis of our environmental state. However, the de-divinizing of nature by Christian theology that we noted above *was* a catalyst for Western scientific development, and science in turn *has* reinforced a sense that we are free to use nature as we want. It has been hard for humans to keep a sense both of God's distinctness from the world and of God's immanent presence in every aspect of that world. Here theology may need new imagery for the God-world relation; for example, Jay McDaniel offers the image of God as "heart" but also draws on Buddhist principles such as nonharming in order to derive a more sustainable environmental ethic.

Importantly, then, the science-religion conversation is not just about fine metaphysical distinctions between types of explanation of the origin of the universe; ultimately it is about the wisdom to relate appropriately to our world, and (if such is our belief) to our creator—to know how best to address our ever-growing power to influence that world, through the sheer extent of our technological life, and specifically through such advances as the new genetics. Science must inform our wisdom but cannot be its sole source.



See also *Creationism; Evolution; Monism; Natural Theology; Naturphilosophie; Newtonianism; Philosophy and Religion in Western Thought; Physics; Science, History of; Scientific Revolution.*

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Christopher Southgate

## RELIGION AND THE STATE.

This entry includes five subentries:

*Africa*  
*Europe*  
*Latin America*  
*Middle East*  
*United States*

### AFRICA

The modern African state system is a new political concept that came about from the struggle for independence. These states are organized in the matrix of the two great religious traditions: Islam and Christianity. The secular hegemonic nature of the founding of these states brings into play the political meaning of these religious traditions. Religion in Africa is projected as a part of a continuum in the debate about the "national question": Who shall rule, and how shall the state be governed? Several historical conjectures indicated that religion would have a say in addressing the question of governance. These historical conjunctures include:

1. The institution of apartheid in South Africa with the blessing of the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa.
2. The Africanization of the leadership of the Christian Church at the same time that African nationalists were replacing the European colonial governors.
3. The rise of modern anxieties, culture of crime, and graft and corruption in the political arrangements of the new states, causing life in many of these states gradually to become vulgar, morally degraded, depraved, and spiritually vacuous.
4. The official formation of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) in Rabat, Morocco, in 1969, the formation of the Islamic Development Bank in 1975, and the successful establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran after the revolution in 1979 led by Ayatollah Khomeini, combined with subsequent influences of Wahhabi Islam originating from Saudi Arabia and the al-Qaeda factor, especially in East Africa, all increased the climate of Islamic zealotry.
5. Liberal democracy and economic prosperity, which African nationalists promised their masses in the 1960s and 1970s, were not achieved; rather, all the inescapable realities of lack of human dignity and economic assurances, with a deepening gap between rich and poor and rising ethnic frictions, broke down the social contract between the state and its citizens. African religious leaders with faith in their belief systems counter that religion should be the keystone in

both the personal life and the fulfilling of state obligations; that, measured against the majesty of God's work, the state is subsumed under that majesty.

African states, then, in their earlier stages were conflicted in the interaction with the two great religious traditions in their midst. There was initially a love-hate relationship between the state and the two great religious traditions. Sometimes the politicians cracked down on the religious leaders or their organizations; at other times they tried to appease them. Nasser and the Ikhwan al-Muslimin (Muslim Brotherhood) in Egypt, Gadhafi and the Sanusiyya brotherhood in Libya, Nimeiri and the National Islamic Front in Sudan, all experienced a love-hate relationship. There was a period of appeasement in the relationship between state and religion, but by the 1980s, powerful Islamic and Christian movements came to be seen as threat to the very existence of the state. In such situations, the confrontations between state and religion took a different turn.

South Africa, with its "state theology," came under serious scrutiny. The Muslim community and a counterreligious consciousness among Black liberation theologians initiated a powerful ideological attack on the ideology of apartheid. Liberation theologians came to see apartheid as a form of "structural sin" and sought to persuade the religious community (the South African Council of Churches, the World Lutheran Federation, the World Council of Churches, and, more important, the World Alliance of the Dutch Reformed Church) of this. The extraordinary role of the members of the religious community (both Christian and Muslim) in mobilization of the oppressed in South African and the international community—that finally came to see apartheid as heresy and apostasy—contributed immensely to the collapse of the apartheid system.

In other parts of Africa, Christian leadership produced Pastoral Letters—a rare, frank critique of African dictatorships in Idi Amin's Uganda, Hasting Banda's Malawi, Mengistu's Ethiopia, Abacha's Nigeria, and, more recently, Mugabi's Zimbabwe. On the other hand, African political leaders who were Christian did not shy away from proclaiming publicly their Christian faith; notice the born-again Christian president of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo, and the building in 1989 of one of the largest Roman Catholic churches (the Basilica in Yamoussoukro, Ivory Coast) in modern Christianity in Côte d'Ivoire by its Christian president Felix Houphouët-Boigny.

African Muslims who see the state as a sacred entity under the rule of Allah exhorted the leadership of the secular states for an Islamic dispensation as the politicians go about creating new political formations. The various Islamic organizations in varying degrees encountered problems. In Morocco, the Islamic group Justice and Welfare was ordered to disband in 1990; Algerian "Salafists" who wanted to return to pristine Islamic ideals came under great pressure from the government. The Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was legalized in 1989. It won the elections of that year, but the Algerian government canceled the second round of elections, jailed most of the FIS leaders, and in 1992 banned the organization. Tunisia never legalized the Ennahda (Renaissance) Party, repressed its mem-

bers, and closed down its newspaper. The Libyan government disrupted the Islamic movement in that country, and by the early twenty-first century the movement was unstructured, with many of its leaders imprisoned. The Islamic Party in Kenya was summarily denied official recognition during the presidency of Daniel arap Moi. But in states such as Tanzania and Uganda, Islamic organizations were encouraged to form and acquire government patronage. The Egyptian experience with the radical Islamic group "Jihad," which was implicated in the assassination of President Anwar Sadat in 1981, was very instructive to many African politicians.

The Islamic code of *shari'a*, which regulates the Islamic community, has received special attention in Africa. Strict Islamic laws—such as the imposition of amputation or death by stoning for transgressions such as theft, adultery, or fornication and the banning of prostitution, gambling, and consumption of alcohol—are elements embedded in the *shari'a*. These are elements of Islamic law that African secularists deemed too harsh.

Sudan introduced the *shari'a* in 1990 (although in 1983, Colonel Nimeiri had introduced the "September Laws," which recognized the *shari'a* as the basis of state law, it was alleged that he did so to serve his own political agenda, not as a sincere application of the *shari'a*). The civil war that raged in that state from 1957 pitched the north, which is Muslim, against the south, which is predominantly Christian and traditional religionists. With the introduction of the *shari'a* by the government, the south, under the leadership of the Sudan Peoples Liberation Army, began challenging the Islamization of the state and its extension to the south. But the Islamization program of the Hassan al-Turabi and Omar Hassan al-Bashir governments took root. Peace negotiations were in progress in 2004 to bring the north and south together, but the south was reluctant to accept the political control of an Islamic republic.

Nigeria, on the other hand, came out of the Nigeria-Biafra civil war in 1971 with the dictum "No victor, no vanquished" under the leadership of a Christian military leader, General Gowon. Yet from 1971 the southern and Middle Belt Christians were continuously victimized, and militant Muslims in Northern Nigeria killed thousands. This religious bloodletting was exacerbated with the introduction of the *shari'a*, first by the state of Zamfara but subsequently practiced in eleven northern states. The Amina Lawal court case, in which Amina Lawal was prosecuted for illegal sex and pregnancy out of wedlock, received national and international attention. International outrage, particularly the outrage of women's rights groups nationally and globally, and the intervention of the secular state of the Federation of Nigeria, along with a brilliant defense team saved Amina Lawal from the capital punishment authorized by the *shari'a*.

In addition, Muslim political leaders, in a secretive process, applied for Nigeria membership in the Organization of Islamic Conference. All these actions by the Muslim leadership led to the formation of the Christian Association of Nigeria, whose agenda aimed at putting a stop to further Islamization of the Nigerian state. The Nigerian state, however, presented itself as a mediator in Muslim/Christian relations. The state funded

the building of a Christian cathedral and mosque in the federal capital of Abuja, funded pilgrimages to Mecca and Jerusalem for Muslims and Christians, respectively, and also created a Ministry of Religious Affairs.

In both states, Nigeria and the Sudan, the tendency was for religious vigilante groups to form and keep an eye open for any transgressions of *shari'a* regulations. The Sudan People's Liberation Army and the Christian Association of Nigeria opposed such intrusion of religious oversights in the body politic of their respective states. Unlike the Sudan, where a real war was waged to settle the matter, in other parts of Africa, including Nigeria, a religious "cold war" operated in the context of a constitutional truce.

To anyone who has looked closely enough, the religious leaders of Africa and their beliefs and faith, plainly enjoy a strength. Arguably the greatest strength of all, something truly imposing, is their ability to threaten the state. Their positions and beliefs have broader historical roots than the African states. They are not only popular, wealthy, and global in the sense that they are well connected, they are also institutionally sophisticated. Their ideas appeal to many African citizens who are poised to challenge the state whenever possible. Christians and Muslims alike in Africa should see themselves as effective intermediate civil societies that lie between the *state* and the *household*. In this sense, then, they exist to protect and advance their religious interests and values in a plural society. African governments, on the other hand, should be encouraged to look at African religious leaders and their faith as autonomous intermediaries between the state and its citizens. The role that these religious leaders have played in dislodging African dictatorships, apartheid, corruption, and social justice and their implementation of compassionate charities to help bridge the deep gap between the rich and the poor on the African continent is highly commendable. The state governments, however, have in many instances cracked down on the religious leaders and their followers in the pursuance of the dictum of political realism when they felt that the state was threatened.

Three major concerns in the relationship between state and religion in Africa can be deciphered from historical occurrences of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. First, in the genocidal activities that raged in Rwanda in 1994, certain Roman Catholic priests were said to have participated in the genocide of the Tutsis by the Hutus. The inability of the church to forestall this genocide is troublesome. Second, the recent linkages between al-Qaeda activities and some religious organizations in Africa have foreboding consequences. The intricate web of front companies and individuals in Africa who were associated with the al-Qaeda movement, allowing al-Qaeda operatives to trade in African gold, diamonds, and other gems—thus providing the economic resources and networks that led to the bombings in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam and the possible assistance given to those who shot down the U.S. Black Hawk helicopter in Mogadishu—and al-Qaeda's presence in Sudan are all indications of serious problems for African state/religious relations. Third, Christians and Muslims in Africa are gradually accepting the electoral system as

the moderating instruments to affect change in their states, but when the states are unable to accept the electoral victories of religious parties, political instability of the African states becomes inevitable.

In one sense, neither religion nor state may claim the high ground in any assessment of instability of African political culture. Yet both should strive to use their powerful influence to illuminate African lives in order to fulfill the promise of the majesty of God's/Allah's work. The genius of modern liberal education in Africa in the early twenty-first century is the pragmatic compromise that many African citizens are learning; religion has a place in pursuing the aim of social justice and freedom. Many Africans would love to have the freedom to choose for themselves how they ought to live. Their devotion to God's law and their devotion to the secular state are sometimes conflicted. But these should not be judged trivial when measured against the majesty of God's/Allah's work.

The recent use of the phrase "African Renaissance" by such leaders as President Mbeki of the Republic of South Africa once again reminds African citizens that the ideals and spirit of enlightenment that both the state and African religious leaders are exposed to could be helpful in promoting coexistence. In trying to define "African Renaissance," both the state and religious leaders in Africa should aim at reconciling God and freedom, political liberty, and pragmatic compromise. As the states in Africa mature, there is the hope that the deepest believers in Islam and Christianity will tone down their rhetoric and devise ways to coexist with the state rather than prepare for a possible showdown with the state. The African states, with all their failures, still provide the one political-legal framework that can transcend all the manifold differences between the religious traditions, can accommodate their various belief systems and ways of life, and can serve as a normative basis for their coexistence and cooperation.

*See also Islam: Africa; Religion: Africa; State, The.*

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Austin M. Ahanotu

### EUROPE

In order to discuss religion and the state, the demarcation between the two must be clear, which leads to the postulation of distinct and potentially conflicting purposes. For most of the world’s cultures at most times, a separation of political and religious goals was simply unimaginable. In social systems such as ancient Egypt’s and Japan’s, where the supreme leader was accorded the status of a deity, the fusion of the religious and the political was seamless. Obedience to the divine and to the ruler could not meaningfully be distinguished, and a heavenly mandate alone determined who should command. Likewise, in urbanized polities such as the classical Greek *polis* or the Roman Republic, performance of one’s public duties included a clearly religious dimension, and priestly offices were civil in origin and nature. When Socrates (469–399 B.C.E.) was tried and convicted by an Athenian jury in 399 B.C.E. on the charge of “not recognizing the gods that the city recognizes,” this was an overtly political crime inasmuch as disrespect to the local deities meant undermining the traditional arrangements that characterized Athenian civil order. To “invent new gods,” as Socrates was further accused of doing, violated the shared bases of citizenship.

The historical division between religion and politics that leads to the problem of their proper ordering and relation emerges only in coincidence with the phenomenon of divine revelation, and hence only with the so-called Abrahamic religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Religions that rest on a direct relationship between individual human beings and a deity effectively circumvent the monopoly of spiritual authority claimed by the state and its authorized priestly agents. Hence God’s revelation may contradict or contravene political commands, generating a conflict that requires resolution. One solution to the dilemma is for the state to adopt some form of tolerance for the revelation claimed by members of a religious group. An alternative is to engage in widespread persecution and repression of religious communities that assert the precedence of God’s word over earthly legal command. Another alternative might be the complete co-opting of the religion by the state, which then claims divine right.

### Rome and Revelation.

Rome, during its history as an imperial power, adopted all three strategies in relation to revealed religion, depending on circumstance. In general, when Rome conquered a territory, it stipulated that the new provincials sacrifice to the approved Roman deities in addition to their own gods—a relatively unproblematic request to pantheist or pluralistic religions. In the case of Judaism, however, this approach was unacceptable. The Jews had a long history of living and thriving within non-Jewish civilizations in both the Eastern and Western worlds, while nonetheless maintaining their own religious and cultural identity. Rome accommodated the Jews by tolerating non-worship of its cult provided that the unbelievers were prepared to pray to their own God for the sake of the Roman *imperium*. Although the Roman establishment was by no means fond of the beliefs and rites of Judaism, the religion’s antiquity and venerability earned its adherents the respect and forbearance of authorities.

By contrast, the relation between Christianity and the Roman state was considerably more fraught. The early Christianity of Roman antiquity is commonly imagined to be a persecuted religion. This statement requires qualification, however. Although persecution of Christians occurred prior to the Christianization of the Roman Empire, it was seldom conducted on a systematic basis coordinated by imperial authorities (the Great Persecution of 303–312 was exceptional in this regard). Rather, persecution of Christians happened in a sporadic and localized manner, and was sometimes even discouraged by imperial officials who sympathized with persons accused of holding Christian beliefs. Perhaps the most troublesome aspect of Roman persecutions was the nature of the charge: merely to be Christian, rather than to commit some definite offense, was sufficient to be prosecuted for a capital crime. This harshness stemmed from the very odd character of Christian belief when judged by pantheistic Roman standards: it was universalistic and exclusivist. That is, Christians claimed the validity of their faith for all people at all times and in all places and were unwilling to accommodate other deities or the public rites associated with the Roman cults. Indeed, Roman society regarded Christianity to be atheistic in the sense that its adherents refused to “pay cult to the gods.”

The landscape changed dramatically during the fourth century, as Christianity moved rapidly from a proscribed faith to an officially protected and subsidized sect. In the wake of Emperor Constantine’s extension of support, the Christian church became an institutionalized wing of the Roman government and, with the exception of the reign of Julian the Apostate, at least nominal membership within the Christian community was expected of imperial magistrates. In turn, the emperor was transformed into the acknowledged head of the visible church (a doctrine known as Caesaropapism). This meant that the emperor enjoyed broad responsibilities for ensuring the unity of the faith and directing imperial resources toward essentially religious ends. A synthesis of state and religion resulted from the Christianization of Rome.

Yet the public privileging of the Christian religion did not lead to a state-sanctioned imposition of strict orthodoxy on



the lands under the control of the Roman Empire. Beyond the myriad practical problems involved with eliminating paganism and heretical Christian movements, Christianity's universalistic and exclusivist elements were tempered by biblical teachings about charity, patience, nonviolence, and the like. Jesus had advocated preaching and example as the appropriate techniques for disseminating his message. The employment of Church-endorsed state compulsion in order to enforce Christian conformity fit uncomfortably with scriptural lessons that advocated personal free choice and commended turning the other cheek in response to one's enemies. Thus, at the end of the fourth century, St. Augustine of Hippo (453–426) grappled with the issue of whether he should call upon the armies of the Roman state to suppress heresy. Although Augustine ultimately embraced persecution and intolerance as the only practicable solution, he did so only as a last resort, after nearly a decade of promoting less extreme measures. In his initial view, at least, the role of the state should be strictly limited to the protection of peaceful persons from religiously motivated attacks, a function essentially consistent with publicly approved toleration.

### **The Islamic Caliphate.**

The relationship between religion and the state in the lands that came under Islamic control during the spread of the Muslim faith charted a somewhat different, although not entirely unfamiliar, path. Following the death of the Prophet Muhammad in 632, his successors (caliphs) took up the mantle both of the pure word of God contained in the Koran and of the creation of a common Arab civilization. Although the actual power of the caliphs declined during the eighth and ninth centuries, the ideal of a single imperial office maintaining the unity of religion and civilization remained strong throughout the Middle Ages.

The caliphate was not precisely a religious office in the sense of having a priestly status; although the caliph was understood to be a "shadow of Allah on earth," his ordained function was primarily a military one: he was to protect the faithful and spread the words recorded by the Prophet by means of conquest and conversion. Moreover, once *shari'a* (Islamic law) was compiled in the ninth and tenth centuries, the caliph and other Muslim rulers were deemed to be subject to it, just like any other member of the faithful community (*umma*). Strictly speaking, neither the Koran nor *shari'a* dictated or legitimated any political system whatsoever. If every Muslim were to follow the teachings of the Koran and the dictates of religious law, then no political authority would be necessary. Indeed, some medieval Islamic authors promoted a doctrine that modern scholars have labeled anarchism.

Muslim government was also relatively mild in its treatment of those who subscribed to the other Abrahamic religions. In the Muslim-dominated Iberian Peninsula and in parts of the Middle East where Christian and Jewish communities existed, the caliphs and their successors extended the status of protected persons to believers. Protection came at a cost: special taxes were due to Muslim rulers, and adherents to other confessions did not enjoy equal legal rights. But recognition

that Jews and Christians prayed to the same God as Muslims, even if their doctrines were misguided, yielded a climate of relative tolerance. This was to remain the case through the long period of the Ottoman Empire.

### **Christian Europe: The Middle Ages.**

The collapse of the Roman Empire in the West left the Christian church as the major source of trans-European political, cultural, and social unity, and thus Christianity learned to persevere without a meaningful state to depend upon. Indeed, the institutional church, with its authority increasingly centralized in the papacy and the episcopal and diocesan systems, superseded the state entirely, using a combination of spiritual suasion and socio-economic power to control the fragmented and decentralized lordlings who amounted to local strongmen under the feudal structure. Despite attempts on the part of certain dynasties to revive the imperial ideal and extend centralized political control—Charlemagne and his successors are especially noteworthy—the church alone managed to bridge the chronological period between late imperial Rome and emergent Europe.

Thus, the Christian church was left in an unusually powerful position in relation to state authority when consolidation of the social bonds of the feudal nobility, and with it political centralization, recommenced after the year 1000. On the one hand, the church's legal, judicial, and administrative system provided a ready model for temporal governance, and the class of literate clergy that it trained afforded a pool of staff for aspiring monarchic states. Yet on the other hand, the church's monopoly over the state of souls, justified by its claim to have inherited from the Petrine commission the keys determining entrance into heaven, translated into assertions of universal supremacy in all affairs, earthly as well as spiritual. Advocates of the pope's superior station proposed a "plenitude of power" (*plenitudo potestatis*) inhering in the office of the Roman bishop that permitted him, at least in cases of emergency, to exercise "two swords," that is, both corporeal and otherworldly forms of authority. If not quite amounting to theocratic government, the Roman church sought for itself a wide jurisdiction in determining the arrangement of secular rule.

This situation was reflected in the political ideas typical of medieval Europe. Such mainstream thinkers as John of Salisbury (1115 or 1120–1180) and St. Thomas Aquinas (1224–1274) viewed secular government as directed toward two goals, one natural, the other supernatural. The former involved the promotion of virtue and justice among subjects; this could be attained by any political society, whether Christian or pagan. The latter demanded the promotion and diffusion of the true religion of Rome; only a Christian ruler could achieve this goal, and only when guided by and deferential to the Roman church and its leaders.

### **Christian Europe: The Reformation.**

During the sixteenth century, Protestant reformers such as Martin Luther (1483–1546) and John Calvin (1509–1564) challenged the Roman Church's monopoly over the interpretation of Christian doctrine and its maintenance of clerical

obedience. The Reformation generated waves of violent persecution and the suppression of religious dissent as well as forceful resistance by the oppressed confessions. Catholic princes and cities burnt reformers of all stripes; Protestant rulers and communities did the same to Catholics as well as to members of other reforming sects. The state as an agent of confessional enforcement only reinforced the impression that effective use of coercion and violence (even if in the name of the salvation of souls) were the real qualifications for political leadership.

The controversial role of religion in public life in turn spawned major reappraisals of the relationship between religion and the state. Authors began to argue in favor of tolerating differences of conviction and rite. Sebastian Castellion (1515–1563) argued that coercion is an inappropriate tool for effecting a change of religious views since Christian belief must be held with sincere conviction; hence clerics and magistrates must refrain from persecution of convinced Christians who cling to doctrines that do not coincide with official teachings. Major figures in European philosophy weighed in on the side of religious toleration. Baruch Spinoza (1632–1677) claimed a broad application for the right to liberty of thought and belief without inference from a sovereign power's (or a church's) determination of the truth or falsity of one's ideas. Pierre Bayle (1647–1706) asserted that persecution of religious diversity encouraged hypocrisy and eroded social order and that an erring conscience, if it be held in good faith, deserves as much protection as a correct one—a principle he extended even to atheists. Perhaps the most famous, although by no means the most original, proponent of toleration, John Locke (1632–1704), advocated toleration for most Christian (and perhaps some non-Christian) rites in his *Epistola de Tolerantia* (1689). For Locke, the role of the state should be confined to the maintenance of public tranquility and the defense of individual rights rather than the care of the soul.

Locke's *Two Treatises of Government* (1690) also stood at the culmination of another important line of early modern thought concerning the rights of populations to refuse obedience to tyrannical rulers, especially in matters of religion. Reforming Christians of a Calvinist persuasion led the way in articulating a theory of resistance to illegitimate applications of power. Initially, John Knox (1505–1572) and other British exiles propounded the view that government has a responsibility to God to eliminate all forms of idolatry (by which he meant Catholicism). If the ruler refuses to act on this duty, then lesser magistrates and even the common people must step in to suppress idolaters and their sympathizers—that is, Catholic priests and their royal protectors. The Huguenot reformers of France transformed this basic insight into a general account of resistance. According to them, a regime that aids, abets, and even guides the violent persecution of religious minorities may be licitly resisted. Authors including François Hotman (1524–1590) and Theodore Beza (1519–1605) produced a sizeable literature combining traditional Christian prohibitions against popular rebellion with the view that so-called intermediary magistrates—officials in service to a prince—are obliged to repel and contravene commands by their superiors that require religious persecution.

Finally, some thinkers of an Erastian bent wished to place religion entirely under the command of secular rule precisely in order to eliminate the conflicts that it seemed perpetually to engender. Intimations of this idea can be discovered in medieval authors such as Marsiglio of Padua (c. 1280–c. 1343) and Christine de Pisan (1364–c. 1430), for whom the priesthood constituted nothing more than a branch of temporal society under the control of the ruler. But the most robust statement of the secular position may be found in the *Leviathan* (1651) by Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679). Hobbes, who identified the maintenance of peace and order as the sovereign state's principal function, singled out religion as an especially fertile source of political disruption. To remedy the divisiveness of religion, he offered a rather extreme solution in the second half of *Leviathan*: strictly limiting the autonomy of ecclesiastical officials and offices and reinterpreting Christian theology in a manner consonant with his conception of political sovereignty.

### Later Developments.

The basic issues concerning religion and the state that emerged during late classical, medieval, and early modern times framed later debates in those parts of the world (such as the Americas, the Middle East, and Africa) where revealed religions enjoy a considerable following. Specifically, one sees recurrent concern with whether political power is a hindrance or a boon to the spread and maintenance of religion, as well as whether the state should remain neutral to competing confessions. The early history of these discussions demonstrates that the dual questions of the role of religion in politics and politics in religion have always been settled in many different ways. There is no grand narrative of human progress in matters of religion, no progression from persecution to toleration or from unity to plurality or from superstition to secularity.

See also *Secularization and Secularism; Toleration*.

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## LATIN AMERICA

Church-state relations in Latin America since the arrival of the Spanish in 1492 and then the Portuguese can be discussed in four periods: (1) evangelicization and orthodoxy, 1492–c.1750, (2) the secular state, c.1750–1892, (3) *Rerum Novarum*, 1892 to 1962, and (4) Vatican II, 1962 on. The Roman Catholic Church has been the dominant religious institution and Catholics remain a majority in the region. The events of each era resulted from the interplay between secular and religious authorities. Civil authorities initiated the first two periods, and clerical leaders the second two periods. Church-state relations have become more complex in the past 50 years with the rise of Protestantism, the growth of African-based religions such as Macumba, and the increase of faiths brought by immigrants, including Hindu and Islam. Jews arrived with the first European expeditions, although they were forced to conceal their faith throughout the colonial period.

**The Evangelical and Orthodox Period, 1492–c.1750**

Once Europeans discovered the Western Hemisphere and church leaders determined that its residents were indeed human beings, both Spanish and Portuguese monarchs justified their claims to colonies and commercial monopolies in terms of bringing Christianity to the heathens. The monarchs codified this rationalization in the 1494 Treaty of Tordesillas that divided the non-European world between them for commerce, colonization, and religious conversion. Pope Alexander VI confirmed the treaty. For roughly the next three centuries, evangelization dominated church activities and church-state relations. The monarchs provided financial and political assistance. Conversion, often no more than baptism and mandatory weekly masses, was largely the work of Franciscan, Dominican, and later the Company of Jesus (the Jesuits) missionaries. During colonization of the Caribbean, Bartolomé de Las Casas (1474?–1566), one-time conquistador turned missionary, became the blistering critic of Spanish practices. In his political tract *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies*, he described the conquest as the sadistic brutality, torture, enslavement, or murder of indigenous peoples. He called on the king to restrain the conquest, reverse Indian slavery, and regulate Spanish-Indian relations. Spain's colonial rivals (e.g., England) and rebellious dominions (e.g., the Dutch) widely reprinted the book, often with Albrecht Dürer's (1471–1528) fanciful and terrifying engravings to mobilize popular opinion against the Spaniards. As Protestant northern Europe gained ascendancy over the Catholic south in global geopolitics, the influence of this text continued to grow, and its negative portrait of Spaniards and the church still colors popular perceptions in the twenty-first century.

Religious leaders undertook efforts to restrain the conquistadors and colonists and to impose religious orthodoxy by instituting the Inquisition in Spain's possessions. Because they were felt to have an incomplete understanding of religious doctrine, Indians, except in cases of bigamy and cannibalism, were not subject to the Inquisition. In its efforts to evangelize the Indians, and the arriving African slaves, the church utilized its most powerful symbols, frequently announcing new martyrs,

saintly behavior, and miracles. The most famous of these, the 1531 apparition of the Virgin of Guadalupe in Mexico, created an indigenously Mexican mythology in which an Indian, Juan Diego, was chosen by the Virgin to carry her message to a Spanish bishop. Doubters saw in this tale a ploy by church leaders to assist the evangelization process. Albeit initially violent and only intermittently successful, these conversion strategies aimed at African and Indian populations, and the partially successful campaign for orthodoxy among the settlers did result in a continent that was, for the most part, fervently Catholic—although Catholicism itself was transformed in the process, as it integrated symbols, rituals, and imagery from pre-Columbian and African sources, and from New World ecologies.

Church-state relations in Latin America changed fundamentally under Spanish King Charles V (1516–1556), an enlightened monarchy who intended to establish a secular, efficient empire. The best-organized and funded challenge to his authority was led by members of the Jesuit order. In response, the king acted decisively to expel all Jesuits from Spain and its possessions in 1767. This provided a preview of the often-bitter anticlerical policies of government leaders influenced by the Enlightenment and the French Revolution over the next century. The Latin American colonies for the most part had achieved independence by 1824, and nearly all new regimes, whether republics or monarchies, attempted to restrict church influence in secular life by deamortizing church properties, limiting religious holidays, and abolishing clerical control of the civil registry, cemeteries, and separate courts. Until the last decade of the century, Popes especially Leo IX (1049–1054) urged Catholics to reject these secular campaigns as threats to the church. In each of the Latin American nations, efforts to separate church and state resulted in civil strife, and often civil war. In Mexico, it provoked the War of the Reform (1858–1861) won by Benito Juárez and the Liberals, but the clerics made a final effort by helping inspire the French intervention and the empire of Maximilian and Carlota. Warfare continued from 1862 to 1867, when Juárez's armies defeated the French, executed the emperor, and separated the church and state. Similar if less violent struggles took place throughout the region.

The Papal Degree *Rerum Novarum* in 1892 represents a reversal of the Roman Catholic Church position on the struggle with national governments and modern society. Pope Leo XIII decreed that the church should protect the local nature of religion, and support individuals against the social homogenization and economic exploitation of modern life that destroyed faith. This decree inspired a re-evangelization campaign, and initiated the organization of Catholic unions and political parties, many of which, such as the Christian Democrats in Chile, remain powerful in the twenty-first century. Priests and members of religious orders now tried to control the programs of civil government rather than trying to dominate government. At times, the social activism resulted in bitter struggles, for example the Cristero Rebellion in Mexico (1926–1929) over the role of religion in a revolutionary society. *Rerum Novarum* also inspired what became splits within the church itself. The Pope encouraged



social activism, but by the 1920s and 1930s the militancy among some priests had become a revolutionary fervor. Colombian Father Camilo Torres, for example, went into the highlands in the 1960s to join revolutionaries and was later killed by counterinsurgents.

Pope John XXIII called the bishops to meet in 1962 in Vatican II. Beset by challenges of the world's economic inequities, the rise of communism, and the increase of revolution, the church fathers initiated changes. One result was the rise of liberation theology, with local parish programs for social welfare called Christian Base Communities (CBCs). These community action programs confronted needs unmet or ignored by civil authorities. The CBCs constituted an indirect challenge to government officials, and often provoked direct confrontation with governments to obtain basic necessities for the poor. These CBCs became especially important in Brazil during the years of the military dictatorship and served as a form of grassroots organizing. In other countries, Guatemala, for example, the failure of both government and church leaders to assist the indigenous population provided an opening for Protestant and Mormon missionaries. Conversion to these faiths provided a new support network for rural Guatemalans. The church-state experience, of course, varies by country, from leadership in challenges to dictatorship in El Salvador, to organization of indigenous peoples in Chiapas, to struggle to survive in antireligious Cuba. The rise in conversion to Evangelical Protestantism is another complicating factor, with some governments reacting with hostility and suspicion to a movement led by foreigners, while in other cases— notable Guatemala—conservative Protestants have become heads of state. In the twenty-first century, the relationship between church and state remains in flux.

See also *Anticolonialism: Latin America; Authoritarianism: Latin America; Colonialism: Latin America; Religion: Latin America.*

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William H. Beezley

#### MIDDLE EAST

The relationship between religious and political domains in Islam is extraordinarily complex and is rooted in a rich conceptual and a long (although conflicting) institutional tradition. Koranic verses clearly endorse the prophet Muhammad's spiritual and temporal authority. Muslims agree that he was the sole transmitter of the divine message, the most qualified person to decide the meaning and application of that message, and the ultimate authority in applying that message. Sev-

eral Koranic verses, for example 3:32, 3:132, 4:42, 4:80, and particularly 4:59, call Muslims to obey Muhammad and his appointees. The first Muslim commonwealth, the city-state of Yathrib, which was later called *Madinat al-Nabi* (the "City of the Prophet"), was established on the conceptual basis of this unified authority. The prophet led the Friday prayers, acted as a judge, was the supreme commander of the Muslim forces, and appointed governors and ambassadors. A sovereign exercising both temporal and spiritual authorities remained ideal to a number of Muslim medieval political theorists such as al-Farabi (d. 950), who at the same time recognized the difficulty of finding a legitimate contender for such a position.

#### The Shia-Sunni Controversy

While the sources for reconstructing the early history of Islam leave much room for contention, it appears that a crisis of authority took place immediately after Muhammad's death (632 C.E.). Faced with the task of finding a successor to the Prophet, Muslims (at least according to later views) were divided into two main camps. The first group—later referred to as the Sunnis—decided that a successor should be elected by the highest-ranking Muslim leaders. These Muslims elected Abu Bakr, an old ally of Muhammad and one of his fathers-in-law, as his successor or "caliph." A second group argued that the matter of succession had already been decided by God and revealed by the Koran and the Prophet. This group believed that the legitimate successor was Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law 'Ali. The members of this group were referred to as the *shia* (partisans) of 'Ali, or simply the *shia* (or *shii*). To them, 'Ali and certain of his offspring—to whom they refer as imams—have been designated by God to rule the Muslims. According to most Shia, including those in contemporary Iran, imams have access to knowledge not available to any other human being, and they are free from sin. Because of these extraordinary characteristics, they are qualified to succeed the Prophet as the holders of both religious and political authority. The majority of Shia in the early twenty-first century believe that the last of these imams (the twelfth imam, al-Mahdi) went into hiding to avoid persecution at the hands of the Sunnis in the late ninth century. He remains in occultation today, but at some point will return in order to bring peace and justice to the world.

The majority of Muslims refer to the first four caliphs after Muhammad's death, including 'Ali (who was widely regarded as the fourth caliph), as the "Righteous" or "Rightly Guided" caliphs. While there is no question of their having wielded prophetic authority, prophethood having come to an end with the death of Muhammad, they nonetheless hold both religious and political authority. Later caliphs, however, were not able to keep these authorities unified. Over the course of the early medieval period, the *ulema* (religious scholars, literally "those who have religious knowledge") gradually staked for themselves the claim to have inherited the Prophet's religious authority. Moreover, by the late ninth and early tenth centuries, even the caliph's secular authority was reduced substantially, as local princes (emirs or, later, sultans) successfully usurped the caliph's temporal power and effec-



tively reduced him to the position of figurehead of Sunni unity. Meanwhile, a sovereign exercising both temporal and spiritual authorities remained ideal to a number of Muslim medieval political theorists such as al-Farabi, who at the same time recognized the difficulty of finding a legitimate contender for such a position. During the early medieval period, a number of explicitly Shia states were also established, in several of which the leaders claimed to rule as imams or in the name of the imams. In these states (the Nizari state in Iran and the Fatimid state in Egypt, for example), the unity of authority was better preserved, as the rulers claimed direct or indirect link to 'Ali's family (and thus to Muhammad), and so exercised both spiritual and temporal powers.

### The Early Modern Islamic States

The Mongol invasion and the fall of Baghdad (1258) put an effective end to the caliphal system. Religious authority was officially separated from and formally subjugated to the political authority. The underlying tension between religious and political authority has, however, remained a central problem of modern Islamic history. By the early modern period, the Ottoman state, which owed its legitimacy to engagement in jihad against the Byzantine Empire, effectively renewed the caliphal tradition. The Ottoman sovereign was referred to as both the sultan and the caliph, and while the term "caliph" was sometimes used simply as a generalized marker of supreme authority, the Ottoman sultan also staked a claim to a degree of religious as well as political power. However, by the mid-seventeenth century, the Sunni religious establishment (the ulema) had also established itself as a formidable temporal power, and was, for example, at the center of the alliance that removed Sultan Ibrahim from the Ottoman throne (1648). In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Ottoman state remained a source of inspiration for Muslim political activists who wished the return of an Islamic empire similar to that which existed under the Righteous Caliphs. Among those who articulated such inspirations was Sayyid Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (c. 1838–1897), an early modern advocate of Pan-Islamism, who also engaged in political intrigues and propaganda in Egypt and India in the name of Islam.

Shortly after the establishment of the Ottoman Empire, the Safavids (1502–1736), claiming to be the offspring of 'Ali, established their Shia state in Iran. Safavid shahs (kings) initially declared themselves to be either the deputies of the last imam or, in the more extreme formulation of their claims, the imam himself, and therefore the legitimate holders of both the spiritual and temporal authorities. But in this case, too, a religious establishment with rapidly growing influence began to appear soon after the empire was established. Thus, toward the end of the Safavid period, the leading cleric of the early seventeenth century, Muhammad Baqir Majlisi (1627–1698), enjoyed a degree of authority in temporal affairs only second, if not equal, to that of the shah.

During the eighteenth century, a third modern Muslim state was formed on the Arabian Peninsula. This was the result of an alliance between a Sunni religious scholar, Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1703–1792), and a local prince,

Muhammad ibn Sa'ud. Abd al-Wahhab considered his movement an attempt to return to pure and genuine Islamic society, arguing that Muslims other than his followers had abandoned the principles of Islam. The alliance between Abd al-Wahhab and ibn Sa'ud led to the creation of an army of zealous Muslims. Following this alliance, the Saudi princes claimed the title of imam in order to unify spiritual and temporal authority in the Arabian Peninsula. The Wahhabi-Saudi alliance proved to be resilient and successful in unifying the peninsula and in providing the Saudi monarchs with substantial legitimacy. But again, one must not discount the influence of the ulema, who demonstrated their power in the abdication of King Saud (1964).

### From Secularization to Islamic Revivalism

Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the Muslim world in the Middle East witnessed a general turn toward secularization. Ottoman reform movements in the nineteenth century (the *Tanzimat* and, later, that of the Young Turks) and the Iranian Constitutional Revolution (1905–1911) were examples of attempts to duplicate European models of building modern states, with separation of religious and secular authority adopted as at least an implicit principle. This trend reached its height with the rise to power of Kemal Atatürk (Turkey, 1923) and Reza Shah (Iran, 1925). They reduced the influence of the ulema significantly and made the separation principle an explicit cornerstone of their reforms.

Ironically, the early twentieth century also witnessed the birth of contemporary Islamic Revivalism, especially in Egypt, where the state failed to take radical reform initiatives similar to those of Turkey and Iran. In response to various national and international challenges and the failure of both traditional and liberal (*Wafd* party) establishments in meeting these challenges, the Egyptian schoolteacher Hasan al-Banna (1906–1949) established the first modern political party, the Muslim Brotherhood (founded 1928). The Muslim Brotherhood advocated an exclusively Islamic ideology and a radical platform not only to reeducate individual Egyptians in Islam, but also to transform Egypt into an explicitly Islamic society with a self-consciously Islamic state. Another relevant event during the first half of the twentieth century was the birth of what was eventually called the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, a state that from the beginning justified its existence based on Islam. Pakistan was also the birthplace of another important ideologue of contemporary Islamic Revivalism, Abu l-A'la' Maududi (1903–1979).

Al-Banna and Maududi opened the road for other, often more radical, advocates of reviving Islamic societies, which would be ruled by Islamic states and according to the Islamic laws. Sayyid Qutb (1906–1966) of Egypt and (in a very different context) Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini (1902–1989) of Iran are among such figures. Maududi and Qutb contributed significantly to a new shift in radical Islamic political thought by developing the concept of *jahaliyya*, according to which Muslims in the contemporary world find themselves living in a state of "ignorance" similar to that confronted by Muhammad and his earliest followers. The concept accused contem-

porary Muslims of being ignorant of Islam and its laws, or ignoring those laws as the sole legitimate guidance for action in both public and private domains. Al-Banna, Maududi, Qutb, and Khomeini challenged Muslims to re-create the genuine Islamic state, whose principal characteristics could be traced to the prophet Muhammad's experience in Medina.

In Pakistan, after General Zia al-Haq seized power in a military coup (July 1977), attempts were also made to revive an Islamic state, particularly through a program known as Nizam-i Islam. However, it was in Iran that the principal contemporary Islamic state was created in 1979. Coming to power by mass revolution, Ayatollah Khomeini and his associates articulated a new and radical interpretation of an older Shia doctrine, that of the "Guardianship of the Jurist of Islamic Law" (*velayat-e faqih*). According to their interpretation, during the continuing absence of the twelfth Shia imam (al-Mahdi), the only legitimate political authority is that exercised by the qualified jurists of Islamic laws. Consequently, the Iranian Constitution places supreme authority in the hands of a cleric (referred to as the "Supreme Guide" or "Leader of the Revolution"). Thus, in Iran spiritual and temporal authority have once again become unified, albeit in a very modern (and also explicitly Shia) form.

Soon after the revolution in Iran, attempts to build an Islamic state in the Sudan were initiated. Similarly, Afghanistan witnessed the creation of an Islamic state with the fall of the socialist government of President Najiballah (1992), and the establishment of the Taliban regime in 1996. The Taliban ("students" in Persian) movement took root among young Afghan refugees in Pakistan, trained in schools with Islamic curriculums during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. Upon coming to power, the Taliban government strictly enforced its version of Islamic law, in yet another attempt to create an Islamic State based on the principles of Prophet Muhammad's commonwealth in Medina.

See also *Islam; Religion: Middle East*.

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Cyrus Masroori

#### UNITED STATES

Citizens of the United States quite properly regard the ideas and practices relating religion to the state in their nation as being sharply distinguished from those that prevailed in Europe at the time of the national founding. The sources of these ideas were European as opposed to African, Asian, or Native American. They arrived in America through literary imports and in the minds of colonists chiefly from the British Isles between 1607, when settlers arrived in Virginia, and 1787, when the U.S. Constitution was written in Philadelphia. The specific forms these ideas took on American soil, however, differed significantly from patterns that originated east of the Atlantic Ocean.

#### The Ideas Behind a Liberal Polity

What emerged in the United States in connection with these ideas was a form of liberal polity and practice. Whatever else this style of liberalism includes, it depends on reason, which means that participants are expected to argue their political cases on rational grounds without privileging religious warrants. Second, such a liberal state encourages or at least allows for a considerable expression of individual freedom. A third feature is the recognition that such a state cannot thrive if the majority of its citizens do not practice considerable degrees of tolerance in respect to the religious and philosophical commitments of others.

In the longer history of the West, religion had been a force that in many ways militated against these three expressions. In almost all cases, the founders came with preconceptions that

related specifically to Christendom, which was the political realization of Christianity as a set of both ideas and institutions.

Judaism was the ancestor of such Christianity, and in respect to thought about the state, most Christian founders at the time when the Constitution was being written drew as much on the Hebrew Scriptures as they did on the New Testament. Their “Old Testament” included many provisions for government, including the Decalogue, which remained highly influential in official European Christianity. The New Testament texts, while they included celebrations of government in several instances, were much more colored by apocalyptic thinking. When these were written, the world was expected to end soon, so there were not many reasons for believers to be concerned with how to govern the state.

### Religious Establishment

One cluster of ideas in the experience of Christendom colored everything done in its name. This was the establishment of Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire in the fourth century. The division of the Christian Church into Roman and Eastern factions by the eleventh century in no way led to legal disestablishment. For the most part the Reformation of the sixteenth century that issued in Anglicanism and various forms of European Continental Protestantism also did not change this significantly. There were, of course, small dissenting groups such as the Quakers and Anabaptists, just as there had been marginalized groups in medieval Catholic times, but these suffered harassment and persecution.

Establishment meant that only one form of religious faith was given legal status, privilege, and the mandate to support the state. Almost all colonists came from European nations and territories that authorized and depended upon the sanction of only one religious expression—for example, Roman Catholicism, Anglicanism, or Presbyterianism. Even most of the dissenters who arrived from the British Isles, notably Puritans, set up established churches when they arrived in New England after the beginnings of the Massachusetts Bay colony in 1630.

Establishment Christianity did not imply that Christians were enemies of reason. It did prescribe, however, that revealed religion was to be honored. Thus “the divine right of kings” was a typical element of the system that the colonists had to counter when they declared independence from England in 1776. In 1787, however, in nine of the thirteen colonies they still drew upon the Bible and church authority to undergird the state and determine much of their own political argument.

Similarly, while the Constitution assured religious freedom in all colonies as they became states, in the new nation the Christian majority could appeal to many strands of biblical and ecclesiastical thought to legitimate individualism. Yet most Christians assigned priority to community expression. Individualists like Roger Williams (1603?–1683), Anne Hutchinson (1591–1643), and others were dissenters who always had to struggle for their rights.

As for tolerance, establishment Christians were not always poised with the sword to punish dissent in the harshest of terms, yet it was expected that one set of ideas should have a monopoly or at least privilege. Dissent was recognized only grudgingly.

### The National Period: Disestablishment Favoring Religion

Despite these establishment predilections, within a fifty-year period after 1787 the vast majority of Christians in the United States came to embrace government of the state based at least theoretically and legally in nothing but rational discourse. Religious institutions paradoxically prospered when their advocates had to bid for public attention among people, many of whom did not assent to their sacred dogmas.

Second, not only did the religious leaders accept the concepts of individual freedom that much of Christendom had long inhibited. They began to claim that they had possessed a patent on them and were the main custodians of citizen rights. And while the religiously serious did not all assent to doctrines that made room for or depended upon tolerance, through the many decades after 1787 most people found ways to combine personal conviction and institutional truth claims with at least practical support of toleration in the face of religious diversity.

### The Enlightenment and Evangelicalism

One set of leaders who helped make possible the drastic changes were advocates of an American version of the Enlightenment. Another were the new-style religious evangelicals, who were “awakeners” or revivalists, who made direct intuitive appeal to the minds of the public. In the process, they began to undercut establishments. In contrast to the anticlericalism of much of the European Enlightenment, in America the celebrators of reason and rational religion tended to be friendly to faiths. Many of the advocates—George Washington (1732–1799), John Adams (1735–1826), and others—praised the contribution of religion to the morality and virtue on which the free state depended. Even those who were the most strenuous advocates for disestablishment and religious freedom, among them James Madison (1751–1836) and Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826), who could be quite critical of much religious authority in their day, did much to help assure freedom for formerly established as well as dissenting churches and, of course, with them, for individuals.

Before long the revivalists and evangelists attracted followings and these outpaced those in establishment Congregationalism and Anglicanism (Episcopalianism). Their appeal to citizens to make religious choices did much to enhance the concept of individualism.

While the U.S. Constitution in Article 6 demonstrated the influence of the advocates of religious freedom, it also reflected the practical situation of colonists who knew there could not be a national union if Congress arranged for an established church. So that article ruled out all religious tests for holders of office. In the First Amendment (1789) the drafters were more specific and sweeping: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free



exercise thereof.” The wording referred only to Congress; the drafters could not have gotten assent to the law had they insisted on disestablishment in the various colonies, now states. But by 1833 the last establishments fell and after 1941 the U.S. Supreme Court set the precedent for incorporating all the legal terms of religious freedom nationally into the judicial rulings of the states.

### Separation of Church and State

The term most citizens, including their legislators, executives, and jurists, have favored for their polity is “separation of church and state,” a phrase used by Thomas Jefferson in a letter to Connecticut Baptists in 1802. This is accepted as constitutional dogma by many, though it is not mentioned in the Constitution and in practice it has not meant the drawing of a radical line between what James Madison called “religion and civil authority.” Thus the fact that religious institutions are ordinarily exempted from taxation, that legislatures pay chaplains, and the like, suggests that extreme and pure separation has never existed.

The terms in which the Constitution is interpreted by the U.S. Supreme Court and other courts and by the public change regularly in the light of changed circumstances and changing Court personnel. Persistently, American majorities have indicated that they prefer policies friendly to religious institutions and expressions. Most of them withhold consent, however, when such policies verge too explicitly toward establishing a religion, or religion in general, when privileging one religious group over another, or privileging religion over nonreligion.

While these majorities insist that they are free to advocate for specific political outcomes on the basis of their interpretations of sacred texts such as the Bible or church dogma, most know that to be effective they cannot expect the nonreligious citizens or members of other religious groups to be swayed by their own interpretations and claims. The Enlightenment ideas have endured alongside dissenting Christian expressions to counter too aggressive religious movements.

In the *Federalist Papers* No. 10, James Madison, when he was trying to win support for the ratification of the Constitution, contended that the security of the republic lay in the multiplicity of interests, including religious ones. There have always been and there remain controversies over policy contention based on explicit religious claims of some versus those of others who would appeal chiefly to rational argument. However, in general, American religionists have bought into and support the liberal state.

The favor most Americans show religion and religious groups has been returned in kind throughout most of American history. During the Civil War southern religious leadership provided warrants for the ideas and military acts of the Confederate States of America while the northern clerics and lay articulators supported the ideas of the Union. At the same time, what scholars call civil religion, public religion, or the religion of the republic has tended to draw support of the members of religious organizations. While the voice of dissent has never been completely stifled, for the most part religious voices have been

nationalistic, supportive of the military in the nation’s wars, and confident that the American state is “a nation under God,” even if there is no Constitutional base for the claim.

### Non-Judeo-Christian Religions

While over eighty percent of the people of the United States identify themselves with what has come to be called the “Judeo-Christian” religion, there have always been inhabitants who did not belong to that tradition. Most notable have been Native Americans or American Indians, many of whom did convert to Christianity, but others, down to the present, have retained their own rituals and traditions. They have often represented anomalies to the courts. In one of the most celebrated instances, for example, the United States Supreme Court in *Employment Division v. Smith* (1990) ruled against two Native American drug rehabilitation counselors who were fired because they ingested peyote during ritual observances.

Some of the founders anticipated a day when citizens from a variety of religious heritages would test the boundary of the biblical tradition. Already during the debates over religious freedom in Virginia in the 1780s, Thomas Jefferson argued that the legislature was trying to protect, and should protect, “the Jew and Gentile, the Christian and Mahometan, the Hindoo, and infidel of every denomination.” Through the next two and a half centuries “Mahometans” and “Hindoos” were few in number. After the U.S. Congress changed the immigration laws in 1965, however, great numbers of immigrants came from Asia, Africa, and especially nations where Muslims predominated.

Some came from places where religious practices were proscribed, but others had the experience of polities in which religion and regime had never been separated, as is the case with most areas dominated by Muslims. Their views on “religion and the state” did not awaken much curiosity until a number of terrorist acts, especially the destruction of the World Trade Center in New York on September 11, 2001, and the increasing involvement in Middle Eastern conflicts, as between Arabs and Jews, led many non-Muslim citizens to be suspicious and to resist efforts by Muslim populations to have some of their controversial practices protected by law.

The presence of the varieties of immigrants from other than Europe and the increase in both pluralism and in the demands for personal freedom led to many testings of the conventional boundaries of “church and state” in law and in custom. Not all the tensions among citizen groups resulted in legal battles, but across the spectrum from neighborhoods surrounding mosques to high governmental administrators and strategists, Muslims found themselves having to demonstrate that they were full participants in the American complex.

Given the suddenness of the arrival of new immigrants and the global conflicts reflected among American citizens, one might have expected that confrontations would have become menacing and even bloody. Yet gross violations of citizen rights were few, and most of the new Americans, whether or not they felt themselves to belong to the longer tradition called “Judeo-Christian,” adapted to their new environment. As is often the



case with converts to a cause or new arrivals to a culture, most went out of their way to advertise their attachment to the United States, even when and perhaps because its legal tradition and culture worked to keep Madison's line of distinction between religion and civil authority clear. And, like so many before them, they came to affirm America's "civil religion," were ready to sing "God Bless America," and to recite the Pledge of Allegiance concerning "one nation, under God. . . ."

See also *Americanization, U.S.; Assimilation; State, The; Toleration.*

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Martin E. Marty

**RENAISSANCE.** The term *Renaissance* (English, French, German; *rinascità* in Italian) refers to (1) "a rebirth of arts and letters" noticed by authors and artists living between the 1300s and the 1600s; (2) Italian cultural history from about 1300 to 1520 ("La Rinascimento"), as in the period concept of Jacob Burckhardt's *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* (1860); or (3) a period of European history starting in Italy as early as the fourteenth century and extending into the seventeenth century in England. In the twentieth century, those studying other European nations sought to document outside Italy the presence of both a renaissance of arts and letters and the Burckhardtian characteristics of Renaissance civilization. The Renaissance, especially in American humanities courses on "Western" civilization and to members of the Renaissance Society of America (founded 1954), became a full period concept for European civilization from Petrarch to Milton, including trade routes and colonization.

Medievalists, led by Charles Homer Haskins, researched a succession of medieval renaissances (Carolingian, Ottonian, twelfth century), suggesting that the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Renaissance may be viewed as an extension of late medieval culture. Nevertheless, Erwin Panofsky in *Renaissance and Resuscitations in Western Art* (1972) argued that the Italian Renaissance differed from the earlier ones in that the revived classical heritage became a permanent possession and ancient forms were reunited with ancient content; to experience Panofsky's point, visit in the renovated Galleria Borghese in

Rome the succession of rooms of pagan gods such as Venus or Hermaphrodite.

#### Comparison of Culture to Horticulture

Petrarch, who was a practical gardener, viewed the rebirth of culture as plants regrowing in the sunlight of spring. Petrarch's French disciple Nicolas de Clamanges refers to flowers together with the Latin term *renasci*, meaning "to grow again" or "to be reborn." Boccaccio praised Dante for inviting back the Muses and Giotto for restoring the art of painting. Borrowing from the ancient vegetative imagery, such as the older Cato's image of a broken clover regrowing and Pliny's examples of vegetative matter regrowing as sprouts, humanists praised the work of fourteenth-century Italian artists and writers. Northern humanists continued a strategy of nourishing, cultivating, and transplanting from classical texts and images the seeds of virtue and knowledge. In the circle of King Francis I of France, in flowery rhetoric humanists praised him for the rebirth (*renaître*) of letters, and in the architecture, decorative arts, and manuscript and book collections in the court at Fontainebleau, there was a "renaissance of arts and letters." Visual evidence for concepts of the rebirth of culture include Simone Martini's illumination that Petrarch commissioned for his copy of Virgil's *Georgics* and *Eclogues*, Da Vinci's image of a trunk resprouting (a botanical lesson from Virgil's *Georgics*), and Botticelli's *Primavera*.

#### The Influence of the Burckhardtian Renaissance

Burckhardt claimed "the Italian Renaissance must be called the mother of our modern age" and described its six major characteristics: the vision of the state as a work of art in both princedoms breeding egocentric leaders and republics breeding new independent individuals; the development of the individual—newly subjective, conscious of fame, and multifaceted; the revival of antiquity, especially ancient Latin culture; the discovery of the world and of humanity as evidenced by mapmaking, landscapes, natural science, poetry, biography, and social commentary; the equalization of society through festivals that expressed a common culture; and the advent of an immoral and irreligious age with revival of ancient pagan superstitions and an oscillation between religiosity and secularity. Medievalists sought to show that especially the first four Burckhardtian characteristics were already present in the medieval world, that in fact a rich Roman culture persisted more in the north than in the divided Italian peninsula. They documented individualism in Thomas Aquinas and Eleanor of Aquitaine and medieval advances in science and in naturalistic art. Scholars of the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries in England, France, Spain, the Low Countries, the German lands, Hungary, Poland, and elsewhere have likewise claimed Burckhardtian Renaissances, usually like the medievalists emphasizing the first four traits, although in French scholarship a secular, doubting French Renaissance had a vogue to which Lucien Febvre responded in *The Problem of Unbelief in the Sixteenth Century: The Religion of Rabelais* (1982). In the expansion by later Burckhardtians, the Italian city-states were a model in miniature for the development of the nation-states (see Garrett Mattingly on diplomacy, Hans Baron on civic hu-

### REBIRTH OF CULTURE AS A REGROWTH OF PLANTS IN THE SPRING

Petrarch, *Secretum*, c. 1343: “When too many plants are sown in a narrow ground, namely that their growth is prevented by crowding, the same thing happens to you, so that no useful roots are put down in the soul that is too occupied and nothing fruitful grows.”

Pierre Belon, *Observation*, 1553: “The minds of men . . . have begun to wake up and to leave the darkness where for so long they have remained dormant and in leaving have put forth and put in evidence all kinds of good disciplines, which to their so happy and desirable renaissance, all as the new plants after a season of winter regain their vigor in the heat of the Sun and are consoled by the mildness of the spring.”

SOURCE: From Maryanne C. Horowitz, *Seeds of Virtue and Knowledge*, pp. 115, 297, n. 96; pp. 156, 309, n. 7.

manism in Florence as a precedent for the United States), and individualism emerged not only from political turmoil but from the development of capitalist, middle-class occupations (Alfred von Martin, E. P. Cheyney).

Today the Burckhardtian Renaissance is evident in textbooks, in films on Renaissance individuals, and in art exhibitions. The term “renaissance” meaning a flowering of culture is positive and optimistic, and thus it has been extrapolated to other contexts, such as the “Jewish Renaissance” of Hebrew with the rebirth of Zionism in nineteenth-century Europe, the “Harlem Renaissance” of African-American culture in the 1920s, and numerous discussions of urban renewal as a “renaissance.”

Burckhardtian scholarship continues to emphasize Burckhardt’s first four characteristics of the Renaissance, finding isolated precedents in the medieval period. As social and economic historians and women’s historians have made evident the hierarchies of rank and gender that marked the age, scholars have recognized that the fifth characteristic, “equalization,” was limited to the mingling and rising of burgher to noble status and that a few daughters tutored along with sons and women’s presence at courts did not add up to Burckhardt’s “footing of perfect equality with men.”

In claiming Burckhardtian Renaissances for other nations, generally scholars isolated the “immoral and irreligious age” to the Italians, although in some postcolonial interpretations (such as that of Walter D. Mignolo), point four—the discovery of the world and of humanity—provides the strongest evidence of point six—the immorality of the European colonialist, slave trader, and missionary.

Scholars of the Protestant Reformation have always emphasized the Christian characteristics of northern humanists. Criticizing Luther for authoritarianism and asceticism, Ernst

Troeltsch (1906) contrasted medieval traits of the reformation with modern traits of the Renaissance; admiring Luther for redirecting Christian freedom to vocations in this world, Wilhelm Dilthey (1923) interpreted the Renaissance and Reformation together as the foundation of the modern world. Especially in the United States, where scholars specializing in the Renaissance and the Reformation often interpret the Reformation as a culmination of the Renaissance and focus on the humanist’s inquiries into Christian antiquity, the term “Christian humanism” is applied to humanists of both the Italian and the northern Renaissance. Nevertheless, we must note that curious and daring humanists employed Jews and Greek Orthodox to explore texts in Greek, Hebrew, Aramaic, and Arabic, and openly read and commented upon works written by ancient pagans; Jewish humanists in Italy brought about a renaissance of ancient Hebrew genres (see Cecil Roth and Arthur Lesley in *Renaissance Rereadings*).

### Historical Challenges from *Annales* School and from Early Modernists

Coincident with national movements of independence from colonization by European nations, historians in Paris developed a movement disparaging the historical studies focused on “What’s new?” The *Annales* school focused on structures of long duration, emphasizing land patterns, family structures, religious and political rituals, and popular customs that have changed slowly and not in accordance with the traditional dates of historical periodization. Funded as social science and utilizing increasingly computerized databases on demography and prices of material goods (whether wine, salt, or catechisms), scholars are accumulating more precise information on living conditions in the premodern world.

The work of scholars seeking out lives of lesser-known people (women and the marginalized) and seeking documents of public performances (confraternity events, religious and political rituals) has provided a fuller awareness of premodern cultures. To be inclusive of popular as well as elite cultures and to start afresh without the ideological implications of nineteenth-century interpretations of “Renaissance,” some scholars prefer the period term “early modern.” Such scholars tend not to be working on the Italian Renaissance of the 1300s and early 1400s but to start after 1450, when the invention of the printing press accelerated the spread of the renaissance of arts and letters throughout Europe. For those scholars, who view either the invention of the printing press or Martin Luther the protester as the turning point from the Middle Ages to the early modern period and who drop Renaissance as a period concept, the Renaissance in Europe becomes closer to its original definition as a movement in arts and letters—in the early modernist’s viewpoint, the first movement in a succession of overlapping movements of the early modern period.

A strain of scholarship has emerged to historicize the development of the concept of a Renaissance period. Scholars are fascinated by various versions of ideas of the Renaissance, such as those of Jules Michelet, Burckhardt, the Victorians, J. P. Morgan, and Virginia Woolf. Pascal Briost emphasizes that Michelet published his *Introduction à la Renaissance* in 1855, the year Burckhardt began writing his more famous work. Even though Michelet originated the phrase “the discovery of the world and the discovery of man,” the term “Burckhardtian” remains the common adjective for “Renaissance” with a capital R.

While “medievalisms” are also studied, the brunt of historicizing of the period concept of Renaissance suggests that the Burckhardtian Renaissance is a nineteenth-century historical fiction or a utopian vision. J. B. Bullen traces the development of the “myth” of the Renaissance between Voltaire (1756) and Walter Pater (1873). Burckhardtrians have responded to the undermining of the period concept by printing editions of his work with art illustrations, as art more than any other medium demarcates a distinctive period. The 1793 creation of the Louvre Museum, with its succession of rooms of great civilizations (Egypt, Greece, Rome, and the centrally placed Renaissance) set a pattern spread by Napoléon to Madrid, Naples, Milan, and Amsterdam, and imitated in New York, Boston, and Chicago (see Carol Duncan’s 1995 study, *Civilizing Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums*). Daniel Ménager in 1992 emphasized the aesthetic, in fact the religion, of beauty that distinguishes the creativity of the Renaissance. Paula Findlen, in a 1998 *American Historical Review* forum on “The Persistence of the Renaissance,” demarcated the period by its passion for collecting objects of antiquity and taking creative inspiration from that collecting. The general public, as well as the tourist industry, recognizes the innovation, distinctiveness, and sheer visual beauty of art from, say, the cardinal and Christian virtues and vices of Giotto’s Arena Chapel in Padua to the nude forms of Michelangelo’s Sistine Chapel ceiling and *Last Judgment*.

### Humanists and Early Scientists

Meanwhile, neither humanist nor reformer ushered in the world of the post-Sputnik generation; government funding of the sciences, including the history of science, has taught historians that the major intellectual shift of modernity occurred in the development of the sciences, especially from Galileo to Newton. Dava Sobel’s *Galileo’s Daughter* (1999) illuminates the contrasting mentalities of this shift as represented by the scientist’s relationship (through correspondence) with his daughter Maria Celeste, a nun. The interpretation of Copernicus and Galileo as early scientists rather than as “Renaissance men,” as well as the seeking of the origins of science in the practices of apprenticeship, the work of artisan workshops, and in the inventions accompanying military battles and world navigation, rivals the outpouring of current scholarship documenting the humanist movement in countries throughout Europe.

In the second half of the twentieth century, the decrease in humanists educated in Greek and Latin letters, the rise in the status of scientists and those educated in “science” or “social science” curricula, and the funding of the history of science encouraged a search for the origins of modernity in the seventeenth-century innovations in science and technology. To create global and multicultural liberal arts curricula, colleges and universities have condensed posts across the disciplines for premodern Europe, making it sensible for those doing scholarship on topics from antiquity to the French Revolution to advocate their common interests in the creation of academic centers, funding of journals, and defending posts in premodern studies. For those in the historical profession, “early modern” is the category used globally by the American Historical Association.

### Renaissance of the Renaissance Society of America

Together with practical on-line resources for accessing published books, such as *Early English Books, 1475–1700*, Elizabeth Eisenstein’s *Printing Press as an Agent of Historical Change* refocused attention on 1450 as a turning point. E-mail groups such as FICINO and conferences have discussed the rivalry of the term “Renaissance” and the term “early modern,” but “Renaissance” persists as a period label for books and articles in disciplinary histories such as art history, music history, and history of science, in national and comparative literatures, and in history. While the *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* appeared in 1997 with the new title *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, expanding its reach to “European and Western Asian cultural forms from late antiquity to the seventeenth century,” its home base at Duke University remained the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies. Women’s studies scholars, delving into women’s writings and disregarding the stereotype “Renaissance woman,” created the Society for Study of Early Modern Women with a home base at the University of Maryland Center for Renaissance and Baroque Studies.

Encouraging regional and topical organizations, the Renaissance Society of America holds council meetings with affiliates. As of 2003, there was no early modern umbrella organization. From the 1985 national meeting of the Renaissance Society of America at Occidental College, the Huntington Library, and the J. Paul Getty Museum, which ushered in open calls for

papers on distinctive topics of the European Renaissance (collected in *Renaissance Rereadings: Intertext and Context*, a selective anthology commemorating the conference) to the RSA's international meetings in 2000 in Florence, Italy, and in 2005 in Cambridge, England, there has been an international renaissance of Renaissance studies.

See also *Cultural History; Humanism: Renaissance; Periodization; Periodization of the Arts; Reformation; Science, History of*.

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Maryanne Cline Horowitz

#### REPRESENTATION.

This entry includes two subentries:

*Mental Representation*  
*Political Representation*

#### MENTAL REPRESENTATION

Humans are surrounded by representations. Some of these occur naturally—for example, tree rings and footprints—while others are artificial—for example, words and photographs. Whatever their origins, all share a fundamental feature: they *stand for* something. Tree rings stand for the age of the tree; footprints stand for the entity that made them; a photograph stands for that which it pictures; and a proper name stands for the person so named.

There is considerable evidence that representations are not confined to the external world; they figure in people's mental lives as well. Perceptual illusions provide intuitive motivation: a straight oar in water appears bent, amputees may experience "phantom" tactile sensations in a missing limb, and some series of tones sound as if they are continually rising in pitch. In each of these cases, it is natural to explain the phenomenon by positing mental representations (albeit incorrect ones).

#### History

The Western intellectual tradition has long recognized the importance of representation in thought. A dramatic example is provided by the philosopher René Descartes (1596–1650), who hypothesized the existence of an "evil demon" that deceived him in every way, causing *all* of his mental representations to be false. Descartes's emphasis on the role of mental representations in thought was influential, and subsequent thinkers—John Locke (1632–1704), David Hume (1711–1776), George Berkeley (1685–1753), and John Stuart Mill (1806–1873), to name a handful—expanded the discussion.

Contemporary work on mental representation owes as much to the theory of computation as it does to modern philosophy. In the mid-twentieth century, psychology was dominated by *behaviorism*, according to which mental entities, even if they exist, have no theoretical role in explanations of behavior. Instead, behavior was to be explained exclusively in terms of stimulus-response patterns. However, in the 1950s, opponents argued that this goal could not be achieved; one must posit internal representations. Moreover, these researchers came armed with a powerful new tool—the methods and concepts of the theory of computation.

The abstract principles of information processing upon which devices such as personal computers are based constitute the theory of computation. According to this theory, computation consists in the rule-governed manipulation of symbols. For example, consider doing long division using pencil and paper. A problem is written on the paper as a set of numerals, and solving it involves repeatedly applying a series of basic rules: division, multiplication, subtraction, writing additional symbols on the paper, and so forth. Analogously, an influential predecessor of today's computers—proposed in 1936 by the mathematician Alan Turing (1912–1954)—consists of a tape for storing symbols, a means for writing and reading symbols to and from the tape, and a controller encapsulating the rules for performing a calculation using those symbols.

Turing's machines are machines in name only; in actuality, they are abstract definitions, introduced to address a prob-



lem of mathematical logic. Regardless, he and others realized that variations on these machines could be physically realized. It was only a small step to infer that human cognitive processes are computational, involving the manipulation of mental representations according to “rules of thought.”

Wielding the conceptual tools of computation, opponents of behaviorism initiated a flurry of research on mental representation, as well as creating entirely new areas of research, such as artificial intelligence and computational linguistics.

Three questions receiving considerable attention in contemporary research are: How do mental representations come to have their contents? What conditions must an entity satisfy in order to be a mental representation? And, what is the format of mental representation?

### Mental Content

Concerning mental content, one hypothesis is that the content of a representation is determined by the role it plays in a person’s overall system of mental representations. As an analogy, consider chess pieces: the difference between a knight and a bishop consists in the fact they have distinctive ways of moving—they play different roles in the game. Similarly, mental representations with distinct contents differ in the types of inferences they invite: believing that Tom is tall leads to different conclusions than does believing he is handsome, and each of these beliefs will be the result of different sets of prior beliefs. Perhaps, then, these differences in roles are constitutive of the content of those beliefs.

One difficulty such theories face is that, because it is unlikely that any two people will share precisely the same network of representations, no two people possess beliefs with the same contents—a counterintuitive result. Additionally, the relationship between playing a certain role and “standing for” something is unclear. How do representations come to relate to things in the external world?

An alternative theory makes more of the representation-world relationship, proposing that the content of a representation is determined by its *resemblance* to things in the world. Just a painting of Napoléon Bonaparte represents Napoléon (and not Abraham Lincoln) because it *looks* like Napoléon (and not Lincoln), a mental representation has the content it does because it resembles that which it represents. This proposal also faces challenges. For example, if for a representation to resemble something is to picture, how can abstract entities (e.g., “justice”) be represented?

A descendant of the resemblance theory hypothesizes that the causal relations a representation has with the environment fix the content of that mental representation. According to a simple version of this theory, content is determined by the things that normally cause that representation to occur. For example, the “eagle” concept has the content it has because eagles (as opposed to other types of animals) cause one to think about eagles, that is, to instantiate that representation.

Despite obvious flaws in this simple theory (e.g., if a duck causes someone to think about eagles, then ducks are part of

the content of the “eagle” representation), more elaborate causal theories of content remain popular.

### The Nature of Mental Representation

All representations have content; but do they typically possess other features as well? One proposal is that, for an entity to be a representation, it must also be capable of standing for its object in the absence of that object. In this case, for instance, the level of mercury in a thermometer would not represent the temperature of a room because the mercury cannot stand for that temperature in its absence: if the temperature were different, the level would change.

Even when this constraint is satisfied, different types of mental representation are distinguishable. For example, throughout the day, the sunflower rotates to face the sun. Moreover, this rotation continues even when the sun is occluded. Consequently, it stands to reason that somewhere there is a physical process that represents the location of the sun and that guides the flower’s rotation during those instances when the sun is not present. However, there is very little a sunflower can do with this representation besides guide its rotation. Humans, in contrast, are not subject to this limitation. For instance, when seeing a cat, a person may represent its presence at that moment. Furthermore, the person may think about the cat in its absence. But, unlike the sunflower, that person can also think *arbitrary thoughts* about the cat: “That cat was fat”; “That cat belonged to Napoléon,” etc. It seems as if the “cat” representation can be used in the formation of larger—and completely novel—aggregate representations. So, while possessing content is a necessary feature of mental representation, there may be additional features as well.

### Representational Format

Some representations play certain roles better than others. For example, a French sentence conveys information to a native French speaker more effectively than does the same sentence in Swahili, despite the two sentences having the same meaning. In this case, the two sentences have the same content yet differ in the way in which they represent it; that is, they utilize different *representational formats*. The problem of determining the correct representational format (or formats) for mental representation is a topic of ongoing interdisciplinary research in the cognitive sciences.

One hypothesis was mentioned above: human cognition consists in the manipulation of mental symbols according to “rules of thought.” According to Jerry Fodor’s influential version of this theory, cognition requires a “language of thought” operating according to computational principles. Individual concepts are the “words” of the language, and rules govern how concepts are assembled into complex thoughts—“sentences” in the language. For example, to think that the cat is on the mat is to take the required concepts (i.e., the “cat” concept, the “mat” concept, the relational concept of one thing being on top of another, etc.) and assemble them into a mental sentence expressing that thought.

The theory enjoys a number of benefits, not least that it can explain the human capacity to think arbitrary thoughts.

Just as the grammar for English allows the construction of an infinite number of sentences from a finite set of words, given the right set of rules, and a sufficient number of basic concepts, any number of complex thoughts can be assembled.

However, *artificial neural networks* may provide an alternative. Inspired by the structure and functioning of biological neural networks, artificial neural networks consist of networks of interconnected nodes, where each node in a network receives inputs from and sends outputs to other nodes in the network. Networks process information by propagating activation from one set of nodes (the input nodes) through intervening nodes (the hidden nodes) to a set of output nodes.

In the mid-1980s, important theoretical advances in neural network research heralded their emergence as an alternative to the language of thought. Where the latter theory holds that thinking a thought involves assembling some mental sentence from constituent concepts, the neural network account conceives of mental representations as patterns of activity across nodes in a network. Since a set of nodes can be considered as an ordered  $n$ -tuple, activity patterns can be understood as points in  $n$ -dimensional space. For example, if a network contained two nodes, then at any given moment their activations could be plotted on a two-dimensional plane. Thinking, then, consists in transitions between points in this space.

Artificial neural networks exhibit a number of features that agree with aspects of human cognition. For example, they are architecturally similar to biological networks, are capable of learning, can generalize to novel inputs, and are resistant to noise and damage. Neural network accounts of mental representation have been defended by thinkers in a variety of disciplines, including David Rumelhart (a psychologist) and Patricia Churchland (a philosopher). However, proponents of the language of thought continue to wield a powerful set of arguments against the viability of neural network accounts of cognition. One of these has already been encountered above: humans can think arbitrary thoughts. Detractors charge that networks are unable to account for this phenomenon—unless, of course, they realize a representational system that facilitates the construction of complex representations from primitive components, that is, unless they implement a language of thought.

Regardless, research on artificial neural networks continues, and it is possible that these objections will be met. Moreover, there exist other candidates.

One such hypothesis—extensively investigated by the psychologist Stephen Kosslyn—is that mental representations are *imagistic*, a kind of “mental picture.” For example, when asked how many windows are in their homes, people typically report that they answer by *imagining* walking through their home. Likewise, in one experiment, subjects are shown a map with objects scattered across it. The map is removed, and they are asked to decide, given two objects, which is closest to a third. The time it takes to decide varies with the distance between the objects.

A natural explanation is that people make use of *mental imagery*. In the first case, they form an image of their home

and mentally explore it; in the second, a mental image of the map is inspected, and the subject “travels” at a fixed speed from one object to another.

The results of the map experiment seem difficult to explain if, for example, the map were represented mentally as a set of sentences in a language of thought, for why would there then be differences in response times? That is, the differences in response times seemed to be obtained “for free” from the imagistic format of the mental representations. A recent elaboration on the theory of mental imagery proposes that cognition involves elaborate “scale models” that not only encode spatial relationships between objects but also implement a simulated physics, thereby providing predictions of causal interactions as well.

Despite the potential benefits, opponents argue that a non-imagistic account is available for every phenomenon in which mental imagery is invoked, and furthermore, purported neuroscientific evidence for the existence of images is inconclusive.

Perhaps the most radical proposal is that there is no such thing as mental representation, at least not as traditionally conceived. According to dynamic systems accounts, cognition cannot be successfully analyzed by positing discrete mental representations, such as those described above. Instead, mathematical equations should be used to describe the behavior of cognitive systems, analogous to the way they are used to describe the behavior of liquids, for example. Such descriptions do not posit contentful representations; instead, they track features of a system relevant to explaining and predicting its behavior. In favor of such a theory, some philosophers have argued that traditional analyses of cognition are insufficiently robust account for the subtleties of cognitive behavior, while dynamical equations are. That is, certain sorts of dynamical systems are *computationally more powerful* than traditional computational systems: they can do things (compute functions) that traditional systems cannot. Consequently, the question arises whether an adequate analysis of mental representations will require this additional power. At present the issue remains unresolved.

See also *Consciousness; Mind; Philosophy of Mind*.

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Whit Schonbein

### POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

Although in the early twenty-first century *representative government* is synonymous with *democracy*, the concept of political representation arose separately from the idea of the rule of the people. Broadly political representation refers to an arrangement whereby one is enabled to speak and act with authority in the behalf of some other.

There are two issues that must be addressed in any theory of representation: who or what is to be represented, and who or what is to be the representative. The first question revolves around the description of constituencies. The second concerns the method of selection by which the representative is determined. There are specific answers to these questions that make representation compatible with and complementary to democracy. Once such a constellation of ideas is in place, however, the drama with which the conjunction of representation and democracy is received—in 1820 James Mill (1773–1836) wrote that “in the grand discovery of modern times, the system of representation, the solution to all difficulties, both speculative and practical, will perhaps be found” (p. 21)—eclipses somewhat the predemocratic origins of the concept of representation.

#### Classical Consent

An institutional arrangement that looks quite similar to modern representative democracy was established in Athens in 501 B.C.E. when Cleisthenes established the Council of Five Hundred, whose members were appointed in equal numbers from the ten tribes. The principle of sortition (lot) came to be central to the representative offices in Athens. This mechanism protected against the advantage the oligarchic elements enjoyed in elections, and kept representation democratic. The primary rationale for the use of a system of representation was its usefulness for extending the reach of democracy over a community larger than could be governed through the direct participation of all. However this Athenian institution did not receive a contemporaneous theoretical advocacy to match its practical use. Among those theorists who did not simply dis-

parage democracy (Aristotle stands out) the ideal polity was limited in size precisely by the requirements of direct participation in deliberative proceedings. The Roman assemblies, also apportioned on a tribal basis, did gradually become representative in fact, in that most citizens did not attend. No conceptual or legal recognition of this arrangement was put forth however. From ancient Greece to the eighteenth century, democratic regimes were always conceived of in terms of the “Athenian model” of a small community whose citizens participate directly in the government of affairs.

Election is an ancient custom, and early statements of electoral principle, such as that by Pliny the Younger (62–111), seem to imply a representative relation, “The emperor of all the people should be chosen by all the people” (*imperator omnibus eligi debet ex omnibus*). The practice of obtaining the consent of the “better part” of the people is referred to by Pope Celestine I (422–432), who states that “a bishop should not be given to those unwilling [to receive him],” and Pope Leo I (440–461) affirms that “He who governs all should be elected by all.” Numerous instances of such electoral consent can be found throughout the first millennium, in ecclesiastical settings at least. In 1140 Gratian transmitted the Roman principle, which required such consent: “What touches all must be approved by all” (*quod omnes tangit ab omnibus tractari et approbari debet*). (A similar formulation, referring exclusively to private matters, is found as early as the Justinian Code of 531.)

#### Medieval Corporatism and the Origin of Political Representation

The medieval conception of representation moved beyond the idea of consent, based on the principles of the right of the majority to determine an issue and the *quod omnes tangit*. These principles alone, realized in the context of feudal and Germanic law, were inadequate to produce the concept of representation. This tradition of law contemplated only real individuals as persons with rights and interests, and consequently contained only the concept of a proctor: one real person acting on behalf of another real person, as an agent. Political representation only arose after 1150 C.E. when the concept of the proctor was conjoined to the concept of a corporation, a fictive person comprised of a group of individuals with similar interests which was itself considered the seat of rights and interests. The corporation introduced the idea of the conscious embodiment of a collective unity, a social community, for the sake of the defense and advancement of the common interests of the community as a whole. Such representative relations are referred to repeatedly by Thomas Aquinas, for example, in the *Summa Theologia* (1265–1273), where a temporal or ecclesiastical authority, prince, king, ruler, pope, bishop, or other, is said to “represent” their communities in the sense that they stand as allegorical images or symbols of the collective and disembodied whole. This symbolic representation functions specifically when magistrates, by virtue of their office, represent the image of the whole state, and generally when the weightier part (*sanior pars*) of any group is taken (both definitionally and procedurally) as the majority (*maior pars*).



The idea of a corporation, and the collectivist conception of the relation between representative and constituency, was soon challenged by William of Ockham with his conception of a constituency as the aggregation of real individuals. Ockham's nominalism, applied to the corporate theory of representation, rejects the attribution of rights to abstract fictions such as the collective entities, the church and the state. Only real individuals have rights and interests, and these cannot be alienated to a fictive corporate entity. The notion of a representative of the corporate whole does not take into account the fact that real individuals cannot delegate all their authority or alienate all their rights: Delegation is always subject to the reservation that the delegate do nothing contrary to the faith and to sound morals. In rejecting the corporate account of representation, and in insisting that delegates can only represent real individuals and groups of individuals, Ockham prevents the assimilation of the representative to the community it represents. This distinction between representative and constituency clears the path for the development of a theory of the representative's accountability and responsiveness to the constituency.

It was the medieval development of parliaments that accrued to themselves the powers of deliberation and decision, first in 1188 in the Spanish kingdom of Leon, that brought the concept of representation to a proper political setting. These parliaments were power-sharing arrangements, particularly regarding the levy of taxes and troops, among crown, bishops, nobles, and wise men. The authority that the consent of such parliaments conferred was bolstered as they came to be understood as representative in nature. The first explicit recognition of political representation is found on the occasion of the English Parliament of 1254, when knights of the shires were elected in county courts and empowered to speak for and bind the whole county. The authority that such direct consent conveyed was repeatedly affirmed in formulations such as that of the Chief Justice of England who, in 1365, proclaimed that "Parliament represents the body of all the realm." By the fourteenth century as well, members of Parliament were expected to convey the grievances of their constituencies to the king and his counselors, giving rise to the formula "Redress of grievances before supply." Thus the function of the representative was to serve as a two-way channel of communication, expressing grievances and popular opinion, while garnering popular support for the policies of rulers. This in turn gave rise to the affirmation that rulers, in so far as they are representative, must act in the interests of those they represent.

The political theorists of Renaissance Italy, while interested in republican and participatory theories of government, had no conception that legislatures might properly consist in representatives elected by the people rather than the people themselves. There was some development of a protodemocratic conception of representation among some Puritans, especially the Levelers in England. In their search for a practical expression of their demands for a broader franchise and a government responsive to a broad electorate, they merged the democratic idea of rule by the people with the idea of representation. Through the seventeenth century, the corporate conception of representation in which individuals were considered to be sub-

sumed into the political body and its image, the representative, dominated both theory and practice.

### Representing the Rights and Interests of Individuals

Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan* (1651) contains a theory of authorization and consent that produces a conception of representation that straddles the corporatist-individualist divide. Individuals, in becoming party to the social contract, authorize the sovereign, who then becomes their representative. It is only after they enter into the contract that individuals are merged into the body politic. Once constituted, the state is conceived of in the medieval corporatist fashion, with all political rights of individuals being alienated unto it, with the single exception of the right to life of the individual, which, not being properly political, cannot be alienated. The individualist elements of Hobbes's theory begin the process that results in the individualization of the theory of political representation, laying the way for the development of modern democratic representation.

John Locke makes representation central to his theory of government in *The Second Treatise of Government* (1690), stating that the consent of the majority (primarily to taxation) must be given "either by themselves or their representatives chosen by them" (p. 362). He also introduces a fairly robust conception of the accountability of the representative organ to the people. The government is entrusted with the "right of making laws . . . for the public good," that is, in the interest and for the benefit of those represented, and if it breaches that trust, the people may rescind their authority and place it in another government. The mechanism of election is only imperfectly integrated into this theory, and is inadequate to attain the required degree of accountability, however, so Locke must include the "appeal . . . to Heaven," namely, the force of arms, as an alternate mechanism for the selection of representatives (p. 427).

The idea of the representation of individuals, and not corporations, paved the way for the theory of governmental accountability. This in turn paved the way for a democratic conception of representation, as all that was left at this point was to extend the franchise to the whole people. Montesquieu, in his discussion of the constitution of England, praises the institution of representative legislatures in a clear foreshadowing of the democratic revolution in representative practice: "As, in a free state, every man, considered to have a free soul, should be governed by himself, the people as a body should have legislative power; but, as this is impossible in large states and is subject to many drawbacks in small ones, the people must have their representatives do all that they themselves cannot do" (p. 159). However the democratization of representation faced two challenges in the years preceding the advent of representative democracy.

In his attack on political representation in *Of the Social Contract* (1762), Rousseau equates it with the use of mercenary soldiers, and then asserts that it is literally impossible: "Sovereignty cannot be represented for the same reason that it cannot be alienated; it consists essentially in the general will, and the will does not admit of being represented" (p. 114). The essential moral capacity of persons, the very soul of pol-



itics for Rousseau, cannot be delegated. It requires the direct, unmediated participation of the individual. Against this background, it is clear that representative democracy itself symbolizes the triumph of the liberal view of the appropriate sphere of politics: that the state should be limited in its enforcement of comprehensive moral or religious doctrines. It also heralds the triumph of an instrumental view of politics, as opposed to the classical view that direct participation in politics is a distinct endeavor essential to or necessary for the fullest expression of human being.

While affirming the centrality of representation to legitimate government, Edmund Burke revives the corporatist view that the interests and rights of the community are “unattached” to any concrete entities such as population, territory, and tax contribution. His view of parliament is that it is “the express image of the feelings of the nation,” (*Thoughts*, p. 292) and as such is “not a congress of ambassadors from different and hostile interests . . . but parliament is a *deliberative* assembly of *one* nation, with *one* interest, that of the whole” (*Speech*, p. 69). For this reason, representatives need not be tied directly to the constituencies they represent. Constituencies need not have direct representation, as they still enjoyed “virtual representation” deriving from a “communion of interests and sympathy in feelings and desires between those who act in the name of any description of people and the people in whose name they act, though the trustees are not actually chosen by them” (*Letter*, p. 629). Rather than viewing the representative as a delegate, authorized to do only what the constituency wills, and limited by the expressed interests and preferences, Burke saw the representative as a trustee authorized to judge and act independently of the constituency’s “opinions.”

### Representative Democracy and Electoral Engineering

In practice, however, these views failed to prevent those in the American colonies without actual representation in parliament to formulate the revolutionary slogan “taxation without representation is tyranny.” The constitutions of these colonies and the new American republic affirmed that only election by individuals produces real accountability, and guarantees that representatives will in fact act in the interest of their constituencies. James Madison, in part following Montesquieu, gave definitive expression to the rationales for representative democracy. First through representative institutions democracy can be extended over a much greater territory and population than had been thought possible until this time. This practice has several advantages, including the likelihood that the representatives would be superior to their constituencies in judgment, knowledge, and such skills as public speaking and negotiation.

Further Madison claims, in “The Federalist No. 10” (1787), the effect of a representative legislature would be to “refine and enlarge the public views by passing them through the medium of a chosen body of citizens, whose wisdom may best discern the true interest of their country and whose patriotism and love of justice will be least likely to sacrifice it to temporary or partial considerations” (p. 409). Representative, as opposed to directly participatory, institutions provide more continuity and stability, as representative bodies are less likely than the people to act on sudden changes of opinion. Through the new

science of electoral engineering a representative government can be made to aim more reliably at a general good that encompasses the interests and preferences of many, more reliably than if all individuals in the people were polled directly. In “The Federalist No. 51” (1788), Madison says a multiplicity of overlapping and opposed constituencies, resulting from divided government and federalism, would make majority domination less likely “by comprehending in the society so many separate descriptions of citizens as will render an unjust combination of a majority of the whole very improbable, if not impracticable” (p. 166). Madison hoped that such institutions would reduce the importance of personal, that is, patron-client, ties between electors and their representatives. Such corruption was endemic in early parliamentary politics, and broad programmatic policies often suffered as a result.

The triumph of this view was so complete in the minds of democratic theorists by the mid-nineteenth century that, in *Considerations on Representative Government* (1862), John Stuart Mill could simply state it as matter of course, that “the only government which can fully satisfy all the exigencies of the social state in one in which the whole people participate. . . . But since all cannot, in a community exceeding a small town, participate personally in any but very minor portions of the public business, it follows that the ideal type of a perfect government must be representative” (p. 350).

The effects of the highly complex set of representative institutions in democracies have come to light only through experience. There is a wealth of examples, however, as elections are the primary source of government legitimacy in the world of the early twenty-first century, so much so that even dictators and ruling parties in authoritarian and totalitarian regimes have used elections to fashion themselves as “representative.” While corporatist forms of representation without direct electoral connections survived into the twentieth century in places as varied as Germany in the 1930s to Sweden in the 1970s, direct election of representatives by individuals aggregated into constituencies formed on a territorial basis is now the primary connection between citizens and their governments.

The analysis of representative institutions has yielded real advances in the knowledge of democratic politics. In systems where voters chose from among individually named candidates, the personal relation between the candidate and constituents will matter a great deal more than in systems where voters choose from among parties and the lists of candidates associated with them. Maurice Duverger formulated a set of propositions that outline the effect of district size on the political system as a whole. A first-past-the-post electoral system, in which districts elect a single member by plurality vote, tends to produce a two-party system, while a system in which districts elect multiple members simultaneously tends to produce a multiparty system. While there are exceptions to these claims, a set of refined propositions has been developed to account for most cases. That there is ample, if only tacit, knowledge of the workings of representative institutions is also demonstrated by the various successful attempts to manipulate the electoral rules to achieving system-wide results. Possible manipulations, corrupt and salutary, include denying or

ensuring minority representation, unifying divergent political interests into a few parties, and providing proportional representation to a wide variety of political positions. Thomas Hare developed a system of proportional representation called the single transferable vote, which is widely viewed to be the fairest, in that every individual's vote will count toward the electoral outcome. One puzzle that appears to outrun the ability of political scientists to illuminate, however, is why individuals vote at all. The irony of representation is that it allows the expansion of democracies over such large numbers that the likelihood of any single individual's vote being the tie-breaker is so infinitesimal that there seems to be no instrumental reason to vote. With or without large voter turnouts, however, the representative structure continues to confer and confirm the legitimacy of most modern governments.

See also *Democracy; Political Science*.

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Hans von Rautenfeld

**REPRODUCTION.** See **Biology**.

#### REPUBLICANISM.

This entry includes two subentries:

*Latin America*  
*Republic*

##### LATIN AMERICA

Republicanism advocates a government headed by commoners rather than a hereditary monarchy. It is similar to democracy in that it favors a representative form of government that receives its legitimacy from the people it rules, but democracy in theory also champions political, social, and economic equality. All of the Latin American countries (as well as the United States) are established as republics, while in the Caribbean some former colonies retain the British and Dutch monarchs as their heads of state. Republicanism no longer has the rhetorical appeal that it did two centuries ago, but related key constitutional

issues relevant to the concept of republicanism, including the division of governmental power, political participation, distribution of wealth, and extension of civil and social rights, continue to be important.

During the colonial period, hereditary absolute monarchies in Europe ruled over Latin America. In the nineteenth century, growing resentment at centralized control designed to benefit Europe and leave people in the colonies with little economic or political power led many patriots in Latin America to reject monarchy in favor of a republican system. Republican rhetoric was sometimes more of an opportunistic positioning to remove the entrenched Habsburg and Bourbon rule, which brought little benefit to the colonies, rather than serious commitment to the ideology itself. Conservative leaders, particularly those associated with the Catholic Church and the military, believed that a strongly centralized system was necessary to retain order in the newly founded independent republics. Some conservatives advocated the retention of a monarchy as a way to prevent social disintegration.

Republicanism in Latin America is often, though somewhat mistakenly, associated with movements for independence from Iberian colonial control during the early nineteenth century. Political independence brought few significant changes to the region's social, economic, and cultural structures. Often the new governments were as authoritarian as, if not more so than, the absolute monarchies they replaced. One concrete republican change that did come with independence was the abolition of titles of nobility and *fueros* (privileges extended to members of the church and military). But while a flourishing of liberal ideals brought an end to formal racial discrimination, it did not necessarily end the institution of slavery nor result in an extension of rights to women, Indians, or peasants.

Although women were active participants in the struggles for independence, they still remained legally subjugated to male control. They could not vote or hold public office and could not work or enter into legal contracts without a husband's or father's approval. Without the crown's paternalistic protection, Indians found themselves to be worse off under new republican regimes as creole elites preyed on their communal landholdings, further narrowing the base of landholders. Republicanism witnessed the continued dominance of elite, aristocratic values—with few economic or social advances for subalterns. This resulted in a long struggle by Africans, Indians, women, and other marginalized populations for full and equal participation in affairs of the new republics.

The history of Haiti, Mexico, and Brazil underscores the difference between independence and republicanism in Latin America. In Haiti, Jean Jacques Dessalines and Henri Christophe briefly set themselves up as monarchs after gaining independence from France. In Mexico, Agustín de Iturbide was a royal general who combined forces with creole leaders in a conservative declaration of independence to free Mexico from a liberal-controlled Spanish government. For a brief period of time after independence in 1821, Iturbide ruled Mexico as an emperor (Agustín I) in a constitutional monarchy; it was not

until 1824 that Mexico became a republic. In the 1860s, Mexico once again returned to a monarchy when the French imposed archduke Ferdinand Maximilian of Habsburg as king after occupying the country. In 1867, Mexico once again became a republic after the liberal leader Benito Juárez defeated the French occupying forces and executed Maximilian.

The gap between independence and republicanism is even more dramatic in the case of Brazil. In 1808, Napoleon's occupation of Portugal had driven King João VI's royal court from Lisbon to Rio de Janeiro. In 1821, João returned to Lisbon, leaving his son Dom Pedro as regent of Brazil. When Portugal attempted to curtail Brazilian autonomy, Pedro refused to comply. In his famous September 1822 *fico*, he declared that he would stay in Brazil—bringing a bloodless independence to the colony. Nevertheless, under Pedro I and his successor Pedro II Brazil remained a monarchy, although they ruled in a rather enlightened manner. In 1889, the military overthrew the monarchy, finally bringing a republican form of government to Brazil.

According to Thomas Millington, the persistence of monarchic rule in Brazil undermined a commitment to republicanism in Latin America. Specifically, he argues that Simón Bolívar's refusal to challenge the monarchy in Brazil, something that was within his reach, translated into a wider failure to challenge European influences in the New World—including authoritarianism and elitism. This allowed Bolívar to replicate authoritarian aspects of the Brazilian system, including the goals of order and progress, in the Spanish-American republics. In a sense, Millington contends, the new republics lacked a functioning civil society that provided the consensus necessary for a functioning republican system. Ironically, the Brazilian monarchy implemented a more liberal and "enlightened" system than that existing in the Spanish republics.

Political historians have traditionally portrayed the emergence of republican ideologies at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries as a revolution in political culture. Popular participation in government replaced a hereditary monarchy allied with clergy and military interests. Social historians, however, have demonstrated just how exclusive citizenship rights were, as creole elites consolidated economic and political power in their hands. Economically, independence represented a transfer of wealth from peninsular to creole elites. Politically, the republican constitutions established legal equality but provided for little change in power relations. Without a broadening of suffrage, a very small elite continued to rule over the rest of the population. Even with representative government, there was not more participation in power. Ideologically, republicanism drew on positivist ideologies with its emphasis on liberty, order, and progress. The dissolution of central authority with the elimination of the European crown left nothing in its place, leading to struggles to determine who had the right to rule.

Deep social, economic, and geographic divisions also led to political instability following independence. Large and diverse countries divided physically, culturally, ethnically, and



linguistically, in which people who lived in one area had little to do with those in another area, led to relatively small groups of powerful men using force to assert their will. Small, individual factions with differences in values and ideals fought for control, resulting in rapid changes in power and the appearance of extreme political instability. Stable centralized governments did not emerge until perceived national interests surmounted the economic interests of regional leaders.

Peter Guardino, Mark Thurner, Charles Walker, and others have stressed the importance of examining these transitions to republican forms of government from a peasant perspective. Walker, for example, examines the critical and often unacknowledged role the indigenous peasantry played in battles for independence. Far from employing mindless mob actions, these dissidents engaged in thoughtful political and legal actions and cultivated coalitions with sympathetic outsiders. Rather than being passive or disengaged, Indians were active agents who “imagined” an alternative vision of the nation that conflicted with that of the dominant culture. Walker criticizes historians who “have far too often accepted contemporary views that deemed Indians incapable of political consciousness and indifferent to the battles over the state.” Rather, he sees indigenous peoples as “key to understanding the turbulent transition from colony to republic” (p. 2).

While voicing republican rhetoric, creole elites feared a militant and mobilized indigenous population. Walker argues that despite significant indigenous participation in independence movements, elites intentionally denied them citizenship rights, with the result that republican rule did little to improve their lot in life. Guardino challenges histories of Mexico’s transition to a republican government told from the point of view of the palace, instead stressing the critical role peasants played in this process. Historians are also gaining an increasing appreciation for the previously understudied role that subalterns played in shaping emerging state structures, a role that was significant despite their marginalization within elite conceptualizations of those state structures.

As these examples illustrate, although theoretically informed by liberal ideologies that favored equality under the law, Latin American republicanism did not lead to universal citizenship by any means. Despite variations in constitutions throughout the hemisphere, almost all created exclusionary systems that limited political participation based on literacy, property, gender, and sometimes religious beliefs. Even though property and religious restrictions were generally relaxed during the nineteenth century, it was not until well into the twentieth century that some countries extended suffrage to women and Indians (who had generally been targeted with literacy restrictions). Thurner plays off this imagery in his book *From Two Republics to One Divided*. Colonial administration deliberately divided society into two “republics”: one for Spaniards and another for Indians. Creole elites terminated this bipartite division in the independent republics, but the goal was to abolish separate ethnic identities through assimilation of Indians into a mestizo culture rather than respecting or preserving indigenous peoples’ unique traditions. As Thurner notes, these colonial divisions “were more fictional and juridical than they were actual,” but

“these imagined constructs had real historical consequences” (p. 6). They resulted in wide gaps between the liberal ideals of universal citizenship and the cold reality of highly exclusionary republican governments.

The history of Latin America since independence can be written as a story of subalterns fighting for full citizenship rights that republicanism had promised but never delivered. Women, Africans, Indians, peasants, and others subverted the language of elite rhetoric in order to demand popular sovereignty, political rights, and active citizenship so that they would also have a say in how the government was structured. Theoretically, elections form the base of a republic, as they express the will of the populace. The gap between theory and reality reveals the failure of republican systems in Latin America, but it is a failure slowly being overturned thanks to the efforts of those originally excluded from the political system. Ongoing political activism on the part of Indians, blacks, women, and the poor demonstrates that the republican ideal is still being realized for many.

*See also Anticolonialism: Latin America; Authoritarianism: Latin America; Pluralism; Populism: Latin America.*

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Marc Becker

#### REPUBLIC

The term *republic* derives from the Latin phrase *res publica* (“matter” or “thing of the people”). Most generally, the word refers to any political regime in which no king or hereditary dynasty rules over subjects in a state of submission or servility. A republic is thus populated by “citizens” who enjoy some manner of political and legal rights to govern themselves through collective political mechanisms and processes. Because citizens are self-governing, liberty is associated with and regarded as emerging from republican regimes. Yet republicanism must also be distinguished from democracy: the idea of a republic entails the imposition of fixed and strict limits on the power of the people. Consequently, a republic involves a constitutional system that provides checks and balances or a mixture of authorizing agents. Stated simply, the liberty of the citizens must be weighed against the maintenance of a common public good that is best identified by leaders who are insulated from the unchecked passions of the people.



Historically, the language of republicanism has been recognized as one of the central modes of political discourse in the European and modern Atlantic worlds. The title of a synoptic collection of essays from 2002 labels republicanism a “shared European heritage,” and many scholars treat it as a European bequest to the New World. Certainly, republicanism seems to be a distinctively Western construction, although a plausible case may be constructed that the pre-kingship system of Judaic government depicted in the Old Testament constituted an embryonic system of “federated republic.” (Indeed, many later thinkers viewed the Israelite polity as an inspiration for their own vision of a self-governing constitution.)

Perhaps the most hotly debated issue in current scholarship is the relationship between the ancient or classical, the medieval, and the modern strains of republican thought. Some have traced the diffusion of classical republicanism from the Renaissance through to the founding of the American republic, arguing for an essential continuity, a “Machiavellian moment,” in the phrase of John Pocock. Others have sternly criticized the view that a uniform revival of classical republicanism may be attributed to the modern world, contending instead that “classical” republicanism must be distinguished from a “modern” variant and that, despite superficial resemblances, different thinkers may be sorted into one or the other category. Paul Rahe represents the outstanding proponent of this view. Still others posit a continuous and developing tradition of republican thought that commenced in the Roman era and persisted (in necessarily transformed fashion) through the Latin Middle Ages into the modern world.

### Roman Republicanism

Republicanism in practice predated any attempt to define or articulate it conceptually. Rome became a self-proclaimed republic at the end of the sixth century B.C.E. as a result of a revolt against the Tarquin dynasty of kings who had ruled the region. Thereafter, the Latin word for king, *rex*, was anathema to Romans (even after the rise of the Caesars, who styled themselves *princeps*, “first man,” instead.). The basic constitution of the Roman Republic evolved slowly over the course of the succeeding four centuries, always shaped by a practice of diffusing power among a range of institutions: administrative officers, a body of noblemen (the senate), and various popular citizen assemblies. In the beginning, the concentration of authority rested with the senate and the executive magistrates (chief among whom were the two consuls). Over the course of the republic’s history, however, the lesser citizens demanded and received greater power via the addition of further magistracies and assemblies.

It is perhaps not too great an exaggeration to say that Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 B.C.E.) was the most influential republican thinker of the ancient world. Although many other classical authors contributed significantly to the understanding of the theory and practice of the republic—Polybius (c.200–118 B.C.E.), Sallust (86–35 or 34 B.C.E.), and Livy (59 B.C.E.–17 C.E.) were among the most important—Cicero produced the largest body of writings about the topic. Moreover, he enjoyed the widest audience and most loyal following of

any republican author, both in ancient times and later. Drawing on Hellenic and Hellenistic philosophies, as well as on his knowledge of Roman history and his personal experiences with the practical requirements of republican rule, Cicero in many ways represented the pinnacle of republican theory as well as statesmanship. Reflecting the inherent tension within republicanism between populism and elitism, his teachings endorse two distinguishable and potentially competing theoretical defenses of republican government: one highlighting eloquent speech, the other focusing on the faculty of reason.

**Populism and public discourse.** In Cicero’s writings on rhetoric and oratory, a premium is placed on public discourse—among both citizens and statesmen—as the basis for the republican regime. In writings such as *De inventione* and *De oratore*, Cicero maintains that the eloquent expression of the common welfare binds the republic together. On the one hand, the leaders of the commonwealth are charged with acquiring the oratorical skills necessary to persuade citizens to accept the laws and policies conducive to the well-being of public affairs. On the other hand, all human beings, regardless of their station, are deemed competent (on the basis of their natural faculties) to discern and judge the pronouncements of orators in public assemblies and proceedings.

Cicero grounds this discursive approach to republican rule on the claim that human nature can only be fully realized through articulate and intelligent speech. While his rhetorical writings do not deny the importance of rationality, they are explicitly critical of the philosophical tradition, which glorifies reason to the exclusion or detriment of language. Rather, human beings are both rational and linguistic creatures, simultaneously capable of reasoning and speaking. Speech is, however, accorded primacy in this formulation of human nature. It is not enough to possess reason, for rational powers require the faculty of language in order that their discoveries may be disseminated.

Cicero believes that the realization of the associative potentialities present within human speech may only be achieved with the aid of oratory. The orator discovers what is truly good for his fellow creatures and communicates it to them in the most forceful and convincing manner so that they may put it to use. The combination of eloquence and wisdom characteristic of the orator assures that he will speak on behalf of the interests of the entire community. Cicero invokes a direct contrast between oratory and philosophy. The philosopher may know the good but lack the skill or training to convey it to the multitude. Inherent in the subject matter of oratory, then, is a regard for fellow citizens, which imposes on the orator an overarching duty to act in the service of public welfare. The orator can only achieve this goal, in turn, by expressing himself in the popular idiom. Oratory is concerned in some measure with the common usage, custom, and speech of humankind, so that, whereas in all other arts that which is most excellent is farthest removed from the understanding and mental capacity of the untutored, in oratory the very cardinal sin is to depart from the language of everyday life and the usage approved by the sense of the community.

Cicero's account of the discursive foundations of public life ties the role of political leadership to a clear notion of citizenship and civic intercourse. The man of public affairs is called on to persuade his fellow citizens to follow the wisest course of action in order to achieve the common good. Eloquent speech must, therefore, be cultivated alongside wisdom as a prized asset for political life; the statesman requires these qualities in order to appeal to and convince an audience. Likewise, even though ordinary citizens may lack the talent and skill of the orator, they are deemed to be competent to judge between competing arguments within the public arena and to choose in accordance with the best and most persuasive (that is, the wisest) case that they hear. Thus, citizenship ought to be construed in an active sense: statesmen seek the approval of citizens, who, by virtue of their inherently rational and linguistic faculties, are all qualified to discern the public good. Public life is a kind of recapitulation of the initial entry of human beings into the social and political order. Hence, this discursive approach has overtly participatory implications; it encourages political actors to conceive of their roles in terms of open rational persuasion and debate leading toward the civic recognition of the public good.

***Elites and natural reason.*** Cicero bolsters this view with an account of the foundations of republican government that emphasizes the centrality of reason alone as the source of public welfare, and concomitantly diminishes the active and discursive dimensions of citizenship. In this version of republicanism, natural reason forms the cornerstone of human social relations. The role of reason is to discover those precepts of natural law that maintain and strengthen the bonds of communal order, and to impose such dictates through law and rulership in a manner consonant with the public good. Of course, Cicero acknowledges that reason is unevenly distributed among human beings. While all people may be minimally rational, some exceed their fellows in the exercise of reason, a fact that qualifies the wise to ascend to positions of authority within the civic body. Indeed, in a well-ordered regime, those lacking fully developed powers of reason ought freely to accede to governance by their betters, on the grounds that wise rule is the strongest safeguard of the common good. The rational powers of statesmen guide the republic for the benefit of citizens, and the people are best governed when they defer to magistrates of superior wisdom. Cicero's philosophical writings, in particular, tend to highlight the Stoic-derived view that human beings are inherently rational creatures and that their natural powers of reason constitute the precondition for all social intercourse and political community.

Cicero maintains that society, and hence people's very capacity to conceive of a public welfare, depends on the cultivation of virtue. Virtue is directly dependent, in turn, on the cultivation of the rational faculties. Hence, the mark of a harmonious communal setting is the presence of virtue as an ingrained feature of its organization. Cicero singles out and concentrates on justice, identifying it as the virtue most crucial to the perpetuation of human association. The Ciceronian conception of justice is rooted in the doctrine of natural law. Cicero holds that nature imposes on individuals a

certain code or measure of conduct, constituted in particular by the requirement to promote the ends and interests of human society. In order to prevent perpetual endangerment to the bonds of society, the law of nature is afforded prescriptive force. To know what accords with the law of nature, and hence what behavior is required by justice, one reasons about the common good. One's duty on the basis of natural law is always to act in the general welfare when there exists a conflict between private benefit and the general interests of society. The Ciceronian doctrine of natural law codifies and authorizes the obligation stemming from justice to value social fellowship above all else.

Cicero believes that all human beings share in the faculty of reason, and therefore are equal in their capacity to grasp what is just and lawful. But it is obvious that all people are not equally rational, and therefore virtuous and law-abiding. Whatever equality human beings enjoy by birth is in effect eradicated by differences of circumstance, so that wisdom is ultimately achieved by a very few persons, and the multitude remain in a state of ignorance. The distinction between the wise and the foolish has important implications for the foundations of the republic. Since civil law, properly speaking, has a rational origin in "what is true and just," according to Cicero, only those statutes that are framed and approved by the wise should be counted as valid. Valid legislation, therefore, must be referred to reason in accordance with nature and justice. No enactment of the multitude, regardless of how overwhelming the popular support, deserves to be accorded respect and obedience unless it is consonant with natural law. And only the wise are qualified to make this determination.

Cicero therefore turns to the *optimates* (best men), in whose hands the security of government must reside. The well-ordered republic of Cicero's *De re publica*—the constitution most in conformity with nature—is the creation of individuals who apply wisdom to the art of politics. In turn, the ideal constitution is balanced and harmonious when the *optimates* (embodied by the senate of the republic) enjoy the influence appropriate to their superior learning. *De re publica* commends that stage in the growth of the republican system when "supreme authority was in the senate with the sufferance and obedience of the people"; and Cicero bemoans the popular grasping after power (in the name of liberty) that leads to the decline in the concord afforded by the republic.

Hence, the rational conception of the republic promotes a passive conception of citizenship as well as an exalted idea of statesmanship. While all human beings are deemed minimally rational, Cicero regards the powers of reason of most of them to be insufficient for sharing directly in the judgment of the common good. Rather, it is up to the statesman, with his wisdom and superior virtue, to serve the public welfare by pioneering and preserving just institutions. Given the distinction between the ignorance of the multitude and the wisdom of the virtuous few, a direct appeal by a statesman to the masses would almost certainly be an act of demagoguery or tyranny, an attempt to destabilize the order of the republic. There is a noticeable contrast between this idea of the rational statesman, who governs on behalf, not at the behest, of

citizens, and the oratorical model, in which the statesman can only lead the citizen body by the force of his eloquence and must accede to the popular will.

### Medieval Republicanism

The tension between the populist and elitist dimensions in republican thought is recapitulated in later important contributions to republicanism. Italy, in particular, produced a number of exponents of republican doctrines, such as Brunetto Latini (1220–c. 1294) and Ptolemy of Lucca (c. 1236–1327). Perhaps the most famous medieval republican work was the *Defensor pacis* (1324), written by Marsilius of Padua (c. 1280–c. 1343). Marsilius stresses the linguistic foundations of the community, following Cicero's account of the formation of the human community as a consensual process in which the multitude is convinced to join into bonds of social and political cooperation by the "persuasion and exhortation" of oratorically gifted individuals. In turn, Marsilius ascribes to discourse a continuing role in the conduct of public affairs, as a sort of repetition of the original foundation of the community. The framing of legislation, for example, he regards as a function of public speech. He stipulates that draft statutes are to be framed by prudent persons (*prudentes*) who, by virtue of their leisure and superior experience, are best qualified to discover just and useful laws. Yet the wisdom of the few does not entitle them to enact legislation on behalf of the general mass of citizens. Rather, the whole body of citizens (which Marsilius terms the *legislator humanus*) must consent to draft statutes in order to give them the status of laws that the community is obligated to obey.

The *Defensor pacis* ascribes to oratory two pivotal functions in the process of a "bill becoming a law." First, it is assigned to the *prudentes*, when they present their legislative proposals to the citizen body, to "explain" publicly the measures they have recommended; and their fellow citizens are likewise bound to "listen attentively" to the arguments given. The *prudentes* in effect play the role created by the primordial orator: they must attempt to persuade the assembly of citizens that the draft statutes are consistent with justice and contribute to the common good, while it is left to the multitude, whose powers of reason are less well developed, to reflect on the justifications presented to them and to approve (or withhold approval from) laws. Second, Marsilius views the occurrence of legislative authorization as an occasion for general public discussion and debate among the members of the civic body. The whole citizen population must have an opportunity to speak about the matters of communal concern placed before it, and the words of the populace are ultimately binding. Lest "partiality" creep into the legislative process, the entire citizen body is to enjoy a say in the laws by which it will be governed.

### Renaissance Italian Republicanism

Scholars often view the Renaissance, especially in Italy, as a decisive period in the development of republican thought. Many important authors of the Renaissance glorified civic-minded virtue—the ethos of sacrifice for the sake of one's fellow citi-

zens and city—shared by members of a community (the so-called civic humanism identified most influentially by Hans Baron). While a simple equation of Renaissance thought with the revival of classical republicanism has come under serious and deserved challenge, some of the greatest humanists of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries embraced citizenship as the fullest expression of a virtuous human life, taking Cicero as their exemplar. Consequently, republican discourse became one of the primary forms of political expression during the period.

The tension within classical republicanism between discursive and rationalistic conceptions of governance thus also reemerged among Renaissance thinkers, perhaps most strikingly in the works of Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1527). One of the central themes of Machiavelli's famed treatise on republican government, the *Discourses on the Ten Books of Titus Livy* (1517) is the defense of the view that the popular elements within the community form the best safeguard of civic liberty as well as the most reliable source of decision making about the public good. In particular, Machiavelli contrasts the constancy and trustworthiness of the people, who are often accused of fickleness and ineptitude, with the improbity of the nobility, who are commonly regarded to be the "natural" leaders of a republic. What permitted Rome to avoid public corruption and to extend its empire for so many centuries, Machiavelli believes, was precisely the fact that ordinary citizens demanded and were accorded such a large hand in public determinations. The people thus thwarted the use by patricians of public power to pursue private interests. The apparent "tumults" between the popular and elite segments of the Roman population were in fact the key to Rome's success. Machiavelli's praise for the role of the people in securing the republic is supported by his confidence in the generally illuminating effects of public speech upon the citizen body. Near the beginning of the first *Discourse*, he notes that some may object to the extensive freedom enjoyed by the Roman people to assemble, to protest, and to veto laws and policies. But he replies by referring to Cicero's view that "the people, although they may be ignorant, can grasp the truth, and yield easily when told what is true by a trustworthy man"; that is, the people are competent to respond to and support the words of the gifted orator when he speaks truly about the public welfare.

Machiavelli returns to this theme in a chapter of the *Discourses* intended to demonstrate the superiority of popular over princely government. He argues that the people are well ordered, and hence "prudent, stable and grateful," so long as room is made for public speech and deliberation within the community. Citing the formula *vox populi, vox dei*, Machiavelli insists that the people are competent to discern the best course of action when orators lay out competing plans, and in fact they are better qualified to make decisions, in Machiavelli's view, than are princes. The republic governed by words and persuasion—in sum, ruled by public speech—is almost sure to realize the common good of its citizens; and even should it err, recourse is always open to further discourse. Nonrepublican regimes, because they exclude or limit discursive practices, ultimately rest on coercive domination and can only be corrected by violent means.



### English Republicanism

According to many scholars, James Harrington (1611–1677) walks directly in Machiavelli's footsteps, circulating classical republicanism beyond the confines of Italian (especially, Florentine) writers, into the English tradition, and eventually across the Atlantic. Yet Harrington's *The Commonwealth of Oceana* (1656) seems to have detoured around some of the more populist elements of Machiavelli's classical republicanism. In preferring the government of Venice to that of Rome, and to a lesser extent, Sparta to Athens, he manifests overt hostility to public speech. Rome and Athens, he asserts, were both ruined by the "storms" arising from the "debate of the people." Far preferable is Venice, which, like its alleged Lacedaemonian exemplar, Sparta, never sanctions public debate. Indeed, in his own ideal commonwealth of Oceana, popular discussion of political affairs is punishable by no less a penalty than death. Harrington's abhorrence of public speech is tied to the rationalistic side of classical republicanism: namely, that public decision making must be conducted in accordance with a strict principle of right reason, accessible only to the wise few, who therefore take it upon themselves to serve as guardians of the people for the sake of the common benefit.

Harrington expressly distinguishes three concepts of reason—as self-interest, as group interest, and as the interest of the whole—and contends that only the latter should be taken into consideration in the formation of laws and public policies. The problem is how the "common right" may safely be discovered and converted into the law of the land. In Harrington's view, this cannot be achieved by the people as a whole, since he observes that nature itself generates clear differences between human beings and, in particular, produces a "natural aristocracy" of the wise who are clearly more adept in their faculties of understanding. Harrington thinks that the foolish or ignorant will recognize that it is desirable to be led by the "excellent parts" in whom special "virtue or authority" resides.

Harrington institutionalizes this distinction between the wise few and the foolish multitude in his construction of the constitution of Oceana. The natural leaders form the body of the senate, whereas the foolish are represented in a popular assembly (or "prerogative tribe") composed of 1,050 delegates. The functions of these two groups differ markedly. The senate is charged with debating public affairs and with decreeing laws and policies; within its halls, discussion of proposals is to be open and unrestricted, and its members are deemed free to express disparate and conflicting opinions, until some conclusion is achieved. That this will not lead to disorder, Harrington believes, stems from the fact that the procedures of debate will occur strictly in accordance with the precepts of reason. The prerogative tribe, by contrast, performs a completely passive role: strictly enjoined from debating the senate's decrees, its members instead either affirm or reject the proposals presented to them. This has the effect of ensuring that the senators do not attempt to employ their authority to pass measures that reflect either private or group interest. The popular assembly thus has the primary purpose of checking potential abuses of power. But Harrington ascribes to the prerogative tribe no positive or active functions; it cannot air grievances, suggest issues or topics for legislation, make any sorts of

changes in proposals, nor even question the wisdom of the senatorial decrees. Starting with the principle that reason is a special competence of the few, Harrington's republicanism excludes popular speech from the well-ordered constitution.

### Modern Republicanism

The modern period witnessed a number of important practical experiments in the implementation of republican ideas, including the Netherlands, France, and the United States. One of the important facets of these experiments was the introduction of novel features into the classical tradition in recognition of the de facto replacement of the city by the territorial state as the central unit of public life. Modern republicans recognized that the process of political debate could not realistically be modeled on a direct interaction between speakers and an audience. Hence, political representation rather than direct governance by the people emerged as a hallmark of republican regimes, even as the principle of popular sovereignty was retained and reinforced. Representation permitted discussion and dispute in an assembly setting that presumably mimicked the views and disagreements that were held by members of society at large. Moreover, republicans such as James Madison (1751–1836) in the United States sought ways to mitigate the consequence of the factionalism that Machiavelli had regarded to be the hallmark of a healthy republic by institutionalizing mixed government by means of a constitutionally designated system of checks and balances. Thus, no faction could entirely impose its will on its opponents.

Another modification to traditional republican conceptions came with the challenge posed by the commercialization of Atlantic economic relations and social values. For classical republicans, the private accumulation of liquid wealth had been widely viewed as incompatible with civic virtue, but early modern authors began to reevaluate this doctrine. Some thinkers contended that citizens should proudly acknowledge industriousness and self-acquired possessions as the foundation of morality and the greatness of their cities. The Dutch-born Bernard Mandeville (1670–1733) proposed in his *Fable of the Bees* (1714) the famous principle that private vices yield public goods, which is to say that the pursuit of personal gain, and indeed the desire for comfort and luxury, leads directly to the enrichment of society as a whole and the consequent benefit of all its members. Republics should thus orient their political institutions in order to promote commercial enterprise.

With the rise of liberalism, capitalism, and democracy during the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, republican ideas entered a period of decline. Only in very recent times has this fortune been reversed. On the one hand, historical scholars such as Gordon S. Wood and John Pocock have offered reminders of how great was the debt of modern political institutions to the language and doctrines of republicanism. On the other hand, political philosophers critical of the excesses of liberalism have turned to the communitarian orientation of classical republicanism for inspiration. Among the best known of these "new republicans" are Hannah Arendt (1906–1975), Alasdair MacIntyre (b. 1929), Michael Sandel (b. 1953), and Philip Pettit (b. 1945). It seems clear that in the early twenty-first century the republican tradition is



enjoying a considerable revival that suggests its continuing vitality and the relevance of its fundamental tenets to modern life.

See also *Capitalism; Constitutionalism; Democracy; Liberalism.*

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Cary J. Nederman

**RESISTANCE.** The path of *resistance* has been neither straight nor narrow. First adopted by the political right, and then crossing the aisle to the left, resistance is sometimes considered a means and other times an end. Its modern history traces the evolution of an idea and a transformation in politics.

The English word resistance is a derivation of “resist,” stemming from the Latin—via the French—meaning “to stand.” Resistance has a technical scientific meaning, the opposition offered by one body to the pressure or movement of another, as well as a later psychoanalytic one, the unconscious opposition to repressed memories or desires. But the *Oxford English Dictionary*’s primary definition: “To stop or hinder (a moving body); to succeed in standing against; to prevent (a weapon, etc.) from piercing or penetrating,” has a distinct political bent.

#### Conservative Roots

Edmund Burke (1729–1797), the great conservative thinker of the modern era, makes the case for resistance in *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790). Fondly remembering Marie Antoinette as a “morning star, full of life, and splendour, and joy” (p. 75), Burke criticizes the revolutionary overthrow of birthright authority. Horrified by the thought of the hairdresser who thinks himself the equal of his betters, he rails against the leveling of classes. But what really motivates Burke’s fear and loathing of the French Revolution is his belief that these radical and sudden changes fly in the face of time-tested tradition and are an “usurpation on the prerogatives of nature” (p. 49). Undermining the firm foundations of society, this can only lead to chaos. As such, Burke appeals to his English audience to resist such progress in their own country “with their lives and fortunes” (p. 16).

Nearly a century later, Burke’s countryman Matthew Arnold (1822–1888) takes up the call of conservative resistance. In *Dover Beach* (1867) he describes a faithless land that “Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light. . . . Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight/ Where ignorant armies clash by night.” Arnold’s mid-nineteenth century England was a world of storm and strife: urbanization, industrialization, and class warfare. The republican ideals of the French Revolution had triumphed over Burke’s beloved tradition, and “nature,” after Darwin, was harnessed to progress. A new principle of resistance was needed; for Arnold it was culture. As “the best which has been thought and said” (p. 6) as he defines it in *Culture and Anarchy* (1869), culture offered a means with which to rise above the politics, commerce, and machinery of the day and supply a universal standard upon which to base “a principle of authority, to counteract the tendency to anarchy which seems to be threatening us” (p. 82) Culture was a metaphysical realm where “real thought and real beauty; real sweetness and real light” (p. 69, author’s emphasis) could safely flourish, eventually returning to terra firma—if at all—in the form of an ideal State to guide society.

#### Anti-Colonial Resistance

Halfway around the world Mahatma Gandhi (1869–1948) was developing his own ideas of resistance. Arriving at conclusions similar to Burke and Arnold, he stood these conservative

notions on their head in opposing British colonial rule. Central to Gandhi's political philosophy was the idea of *satyagraha*. In Sanskrit this means "insistence on the truth"; Gandhi, however, also used the word to denote "civil resistance." This was a logical translation for him. Insisting on the truth in an India under foreign rule meant resisting the imposition of that rule, for as long as India labored under colonial guns and culture, she would have a false idea of herself. It was this false idea: that English culture comprised the "best that has ever been thought and said," that one needed to be violent like one's oppressors, that needed to be resisted more fiercely than even the British themselves. To be free of European bodies on Indian soil was one thing, to be free of their ideas, their prejudices, and their technology, was another. As Gandhi rhetorically asks in an early pamphlet *Hind Swaraj* (1910), "Why do you forget that our adoption of their civilization makes their presence at all possible?" (p. 75). As with Arnold, insistence on the truth meant cultivating a resistant culture that could rise above the world of the West and act as a guide to a truly home-ruled India. And like Burke, tradition offered a resource for this resistant culture. Gandhi counseled breaking India's economic dependence on Britain by *khaddar*, a return to the hand loomed cloth, and looked to non-Westernized, rural India for political and spiritual models.

Radical resistance, defined in part as the rejection of foreign cultures and the celebration of indigenous traditions, winds its way through the twentieth century, as European colonies in Africa and Asia were swept away by struggles of national liberation. This strain of resistance makes its way back to the metropole in the words of those finding parallels between their own struggles and anticolonialism. A key point of identification was the fight against internalized oppression, what the Algerian writer and activist Albert Memmi (b. 1920) referred to as the colonizer within (1965). In 1970 the American group, Radicalesbians, issued a manifesto calling for "The Woman-Identified Woman." "[W]hat is crucial" they write, "is that women begin disengaging themselves from male defined response patterns. . . . For irrespective of where our love and sexual energies flow, if we are male-identified in our heads, we cannot realize our autonomy as human beings." "Only women," they conclude, "can give to each other a new sense of self."

These final words were picked up and developed by the radical black women of the Combahee River Collective, who asserted in 1977, "We believe that the most profound and potentially radical politics come directly out of our identity," setting the stage for an "identity politics" that argued for resistance based within and upon the unique experiences of a person's ethnicity, gender, or sexual identity (p. 272).

### **Totality**

*La Résistance* was the name adopted by the French citizens who fought against the Nazi occupation of France. But the specter of oppression didn't disappear with the defeat of Fascism in the postwar West. Instead, totalizing power was identified everywhere and resistance was redefined as an everyday battle with no end in sight.

This total resistance against totality finds its roots in existentialism. Existentialists argued that the fate of humanity is

to choose and to act; indeed, it is only in these actions that one defines who one is. "Man is nothing else but that which he makes of himself," Jean-Paul Sartre (1905–1980) writes in *Existentialism Is a Humanism* (1946; p. 349). If the importance of action (or resistance) was once judged on its efficacy in bringing about (or protecting) an ideal or country, Sartre was now arguing that it was the choice, and the action that follows, which matters. In the *Myth of Sisyphus* (1955), Albert Camus (1913–1960) retells the tale of Sisyphus, condemned for eternity by the gods to roll a rock up a hill only to watch it roll back down again. In this task Camus identifies the human condition as being condemned to an action that brings no certain result, but also finding definition—and happiness—in the absurd and ceaseless labor.

In 1961 Erving Goffman (1922–1982), an American sociologist influenced by the existentialists, wrote *Asylums* (1961), discussing "total institutions." Observing patients in a mental asylum, Goffman argued that the job of total institutions is to create—or recreate—their charge's identity in order to integrate them into the world. Individuals, however, don't always do what they should. The patients Goffman observed elided institutional demands and created an "underlife" where different values reigned. Indeed, it was in resisting the definitions pressed upon them that inmates of institutions developed their own sense of identity. *Asylums* was an implicit critique of the postwar "Free World" of big business and the welfare state, mass media, and compulsory education. But, Goffman argues, this institutionalization and homogenization of thought and behavior need not lead only to despair, for as Goffman's mental patients taught him, "It is *against something* that the self can emerge" (p. 320).

Meanwhile, youth cultures such as the beatniks, and later the hippies, were busy acting out identities of resistance, defining themselves by what they were not as much as what they were ("I'm gonna wave my freak flag high," sang Jimi Hendrix in 1968). The freak, mental patient, artist, native, and resurrecting an old ideal of nineteenth-century anarchism, the criminal, were celebrated (and idealized) in their "otherness"; their resistance—conscious or not—to the world of the white-collared conservative. In 1968 the world seemed to explode. Vietnamese nationalists were defeating the most powerful military in the world, U.S. college campuses and urban ghettos were in upheaval, young people stood up to dictatorships in Mexico City and Prague, and perhaps most dramatic of all, students and workers, together, took to the streets of Paris in May 1968. The world was rocked to its core, yet politically little seemed to change: the ruling powers in these countries continued to rule.

In Paris of the 1960s Michel Foucault (1926–1984), like Goffman, was examining total institutions such as prisons, asylums, and schools, but the French intellectual was interested in institutions of the mind as well, such as disciplinary boundaries and classification systems. The failures of the political resistance in 1968 confirmed what Foucault had already known: that power was not something out there—easy to identify and to overthrow. Instead it was everywhere, "the disciplinary grid of society," which was continuous, anonymous, intimate, and even

pleasurable (1980, p. 111). Whereas previous critics of totalitarianism, from the left and the right, elevated the ideal of the individual subject resisting against totalizing society, Foucault countered that the individual was itself problematic. This Enlightenment creature that made new ideals of personal freedom possible also opened up a new site of oppression: the individual's mind, body, and spirit. Because power is impressed upon and internalized into the subject, it raises the vexing problem of who resists and what exactly are they resisting. Can one resist the very subject thing doing the resisting?

Resistance remains a stated goal for Foucault, but it must be reconceptualized. The ideal of developing the pure subject in opposition to the corrupting object of society must be rejected. "Maybe the target nowadays," he suggests, "is not to discover what we are, but to refuse what we are" (1984, p. 22). Foucault's refusal to provide an answer, to spell out what the resistant subject is for or against, is characteristic, as it is the answer, the category, the truth which constrains us most of all.

In his essay, "The Masses: The Implosion of the Social in the Media" (1985) the playful postmodernist Jean Baudrillard (b. 1929) extends Foucault's ideas to their—perhaps illogical—conclusion. Baudrillard argues that strategies of resistance always change to reflect strategies of control. Against a system that excludes or represses the individual, the natural demand is one of inclusion: to become a subject. This, however, is not the modern world. In twenty-first century Western society people are bombarded with appeals for their participation: "Vote!" and "This Bud's for You," and yet they also know that their choice or vote matters little. Against a system that justifies and sustains its existence by the consent (or consumer purchases) of those it governs, the masses have devised their strategy of resistance: apathy—"a spontaneous, total resistance to the ultimatum of historical and political reason" (p. 588). Popular politics is "no longer a question of revolution but of massive *devolution* . . . a massive desisting from will" (p. 586). It is a resistance to resistance.

### Cultural Resistance

While apathy may reign supreme in the voting booth, some scholars and activists have been looking for resistance elsewhere: on the street corner, in the living room, or at the club, that is, in cultural expression. Matthew Arnold first articulated cultural resistance, but the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci (1891–1937) framed the contemporary discussion.

Gramsci, writing from a Fascist jail in the 1920s and early 1930s, reflected on why the communist revolutions he labored for in the West had so far failed. Part of the reason, he concluded, was a serious underestimation of culture and civil society. Power does not just reside in institutions, but also in the ways people make sense of their world; hegemony is both a political and cultural process. Armed with culture instead of guns, one fights a different type of battle. Whereas traditional battles were "wars of maneuver," frontal assaults that seized the state, cultural battles were "wars of position," flanking maneuvers, commando raids, and infiltrations, staking out positions from which to attack and then reassemble civil society (pp. 229–239). Thus, part of the revolutionary project was to

create counterhegemonic culture behind enemy lines. But if this culture was to have real power, and communist integrity, it could not—contra Arnold—be imposed from above; it must come out of the experiences and consciousness of people. Thus, the job of the revolutionary is to discover the progressive potentialities that reside within popular consciousness and from this material fashion a culture of resistance.

It was this implicitly politico-cultural mission that guided the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham in the 1970s. The CCCS is best known for its subcultural studies, and it was within these mainly working-class subcultures that researchers found an inchoate politics of resistance. Mods one-upped their bosses with their snappy dress. Punks performed the decline of Britain with lyrics that warned: "We're your future, no future." Skinheads recreated a cohesive white, masculine working-class world that no longer existed. And Rastafarians turned the world upside down by rereading Christianity into a condemnation of white Babylon. It was through culture that young people contested and rearranged the ideological constructions—the systems of meaning—handed down to them by the dominant powers of postwar Britain.

For Stuart Hall (the influential director of the CCCS) and his colleagues, cultural resistance was politically ambiguous. Subcultures opened up spaces where dominant ideology was contested and counter hegemonic culture was created, however, these contestations and symbolic victories often remained locked in culture. "There is no 'subcultural solution'" to structural inequality write Hall and his colleagues in *Resistance through Rituals* (1976), "They 'solve,' but in an imaginary way, problems which at the concrete material level remain unresolved" (pp. 47–48). As W. H. Auden (1907–1973) came to lament, "Poetry makes nothing happen"—at least not by itself.

### Resistance Refuted and Reimagined

Is cultural resistance, resistance at all? Malcolm Cowley (1898–1989) raised this question in *Exile's Return* (1934), his memoir of Bohemian days in Greenwich Village. He pointed out that while the cultural conservatism of the Victorians may have served an era of capitalism predicated on hard work and savings, by the 1920s a new ethic was needed for what was becoming a mass consumer economy. Within the context of consumer capitalism the bohemian call to be freed from yesterday's conventions translates easily into freedom to buy tomorrow's products. More recently, Thomas Frank has taken up the refrain, writing in his journal *The Baffler* (1993):

Over the years the rebel has naturally become the central image of this culture of consumption, symbolizing endless, directionless change, an eternal restlessness with "the establishment"—or, more correctly, with the stuff "the establishment" convinced him to buy last year. (p. 12)

As a purely political strategy resistance also has its critics. Resistance only exists in relation to the dominant power—"bonds of rejection," are what Richard Sennett calls these in



his discussion of *Authority* (1980)—and without that dominant power, resistance has no coherence or purpose. This is not a difficulty if resistance is a tactic on the road to revolution (and thus the end of resistance), but once this goal is discarded resistance becomes problematic, for what is the point of resistance if the very thing being resisted must be maintained?

In the early twenty-first century, theorists and activists are rethinking and redefining resistance, approaching it less as a stand against the world and more as means with which to actualize a new one. This is a central theme of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's *Empire* (2000). Resistance, they argue, has two sides. Yes, it is opposing the current world, "but at the same time it is linked to a new world." This new world, however, unlike the revolutionary utopias of times past, "knows no outside. It knows only an inside, a vital and ineluctable participation in the set of social structures, with no possibility of transcending them" (p. 413). This is a strange resistance. What sort of opposition counsels participation inside the system? What sort of new world cannot transcend the old one? The answers lie in Hardt and Negri's analysis of empire. Within the social structures of the system of global capitalism they discover resistant elements: global interdependence, social networks, systems of communication, affective and immaterial labor, and the formation of cooperative consciousness. These ideas and practices are as useful to a new world as they are necessary to the old one. As such, these experiences lived by the multitude are *both* conformity and resistance, depending upon how one understands and mobilizes them.

Hakim Bey (also known as Peter Lamborn Wilson) shares Hardt and Negri's suspicion of a world "outside," but believes that through resistance one can catch a glimpse of an alternative. His model is the TAZ, or *Temporary Autonomous Zone* (1985), an immediate experience—a happening—that temporarily reverses the rules, laying bare the structures of the present and experimenting with a model for the future. The TAZ is necessarily limited in time and space. "But," Bey argues, "such moments of intensity give shape and meaning to the entirety of a life" (p. 100). Protest groups such as London-born Reclaim the Streets put this philosophy of resistance into practice in the 1990s: throwing large, illegal street parties that literally *demonstrated* to participants what the experience of a participatory public culture feels like. What is being created, through acts of resistance, is a revolutionary imagination. As the rebel-poet Subcommandante Marcos of the Zapatista army in Southern Mexico writes,

In our dreams we have seen another world. A sincere world, a world definitively more just than the one in which we now move. . . . That sincere world was not a dream of the past, it was not something that came from our ancestors. It came from ahead, it was from the next step that we had taken.

See also *Liberty; Resistance and Accommodation*.

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Stephen Duncombe

**RESISTANCE AND ACCOMMODATION.** To fight and quite possibly die? Or to acquiesce in one's fate as a slave or conquered person? This has been the classic choice presented by conventional definitions of resistance and accommodation. In Thucydides' (d. c. 401 B.C.E.) *Peloponnesian War*, the people of Melos face the certainty of an invasion by Athens. Two options, both unpalatable, confront their leaders. On one hand, the Melians could acknowledge the superior power of Athens and the coming reality of foreign rule. "And how, pray," they ask, "could it turn out as good for us to serve as for you to rule?" To this the Athenians have a ready answer: "Because you would have the advantage of submitting before suffering the worst, and we should gain by not



destroying you.” On the other hand, the Melians could reject Athenian aggression. “[T]o submit,” they argue, “is to give ourselves over to despair, while action still preserves for us a hope that we may stand erect.” In the end the Melians resist Athenian imperialism, are defeated in battle, and have many grown men put to death and children and women taken as slaves.

Until recently, definitions of accommodation and resistance, particularly in relation to slavery and colonialism, have reproduced the stark decisions that faced the Melians more than two thousand years ago. To accommodate was to agree, however tacitly, with the existing order of things—to compromise, to oblige, to be pliable. Accommodation entailed the avoidance of further conflict, as in a treaty or some other form of agreement that settled a dispute. Compliance with prevailing norms and practices—in short, “accommodation”—contrasted with active contestation of social structures and systems of domination, or “resistance.” Accommodation assumed the absence or ending of conflict, whereas conflict—the throwing up of an obstacle, the establishing of a confrontation—was at the very center of resistance. In some early usages resistance was a physical thing, a type of fortification to slow advancing armies. Accommodation, in contrast, sprang from the mind, and was a strategy by which the less powerful adjusted their lives to the realities of their domination.

Slavery and colonialism represent among the most extreme forms of domination. Slavery centers on “natal alienation”—slaves are divorced from their own community—and property rights, one person owning another human being. Colonialism entails the domination of one society by another that is geographically and culturally distinct from the society that is subjugated. Slavery invariably involves close interaction, even intimacy. A central characteristic of colonialism, on the other hand, is foreignness, rule by a remote society.

Throughout most of the twentieth century perspectives on slavery and colonialism stressed the totality of domination and the apparent passivity of slaves and colonized peoples, or, conversely, dramatic examples of resistance. Influenced by his understanding of Jews in Nazi concentration camps during World War II, the historian Stanley Elkins argued that certain behaviors of slaves showed their near total domination by white masters and the psychological consequences of accommodation. Elkins drew on the work of the German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831), particularly on Hegel’s “master-slave dialectic,” according to which the slave becomes an instrument of his master’s will. To the extent that the master’s consciousness and identity come to depend on the slave, so the slave’s capacity for an independent consciousness will decline and he will adopt a “slavish consciousness.” The absence of dramatic resistance such as rebellions seemed to suggest the pervasiveness in American history of accommodation and “slavish consciousness.”

Theorists of colonialism occasionally made similar arguments. The Tunisian Albert Memmi wrote of the entwined identities of colonizer and colonized and of the psychological consequences of accommodation. Frantz Fanon (1925–1961), trained as a psychiatrist, thought colonialism a form of dehu-

**STATEMENT OF FREDERICK LAW  
OLMSTED, HAVING VISITED VIRGINIA,  
UNITED STATES**

[T]hat everywhere on the plantations, the agrarian notion has become a fixed point of the negro system of ethics: that the result of labor belongs of right to the laborer. . . . They [slaves] almost universally pilfer from the household store when they have a safe opportunity.

SOURCE: Frederick Law Olmstead, *A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States*.

manization; some of the disorders he treated during his time in French Algeria he considered to have originated in the effects of accommodation. Fanon elaborated ideas about resistance and advocated participation in anticolonial violence as a way by which the colonized could cleanse themselves of the stain of subjugation and reassert their basic humanity.

Until the 1970s, writings on accommodation in slave and colonial societies proceeded from a number of assumptions about resistance. Accommodation and resistance were viewed as inversely proportional: the greater the resistance, the less the accommodation, and vice versa. Resistance was clearly identifiable as purposive organized action. In the Americas, the Haitian Revolution (1791–1803), in which slavery was overturned, represented the clearest example of resistance. Scholars looked elsewhere for other examples of slave rebellions and argued that the absence of organized resistance indicated greater levels of domination and accommodation.

Throughout the postcolonial world, discussions of resistance likewise centered on organized actions to resist or to overthrow colonialism. Scholars of South Asia concentrated on revolts such as the 1857 Indian Rebellion or on the nonviolence campaigns of Mahatma Gandhi that led up to the granting of Indian independence in 1947. China specialists analyzed events such as the Boxer Rebellion at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Africanist scholars distinguished “primary resistance” from “secondary resistance.” Active, organized protest against colonial encroachment and conquest, or against early colonial rule, represented primary resistance. The Maji Maji rebellion in German Tanganyika (1905–1906), the Herero rebellion in German South West Africa (1904–1907), and military engagements across the continent in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were representative examples. In contrast, “secondary resistance” looked ahead to the ending of foreign rule and the creation of new nation-states; strikes and demands by trade

**STATEMENT OF HENDRIK WITBOOI (NAMA CHIEF) ON THE GERMAN  
ADMINISTRATION, SOUTH WEST AFRICA [NAMIBIA]**

The German himself . . . is just what he described the other nations as . . . he makes no requests according to truth and justice and asks no permission of a chief. He introduces laws into the land . . . [which] are entirely impossible, untenable, unbelievable, unbearable, unmerciful and unfeeling. . . . He personally punishes our people at Windhoek and has already beaten people to death for debt. . . . it is not just and right to beat people to death for that. . . . He flogs people in a shameful and cruel manner. We stupid and unintelligent people, for so he thinks us to be, we have never yet punished a human being in such a cruel and improper way for he stretches people on their backs and flogs them on the stomach and even between the legs, be they male or female, so Your Honour can understand that no one can survive such a punishment.

SOURCE: Namibweb.com, "German Imperialism in South West Africa."

unions and, especially, the claims and actions of nationalist organizations were the clearest examples. Importantly, whereas primary resistance invariably entailed violence, this was not necessarily so with secondary resistance, which embraced peaceful protests as well as armed movements for national liberation.

### **The Effects of Culture and Consciousness**

Definitions of resistance and accommodation, even in their earliest formulations, inevitably raised issues of culture and consciousness. As early as the 1960s, scholars began widening their definitions and complicating what once appeared to have been clear distinctions between accommodation and resistance. The absence of organized resistance, they said, did not necessarily imply accommodation, and certainly not acquiescence. All forms of critique could be seen to be examples of resistance. In the study of slavery in the Americas, scholars called attention to symbolic rather than directly confrontational forms of resistance. Songs might criticize the planter class. The preservation and reworking of African beliefs and practices pointed to the creation of identities and consciousness independent of the slave master. The accumulation of personal property offered some, albeit often very small, degree of economic autonomy and indicated the success slaves had in mitigating their condition. The existence and preservation of family networks were another way slaves created a world separate from their masters and, in so doing, brought into question the solidity of slavery as a system of domination.

Indeed, in this new way of looking at slavery, masters were discovered to have accommodated to the demands of their slaves in order to protect their economic investment and preserve a modicum of stability. Slavery came to be seen in less stark terms, slave societies as intensely negotiated worlds. At

the same time, as topics such as songs and rituals began being included within the more expansive definitions of resistance, so also did theft, slowdowns, and other actions that did not have as their immediate object the overthrow of slavery itself. Because slaves had access to the master's valuable economic resources, they could steal from planters, damage crops, livestock, and machinery, or simply work slowly or inefficiently. Behaviors that Elkins and others had viewed as examples of moral defeat and acquiescence came to be viewed far differently, as creative expressions of resistance.

In Africa and elsewhere in the colonial world scholars were making similar points, focusing increasingly on symbolic and "hidden" forms of resistance. The older dichotomies of resistance versus accommodation fell out of favor. Historians called attention to social banditry, theft, and myriad activities ranging from tax evasion to migration, whereby the colonized resisted domination. One important concept was "moral economy," the cultural and ideological logic by which people understood social and economic relationships. The dominated—whether slaves or the colonized—expected their superiors to abide by certain codes of conduct that created a kind of consensus about how the community should function. These norms and obligations might range from how hard people should work to the provisioning of food. This logic could at times be articulated in ways that helped to foment active resistance or to force masters or colonizers to somehow accommodate to the demands of slaves or colonized peoples.

Oral histories and the recording of songs and other cultural productions pointed to the elaboration of rich critiques of colonial power. They also revealed the important roles of gender and generation. Women contested colonialism in ways that were often very different than men, and younger adults did so

differently than their elders. In Mozambique, women complained of the burdens of forced cash-crop production of cotton and of sexual abuse by local colonial functionaries. Pounding grain into flour offered women an opportunity to converse and to compose songs about their condition as exploited people. "I suffer, I do," women lament in one song (see White and Vail),

I cultivate my cotton,  
*I suffer, my heart is weeping,*  
 Picking, picking a whole basketful,  
*I suffer, my heart is weeping,*  
 I've taken it to the Boma [market] there,  
*I suffer, my heart is weeping,*  
 They've given me five escudos  
*I suffer, my heart is weeping.*

Other songs the women sang parodied colonial officials, using rich and ribald language; the critique of colonialism remained implicit, so as not to invite retribution.

In the 1980s, the beginning of a cultural turn in studies of accommodation and resistance shifted attention away from collective acts such as rebellions. Increasingly, scholars emphasized culture and what people believed and how they felt. The definition of both words shifted from the physical to the mental to embrace historical conditions that could be political, cultural, even psychological. Scholars demonstrated the ways in which the creation of meaning, the ways people imbued the world around them with significance, could be powerfully constitutive of new identities that stood in opposition to slavery or the colonial order. Compliance therefore did not automatically indicate an absence of resistance. Indeed, some forms of accommodation could mask resistance as long as actions somehow mitigated conditions.

Cultural as opposed to political definitions of resistance have emphasized concepts such as moral economy, ritual, hegemony, and hybridity. Scholars of the subaltern school of South Asian history have been especially important in expanding the definitions of resistance and accommodation. They have, for instance, argued that since colonial domination was never total—that is, hegemonic—the culture of the colonized remained autonomous; their behavior cannot be reduced to so many reactions to colonialism. The emphasis thus shifts from resistance or accommodation to the kinds of engagements people had with those who wielded power. The decision the Melians faced more than two thousand years ago was exceptionally stark. Since most forms of domination—including slavery and colonialism—entail some sort of negotiation, scholars in the early twenty-first century focus on the complex cultural borrowing that typically characterizes slave and colonial societies.

For example, rituals and what some have described as "invented traditions" incorporated parts of the slave master's or the colonizer's world, such as dress, ceremony, or even state procedures such as criminal trials. This mixture of artifacts and other facets, what is called syncretism, can be seen most clearly in religion. Slave religions and religious movements through-

out the colonial world have combined Christianity with earlier conceptions based on local gods and ancestor worship. The new beliefs have frequently critiqued the slave or colonial order as not simply unjust but immoral, even evil. They also have helped shape resistance movements such as the Mau Mau rebellion in Kenya (1954–1956) and the 1915 Chilembwe revolt in Nyasaland (Malawi).

Definitions of resistance and accommodation now embrace far more than treaties, formal acceptances of defeat, and in the alternative large-scale organized movements against slavery or colonialism. As Fanon suggested, even looking the colonizer in the eye could be a form of resistance. Extending the definitions beyond formal settlements and organized resistance has not only broadened the range of possible examples but ultimately blurred the lines separating words that once had clearly opposed meanings. Even conventional acts of resistance are becoming seen as more ambiguous, since resistance often entails some sort of recognition of and accommodation to the colonizer's world. But the understanding of culture and consciousness raises thorny questions. Can one resist without consciously doing so? Can resistance include at the same time accommodation? The central challenge now facing scholars of slave and colonial societies is how to understand meaning and action within highly unequal relationships and how to creatively rethink those moments when people actively reassert their humanity in the face of power.

*See also Anticolonialism; Civil Disobedience; Colonialism; Empire and Imperialism; Slavery.*

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*Clifton Crais*

**RESPONSIBILITY.** The term *responsibility* has several related meanings.

First, there is causal responsibility. To say that the short circuit is responsible for the fire is simply to say that the short circuit caused the fire.

Second, there is personal responsibility. This comes in two forms, prospective and retrospective. To say that the lifeguard is responsible for the swimmers' safety is to say that the lifeguard has a responsibility (a duty or obligation) to see to it that the swimmers remain safe. This is a prospective matter, since it points toward the future. In contrast, to say that the lifeguard is responsible for the swimmers' deaths is to say that the lifeguard bears responsibility for something that has already happened; it is to attribute a sort of blameworthiness to the lifeguard for having failed to fulfill a duty. Attributions of retrospective responsibility need not always be negative, though. To say that the generous donor is responsible for the charity's success is to attribute a sort of praiseworthiness to the donor.

Third, there is collective responsibility. This may also be either prospective or retrospective. Sometimes collections of individuals (such as corporations or nations) are said to have duties or obligations, and on such occasions they may also be held to account for fulfilling or failing to fulfill these duties. It is controversial whether collective responsibility is reducible to personal responsibility (so that all statements about the former can be translated into statements about the latter) or rather constitutes a distinct type of responsibility.

Noncausal responsibility, whether personal or collective and whether prospective or retrospective, may be either moral or nonmoral (as when it is legal or professional) depending on whether the duties in question are moral or nonmoral. Furthermore, retrospective responsibility, whether positive or negative, constitutes a susceptibility to reactions that may vary in kind. The most basic kind of reaction consists simply in an evaluation of the person (or collection of individuals) to whom (or which) the attribution of responsibility is made. Thus, to hold the lifeguard responsible, in this basic way, for the swimmers' deaths is to make a negative evaluation of him or her in light of the deaths. A more robust kind of reaction involves treating the person (or group) in some way—for example, by handing out reward or punishment. It is frequently held that justification for the more robust kind of reaction presupposes justification for the basic kind (so that, for example, punishment is warranted only if the person punished warrants a negative evaluation), but this is not universally accepted.

This article will concentrate on responsibility that is personal, retrospective, moral, and basic. Philosophers have concerned themselves with what is needed and what suffices for

such responsibility. Aristotle (384–322 B.C.E.) suggested two distinct conditions, and his discussion has shaped all subsequent treatment of the matter.

### The First Condition: Freedom

A common assumption is that, to be responsible (personally, retrospectively, morally, and basically) for something, one must enjoy freedom of will or action. Just what the relevant sort of freedom consists of is controversial, but the central idea is that one's behavior must be within one's control.

There is a venerable argument to the effect that this condition of responsibility is impossible to satisfy, and hence that responsibility is never incurred. The argument involves the thesis of determinism (roughly, the view that every event has a cause) and may be put as follows:

1. If determinism is true, no one is ever in control of what happens.
2. If determinism is false, no one is ever in control of what happens.
3. Determinism is either true or false.

Hence,

4. No one is ever in control of what happens.
5. One is responsible for what happens only if one is in control of it.

Hence,

6. No one is ever responsible for what happens.

Premise 5 states the precondition for responsibility that is at issue. Premise 3 is taken to be a logical truth. The rationale for premise 1 is this: if something is caused to happen, then it is, under the circumstances, inevitable; and if it is inevitable, then no one is in control of it. The rationale for premise 2 is this: if something occurs uncaused, then it occurs at random and if it occurs at random, then no one is in control of it.

Some philosophers have accepted this argument, but it is surely hard to do so. (Others, such as Immanuel Kant [1724–1804], have insisted that the idea that individuals never act freely is, practically speaking, impossible to accept.) Among those who have rejected the argument, some have done so by explicitly disputing one or another of its premises. So-called compatibilists deny the first premise; their number includes such major historical figures as Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679), John Locke (1632–1704), David Hume (1711–1776), and John Stuart Mill (1806–1873). So-called libertarians deny the second premise; among major historical figures, perhaps the most uncompromising proponent of this view was Thomas Reid (1710–1796), although both Aristotle and Kant also flirted with it at times.

More recently, premise 5 has been challenged. Robert Adams has argued that certain sins, for which one is to blame,



are involuntary and hence such that one is not free with respect to them. Examples include the vices of bigotry, cowardice, cruelty, and so on, where these are understood not as a matter of behaving in a certain way (something that may well be under one's control) but of being a certain way, that is, of having certain inclinations, desires, or beliefs (something that may well not be under one's control). Adams's point is that, whether or not these phenomena are under one's control, one is certainly to blame for them.

One way to resist Adams's conclusion is to deny that the phenomena in question are never under one's control. Aristotle took this tack, claiming that, even if individuals have now reached a point in their lives at which certain of their virtuous or vicious traits are beyond their control (not in terms of acting on them, but in terms of ridding ourselves of them or of acquiring them), still there was a time when they could have acted in such a way as to prevent their having them (if they are vices they now have) or to produce them in themselves (if they are virtues they now lack). Another way to resist Adams's conclusion is to acknowledge that individuals may be to praise or blame in some way for such traits, but to deny that such praise or blame constitutes an attribution of responsibility. (Peter Abelard [1079–1142] at times suggested this position.)

Another challenge to premise 5 involves granting the traditional idea that responsibility requires freedom but denying the traditional idea that freedom requires control. Harry Frankfurt has recently pressed this line of thought, urging that the inability to behave differently does not compromise the freedom required for responsibility when this inability does not serve to explain one's behavior. His discussion of this issue has generated a vigorous, subtle, and often complex debate.

An argument similar to, but also importantly different from, the argument concerning determinism has lately garnered considerable attention. The argument ends, as before, with the inference of 6 from premises 4 and 5. The difference lies in the beginning. Now the claim is that 4 (the proposition that no one is ever in control of what happens) is true, not because of any general considerations concerning determinism, but simply because of the fact that luck cannot be eliminated from people's lives. In support of this contention, cases of the following sort are commonly cited: Alf shoots at Bert and kills him. Charlie shoots in like fashion at Dave but, because a bird happens to get in the way of the bullet, fails even to wound him. This case serves to dramatize the fact that, in all one's actions, what one succeeds in doing is in large measure not up to the individual but, as it is often put, up to nature. Or again, it may be that what saves Dave is not a passing bird that intercepts Charlie's bullet but a sudden sneeze that prevents Charlie from even firing his gun. The more one thinks about it (independently of any question of determinism), the more one sees that luck permeates people's lives, eroding the control over, and thereby the responsibility for, their actions that they like to think they have.

The force of such considerations is keenly debated. In light of them, some philosophers appear willing to forgo attributions of responsibility. Others seek to preserve such attributions by rejecting (once again) the traditional idea that

responsibility requires control. Still others seek to preserve such attributions by pointing out that lack of complete control over what happens need not amount to lack of any control.

Finally, just what sort of freedom or control might be thought necessary for responsibility has been a subject of some controversy. Some philosophers propose a fairly thin account, involving one's being in some sense the source of one's actions. Others propose richer accounts, involving some form of autonomy or of responsiveness to reasons. Whatever the proper account may be, it is important to note a distinction between two types of freedom, each of which may initially appear necessary for responsibility. This distinction can best be drawn by means of a familiar example. Suppose that Emma goes into a bank, points a gun at Fiona, the teller, and orders her to hand over all the money in her till. Fiona complies. Two questions arise: did Fiona freely hand over the money and is she responsible for doing so? One's initial inclination may well be to answer "No" to both. One may be tempted to add that the negative response to the first question is the ground for the negative response to the second. But on reflection this may seem mistaken. Although there certainly seems to be a sense in which Fiona did not act freely (for she was strongly coerced to do what she did), there is also clearly a sense in which it seems she did act freely; she had a choice in the situation (albeit an unpleasant one) and, one may assume, she made the right choice. Indeed, in light of this, it may well be appropriate to praise her for acting as she did, and this would seem to imply that she is responsible for her conduct after all. It thus seems that the sort of freedom necessary for responsibility (if, indeed, any sort of freedom is necessary) is that which Fiona exemplified rather than that which she failed to exemplify.

### The Second Condition: Mentality

Control over one's behavior is not all that is necessary for responsibility. Gwen, a young child, may have control over what she does (for example, she may freely choose to yank the tail of the family cat), but that is no reason to hold her morally responsible for her behavior.

What is it that Gwen lacks? The obvious answer is that she fails to understand the moral character of her action and is thus not to blame for it. This suggests that one is blameworthy (in a way that imputes responsibility for one's behavior) only if one is aware that one is doing wrong. At least three reasons may be given for rejecting this view, however.

First, ever since Plato (c. 428–348 or 347 B.C.E.), philosophers have claimed that it is not possible freely to act in the belief that one is doing wrong, since this requires that one willingly do wrong, which is impossible. (Of course, many philosophers have rejected this claim. Indeed some, such as St. Augustine of Hippo [354–430], have gone so far as to suggest that it is possible to have wrongdoing as one's ultimate objective.) Although this claim may seem at odds with common experience, its plausibility may grow on reflection. For example, many apparent instances of willing wrongdoing may reveal themselves on inspection to be better characterized as cases of doing something that one merely believes that others take to be wrong.

Second, to be aware that one is doing wrong implies that one is indeed doing wrong, but some philosophers have claimed that blameworthiness merely requires the belief, and not the fact, that one is doing wrong.

Third, blameworthiness seems often to be incurred through negligence, which in many cases involves the failure to be aware that one is doing wrong; indeed, it is this very failure that seems to ground the attribution of responsibility.

On these arguments, it is doubtful that awareness of wrongdoing is necessary for blameworthiness. Yet, as the case of Gwen indicates, it seems that one must satisfy some rather sophisticated mental condition to be blameworthy; just what this condition is, however, remains unclear. Similarly, presumably some other rather sophisticated mental condition must be satisfied if one is to be praiseworthy (in a way that imputes responsibility for one's behavior). Again, it is controversial just what this condition is. Some philosophers appear to think that simply having good intentions will do; others, such as Kant, insist that one must have doing one's duty as one's ultimate objective.

Finally, there is the question of the relevance of mental disorders to responsibility. It is commonly said that suffering from a mental disorder relieves one of responsibility for one's conduct. But this is far too sweeping. While kleptomania may provide an excuse for theft, it surely provides no excuse for assault; similarly, pyromania may furnish an excuse for arson but not for theft. There must be some close connection between disorder and offense for an excuse to be in the offing. Even then, whether an excuse is indeed available is debatable. Suppose that Holly is a kleptomaniac; why think she therefore has an excuse for theft? One answer is that she literally cannot help stealing. But this seems dubious. More accurate would seem to be the claim that she finds it abnormally difficult, rather than literally impossible, to resist the impulse to steal. But if there is the possibility of resistance, why excuse her for failing to resist? Perhaps she is not to be excused after all, if she recognizes that it is wrong to steal. Or perhaps the unusual strength of the impulse to steal makes it justifiable for her to succumb to it, so that she is indeed not to blame for doing so. Or perhaps she is not justified in succumbing to the impulse but is still not to blame for doing so because of some aspect of her mental state that has yet to be identified; for it is noteworthy that we tend rather to pity people such as Holly than to judge them wicked.

It is safe to say that the grounds for attribution of moral responsibility are complex and that, despite Aristotle's lasting contributions, the discussion that began with him remains unresolved.

See also *Determinism; Fatalism; Moral Sense*.

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Michael J. Zimmerman

**REVELATION.** See *Religion; Sacred Texts*.

**REVOLUTION.** It is tempting to give a definition of revolution at the outset of an account such as this. This is a temptation to be resisted. The great sociologist Max Weber (1864–1920) was right to say that “definition can be attempted, if at all, only at the conclusion of the study.” Another great thinker, Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900), declared that “only that which has no history can be defined.” Both of these remarks are highly relevant to the concept of revolution. It is best to postpone any attempt to define it until one has inquired into its history. As a humanly made event, revolution cannot be seen as a timeless thing, lacking change and variety. Like all human artifacts it has a history, and that must mean change. Our understandings of revolution must be sensitive to those changes. There cannot be any “essentialist” definition of revolution, any account that assumes some permanent, unvarying meaning, stretching across space and time.

This does not mean, on the other hand, that revolution can mean just anything (except, that is, to advertisers and marketing people who announce every new model of a motor car as a revolution). The various European languages have naturalized the word revolution—*révolution*, *Revolution*, *rivoluzione*, *revolución*—to mean much the same thing. That is because Western societies have shared certain common legacies and certain common experiences. The concept of revolution has reflected that shared tradition. While we should not

therefore expect revolution to carry one unequivocal meaning everywhere, we should at least expect what Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889–1951) called “family resemblances” between the various uses and understandings.

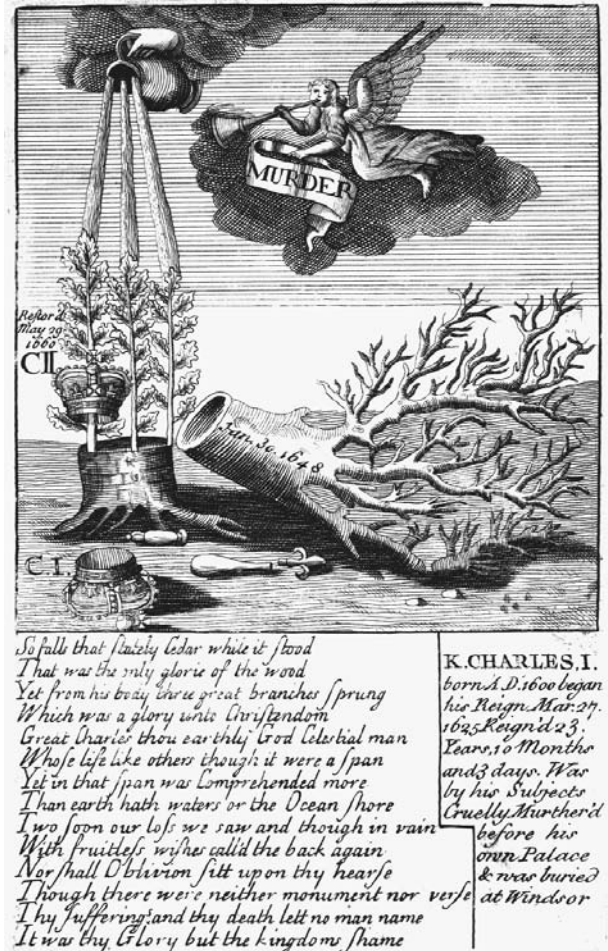
Revolution, finally, is a European invention. The meaning that it has in the world today derives from European use and experience. As a particular species of change it had no equivalent in the non-European world. The theory and practice of revolution was carried, along with other European inventions such as industrialism and nationalism, by traders, missionaries, and colonizers along the paths laid out by the European empires, formal and informal. It was learned and studied by non-Western intellectuals in the cities and academies of the West. If, as is indeed the case, revolution has become a worldwide inheritance, that is because Western principles and patterns of politics have become the norm for much of the world.

That some of the meanings in the non-Western world differ from those in the West is only to be expected from a concept that has always, even in the West, been sensitive to particular contexts and particular histories. The Russian understanding of revolution has been different from that of the French, and that too from the English or American, which have in their turn differed from German or Spanish conceptions. So African, Asian, and Latin American ideas of revolution have shown characteristic variations reflecting their different cultures. Even here, however, it is possible to see the same family resemblances that are observable in the Western cases. The fact that revolution has a tradition of use and meaning explains its variability; but it also points to continuities and similarities. The Western origin of revolution has meant that, as an ideal and a practice, it carries a certain basic stamp that enables us to identify and study it as a coherent phenomenon wherever it appears. Not anything can be called a revolution, whatever the claims of either its adherents or detractors.

**Classical and Christian Conceptions**

Revolution is an invention of Western modernity. In its generally understood meaning today, it was unknown in the ancient world. Nor was it understood in our sense in the European Middle Ages, or in the early modern period. It was only in the eighteenth century, with the American and French Revolutions, that the word *revolution* acquired its modern connotation of fundamental and far-reaching change.

The ancient Greeks certainly had their fill of violent politics; but they had no word for revolution, nothing that truly corresponds to our modern understanding of it. The commonest terms, used by both Thucydides (d. c. 401 B.C.E.) and Aristotle (384–322 B.C.E.), were *metabole politeias* (“change of constitution”), and *metabole kai stasis* (“change with uprising, change due to factional strife”). Plato in the *Republic* uses plain *metabole* (“change”), or occasionally a phrase such as *neoterizein ten politeian*, usually translated as “to revolutionize (or renew) the state.” But this translation, with its connotation of purpose and novelty, is misleading. Plato (in book 8 of the *Republic*) is discussing the inevitable decline of the ideal state, first into a timocracy then, though a series of successively determined stages, into an oligarchy, a democracy, and so to tyranny.



**Political cartoon relating to the execution of Charles I during the English Civil War, c. 1660s.** Many historians consider the English Civil War to be the first true large-scale revolution. The war led to substantial change in England’s government, including the execution of the ruling monarch and the establishment of a republic. © CORBIS

In this highly determinist pattern, there is no room for that consciously directed change that we associate with revolution.

The problem indeed is largely one of translation. *Stasis*, for instance, is regularly rendered by modern translators as “revolution.” Thus book 5 of Aristotle’s *Politics* is generally treated as a discussion of causes of revolution, while Thucydides, in various parts of *The Peloponnesian War*, is usually held to have given a brilliant account of the revolutionary condition of the Greek city-states at the time of the war (e.g., book 3, ch. 5: “Practically the whole of the Hellenic world was convulsed. . . . Revolution broke out in city after city.”).

The trouble is that, just as Plato is not speaking of revolution but of the predetermined turns of the political cycle, so Aristotle and Thucydides are not speaking of revolution but of faction or party, and the violent conflicts that spring from them. A condition of stasis is one of party warfare, one, moreover, where though there may be much noise and fury, there is little





**The storming of the Bastille during the French Revolution, engraving after a painting by Francois Flamena, 1879–1881.** The French Revolution is widely hailed as the epitome of revolutions, the revolution against which all others are measured. Afterwards, the concept of revolution became one of the triumph of human will against an unjust society. © CORBIS-BETTMANN

real change. *Stasis* derived from words meaning “standing still,” “stationariness,” “bring to a standstill,” and in contexts (e.g., Plato’s *Cratylus*) where it is said to be “denial of movement.” When applied to politics, it conjured up a picture of opponents locked in frenzied conflict, preventing, by the very violence and fanaticism of their mutual antagonism, any real change or any genuine resolution of political problems. In so far as revolution is concerned with fundamental change and the starting of new things, where there is *stasis* there cannot be revolution.

Similarly the widespread classical conception of revolution is of the turns of the political cycle, mirroring, or perhaps instancing, the cycles of growth and decay in nature. It excludes all ideas of true novelty, as well as of human agency. Plato had left the cycle incomplete. The degeneration of his ideal state ended with tyranny. It was left to the Greek writer Polybius, drawing explicitly on Plato, to complete the cycle, and to make tyranny pass back into the ideal state, when the cycle would begin all over again. What drove the cycle was Fate or Fortune (*tukhe*). Revolutions were the turns of For-

tune’s impassively revolving wheel—hence inevitable and irresistible, beyond human willing or control. “Such,” wrote Polybius (c. 200–118 B.C.E.), “is the course of political revolution (*politeion anakyklosis*), the course appointed by nature in which constitutions change, disappear, and finally return to the point from which they started.”

The importance of Polybius’s contribution was his influence on Roman writers, such as Cicero (106–43 B.C.E.), and through them the whole later classical and early Christian world. The standard terms—*metabole* and *stasis*—from the Greek political lexicon were glossed in Latin as *novae res, mutatio rerum*, and *commutatio rei publicae*. But when it came to fitting these phenomena into a philosophy of politics Roman writers were apt to fall back on the Platonic idea of the cycle, as amplified by Polybius. For Cicero, for example, the “revolution” whereby Julius Caesar attained power was an instance of the natural cyclical process described by the Greek philosophers. It marked the turn of the circle—*orbis*—that described political change generally.





**Artist rendering of Bloody Sunday protest in Saint Petersburg, Russia.** In 1905, some 200,000 Russian workers gathered outside the palace of the Tsar to demand better working conditions. The palace guards opened fire on the demonstrators, and the uprising of protest that followed eventually resulted in the first Russian Revolution. HULTON/ARCHIVE BY GETTY IMAGES

Christian writers of the Middle Ages were content to follow this respectable example, the more so as its Stoicism fitted in well with a cosmology that was even less inclined to allow freedom to merely human volition. By comparison with the cosmic “revolution” of Christ’s coming, and the end of human history that it portended, all secular changes among humans paled into insignificance. Platonic conceptions, which in any case tended to disparage the things of this world, were highly suited to this view. The political cycles of the earthly city could be seen as the secondary counterpart to the predominant rectilinear pattern of Providential history, which was preparing the way for the consummation in the heavenly city.

It was in fact from the heavens that the word *revolution* descended to enter the earthly domain of politics. Astrology provided the link. The word *revolutio*—from *revolvere*, “to roll back,” “to come back,” “to return in due course”—was a late Latin coinage. St. Augustine of Hippo (354–430) used it to refer to the migration of souls. It then came to be applied to the revolutions of the heavens, to the cyclical rotations of the planets and stars in their fixed orbits. The astronomical usage, as in Nicolaus Copernicus’s *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium* (1543), predominated until the late seventeenth century. But earlier it had already come to be applied to human society, through the widely shared astrological belief in the in-

fluence of the stars on human affairs. The revolutions of the heavens were the direct cause of revolutions among humans.

This confirmed rather than modified in any substantial way the concept of revolution as the turn of Fortune’s wheel. For not only were the movements of the stars as independent of human agency as the dispositions of Fortune (cf. Hamlet’s “Here’s fine Revolution,” as he muses on Yorick’s skull). They operated according to the same laws of motion as the political cycles of the Greeks. Each movement was preordained and predictable, a step or phase in the complete orbital cycle that returned the star or planet to its original starting point. The revolutions of the stars were therefore as bereft of novelty as the revolutions of the seasons. As Hannah Arendt has written of the astronomical *revolutio*, “if used for the affairs of men on earth, it could only signify that the few known forms of government revolve among the mortals in eternal recurrence and with the same irresistible force which makes the stars follow their pre-ordained paths in the skies” (p. 35). The astronomical conception of political change dominated the uses of the term *revolution* from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries. The *rivoluzioni* of the North Italian cities of the fourteenth century—when the term first entered the political vocabulary to denote violent political change—were seen in the perspective



Poster celebrating the Red Navy during the Russian Revolution, 1917. Two successive uprisings in 1917 by Russian peasants and the working class led to the overthrow of the monarchy and created the first Communist regime. © BETTMANN/CORBIS

of the cyclical conception derived from classical antiquity. Most commonly *revolution* was used in some sense of restoration, the return to a truer or purer or more original state of things. This was the meaning of its use in relation to the pro- and anti-Medicean revolts in Florence in 1494, 1512, and 1527. Widely called *rivoluzioni* by contemporary observers, the revolts were held by their supporters to bring back the better state of affairs displaced by their rivals. A similar meaning underlay the use of the term *révolution* to describe the conversion to Catholicism of the French king Henry IV in 1593. By so disarming his enemies, the Catholic League, and causing massive defections to his side, Henry was said both to have brought about an irresistible turn of the wheel of Fortune and at the same time to have restored the kingdom to an earlier condition of health (Griewank, p. 145). In this late sixteenth century usage one sees as clearly as anywhere the persistence of a concept of revolution in which the quality of novelty is conspicuously absent.

### The Seventeenth Century

It has been common to see the seventeenth century as the source of the modern idea of revolution. Partly this is due to

the fact that seventeenth-century Europe was profoundly shaken by a great wave of rebellions and civil wars. There were revolts in the Netherlands against Spanish rule; major rebellions in France—the Fronde—and in several of the territories of the Spanish monarchy—Catalonia, Portugal, Naples, and Sicily; Scotland and Ireland rose against English domination. Above all there is the English Civil War of 1642–1649, seen by many, such as Karl Marx, as the first of the “great revolutions” of modern history.

Most historians agree that, however bloody the conflicts, most of these rebellions were just that—rebellions, not revolutions. These were traditional uprisings by traditional actors. There was no attempt to create anything new or different. Peasants, townsmen, and disaffected aristocrats appealed to “the ancient and fundamental laws of the kingdom,” to customs, traditions, and the “good old ways”—in other words, to the past—in their struggles with their rulers. The aim was to bring back or to confirm historic institutions—the French parliaments and Estates-General, the Spanish Cortes, the Catalan *diputació*, the English Parliament.

The English Civil War, however, has seemed to many a different kind of conflict, one deserving the name *revolution* in the modern sense. Did the English not execute their king, abolish the monarchy and the House of Lords, disestablish the Church of England, and proclaim a republic? In a more far-reaching way, did the English Civil War not clear the way for capitalist development, so launching England on the path that was to take it to the pinnacle of the world economy? Contemporaries called it “the Great Rebellion,” but should we not be prepared to call it, with Lawrence Stone, “the first ‘Great Revolution’ in the history of the world” (p. 147)?

One needs to attend to the language of contemporaries, and to beware of imposing our often anachronistic interpretations on past events. In relation to the events that occurred between 1640 and 1660, and even to those of 1688, contemporaries largely avoided the newly coined political term “revolution.” When they did use it, they gave it the meaning current in early modern political thought. That is, they employed it with the cyclical connotation derived from its astronomical usage. That is why it so often appeared in plural form, as when Robert Sanderson wrote in 1649 of “the confusions and revolutions of government,” or Matthew Wren in 1650 of “those strange revolutions we have seen.”

Most revealingly of all, what we call the “Restoration” of 1660 was widely hailed as a “revolution.” It was so termed by Lord Clarendon, the first historian of what he called, referring to the events of the past twenty years, the “Great Rebellion.” Thomas Hobbes, in his *Behemoth* (1668), was also clear that with the return of Charles II in 1660, a political cycle had been duly completed: “I have seen in this Revolution a circular motion of the Sovereign Power, through two Usurpers, from the late King to his Son.” Nor was it just monarchists and conservatives who remained wedded to the traditional concept of revolution. What was later to be sanctified as the “Glorious” or “Bloodless” Revolution of 1688 was also at the time understood to be a revolution in the tra-

ditional sense of the word. The parliamentary Whigs, taking their cue from John Locke, here turned the tables on Clarendon and the supporters of the Restoration by arguing that not 1660 but 1688 was the true restoration, hence the true, final revolution. Charles II, and even more James II, had flouted the fundamental laws and violated the original constitution of the kingdom every bit as much as Charles I and Oliver Cromwell. All had plunged the country into a cycle of violence and oppressive but unstable regimes. Only with the restoration of a truly constitutional monarchy in 1688 had the cycle run its course.

One is entitled, for certain purposes, to argue that the men and women of the seventeenth century knew not whereof they spoke, that when they spoke of “restoration,” we can quite properly speak of revolution in the modern sense. This claim has been especially made for the radicals of the English Civil War, the Levellers and Diggers, who are said to look forward to the socialist and communist revolutionaries of a later century. But why deny the reality to the radicals of the language that they used to describe their actions? When Levellers protested against “the Norman yoke,” this represented to them a real usurpation of traditional English rights and liberties by an alien ruling class. When the Diggers proclaimed communism, this was because, as their leader Gerard Winstanley said, they wished to restore “the pure law of righteousness before the Fall,” to make the earth “a common treasury again.” Along with such groups as the Fifth Monarchy men, the Diggers believed that Christ’s Second Coming, as foretold in the Book of Revelation, was imminent. With it would come “a new heaven and a new earth,” Christ’s millennial reign on earth. These were all convictions sincerely and powerfully held. On what grounds are we to say that they were deluded, that their actions really meant something else?

Millennial imagery and even doctrine are not foreign to modern concepts of revolution. It is even possible to argue, as Melvin Lasky does, that without this millenarian background, the idea of revolution is inconceivable. But revolution is no more religion than it is restoration—not, at least, in the senses that the term has come to hold for us. At some point revolution was stripped of its religious associations and launched on an independent career as a secular concept. This was the accomplishment of the American and French Revolutions of the eighteenth century. It is to them we must look for the birth of the modern concept of revolution.

**Inventing Revolution: American and French Revolutions**

The pull of the past is nowhere more evident than in the case of the American and French Revolutions. Repeatedly they made reference to the heroic deeds and figures of the past. Rome, the Rome of the Republic, was an inspiration to both revolutions. The revolutionaries frequently saw themselves in the guise of Gracchus or Brutus, opposing tyranny and striking a blow for the liberty of the people. Their painters and sculptors portrayed them in Roman costume. In their speeches they quoted the great Roman orators. They wished to revive the public spirit and civic virtue of the Roman Republic, to make citizens out of subjects.

The American and French Revolutions did in truth both begin with conservative intentions, or at least pretensions. The Americans wished, they said, to go back to the working arrangement that they had had with the British state since the seventeenth century, an arrangement upset by the “innovations” of the British Parliament; the French wished to restore power to the old institutions of the parlements and the Estates-General, in the face of a reforming and “modernizing” monarchy. In both cases the revolution rapidly went beyond these conservative premises, to the consternation of many who began the revolution. A new concept of revolution emerged in the course of these revolutions. Tom Paine, whose pamphlet *Common Sense* (1776) saluted the American Revolution as “the birth-day of a new world,” went on in *The Rights of Man* (1791–1792) to see the French and American Revolutions as jointly inaugurating a veritable “age of Revolutions, in which everything may be looked for.”

“What were formerly called Revolutions, were little more than a change of persons, or an alteration of local circumstances. They rose and fell like things, of course, and had nothing in their existence or their fate that could influence beyond the spot that produced them. But what we now see in the world, from the Revolutions of America and France, are a renovation of the natural order of things, a system of principles as universal as truth and the existence of man, and combining moral with political happiness and national prosperity.” (Paine, 1984 ed., p. 144)

Americans, increasingly dismayed by what many saw as the excesses of the French Revolution (though Thomas Jefferson was not one of them), progressively downplayed the significance of their own revolution, giving it a conservative interpretation that dominated all discussion until recently. In this they paid unconscious homage to the defining character of the French Revolution. Fairly or not, it is the French, not the American, Revolution that has come to be seen as the inventor of the modern concept of revolution.

The French Revolution is the model revolution, the archetype of all revolutions. It defines what revolution is. This is a matter of fact rather than of conceptual analysis—or rather, it is a matter of the concept being shaped by the historical experience. For not only was it during the French Revolution that the concept of revolution unmistakably acquired its modern meaning. The French Revolution also established the classic pattern of revolution. It named the revolutionary experience, and wrote the script of the revolutionary drama. It showed, by its own example as well as its attempt to export its revolution, by its ideas as well as its armies, what it is a society must do to undergo revolution. In this sense the French Revolution was not simply the first great revolution. It can seriously be argued to be the only revolution. All revolutions subsequently were indebted to it. It was from the French that they borrowed their concept; it was the French Revolution whose practice they attempted to imitate—even when they hoped to go beyond it.

With the French Revolution, the hesitations and ambiguities of earlier revolutions were swept aside. Revolution now acquired its distinctively modern meaning. It came to mean, not the turns of a recurrent cycle or the reversion to some earlier condition, but the creation of something radically new: something never before



seen in the world, a new system of society, a new civilization, a new world. Moreover it lost—though never entirely—its connotation of something natural, inevitable, and irresistible, something occurring beyond the province of human agency or the possibility of human intervention. Revolution was on the contrary now something quintessentially man-made. It was the action of human will and human reason upon an imperfect and unjust world, to bring into being the good society. This was for the philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel the great discovery of the French Revolution: “Never since the sun had stood in the firmament and the planets revolved around him had it been perceived that man’s existence centres in his head, i.e. in Thought, inspired by which he build up the world of reality. . . . This was accordingly a glorious mental dawn. All thinking beings shared in the jubilation of this epoch” (Hegel, 1956 ed., p. 447).

With the example of the French Revolution before them, it became possible for contemporaries to see earlier events as comparable in several important respects, and retrospectively to baptize them as revolutions—often with a polemical purpose in mind. French revolutionaries such as the Marquis de Lafayette, who had fought with the Americans against the British, were quick to refer to “the American Revolution,” by analogy with what they saw as the similarly heroic enterprise embarked upon by the French in 1789. The French historian and liberal statesman François Guizot, in his *Histoire de la révolution d’Angleterre* (1826), was the first to call the English Civil War a revolution in the modern, that is, French, sense, in his case with the cautionary purpose of championing English moderation against French fanaticism. Dutch historians began to discover in the sixteenth-century “revolt of the Netherlands” rather a “Dutch Revolution.”

Nor did the comparisons remain solely in the political field. The technological and economic developments transforming England in the early nineteenth century were seen in the 1820s as “the industrial revolution.” Later scholars were to speak of “the revolution of the Baroque” and of “the scientific revolution” of the seventeenth century, to refer to the thoroughgoing changes in artistic practice and in scientific thought in that period. They would also speak of “revolutions of humanity,” such as the Paleolithic and Neolithic revolutions, or the “urban” or “agricultural” revolutions. Changes of an epoch-making kind routinely came to be called revolutions, as in “the Roman Revolution,” which produced the principate out of the republic in the first century of the common era.

In all cases what gave the term its meaning was the analogy with what increasingly came to be designated “the Great French Revolution” of 1789. In whatever sphere it was employed, political, economic, or cultural, revolution meant dramatic, fundamental change, change in a radically new direction, a complete change of “paradigm,” to use the term popularized by the philosopher of science Thomas Kuhn. Whether, especially in the political realm, the change had to be accompanied by violence, as in the French case, remained a matter of dispute. “Violence is the midwife of the old society pregnant with the new,” said Marx; but Vladimir Lenin, noting this, penciled in the laconic comment, “some births are difficult, others easy.” What mattered in the end was not so

much violence as the degree and intensity of the change. Revolution was a speeding up of evolution. It was an action by which men changed utterly the way they had traditionally done things. It looked to the future, not to the past.

In this respect, too, the future belonged to the French Revolution, as much as it inspired a renaming and reimagining of past episodes of change. Not the English or the American Revolution but the French Revolution became the inspiration of the revolutionary movement throughout Europe and the rest of the world. Marx called it “the lighthouse of all revolutionary epochs,” and he remained indebted to its example in his conception of the future socialist revolution. In the understanding of revolutionaries and revolutionary theorists everywhere, to undergo revolution was to imitate the French. The French Revolution displayed the universal “logic of revolution,” the stages or phases through which all revolutions must pass. There would be a “rule of the moderates” followed by “the rise of the radicals,” Girondists followed by Jacobins. Terror would give way to Thermidor, the point at which the revolution ceased its radicalization and tried to achieve a period of stability. As in the French case, this would often lead to a military dictatorship that claimed to safeguard the gains of the revolution. The symbolic dates of the French Revolution marked, for generations to come, the successive phases of the revolutionary process: the “Fourteenth of July” (capture of the Bastille and seizure of power), the “Ninth of Thermidor” (fall of Maximilien Robespierre and the beginning of the period of stabilization), the “Eighteenth of Brumaire” (Napoleon’s coup d’état and the inauguration of the dictatorship). If, as was claimed in the nineteenth century, *le nouveau Messie, c’est la Révolution* (“revolution is the new Messiah”), it was the French Revolution that had inspired these apocalyptic hopes.

### The Revolutionary Idea in the Modern World

The idea of revolution, once invented by the French—Americans having for the most part disclaimed the patent—rapidly became the possession of the entire world. This was partly because the idea was carried on the bayonets of Napoleon’s armies in the French bid to revolutionize the whole of Europe. But the defeat of Napoleon was no barrier to the further spread of the idea. All attempts to repress it only seemed to lend it strength. It inspired a whole series of later revolutions in France, the land of its birth, in 1830, 1848, and 1871. In 1848 practically the whole of Europe—Britain and Russia were almost the sole exceptions—was convulsed by revolution. The idea had a particular appeal for intellectuals in Central and Eastern Europe, who embraced it with messianic fervor. In Russia in particular it found fertile soil, so much so that revolutionaries in Western Europe began to look to Russia to give the signal that would light the torch of revolution everywhere.

The idea of revolution as expressed by the French Revolution appealed because of its simplicity and universality. “Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity” could inspire populations from Brussels to Beijing, from Poland to Peru. Of course there remained the question of how to interpret and apply its terms. Here the main modification to the original idea consisted in seeking to realize liberty and equality in the social as well as the political realm. This was the contribution of the nineteenth-century socialists, supremely in the thinking of Karl



### OLYMPE DE GOUGES (1748–1793)

Olympe de Gouges—the self-invented name of Marie Gouzes—was a playwright and pamphleteer who took an active part in the French Revolution. She agitated for the emancipation of slaves, divorce, and the rights of illegitimate children and unmarried mothers. After her own unhappy marriage she renounced marriage as such, proposing that the marriage contract be replaced by a “social contract” that specified the equal rights of the partners, including the right to end the union. Her best-known work is the *Declaration of the Rights of Woman and Citizen* (1791), a direct riposte and corrective to the more famous *Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen* of 1789. In it she strove to reconcile the abstract universality of that document, which she thought unreal and dangerous, with an acknowledgment of difference. Men and women were different, she argued, just as nature was variegated, but both were equally the bearer of rights, equally capable of agency and action. The Jacobins, like nearly all the leading French revolutionaries, were hostile to the claims of equality for women. They denounced Olympe’s activities as “unnatural,” and condemned her to death in 1793 for plastering the walls of Paris with posters opposing Jacobin centralization and in favor of the Girondist program of decentralized federalism.

Marx. For Marx, the French Revolution remained to be completed. It had freed the capitalists, the bourgeoisie, but at the cost of turning the mass of workers into exploited and propertyless proletarians. The liberal gains of the French Revolution—and Marx never denied that they were gains—had to be converted into the emancipation of the people as a whole. This would be accomplished by a socialist or communist revolution that would abolish private property and bring about the “free association of producers.” In the final condition of communism, following the transitional “dictatorship of the proletariat,” the state itself would “wither away,” having no necessary function. In this vision of the future, the Marxist concept of revolution fused with that of the anarchists, who had particularly strong followings, through the teachings of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809–1865) and Mikhail Bakunin (1814–1875), in France, Russia, Spain, and Italy.

It is fair to say that, in one version or another, the Marxist concept of revolution came to dominate not just Europe but the world beyond in the later nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. This was perhaps inevitable, given the massive disruption and distress caused by the relentless march of capitalist industrialization across the globe. The Paris Commune of 1871, which Marx hailed as the first truly proletarian revolution, can perhaps be taken as marking the divide between the older, more purely political, concept of revolution, and the later one that made social and economic transformation the heart of the revolution. Symbolically, the old revolutionary hymn of the *Marseillaise* was replaced by the new socialist anthem, the *Internationale*; the red flag of the socialists replaced

the tricolor of the liberals. Not surprisingly, the Russian Revolutions of 1905 and 1917 gave a massive impetus to this socialist understanding of revolution, as did the later success of socialist revolutions in China (1948) and in Cuba (1958).

The Russian Revolution of 1917 became the type of twentieth century revolutions, especially in the non-Western world. It seemed to solve the difficult question of how to make a socialist revolution in conditions that, in a strictly Marxist understanding, were highly unpromising. Marx had expected the socialist revolution to begin in the advanced industrial societies, such as France, Germany, or Britain, where the industrial working class or proletariat made up the vast majority of society. Russia, like many other non-Western societies, was at the time of its revolution 80–90 percent peasant. It also had a relatively small and weak middle class. But in the main urban centers, such as St. Petersburg (Petrograd), it had a proletariat that, though small, was highly developed, well organized, and politically very conscious.

The Russian revolutionaries, especially Lenin and Trotsky, elaborated a theory of socialist revolution in which, under the guidance of the proletariat, the mass peasant population would be induced to rise in rebellion and to take over the land, at the same time as the proletariat took over the factories. Together the workers and peasants would coordinate the socialist revolution, after suppressing their common enemies among the bourgeoisie and the aristocracy. Throughout a significant role was marked out for the worker’s party—in this case the Bolshevik party—as the theoretical organ and directing force

of the revolution. But it was always stressed that rule by the party was in the nature of a temporary, bridging, operation, mainly concerned with mopping up the remaining pockets of resistance and in preparing the workers for direct rule.

Here then was a new model of revolution, though particularly appropriate for countries, such as Russia, that had not been through a “bourgeois revolution” and had not as a result enjoyed the benefits of liberal or constitutional rule. The proletariat, organized by the party, would in effect carry out a dual or two-fold revolution. It would overthrow autocratic or authoritarian rule, here accomplishing the aim of the classic bourgeois revolutions, such as the English and French revolutions; and it would also push through, in a single, uninterrupted sequence, to the proletarian or socialist revolution. Both political and social emancipation would be achieved by the self-same agency, in the same act of revolution. No wonder that, whatever the misgivings about the course of the revolution in Russia, such a model proved so compelling to those many non-Western countries that saw themselves as standing in the same semi-feudal and backward condition as Russia on the eve of 1917.

But it would be wrong to overstress the differences between the socialist and earlier conceptions of revolution. For Marx the French Revolution of 1789 was always the model revolution, the one that provided the essential terms of revolutionary conflict as a conflict of classes. If the French Revolution was a “bourgeois revolution,” the coming socialist one would be a proletarian revolution. It would differ in that the proletarian revolution would lead to general emancipation instead of the emancipation of only one class. But the form of the revolution, the conditions under which the proletariat would gather its strength and overthrow its oppressors were precisely modeled on the rise of the bourgeoisie in feudal society. Thus both in its form—class struggle—and its intention—liberty and equality, now understood in social and economic as well as political terms—the socialist revolution could plausibly be presented simply as the continuation and completion of the enterprise started by the French Revolution. This was the claim of many prominent socialist revolutionaries. “A Frenchman,” wrote Lenin to a French comrade in 1920, “has nothing to renounce in the Russian Revolution, which in its method and procedures recommences the French Revolution.” Fidel Castro, in his defense speech at the Moncada trial of 1953 (1968), saw the very existence of an independent Cuba as an inheritance of the European revolutionary tradition, and he looked back to the French Revolution to justify his actions and to proclaim the inevitability of revolution in Cuba.

Of course there had to be modifications even to the socialist idea of revolution, especially as it moved beyond its European base and encountered different conditions and different traditions in the non-Western world. The most important amendments were provided by Mao Zedong in China, Vo Nguyen Giap in Vietnam, and Castro and Che Guevara in Cuba—leaders and fighters as well as theoreticians. What especially concerned them was the role of the peasantry in what were overwhelmingly peasant societies. The predominantly urban tradition of revolution had to be rejected. “The city,” observed Castro of the Latin American experience, “is a cemetery of rev-

olutionaries and resources.” In place of the city and the urban workers they looked to the countryside and the organization of the peasants—in their traditional communities, if possible, in the form of mobile guerrilla bands if for whatever reasons this proved strategically dangerous (as for instance it appeared to do so in Cuba and Latin America generally). This was the revolutionary strategy that, often after decades of struggle, led to the success of the Chinese, the Cuban, and the Vietnamese revolutions. These in turn became the inspiration, the “model” revolutions, for other Third World societies. Socialist in form and rhetoric, they quite often—as in many African cases—embodied fundamentally nationalist aspirations in societies seeking to throw off colonial rule.

In the West too, changing conditions brought about modifications to the inherited concept of revolution. Revolution on the barricades began to appear increasingly unreal in societies where sophisticated firepower and counterinsurgency techniques gave states overwhelming power against potential insurgents. The fate of the Hungarian revolution of 1956 gave the clearest indication of this, as did, in a somewhat different way, the failure of the “Prague spring” of 1968. In the face of this, the student revolutionaries in Paris and elsewhere in 1968 turned away from direct confrontation with the state and invented subversive techniques based on ridicule and new forms of cultural opposition. “All power to the imagination”; “Be a realist: demand the impossible”; “I am a Marxist—Groucho style”—such were the slogans on the posters that the students plastered all over Paris in May 1968. Marx was still an influence, but it was Marx the philosopher of alienation rather than Marx the anatomist of the capitalist economy who continued to be an inspiration. In addition, and often taking over, were influences derived from the Dadaists and Surrealists, together with a radical reading of Sigmund Freud.

Revolution has not been a prominent feature of Western societies since World War I—not, that is, revolution as it has traditionally been understood in the libertarian, “left-wing,” versions inherited from the French Revolution. There have been some who have spoken of the Nazi or the fascist revolution, and have tried to offer a “right-wing” concept of revolution. This has to struggle with a whole tradition of meaning derived from the European experience of the past two hundred years. Inequality, authoritarianism, and racism—central elements of fascist ideology—simply have not been part of the revolutionary inheritance, whatever the practices of states, such as the Soviet Union, that claimed the revolutionary mantle. Condorcet’s statement of 1793, that “the word revolutionary can only be applied to revolutions which have liberty as their object,” aptly sums up the predominant and persistent meaning of the concept, as it has been elaborated by successive theorists since the French Revolution.

Nowhere was this demonstrated more forcibly than in the 1989 revolutions, the revolutions that overthrew communist rule throughout Central and Eastern Europe, eventually, in 1991, dissolving the Soviet Union itself. While in the same year the French and other Western Europeans, contemplating with a conspicuous lack of enthusiasm the bicentennial of the French Revolution, appeared disillusioned with the whole idea of rev-

olution, Eastern Europeans embraced it with fervor. Crowds occupied the squares of Prague, Warsaw, Budapest, and Bucharest, forcing, in almost classic demonstration of the power of the people, their rulers to depart. If the West had forgotten its revolutionary heritage, the same had not happened in the East. Moreover, it was not, for obvious reasons, the Marxist or socialist idea of revolution that inspired the East Europeans. In a remarkable reversal, what they looked back to, what was evident in almost every demand they made, was the tradition of the eighteenth-century American and French Revolutions. It was individual rights, a free civil society, and a liberal constitution that were the centerpieces of the programs of 1989.

Do the 1989 revolutions mark the end of revolution in the West, as many have claimed? Are they the final deposit of the revolutionary tradition? This may be too shortsighted a view, even for the West and certainly from the perspective of the world as a whole. In November 2003 the people of Georgia, one of the former republics of the Soviet Union, rose up against a corrupt ruler in a classic display of revolutionary action. Elsewhere in the world—in China, in Latin America, in the Middle East—there are intermittent but persistent revolutionary stirrings. Many of these are now mixed with religion, following the example of the Iranian Revolution of 1979. Revolution has always been a changing and many-sided thing. We can be sure there are many surprises in store for us still.

See also *Cycles; Evolution; Liberty; Marxism; Scientific Revolution.*

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Krishan Kumar

**RHETORIC.**

This entry includes two subentries:

*Overview*

*Ancient and Medieval*

**OVERVIEW**

Rhetoric governs the effective use of verbal and nonverbal communication designed to influence an audience. Understood in its broadest sense, it is practiced more or less deliberately in all societies. Even the animal world seems to apply some of its principles. But in its original and historical form, rhetoric is associated with the use of human discourse to persuade and can be defined as the art of speaking, of speaking well, or of speaking effectively with the aim of persuading. Rhetoric is at once technical, practical, pedagogical, and analytical. It deals with opinions, rather than truths and certitudes, and as such, it can be abused as a means of manipulation.

Since originating in Sicily in the fifth century B.C.E., rhetoric has reflected a keen awareness of all the conditions that, taken together, influence an audience in one way or another. Rhetoric has established itself as a systematic and exhaustive synthesis of all the human sciences, as they are called, and of all practices from which it can draw a benefit, from philosophy to psychology, linguistics to literary theory, and anthropology to sociology. What is specific to rhetorical synthesis and what gives it its universal validity is its transdisciplinary dimension. Rhetoric is an art of synthesis that controls a series of approaches, which together—and only together—contribute toward bringing about the desired effect.

**Universality**

Although the most systematic formalization of rhetoric occurred in the West, first in Greece and then in Rome, its key practices and conceptions are universal. Ever since writing was invented in Mesopotamia and Egypt, people have recognized the power of professional writers. Examples of practices and precepts related to eloquence can be found in Egypt beginning with the second millennium B.C.E. and in the Book of Proverbs.

China, like Europe, wanted to separate the persuasive and expressive aspects of rhetoric, to distinguish between the rhetoric of public discourse and what is called literary or ornamental rhetoric. This can be seen throughout China's history in the many compilations of exemplary speeches, in the many treatises with a pedagogical aim, and in the long tradition of poetry and poetic commentary. India, which early on invented an argumentative epic literature, also had rhetorical competitions and later developed a practical and critical method for teaching rhetoric as well as a theory of poetry and drama.

Societies without writing sometimes recognize the authority of those gifted at speaking out. Hence we find the ethos of wisdom among Australian aborigines or that of venerable age and heroic deeds among Native Americans. European Americans recognized and appreciated the eloquence of Native Americans, who used irony or pathos. Thomas Jefferson, for example, com-

pared the Mingo chief Logan to the Roman orator Marcus Tullius Cicero. Specialists have studied the verbal formalism typical of Aztec ceremonies, evidence of which was passed down by the conquistadores. A society without rhetoric is hardly imaginable, since rhetoric is necessary to all communication. And it is impossible to imagine how anyone could utter words without seeking ways to make language more effective.

**Fields of application.** By definition, any human activity that explicitly or implicitly involves a quest for influence entails rhetoric in its broadest sense, whether or not that activity is grounded in verbal communication. Hence a multiplicity of rhetorics exists. Nothing prevents us from calling any field of interaction rhetoric, since it is precisely the field of interaction that defines the conditions for treating matters discursively, for arguing in one's own defense, or for choosing modes of expression. As a result, it is possible to speak of rhetorics of minorities and of majorities, rhetorics of sexuality, racism, and feminism, rhetorics of drugs, war, peace, exile, and so on. We may also speak of rhetoric in reference to nonverbal activities, assimilating them to one function or another of language to show their influence on the public. Every art form—music, painting, the figurative arts in general, architecture, and cinema—has its rhetoric, although it may lie at least as much in the manipulation of images as in the use of speech. There is, therefore, also a rhetoric of gestures, of mime, of public or religious gatherings, and of military parades, of all activities that are supposed to communicate a message or spread propaganda.

**The Art of Persuasion**

Because the Western world has offered the most systematic historical, methodological, and theoretical approach to rhetoric, this entry will focus on the Western concept of rhetoric, understood as the art of persuasion, essentially through speech.

**Form and content.** Rhetoric's persuasive efficacy depends on both thought and expression or style. Thought, which is the domain of philosophy, governs the art of dialectics. Expression, which is concerned with the speech act itself, governs how that thought is put into words and how it is delivered. That division between the philosophical realm of thought and the linguistic field of expression is problematic, and the history of rhetoric is in large part the history of their relationship. The tendency to separate them, to limit rhetoric to expression and reserve the dialectical realm of argument, evidence, and organization to philosophy is always present, as if thought were independent of its expression and, conversely, as if eloquence were independent of thought and truth. In rhetoric properly understood and as Cicero (106–43 B.C.E.) conceived it in *De oratore*, persuasion and expression are interdependent, organically connected. Meaning lies as much in form as in content.

**Logos.** Rhetoric thus defined deals with the everyday universe and the contingent aspects of human and social reality, which a certain kind of philosophy, practiced by Plato (c. 428–348 or 347 B.C.E.) and later by René Descartes (1596–1650), disdained and considered unworthy of interest. Philosophy in its traditional and classic sense is interested in eternal and universal certainties and truths. It intends to convince



by calling upon unassailable evidence and by invoking arguments that will make its demonstrations irrefutable. Rhetoric's philosophical method is dialectics, which relies on credible arguments, plausible evidence, or circumstantial events. Such arguments appeal to commonplaces and are based on received opinion; they allow for and may even demand refutation, or at least objections that appeal to competing opinions and the same sorts of evidence. Because rhetoric deals with opinions, it argues by applying what is called dialectical reasoning to the probable causes on which the opinion is based. In order to persuade, rhetoric relies on credible arguments, plausible evidence, or circumstantial events. Such arguments appeal to commonplaces and are based on received opinion, but at the same time, they must allow for and may even demand refutation, or at least objections that appeal to competing opinions and the same sorts of evidence.

**Pathos and ethos.** Although the first measures taken by the rhetoric of persuasion occur in the realm of thought (designated by the term *logos*), the order of verisimilitude to which thought belongs is not sufficient in itself to influence the audience decisively. Rhetoric moves beyond logical argument to consider indirect and circumstantial data (historical, political, social, religious, psychological, moral, and ethical, for example) as a way to increase its effectiveness. It also considers the audience's sensibility, passions, and emotions at least as much as its intellectual faculties. This appeal to the psychology of the audience is what traditional rhetoric calls pathos and it is directed primarily at the senses. Hence images, sounds, odors, and even tactile and gustatory sensations may serve to reinforce the influence sought. That is why the senses (especially sight but also hearing) seem to have become the target par excellence of modern methods of influence, as in advertising. The dominance of the visual in the twenty-first century means that image is often the determining factor; no one who is not at least minimally telegenic can expect to have much public or political success.

The final aspect of any rhetorical approach is ethos, which is linked to the orator's personality. It establishes authority and assures the audience's trust by presenting a view of the orator's character, moral qualities, and sincerity by projecting a moral and physical image. Hence venerable age, experience, social or religious position, or professional or media success may invest an individual with authority.

### Description

The Greek philosopher Aristotle (384–322 B.C.E.) and the Roman Cicero provided what has become the standard description of rhetoric. In addition to the series of steps to be followed, they defined types of discourse according to the kind of public each type was meant to address.

**Audience and types of discourse.** The invention of Western rhetoric in Hellenic Sicily in the fifth century B.C.E. can be attributed to judicial, or forensic, discourse, which was developed to level accusations or mount defenses in the name of justice. In Greece, rhetoricians very quickly came to identify two other types of discourse as functions of the different audiences to which they were addressed. The deliberative, which

is supposed to inform, exhort, advise, or dissuade, coincides with the democratic political discourse and was initially addressed to the Senate to urge it to support the useful against the harmful. The epideictic, also called the demonstrative, whose purpose is to praise or blame, to commemorate or denounce, is addressed to a group of spectators to elicit their admiration or reprobation, often to hold something up as an example or as a value to them. These original distinctions are open to revision in the early twenty-first century, when more and more complex types of discourse seem to exist, ranging from the sciences to advertising, television to the Internet, drama to poetry, including treatises, theses, films, cartoons, and so on, and when these types of discourse seem to be more precisely defined and to have better-delimited audiences. Although the distinction between judicial and deliberative discourse still seems valid, we might have to concede, as some have suggested, that epideictic praise or blame has been reincarnated as advertising. In this new type of discourse, the audience is the consumer, the easily influenced viewer who is the potential customer for the items being extolled.

**The parts of rhetoric.** Since Aristotle's time, rhetoric has been divided into parts comprising the steps involved in producing a discourse and delivering it in person to the intended public. Each of these parts has in turn been subdivided, resulting in an extremely structured system wherein each phase in the production of a persuasive discourse is systematically and exhaustively represented. Rhetorical treatises are encyclopedias of discursive expertise on how to think, how to write, and how to deliver.

Latin writers, including Cicero in *De oratore*, definitively established the steps involved in elaborating an oral discourse. The first is *inventio* (invention), which consists of seeking and selecting the arguments and other resources necessary to one's cause as a function of the discourse chosen. These may include syllogisms, on which dialectical argument is based, or prototypical examples. Logos, pathos, and ethos are subdivisions of *inventio* and determine the type of argument selected, including the type of evidence, whether extrinsic or intrinsic.

*Dispositio* (arrangement or composition) defines the order and organization of these arguments. The discourse may have between two and seven parts, but usually has five: the introduction or exordium, the narration (exposition of facts), the confirmation (exposition of evidence), the refutation (denunciation of the opposing argument), and the conclusion or peroration.

*Elocutio* (elocution) has to do with style: the choice of words and figures and of their formal syntactical combination. These choices are adapted to fit the subject following the rules of decorum. Three styles have been identified. They are known in Latin as *grave* (noble), *tenue* (simple), and *medium* (agreeable); the choice of style is governed by the nature of the subject to be treated, the goal to be achieved, and the target audience. These styles determine the choice of vocabulary (unusual, common, or familiar), the complexity of syntax, and the use of relatively obscure versus transparent figures. A further distinction is made between figures that have to do with the words themselves and those that have to do with ideas. Individual words taken in a sense other than their

usual one are called tropes (metaphor and metonymy, for example). *Scheme* refers to the order in which the words are arranged. Rhetorical figures are often seen as the essence of *elocutio*; indeed, rhetoric as a whole is sometimes reduced to them. Such figures have regularly been seen as markers of a text's literariness.

*Memoria* (memory) designates the stage of memorizing a discourse and involves a complex mnemonics that places the parts of a discourse in an imaginary physical space such as, for example, a house or a human body. Finally, *actio* (delivery) is the art of public performance, the theatrical effects governing voice, accent, body language, mimicry, and so on. It names the moment when the orator comes into contact with the public, makes an entrance and becomes an actor. *Memoria* and *actio* apply only to oral discourse, whereas *inventio*, *dispositio*, and *elocutio* apply to both the written and the oral.

### History

Rhetoric, which was first formalized in Greece, found a practical field for expansion in its service to the republic of Rome. Under the Roman Empire, Quintilian (c. 35–c. 100 C.E.) introduced the most systematic description of rhetoric. As a teacher, he saw the rhetorician as someone whose level of education entailed an ethical responsibility. The art of speaking well implied the art of speaking virtuously.

The Christian Middle Ages was wary of rhetoric, believing that revealed truth did not need the artifices of eloquence. But the Church also recognized its utility, since rhetoric made it possible to defend the new religion against its enemies. A moderate eloquence would soon be enlisted as an instrument of propaganda, a way of spreading the truth. Saint Augustine of Hippo (354–430), a rhetorician by profession, recognized the model for this eloquence in the Bible itself. In addition, medieval hermeneutics applied the rules of rhetorical analysis when it proposed that the books of the Old Testament be read allegorically.

From the twelfth century on, rhetoric survived in law studies, preaching, and poetry. Beginning in the fourteenth century, Francesco Petrarca (1304–1374) and the humanist Renaissance restored rhetoric's gleam, which had been tarnished by medieval suspicion. But this was also the age when the anti-Ciceronianism of Petrus Ramus (1515–1572) once again called into question the integrity of rhetoric, establishing a historical break between the fields of thought and expression that lasted for centuries. Rhetoric was confined to *elocutio*, whereas *inventio* and *dispositio* moved to the logico-philosophical realm of dialectics.

Although that revolution had no major consequences in the short term, Descartes and later John Locke (1632–1704) rejected the legitimacy of dialectics itself, believing that what is only probable and credible has no claim to truth, which lies in the realm of reason or experience. Rhetoric could no longer make use of dialectics but was confined to *elocutio*. That break was not universal: The Counter-Reformation viewed rhetoric as a useful instrument of propaganda, and thus rhetoric would have its moment of glory in Jesuit teachings.

Romanticism dealt rhetoric a nearly lethal blow, reacting to a rigid formalism that had gradually set in toward the end of the *ancien régime*. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832) and those who followed contrasted rhetoric to the freedom of a new sensibility that was in quest of a more personal and more sincere expression.

The art of rhetoric was resurrected many times in the twentieth century but always in the shadow of the Ramusian scission. On one side, philosophers such as Chaïm Perelman, in *The New Rhetoric*, took an interest in questions of argumentative logic and brought about a rhetorical revival in midcentury; on the other side, literary theorists and specialists in poetics confined their interest not just to *elocutio* but to rhetorical figures, and in the end to a few paradigmatic figures such as metaphor and metonymy. As Gérard Genette argued, the development of an increasingly limited rhetoric characterizes modern literary critical discourse.

**Rhetoric and literature.** Literature is one of the language arts most directly influenced by and dependent on rhetoric. Until the eighteenth century, even poetry, as any other oral or written discourse, was directly concerned with the three divisions of rhetoric applicable to written language (*inventio*, *dispositio*, and *elocutio*). It would be a serious anachronism to ignore this. But beginning in the nineteenth century, poetry considered only *elocutio* and gradually reduced even it to the question of figures, which became the chief subject of poetic treatises. Figures were now what defined the poetic quality of a text. No longer mere ornament and flowery language, they served to shore up a truly cognitive approach and became a privileged way of apprehending the world. Hence the formalist linguist Roman Jakobson defined the poetic function of a text as the display of its materiality, its "palpable" side, and as a figurative quality essential for expressing indirectly what is not accessible through "simple" speech.

Thus every age seems to have an emblematic figure. In the Middle Ages, allegory was conceived of as the tangible manifestation of the abstract and spiritual world through personification. In the nineteenth century, the symbol became an expression of the cosmic and universal correspondences that the romantics saw as the essence of their poetics. In the twentieth century, metaphor and metonymy became the exemplary figures for a conception of the world that was either poetic and founded on analogy, or prosaic and utilitarian and founded on contiguity. This was an extreme moment in the figurative character of literary rhetoric. Ultimately, an essential figurativeness was revealed at the core of all literary expression. The text, at odds with itself, was now seen as fundamentally incapable of representing the world. Only a return to philosophical reflection may be able to temper the rhetoric of figures and subordinate it to metalinguistic reflection.

### General Assessment

From its birth in Sicily within the particular context of defending landowners' rights to twenty-first-century media globalization, rhetoric has evolved and adapted. It is interdisciplinary in its essence and has sometimes appropriated knowl-

edge from disciplines close to its own object; at other times, it has been appropriated by disciplines encroaching on its domain. A unique synthesis of philosophical and expressive approaches, rhetoric is constantly being born anew. It has at its disposal a set of prescriptive or analytical practices and theoretical reflections that even in the twenty-first century allows it to master all fields of human expression and communication designed to act on the world.

On the whole, the global conception of rhetoric as it appeared in Aristotle's Greece has changed little. Despite, or may because of, its desire for a somewhat utopian, if not ominous desire for control, its overall theoretical and practical understanding of persuasion is still valid.

What has changed are the resources available. One of the advantages its modern-day practitioners have over their ancestors is that they are able to benefit from advances in technology and from the knowledge acquired through research in the nearby branches of the human sciences. In these fields of research, the modern orator, whether a lawyer, a political candidate, or a car dealer, will find resources to better grasp the social, ideological, psychological, or emotional state characterizing the target audience and thus to better understand it so as to better influence, if not control it.

But what has changed even more deeply are the technological means of communication, which are now able to diffuse farther, more rapidly, and more effectively a larger number of messages to a greater number of targets in a greater number of places. The power of the message is directly affected by that new audience. The electronic revolution itself, which is at least as significant as the invention of the printing press, offers new means for more effective persuasion. It is easier to seduce, and hence to influence, through the use of audiovisual media and virtual reality. Virtual reconstitutions of crime scenes, for example, are admissible in court. Rhetoric can only seek to adapt to these technological media, which constitute the new field of *actio*. The television screen has replaced the forum, the actor has replaced the orator, and teleprompters have replaced memory.

Even more radically, control of the media and access to the means of communication are what now seem to determine the true efficacy of the message, rather than oratorical talent or the intellectual quality of an argument (with perhaps the exception of the lawyer in the courtroom). That revolution has altered the conditions governing access to an audience. The means of communication, when they are not controlled by the state, are increasingly placed in the hands of a few large institutions, which are often controlled by commercial or ideological interests.

The Internet as it exists in the early twenty-first century would seem to offer to each individual access to his or her own means of communication. It ends up, however, providing a virtual "audience" an anarchical plethora of mostly unreliable and inefficient information. Without access to the media, which are the chief if not the exclusive means for diffusing ideas, no opposing power and no perceptible dissension can exist. And dissension is an unavoidable marker for freedom of

speech, which is now reserved and limited to those who control access to the means of diffusion. Some speak of a "dictatorship of the media" linked to the power of the new technology, and of "formal democracy." Competition in the realm of opinion requires equal access to the forum.

Paradoxically, then, although nothing seems to have changed in terms of the general principles that govern the art of persuasion, the means available to rhetoric have shifted the essence of intellectual activity toward expression, whether that refers to *elocutio*, with the emphasis on seduction, or to *actio*, with the idea that the orator cannot be heard. It is somewhat as if the universe of communication were being transformed into an enormous literary fiction designed to entertain more than to inform or argue. This fiction is already embodied on our television screens and in our magazines as a new kind of discourse, the infomercial, whose very name captures its ambiguity.

Any rhetoric has two aspects: vacuity, if not manipulation and lies; and ethics and trust. We must ensure that such trust is not irremediably undermined by the distrust produced by the growing monopolization of increasingly effective means of communication. The public is now a captive audience, increasingly powerless in the face of that monopoly, and the very future of democratic societies is at stake. In addition to the tradition of reliance on the speaker's ethos, access to a multiplicity of opinions is the public's essential safeguard against possible abuse of rhetoric. Rooted in freedom of speech, rhetoric finds its justification in the equal opportunity of access to the means of communication.

*See also Metaphor; Poetry and Poetics; Rhetoric: Ancient and Medieval.*

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Jean-Claude Carron

## ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL

Despite some recent controversy, *rhetoric* may be seen, from its ancient Greek-language origin, to be the systematic preceptive training that orators or public speakers have sought or received, from the fourth century B.C.E. onward. Signifying less a set of “ideas” than a preceptive practice, the Greek word *rhetoric*, later adopted into Latin (despite the equivalence of the phrase [*artificiosa*] *eloquentia*), always refers to the Graeco-Roman preceptive tradition, which remained foundational from the time of Aristotle (384–22 B.C.E.) to that of Hobbes (1588–1679), Vico (1668–1744) and even Nietzsche (1844–1900). It is only in recent times that the term has come to serve in a pejorative sense as a substitute for “truth.”

## Graeco-Roman Origins

This Graeco-Roman tradition had its origins in certain specific situations that required extraordinary and popularized skills in public address. One such tradition of origin is associated with the names of Tisias and Corax (who may be one or two persons, or a figment of later theorizers and historiographers of rhetoric), who are supposed to have “invented” and “published” in now lost manuals, an art of legal pleading upon the fall of the “tyrants” who ruled in Sicily (until 467 B.C.E.) apparently enabling ordinary, propertied people to make court claims for

the restitution of lands confiscated under the preceding tyrannies. True or not, this judicial emphasis became progressively crucial and the earliest extant Latin manuals (Cicero’s *De inventione* and the pseudo-Ciceronian *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, both written in the Roman Republic during the first quarter of the last century B.C.E., have a courtroom context and background, and the training they offered, though apparently popular, was seen by some to be subversive of Roman ways. Although a perceived dependence upon Greek technical manuals stimulated this opposition, it was nevertheless such a dependence that produced the classic shape of Roman rhetoric.

Invention (*inventio*) is the devising of matter, true or plausible, that would make the (legal) case convincing. Arrangement (*dispositio*) is the ordering and distribution of the matter, making clear the place to which everything is to be assigned. Style (*elocutio*) is the adaptation of suitable words and sentences to the matter devised. Memory (*memoria*) is the firm retention in the mind of the matter, words, and arrangement. Delivery (*pronuntiatio*) is the graceful regulation of voice, countenance, and gesture.

The pseudo-Ciceronian *Rhetorica ad Herennium*—from which the above quotation comes, provides instruction in all these divisions of the art, though in a slightly different order to the enumeration here. This training, although it was later to be further adapted to Roman political and court contexts in the last century of the Roman Republic (principally by Marcus Tullius Cicero, 106–43 B.C.E., though others were similarly skilled, went back to the Greek preceptive texts of Aristotle (c. 330 B.C.E., his *On Rhetoric* being the earliest complete rhetorical “manual” to have survived the pseudo-Aristotelian *Rhetoric* [dedicated] to Alexander, the *Rhetorica ad Alexandrum*), Isocrates (436–338 B.C.E.), and above all Hermagoras of Temnos (middle of the second century B.C.E.), whose lost texts much influenced later developments.

## Aristotle and His Successors

Aristotle set the tone of later ideas with his concept of the three major audiences (already found in Isocrates as three kinds of oratory, judicial, political / deliberative or “epideictic”—the audience is either a judge dealing with actions in the past [court cases] or the future [deliberative assemblies], or a spectator [listening to a speech in praise or blame of something/someone but not required to make a judgment]). Aristotle’s discussion of emotion and character—analyzing the feelings in an audience and the expectations the audience may have of the speaker (*pathos* and *ethos* respectively) and the strong links with argumentation (dialectic)—all in book II—were decisive for the future of the subject, as was book III on style, arrangement, and the parts of the speech. Thus “rhetoric” began its career by being forced into the straitjacket of the art or skill or preceptive system for finding what may be persuasive in any communications situation, as distinct from the direct “magic” of word power, stressed for example by Gorgias (fifth century B.C.E.), an early member of a group that came to be called “sophists,” that is, professional purveyors of “wisdom” and techniques that might lead to success in the world. A “stylistic” tendency had its outcome in the debate between protagonists of the “Asian” (“ornate”) and “At-



tic” (“restrained,” but originally assuming conscious imitation of Athenian writers of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.E.) styles in Roman antiquity, in the emphasis upon style in the works of Dionysius of Halicarnassus (who lived at Rome in the last years of the era before Christ), Longinus (possibly Cassius Longinus, a rhetorician of the third century A.D.), and Hermogenes (second century C.E., known as perhaps the most important Greek rhetorician of the Roman Empire). Aristotle himself assumed that the user of rhetoric would be a “good person,” thus linking rhetoric with “virtue,” a link that had its origins, perhaps, in Isocrates’ emphasis upon the orator’s moral qualities and wide-ranging skills and knowledge. It was a link that remained strong, in Cicero, Augustine, and even in Alcuin’s *De rhetorica et virtutibus* (730–804 C.E.) Rhetoric (*copia dicendi ac summum eloquentiae studium*—“abundance of speech and the most elaborate study of eloquence” according to the terms used in Cicero’s *De inventione* 1.1) was capable of good or evil, and although the initial incentive toward civilized modes of living must have been implanted by a uniquely eloquent individual, there came a time when masters of eloquence paid insufficient attention to philosophy with the consequence that the state suffered (all this to be found in the proem to the *De inventione*). In later times the term “rhetores” was often reserved for those who used eloquence for shallow and selfish ends.

### Roman Imperial Rhetoric

In the Roman Empire (31 B.C.E. to c. 476 C.E.), rhetoric reached its full development as a technical system useful for lawyers and advocates (most eloquently and grandly put in the twelve-book *Institutes of Oratory* by the Spanish orator Quintilian who lived in the first century C.E.) in court situations, especially the centumviral courts (concerned in the main with civil law, particularly inheritance), which spawned a set of manuals that formed a large part of what has come to be known as “the minor Latin rhetoricians.” Rhetoric was most eloquently and grandly described in the twelve-book *Institutes of Oratory* by the Spanish orator and advocate Quintilian who lived in the first century C.E. The art also served as a civilized code of shared behavior supposed to unite the elite court, curial (that is, related to the town councils of the Roman Empire), civil service, and rural aristocratic class of the empire with their rulers in pursuit of common cultural goals and parameters; as a code of ornate, ceremonial praise and blame in prose for the articulation of official values of the imperial autocracy (panegyric) and the proper celebration of important moments in elite life (see Menander Rhetor for the epideictic writings of Menander of Laodicea c.300 C.E.) and as a code of poetic and prose expression suited to the elaboration of elite perspectives on life, politics, and art. The best surviving late antique rhetor/orator is Libanius of Antioch (314–c.394), for whom some 51 declamations, 96 progymnasmata (see below), 64 orations, and 1600 letters have survived.

Christianity broke into this interlocking, mutually reinforcing complex in the course of the fourth century C.E. by stressing the dichotomy “truth versus ornate expression” and emphasizing new techniques of communication—sermons and homilies, together with a training in argumentation use-

ful for the doctrinal polemics that characterized early Christian history. Although ultimately destined to absorb and make over much of the classical rhetorical and hermeneutic tradition (Copeland), Christianity initially set itself against the elite preceptive communications system and (St.) Augustine himself (354–430) in his celebrated *Confessions* enshrined for later generations the difficult process of transition from this elite classical preceptive tradition to the new language of Christian discourse: “humble speech” (*sermo humilis*). Augustine focused on imitation of the supposed language of Christ speaking to ordinary people, and taking as a universal model biblical passages replete with moral and behavioral worth fitted to Christian doctrines and beliefs, and full of eloquence of an adapted sort.

### Medieval Transitions

The Venerable Bede in England (672/73–735) brought this approach to a kind of fruition by pointing out in his treatise *De schematibus et tropibus* (“Concerning figures and tropes”) that the Bible revealed all the stylistic tricks inculcated by the Latin rhetorical preceptive tradition (under the heading of style or *elocution*, see Miller, Prosser, and Benson, pp. 96–122). However, although intellectual life in the western European Middle Ages (c. 500–1500) was committed rather more than that of pre-Christian antiquity to notions of revealed truth, it relied heavily upon the Graeco-Roman rhetorical preceptive tradition to organize its communicative needs and its perceptive grids. The Augustinian, imitative and the Ciceronian preceptive tradition were in balance until the twelfth century, when the habit of lecturing on the *De inventione* and *Ad Herennium* (begun, at least as far as the former treatise was concerned, in at least the third century C.E.) returned to favor and dominated communications systems, even invading theological discourse and ideas, where the distinction between “literal” and “allegorical” interpretations of a text permitted the carriage of multiple meanings, thus pluralizing “truth” in favor of what Abelard called the *multiloquium* (or “omnicompetent multifacetedness”) of language. From the period between c. 1020 and c. 1215 C.E. some twenty-two commentaries on the *De Inventione* and the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* have survived to the present in manuscripts, compiled usually as reportages of lecture series delivered in cities with teaching cathedrals or court and monastic schools. These texts, catering to situations that demanded intensified persuasive discourse (for example the so-called Investitures Controversy of the eleventh century or the intensified study of Roman law or the processes of argumentation in theology and university “arts-faculty” disputations / controversy), produced a series of new departures adapted to expanding government and church administrations and aspirations from c. 1000 onward. It is interesting, for example, that although neither Greek nor Roman antiquity produced any preceptive manuals devoted to letter and document composition, in the later period “formularies” have survived such as the model letter collection of the sixth-century Italian Cassiodorus, the late eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries spawned an important series of classically influenced treatises (on *dictamen* or “composition”) setting out the modes of address and persuasion between potential

letter writers and receivers in medieval diplomatic, administrative and intellectual contexts—where the letter was the major carrier of news, ideas, information, and polite discourse of a less-than-treatise worthy nature. In England at least these treatises expanded into regular “business courses” (Camargo, 1995), and the treatise-form was eventually adopted by a wide range of communication arts, including the arts of memory and public address.

The same can be said for the pressing need of the revivalist international (Latin-using) church of the thirteenth century felt to communicate its elaborate salvational doctrines against heresy, apostasy, witchcraft (*maleficium*), heathenism, Islam, Judaism, secularism, impiety and various forms of lay piety, particularly that of women. This emphasis produced a vast range of sermons and preaching manuals (the *ars predicandi* or “art of preaching” and the art of “praying” or *ars precandi*), which matched a somewhat smaller profusion of manuals (c.1175–1250) imitating the ancient *ars poetica* of Horace (a text commented upon with interest in the twelfth century) and designed to inculcate a maximum of prose and poetic flexibility in the ornate Latin discourse of the day.

### Late Medieval Transformation

These perceptive packages continued to have an impact until the Renaissance of the fifteenth century and were joined from the time of Dante (1265–1321) onward by a less uniform but still extensive set of commentaries and notes on and from the *De Inventione* and *Ad Herennium*, in both Latin and, especially, in Italy, in the vernacular. This complex of texts had a profound influence on the shape of major literary works of the period (Jean de Meung’s *Romance of the Rose*, Dante’s *Divine Comedy*, the works of Chaucer) and on modes of elite historical writing, though the formal instruction of the universities (from the thirteenth century onward) concentrated only on the theoretical structure of the classical rhetorical system (using a text such as the early sixth-century Italian Boethius’s *On the different topics*), and on the provision of a training in *dictamen*, the *ars poetriae*, and the *ars predicandi*. Italian culture from the time of Petrarch on added force and precision to the classical rhetorical inheritance, enriching the texts favored by the Middle Ages with works less in vogue during the former period (the mature rhetorical texts of Cicero, and his letters—which became key texts in Renaissance rhetoric—together with the works of Hermogenes and the full text of Quintilian’s *Institutes of Oratory*), thus inculcating a more thorough-going recovery of classical Latin (and Greek) modes of expression and vocabulary, together with doctrines neglected—or practiced differently—in the Middle Ages (such as *numerus* or the system of prose rhythm discussed in many of Cicero’s mature rhetorical works). In this respect the medieval West finally drew nearer to the Byzantine world of Eastern Europe and western Asia, where classical Greek rhetorical influences maintained their hold and there was less of a parallel to the rupture caused in the west by the so-called fall of the (western) Roman Empire. In Byzantium, the emphasis evident in the “preliminary” compositional exercises or progymnasmata (Greek; in Latin *praexercitamina*) found among the works of

Hermogenes (this portion only translated into Latin and therefore available to the Latin Middle Ages) and Aphthonius of Antioch (fourth century C.E.—remained dominant. Judicial rhetoric was dominated by the classical emphasis upon *stasis*-theory (that is, a classification of the ‘issues’ an advocate might encounter in the law courts), whilst epideictic and deliberative rhetorical theory and practice gradually gained strength. The whole complex of Byzantine rhetoric proved influential even upon the Islamic world of the Arabs during the Middle Ages, and from the ninth-century onward, a commentary tradition emerged, based upon the so-called Athonian-Hermogenic corpus of rhetorical works. As in the West, a tension was evident between a striving for effect that might have struck some as “obscure” and an emphasis upon a simplicity open even to the ill-educated. The wide oral and theoretical range of Byzantine rhetorical studies and practice is illustrated by the works of Michael Psellus (1018–c. 1072). In contrast with the West, Byzantium emphasized rhetoric more than dialectic (argumentation) and made less of rhetorical techniques for scriptural exegesis or interpretation.

In both antique and medieval times, Greek and Latin rhetorical ideas, despite the patriarchal conventions that underlay contemporary gender ideas, spread to select women: in the medieval period (H)rotsvit of Gandersheim (tenth century), Heloise (twelfth century), and Christine de Pisan (writing in the French court vernacular but understanding and using Italian and Latin) made notable contributions to the literary genres of their day. Like the female mystics (for example Marguerite Porete, burnt in Paris for heresy in 1310), they did not contribute to the technographic rhetorical teaching literature, but they did absorb much of the contemporary rhetorical culture. Ancient examples include such figures as Aspasia, the mistress of Pericles of Athens (whose famous “funeral speech” in the later fifth century B.C.E. some suppose she wrote), and Hypatia of Alexandria (fourth century C.E.).

See also **Christianity; Logic; Power; Rhetoric; Overview.**

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John Ward

## RITUAL.

This entry includes two subentries:

*Public Ritual*  
*Religion*

### PUBLIC RITUAL

The study of ritual performed in communal life encompasses the wealth of world history and cosmology. Yet, few linguistic or conceptual categories of analysis address fully the diversity of ritual as an enactment of belief in the divine, inclusive of the mythologies of magic, associated with the liminal moments of human experience. For modern societies, the historical celebration of ritual as a dramatic enactment of the numinous (sacred) reveals a persistent trait among world communities to transform human existence in order to experience sacred presence. To this end, the stylized adaptation of religion, foremost for the Western world, is predicated on a richly variegated model of ceremonial systems that are centered on the formalized invocation of symbols, discourse, and gestures. Combined, the sensory experience innate in ritual performance extends to the history of communities, institutions, and the rise of the premodern and the modern state. The enactment of ritual, both political and religious, also touches on the history of law and the rise of modern theories of government predicated on precepts of moral obligation and the duty of obedience to ordained rulership that have historically been enjoined on individual members of civic communities.

Since the nineteenth century, the subject of ritual has been the focus of a considerable corpus of historical, philosophical, ecclesiastical, economic, and legal research. In the latter third of the twentieth century, significant contributions were also achieved through the application of models of social and cultural anthropology that link the transmission of oral, written, and visual texts. The discipline of art history, specifically the study of iconology, has further refined the implications of the sacred within the emerging loci of secular, national histories. Among the luminaries who have contributed to twentieth- and

twenty-first-century research on ritual are Émile Durkheim, Victor Turner, Clifford Geertz, Mircea Eliade, Natalie Zemon Davis, Catherine Bell, Michel Foucault, Marshall Sahlins, and Pierre Bourdieu. Each has approached the modern study of ritual with reference to the liminality of human experience; Foucault and Bourdieu have addressed concerns of communities to protect civic interests from nonconformist intrusion. A fourth contribution also informs the modern study of public ritual. The history of ritual violence, a trait of premodern communities, has effected the transformation in theories of resistance to authorized authority as well as the imposition of penal practices that now characterize the modern state. The ritualized forms of violence and murder that have been enacted against minorities in the twentieth century reveals the critical paradox of limning-out a theory of ritual as a codified form of social communication: ritual practices have promoted the consolidation of human resources without supporting a universal model of human rights predicated on notions of diversity and tolerance.

### Historical Models in Premodern Europe

Basic to any study of ritual in Western culture is the understanding that its history is qualified through linguistic distinctions between ritual (derived from the study of liturgical rites, *ritus*) and ceremony (derived from the stages of the celebration, *caerimonia*). Thus, the modern etymological basis of ritual is rightly sited within the upheaval of the sixteenth century and the rise of Protestantism, yet its history from classical antiquity through modern culture is posited on the importance of public rituals enacted in early medieval communities. For example, the cultural performance of ritual at the close of the Roman Empire and the rise of the Christian West was predicated on the importance of liturgical rites that were performed by members of monastic communities in order to promote and to maintain the hierarchies of rulership that bound ecclesiastical and lay communities into a “body politic.” The embodied celebration of ritual was, in turn, founded on an ethos celebrating the omnipresence of the sacred. The elaboration of the *adventus novi episcopi* (the ceremonial entry honoring the appointment of new bishops) established the eternal model for the reception of royalty in Western kingdoms. The rituals of Visigothic kingship included the sacral elements of unction, the ecclesiastical ritual of coronation, and the swearing of a royal oath to protect property. By the tenth century, the most frequently enacted rituals were religious processions staged to honor the holy feast days and the solemn celebrations of the Church liturgy, which drew the attendance of dignitaries of the royal and Church courts. A more political use of early ritual enactment soon extended to the reconciliation of communities after a king’s subjects had suffered the trespass of war and violence. Both the frequency of war and the gravity of insurrection in the early Middle Ages influenced the protocol surrounding the presentation of royal regalia. Medieval rituals of lordship that were centered on restoring peace first incorporated the regalia of sword into the enactment of truce. Such ceremonies of peace then influenced the history of royal ritual. The incorporation of the sword of justice, spurs, and the enactment of the kiss of peace into the



royal coronation ritual are testimony that the divine providence of ordained authority that was increasingly celebrated in terms of “natural” realities.

If initially the celebration of royal ritual was performed to burnish regal authority, early commentators on such ceremonial enactments recognized how the symbolic enactment of the sacred promoted an ideology of power that ultimately lasted throughout the Middle Ages. Texts that recorded the liturgy of raising prayers and the celebration of Mass were central features in the corpus of historical scholarship that examined the liturgy of coronation rituals. In general, the records of such rites underscore the intrinsic association of *regnum* and *sacerdotium* based on the exaltation of Judeo-Christian models of kingship within a rapidly changing dynastic basis of medieval territories of power. In general, the multivalent history of the early medieval rituals of royal advent attests to the primacy of symbolic dramatization in the history of world culture. For anthropologist Clifford Geertz and modern scholars, the past dynamics of social order are linked to two sources, charisma and the authority vested in a ruler’s body. To this end, throughout the history of medieval and early modern Europe, religion provided a Christological basis that promoted ritual associations of the sacred and profane.

A parallel corollary, the consolidation of sovereign prerogative over civic resources, also requires the same cultural frame in order to define the rites of constitutive power and the (mystical) ceremonial attributes of bodily actions. Evidence supporting Geertz’s observations extend throughout the Middle Ages, when both royal and Church officials began to shape commentary on Church liturgy into a discourse that promoted the viability of a “political theology” predicated on ritual and the construction of holiness. The writings of men in orders, canon lawyers, and later royal publicists promoted the celebration of royal advent enacted through dramatic parallels drawn between the Majesty of Christological kingship and the *Dignitas* of the king’s body on display, vested with royal regalia and the insignia of spiritual authority. The annual rites commemorating Christ’s Birth and Passion were incorporated into the history of dynastic states. Failures derived from dynastic or territorial ambitions were atoned through recourse to rites of royal penance and the solemn display of relics in public processions. Imagery of coronation ceremonies was recorded in texts that enhanced the parallels of the lives of kings with the lives of the Biblical kings of the Old Testament. As contemporary culture articulated the spiritual basis of royal authority in terms of obligations and prerogatives of office, the resources of community life visualized the extended nature of this kingship with recourse to the sculpture that framed church portals. To summarize, members of civic communities who sought salvation through ritual enactment of Christ’s Majesty increasingly honored the thaumaturgical elements of royal Majesty as they crossed the liminal space of sanctity.

By the twelfth century, the history of royal advent had achieved an element of codification that proved essential to the emerging theory of political theology now associated with the celebration of late-medieval ritual and ceremonial traditions. First, the historical understanding of the sacred rites of

unction and coronation was articulated through the invocation of the *gravitas* of anointing medieval rulers. With recourse to historical texts, commentators grafted the legacy of eleventh- and twelfth-century Capetian ceremonial onto the stemma of the early-medieval royal dynasties of the Merovingian and Carolingian rulership. The transmission of one legend became the impetus of French ritual practice, and ultimately influenced the history of other national rituals of advent. The search for mystical provenance led to a premise of divine communication: the origins of Christian kingship were traced to the conversion of Constantine the Great and the baptism of the Frankish king, Clovis. The royal legend was familiarized in texts and the subsequent performance of the French ritual of consecration with holy oil increasingly celebrated the sacramental basis of political power achieved through hereditary rulership. Thus, the ritual elements of elevation and investiture that had once dramatized the elective principle of monarchy were effaced in the course of the High and Late Middle Ages in order to stress the primacy of royal power in a fully hereditary monarchy. The history of enthronement was addressed with recourse to ceremonial elevation, the display of royal insignia, and the incorporation of heraldic and dynastic emblems in the historical accounts of the Capetian dynasty. Jurists and publicists who wrote extensively on behalf of royal prerogative promoted royal authority over matters of church and state. Artists captured the primacy of such argument by depicting royal enthronement in manuscripts, liturgical texts, and coinage. In each medium, the representation of royalty was achieved through the dramatization of divine presence that extended to new participants, foremost the increasing large cadre of officials who promoted royal interests and the rise of civic communities that were steadily brought under an invigorated model of royal prerogative.

By the late thirteenth century, the articulation of the sacred in rituals enacted to dramatize obedience to ordained authority served to define communal practices inherent in the administration of law and justice. And, to exactly the opposite effect, the celebration of ceremonies and rituals that elevated the doctrine of political theology into a nascent form of constitutional thought were also enacted to manifest the “natural” realities of sacred rites and public ceremonies. Few scholars have influenced modern scholarship on the essence of ritual symbolism in the late medieval and early modern state as fully as Ernst H. Kantorowicz (1895–1963). In his seminal work, *The King’s Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology*, Kantorowicz schematized the interplay of ritual, symbolism, politics, and law that flourished from the late Middle Ages well into the seventeenth century. Ultimately, Kantorowicz posited an integrated model of power that incorporated the full history of antiquity with that of Byzantium and the Western world. Central to the argument is the history of Roman law precepts addressing questions of majesty and authority; the development of laws of community, *ius commune*, were treated as empirical models of an ethos supporting civic authority within an integral community of divine providence. The model was antique and universal, but its application favored the northern monarchies of France, England, and the comital states of Burgundy.



As charted by Kantorowicz, in the course of the fourteenth century, as the Capetian royal house began to falter and the Valois dynasty was elevated to the throne, the drama of royal bodily metaphor achieved the status of public law pertaining to royal succession and the inalienability of royal domain. One effect of this emerging constitutionalism was to promote anew the fully hereditary title of the Valois to the crown of France. A second was to encourage representational models of kingship. The image of the sovereign as embodiment of both qualities of *Majestas* and *Dignitas* is one of the most striking features of late medieval kingship in both France and England. For France, modern scholars have elucidated how the pictorial traditions of representation were adapted to exceptional effect in the coronation book of Charles V of France and Jeanne of Bourbon. Executed at the king's request in 1364, the fully illuminated manuscript records the image of majesty with the presentation of the king and queen's authority during the royal ceremonial of coronation and their joint enthronement that concluded the ritual.

Although modern historians celebrate the articulation of Majesty through image, the constitutional implications of the subsequent ritual enactments staged during the reigns of Charles VI and Charles VII revived the drama of protecting the sempiternal basis of the crown of France within the context of war and trespass. Neither the French nor English monarchy exhibited the necessary vigor to assert dynastic preeminence and power. Yet, the effect on the French rite of royal coronation was to mark a liminal stage in articulating the abstract legal precepts of the early modern state. On the one hand, the rite of 1364 fully articulates the conscious and voluntary submission to the symbolic presentation of a king's body. Yet, the later inclusion of two oaths of office that bound successive kings to protect the full resources of the Church and the property of the royal domain produced the fictional ritual of royal marriage of the king to the kingdom. From this remarkable articulation of the duty of office, Kantorowicz was one of the first scholars to expand the constitutional meaning of ritual symbolism within the cognitive grammar of symbolic ritual. For both France and England, the subsequent elucidation of the legal fiction of the corporate soul influenced the tenor and protocol of ceremonial festivities, foremost by focusing on the presence of the "royal" body in politico-legal culture.

Following Kantorowicz's research, modern scholars have found considerable evidence attesting to a shared belief among contemporaries of late medieval Europe regarding the sempiternal nature of ordained rulership. The gravities of the Hundred Years War did little to efface belief in the mystical corpus of the realm, the body politic, and did much to promote the understanding of the king's authority as "living law," (*Vivat lex*). Royal piety attested to the sanctity of office and royal prerogative increasingly framed the duties and obligations imposed on subjects. The public display of the king's body was increasingly framed by extensive preparations that bound civic communities and the officials of the royal court who were charged with overseeing the enactment of power that was predicated on ideology and the control of social groups.

The symbols and rites associated with royal authority in the northern monarchies—foremost the crown, rite of unc-

tion, and the presentation of the scepter—were common attributes of other kingdoms. Variations in the rituals, however, reveal an issue innate in the classification of ritual. The development of a "functionalist" approach to celebrations of royal prerogative encourages the association of repetition with the emergence of new models of power. Yet, the English and French models cast a long shadow over the history of ritual celebrations of advent in other communities. Before the reign of Alfonso XI in 1312, Spanish kings rarely resorted to the full ritual of unction, coronation, and investiture. Yet, his dramatic gesture of self-coronation did not inspire subsequent kings who ruled over the regions of Spain and the Netherlands to repeat the gesture. Both Philip II and Philip IV were adamant promoters of royal prerogative and vigilant defenders of the primacy of Catholic ritual, yet the ritual of Habsburg advent is rarely celebrated within the model posited by Kantorowicz. Moreover, the perception that sites of power are defined through repeated enactment of ritual and secular ceremonies honoring the king's authority detracts from a full appreciation of the gravity of imperial authority in the late Middle Ages. For example, Emperor Charles IV of Bohemia established Prague as the center of empire but he remained a pivotal figure in the formation of French dynastic interests in the early fourteenth century. A second imperial figure, Frederick III, promoted a Christological depiction of Habsburg rule that marked the recovery of the vitality of German kingship. His magisterial enthronement in Rome in 1452 has not been studied as an *impresa* of ordained ritual; yet the liturgy, the drama of enactment by the presence of Pope Pius II as officiant and the vision of ordained rule shared with the Empress Eleanor of Portugal touch directly on the character of Renaissance rulership: the coronation accounts emphasize the imposition of a humanistic model of kingship that scholars now associate with the monarchies of Renaissance France and England.

### Ritual and State-Building in Europe

Following the research of Kantorowicz, twenty-first-century scholars, foremost scholars of French ritual, have proposed a model of ritual that draws inspiration from antique sources. The effect of the scholarship on ceremonial has invigorated the association of classical and modern use of allegory and mythology in burnishing the royal prerogative of the heirs of Charles V of France. By the late fifteenth century, the history of royal presentations of majesty was predicated on the performance of four rituals associated with the king's advent: celebration of the royal coronation rite; the staging of an elaborate post-coronation entry ceremony into the city of Paris; the sporadic attendance of the kings of France within the chambers of judicial institutions (the *lits de justice*); and the orchestration of emotions associated with a king's death and the drama of the royal funeral ceremony. For each ritual, the medieval origins of the ceremony have been noted. The continuity in ritual enactment reveals a new tenor in kingship expressed through elaborate protocol, processional order, and the hierarchy of rulership; these qualities became defining characteristics of the modern, "absolute" ritual of Louis XIV's court that treated ritual as performance theater. The full resources of the crown of France were evoked through constitutional metaphor of the "king's two bodies," yet ritual performance

underlined the gravitas of the physical presence of a king's body amidst the collected members of the body politic. Both the festivities and participants increasingly eulogized the glory and prowess of hereditary monarchy at the juncture in history when ritual became a pejorative term for many communities who fought the resources of the crown and church in order to defend the Protestant faith.

Although the model of "state" ceremonial is grounded in study of Kantorowicz's seminal work and Geertz's research, the theory introduces critical elements of an antinomialism that limit the empirical and normative elements of ritual study. First, the public presentations of majesty in Renaissance and Reformation Europe also included adventitious ceremonies. For example, both civic and religious processions were staged throughout each realm to honor the presence of members of the royal family or the arrival of royal officials. The celebrations of royal births and marriages, as well as military and diplomatic victories, encouraged the invocation of ceremonial and rituals that paralleled the protocol of "state" ceremonial. The pageantry and orchestration of a processional order predicated on office and privilege reveals a vested interest in ceremonial robes and emblems of office. Yet, while the articulation of "state" ceremonial is defined through the pursuit of order among hierarchies of elites, the records of many of the adventitious celebrations demonstrate considerable dispute among contemporary office-holders regarding the past history of ritual, protocol, the privileges of office; even the history of gift-exchange was rigorously debated. Second, the model of "state" ceremonial is wholly royal and excludes the presence of royal women at critical moments of dynastic change. The result has been a celebration of royal prerogative that has been encoded in legal metaphors of power as a "canon of law" based on the promotion of misogyny. Yet, the full records of state and adventitious celebrations staged to honor the queens of France reveal a profuse culture of affective topoi based on the emotional elements of kinship and community evident in discourse and gesture that both acknowledged and celebrated the queens' authority within communities throughout the realm. Thus, if the model of "state" ceremonial is exclusively royal, the combined study of ritual and ceremonial suggests a fully gendered model that is at odds with social and political history of early modern monarchies and the rise of nation-states. The confluence of religion and political aspirations is especially striking in study of the acts of regicide enacted against Louis XVI of France and Charles I of England. The history of festivals during the French Revolution offers insight into the transformation of state-building based on the incorporation of republican models of citizenship that has transformed the process of government in Western communities.

### Rituals Sacred and Profane

The contractual nature of public ritual in Western culture is critical to interpreting the symbolism of political rights within modern communities of world culture. For example, the gesture of gift-exchange is one measure of how rituals revitalize society by shared gestures of affection and devotion. A second example, the ritual invocation of violence touches directly on

the history of power. Feud and vengeance, combined with factional struggles in cities, territorial, and modern-nation states in Renaissance Italy, has supported the belief shared by scholars that the importance of ritual in political systems is its ability to foster the resolution of conflict. For the history of the Protestant Reformation, communities in the monarchies of northern Europe engaged in destructive elements of ritual and violence in order to discredit the authority of ordained rule predicated in the history of Catholic liturgy. The horrors of the Wars of Religion offer full testimony of the brutality inflicted throughout communities based on legitimate and historical practices that supported royal authority. Yet, the crisis of representation posed by a divided polity of Protestant and Catholic adherents ultimately produced rituals of reconciliation. In France, communities petitioned the queen regent of France, Catherine de Médicis (1519–1589), to uphold the sacred basis of royal authority. The shared language of devotion between the widowed queen and her subjects suggests that the sustained perception of transcendental experience ultimately supported the promulgation of the first modern notions of toleration. The subsequent promotion of Henri IV's authority as king in the late sixteenth century was achieved in two stages. First, the award of amnesty and gifts to the king's political rivals that took place in a ceremonial seating that captured the essence of the symbolism of the Last Supper; second, his conversion to Catholicism and the celebration of a royal rite of coronation enacted the drama of mystical revival of the royal body and the body politic. In Switzerland and Imperial German cities, the violence of the Reformation was addressed through the ritual of *stalling* (peace-bidding), which dramatized the connotations of the performance of Penance with the symbolism of the Last Judgment. Finally, in England, ritual use of royal healing, combined with elaborate pageantry and ceremonial associations between king, queen, and nobility, the ruler and the ruled, remained a potent force in royal courts of Sweden, Poland, and Russia in premodern Europe. The adaptation of rites of advent was a potent source of political renovation for Western Europe during the twentieth century. The confluence of ritual, pomp, and power as an ideology is also evident in the articulation of the doctrine of "manifest destiny" that has guided the diplomatic relations of both the United States and Britain.

Study of ritual also offers broader cultural implications throughout world communities. By the seventeenth century, ceremony was adapted by Spanish, English, and French inhabitants of colonial North America to legitimize claim to new lands and political power over native inhabitants. The ceremonial history of African and Caribbean communities, for example in Dahomey and Jamaica, reveals how political elites either created or usurped power over local communities and resources. The myths and symbols of ritual based on precepts of theology were also part of the politico-religious culture of the Incan rulers in premodern communities, Islamic communities in world culture, and the history of imperial authority in Japan and China into the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries. The modern use of ritual extends to the political drama of the Russian Revolution, the rise of ideologies of fascism, nazism, and communism. Rituals and the public display of symbols of authority in modern China underscores how fully aspects of political power based on

representation of human and divine decree have been adapted by communities to invent national and world mythologies of divine providence associated with the social construction of twentieth- and twenty-first century visions of hegemony. Of particular interest is the adaptation of ritual, foremost parades, to include the construction of national identity in Singapore, throughout communities in North America, as well as Sino-Soviet regimes of the late twentieth century. The general significance of parades as models of ritual and cultural anthropology has recently included study of both minority and gay and lesbian culture in world communities.

If the cumulative effect of this cycle of ritual performance was to promote a gradual secularization of society predicated on modern notions of state and conscience, one question remains open for the study of ritual within the political discourse of human rights: to what extent has the modern study of medieval ritual promoted a rebirth of violence associated with the rise of the modern state and the legal construct of racial slavery? Both events are predicated on the dichotomy of embodied rights and powers. Both systems of government have been historically grounded in royal legal fictions based on Christological notions of ordained authority. If, as scholars assert, the life of ritual and religion shifts continually between the two phases of maintaining and regenerating world systems of belief based on sacrifice, the model of cultural anthropology may need to question belief that the dynamic of ceremonial performance can be codified into a search for a universal system of just law necessary for the promulgation of human rights based on a model of theological ethics.

See also *Authority; Monarchy; Theater and Performance; Tradition.*

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Elizabeth McCartney

#### RELIGION

The comparative study of religion has generally focused on doctrine, on canonical texts and their interpretations. But what of religions without writing, much less canonical texts?

#### Evolutionary Anthropology

As E. B. Tylor noted in his seminal work, *Primitive Culture* (1871), "it is generally easier to obtain accurate accounts of ceremonies by eyewitnesses, than anything like trustworthy and intelligible statements of doctrine; so that very much of our knowledge of religion in the savage and barbaric world consists of acquaintance with its ceremonies" (1958 ed., vol. 2, p. 449). Such a division of religion into "doctrine" and "ceremony," into "belief" and "ritual," reflected an even more fundamental dualism in European thought between "mind" and "body." The unquestionably racist implications of the idea that, among "savages," ritual is more developed than doctrine is that their mental faculties are less developed than their physical ones.

*Tylor and Frazer.* Tylor was one of the key figures in the institutionalization of the modern discipline of anthropology; indeed, in 1884, he was appointed to the first university post in anthropology in Britain, at Oxford no less. Tylor and his contemporaries looked to so-called primitive societies for insights into the origins of modern institutions, such as marriage, the family, the state, and property. These scholars relied heavily on the accounts of European travelers, few of whom were conversant enough in the languages and cultures of the peoples they described to provide accurate and detailed accounts of religious belief. Consequently, Tylor depended upon descriptions of ritual in his attempt to infer a generalized idea of "primitive religion" that he argued was centered on "animism," the belief that humans, but also animals and even inanimate objects, have souls. To support his theory, he cited legions of examples from around the world of "water worship," of "tree worship," of the sacrifice of objects, animals, and humans at funerals so that their souls might assist the deceased, and other ritual practices. Tylor's ultimate aim was to demonstrate that religion as a whole was a holdover from primitive misconceptions about the world. Thus he also used ritual to demonstrate the existence of primitive "survivals" in contemporary religious practice: "throughout the rituals of Christendom stand an endless array of supplications unaltered in principle from savage times—that the weather may be adjusted to our local needs, that we may have the victory over all our enemies, that life and health and wealth and happiness may be ours" (p. 456).



Sir James Frazer shared Tylor's methods of argumentation as well as his opposition to Christianity. For Frazer, religions emerged from earlier forms of belief in magic, based on principles of analogy and imitation. *The Golden Bough* (1890) cited countless examples of rain-making and wind-making rites as illustrations of such principles of "sympathetic magic." Frazer's analysis revolved around the figure of the divine priest-king responsible for the rites ensuring the fertility and prosperity of the land, who had to be put to death once his powers gave signs of waning. For instance, he drew parallels between instances where divine kings in Japan or Mexico were prohibited from seeing the sun or touching the ground and similar interdictions in girls' puberty rites from around the world: "The uncleanness . . . of girls at puberty and the sanctity of holy men are only different manifestations of the same supernatural energy" (vol. 2, p. 242). For Frazer as well as for Tylor, primitive rituals provided a code with which to decipher imperfectly articulated systems of belief.

**Robertson Smith.** W. Robertson Smith's *The Religion of the Semites* (1889) aimed, like the work of Tylor and Frazer, to uncover the primitive roots of modern religion. However, he conceived of the relationship between ritual and belief in radically different terms. Premising that "the antique religions had for the most part no creed; they consisted entirely of institutions and practices" (1972 ed., p. 16), he concluded that ritual was prior not only to doctrine, but even to myth. Sacrifice, the most ancient of all rituals, addressed the relationship between the clan, its god, and its totem animal, all of whom were considered kin to one another. The god, as a member of the clan, was particularly concerned with maintaining harmony among fellow members. The original form of sacrifice was a holy meal for which the totem animal, whose flesh was otherwise strictly forbidden, was ritually killed and shared by the assembled clan and its god. The act simultaneously expressed and guaranteed the solidarity of the clan. If the theories of Tylor and Frazer were primarily intellectualist, attempts to use ritual as a key to primitive thought, Robertson Smith pioneered a more thoroughly sociological approach.

### From Evolution to Sociology

Émile Durkheim acknowledged the influence of Robertson Smith in his magnum opus, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (1912). However, unlike his evolutionist predecessors, his goals were not to uncover the original form of religion (which he rightly considered an impossible task) but rather the very essence of religion, its universal features. He accepted key evolutionary assumptions, notably that he could rank human societies unambiguously from simpler to more complex, and that the simplest society would have the simplest religion. Scholarly consensus at the time identified native Australian societies as the simplest in existence. Durkheim was able to rely on the work of pioneer Australian ethnographers Baldwin Spencer and F. J. Gillen, whose description of the Arunta in *The Native Tribes of Central Australia* (1899) contained a wealth of detail on religion and especially ritual. Durkheim intended his analysis of this "elementary" case to demonstrate the centrality of religion to human society in all of its forms, including modern Europe. For Durkheim, religion incarnated society's *conscience collective*, a

term that can be translated either as "collective consciousness" or as "collective conscience." If religious beliefs were expressions of this consciousness, then ritual imparted the conscience causing believers to internalize the deep-seated sentiments that made religious and moral ideas compelling. Rituals were, for Durkheim, sites of collective effervescence, moments when the very fact of congregating to perform set actions imparted special energy to the participants. These emotions generated by ritual gave credence to religious beliefs and moral dispositions. For example, mourning rituals were not simply expressions of an individual sense of loss; on the contrary, the rituals conditioned, if they did not create, the very sentiments they expressed. Last but not least, ritual was essential in maintaining the separation between the domains of the "sacred" and the "profane" that, for Durkheim, constituted the defining essence of religion.

**Van Gennep.** Arnold Van Gennep's *The Rites of Passage* (1909) considered rituals from an entirely different vantage point, neither in terms of the ideas they expressed nor the sentiments they instilled, but rather in terms of shared formal properties of ritual process. Specifically, he argued that a wide variety of rituals from very different types of society effected "passages" in a literal or metaphorical sense from one state to another. Literal passages included leaving or entering a specific territory or passing a threshold when entering or exiting a dwelling. Metaphorically, they denoted the passage from one social state to another, specifically rituals of pregnancy and childbirth, of initiation, of marriage and betrothal, and of death. Such ceremonies, he suggested, all involved the same sequence of phases—rites of separation, of transition, and of incorporation—so that the person or group could be separated from one initial state in order to pass into another. Van Gennep categorized the transitional phase in terms of the metaphor of the threshold (*limen* in Latin), as "liminal." His was undoubtedly the most fully "instrumental" of the early approaches to the study of ritual, an attempt to understand ritual in terms of what it accomplished instead of what it expressed.

### From Theory to Ethnography

The development of anthropology as an academic discipline in the first half of the twentieth century effaced the distinction between ethnographic description and theorization that characterized the work of the evolutionists, as well as Durkheim and Van Gennep.

**American approaches.** In the United States, Franz Boas and his students were especially critical of the speculative nature of their predecessors' theories. Working for the most part among Native Americans, they provided richly detailed accounts of rituals while deliberately avoiding presenting their own interpretations. Paul Radin, in *The Winnebago Tribe* (1923), devoted a large portion of his text to descriptions of ceremonies, translated as literally as possible from informants' accounts. In his discussion of fasting and the vision quest, he juxtaposed a variety of individual accounts in order to demonstrate the importance of distinguishing between "the actions and testimony of the religious man from that of the intermittently religious and the nonreligious man" (1990 ed., p. 229). However, another of Boas's students, Ruth Benedict, was able



to find a means of interpreting ritual that avoided both intellectualist and sociological approaches. In *Patterns of Culture* (1934), she contrasted the Apollonian ethos of Pueblo culture with the Dionysian timbre of their neighbors, using examples largely drawn from ritual contexts. The vision quest and the Sun Dance among Plains cultures exemplified the extent to which they “valued all violent experience, all means by which human beings may break through the usual sensory routine” (p. 80). On the other hand, “There is nothing wild about [Pueblo dances]. It is the cumulative force of the rhythm, the perfection of forty men moving as one, that makes them effective” (p. 93). Rituals were an expression, not of individual ideas, but rather of the overall style of a culture, in the same way that Gothic architecture expressed the style of the later Middle Ages.

**French approaches.** Unlike their American counterparts, French and British anthropologists were self-conscious heirs to the Durkheimian tradition, though in very different ways. In France, an important school of thought developed around the work of Marcel Griaule among the Dogon in West Africa. In *Conversations with Ogotemelli* (1948), he related a series of interviews with a knowledgeable elder who gradually exposed an intricate, secret cosmology to the anthropologist, providing interpretations of major Dogon rituals in the process. For Griaule and his school, the true, deep meaning of rituals lay in esoteric traditions of exegesis, fully known only to a few initiates, the most knowledgeable of elders. If nineteenth-century theorists had argued that rituals were the key to understanding religious ideas which “natives” were incapable of articulating, Griaule suggested on the contrary that highly articulate native intellectuals held the key to understanding the inner significance of their culture’s rituals.

**British approaches.** Of the various national traditions, British anthropology was perhaps the most sociologically inclined. No doubt for this reason, early British ethnographic studies tended to focus on institutions—economy, law, politics, and especially kinship. The notable exception was Gregory Bateson’s *Naven* (1936), which centered on a transvestite ritual among the Iatmul of New Guinea; to honor a boy or a young man, his mother’s brother dressed in grotesque female attire and symbolically offered himself to his nephew, while his paternal aunt proudly donned male attire. The book was an extraordinary experiment in analysis, exploring the cogency and limits of four different approaches to explaining the ritual: a “structural” analysis in terms of the cultural logic of different kin relationships; a “sociological” analysis in terms of the contribution of the ritual to maintaining solidarity within the community; an “ethological” analysis examining the emotional component of Iatmul culture, especially in gendered terms; and an “eidological” analysis in terms of patterns of dualistic thought among the Iatmul.

In the 1950s, other British anthropologists turned increasingly to studies on religion and ritual. E. E. Evans-Pritchard’s experience of fieldwork among the Nuer of southern Sudan in the 1930s had led him to convert to Roman Catholicism. Years afterwards, in his study *Nuer Religion* (1956), he suggested that “Those who give assent to the religious beliefs of their own

people feel and think, and therefore also write, differently about the beliefs of other peoples from those who do not give assent to them” (p. vii). This attitude was evident in the rich and complex analysis of Nuer sacrifice that accounted for about one-third of the entire book. Sacrifice was a means of communication between the sacrificer and *kwoth*, “God” or “Spirit,” comprehensible only in terms of the complex Nuer representations of “Spirit” but also of “sin,” especially when the purpose of sacrifice was to restore the moral imbalance in the relationship between Spirit and the believer that the commission of a fault had occasioned. The sacrificer identified himself in the most intimate way with the spear with which he transfixed the victim, but equally with the ox, the victim, itself, so that sacrifice ultimately represented a gift of the self to God—a relationship that Evans-Pritchard refused to reduce to a sociological, psychological, or ideological explanation.

Audrey Richards’s *Chisungu: A Girl’s Initiation Ceremony among the Bemba of Zambia* (1956) was a pioneering study that focused centrally on women’s performance, ideas, and attitudes. She paid special attention to the explanations of different sorts of participants, ritual specialists as well as initiates or their mothers, and showed how the ritual simultaneously expressed dogmatic cultural values—the deference of juniors to elders and of females to males—and unconscious tensions connected with the ambivalent attitudes about sex and marriage.

### The 1960s

The 1960s saw the emergence of sharply divergent currents in American anthropology, with some anthropologists focusing on the elaboration of cultural meanings while others stressed the relationship of behavior to ecology, with the interaction of humans with their environment.

**Ritual and ecology.** Marvin Harris was perhaps the most dogmatic of the latter, advocating a kind of analysis loosely inspired by Marx, which he labeled “cultural materialism.” For Harris, ritual and ideology were epiphenomena of modes of production, a mechanism for adapting to specific environments. His most famous example was the “sacred cow” in India; in his analysis, he maintained that ritual prohibitions on eating beef (which did not in any case apply to the least privileged classes, including Muslims) were not instances of the irrational sway of religious ideology, but rather a highly efficient strategy for managing scarce resources, including manure needed for fuel, milk, and animal traction for plows.

Roy Rappaport’s *Pigs for the Ancestors* (1968) analyzed the *kaiko*, a ritual cycle among the Maring of New Guinea, in terms of cultural ecology. The cycle began with the planting of a *rumbim* tree to signal a truce between warring groups. Some years later, the uprooting of the tree heralded the beginning of a year-long celebration whose climax involved a huge feast where most of the pig herd of the group was slaughtered and consumed, after which hostilities might resume. Rappaport included extensive discussions of the role of pork within the Maring diet, of the carrying capacity of the territory, of the balance between the human and the pig populations, and of warfare as a mechanism for controlling scarce

agricultural resources. He concluded by comparing the *kaiko* cycle to a thermostat, an on/off mechanism for adjusting the relationship between different variables: human and pig populations, but also trade, marriage, and relations of alliance and hostility. Unlike some of his colleagues, Rappaport never dismissed the importance of cultural meanings out of hand, but instead bracketed consideration of meanings for the specific analytical purpose of examining the pragmatic functions of ritual.

**Geertz** The 1960s also marked the heyday of “symbolic anthropology,” of a renewed interest in religion and symbolism, topics that for a long time, especially in the United States, had been marginalized in anthropology because they seemed intractable to scientific investigation. In an influential paper titled “Religion as a Cultural System” (1966), Clifford Geertz, the leading exponent of this approach, looked back to Durkheim when he postulated that “sacred symbols function to synthesize a people’s ethos—the tone, character, and quality of their life, its moral and aesthetic style and mood—and their actual world view—the picture they have of the way things in sheer actuality are, their most comprehensive ideas of order” (1973, p. 89). Ritual served to integrate ethos to worldview by rendering the ethos intellectually reasonable and the worldview emotionally compelling. In this way it supplied “models of” as well as “models for” reality—compelling representations of the way the world really is and the way it ought to be.

Geertz had already applied this perspective in his monograph on *The Religion of Java* (1960). Though the overwhelming majority of Javanese identified themselves as Muslims, Geertz identified three variants—*abangan*, *santri*, and *prijaji*—associated with three distinct strata of Javanese society: peasants, merchants, and bureaucrats. *Santri* were more preoccupied with doctrine than with ritual, whereas both *abangan* and *prijaji* variants were primarily associated with ritual expression. The core of *abangan* practice was the *slametan*, a communal feast shared with neighbors (not to mention local spirits), which “concentrates, organizes, and summarizes the general *abangan* ideas of order, their ‘design for living’ ” by stating “the values that animate traditional Javanese peasant culture: the mutual adjustment of interdependent wills, the self-restraint of emotional expression, and the careful regulation of outward behavior” (p. 29). Similarly, the mystical *prijaji* ethos and worldview were best expressed in shadow plays. Geertz went on to apply a similar approach to the politico-religious rituals of the Balinese theater state or, more prosaically, to cockfights.

**Turner.** The study of symbolism in ritual was already an important facet of British anthropology in the 1950s; in the 1960s, the next generation produced a dazzling array of detailed analytical studies of ritual, particularly in African societies, among which Victor Turner’s work with the Ndembu of Zambia stood out as particularly rich and multifaceted. Turner was deeply interested in theater, and used the analogy of “social drama” as an analytical device even before he focused specifically on ritual as a means of presenting case studies of village conflict. The analogy lent itself particularly well to ritual performance, especially healing rit-

uals, which simultaneously expressed and attempted to resolve specific conflicts generated by points of tension in Ndembu society. For the Ndembu, this tension revolved around conflicting principles of matrilineal descent and virilocal residence, whereby women were expected to live with their husbands; unstable communities were constantly being formed around men who would simultaneously strive to hold on to their wives and children while attracting their sisters and their sisters’ children as well. Turner suggested that such conflicting principles were not only acted out in the course of rituals, but also deeply embedded in ritual symbolism. Key symbols in rituals connoted multiple and often contradictory meanings. For example, the milk tree central to *Nkang’a*, the female rite of initiation, “stands for, *inter alia*, women’s breasts, motherhood, a novice at *Nkang’a*, the principle of matriliney, a specific matrilineage, learning, and the unity and persistence of Ndembu society” (1967, p. 28) Such meanings were clustered around two poles: an ideological pole, centered on the importance of group norms and values, such as matriliney; and a sensory pole, focused on emotional reactions to the body and bodily functions and fluids, such as milk. Loosely following Sigmund Freud, Turner suggested that such symbols were “a compromise between the need for social control, and certain innate and universal human drives whose complete gratification would result in a breakdown of that control” (p. 37).

Turner’s concern with process as well as with symbols in ritual led him to explore a specific aspect of Van Gennep’s scheme of rites of passage, the phase of “liminality.” Liminality in rites of initiation was associated with the temporary breakdown of social distinctions among novices, their assumption of a status that was simultaneously lowly and symbolically charged, even potent. Turner associated such a state with “*communitas*,” with the sentiment of common humanness, an antistructure in sharp contrast to the structured social relations before and after the ritual. If, for Turner, the dialectic between the ideological and sensory poles of symbolic meaning replicated the conflict between “self” and “society,” then the dialectic between structure and *communitas* embodied a countervailing conflict between “selflessness” and “society.”

**Douglas.** Like her colleagues, Mary Douglas was initiated into the ranks of British anthropology through fieldwork in Africa. However, in her most important work on ritual, she turned from the particulars of her field experience to the elaboration of a more general model. In *Purity and Danger* (1966), she focused on ritual concerns with purity and pollution. As a central case, she analyzed Hebrew dietary prohibitions as detailed in Leviticus, pointing out that the logic of the prohibitions rested on a scheme of classification that identified species as in one way or another typical or atypical. Anomalous animals, such as fish without scales, were deemed unclean. She argued that such preoccupations with cleanness (defined ideologically and not hygienically) corresponded with attempts to maintain group boundaries between insiders and outsiders as sharply as possible.

In *Natural Symbols* (1970) she pursued the relationship between ritual, ideology, and social organization. She proposed a two-dimensional scheme for classifying types of societies, with one axis representing “grid” and the other “group.” The “group” dimension referred to the extent of the emphasis placed on “insider” or “outsider” status; “grid” referred to the extent to which interpersonal relations were defined in terms of set, ascribed categories. Societies with high grid and high group had a firm commitment to ritual practice and place a higher priority on the group than the individual; societies that scored low on both counts (modern industrial societies among others) tended to devalue ritual in favor of personal expression. But it was possible to have one without the other. She furnished examples from Central African societies that placed high value on group membership but whose fluid role structure rated low in terms of “grid”; such societies, she suggested, were obsessed with their vulnerability to outside agencies of evil, notably witchcraft, and their ritual observances centered on the identification and expulsion of such threatening forces.

### Practice and History

In France during the 1960s, anthropological concerns with symbolism, spearheaded by Claude Lévi-Strauss, were far more centrally concerned with myth than with ritual.

**Bourdieu.** Pierre Bourdieu’s *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1972), a critique of French structuralist but also British functionalist approaches, proposed an alternative approach that devoted considerable attention to the analysis of ritual. As the title of the book suggests, Bourdieu stressed the importance of the domain of practical activity, understood in terms of “habitus,” taken-for-granted predispositions that were neither consistently verbalized nor unconscious in any deep sense. Such predispositions included, for example, bodily gestures, modes of interpersonal interaction, and the organization of space and time. “Rites, more than any other type of practice, serve to underline the mistake of enclosing in concept a logic made to dispense with concepts; of treating movements of the body and practical manipulations as purely logical operations; of speaking of analogies and homologies . . . when all that is involved is the practical transference of incorporated, quasi-postural schemes” (p. 116).

**Ritual in historical time.** In recent years, anthropologists have grown increasingly self-conscious about the historical contexts in which they conduct their research and correspondingly wary of abstracting cultures from particular places and times with specific antecedents. For example, Maurice Bloch’s analysis of circumcision ritual among the Merina of Madagascar paid particular attention to historical accounts to demonstrate how a family ritual was transformed into an expression of the central power of the state in the late eighteenth century and back again, in the twentieth century, into a family performance with increasingly anti-Christian and antielite overtones. While elements of the symbolism may have been invariant and placed constraints on the uses to which the ritual might be put, it was equally clear that the meanings of specific performances were highly subject to the agency of particular actors. Jean Comaroff’s

account of ritual in Zionist churches among the Tshidi of South Africa explicitly integrated a focus on practice with attention to historical context, arguing that the sometimes disjunctive synthesis of precolonial Tswana and of Protestant Christian imagery is a form of resistance to the social and cultural hegemonies that marginalize adherents.

Talal Asad has gone so far as to historicize the very concept of “ritual,” pointing out that in eighteenth and nineteenth century editions of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* the term specifically referred to instructions for performing the divine service. It was precisely early anthropologists such as Tylor, Frazer, and Robertson Smith who introduced the concept of ritual as symbolic behavior, in other words as a form of practice that called for decoding, for interpretation, especially by an outsider. Using the *Rule* of St. Benedict as a paradigm, Asad advocated a return to the earlier meaning of ritual as a prescription for action: “Ritual is therefore directed at the apt performance of what is prescribed, something that depends on intellectual and practical disciplines but does not itself require decoding” (p. 62). While many anthropologists balk at so far-reaching a critique, contemporary accounts of ritual demonstrate a heightened sensitivity to issues of agency, gender, power, and the capacities of ritual performers to understand and interpret their own actions in modern contexts.

See also *Anthropology; Myth; Sacred and Profane; Theater and Performance*.

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Robert Launay

## ROMANTICISM IN LITERATURE AND POLITICS.

Romanticism is perhaps the richest and certainly the most vexed of the "isms." At the most general level, the term denotes a set of common tendencies in European art and thought from about 1797 to 1848. Ultimately those tendencies influenced the arts, especially literature, in virtually every country from Spain to Russia, but their acknowledged origins and centers were Britain, France, and Germany. Until the late twentieth century, there was even wide critical and historical agreement on the canonical names and the succession of Romantic generations in these countries. In literature, criticism, and philosophy, it was standard to regard William Blake (1757–1827), William Wordsworth (1770–1850), and Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772–1834) in England as constituting the first generation of major Romantic poets and Lord Byron (1788–1824), Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792–1822), and John Keats (1795–1821) the second, with Sir Walter Scott (1771–1832) the lone novelist; Thomas Carlyle (1795–1881) often figured as a later Romantic *sui generis*. In Germany, "early Romanticism" (*Frühromanti*) meant the Jena Circle of Friedrich Schlegel (1772–1829) and August Wilhelm Schlegel (1767–1845), Novalis (pseudonym for Georg Friedrich Philipp von Hardenburg [1772–1801]), and Ludwig Tieck (1773–1853)—the first self-conscious Romantic "movement,"

though without the name—along with Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder (1773–1798), Friedrich Hölderlin (1770–1843), the philosopher Friedrich Schelling (1775–1854), and the theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834). The younger writers of the second "War of Liberation" generation included the folklorists and writers Achim von Arnim (1781–1831), Clemens Brentano (1778–1842), the brothers Grimm (Jakob [1785–1863] and Wilhelm [1786–1859]), Jean Paul (1763–1825), and the more problematic Heinrich von Kleist (1777–1811). Romanticism in France arguably lasted longer, though it started a little later, and could be divided into four generations, both chronological and ideological—François René de Chateaubriand (1768–1848), Benjamin Constant (1767–1830), and Germaine de Staël (1766–1817) (the lone woman considered in her own right) in the revolutionary and Napoleonic periods; the *cénacles* around Victor Hugo (1802–1885) and Stendhal (pseudonym of Marie-Henri Beyle [1783–1842]) in the 1820s; the *Jeune France* (Young France) Romantics of the Revolution of 1830 and the following decade, including Théophile Gautier (1811–1872), Alfred Vigny (1811–1872), Alfred de Musset (1810–1857), and Gérard de Nerval (1808–1855); and finally the so-called Social Romantics led by the poet-politician Alphonse de Lamartine (1790–1869), whose ideas triumphed, then foundered in the failed Revolution of 1848, finally taking Romanticism with them.

The sheer number, diversity and chronological spread of these writers suggest the difficulty of generalization, and the list does not include all the putative Romantic writers and critics, let alone painters and composers. Nonetheless literary critics and historians through the 1960s did identify a number of characteristics that, even if not all shared by every Romantic, seemed to capture a distinctive Romantic style, indeed a whole ethos. Central to it was a validation of both unique human particularity or individuality and the human sense for the infinite, as well as the effort to reconcile the two. The Romantic idea of individuality involved a heightened awareness and legitimization of the emotions and the irrational, against what it took to be the arid rationalism and the narrow, destructive analytic spirit of the eighteenth century. The crucial faculty of the expanded Romantic self was the imagination, which through the emotions and the unconscious could grasp and unite with the infinite in its various characterizations, whether a virtually deified Nature, a more abstract Absolute, or a more traditionally theistic divinity. As to the origins of these new concerns, as early as the 1820s contemporaries had identified a number of instigating factors: the revival of ballads and of medieval and Elizabethan "romance," the rise of German Idealist philosophy, and the French Revolution.

M. H. Abrams's *Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature* (1971) offered an elegant, powerful synthesis of British and German Romanticism whose range went beyond the narrowly literary implications of its title to include Johann Gottlieb Fichte and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel as well as such later figures as Karl Marx, Friedrich Nietzsche and D. H. Lawrence, whom Abrams also claimed for Romanticism. Abrams saw Romanticism as profoundly philosophical, a "metaphysics of integration" whose





*The Death of Sardanapalus* (1844) by Eugène Delacroix. Oil on canvas. As with Romanticism in the visual arts, written works in the Romantic style stressed emotions and intuition over rationalism and scientific analysis, and the imagination above all. © PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART/CORBIS

key was “the ‘reconciliation,’ or synthesis, of whatever is divided, opposed and conflicting.” Its central literary trope was the circuitous journey, in which the visionary writer, as prophetic representative of all humanity, falls from primal unity into individuated and conflicted existence but ultimately returns to a higher unity that restores the original harmony while preserving his fully separate identity. This trope was the secularized and naturalized transformation of Christian Neoplatonism, which posited a three-stage developmental history of Being as paradigmatic also for human development: primal cosmic unity and goodness, subsequent differentiation into multiplicity and particularity, equivalent to a fall into evil and suffering, and then a return to unity and goodness that yet retains individuation and differentiation.

Abrams explained the Romantic secularization of an originally religious metaphysics as the direct result of the French Revolution. The Revolution seemed to bring the prospect of

heaven down to earth, holding out a this-worldly hope for radical individual freedom and complete social harmony, only to betray that hope by its murderous course and ultimate failure. The Romantics, initially caught up in revolutionary fervor, transferred their quest for liberation and reconciliation from political actions and forms to the spheres of aesthetics and philosophy. As Abrams put it, external means for transforming the world were replaced by internal means; the millennial faith in an apocalypse by revolution gave way to faith in an apocalypse by imagination or cognition.

The depth, coherence, and comprehensiveness of Abrams’s synthesis meant that any new approach would inevitably, directly or implicitly, be directed against it. In the ensuing decades the “visionary” interpretation of Romanticism was subjected to three main sorts of criticism.

Even before *Natural Supernaturalism* was published, Geoffrey Hartmann’s groundbreaking work on William

Wordsworth had undermined one of Romanticism's fundamental premises: the idea of a Romantic reconciliation of individuality and infinity. The attack on reconciliation became the main thrust of deconstructionist criticism, drawing on the French philosopher Jacques Derrida and led by the critic Paul de Man, whose first essays also predated Abrams. As he and others argued, Romantic writing consistently "deconstructed" the hoped-for unity of the mind with the objective Absolute through literary tropes and rhetorical disclaimers that unintentionally revealed the supposedly objective Romantic absolute as a wishful linguistic artifact of mind itself. Ultimately there was nothing but the human imagination, looking for, but in the nature of things unable to find, an external cocreator of the human experience of infinite wholeness. Romantic literature, as one critic put it, was a constant "dialogue between illusion and its deconstruction."

A very different kind of criticism of the visionary approach implicated deconstruction as well: Both were radically unhistorical. Abrams's interpretation was ostensibly historically-minded in its claim that Romanticism was a continuation of the project of the French Revolution by other means. In the following decades, however, historicist criticism, partly building on an earlier Marxism but using new techniques of reading derived from the critic Stephen Greenblatt's application of Clifford Geertz's anthropology, the work of Michel Foucault, and deconstruction itself, insisted that this claim obscured the true relationship between politics and Romanticism. By shifting the arena of freedom and reconciliation to the imaginative and aesthetic, the Romantics were in fact either occluding politics or retreating from it altogether. Jerome McGann (1983), for example, asserted that the poetry of Romanticism was everywhere marked by an extreme form of displacement, through which the actual human issues of liberation from hierarchy, oppression, and poverty and the political struggle to achieve a just and egalitarian society were resituated in a variety of idealized locales such as nature, agrarian utopias, or the visionary imagination of art. Only a sociohistorical method of reading even such ostensibly unhistorical poems as Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey" (1798) could demystify them by revealing the hidden conservative or outright antipolitics of a Romanticism that tried to transform concrete sociopolitical agenda into timeless ontological visions.

German historical criticism took a similar political tack, though it was less debunking in tone because there was never any doubt in the minds of critics that the original German Romantic impulse was inspired by the liberationist goals of the French Revolution or that the early Romantics themselves openly acknowledged this. As Frederick Beiser (1992) pointed out, what separated early from later German Romanticism was the distinction between the former's relatively egalitarian ideal of community and the latter's more authoritarian and paternalistic ideal of the state. The question for critics like him, therefore, was why the original radical thrust of German Romanticism, in which Friedrich Schlegel's demand for a "universal poetry" shaped only by the poet's sovereign will was initially linked with republican politics, not only dissipated but turned into its opposite.

The third line of dissent from the visionary hypothesis argued the limitations of an inherently masculine Romantic vision and its contemporary masculinist interpretation. Both, feminist critics claimed, entailed the ideological subordination of the feminine along with the simultaneous exclusion of real women from their purview. Feminist Romantic criticism undertook three distinct though connected initiatives. One worked at exposing the gendered character of the visionary synthesis. Ann Mellor (1988, 1993), for example, claimed that the Romantic poets endorsed a concept of the self as a power that gains control over and gives significance to nature, represented in their writings as female, thus legitimizing the continued repression of women. A second initiative focused on the women writers of the Romantic movement, both previously acknowledged if underestimated authors like de Staël and Mary Shelley, and those hitherto treated as little more than supernumeraries and handmaidens of the canonical Romantic writers, such as Dorothy Wordsworth, Dorothea Schlegel, and Caroline Schelling. A third approach, the one potentially most disruptive of the previous synthesis, tested the Romantic canon by resurrecting the work of a number of late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century women writers such as Helen Maria Williams, Charlotte Smith, Mary Robinson, Felicia Hemans, and Maria Edgeworth, all well-known and well regarded in their own time but consigned by later critics to oblivion. Many of them could not be easily assimilated into the interpretive categories of visionary Romanticism.

In the face of the new diversity, there might be a temptation to return to Lovejoy's radical nominalism. But a more helpful approach, one faithful to the spirit of the times, revises the earlier synthesis in the light of its challengers, maintaining the meaningfulness of the term Romanticism, while acknowledging that not everything written during the "age of Romanticism"—for example, the novels of Jane Austen—was Romantic. Such revision, furthermore, is able to include more of the conclusions of the new methodologies, and more of the new work they examine, than might initially be expected. The indispensability of the historical context for understanding the emergence and development of Romanticism strongly suggests that synthesis must take the form of a narrative, however necessarily simplified in a short article.

### **The First Generation in Britain and Germany**

Romanticism in Britain and Germany did indeed begin in the late 1790s as the young intellectual generation's response to the great hopes and correspondingly crushing disappointments of the French Revolution. The German Romantic poet Novalis wittily referred to the revolution, meaning his generation's reaction to it, as a puberty crisis. But if it was, the Romantics unwittingly revolutionized Western adolescence by inventing a new ideal of the self, which would become the maturational ideal of truly free and fully self-aware moderns. The first Romantics comprised an actual demographic generation; all were born within a few years of 1770, all came of age around the outbreak of the Revolution in 1789, all were its ardent partisans. They came to it out of personal motives of rebellion against hierarchical societies and paternalistic families on behalf of freedom of vocational choice and sexual self-expression.

Implicitly already political and social, their rebellion found in the Revolution the larger framework of socio-political analysis and universal ideals that enabled them to generalize it into an ideological worldview.

“Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive / But to be young was very heaven,” Wordsworth famously wrote of the Revolution. Heaven did not last long, but while it did, he and others pushed the Revolutionary ideal of freedom beyond anything the revolutionaries themselves had conceived, beyond freedom guided by reason to freedom that accepted no restraints from nature, history or any “general laws,” only the “light of circumstances / flashed / Upon an independent intellect.” In Germany the philosopher Fichte, explicitly generalizing from the political ideals of the Revolution, went beyond Kantian rational freedom to theorize the self as an infinitely striving subjectivity that in principle knows no boundaries except those of its own finitude, which it experiences as a goad to constant transcendence.

This vision of unbounded freedom could not survive either the dilemma of relativism that it generated or the perversions of tyranny and exploitation in both revolutionary politics and personal life that it seemed to produce. The first generation (with the exception of Hölderlin) turned away from radical politics while retaining the idea of infinite freedom in the sphere of the creative imagination. It was at this stage that August Wilhelm Schlegel, in *Athenaeum* Fragment 116, propounded his famous definition of romantic poetry. But even as an aesthetic doctrine, infinite freedom—Keats’s famous “egotistical sublime”—threatened anarchy and isolation. Recoiling from the imperial self, the young rebels created Romanticism by reconnecting the self with that which was greater than it, the infinite, embodied in an entity, whether nature, the beloved, or more abstractly, the Absolute, with which it could unite. As feminist critics noted, this entity was virtually always figured as feminine. But the Romantics’ relationship to the feminine infinite was not simply conquest and subordination, but a complex, and contradictory, mixture. On the one hand, the mind was dependent on the infinite, safely harbored in its sheltering matrix and, as in Wordsworth’s explicit metaphor of infant and mother, connected through its greater power to the rest of the world. On the other hand, nature was but mind’s partner and cocreator of the vision of the unity of all things, in Wordsworth’s words, the “genuine counterpart” of the “glorious faculty / Which higher minds bear with them as their own.” Thus the infinite was at once the mind’s external superior and mind’s own equal capacity; in Coleridge’s famous formulation, the poetic imagination was the repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite “I am.” Another version of the Romantic paradox, Schleiermacher’s description of the self’s two basic but opposite urges, presented a different face of contradiction. On the one hand, he wrote in *On Religion* (1799, 1806), the self “longs to expand . . . outwards into the world, and so to permeate everything with itself . . . to penetrate everything and fill everything with reason and freedom.” On the other hand, “the opposing drive is the dread fear of standing as a single individual alone against the whole; it is the longing to surrender and be completely absorbed in it, to feel taken hold of and determined

by it.” The Romantic self was driven at once by the desire for infinite self-assertion and the desire for complete subsumption into the infinite.

Before deconstruction, many Romantics were aware of the impossibility of this conjunction. Schlegel’s central concept of romantic irony was the expression of his insistence that every claim on the part of a Romantic work to totality was necessarily false because of the finitude of the self and of its creations. One strove to create knowing that one had to destroy the thing one loved in order to continue creating. And the German Romantic sense of infinite longing, *Sehnsucht*, epitomized in Novalis’s yearning poems of love *Hymns to the Night* (1800), testified to the awareness that haunted all of Romanticism, that the infinite was beyond human reach and could only be the achievement of wish-fulfilling dreams of eternal love.

The gendered contradictions in Romantic metaphysics between maternal symbiosis and partnership, and between surrender and penetrating mastery, parallel literary depictions of Romantic love as well as real relations among the Romantics. Friedrich Schlegel’s representative, quasi-autobiographical novel *Lucinde* (1799) describes a series of relationships with women that enable the male protagonist to mature into a centered, creative artist. His harmonious wholeness is achieved through the experience of being loved, and his unified personality in turn makes possible the organic form of his artistic work, which does not need to rely on classical rules for its unity. The relationship with Lucinde (a barely disguised if idealized version of the author’s lover and later wife, Dorothea Mendelsohn Veit) is described contradictorily both as reciprocal—“Only in the answer of its ‘you’ can every ‘I’ wholly feel its boundless unity”—and unequal: Lucinde, while an independent woman and an artist, is finally the mirror in which Julius sees his own unity and power reflected, the moon to his sun. Dorothy Wordsworth played an analogous role for William not only in life, but in poems like “Tintern Abbey,” where she serves as the guarantor for the poet’s vision of the unity of all things. While it was necessary for the feminine to be seen as independent, even omnipotent, to make possible the Romantic imagination of the unity of personality, it was precisely the exclusion of women from the public sphere, sparing them the conflicts and imperfections of striving, that made it plausible for the male Romantics to see the feminine as already achieved wholeness. The maternal role best symbolized feminine self-containment and selflessness, even as the male Romantics demanded that women be autonomous, indeed creative, intellectual companions.

The women of that first generation were, consciously at least, mostly content to fill the roles assigned them. Though Dorothy Wordsworth wrote poetry, she refused to think of herself as a poet, even referring to her poems as mere verses or rhymes. Conflicting assessments of her work suggest that it was either thwarted in its effort to follow her brother’s sense of the Romantic self by her felt exclusion from its masculine authority, or that it registered a different relation of self to community from that suggested by the visionary imagination, one in which the self had its place though not the privileged one of the male visionary. Her sense of community, however, was in fact no different from the ideal that William himself suggested in the chastened agrarian republicanism and later



increasingly Burkean traditionalism of his postrevolutionary social vision. Visionary imagination and the celebration of the common life were not mutually exclusive in the poetics of *Lyrical Ballads* (1798, 1800), but were rather in fact mutually entailed. Dorothea Schlegel, unlike Dorothy Wordsworth, published the work she wrote, the novel *Florentin* (1801), but its hero was the questing young male Romantic seeking the ideal woman who could complete him.

There is no critical consensus as yet, however, about the women poets of the time whose work critics are rediscovering in the early twenty-first century. Some critics like Mellor and Marlon Ross (1989) see in it a distinct feminine sensibility that offers a countertradition to that of the egotistical sublime, one that emphasizes local experience and sensibility rather than vision. Yet, as Isobel Armstrong argues, women's poetry shared with male Romantic writing the valorization of emotion and the language of the sense as well as the explicit self-consciousness about both long held to be one of Romanticism's chief characteristics. What does seem clearly to be the case, as Stuart Curran and Gary Kelly point out, is that in the first decade of the nineteenth century at the height of the Napoleonic wars women writers like Hemans and Edgeworth moved like their male counterparts away from radicalism to a celebration of domesticity which entailed the negative representation of "excessive selfhood." In this respect they participated in a consensual "discourse of Romanticism."

### The Second Generation in Britain and Germany

Romanticism in Britain and Germany diverged in the second generation as a result of very different political experiences during and after the Napoleonic wars. Freed from the climate of oppressive wartime fear, though not from the continuing repressive policies of the British government, Byron and Shelley felt it was time to revive the original radical impulse of the first generation, and sharply criticized Wordsworth for his frightened apostasy from the cause of liberty. Both, however, understood the legitimate reasons for his fearfulness: Freedom had been perverted during the Revolution, and its champions knew that they had to explore and exorcise the inner temptations that a fledgling radical autonomy bred before it could be safely embraced. In his dramatic poems "Manfred" (1816) and "Cain" (1821), Byron wrestled with the problem of guilt over (possibly sexual) misuse of freedom and of the religious temptations of forgiveness and consolation at the cost of submission to authority, ultimately rejecting them for an affirmation of individual agency and moral responsibility. In *Prometheus Unbound* (1820), Shelley identified the tyrannical Zeus, who had punished the rebellious Prometheus, as an emblem of humanity's own worst potential, the corruption of freedom and love into self-love and the lust for domination. Only when freedom recognized its own temptations to omnipotence and controlled them was it capable of the mutuality on which both true love and a free polity were based. But in the end their Romantic visions were quite different. Shelley celebrated love, earthly and divine, as the symbol of the fusion of the individual and the whole. The relentless satire and irony of the late masterpiece *Don Juan* (1819–1824) have seemed to some later

critics un-Romantic, and certainly very different from the restless questing and world-weariness of the Byronic hero of the earlier *Childe Harold* (1812–1818), but they were in fact the other side of Romanticism, a display of the "mobility" Byron ascribed to his most positive character in the epic, the ability to respond spontaneously to every new stimulus without false sentimentality. In his own time, "Byronism" was second only to the cult of Napoleon—which Byron himself helped promote—in mythifying one Romantic life model: life as an experiment without bounds, the infinite conquest of experience.

The fiction of Scott showed, however, that the Romantic dialectic could produce yet another kind of synthesis. In the *Waverley* novels (first published in 1814) and in medieval romances like *Ivanhoe* (1819), Scott, a modernizer but an anti-Jacobin fearful of the radical effects of revolutionary individualism, in effect extended the ideal of individuality from person to nation. In the increasingly conservative and patriotic vein of the postrevolutionary Wordsworth, he established the genre of the historical novel as a vehicle for the creation of national identity through (mythic) national history. From a very different vantage point Mary Shelley also offered a critique of Romantic—and modern scientific—hubris in her novel *Frankenstein* (1816–1818), which, as she herself wrote in a preface to the third edition, was intended as the story of a "human endeavor to mock the stupendous mechanism of the Creator of the world." Contemporary feminist critics have pointed out that the creation of the "monster" was also a masculine attempt to usurp the feminine role in reproduction. The two interpretations are not mutually exclusive.

The transformation of individualism that Scott worked implicitly, the German Romantics of the second generation advanced programmatically. Most of the Jena Circle had by the late 1790s and early 1800s already become more conservative while striving to retain the forms of political freedom. In *Belief and Love* (1798), Novalis argued that the integration of monarchy and republic was the highest form of liberty. As inherently free egos, all men were in principle worthy of the throne. The legitimacy of the Prussian monarch derived from his being both incarnation of the Fichtean absolute ego—made possible, of course, only by the indispensable love of his queen; the purpose of his rule was to ultimately cancel out his own authority by preparing all men, through his example, for freedom in a polity of self-governing equals. The evolution of Friedrich Schlegel's politics, preceded by his conversion to Catholicism, brought him to an idealization of the Holy Roman Empire's universalism, whose unity under the aegis of the Roman Catholic Church had made safely possible the harmonious flourishing of plural national individualities.

Adding to the chaos produced by the French Revolution, the humiliations inflicted on Germany by Napoleon intensified German Romantic conservatism. Yet even when it seemed to elevate the nation or the state to dominance, it never wholly surrendered individualistic ideals. The second generation devised a putatively unique German version of individuality that displaced that idea from the person onto the collective entity. True individuality was thus not incompatible with social solidarity, as was merely "French" or self-interested individual-



ism; rather it was the salutary effect of identifying with the unique spirit of one's collectivity. Many Romantics embarked on the construction of a unique "personality" for Germany out of its history, language, and folk culture, for example, in the folk songs collected (and composed) by Arnim and Brentano in *The Boys Magic Horn* (1808), or the folk tales assembled (and revised) by the brothers Grimm (1812). These celebrants of folk culture recognized the "higher reality" of magic and the supernatural as vehicles of the collective unconscious, as did the tales of E. T. A. Hoffmann (1814, 1817), and thus as agencies of an expanded national individuality not constrained by the limits of universal rationality.

### French Romanticism

Paradoxically, given the role of the Revolution in fostering Romanticism, French Romanticism began a few years later than British and German, in part because French writers could be more directly involved in the politics than their European counterparts. Perhaps for this reason too it took a somewhat different course in the first generation; two of its main protagonists, de Staël and Constant, remained liberal, if chastened, revolutionaries. It was de Staël, in her extraordinarily influential *Of Germany* (1810), who brought German Romanticism to French, and wider European, notice.

But it was the young aristocrat Chateaubriand who first dazzled France with an indigenous version of Romanticism. Initially a supporter of the Revolution, he had left, disillusioned by its violence, for the United States to investigate the pristine republican virtue of the native "noble savages," acclaimed by Jean-Jacques Rousseau and a generation of Enlightenment writers. It was in the wilderness, however, that he became aware of the dangers of *le vague des passions*, the passion for the indeterminate, which he came to believe had derailed revolutionary politics into self-deifying tyranny. In forced exile after a failed military venture in the royalist cause, he experienced a religious epiphany whose first fruits were the short stories "Atala" (1801) and "René," included in the enormously influential *Genius of Christianity* (1802). The stories are cautionary tales about the dangers of the quest of the infinite in its most exalted interpersonal form, sexual love. Only in religious yearning, expressed in such earthly creations as the Gothic cathedral and in the heavenly vision of the fulfillment of Christ's love in the afterlife, did passion have an adequate object that would never disappoint and the quest for which would never be destructive. Chateaubriand's Romantic religiosity, like that of his German Protestant counterpart Schleiermacher, was quite untraditional. The "genius" of religion lay not in its dogmatic claims but in its unique ability to fulfill secular yearnings for ecstasy and to inspire human creativity. The same powerful residue of revolutionary individuality can be found in Chateaubriand's later politics. A royalist out of reason, he said, he remained a republican by taste; only monarchy could preserve liberty because it was limited by divine law.

Unlike Chateaubriand, Constant's revolutionary liberalism weathered the Terror, though it was through it that he understood the dangers both of centralized political power and of "enthusiasm" in politics. But his attitude toward enthusi-

asm was necessarily ambiguous. A defender of the modern liberty of rights against both traditional authority and the classical republican priority of the common good, Constant was also deeply suspicious of self-interest for political as well as existential reasons. The self-interest of the private sphere not only endangered public-mindedness, it was a corrosive sentiment that drained life of meaning by drying up passion, above all the passion for the infinite. It was his onetime mistress and political mentor de Staël who had taught him its importance in politics and life. But, like Chateaubriand, Constant had learned that passion had to be directed at the proper object. Politicized in the abstractions of virtue and the common good, it could put tyrannical power in the hands of any group who claimed superior knowledge of them. It was ultimately in religion and the arts that absolute passion could most fully and safely express itself, though devotion to the transcendent ideal of liberty was its indispensably activist, public dimension.

Like Chateaubriand too, Constant believed that love was not passion's safest outlet, for love ran the same danger as politics of deifying the finite object of devotion. His novel *Adolphe* (1816) documented the insatiable need that continued to drive an erotic attachment that had outlived its initial frenzy, fully aware of the limitations of its object and of its own narcissistic tendency to exploit, yet unable to let go. Contemporaries and some later critics interpreted the novel as a roman à clef charting Constant's tortured relationship with de Staël (and other mistresses), but Germaine, a prolific and established novelist long before Constant, had her own Romantic agenda. More committed than Constant to the expression of enthusiasm as romantic passion, she also knew that passion was particularly problematic for women. Women love men for their individuality, but women's individuality is a hindrance to men's love. In her novels *Delphine* (1802) and *Corinne* (1807) talented women who aspire to creative achievement do not find the succor in men that men find in women; unable to hold a man's love, and no longer nurtured by it, they either die or lose their creativity.

Under Chateaubriand's influence, French Romanticism was predominantly royalist and Catholic during the Restoration, but there was a significant liberal coterie, under the leadership of Stendhal, that in the wake of aristocratic reaction in the late 1820s recruited former royalists like Hugo and Lamartine. In the preface to his play *Hernani* (1830), whose first production inspired an epoch-making riot in the theater between partisans of traditional neoclassical drama and the new Romantic ideas, Hugo called for a "July 14" of art and declared that liberty in art was the offspring of political liberty. Harmony, the goal of all art, could not be achieved by excluding the unique and the idiosyncratic or the ugly and grotesque. Rather the artistic challenge was to achieve formal unity and wholeness by including the infinite variety of life, and to do so not by following rigid rules but through the creative inspiration of the artist whose genius derived from being authentically him or herself. In his novels, particularly *The Red and the Black* (1830), Stendhal wittily explored the formidable obstacles to the Romantic ideals of authenticity and emotional sincerity in the way of an ambitious young man striving

to achieve both in the post-Napoleonic era of restored authoritarian hierarchy in society and church.

The Revolution of 1830 promised at first to realize liberal Romantic hopes for extending political as well as artistic freedom, but the younger generation was severely disappointed by the political and cultural dominance of a commercial oligarchy under the “Bourgeois Monarchy.” The writers of the Young France movement abandoned politics once again for art, now aiming it explicitly against the sordid materialism of bourgeois society. Proclaiming the aesthetic doctrine of “art for art’s sake,” they in fact posed ideals of sensuality and beauty as a counter-culture to the ugliness of everyday bourgeois life. In his novel *Mlle. de Maupin* (1835), Théophile Gautier extended the idea of the boundaryless Romantic personality in the first literary exploration of the realities and potentialities of human bisexuality and the need to integrate it into the personality that would be genuinely whole. Beyond art, Romanticism became a lifestyle whose declared purpose was to “shock the bourgeoisie” by flouting its norms and acting out the infinity of the self in theatrically eccentric and bizarre behavior. The “Bohemia” of the countercultural artist was a reality before it was a novel—though the novel by Henri Murger (1849) that gave it its name was an unsparingly unsentimental view of its less respectable underside.

In the final cycle of French Romanticism, the implicitly political critique of 1830s aestheticism reasserted itself directly in the 1840s as a growing protest against the selfish narrowness of the political class and the social oppression and misery that marked the beginnings of the industrial revolution in France. “Social Romanticism” idealized “the people” as the new Romantic hero, the repository of spontaneity, goodness, and unity, and demanded that their liberty be realized not only in more democratic politics but in providing the poor with the material means that were the prerequisite for full self-realization. The literature of Social Romanticism ranged from the Parisian novels of Georges Sand to the histories of Jules Michelet, the chronicler of the people’s struggle for liberty. But its great moment seemed to come when its most prominent spokesman, the poet-politician Lamartine, became leader of the provisional republican government of France in the Revolution of 1848. Lamartine was by far not the first Romantic politician—a number of his European predecessors had held offices high and low—but for the first time in history, a Romantic literary figure seemed to be in a position to legislate a version of Romanticism into reality. When, however, in the tragic denouement of the June Days, Lamartine found himself directing the army to shoot down “the people” on the barricades of Paris, the vision of Social Romanticism, and with it the era of Romanticism, came to an end. Its legacy nevertheless remained not only in the revived “late Romanticism” of

the fin-de-siècle but as a permanent dimension of contemporary art and of our understanding of the modern self.

See also *Enlightenment; Revolution; Romanticism*.

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# S

**SACRED AND PROFANE.** In order to define and explain the paired concepts of *sacred* and *profane*, it is important to look at these concepts as developed in the influential work of the French sociologist Émile Durkheim (1858–1917).

### Durkheim's Definition of Religion

In his last great work, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (1912), Durkheim set out “to study the simplest and most primitive religion that is known at present, to discover its principles and attempt an explanation of it” (p. 1) in order to uncover universal properties of religion. But first he needed to define religion, or else “run the risk of either calling a system of ideas and practices religion that are in no way religious, or of passing by religious phenomena without detecting their true nature” (p. 21). Rather than immediately proposing a definition of his own, he began by rejecting two existing definitions. Religion could not be defined, he argued, in terms of the “supernatural,” a category that made sense only in opposition to a modern European paradigm of scientific explanation for “natural” phenomena; for most of the world’s peoples, including premodern Europeans, religious phenomena were perfectly natural. Nor, he continued, could religion be reduced to ideas of “divinity” or even “spiritual beings.” For instance, salvation in Buddhism was not predicated on divine assistance, and many religious practices—Jewish dietary regulations, for example—were “wholly independent of any idea of gods or spiritual beings” (p. 32).

Instead, Durkheim formulated a radical proposition:

Whether simple or complex, all known religious beliefs display a common feature: They presuppose a classification of the real or ideal things that men conceive of into two classes—two opposite genera—that are widely designated by two distinct terms, which the words profane and sacred translate fairly well. The division of the world into two domains, one containing all that is sacred and the other all this is profane—such is the distinctive trait of religious thought. (p. 34)

Unlike definitions in terms of “supernatural,” “divinities,” or “spiritual beings,” Durkheim’s definition in no way predicated any specific kind of belief, much less belief in any particular kind of being. On the contrary, for Durkheim, the division into “sacred” and “profane” was a necessary precondition for religious beliefs, indeed their very foundation. “Religious beliefs are those representations that express the nature of sacred things and the relations they have with other sacred

things or with profane things . . . rites are rules of conduct that prescribe how man must conduct himself with sacred things” (p. 38).

### Sacred versus Holy; Profane versus Secular

It is helpful to contrast Durkheim’s concept of the sacred to that of the holy in the contemporary work of the noted German theologian Rudolf Otto, in *The Idea of the Holy* (1917). The holy, for Otto, derived from a sense of the “numinous” (a word Otto coined): the experience of awe, of the transcendent majesty, energy, and mystery of the wholly other. For Otto, the holy was grounded in individual feeling, the apprehension of something outside the individual and infinitely greater. Durkheim hardly denied the existence, or for that matter the importance, of such an experience but held that it derived from the idea of the sacred rather than constituting its essence. For Durkheim, the concept of sacred was above all intrinsically social, the product of the social classification of all phenomena into the antithetical categories of sacred and profane. Unlike Otto’s “holy,” Durkheim’s sacred was literally unthinkable except in terms of the profane. The content of the category sacred was intrinsically fluid: anything might be classified as sacred. What mattered was the social act of separation from the profane.

At first sight, this dichotomy between sacred and profane seems identical to that between sacred and secular. While Durkheim did not explicitly argue against such assimilation, it is clear that he would have regarded it as analogous to that between natural and supernatural, a historically constituted distinction that made sense only in terms of relatively recent European history, with its emphasis on the separation of church and state. Most important, Durkheim very definitely refused to exempt the secular realm of the state from the domain of the sacred. One of his most powerful images—all the more so when one bears in mind that *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* appeared only two years before the outbreak of World War I—was that of the flag: “The soldier who fall defending his flag certainly does not believe he has sacrificed himself to a piece of cloth” (p. 229); “A mere scrap of the flag represents the country as much as the flag itself; moreover, it is sacred in the same right and to the same degree” (p. 231).

### Totems, Society, and the Sacred

Durkheim’s analysis centered on what he considered to be the simplest and most primitive known religion, namely Australian totemism, and rested on the consideration of what the Australians held sacred: “totemism places figurative representations

of the totem in the first rank of the things it considers sacred; then come the animals or plants whose name the clan bears, and finally the members of the clan" (p. 190). It is important to note that representations of totem animals were far more sacred than the animals themselves. Such designs were placed on ritual objects such as churinga (bullroarers), the very sight of which might be forbidden to profane noninitiates—foreigners, but also women and children—on pain of death. The relatively abstract nature of such representations made them particularly appropriate symbols, concrete manifestations of an abstract idea, just as the flag represented the nation; indeed, Durkheim noted, the "totem is the flag of the clan" (p. 222).

More generally, the totem represented a sacred force of energy that Durkheim (borrowing a term from other Melanesian and Polynesian peoples for lack of an appropriate Australian word) named *mana*. This force, external to the individual but in which he also participated, was nothing else but society itself, Durkheim argued. Ultimately, the sacred was not only social but also the very form in which society represented itself to its members.

### The Ambiguity of the Sacred

The sacred was not in any simpleminded way reducible to "the good." Mourning rituals pointed the way to another dimension of the sacred, connected with "[any] misfortune, anything that is ominous, and anything that motivates feelings of disquiet or fear" (p. 392). The domain of the sacred also included "evil and impure powers, bringers of disorder, causes of death and sickness, instigators of sacrilege" (p. 412). Just as the sacred and the profane could be defined only in terms of one another, so the pure and the impure constituted two inextricably linked modalities of sacredness. After all, both holy and polluting things need to be kept separate from the profane realm of everyday reality.

In some cases, Durkheim suggested that the same object could easily pass from one state to another. The impurely sacred, according to Durkheim, was necessary in order to represent inevitable negative facets of social reality. "[The] two poles of religious life correspond to the two opposite states through which all social life passes. There is the same contrast between the lucky and the unlucky sacred as between the states of collective euphoria and dysphoria" (p. 417).

### Durkheim's Critics

Despite the profound influence of Durkheim on the structural-functional school of British anthropology, many of its practitioners were highly critical of the pertinence of his antithesis between sacred and profane. E. E. Evans-Pritchard proposed "a test of this sort of formulation . . . : whether it can be broken down into problems which permit testing by observation in field research, or can at least aid in a classification of the observed facts. I have never found that the dichotomy of sacred and profane was of much use for either purpose" (p. 65). Specifically, British anthropologists challenged its applicability to the real-life situations they observed in the course of field research.

Evans-Pritchard argued that among the Azande of central Africa, sacredness might be situational. Shrines erected for the

purposes of ancestor worship in the middle of a compound might serve as a focus of ritual offerings on some occasions but on others, might be a convenient place for resting spears. W. E. H. Stanner found that the distinction was impossible to apply unambiguously in studying Australian religion, the very example on which it was ostensibly based. Jack Goody noted that many societies have no words that translate as sacred or profane and that ultimately, just like the distinction between natural and supernatural, it was very much a product of European religious thought rather than a universally applicable criterion.

### Sacred and Profane since Durkheim

The American anthropologist W. Lloyd Warner, after conducting ethnographic research in Australia, turned in the 1930s to field work in a New England town that he called "Yankee City." He published a series of monographs about American life through the lens of a small town, the last of which, *The Living and the Dead* (1959), focused on symbols and symbolism. The central chapter of the book, the one that most closely reflects the title of the book, was an analysis of Memorial Day rites, which "are a modern cult of the dead and conform to Durkheim's definition of sacred collective representations" (p. 278). These rites transcended the division of the community in terms of class, ethnicity, and religion, uniting it around sacred symbols, including the cemetery, and national heroes—Lincoln, Washington, the Unknown Soldier. "The graves of the dead are the most powerful of the visible emblems which unify all the activities of the separate groups of the community," whereas the celebration of the deaths of men who sacrificed their lives for their country "become powerful sacred symbols which organized, direct, and constantly revive the collective ideals of the community and the nation" (p. 279).

The sociologist Robert Bellah explicitly built on Warner's analysis of Memorial Day rites to elaborate a concept of "American civil religion"—"a collection of beliefs, symbols, and rituals with respect to sacred things and institutionalized in a collectivity" (p. 10). Examining various presidential addresses on ceremonial occasions, from the founding father down to Lyndon Johnson, he notes the strategic invocation of "God" and the complete absence of mentions of "Christ," which he argued signaled the transcendent, sacred nature of the nation while acknowledging the separation of church and state by avoiding references to any particular institutionalized religious faith. Ultimately, these analyses of American civil religion developed the analogies that Durkheim had suggested by stressing the identity of "flag" and "totem" and demonstrated the extent to which this conception of the sacred could not be opposed in any straightforward way to the secular.

More than any other contemporary anthropologists, Mary Douglas has made Durkheim's distinction between sacred and profane a central focus of her work. In *Purity and Danger* (1966), she proposed a sweeping cross-cultural analysis of rules concerning purity and pollution that stressed Durkheim's central thesis that religious ideas depended on the active separation of antithetical domains, a separation that in turn implied a system of classification. The central premise of her analysis



## ÉMILE DURKHEIM

Émile Durkheim (1858–1917) was the founder of academic sociology in France and a thinker whose contribution to the social sciences, especially sociology and anthropology, continues to be fundamental. Born into a family of rabbis in Lorraine, he studied at the prestigious École Normale Supérieure in Paris, where his fellow students included the future philosopher Henri Bergson and Jean Jaurès, who was to become the leader of the Socialist Party. Philosophy was (and remains) a central focus of the humanities in France; Durkheim's first concern was to establish sociology as a legitimate branch. Consequently, his doctoral thesis and first major work, *The Division of Labor in Society*, published in 1893, sought to establish a "science of ethics."

The idea of looking for morality in the division of labor was startling, especially in light of the Marxist convictions of Durkheim's socialist friends. With equal daring, Durkheim suggested that such moral principles were reflected in the different types of law, repressive (criminal) and restitutive (civil). Repressive law rested on shared social understandings of "crime" morality, a domain Durkheim labeled the "conscience collective," which can be translated either as "collective consciousness" or "collective conscience." The moral underpinnings of such understandings amounted to "mechanical solidarity," the recognition of essential likeness between fellow members of a society. The increasing scope of the division of labor gave rise to a higher form of "organic" solidarity, reflecting complementarity rather than likeness. Ideally, organic solidarity was expressed by restitutive law stipulating reciprocal rights and obligations and redressing imbalances rather than punishing crimes. Durkheim was acutely aware of the gap between law and justice in modern society, a gap that he named "anomie," the absence of rules or norms. In his view, the economic aspects of the division of labor had temporarily outpaced the development of law and morality.

Two years later, in 1895, he published *The Rules of Sociological Method*, in which he insisted that

"social facts," "ways of acting, thinking, and feeling, external to the individuals, and endowed with a power of coercion, by which they control him" (p. 3), could be explained only in social terms and were not reducible to biological or psychological explanations. In 1897 he published *Suicide* as a dramatic demonstration of the power of his methods; after all, the decision to take one's own life seemed a matter of individual psychology. However, he persuasively argued that psychological, biological, or climactic theories could not explain differences in suicide rates. For example, Protestants were more suicide-prone than Catholics, recently widowed men more so than women; suicide rates climbed during economic depressions and dropped in periods of revolutionary upheaval. Different types of suicide could be classified with respect to two axes: one in terms of the individual's commitment to social norms and the other in terms of the extent to which such norms were available to guide the individual in particular situations.

In 1896 Durkheim founded a journal, the *Année Sociologique*, which served as a forum not only for his own ideas but also for those of a growing number of brilliant pupils, including his nephew, Marcel Mauss. In 1912 he published his last book, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*; in it, he used Australian totemism as his central case on the grounds that native Australians were the simplest society known to humanity and that their religion was consequently free from confusing accretions. In stark contrast to his predecessors, nineteenth-century theorists of social evolution such as E. B. Tylor, Lewis Henry Morgan, and James Frazer, Durkheim did not use the Australians to demonstrate how far European society had evolved but rather as a means of uncovering universal features of religion and society that we share with them.

As a native of Lorraine, which was annexed by Germany in 1871, Durkheim enthusiastically supported the cause of France in World War I, with tragic consequences. His only son and most of his students died at the front, and he died a broken man in 1917.

was that “dirt is essentially disorder” (p. 12). For this reason, anomalous persons or animals, those that did not fit neatly into preconceived, socially determined categories, were especially powerful or dangerous. Seen in this light, European-American preoccupations with hygiene were not qualitatively different from non-European anxieties about ritual pollution. Such preoccupations with the maintenance of order and the separation of antithetical categories were intimately related to the perpetuation of social boundaries between insiders and outsiders.

Most recently, Durkheim’s concepts have reappeared in a heated debate between anthropologists as to whether Captain James Cook, who arrived in the Hawaiian islands in 1778 and was killed by native Hawaiians in 1779, was really considered by his killers to be an avatar of the god Lono. Marshall Sahlins, in *Islands of History* (1985), asserted that Cook’s murder was a direct outgrowth of his deification. Sahlins’s analysis centered on the opposition between the god Lono, “associated with natural growth and human reproduction who annually returns to the islands with the fertilizing rains of winter” (p. 105) and the god Ku, associated with kingship, warfare, and human sacrifice.

Each year, the Makahiki festival celebrated the arrival of Lono along with the rains, his journey throughout the islands, and his departure/death, marked by the resumption of human sacrifice to the god Ku. The arrival of Cook in Hawaii, his journey around the island, and his departure all coincided with the ritual trajectory of the god Lono, with whom, Sahlins argued, Cook was literally identified, particularly by the priests of Lono. Disaster struck when, after his departure, Cook was obliged to return to Hawaii. The arrival of “Lono” at the wrong time and from the wrong direction was precisely a violation of rules of separation of antithetical categories, a direct threat to the god Ku and the king, who promptly had Cook killed. “Cook was transformed from the divine beneficiary of the sacrifice to its victim—a change never really radical in Polynesian thought, and in their royal combats always possible” (p. 106).

This analysis has been challenged by Gananath Obeyesekere, who has argued that such accounts of the deification of explorers like Cook were part of European imperial mythologizing rather than “native” thought. Advocating an approach derived from the sociology of Max Weber and emphasizing “practical rationality,” he has suggested that Cook’s death be interpreted more prosaically in terms of factional power struggles in Hawaii. Sahlins, it must be noted, carefully avoid the assertion that all Hawaiians accepted that Cook was a god. Rather, his point was that the historical events could be understood only in terms of the framework of Hawaiian ideas about the sacred, ideals that revolved around the classification of the social and the physical world in terms of one another, where the mixture of antithetical categories generated either great power or danger.

The debate shows clearly that Durkheim’s distinction between sacred and profane continues to inform anthropological analyses of religion (as well as of ostensibly secular ideologies) but also that such approaches continue to be challenged and

contested, and that the relevance of such distinctions is far from universally accepted.

*See also Animism; Polytheism; Secularization and Secularism; Superstition; Untouchability; Taboos.*

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Robert Launay

**SACRED PLACES.** Every civilization has its share of sacred places, that is, geographical locations, buildings, monuments, or environmental features, such as mountains, lakes, rocks, waterfalls, and so on, that are believed to be endowed with intense spiritual qualities. Indeed, such places are frequently thought to possess a variety of supernatural powers that can heal, rejuvenate, or otherwise affect the human beings who visit them, often as devout pilgrims. They are also sometimes thought to be the focal points of creation, the places where deities first manifested themselves or performed some fundamental actions, and are thus typically steeped in mythology and theological dogmas.



**Stonehenge. Wiltshire England.** Constructed over a span of fifteen hundred years, Stonehenge is one of the oldest sacred places on the planet. The exact function of the stone circles remains unknown, although numerous theories exist. © BOB KRIST/CORBIS

In what follows, we shall consider eight well-known sacred places in several parts of the world, all of which have not only had a profound impact on the civilizations that venerate them, but also, in several cases, on a fair share of the human race. They are England's Stonehenge, the Great Pyramid of Egypt, the Greek oracle at Delphi, the Temple Mount and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, the Pyramid of the Sun at Teotihuacán, the great Islamic pilgrimage site of Mecca, and the Ise-Jingu, the most sacred of all Japanese Shinto shrines.

### Stonehenge

We begin with one of the oldest—and best-known—sacred places on the planet, the great megalithic stone circle known as Stonehenge, the ruins of which still loom majestically above Salisbury Plain in southwestern England. Like Rome, Stonehenge was not built in a day, but rather over a span of about fifteen hundred years, from about 2900 to 1500 B.C.E. The earliest phase in its construction involved the excavation of a circular ditch some 360 feet (110 meters) in diameter and five feet (1.5 meters) deep. Inside the ditch was an embankment, composed of excavated material, and just inside the embankment was a circle of fifty-six holes, or pits, that have come to be known as “Aubrey Holes” after their seventeenth-century discoverer, John Aubrey. These holes may have held posts of some sort.

The second phase in Stonehenge's construction, which lasted from 2900 to about 2500 B.C.E., saw the erection of wooden structures and posts in the center of the site. It was during the third and final phase (2500–1600 B.C.E.), however, that the monument we know today was created. Two concentric circles of approximately eighty huge stone pillars, quarried in southwestern Wales and known as “bluestones,” from their bluish color, were erected in the center of the circle—only to be replaced several centuries later by a row of even bigger “sarsen” stones that were brought from Marlborough Downs,

some twenty-five miles (forty kilometers) to the north. The thirty sarsen stones, each of which stands approximately thirteen feet (four meters) high, form a circle about 108 feet (33 meters) in diameter. Originally, they were topped by a circle of lintels; however, today only a few remain intact, together with seventeen of the original sarsen pillars.

Inside the so-called Sarsen Circle the builders erected a horseshoe-shaped structure composed of five pairs of huge sarsen blocks, weighing approximately forty metric tons each, each topped by an equally massive lintel forming a series of trilithons, or three-stone gateways, the largest of which rises twenty-four feet (seven meters). Within the horseshoe, next to the central trilithon, lies the formerly erect Altar Stone. In addition, four “station stones” are located just inside the embankment, and several more sarsen blocks were originally placed near the entrance to the site. The two that survive are the Slaughter Stone and the Heel Stone, which were placed just outside the ditch. The latter stone appears to have played a crucial part in the rituals that took place (and still take place) during the summer solstice.

In any case, it is the ruins of this final phase in Stonehenge's evolution that impress visitors today. Although there are over one thousand stone circles in Britain, the massive remains on Salisbury Plain are by far the most impressive, despite the collapse of most of the lintels and over half of the original stones. That it was an intensely sacred place dating back into the mists of prehistory is undoubted, despite the fact that the closely related questions of who built Stonehenge and what went on there have long been hotly debated.

The earliest theory, advocated by the aforementioned James Aubrey, was that it was built by the ancient Celtic Druids. However, while these mysterious white-clad priests probably venerated Stonehenge and performed rituals there, it long predated their appearance in Britain around 600 B.C.E. Other theories range from wandering Mycenaean (on one of the sarsen





**The Great Pyramid. Giza, Egypt (created c. 2525 B.C.E.; photographed c. 1880).** The Great Pyramid, along with all of Egypt's sacred structures, was built on the western bank of the Nile River, facing the setting sun. The Egyptians believed that the land of the dead lay in this direction. © CORBIS

stones there are markings that some scholars have identified as a Mycenaean double-ax) to Egyptians and even ancient astronauts. However the most likely candidates were the Bronze Age (3000–1000 B.C.E.) inhabitants of southern Britain, including the “Wessex people,” whose precise linguistic affiliations are as yet unknown, although we do know that they shared a great many traits in common with the pre-Celtic populations of western Europe, including stone circles (compare Carnac in Brittany).

However, the questions of what it was used for can now be tentatively addressed, if not definitively answered. In the mid-1960s American astronomer Gerald S. Hawkins suggested that Stonehenge was an ancient astronomical observatory that was used to calculate a variety of celestial events, including both lunar and solar eclipses, as well as the summer and winter solstices. To this day, the sun rises over the Heel Stone on 21 June, the summer solstice, and thousands of pilgrims, including latter-day “Druids,” flock to Stonehenge every year on that date to watch this occur. If Hawkins is correct, the calendar, as well as the solar and lunar cycles, must have loomed large indeed in the beliefs systems of those who built the monument. However, this hypothesis is by no means universally accepted. Other scholars assert that, while it was clearly

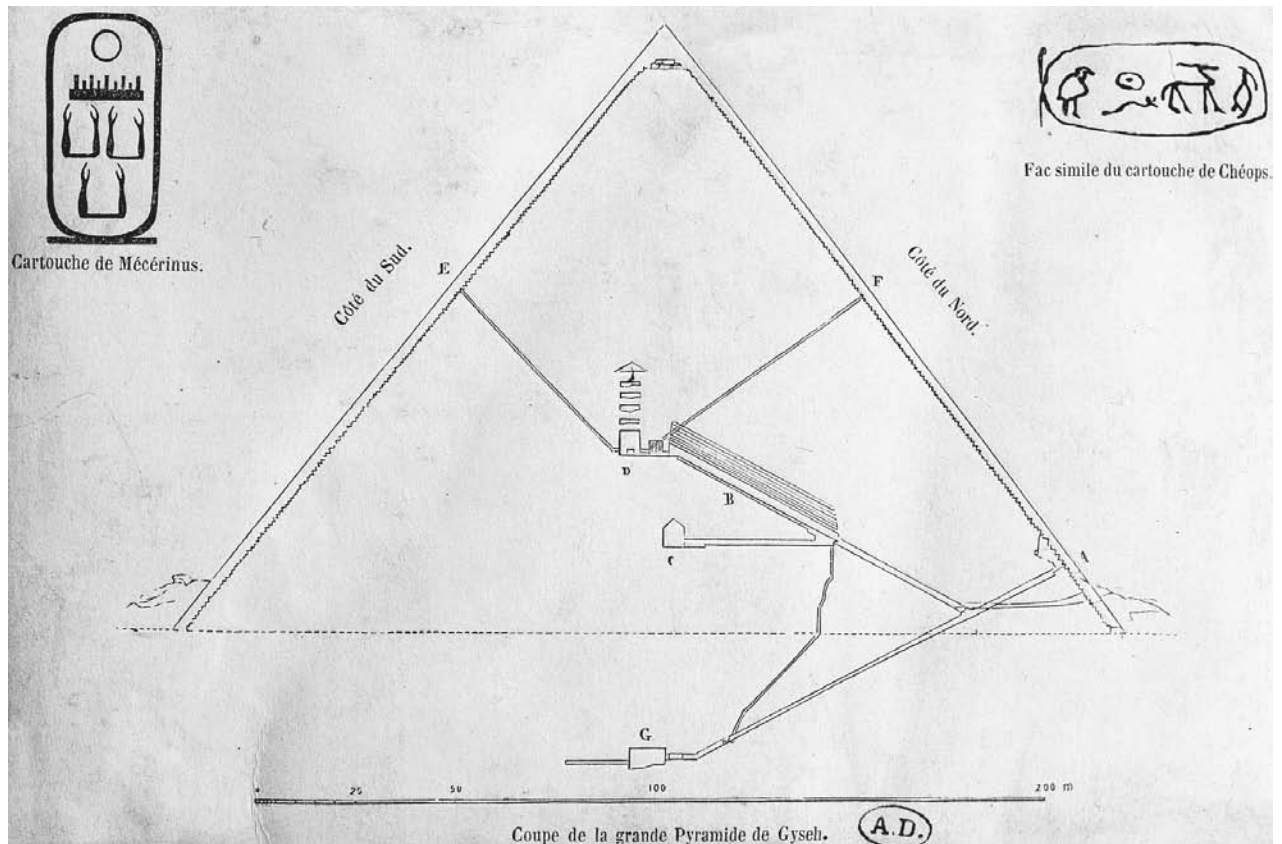
a place where extremely important rituals took place, some of them perhaps involving animal and perhaps human sacrifices (hence the “Slaughter Stone”), it was not a primordial “computer” designed to facilitate the calculation of astronomical events. In short, a definitive interpretation of the fundamental meaning and purpose of this remarkable place remains elusive.

Nevertheless, anyone making the trek to Salisbury Plain for the first time cannot help but be awestruck at the sight of those mighty stones silhouetted against the sky. The enduring sacredness of Stonehenge is underscored by the fact that, unlike the other megalithic monuments of Britain, such as the great stone circle at Avebury, some thirty miles (forty-eight kilometers) to the north, it has never been intruded upon by a town or village.

### **The Great Pyramid**

Our second example of a major sacred place, the Great Pyramid at Giza (near Cairo) in northern Egypt, dates from approximately the same time at which the prehistoric people of southern Britain were beginning the second phase in Stonehenge's construction, that is, c. 2500 B.C.E. In fact, the





**Cutaway diagram of the interior of the Great Pyramid at Giza.** The incredibly precise geometric measurements of the Great Pyramid, along with the size and weight of the stones used, gave rise to many unusual theories about its construction. THE ART ARCHIVE / BIBLIOTHÈQUE DES ARTS DÉCORATIFS PARIS / DAGLI ORTI

Great Pyramid can be dated far more precisely. It was during the reign of the pharaoh Khufu (Cheops) (2551–2528), which marked the high point of what Egyptologists call the “Old Kingdom.” It was the first of the three major pyramids built at Giza, the other two being the pyramids of the pharaohs Khafre and Menkaure, respectively, Khufu’s son and grandson. However, it also represents the culmination of a long period of development that began in predynastic times with the construction of mastabas, or flat-topped tombs with sloping sides, and continuing through the famous Step Pyramid at Saqqâra (also near Cairo) that was designed by the brilliant Egyptian architect Imhotep for King Djoser (Third Dynasty), who reigned from 2630 to 2611, and the so-called Bent Pyramid built by Khufu’s father Sneferu (2575–2551).

Like those pyramids and mastabas that preceded it, the Great Pyramid, which originally rose 481.4 feet (146.73 meters) and is composed of approximately 2.3 million blocks, each of which weighs, on average, 2.5 metric tons, was a royal tomb. It was located on the west bank of the Nile. Indeed, all of the sacred places in Egypt that played host to the dead, from Giza and Saqqara to the Valley of the Kings opposite ancient Thebes (modern Luxor), were located on the west bank of the river because it was in the direction of the setting sun, that is,

the land of the dead, the place toward which the Sun God Re sailed each day as he navigated the Celestial Nile, which ran at right angles to the Earthly river.

In view of its mammoth proportions, the weight of the stone blocks, and the fact that it is almost perfectly aligned with the points of the compass, some researchers have suggested that the Great Pyramid, as well as the other two Giza pyramids and the Sphinx, traditionally attributed to Khufu’s son Khafre, must have been built by technologically sophisticated extraterrestrials, as no human technology, ancient or modern, could possibly have manipulated stones of this size and weight. However, recent archaeological research at Giza has clearly demonstrated that the pyramids were built by thousands of ordinary human beings, most of whom were peasants, rather than slaves, whose labor was conscripted during the fallow season, and who lived in nearby barracks. Moreover, the architects knew enough geometry to work out the remarkable alignments and, after several earlier failures, to determine the correct angle and slope. It is also clear that by using ramps, rollers, massive sleds, and sheer human muscle power, the builders were in fact able to wrestle the blocks into position without any extraterrestrial help.

Nevertheless, even though they were almost certainly not built by space aliens, from the beginning of Egyptian history,



**King's Chamber of the Great Pyramid at Giza, photographed c. 1930.** The mummified remains of the Pharaoh were placed in the King's Chamber, along with objects of wealth and a collection of figurines which were believed to serve the Pharaoh in the afterlife. HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES

the pyramids of Giza and Saqqara have had a special religious significance. They were thus fitting final resting places for the Pharaoh's soul—or souls, as the ancient Egyptians believed that each person had two souls: a *ka* and a *ba*. At death, the *ka* left the deceased's mortal remains and went to the afterworld; the *ba*, however, was destined to remain behind in the tomb, which was why pharaohs and other wealthy Egyptians were buried with such a plethora of grave goods: the *ba* needed these things to survive. Both souls needed as close a replica of the former living body as it was possible to produce, which accounts for the practice of mummification.

In any case, although the wealth interred with Khufu in the Great Pyramid has long since been looted, his *ba* must have been surrounded initially with a priceless horde of objects with which it could live in a princely style for what his heirs hoped would be eternity. In addition to physical objects, the needs of a deceased pharaoh were served by a retinue of figures called *ushabtis*, figurines would serve both his *ka* in the afterworld and his *ba* within the pyramid's burial chamber.

The interior of the Great Pyramid has two such chambers, the King's Chamber, which is reached by a steep gallery, and the Queen's Chamber, some distance below it. As just indicated, both chambers are now completely empty, and have been for several millennia. However, the King's Chamber, which is located close to the center of the pyramid, has long been considered to possess extraordinary spiritual power. The author of this article once spent the better part of an hour, between waves of tourists, sitting cross-legged in the center of the chamber in question, doing his best to absorb some of that supposed spiritual energy, or "pyramid power," as it is sometimes called. While he failed to notice any appreciable psychic changes, he did come away from the experience with a

profound sense of awe and wonder. The Great Pyramid is thus by any measure an extremely sacred place, and all who visit it, even casually, cannot help but be impressed not only by its sheer size, but also by its ineffable majesty and intense spiritual aura.

## Delphi

Some five hundred-odd miles (805 kilometers) due north of Giza, on the slopes of Mount Parnassus, which looms above the north shore of the Gulf of Corinth in northwestern Greece, is another extremely sacred place: Delphi, site of the famous Oracle of Apollo. Like Stonehenge, the origins of Delphi are lost in the mists of mythology and prehistory; however, we do know that very early on the ancient Greeks came to consider it to be the center of the universe.

The central feature of Delphi is the Temple of Apollo, which commemorates the god's slaying of Python, a terrible she-dragon that lived on the slopes of Parnassus. According to ancient Greek mythology, the goddess Hera sent Python to harm her husband Zeus's paramour, Leto, while Leto was pregnant with Apollo and Artemis. But Leto was saved in the nick of time by Poseidon, who hid her in the waves. In any case, four days after he was born, Apollo set out to find a location where he could establish his sanctuary. When he wandered onto the slopes of Parnassus, he encountered Python, who immediately attempted to kill him, just as she had his mother. Apollo loosed one of the magical arrows the smith-god Hephaestus had forged for him and mortally wounded the monstrous reptile. However, one of Python's tasks had been to guard the region, which had been sacred to her mother, the primordial earth-goddess Gaia, and so Apollo needed to purify himself and placate the slain monster's spirit. He exiled himself to Thessaly, did his penance, and when he returned to what was to become Delphi, he established the oracle that bears his name. In memory of Python, he named the woman who spoke with his voice the Pythia.

The name Delphi comes from *delphin*, the Greek word for "dolphin." When Apollo realized that he needed priests to interpret his words, he changed himself into a dolphin and lured a boatload of Cretan sailors to the shore beneath Mount Parnassus and convinced them to serve him.

From the earliest period in Greek history, Delphi was an extremely sacred place. Both individuals and cities came to Delphi to hear Apollo's oracles. Indeed, each major Greek city maintained a treasury along the Sacred Way that led up to the Temple of Apollo. The region around Delphi was nominally a dependency of the city of Phocis, although the site was in effect international territory and, except on rare occasions, unaffected by the wars that constantly pitted city-state against city-state, the most famous of which was the Peloponnesian War (431–404 B.C.E.).

The mantic, or divinatory ritual, took place in a chamber deep within the temple called the *manteion*. The Pythia, who, in anthropological terms, was a shaman, that is, someone who goes into a trance and is either possessed by a divine being or is able to visit the spirit world, chewed a laurel leaf and then





**Tholos of the Sanctuary of Athena at the Oracle at Delphi, Greece.** Considered by the ancient Greeks to be the center of the universe and a place of great mystical power, the Oracle of Apollo at Delphi was constructed in the early 4th century B.C.E. and is located on Mount Parnassus. © BETTMANN/CORBIS

mounted a tripod that stood on top of the Omphalos Stone, which was believed to be the world's navel. According to several ancient eyewitnesses, including the second-century C.E. historian Plutarch, "noxious fumes" issued from a hole, about nine inches in diameter, directly beneath the tripod and surrounded the Pythia. Some modern scholars have suggested that the chewed laurel leaves might have been responsible for her altered state of consciousness, and that the fumes came from a natural source beneath the ground. However, we now know that no such source exists and that laurel is not a hallucinogen. The author of this article has suggested that the "noxious fumes" probably came from *Cannabis sativa* leaves burning in a secret furnace directly beneath the *manteion*, and that it was their hallucinogenic effect that put the Pythia into a trance. Unfortunately, all evidence of such a furnace has long since disappeared, and, until further research is done on the charring in the interior of the hole, this must remain a tentative hypothesis.

In any case, after the petitioner posed his question, the Pythia babbled incoherently. Her random utterances were then reshaped by the Delphic priests into coherent, albeit cryptic "responses," which frequently reflected current political

realities or the size of the gift the petitioner or his city had made to the oracle.

In addition to the Temple of Apollo, the surviving ruins of which date from the fourth century B.C.E., when the oracle was at the height of its importance, Delphi includes several other temples, a theater, and the aforementioned treasuries. Although it declined steadily during the Roman period (after 150 B.C.E.), and especially after the spread of Christianity in the fourth century, the oracle remained a sacred place in the eyes of both the Romans and the Greeks, and it survived until 390, when the Temple of Apollo was finally closed by the Roman emperor Theodosius I (347–395), along with other pagan sites in Greece, including the Parthenon.

### The Temple Mount

Our next two sacred places, which still possess a profound spiritual aura, are in the city of Jerusalem, a city sacred to three world religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, which, between them, command the devotion of well over two-thirds of the world's population. By the beginning of the Bronze Age (c. 3500 B.C.E.) what was to become Jerusalem had



**Jews at the Western Wall of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.** The Western Wall is all that remains of the Second Temple, which was destroyed in 70 B.C.E. It serves as a gathering place for Jews to lament the Temple's loss. AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

been conquered by a Canaanitic people known as the Jebusites. By around 1400 Egyptian records indicate that the site was called Urusalim (Heb., Yerushalayim). However, the history of Jerusalem as we know it begins with the Hebrew conquest of the region around 1250. Around 1000 King David managed to capture the city from the Jebusites, brought the Ark of the Covenant from Qiryat Ye'crim, where it had been kept, and installed it in a tabernacle. He also began construction of a modest temple, which was vastly enlarged and completed by his son and successor, King Solomon.

Although Jerusalem is studded with monuments sacred to the three religious traditions that venerate the city, in what follows we shall focus on two locations that loom above the rest: the first is the Temple Mount, which today includes the Dome of the Rock, the al-Aqsa Mosque, and the Western Wall or "Wailing Wall," the last remnant of the Second Temple; the second is the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.



**Church of the Holy Sepulcher, Jerusalem.** The most well-known and popular Christian pilgrimage site, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, was originally constructed in 330, but was destroyed some three hundred years later and rebuilt in the thirteenth century. © CARMEN REDONDO/CORBIS

The Temple Mount, also known as Mount Moriah and, to Muslims, as Haram-esh-Sherif, was initially the site of Solomon's Temple, completed in the early tenth century B.C.E., which was totally destroyed by the invading Babylonians in 586. The Second Temple was begun on the same site shortly after 539, when the Persians liberated the Jews from captivity. It was ravaged several times in the ensuing centuries, most notably by the Syrian king Antiochus IV in 168 B.C.E. In 4 B.C.E. the Second Temple was extensively restored by Herod the Great, only to be destroyed permanently by the Romans in 70 C.E. in the wake of the great Jewish Revolt of 69–70.

The dimensions and appearance of both temples were roughly similar. The First Temple reached the zenith of its development under King Hezekiah (c. 715–687 B.C.E.). By that time it had become a prime place of pilgrimage for Jews from both Israel and Judah. The most sacred part of the temple was the "Holy of Holies," where the Ark of the Covenant, a box, traditionally 2.5 cubits (3 feet, 9 inches) in length and 1.5 cubits (2 feet, 3 inches) in height, that contained the Tablets of the Law (the Ten Commandments) which Moses had received atop Mount Sinai, was kept. The Holy of Holies was located deep inside the principal building and could only be approached by the hereditary priests, that is, the descendants of Aaron, the first Jewish high priest and traditional founder of the Hebrew priesthood.

The Second Temple, especially as restored and enlarged by Herod the Great, was even larger and more impressive than Solomon's Temple, although it still served fundamentally to house the Ark and the Tablets of the Law. It was in the Second Temple that Jesus disputed with the Pharisees and later





**Worshippers around the tomb of Christ in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.** The Romans built the Church of the Holy Sepulcher on what they believed was Golgotha, the site of the crucifixion of Jesus. AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

kicked over the tables of the money changers in the courtyard. However, save for a handful of artifacts looted by the Romans—a menorah, or sacred seven-branched candelabra, a shofar, or ritual horn, and some cups and other vessels, images of which were carved on the Arch of Titus in Rome—most of the Second Temple’s furnishings, including the Ark and its sacred contents, were lost forever when the building was razed in 70 C.E. (According to some legends, the Ark of the Covenant managed to survive the catastrophe, and several sites have been suggested as its ultimate resting place, including one in Ethiopia; this was the theme of the film *Raiders of the Lost Ark*.)

However, the Temple Mount remained, as did the aforementioned Western Wall, better known as the “Wailing Wall,” where Jews still come to pray and lament the temple’s loss. And the Temple Mount also came to occupy an extremely important position in Islam as well. Indeed, it is the third most important pilgrimage site, outranked only by Mecca and Medina. The reason is that when the prophet Muhammad died in 632 C.E. he ascended to heaven astride his horse, but not before stopping briefly at the Haram esh-Sherif, or Temple Mount, more specifically on the rock traditionally believed to be the one on which Abraham offered the sacrifice of his son Isaac to God. Indeed, devout Muslims believe that the imprint of one of Muhammad’s horse’s hooves can still be seen on this rock. A sanctuary, called the Dome of the Rock, was built

between 691 and 692 C.E. by the Umayyad caliph ‘Abd al-Malik to mark this sacred spot. Originally its domed roof was covered with gold leaf, although in 1962 the gold was replaced by gold-colored anodized aluminum. Nearby is the sacred al-Aqsa Mosque, which has also figured importantly in recent disputes between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

### **The Church of the Holy Sepulcher**

The second sacred site in Jerusalem is the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, believed to have been constructed on the site of Jesus’ crucifixion and interment. In some respects, as the historian of religion Jonathan Z. Smith points out, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the original version of which was built by Helen, mother of the Roman emperor Constantine, in 330, can be regarded as the successor to the Second Temple. Indeed, it immediately became the single most important Christian pilgrimage site (the second was the equally ancient Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem) and thus carried on the tradition that Jerusalem was a supremely sacred place among adherents of the new religion.

The original church, built in the Byzantine style, was destroyed by the Persians in 614. It was rebuilt in the same style shortly thereafter and, although severely damaged by an earthquake in 808, managed to survive until the Fatimid caliph al-Hakim destroyed the building again in 1009 and along with it the cave that was the presumed tomb of Jesus. In 1244 the



**Pyramid of the Sun at Teotihuacán, photographed c. 1931.** The Aztec Pyramid of the Sun in the Valley of Mexico contains six man-made chambers beneath its base which were not discovered by archeologists until the twentieth century. HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES

Crusaders rebuilt the church, in the Romanesque style, and it has remained essentially intact ever since, despite several attempts at restoration.

In the interior, the site of Golgotha, the traditional location of Jesus' crucifixion is marked by a Greek Orthodox chapel, and his tomb, or Sepulcher, called in Greek the *Anastasis*, or "Place of Resurrection," is located beneath a rotunda surrounded by columns supporting an ornamented, domed roof. The Sepulcher itself is marked by a structure known as the Edicule, which is believed to be directly above the cave destroyed in 1009.

A unique—and not always happy—feature of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher is that it is jointly owned by three major Christian denominations: the Greek Orthodox, the Armenian Orthodox, and the Roman Catholic Churches. Other communities—the Egyptian Coptic, the Ethiopian Orthodox, and the Syrian Orthodox Churches—also possess certain rights and small properties in or near the building. For example, the Copts share a small area on the roof. The rights and privileges of all of these communities are protected by the Status Quo of the Holy Places (1852), as guaranteed in the Treaty of Berlin (1878), although the several communities jealously guard their spaces and rarely agree on even the smallest matters of basic maintenance. Indeed, at various times the secular authority, as of the early 2000s wielded by the State of Israel, has been

forced to intervene in these disputes and subsidize needed repairs and renovations.

Nevertheless, despite the recent political upheavals in the region and the ongoing squabbles among its owners, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher remains the foremost Christian pilgrimage site in the world and is indeed a worthy successor to its vanished neighbor, the ancient Hebrew Temple.

### **The Pyramid of the Sun at Teotihuacán**

The Pyramid of the Sun at the great pre-Columbian site of Teotihuacán in the Valley of Mexico is an awe-inspiring sight. One of the largest man-made constructions in the Americas—a continent dotted with enormous pre-Columbian pyramids—the Sun Pyramid stands at 489 feet (149 meters) by 551 feet (168 meters) at its base, 148 feet (45 meters) in height. Its graceful volumetric construction echoes the shape of the mountain behind it, encouraging viewers to perceive the man-made shape as a metaphorical echo of the enormous natural form that dominates the valley.

The Pyramid of the Sun is one of a series of impressive pyramids, temples, and plazas that line the Avenue of the Dead, the main north-south axis of the central precinct of Teotihuacán, one of the largest cities of the world during the first millennium C.E., when it boasted a population of 100,000 to 150,000. The city began its rise to prominence around 1 C.E.; the pyramid began to be constructed around 150 C.E., and was repeatedly expanded through multiple construction phases. Abandoned rather suddenly after 600, the enormous ruins of this urban center nonetheless continued to influence Mexican life for centuries thereafter. The conquering Spanish learned of the site from the Aztec ruler Montezuma, who regularly visited there, considering it a holy place. Tourists, both Mexican and international, continue to be moved by its grandeur, and the U.S.-based artist Michael Heizer, son of an archaeologist, has gained international prominence for his abstract earthworks, which echo the majestic form of the pyramid he saw as a child.

The full significance of the Pyramid of the Sun only became clear to archaeologists in the early 1970s, when a tunnel was accidentally discovered at the foot of the main staircase. This tunnel leads directly toward the center of the pyramid's base, where six chambers or caves were discovered. Originally believed to be natural springs, these "caves" are now thought to be completely man-made, and to date back to the earliest date of the pyramid's construction.

In the religions of the ancient Americas, perhaps more so than in the other great religious traditions described here, sacred places loomed especially large in the spiritual imagination. Widespread traditions of ancestor worship invested the tombs of the dead with great power both as the sources of political and social legitimacy for the living, and as sites imbued with religious sanctity and powerful with the sources of life, fecundity, and health not only for human descendants, but for the ecosystem more generally. Features of the natural landscape, such as springs, caves, and mountain peaks, were likewise invested with great sacral significance, and were often





**The Great Mosque at Mecca, Saudi Arabia, photographed 1973.** Mecca, the birthplace of the Prophet Muhammad, is the most sacred place in Islam. © BETTMANN/CORBIS

believed to be original places from which the very first ancestors emerged. In Mesoamerica in particular, the idea of a hidden source of water inside a cave was closely associated with the birth of ancestors and with the control of rainfall, the circulation of water, the origins of time, and the source of life. This complex of ideas was one of the oldest and the most pervasive religious concepts, traceable far back in time, and shared across the many language and cultural groups of the region. The six secret caves under the Pyramid of the Sun may make specific reference to the origin myth of ruling lineages, but more importantly, in constructing their largest and most impressive temple-pyramid around a circle of secret caves containing canalized water, the builders of the Pyramid of the Sun tapped into this most primordial of ancient American ideas about sacred space.

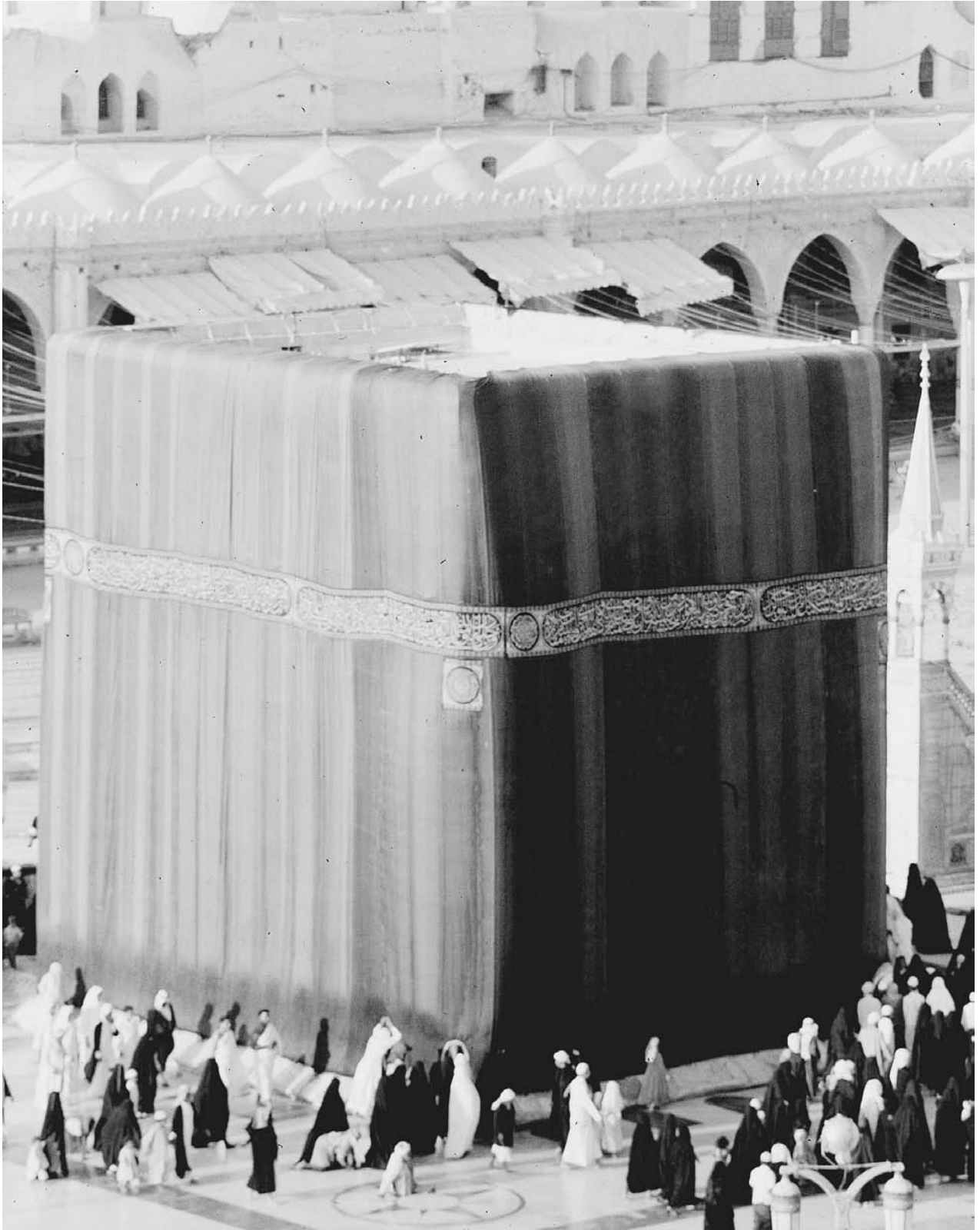
### Mecca

The most sacred place in Islam is the city of Mecca (or Makkah in Arabic), which is located in the western part of Saudi Arabia about seventy-five miles (121 kilometers) inland from the port city of Jidda in Hejaz province. Although it was clearly a sacred place for centuries before the time of Muhammad (c. 570–632 C.E.), and includes the famous Ka'ba, a cube-shaped building said to have been built by the Hebrew patriarch Abraham and in whose southeastern corner can be found the venerated "Black Stone," supposedly given to Abraham by the Angel Gabriel, the city's sacredness in Islam

derives primarily from the fact that it was the Prophet's birthplace.

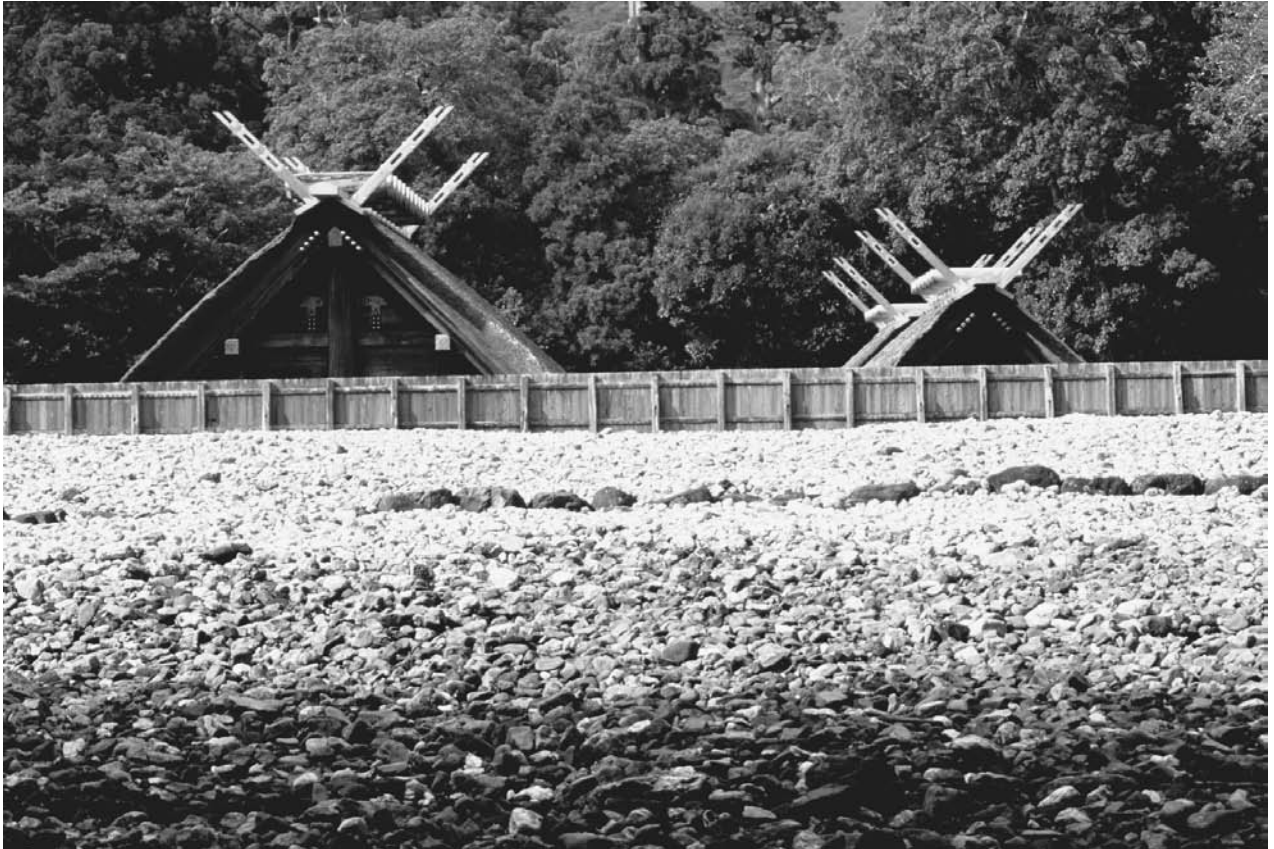
Muhammad lived peacefully in Mecca, managing his wife's business affairs, until he was about forty years of age, when he began receiving revelations from God via the Angel Gabriel. He soon began to preach his new faith, supported by his devoted wife Khadijah and a growing number of followers. But after his wife died, he began to struggle against opposition from several quarters and, in the year 622, he was forced to flee to the nearby city of Medina one step ahead of a plot to assassinate him. This retreat, called in Arabic the *Hejira*, or "flight," later became the base-year for the Muslim calendar.

Eventually Muhammad returned to Mecca in triumph, and after his death in 632, his revelations were gathered together into the Muslim holy book, the Koran. These revelations included the "Five Pillars of Islam," one of which asserts that every Muslim should make a pilgrimage, called the hajj, to Mecca at least once in his or her lifetime. Thus the city annually plays host to two million Muslims from all over the world. Wearing a white robe called an *ihram*, the pilgrims are expected to circle the Ka'ba seven times, to run another seven times between two hills, Safa and Marwa, to spend from noon until sunset on a hill in the valley of Arafat, to throw stones at the devil in the valley of Mina, and to sacrifice sheep and goats. The hajj occurs only in the first two



Moslems make the ritual circuit of the Ka'ba at Mecca. One of the sacred Five Pillars of Islam is the *hajj*, or pilgrimage to Mecca. More than two million Moslems make the journey to the city annually. THE ART ARCHIVE/HARPERCOLLINS PUBLISHERS





**Naiku Shrine at Ise-Jingu, Japan.** The inner shrine at Ise, the Naiku, is considered the final resting place of the Japanese Sun Goddess Amaterasu Omikami. Both the inner and outer shrines are destroyed and precisely rebuilt every twenty years. © MICHAEL S. YAMASHITA/CORBIS

weeks of Dhu al-Hijja, the last month of the Muslim lunar year, and during the time they are in Mecca and its environs the pilgrims are expected to observe some strict taboos, including abstinence from sexual activity. Those who make this pilgrimage are entitled to add the title *hajji* to their names.

Thus, like Jerusalem, Mecca has become a worldwide place of pilgrimage. It is clearly a place apart, a place brimming with spirituality and sacredness, despite the fact that only Muslims are permitted to visit it.

### Ise

Our final example of an important sacred place is the Ise-Jingu, the most sacred shrine in Shinto, the indigenous belief system of Japan. Located in the city of Ise in Mie prefecture, about an hour's train ride south of Nagoya, it is dedicated to the Sun-Goddess Amaterasu Omikami, from whom the imperial family is traditionally believed to descend through her grandson, Honinigi, who, according to the *Kojiki* (712 C.E.), the most ancient Japanese mythological text, descended to Earth and extended his grandmother's sovereignty to the "Reed Plain," that is, the mortal realm. Actually, there are two major shrines at Ise. The Outer Shrine is dedicated to Toyouke, the *kami*, or god, of harvests and goods. But it is the Inner

Shrine, or Naiku, that is most important to the Japanese people, as it is there that Amaterasu is enshrined.

Traditionally, the Naiku is said to date from the third century C.E., and the extremely simple architecture reflects the wooden thatched-roof storehouses of the late prehistoric period. However, what sets the Ise complex apart not only from all other Shinto shrines, but from sacred places elsewhere in the world, is that all of the shrine buildings are torn down and rebuilt exactly as they were every twenty years (the most recent rebuilding was in 1993). Thus, the Ise shrines are at once extremely old—the rebuilding cycle began in the eighth century—and very new. And the same holds for Amaterasu and Toyouke, who are ritually rejuvenated with each rebuilding.

Each year, the emperor is expected to make a pilgrimage to Ise to honor his ancestor and report to her about what has happened to him and the realm since his last visit. But he is not the only pilgrim. A great many Japanese from all walks of life visit Ise annually to worship at its shrines and do honor to the Sun Goddess. Indeed, in the mid-nineteenth century, as Japan began to open up to the outside world, several Ise-related cults swept across the country and impelled thousands of Japanese peasants to leave their villages and head for the Ise-Jingu. While the current Ise pilgrimages are far less

frenziered, the shrine remains central not only to Shinto, but to Japanese culture per se.

### Conclusion

These, then, are eight of our planet's premier sacred places. While they are very different from one another in a great many respects, all share at least one common quality: an intense spirituality that makes them special. Some paranormal researchers have suggested that they are inherent "power spots," located at the confluence of what have been called "ley lines," that is, energy-charged paths that presumably connect major ancient and prehistoric sites. While most orthodox scientists scoff at this notion, one cannot help but wonder whether these six locations and others like them do have an inherent spiritual power that sets them apart and renders them sacred, not only to those who built them, but to subsequent generations and cultures.

See also *Religion; Sacred Texts; Visual Order to Organizing Collections.*

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### SACRED TEXTS.

This entry includes two subentries:

*Asia*  
*Koran*

According to Buddhist tradition, questions regarding doctrinal authenticity first arose during the lifetime of the historical Buddha (c. fifth century B.C.E.). When asked how his followers should distinguish the true "word of the Buddha" (*buddha-vacana*) from false teachings, he is reported to have said, "whatever is well spoken is the word of the Buddha." Later commentators understood this to mean that if a doctrine or practice accords with the Buddhist goals of liberation from cyclic existence (*samsara*) and the alleviation of suffering (*dukkha*), and if it is concordant with the core doctrines of Buddhism, then it can be adopted and practiced by Buddhists, regardless of who originally taught it.

A more restrictive approach to questions of textual authority was presented in the Great Instruction Discourse (*Mahapadesa-sutta*, attributed to the Buddha but probably written after his death), in which he advises his followers to compare contested teachings with the corpus of discourses known to have been spoken by the Buddha. If a teaching or text accords with the oral instructions (*Pali, sutta*; Sanskrit, *sutra*) and the rules for monastic conduct (*vinaya*), then it can be accepted as authoritative. It should be noted, however, that the text assumes that only well-educated senior monks—not ordinary Buddhists who lack a thorough knowledge of the Buddha's teachings—will be able to make such determinations.

Shortly after the Buddha's death, a group of five hundred of his most advanced disciples convened to definitively settle the limits of Buddhist teaching. All were arhats, men who had eliminated mental afflictions and who would attain nirvana at the end of their lives. It was assumed that such people would not be hampered by faulty memories or sectarian biases. Ananda—who had been the Buddha's personal attendant and had been present at all of his discourses—was responsible for reciting the oral discourses, while Upali recounted the Buddha's instructions on monastic discipline. After the recitation was concluded, the canon was declared closed, and the assembled arhats agreed that no new teachings would be recognized as the "word of the Buddha."

Contemporary Western scholars have questioned the historicity of the “first council,” but the story is accepted as fact by the Theravada school, the dominant Buddhist tradition in Southeast Asia, which views it as an indication of the validity of its canon. This is written in an Indic language called Pali and is believed to have been definitively codified by the five hundred arhats. It is organized into three sections, called “baskets” (*pitaka*): Vinaya *pitaka*, which was concerned with rules for Buddhist monks and nuns; Sutta *pitaka*, the Buddha’s discourses on doctrine and practice; and Abhidhamma *pitaka*, containing scholastic treatises summarizing and explicating Buddhist doctrine.

### Later Additions to the Buddhist Canon

Despite the confident pronouncement by the participants at the first council that the canon was closed, several centuries after the passing of the Buddha new texts began to appear in India that carried the title of “sutra,” purportedly spoken by the Buddha during his lifetime. These were part of a new movement that referred to itself as “Mahayana” (Greater vehicle) and that characterized its opponents as “Hinayana” (Lesser vehicle). Proponents of the Mahayana sutras claimed that their texts superseded those of their rivals and were of “definitive meaning” (*nitartha*), while those of the previous canons were relegated to the status of “interpretable meaning” (*neyartha*). The opponents of Mahayana, for their part, categorically rejected these new texts as forgeries, and pointed out that they differed significantly from those of the earlier canon and contained new doctrines and practices that were not attested in the earlier texts. The Mahayanists responded by claiming that their sutras had been taught by the Buddha but were only revealed to his most advanced disciples.

Some Mahayana sutras set out hermeneutical principles that could be used to differentiate which texts are definitive and which are interpretable. According to the Teaching of Aksayamati Sutra (Aksayamati-nirdesa-sutra), which became normative for the Middle Way (Madhyamaka) school, the differentiating factor is doctrinal content: those texts that discuss the final nature of phenomena are definitive, while all others are of interpretable meaning. The final nature of phenomena is said to be their emptiness (*sunyata*) of inherent existence (*svabhava*).

Another hermeneutical schema was propounded by the Sutra Explaining the Thought (Samdhinirmocana-sutra), which became the primary scriptural source for the Yogic Practice (*Yogacara*) school. In this text, the Buddha is presented as claiming that he taught his doctrines in three cycles, or “wheels of doctrine” (*dharmacakra*). The “first wheel” contains basic Buddhist doctrines that are contained in the early canon, which were taught for beginners and were not definitive. In the “second wheel” the literal interpretation of these doctrines was rendered problematic by the declaration that all phenomena—including Buddhist teachings and practices—are empty of inherent existence, and so the doctrines of the early canon lack the privileged truth status that conservative Buddhists had attributed to them. The “third wheel,” represented by the Sutra Explaining the Thought, differentiates interpretable and definitive teachings and provides hermeneutical guidelines by

which Buddhists (or at least those who accept them as normative) can differentiate the two.

The canonical situation of Indian Buddhism became even more confusing in later centuries when a new group of texts began to appear, again claiming to have been spoken by the Buddha. These were called “tantras” and contained significant innovations in doctrine and practice, although the basic path was that of the Mahayana. Like the Mahayana sutras before them, they claimed to supersede previous teachings and to represent the final “word of the Buddha” on doctrine and practice.

### Regional Transmission

The profusion of canonical, protocanonical, and deutero-canonical literature in India presented significant difficulties for Buddhists in other Asian countries as the religion spread. Scholars of the tradition commonly identify three primary trajectories in the diffusion of Buddhism: Southeast Asian Buddhism, East Asian Buddhism, and Northern Buddhism.

According to tradition, Buddhism was first established in Southeast Asia by a mission led by Mahinda, a Buddhist monk who was the son of the Indian emperor Aśoka (ruled 272–236 B.C.E.). After arriving in Sri Lanka, Mahinda reportedly converted its king to Buddhism, and the two founded the Mahavihara, the first Buddhist monastery outside of India. It became the seat of Buddhist orthodoxy in Southeast Asia for millennia. The dominant Buddhist tradition in the region is Theravada (Teachings of the Elders), which prides itself on its conservatism and adheres to the Pali canon. According to mainstream Theravada, their canon contains the only true “word of the Buddha,” and all other purported teachings are spurious.

East Asian Buddhism mainly arrived via trade routes linking India to China and the rest of the region. Several of the oasis cities along these routes had established Buddhist centers, and these became a conduit by which texts, doctrines, and practices moved from India to China, and from there to Korea, Japan, and Vietnam.

The first outpost in the transmission process was a translation bureau established in the Chinese capital of Loyang in 148 C.E. by the Central Asian monk An Shigao. Together with a team of other Central Asian monks, he began rendering Indic texts into Chinese. The process of translation intensified in later centuries, and two primary techniques were adopted by Chinese translators: some coined new terminology for Indic technical terms that had no equivalents in Chinese, while others developed a system called “matching meanings” (*ke-yi*), in which they appropriated terms (mainly from Daoism) that approximated Indic originals.

Both of these approaches had inherent problems. Translators who opted for the creation of a new technical vocabulary often ended up with neologisms that sounded odd to Chinese readers and that had little resonance for them. While they might be technically accurate, literate Chinese often perceived them as evidence of the foreign (and inferior) origins of Buddhism and its unsuitability for Chinese. The practice of





**Statue of Buddha with offerings, Munsusa Monastery, South Kyoongsang, South Korea.** After the Buddha's death, a council of his disciples met to finalize and close the canon of his teachings. Several centuries later, however, new texts began to be presented as doctrines that Buddha had put forth during his lifetime. JOHN POWERS

“matching meanings,” on the other hand, produced texts with terms that were well known to Chinese and that appeared to contain familiar doctrines, but there was considerable slippage between the original Indic terms and their Chinese equivalents. For example, in some texts the Sanskrit term *nirvana*—liberation from the world and from rebirth, which is the result of the elimination of mental afflictions and the cultivation of wisdom and insight—was commonly rendered by the Daoist term “nonaction” (*wu wei*), which is the ideal way of life of the Daoist sage, who lives in accordance with the rhythms of the Dao and avoids micromanaging affairs.

Such terminological ambiguity was compounded by the problems of textual transmission to East Asia. Buddhism only gradually gained adherents, and for centuries texts flowed into China haphazardly, brought mainly by pilgrims or missionary monks. The difficult terrain of the deserts of Central Asia and the vast distances covered by the trade routes limited what individual travelers could carry with them. Missionaries would bring texts that were important to them and seldom attempted to carry a representative sampling of Indian Buddhist literature. As a result, commentaries sometimes arrived in China before the texts on which they commented, and polemical texts arrived before those they were attacking. The Chinese Buddhist canon contains a plethora of texts from

various regions of India, various schools and traditions, and from different periods of time. Many sutras exist in several variants, which are dated in the Chinese canon. These have provided scholars with evidence for when certain doctrines and practices developed in India, because later versions retrospectively added material as it became established in India. In addition, the Chinese canon contains portions of other Indian canons, which have revealed some of the doctrines and practices of schools that were influential at a certain point but later died out.

China was the conduit from which Buddhism was disseminated to the rest of East Asia. It first traveled to Korea, and from there it was exported to Japan and Vietnam. The Korean Buddhist canon is derived from the Chinese canon, and the canonical texts used in Japanese and Vietnamese Buddhism also derive from Chinese translations.

The transmission of Buddhism to Tibet and Mongolia was significantly different from that into East Asia. Like the Chinese, Tibetans adopted Mahayana Buddhism, but tantra was much more influential than in China. Also, while China had an advanced culture at the time when it first encountered Buddhism, Tibet was relatively backward culturally. Despite this, it was an expanding military power, and as it spread outward from the Tibetan plateau it encountered other civilizations that were



far more advanced in science, technology, and culture. One result of this was that the Tibetan kings of the Yarlung dynasty (so called because its headquarters were in the Yarlung Valley of central Tibet) decided to import elements of the civilizations beyond their borders.

Beginning in the seventh century, the Yarlung kings converted to Buddhism and began a process of transforming Tibetan society. According to tradition, the first of the “dharma kings” (*chos rgyal*) was Songtsen Gampo (Srong btan sgam po; c. 618–850), who is said to have been a physical emanation of the Buddha Avalokitesvara, who embodies compassion and is the patron Buddha of Tibet. He married princesses from Nepal and China, both of whom are said by tradition to have been emanations of the Buddha Tara, and the three worked together to convert the Tibetans to Buddhism. Although this is the consensus of histories written centuries later by Buddhist clerics, there is little contemporary evidence that Songtsen Gampo had any real interest in Buddhism.

Some of his successors, however, were clearly devout Buddhists, and they allocated significant resources to the importation of Buddhism. Tibetan students were sent to the great seats of Buddhist learning at monastic universities like Nalanda and Vikramasila, and Indian masters were invited to Tibet to spread the faith. During the early period of transmission (*snga dar*), translation committees were established, often with government funding. Their task was to render the vast corpus of Indian Buddhist literature into Tibetan. Faced with the same translation issues that Chinese Buddhists had encountered earlier, the Tibetans opted for the development of a specialized vocabulary for Indian Buddhist technical terms. Many of these were Tibetan neologisms, such as the rendering of “passed beyond sorrow” (*nya ngan las 'das pa*) for the Sanskrit term *nirvana*.

During this early period, translation equivalents varied considerably, and when the Yarlung dynasty fell in 842, translation activity was largely suspended. It began again during the “second dissemination” (*phyi dar*), which was initiated by the arrival of Atisa (982–1054) in Tibet in 1042. During this period translation bureaus were reconstituted, and standard Sanskrit-Tibetan lexicons were created in order to standardize terminology. In the fourteenth century, the Tibetan scholar Bu-ston (Bu ston rin chen grub; 1290–1364) reportedly codified the Tibetan canon by poring through the various manuscripts of translations of Indian Buddhist texts and selecting those he deemed to be the most accurate. These were arranged into two groupings: Kangyur (bKa' 'gyur, literally “translations of teachings”) and Tengyur (bsTan 'gyur, literally “translations of texts”). The first section contained Indian Mahayana sutras and tantras, as well as texts on monastic discipline. The “Translations of Texts” section includes Indian philosophical texts and commentaries on sutras, along with some indigenous Tibetan works and translations of Chinese treatises. Most of this literature was imported from the libraries of the great monasteries of northern India, but at the same time tantric teachings, both written and oral, came to Tibet, mostly transmitted by Indian masters and their students. These often

achieved a deuterocanonical status within tantric lineages, and many are still widely circulated and discussed.

During the early period of transmission of Buddhism, Tibetans mainly concentrated on translating Indic texts, but as they grew more confident in their understanding of the tradition, a vast corpus of indigenous works was composed. Over time, four main orders formed in Tibet: Nyingma (rNying ma), Kagyü (bKa' rgyud), Sakya (Sa skya), and Geluk (dGe lugs). Each of these in turn produced deuterocanonical texts, and the Nyingma, Kagyu, and Sakya orders have compiled their own canons. The Gelukpa order mainly relies on the works of its founder Tsong Khapa (Tsong kha pa bLo sang grags pa; 1357–1419) and his disciples Kaydrup (mKhas grub rje) and Gyeltsap (rGyal tshab rje). All of these traditions continue to revere the Indic texts contained in the normative Buddhist canon, but in practice they are seldom studied today; instead, Buddhist students and scholars tend to rely on the works of their own traditions, supplemented by oral instructions by their teachers.

Questions regarding authenticity and interpretation remain important in Buddhism today. In most of Asia, the prime criterion for judging the validity of a given text is whether or not there is an Indian original. Given the vast size of the various Buddhist canons, however, this provides little help in deciding which texts or teachings should be regarded as definitive. Most Buddhist traditions base their decisions on what has been handed down to them by their respective lineages. Most of these privilege a particular text (or set of texts) and use it as the criterion for determining authoritativeness. Several East Asian lineages in particular have devised elaborate classification schemes that rank Buddhist teachings hierarchically, with those of their preferred text(s) on the top. It is rare for individual Buddhists to take the time to pore over the voluminous literature in their respective canons, and most interpret texts and doctrines in accordance with the traditions of their lineages.

See also **Buddhism; Daoism; Zen.**

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## KORAN

The English word *Koran* comes from the Arabic *qur'an*, most likely meaning “recitation” or “reading,” although some Muslim commentators consider it simply the name of the scripture, while some others trace its etymology to a verb that means “to collect.” The word *qur'an* is probably related to the Syriac word *qaryānā*, which in pre-Islamic Christian usage meant a reading or a recitation from memory in the context of worship and prayer. The Koran is accepted by Muslims as the corpus of revelations given through Muhammad in the Arabian towns of Mecca and Medina between 610 C.E. and his death in 632 C.E. It is the revelations themselves that proclaim the Prophet's authority. At the same time, the revelations are accepted on the basis of his testimony.

The traditional biography of Muhammad portrays the first encounter of this forty-year-old merchant with God's messenger Gabriel in a mountain cave as a terrifying experience. He is commanded to recite, yet does not know how or what to recite. Indeed, for Muslims the illiteracy, or at least lack of education, on the part of the Prophet is a guarantee that the revelations were not composed by him, but have a divine origin. Over the ensuing twenty-two years, Gabriel teaches him the revelations that will eventually become the text at the heart of Muslim life and faith. It came initially not as a completed text but piecemeal, as the voice of God addressing the Prophet and his hearers according to the actual situation in which they found themselves.

Although it is common to think of the Koran as an elaborately calligraphed text, and in spite of the fact that it refers to itself as scripture (*kitab*), the name *qur'an* underlines in several senses the centrality of its oral character. It comes to the Prophet orally, dictated by the angel, who assures that it is committed to memory. It is delivered to the people orally as it is revealed piece by piece. Even after the text was transcribed on the basis of oral testimony and given standardized form probably some twenty years after the death of the Prophet, it continued to live principally in oral form, memorized and recited by the community. The oral tradition rather than ancient manuscripts formed the basis of the standard edition made in Egypt in 1924.

### The Koran and Previous Scriptures

In its characteristically self-referential way, the Koran tells Muslims that they are to believe not only in what has been revealed through Muhammad, but also, and without distinction, in “what was revealed to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and the tribes, and what Moses and Jesus received, and what the prophets received from their Lord” (2:136). The Koran has a very clear idea of its place in the broader pattern of divine revelation: it contains essentially the same message as has been delivered by every prophet sent by God from the beginning of creation. Those who possess the earlier scriptures—the *ahl al-kitab*—recognize in the Koran the same truth (5:83). This was the first time the Arabs had been addressed by God in their own language, and Muslims consider the Koran the definitive and most complete version of the divine message currently available.

Even though in principle the other scriptures are to be believed, it is not clear whether or not the other communities are still in possession of the original message entrusted to them through their prophets. Charges of falsification and corruption of their scriptures, or at least of misinterpreting them, are often leveled against Christians and Jews.

The Koran addresses its hearers as though they are already familiar with the stories of the great biblical figures, commenting on them without retelling the narrative. In this the Koran sees itself acting as a reminder of the perennial revelation. It has often been noted that these figures are presented in the Koran with little of the detail and few of the distinguishing characteristics found in the biblical narratives. Early commentators of the Koran drew on the Bible and on other Jewish and Christian materials (referred to as *isra'iliyyat*) to explicate texts that were otherwise opaque.

### History of the Koranic Text

There are several quite distinct senses in which one might speak of the history and prehistory of the text. For the believer, the Koran's prehistory is its preexistence in the heavenly realm: as God's speech, as part of the *umm al-kitab*, or “source of the scripture” (43:4) written on the heavenly *lahf mahfuz* (“Preserved Tablet”) (85:22). From the Preserved Tablet it descended as a whole to the lowest heaven on the Night of Destiny (97:1), whence it was transmitted to the Prophet as need and occasion required.

Non-Muslim scholarship, on the other hand, sifts the Koran in search of textual and conceptual parallels with the Bible, the Talmud, Christian apocrypha, and ancient near-eastern religions, hoping to discover there the prehistory of the text now known. However, this search for dependence has yielded little evidence to show that the Koran has relied on those texts, except to presuppose the broad lines of their narratives as background for its own teaching. For the believer, these echoes and similarities pose no difficulty, since the Koran makes no claim to novelty in its content, but rather asserts proudly the divine origin it shares with those earlier scriptures.

**Historical setting.** Another sense in which one might speak of the history of the text is in the attempt to determine the precise historical context that the text is addressing or, one might say, within which it is a player. Since the Koran itself has no narrative structure, and its chapters (*suras*) and verses (*ayat*, sing, *aa*) contain little or no indication of their historical context, various attempts have been made by Muslims and others to establish a chronological order for the revelations, and a context for each verse or group of verses. The basic division is between the revelations that took place in Mecca and those after the Emigration (*hijra*) to Medina. The Meccan verses are in their turn often divided into three subperiods. All this activity is at best speculative, though there does seem to be gradual development in style and thought that could be taken to mirror the changing circumstances of the Prophet's career. As the Koran came to be used as a source for the elaboration of law, it became increasingly important to establish context and chronology.

Most non-Muslim scholarship accepts along with Muslims that the Koran, whatever prehistory it might have, dates as a textual corpus to the time of Muhammad in Mecca and Medina. However, the years since the mid-1970s have seen a revisionist movement among historians of early Islam who take a radically critical approach to the historical evidence. These scholars, following the lead of John Wansbrough, suggest a later and more gradual process of canonization, taking place once the Arab conquerors had moved out of the Hejaz region of Arabia and encountered the sectarian milieu of Jewish and Christian Syria and Mesopotamia. Such a situation seems to them a much more probable setting for the Koran's particular range of concerns and styles. There is still considerable controversy over this question.

**The written text.** The history of the written text is also approached in various ways. Most Muslims would believe that the text currently available in print is precisely what was taught to the Prophet by Gabriel. Unexpectedly, perhaps, it is Muslim tradition itself rather than non-Muslim scholarship that throws most doubt on this simple approach. The tradition preserves accounts that assure the community that every word of the Koran was transcribed on whatever materials were to hand at the time of its revelation. However, it also contains accounts of disagreements about the content and pronunciation of the text even during the lifetime of the Prophet.

The official transcript of the text under the caliph 'Uthman (r. 644–656) seems to have been based on oral testimony. Even so it did not succeed in putting an end to variants, and the Koran has continued to be recited within a certain range of variation that came eventually to be agreed upon as canonically legitimate. The variant oral traditions themselves for the most part represent divergent ways of vowel-ing and so of pronouncing the original transcription, which contained only an incomplete consonantal skeleton. The script used in 'Uthman's transcription did not even distinguish all the consonants; one particular shape, for example, was used to represent five different consonants, a vowel, and a diphthong. Over the first three or four Islamic centuries a more complete script was gradually developed and came to be accepted.

No doubt the publication of the Egyptian standard edition has created the impression of uniformity and unanimity in the transmission of the text. Its wide circulation may indeed contribute to a real uniformity. However, ancient Koran manuscripts and fragments found in Yemen some years ago reveal that even the main written tradition took some centuries to achieve complete uniformity.

### Themes and Styles

It comes as no surprise, either to Muslim or non-Muslim, to find that many of the central themes of the Koran are familiar from other scriptures. Prophetic denunciations of injustice and unbelief are characteristic of the revelations usually considered early. Mistreatment of the widow, the orphan, and the female child are condemned, the arrogant atheism of the rich deplored. These censures are accompanied by vivid images of the end-times, and the repeated announcement that all the

living will be raised by God to judgment, reward, and punish according to their deeds. God, who created all living things, can easily resurrect them.

The power, wisdom, and providence of God should be obvious to all who consider the signs (*ayat*) in nature and in human history (for example, 16:10–18; 30:20–25; 80:24–32). Many passages rehearse this theme and repeatedly call people to reflect on their world and on the history of nations that have gone before them. Each nation received prophetic guidance from God and was punished if it did not respond. Increasingly important as time goes on is the affirmation of God's unity, the center of Koranic thought and the basis of much of its polemic, not only against the pagan polytheists, but also against Jews and Christians. These latter groups, although having received the Scripture through Moses and Jesus, are considered to have abandoned the core Abrahamic belief in one God and to have given other figures a role alongside God as intercessors and protectors. The Koran consistently calls its hearers to faith in the one God (*iman, tawhid*), which consists in entrusting oneself to God alone (*islam*), and following the guidance God provides through the prophets.

A recurrent theme is the question of the Koran's own origin and authority, both of which are constantly questioned or denied by its hearers. This self-consciousness is a major feature of the Koran, and no other scripture observes and comments upon the processes of its own revelation and reception in such a sustained way. No other scripture argues with its hearers in order to proclaim and defend its authority and the bona fides of its prophet. The history of prophecy is rehearsed schematically to show that Muhammad's career conforms to a centuries-old pattern of rejection.

Particularly in the revelations of the Medinan period, the Koran provides regulations for the life of the new community of believers: for example, on the religious duties of prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and pilgrimage; on family matters of inheritance, marriage, and divorce; on communal obligations such as defense and propagation of the new faith and relations with other communities. Along with these, there are particular regulations for the Prophet and his family.

The Koran, like the Hebrew Bible, emerges in an environment of sometimes bloody conflict. However, unlike the Bible, it does not contain narratives of such bloodshed. Its regulation of religious conflict, even though sanctioning defensive and retaliatory violence, always carries conditions to provide for a cessation of hostilities (cf., 2:190–193; 9:5, 29).

### Controversy over Whether the Koran Was Created

Any religion founded on the belief that God communicates with creatures must eventually consider the relationship between God and God's word or speech. Since Muslims consider God to be the "speaker" of the Koran, the text is therefore defined as God's speech (*kalaam Allah*). However, God's speech cannot be external to God or accidental, but belongs to God's essence. It is, therefore, uncreated and, according to some, eternal.

Beginning in the late eighth century much attention, and for a time an inquisition, came to be focused on the questions of whether, and if so in what sense, the Koran text itself is uncreated. Although one still hears echoes of the Mu'tazilite school of thought that denied the Koran is uncreated, the question of its uncreated nature has been resolved virtually unanimously in the positive. However, the question of in what sense the Koran is the uncreated speech of God was never firmly resolved and remains important even in the early twenty-first century.

There are several reasons for wanting to maintain a distance between the words of the Koran and the eternal speech of God. The first is to safeguard the otherness and immateriality of God and avoid the risk of anthropomorphism. Another is the logical need to recognize the historical particularity of many of the Koran's revelations. A third would be to avoid the idea that in the act of recitation the reciter of the Koran becomes completely identified with God (*hulul*).

At the same time, to distance the Koran too much from God risks undermining its authority and its value as "guidance for the God-fearing" (2:2). It risks reducing it to a merely human document, thus opening too much latitude for interpretation, and diminishing its value as a clear foundation for the law.

### The Koran and Law

The Koran itself contains relatively little in the way of specific laws. What little there is, even the five crimes for which it fixes punishments (*hudud*), needs further specification. In one sense the Koran remains the foundation for all Islamic law, yet at the same time it must be read in the context of the Prophet's teaching and example (*sunna*). The intimate connection between Muhammad and the revelation makes it unthinkable that the sunna could conflict with the Koran. If there seems to be a contradiction, it is the sunna that indicates the true meaning of the Koran, makes it more precise, or renews it for changed circumstances. The idea that the Koran must share the place of authority with the sunna was elaborated by al-Shafi'i (d. 820), who argued that the Koran itself commanded obedience to the Prophet along with obedience to God (3:132; 4:180), and further that God had given Muhammad not only the Koran but also another form of revelation, the Wisdom (*al-hikma*, 2:151, 231; 62:2).

### Koranic Interpretation

It is widely believed that Muslims cannot or will not interpret the Koran but insist on simple literalism. It is true that there is a strong preference for a plain reading that does not evade the claims the text makes on believer and unbeliever alike. However, the Koran itself says (3:7) that it contains some verses that are straightforward and others that need to be interpreted—either because they are metaphorical or because they can only be fully understood in relation to other verses. That verse itself is open to several interpretations, depending on how one divides the sentences within it, and on how one understands the key words translated here as "straightforward" and "metaphorical." Thus, the Koran itself, while denouncing the

kind of manipulation of the text that divides the community, recognizes the necessity of interpretation.

The tradition of commentary (*tafsir*) and analysis is rich and extensive, and draws on several principles and methods familiar in biblical studies: study of textual variants (*qira'at*); reconstruction of the historical context or "occasions of revelation" (*asbab al-nuzul*); distinguishing different literary forms; recourse to grammatical technicalities; and lexical studies of contemporary literature in order to understand unfamiliar vocabulary.

A major factor in interpretation is the doctrine of abrogation (*naskh*) based on the verses 2:106 and 16:101. It is effectively a recognition of the historicity of the text and of the developments this inevitably involves in the divine teaching and commands. As the situation of the Prophet and the community changes, so too does the guidance offered by God change or become more specific. As the faithful become more established in their religion, so too do the demands made upon them become more challenging: the prohibition of alcohol, for example, is introduced in stages.

The principle of abrogation is used by some Muslims, for example, to deny the continuing validity of verses that encourage patience under persecution, and good relations with Christians. Such counsel is considered appropriate only to the period in which the community is weak and unable to fight back. Others, however, would hold that such verses are still valid even where the community is strong.

Esoteric and mystical interpretations are often referred to as *ta'wil*. They rely on distinguishing between the surface meaning (*zahir*) and the deeper sense (*batin*) that should be developed from it on the basis of the teaching of the Shiite imam or the Sufi master.

### Contemporary Controversies over Koranic Criticism

There has long been a distinction, if not a conflict, between interpretation based on traditions of the Prophet and his Companions (*tafsir bi-l-ma'thur*) and interpretation based on reason (*tafsir bi-l-ra'y*). Contemporary conflicts can to some extent be seen as a continuation of that classic dispute. The central question is what role the Prophet had in the process of revelation. Even without denying the divine origin of the Koran, some Muslim authors discuss the human, and therefore conditioned, aspect of the text. Though this has caused great consternation, particularly in the case of the Egyptian author Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, in many respects it has its roots in classical discussions—about the nature of the prophetic access to the unseen realm, compared to that of poets and seers; and about the nature of the passage from the eternal divine word that has no letters, words, or sounds, to the actual Arabic words of the Koran. It is not new to suggest that what God revealed was the meaning (*ma'na*) and that the Prophet, or perhaps Gabriel, was responsible for the wording (*lafz*) that nonetheless faithfully conveyed that meaning.

Another approach came from the Sudanese author M. M. Taha, who suggested that, contrary to traditional approaches,



the earlier rather than the later revelations are the authoritative heart of the Koran. The Meccan verses contain the eternally valid principles of faith, justice, and equality. The Medinan verses, however, represent an application of the principles to a very particular historical circumstances and cannot respond to the changed circumstances of the early twenty-first century. Taha was executed for heresy in 1985. His approach has found echoes in the work of, among others, feminist writer Fatima Mernissi.

The controversy arises from calling into question the contemporary adequacy not of the Word of God itself, but of some of its traditional interpretations. This is seen to open the way to a reduction of the Koran to the same level as the much analyzed and thus diminished Bible. It is also an attack on the power of the guardians of traditional interpretations. Nonetheless, the quest for a new approach to the Koran continues, based on the confidence that the scripture need not remain locked in the seventh or the tenth century, but that it remains the Word of God valid for and relevant to this century.

See also *Islam; Law, Islamic; Religion*.

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**SAGE PHILOSOPHY.** Sage philosophy is a body of knowledge attributed to wise men and women in communities and is regarded to be philosophically significant for both its content and its critical approach to the sustenance and growth of knowledge at the communal level. Although the term came into use rather recently in the course of African philosophers' appraisal of the nature and relation of philosophy to the indigenous traditions of their communities, questions that have emerged from debating the nature of sage philosophy are applicable beyond the postcolonial confines of African scholars' efforts to revise, redefine, and align disciplinary contents and practices to the recovery of their cultural values. For example, because sage philosophy raises such questions as the separation between critical thinking and popular belief, its discussion could resonate with analytical methods that rely on the analysis of popular conceptual assumptions and ideas as expressed either in ordinary language or in the language of professional communities. In these senses, analytic practices appear constantly to seek conceptual clarification by comparing and contrasting specific—and, therefore, sometimes specialized—uses of terms to their appearances in other domains. Discussions of sage philosophy might also be relevant to theories about the social underpinnings of scientific knowledge advanced by the American historian Thomas Kuhn

(1922–1996). He explains that a revolution occurs in scientific theory only when it is determined that a new explanation has made a complete break from a previous paradigm; this is, in a sense, a discussion of how radical critical thinking relates to a more popular—that is, communally held or communalized—mindset or framework from which it becomes disentangled by virtue of a critical engagement with it.

From a historical standpoint, sage philosophy connects with other voices and perspectives in the postcolonial discourse through its claim, however more implicit than it is an open expression, that Africans' creation of knowledge in the present moment of Africa's history cannot ignore those voices that give the present a sense of relevance and validity by bridging it with the past to form a continuum.

### Historical Origins

Conceived, defined, advanced, and defended by the late Kenyan philosopher Henry Odera Oruka (1944–1995), the idea of sage philosophy has its historical origins in two separate but related colonial factors: first, the general disparaging colonial attitude that Africans were incapable of abstract thinking; and second, a vicious rivalry between different European religious denominations for control over Africans' minds and souls. On the one hand was a Protestant skepticism about Africans' capacity to philosophize, and on the other was the guarded Catholic belief, formed out of long years of training young Africans in ecclesiastic philosophy as part of their priestly education, that Africans could grasp some philosophy if it was appropriately tailored to have some resonance with their indigenous worldviews. Needless to say, Africans pursuing the study of philosophy as a secular and purely academic goal were rare in the colonial education system.

At the University of Nairobi, the Department of Religion and Philosophy (founded in 1970) was headed by Stephen Niell, an ultraconservative retired Anglican bishop. His deputy was Joseph Donders, a younger Catholic priest who doubled as a professor of philosophy at a local National Seminary. Convinced that Africans were not gifted for abstract or logical thinking, Niell had reluctantly offered Oruka employment as a special assistant, to ensure Oruka did not get a regular appointment despite his possession of a doctoral degree in philosophy from the University of Uppsala in Sweden. Specifically, Niell instructed Donders not to assign Oruka any logic classes—as Africans had no idea what that was, let alone being able to explain or teach it.

By the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s, anglophone Africa was still basking in the positive reception of John Mbiti's *African Religions and Philosophy* (1969) and of the slightly older translations of Marcel Griaule's *Conversations with Ogotemméli* (1965) and Placide Tempels's *Bantu Philosophy* (1959). But as much as they were popular for a variety of reasons, these texts also clearly stated just what people like Niell would have liked to hear and to show in support of their skepticism regarding Africans' tuning to academic philosophy: that African modes of thought were deeply grounded in their mythical representations of reality. With this background, Oruka's project, simultaneously personal and professional, was

defined—to erase the two levels of myth surrounding and possibly even blocking the practice and growth of African philosophy. One level was established by the previously mentioned texts, by virtue of leaving many complex African myths and other representational forms unexamined and unexplained but presenting them intact as philosophical knowledge. The other, made possible by the first and created by people like Niell and their followers (both local and otherwise), was that Africans could not think philosophically.

### Relation between Sage Philosophy and Popular Myths

Oruka's 1972 article "Mythologies as African Philosophy" marked the beginning of his project of dismantling the mythological constructs in African philosophy. Although others—such as Franz Crahay, Fabien Eboussi Boulaga, and Paulin Hountondji—shared similar concerns and produced similar arguments, these were veiled from Oruka by Africa's linguistic divide. Oruka argued that myths could not be substituted for philosophy for their lack of the subject and of the critical method. While Oruka recognized the universal presence and usefulness of myths at the cultural level, he claimed, like his contemporaries cited above, that the conflation of the two only in reference to Africa could lead to a harmful confusion. Like Crahay, he at least partially contended that philosophy builds on, even at the same time as it also "takes off" from, the cultural plain that for every thinker constitutes the sourcing field. At the same time, however, Oruka insisted that his separation of philosophy from mythology did not amount to the erroneous inference, once made by some critics of the essay, that philosophy was a monopoly of the academy in the narrow sense of a discipline practiced exclusively within the confines of its academic definition and control.

This double separation has not been easy. The key problem has been the contrast between the logical soundness of the argument and what is perceived to be the weakness of the examples accumulated as illustrations of the logical claim. For example, in contrast to Griaule's *Conversations with Ogotemméli*, which, in Oruka's view, presents the commonly shared knowledge of Dogon worldview through the folk sage Ogotemméli, the protagonists of Oruka's sage philosophy think as independent and critical-minded individuals. While folk sages know and teach the common wisdom of their communities as a way of both keeping traditions and group identity and protecting them from breach, philosophic sages, in a Socratic fashion, stir up this quiet in the interest of truth and inquiry. The philosophic sages are guided by their realization and admiration of the view that there are many aspects of culture that are neither rationally acceptable nor practically compelling for every member of the communities where these are operative. Thus, they share with others in the community only some selective customary practices and beliefs or some aspects of them. In the everyday negotiation—that is, explanations and determination of courses of action—over issues in the community, these independent-minded persons were a source of new knowledge and the change that issued therefrom.

According to the philosopher Kwasi Wiredu, such independent and critical thinking was available in varying forms in communities and was the basis of frequently protracted

disputations among elders, for example, in search of a consensus over different matters that required disputative negotiations. Thus, contrary to popular belief regarding knowledge at the communal level, it is precisely in regard to the importance of consensus on matters of common good that disputation and careful navigation through different opinions was crucial. Needless to say, such matters were not adjudicated without the input of those members of community who were well regarded for their excellent independent opinions. Africans often object to suggestions that some specific individual's opinion be sought on an issue under scrutiny: "Why seek so-and-so's opinion when he never has a personal view to anything? He only follows other people like sheep do." At the very least, such an observation about other people's character of mind suggests that independent thinking is not only accepted in African cultures, but it is also encouraged and admired as a virtue. Once in a while such independent-minded wise persons acquired some infamy and notoriety for stubbornness, especially in the eyes of those other persons whose opinions or justifications might have been the subject of the sage's criticism. History illustrates that outstandingly critical individuals in society only rarely enjoy comfort with those—usually in the majority—whose views stand in opposition to their own.

According to Oruka, for a person to be regarded a sage philosopher, one not only will be a catalyst to change within his or her community, one will also have to be a significant contributor to the growth and sustenance of the moral ideals of the community. In this context, the criterion for a moral ideal, according to the sage, is not that it match the historical belief of the community but that it satisfies an acceptable idea of right, fairness, and respectfulness toward all those who are involved or may be affected by its practical application. Imagine the conjunctural case where, for purposes of satisfying a local ritual requirement, custom dictates that a man and his baby son spend a night or two in an improvised structure outside his regular house. While the majority of the family group insists on the performance of the ritual according to custom, mindless of the weather uncertainties in the middle of the wet season, the sage among them steps in to object. According to her, custom provides guidance to desired behavior; it is not an end unto itself. Thus, she advises, calls for the performance of ritual need to take into consideration the view that because rituals are meant to give us a sense of reconciliation between a chain of ideas as we believe they relate to our practices; they are meaningful only if we do not cause harm to people in the course of performing them. In this case, she added, the performance of ritual as called for is likely to expose those involved, especially the baby son, to circumstances detrimental to their health. Hence the performance of the ritual would be counterproductive, and so unreasonable and unallowable. Such would be a circumstance where the sage would endeavor to subject a customary requirement to a rational appraisal and be committed to a view considered by her to be rationally superior to the traditional position. According to Oruka, the sage can sometimes have only a private disagreement with customary principles and that would be sufficient to define her as a person who relies on the dictates of rational appeal. Also, disagreement with commonly held knowledge is neither a condition nor a defining rational

character of the sage. Because she is a member of the community, she probably agrees with and abides by many of her community's maxims and ways. Thus her uniqueness emerges in those circumstances of need for exacting principles or reasons in matters requiring theoretical clarification and understanding. Faced with such a need, the sage can agree with custom but largely on the basis of independently concurring with the view expressed in a customary principle or the justification for one.

Worried that the ethnophilosophical texts of Tempels, Griaule, the Rwandan philosopher Alexis Kagame, and several others who merely baptized the anonymous traditional worldviews as philosophies may have justified the harsh but equally mythical criticisms like that of Niel, Oruka's endeavor was to separate the thoughts of individual thinkers at the traditional level from the collective traditional beliefs. The criterion set by Oruka for the qualification of the individual sages' views as philosophical thinking was not their mere variance from the communal beliefs of the sages' own groups but also a theoretical account provided by the sage as the foundation of his or her own view. Accordance or discordance with a group's views was, for Oruka, a factor that could not by itself satisfy the philosophical character of a sage's knowledge. The sage attends to the rationality of views rather than to the judgment of the group, although the sage always hopes that everyone sees and accepts the grounds that make his or her position the better one. This criterion, in Oruka's view, is precisely what qualifies Socrates (c. 470–399 B.C.E.) as a philosopher. And while the criterion favors the classification of both Socrates and Paul Mbuya as philosophers, for example, it disqualifies Griaule's Ogotemméli from being one (Oruka, 1991, p. 49–50).

In response to the question whether the one-time interviews with the sages was sufficient for the detection of their philosophical groundings, Oruka makes the following observation: "Some of the Greek sages are known and treated as philosophers for having made only one or two utterances. Thales, for example, is known to have said that 'everything is made of water,' and Heraclitus that 'strife is the truth of all life'" (1991, p. 2). Of course this is not correct. The selection of historical textual representation by historians of philosophy may have led to the impression that Oruka holds. But there are large collections of pre-Socratic texts that have been translated into modern languages and that show that there was much more than the specific topics historians have overwhelmingly focused on in order to create the image of a unilinear growth of the discipline generally and of specific topical issues. Hermann Diels's collection, *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (1903), is a good example of the contrast between what more there is—and could be if they were recovered in their complete forms—of the pre-Socratic period and what some historians have biasedly used. To be sure, Oruka uses the pre-Socratic example only as an explanatory tool, given that he too, like the ethnophilosophers that he partly wanted to correct, wrote largely for a European audience. As for their relevance to local societies, a case can be made that not only does Oruka's project aim at establishing the claim that the sages are philosophers in their own right, but it also teaches that there are many things to learn from careful consideration of the teachings of different experts in indigenous communities. In



other words, that a local philosophical tradition can ensue out of dialogues with the sages, especially with the sage philosophers, whether directly through dialogical interviews or indirectly by cogitating on the philosophical import of their assertions. This recognition of the philosophical worth of traditional thinkers is the basis of the work of Barry Hallen and John Olubi Sodipo, now in two volumes—one epistemological (*Knowledge, Belief, and Witchcraft: Analytic Experiments in African Philosophy*, 1997, by Hallen and Sodipo), the other ethical and aesthetic (*The Good, the Bad, and the Beautiful: Discourse about Values in Yoruba Culture*, 2000, by Hallen). In both, Hallen and Sodipo bring traditional thinkers, the *onisegun* or medical experts, into the enterprise of expounding and elucidating traditional thought of an African people, the Yoruba, as it relates to the conception or idea of knowledge in both cognitive and moral senses. Oruka counters Hallen and Sodipo that because the *onisegun* only expound and elucidate the traditional thought of the Yoruba, they are certainly very wise, but they are not philosophers. He thinks that the *onisegun*, who are deliberately kept anonymous by Hallen and Sodipo for reasons of privacy, are like Ogotemmêli, whose presentation, however complex and amazing in details, was exactly what every wise and well-trained Dogon person was expected to know (1990, pp. 9–10).

On the issue of literacy, Oruka is quite correct: literacy alone, in and of itself, does not constitute a measurement for philosophizing. Yet this is really not the point. Philosophy is characterized by some form of “tradition”: that is, by a sustained discursive inquiry rather than by just an expression of ideas, however scattered and unrelated among themselves, or however they may be at variance with some societal belief. Those who defend literacy (see, e.g., Goody; Popper; and Bodunrin) make the minimal claim that literacy contributes to the sustainability of a discourse by making it possible for all those who are or wish to be involved to critically engage in it with regard to a specific issue whose point of reference remains accessible. Thus, while the pre-Socratics may have offered little to regard as philosophy, the worth of the little they are alleged to have uttered lies in how reference to them by later thinkers made them the subject matter of wider and growing commentaries, interpretations, and, why not, even reaffirmations and re-elaborations. It is the possibility of a revisit of older texts that, for example, enables Martin Heidegger (1889–1976) to attempt to reestablish what he calls the proper understanding of Being.

As a discipline that aspires so much to clarify concepts and ideas as representations of reality, the task of philosophy includes conceptual analysis as a means to attain clarity and precision in understanding. So, in fact, the reason why the pre-Socratics have lost their worth is precisely that the scattered utterances in themselves do not lead to much, if anything, except via their re-interpretations by later philosophers. Thus reference to them may be crucial, but it is largely indirect.

It turns out, then, that Oruka was right in claiming that literacy per se does not constitute philosophy. Nor, conversely, would orality, in and of itself, be a hindrance to philosophizing. Critics of the attribution of philosophical thought to

Africans who were not formally schooled in the discipline held the generalizing view that oral cultures are incapable of producing or enhancing the growth in their individual members of the virtues of skepticism that these critics considered pivotal to philosophical thinking and inquiry. However, as argued by Oruka, Wiredu, Hallen, and Sodipo, philosophizing requires much more than the mere medium of its expression. For indeed, when considered together with other factors, each can be a medium by which ideas are made known and their defense elaborated. Nor does mere variance of opinion from some popular belief by itself constitute philosophy. But variance becomes an important characteristic of philosophy through a sustained critical inquiry that includes the testing of such an opinion against its real and possible rivals. Traditional palavers, negotiations, and other forums of public debates and deliberations provided the contexts for such testing. Such forums uncovered and enhanced the development of great communal orators as much as they did those individuals with succinct analytic mental skills. Analysis of the procedures of these forums could yield insight not only into how ideas were processed at the traditional level but also into the role and esteem accorded the personal skills of oration and debating.

But the rise of pluralism and the crisis of foundationalism in the late twentieth century introduced and require a fresh reading of sage philosophy. As one takes stock of what has happened in African philosophy from the 1980s through the turn of the twenty-first century through the aid of such compelling titles as Ngugi wa Thiong’o’s *Decolonising the Mind* (1986) and V. Y. Mudimbe’s *The Invention of Africa* (1988), there arises the possibility of reading Oruka’s idea of sage philosophy as part of the wider (postcolonial) critique and rejection of the Eurocentric idea of a comprehensive framework in which philosophical reflection must take place.

Out of the postcolonial discourse Oruka draws two implications. First, the irreducible plurality of values and cultures that issue into a plurality of forms of reflection makes it possible for him to call for an end to the unjustified Western monopoly of philosophy, and especially of the monopoly of the institutional mode of its production. Hence such plurality removes the monopoly of philosophy from the confines of the academy. But while he emphasizes this plurality, Oruka does not draw from it the view that informs the ethnophilosophical texts: that the nature of social organization within which African philosophy is produced distinguishes it from all others by making it a consensual or, as he calls it, a communalized commodity (1991, p. 8). Also, like Wiredu, Oruka did not believe that pluralism opened doors to relativism. Rather, again like Wiredu, he believed in the possibility of recasting the philosophical task as an invitation to a philosophical conversation both across cultures and between the professionals and the solid thinkers of the traditions.

In the wake of the emphasis of the plurality of forms of knowledge, the idea of sage philosophy becomes an interesting and important channel for identifying, understanding, and articulating the philosophical task through a comparative contrast of different epistemic fields. Hallen and Sodipo’s work does this, as does Wiredu in *Philosophy and an African*



*Culture* (1980) and in *Cultural Universals and Particulars* (1996), in the course of discussing the concepts of mind, the person, truth, democracy, human rights, and other matters pertinent to philosophical thought and practice. But above all, sage philosophy addresses the crucial question of who produces knowledge in the modern hierarchized social formations. In pursuit of the underpinning elements of an African epistemic field, Oruka originally classified Africans' practice of philosophy into four trends, listed as ethnophilosophy, nationalist-ideological philosophy, professional philosophy, and philosophic sagacity. In *Sage Philosophy* (1991), Oruka makes additions to this list to bring the number of the trends to six, including hermeneutic philosophy and artistic or literary philosophy. It is important to note that Oruka did not see these trends as separated in a strong sense. He thought of them as reconcilable by means of a comprehensive account. Such a comprehensive account, he thought, could be offered only by the professional philosophers. "No one thinks in a vacuum" is a tenet that appears to have been central to Oruka's view of this comprehensive account of the trends in African philosophy. The technical work of professional African philosophers, who are themselves also sages at a different level, should find its grounding and discursive context in the frameworks provided by the other three trends (Oruka, 1991, p. 2). He did not think of the trends as differentiated by value on a scale that runs from bad to best. Rather, they complement each other in constituting specific fields of knowledge.

Sometimes the proposed method for identifying a sage reads as problematic, as when Oruka says, for example, that "the best judge [of who qualifies as a sage] must be the community from which the person hails. The researcher [however,] must follow up the guidance of the community and be capable of assessing those alleged to be sages and dismissing others" (1991, p. 3). So, after all, it is the professional practitioner who produces the sage according to his or her institutionalized definitions of the categories of knowledge. Several other critics of the modes of executing the sage philosophy research have adequately covered other methodological problems (see, e.g., Keita; Bodunrin; and Oruka, 1991; several others are also reprinted in Oruka, 1991, and also noted by van Hook).

The significant merit of the idea of philosophic sagacity is to be found, at least in part, in a combination of what Mudimbe has called "the geography of a discourse" and the decentering implications of the Tanzanian politician Julius K. Nyerere's idea of *ujamaa* (the social and moral view that lasting good stems from recognition of the basic interdependency and ultimate unity of all human endeavors and goals). The idea of sage philosophy suggests that professional philosophers ought to take sufficiently into account the problems posed by the sages in the course of their conversations, not just once, but always. This engagement, Oruka believed, would erase the current division of African philosophical discourse into two opposed spaces of tradition and modernity. According to Mudimbe, the view of binary opposition between modernity and tradition can be justified only through the false representation of the latter as static and prehistoric. In his view, however, "tradition (*traditio*) means discontinuities through a dynamic continuation and possible conversion of *traditio*

(legacies). As such, it is part of a history in the making" (p. 189). Like Mudimbe, Oruka too postulates that an African tradition of philosophy will be hard to establish in an influential way "if it ignores the past and traditions. But the continent will equally be handicapped if it abandons science and logic, in the so-called Western sense, as things that are un-African" (1991, p. 26). It would be a tragedy, Oruka argued, as has happened in Great Britain, if the intellectual elite of society were to succeed in imposing its views on the masses.

By proposing to narrow the opposition between the academy as the institutionalized production center and the rest of society as the location of pure consumers at the periphery of the academy, Oruka strips the academy of its colonial definition and status. And he does not limit this stripping to the practice of philosophy. Rather, he sees it as a project to be expanded to all other disciplines and institutions whose processes find their justification and principles of procedure in colonial epistemological formulations and assumptions. His views as expert witness at the now-famous (or, for some, infamous) civil case over the Kenyan lawyer Silvano M. Otieno's body in 1987, and on several other related issues thereafter, clearly define Oruka's opposition to the naïvete with which many people, African and non-African, intellectual professionals and ordinary people, regard the idea and process of "modernization." Particularly relevant was his reply to the presiding judge's question as to whether he, Oruka, as a modern, well-educated (Western-educated) analytic philosopher and professor of philosophy, believed in the (assumedly traditional—by which was apparently implied "primitive") idea of ghosts and their vengeant powers. He responded thus: "there is no reason, your honor, for me to deny [or affirm] the existence of ghosts and their vengeant powers." The statement quickly acquired notoriety more for its perceived arrogance than for the analytic savvy that the judge had unwittingly evoked. In a 1989 article about the case, Oruka gave an analytic appraisal of the naïvete and contradictions of the accusations leveled at him following his testimony regarding belief in spirits.

According to Oruka, one of the most injurious blows colonialism dealt on Africa was to make Africans to think and believe that the label "traditional," applicable to their pre-colonial values, had the negative connotations of evil, brute, irrational, and so on, and hence were to be rejected (1989). Nowhere else, he observed, was "the distinction between tradition and modernity in any given culture [equitable with the] distinction between the *outdated* and the *novel*" (1989, p. 80). Why should Africans judge their participation in or practice of an antiquated European value or practice—such as reading Shakespeare or listening to Mozart's or Beethoven's music—as "modern," and some of their own people's still-valued musical traditions as "outdated"? Or why should Africans regard the reverence of Jesus, who died two millennia ago, as "modern," while tribute to an ancestor who died one year ago as "outdated"? With these questions and considerations, Oruka appears to ask with surprise the criteria for defining the boundaries of reason with regard to cultural encounters. To be specific, listening to Mozart and reading Shakespeare had been cited in the Otieno case as legitimate indicators of Otieno's avowal of "modernity," and therefore repudiation of his own

local traditions, including the requirement that he be buried in his parents' still-standing homestead. In response to his own questions, Oruka observes: "In the naive sense of the term modern, such a person is [judged] modern just because the cultures associated with Shakespeare or Mozart are *European*. And to be European [or, when you are not one, to mimic anything European by origin], it is naively conceived, is to be civilized and modern" (1989, p. 81).

### Conclusion

It is clear from this brief descriptive account of some of the things Oruka stood for that African philosophers are faced with crucial issues and pertinent questions as they critically appraise and define their participation in the wider global philosophical conversation. The influence of Oruka's work is to be seen in both the numbers and research interests of local, regional, and international scholars he inspired to work closely with him, whether or not they agreed with his positions. As a true scholar who believed in the historical spirit of philosophy, Oruka frequently supervised and directed dissertations that sometimes argued strongly against his positions.

See also *Philosophies: African; Wisdom, Human*.

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D. A. Masolo

**SAINTS AND SAINTHOOD.** See *Religion*.

**SAMSARA.** See *Consciousness: Indian Thought*

**SATIRE.** See *Genre*

### SCARCITY AND ABUNDANCE, LATIN AMERICA.

Abundance and scarcity are crucial to Latin America because of the sharp disparities between the wealth produced in this region and the impoverishment of people and environment. Though ideas about causes differ sharply, Latin American social thought has revolved in substantial part around this axis. This entry begins with ideas from before the Spanish conquest, proceeds to key debates among the conquerors, moves then to ideas of progress and modernization, and finishes with recent, critical perspectives.

### Pre- and Postconquest Thought

One risks overgeneralization in speaking of "pre-Hispanic" ideas as a unified entity since this covers so many cultures and geographic settings, but two themes stand out: to maintain abundance, communities engage in reciprocal exchanges with deities of particular places, set in broader spatial orders such as the four compass directions; and societies undergo great cycles of creation, destruction, and rebirth. Such visions once characterized official public thought but after conquest were submerged in the rituals of indigenous communities. The Spanish had a different set of concerns. They had conquered, with great self-confidence, a region of biological abundance and human wealth. Was this "natural" richness a sign of the backward state of the Americans compared to the rational, Christian Europeans? Or was it a paradise lost to pillage and enslavement by rapacious conquerors? The 1550 debate between Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda (taking the former position) and Bartolomé de Las Casas (taking the latter) carries into the present, in which the intellectual

descendants of Las Casas posit a romantic ecology and anthropology of profound indigenous cultures in lush but imperiled habitats and the inheritors of Sepúlveda see underutilized natural wealth needing rationality for its proper exploitation.

### Modernization and the Ideology of Science

From the mid-nineteenth century until the early twentieth century, a broadly Sepúlvedan position held sway. After independence, political fragmentation and the decline of the colonial economy resulted in Latin America falling visibly behind industrializing western Europe and the United States. Capitalist pioneers from those areas after 1850 began to invest in Latin America in alliance with local landowners and businesspeople. Intellectual spokespeople for this process, the “*científicos*” (advocates of science and progress), saw Latin America as abundant and potentially wealth-producing but constrained by cultural and biological backwardness, especially on the part of darker-skinned lower orders. Scientific racism was in the air, making it easy to blame Latin America’s scarcity on Native Americans, African-Americans, and people of mixed European and non-European ancestry. One example of this kind of thought, though not as biologically racist as some, blamed Mexico’s underdevelopment on the nutritional deficiencies of corn tortillas, the millennia-old food of the Mexican people, and advocated instead the consumption of wheat bread, associated with Europe. There was little support for this seemingly “scientific” theory, and it ignored how inequality in resources led to nutritional shortfalls. But it seemed to explain Mexico’s poverty, offering a suitably progressive path forward.

There were dissenters, however. Two Peruvians, the social theorist José Carlos Mariátegui (1894–1930) and the novelist-anthropologist José María Arguedas (1911–1969), stand out for revaluing indigenous cultures. Mariátegui interpreted the indigenous people of the Andes as a revolutionary class in Marxist terms, while Arguedas deepened attention to highland Peruvian culture per se, noting the continuities of pre-Hispanic thought described above. Generally, though, notions that Latin America should follow external models of progress continued into the 1940s, 1950s, and early 1960s. The models had once been England and France, but in this period the economically and politically overwhelming United States provided the vision of power and abundance. Racist theories declined (though did not disappear), and the key idea was “modernization”: that Latin America could engineer progress by discarding its traditional social structures and cultures. A new nationalism crept in, with the central state and local capitalists seen as modernizers as well as, or in replacement of, foreigners. This opened the door for a major reversal in thought.

### The Radical Critique of Modernization

In the 1960s and 1970s “dependency” theorists (including, among others, Teotónio Dos Santos, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Anibal Quijano, and Andre Gunder Frank) argued that as Latin America entered into relationships with dominant economies like Spain and Portugal, and later Britain and the United States, it became poorer rather than richer. Various enterprises, from sugar plantations and silver mines to automo-

bile assembly plants and pharmaceutical factories, did not advance Latin America but rather removed its wealth and stunted its own, self-determining progress. Furthermore one could identify elite classes and dominant areas within Latin America not as modernizers but as doing the work of extraction and control for outsiders. Backwardness thus was imposed from outside on a potentially self-sufficient, abundant region.

Dependency theory at its most radical called for class revolutions in Latin America. It identified a carrier of change in the peasantry seen as a class (rather than as indigenous cultures) and, to a lesser extent, in the urban poor and workers in new industries. These classes were seen as the creators of abundance but the sufferers of scarcity because the surplus product of their labor was taken away in unequal exchange with the world centers of capitalism (a heterodox Marxism focusing on relations of exchange rather than production). In spite of this radical diagnosis, however, dependency theory overlapped in practice with nationalist-capitalist industrialization and urbanization guided by the central state, which envisioned scarcity and abundance in conventional economic terms.

### The Return of Modernization (Neoliberalism) and Its Cultural-Ecological Critics

The nationalist-capitalist project collapsed in the 1980s due to corruption and inequity in which enormous debts to foreign (mostly U.S.) banks resulted in retrenchment, job loss, and impoverishment. Neoliberalism is the intellectual movement that corresponds to the dismal era of economic retrenchment and return of U.S. domination in the period from 1982 to the twenty-first century. As a set of ideas, neoliberalism differs little from those advocated by “*científicos*” and modernizers of past epochs except, perhaps, in its emphasis on the example of U.S. and East Asian business practices, such as private entrepreneurship. Again the assumption is that Latin America is characteristically backward and needs to import models for achieving abundance from more “successful” societies.

There are, however, two alternatives on the intellectual horizon. The Peruvian economist Hernando de Soto propounds the argument that Latin America has been hobbled by monopolies of economic and political power and that enduring prosperity will be created by the acts of millions of tiny entrepreneurs—street vendors, small businesspeople, and the like. This is clearly an idea of its time, related to neoliberalism and reflective of the retreat of the grand projects of the state and the proliferation of microscopic businesses among the unemployed, but it does touch on the persistent problem of stultifying monopolies of power in the region.

Meanwhile, welling up from innumerable social movements are the offshoots of dependency theory but with a new focus on indigenous cultures, women, and ecology. Like dependency theory, these diverse ideas (for which we do not yet have a name) locate abundance inside Latin America, in its forests and waters and in its pre-Hispanic and African-American legacies. They see globalization (economic and cultural) as threatening that abundance and thus form part of the international antiglobalization movement, centered on the World Social Forums held in Porto Alegre, Brazil. Unlike dependency theory, these ideas emphasize an encompassing cul-



tural vision of radical economy and ecology, drawing on 1960s forebears in liberation theology and Paulo Freire's "conscientization" approach to collective self-education. Fragmented as these tendencies are, there is no single intellectual spokesperson, but one might start with the Colombian anthropologist Arturo Escobar. We look hopefully for a synthesis of the penetrating critique of political-economic power characteristic of the 1960s and 1970s and the richer attention to culture and nature characteristic of recent Latin American thought.

See also *Capitalism; Communism: Latin America; Ecology; Globalization; Indigenismo; Marxism: Latin America; Modernization; Neoliberalism; World Systems Theory, Latin America.*

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**SCHOLASTICISM.** Scholasticism is best understood not as a set of doctrines, but as a method, or body of intellectual practices. In particular, Scholasticism developed as the method through which Christian thinkers of the patristic and medieval periods gradually transformed the narratives of Scripture into a theological system. Scholastic method, then, has its roots in the earliest Christian times. It reached its fullest development in the schools of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The disintegrating Scholasticism of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries laid the foundations for modern forms of intellectual discourse.

#### Biblical and Patristic Roots

In Matthew 5:17 Jesus declares, "Do not think that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets. I am not come to destroy but to fulfill (*plērōsai*)" (Douay-Rheims version). Christianity thus stands in a complex relationship of continuity and discontinuity with regard to its Jewish sources. The Christian faith views itself as preserving the Jewish heritage in its integrity, yet at a higher level. The precise definition of this "fulfillment"—that is to say, of the relationship between the Old and the New Testaments—was one of the central tasks of the first Christian thinkers, the church fathers. In addition, tensions that occur within the narratives and teachings of each of the two Testaments (in the four Gospels, for example) had to be explained and smoothed over as well. Some of the strategies that the church fathers used in order to harmonize the texts of Scripture were themselves scriptural, such as allegorization, which patristic thinkers widely employed to read the Old Testament in light of the New. Other techniques, however, were derived from non-scriptural sources; most importantly, the church fathers borrowed philosophical terminology of Greco-Roman provenance in order to articulate certain elements of the scriptural narrative in a systematic fashion, that is to say, as "doctrine." Thus, for example, occasional references to God the Father, the Son, and the Spirit came to be transformed into the doctrine of the Trinity, which was defined, in the Latin West, by means of the Greco-Roman philosophical terms of substance and person.

Unlike their Greek counterparts, the Latin church fathers did not produce a comprehensive account of the Christian faith in a complete theological system. Rather, they limited themselves to discussions of specific areas of theology, such as the Trinity or the relationship between grace and free will. And although they availed themselves of methods of textual synthesis and system-building, they rarely reflected upon these techniques in a detailed fashion. For many centuries, St. Augustine of Hippo's (354–430) treatise *On Christian Teaching* remained the standard text on Christian methodology.

#### The Early Middle Ages

The writings of the church fathers were soon subjected to the same synthesizing approach that they themselves had applied to Scripture. From the fifth century onward, Christian thinkers garnered *sententiae*—"sentences" or authoritative quotations—from the writings of their predecessors. The resulting sentence collections gave rise to two challenges that were crucial in honing the emerging Scholastic method: first, the task of reconciling the often divergent teachings of one or several church fathers on a given theological topic, and of doing so in light of the scriptural



texts upon which these teachings were built; and second, the task of arranging the theological topics in a meaningful order.

In subsequent centuries, the textual basis upon which this method was brought to bear became even broader; this increased breadth in turn called for improved strategies of structuring the material. Thus, the Carolingian era saw the introduction of Eastern theology into the Christian West, especially through the writings of John Scottus Eriugena (c. 810–c. 877). But around the same time, Christian thinkers also began an ambitious project of systematically elucidating the whole of Scripture with pertinent quotations lifted from authoritative writers of the tradition. In the *Glossa ordinaria*, or “Standard Gloss,” the text of the Bible was presented with interlinear notes to explain difficult words and phrases, while marginal annotations helped the reader understand the theological content of key passages. The *Glossa ordinaria* constituted a central step in the Scholastic project of translating the “stories” of Scripture into a theological system. It continued to be improved by successive generations of theologians, reaching its definitive shape only in the twelfth century.

### The Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries

In the twelfth century, the sentence collection became the central genre of theological writing, overshadowing the Scripture commentary and the treatise. A theologian now had to prove his competence by presenting a comprehensive synthesis of traditional doctrine. A number of factors flowed together to produce this situation, especially the inherent dynamics of the development of the Christian intellectual tradition and the increasing importance of urban schools as centers of education. In the monasteries—the paradigmatic institutional setting of earlier medieval writers—education and learning served a contemplative goal: the monks saw themselves as pursuing *salutaris scientia*, “salvific knowledge.” In the schools, on the other hand, knowledge came to be conceivable as an end in itself, dissociated from spirituality. The “master” teaching at the school was neither a monk nor a bishop entrusted with the care of souls, but an intellectual. He competed with masters at other schools for students, who judged his performance based not least upon how effectively he presented his subject matter.

The tradition of the sentence collections culminated in Peter Lombard’s (c. 1095–1160) *Sententiarum libri IV* (Book of sentences), which quickly became the standard theological textbook of the medieval schools—to the chagrin of more conservative thinkers, such as the English bishop Robert Grosseteste (c. 1168–1253), who believed that theology should remain centered on the study of Scripture. In the *Sentences*, Peter Lombard divides theology into four books, logically starting with God and the Trinity in book one, then moving on to Creation, the human being, and the Fall in book two, treating Christology in book three, and concluding with the sacraments in book four. The books were further broken down into chapters, with a table of contents placed at the beginning of the work to facilitate its consultation—a remarkable innovation at the time. Moreover, Lombard indicated the internal structure of each chapter by means of red subheadings, so-called rubrics. Within each chapter, a theological question is posed, then answered provisionally by means of scriptural and

patristic quotations that often remain discordant, therefore requiring reconciliation. This harmonization is effected through detailed examination of the texts, determination of each author’s precise meaning, and careful weighing up of arguments. Lombard usually attempts to formulate a consensus position in a short paragraph at the end of the chapter.

From the beginning of the thirteenth century until the early sixteenth, the history of Scholasticism can to a large extent be written as the history of commentaries upon the *Book of Sentences*. In the commentaries of the theologians of the thirteenth century, Scholastic method reached its most developed stage. Under the influence of newly available Aristotelian methodology, theology came to be defined rigorously as *scientia divina*, “divine science.” This *scientia divina* was conceived as being distinct both from philosophy (taught in a separate faculty at the recently founded universities) and from *sacra pagina*, that is to say, “sacred page” or Scripture commentary. Furthermore, in the commentaries upon the *Sentences*, the dialectical structure of Peter Lombard’s analyses was formalized, to yield the schema with which every reader of Thomas Aquinas’s (c. 1225–1274) *Summa theologiae* is familiar (the *Summa* is, in fact, a revised version of Aquinas’s own *Sentences* commentary): question; arguments con; arguments pro; solution by means of a distinction in which both sides are usually shown to have seen parts of the truth; response to the opening arguments. The “divine science” of the *Summa theologiae* leaves the narrative structure of Scripture behind completely, replacing it with a system that articulates all the elements of the Christian faith as parts of a coherent whole—a whole that represents the methodically generated sum total of all the authoritative voices of the tradition.

### The Waning of Scholasticism

Already toward the beginning of the fourteenth century, however, the intellectual practices of high Scholasticism—such as the question schema just described—were disintegrating. The problems of Christian thought, together with its textual bases, had reached such a degree of complexity that a method designed to integrate discordant voices into a coherent tradition could no longer succeed. Authors now began to emphasize their originality, choosing a format for their presentation that allowed them greater independence. Thus, the “question” dissolved, and commentators on the *Sentences* used the genre for increasingly autonomous statements of doctrine.

See also *Aristotelianism; Christianity; Logic*.

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Philipp W. Rosemann

## SCIENCE.

This entry includes two subentries:

*Overview*

*East Asia*

## OVERVIEW

Science is a product, a particular kind of knowledge, as well as a process to obtain such knowledge. It is a social activity primarily aimed at obtaining objective and consensual knowledge about nature and to use this knowledge for socially desirable purposes. Scientists and philosophers disagree about whether scientific knowledge mirrors nature as it really is, or if it merely constitutes an instrument to describe and control natural processes and objects. Irrespective of the stance on this issue, scientists (and most philosophers) agree that objective and consensual knowledge can in fact be obtained, and that to a large extent the success of science derives from following certain rules and methods. Although there is no one scientific method that leads to true knowledge, there are rules and methods that are generally followed and in a loose way demarcate science methodologically from non-science.

## General

The methodological foundation of modern science was laid during the scientific revolution of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Whereas one school of thought, going back to Francis Bacon, emphasized induction from particular observations and experiments, the followers of René Descartes favored a more hypothetical-deductivist approach. In the mid-nineteenth century, the two kinds of methodology were refined and developed by, among others, John Stuart Mill and William Whewell. It is commonly recognized that both methods are employed in real science and that they do not constitute two different ways of doing science. Moreover, the favored meth-

ods differ from one science to another. The methods of the astrophysicist are not the same as those of the botanist, yet they are not entirely different either.

Science is organized in a large number of disciplines and subdisciplines, including areas of research of a transdisciplinary nature. Although there have been many attempts to establish hierarchical, more or less natural classifications among the sciences, in the early twenty-first century these have largely been abandoned. All of the particular sciences have a limited area of validity, a domain of nature within which they are relevant and about which they can claim cognitive authority. Nevertheless, there is no one-to-one correspondence between domains and scientific disciplines, and many cases in which science has the “right” to speak about a certain domain is a matter of controversy. According to some positivistically minded thinkers, science as a whole covers all domains of nature, consciousness, and society in the sense that all meaningful questions can be answered scientifically, and they ought to be answered so. This point of view, which expresses a kind of scientific imperialism as it denies the legitimacy of, say, social, metaphysical, and religious explanations, is often referred to as scientism. Although few thinkers have endorsed scientism in a pure form, it is not unusual for scientists to believe that social and ethical questions can in the last resort be reduced to scientific questions. In his book *Consilience* (1998), the biologist Edward O. Wilson holds that the unification of the natural sciences with the social sciences and humanities can be achieved on terms dictated by science. It is a matter of debate how stringently a scientific theory should be restricted to its original domain. Nature does not tell what is the proper domain of a scientific theory or principle. According to “restrictionists” a theory can be legitimately applied only to its scientific context, whereas “expansionists” are willing to extrapolate it to very different areas, for instance by means of analogies. Scientism is typically more appealing to expansionists than to restrictionists.

It is a major aim of history and philosophy of science to establish how science develops over time. Science has been hugely successful, but how is it that scientists know so much more of nature, and so much more reliably, than their predecessors? How is cognitive progress achieved? The traditional view is that new scientific theories build on earlier theories, which are criticized and improved upon, typically because they fail to account for new phenomena. They are modified or rejected in order to give way to new theories, although most of the old experimental data will still be valid and have to form part of the new theories as well. According to this picture, science essentially evolves cumulatively, by adding knowledge to knowledge or replacing obsolete knowledge with better knowledge. Whereas the picture stresses the evolutionary and conservative aspects of science development, it pays little attention to major conceptual restructurings of knowledge.

In his *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962), Thomas S. Kuhn argued that cumulative progress occurs only in periods of “normal science” when the community of scientists within a given field agree upon the standards of science, its paradigm. During revolutionary changes a new paradigm

replaces the older one, and the two kinds of science are so different that they cannot be compared rationally. They are incommensurable in the sense that there is no neutral, trans-paradigmatic way to define progress across a revolution. According to the strong version of Kuhnian revolutionary changes, paradigms constitute separate worlds between which no communication is possible. Consequently Kuhn's theory opens up for relativism, with all its problems (as discussed further below). The strong Kuhnian picture, however, does not agree very well with the history of science, which includes many examples of scientists who have had no problems in maneuvering between competing paradigms. Although revolutions in the strong sense rarely or never occur, science often experiences major transformations that may involve drastic reinterpretations of past knowledge. Yet even in such cases—quantum mechanics may be an example—new theories are usually designed to account also for the successes of past science.

### Recent Developments

In classical sociology of science, such as that developed by Robert K. Merton (1910–2003) in particular, ideological, political, and economic factors form the framework of science development, but they do not affect the epistemic content of science. From the 1970s onward, groups of sociologists and philosophers have gone beyond this position and argued that science is not epistemically privileged compared to other, non-scientific modes of obtaining knowledge. Partly inspired by Kuhn's book, scholars such as Paul Feyerabend, David Bloor, and Barry Barnes claimed that science is essentially ideological in nature and that its knowledge claims can be fully understood in terms of social mechanisms, hence by sociology. According to the so-called strong program of science studies, the distinction between science and nonscience cannot be upheld; furthermore, there is no intrinsic difference between true and false statements in science. A true theory is simply one that happens to be accepted by the relevant community of scientists.

Epistemic sociology of science, sociology of scientific knowledge (SSK), or social constructivism was a strong force in science studies during the last part of the twentieth century. It nevertheless left little mark on the scientists. Common to constructivists, of whatever inclination, is that they share to some degree a relativistic conception of science: A scientific theory is relative to social and cultural contexts, hence its truth value cannot be decided simply by comparing it with nature itself (that is, with observations and experiments, for these, too, are social constructs). Modern constructivists, such as Harry Collins, Andrew Pickering, Bruno Latour, and Karin Knorr Cetina, do not form a homogeneous group, but they all deny that science is a successful truth-seeking activity based upon an interplay between theories and experiments that reveal objective natural phenomena. In their arguments, they tend to emphasize controversies within the scientific communities, the contingent nature of scientific problems, and also the inescapable theory-ladenness of experiments. Naturally, the claim that accepted scientific knowledge is not derived from nature, but rather from local social and cultural contexts within and without the scientific community, has caused a great deal of controversy.

The "science wars" have principally been fought between scientists and academic analysts of science, but there have also been battles among scholars within the fields of sociology, history, and philosophy of science. In *Higher Superstition* (1994), the biologist Paul R. Gross and the mathematician Norman Levitt launched an attack on what they considered to be the antiscientific attitude of the "academic left." It is probably true to say that in the early twenty-first century such battles are no longer as intense as they used to be, and that the radical relativism of the 1980s has only a few advocates left. As far as the scientists are concerned, the large majority continue their work unperturbed by the controversy and in many cases blissfully unaware of it.

Yet the turn toward contextualism and constructivism has clearly left its mark upon science studies and opened the way for a variety of new approaches to the historical, philosophical, and sociological study of science. Thus, with the development of SSK it became natural to investigate the role played by rhetoric in the construction of scientific arguments (whereas, traditionally, science and rhetoric have been seen as antithetical). Most scholars in this area of science studies are content to point out the importance of rhetorical strategies, but according to others, closer in spirit to social constructivism, science itself can be understood as a form of rhetoric. Whatever the differences, after about 1980 rhetorical and literary analysis became a legitimate and popular tool in the examination of science—although a tool unknown to most scientists. Among the rhetorical elements that have attracted much attention are metaphors in science.

Science is international, but of course it depends on national and other local contexts as far as funding, organization, and institutionalization are concerned. Since the late nineteenth century it has been argued that the national stamp also covers "styles" of doing science, which derive from either national characters or cultural traditions specific to a certain country. Although the notion of style is controversial, and that of national style even more so, the topic has been examined by several modern historians and philosophers of science. For example, Jonathan Harwood has used style as a historiographical category in studies of twentieth-century biology, and Alistair Crombie has provided an extensive treatment of style in science in his *Styles of Scientific Thinking in the European Tradition* (1994).

The gender aspect of science, although not a new one, has flourished only since the 1980s when Carolyn Merchant in *The Death of Nature* (1980) discussed the historical gendering of nature as female. Likewise, Evelyn Fox Keller argued in *Reflections on Gender and Science* (1985) that science, in its present form, is inherently masculine. One answer to the historically documented conflict between femininity and traditional science has involved attempts to develop a new "feminist science" that reflects what are supposedly feminine values, such as cooperation, tenderness, organicism, and reflexivity. This has resulted in a considerable amount of scholarship, but not any real changes in the practice and ethos of science. Social constructivists, radical feminists, multiculturalists, and postmodernist critics have been accused of fighting the case of antisience. Nevertheless, although they



oppose established science, they are not against science as such but rather seek to build up alternative modes of science in harmony with the social and cultural values they favor. Their endeavors have not been more successful, though, than the attempts of some Christian fundamentalists to establish an alternative “creationist science.” The norms, contents, and institutions of modern science have a remarkable degree of robustness. If there are alternative sciences, they are marginalized and have, at least so far, been unable to challenge established science.

Theory, and particularly mathematically formulated theory, has traditionally been the focus of philosophy of science, whereas experimental practice has been considered merely an appendix to theory. Experimental results have always been of interest, but only from the 1980s has attention been given to experiment and observation as a process. Experiment has become an important field of inquiry, irrespective of its connection to theory. Indeed, Ian Hacking, Allan Franklin, and others have questioned the notion that observations are always “infected” by the theory under test. They have urged scholars to study experiments and observations in their own right, including how instruments are built and used in measurements. Many constructivist scholars share this interest in the experimental workplace. Bruno Latour and Steve Woolgar’s *Laboratory Life* (1979) initiated a new kind of study, laboratory studies, in which scientists and other “actors” are followed in their daily work, much like anthropologists observe the habits of their subjects. Laboratory studies have in some cases been concerned with laboratories as buildings rather than workplaces of scientists. The architecture and physical arrangement of laboratories, observatories, museums, and botanical gardens is a field of growing concern, among other reasons because they are seen as expressions of the values associated with science at any given time and place.

See also *Experiment; Paradigm; Science, History of; Scientific Revolution.*

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Helge Kragh

#### EAST ASIA

The most familiar characteristics of modern science—rigorously demonstrated relationships based on a combination of experimentation and exact measurement—did not exist anywhere in the world before the seventeenth century. Any definition of science that holds for earlier times or for places other than Europe must be more inclusive. More useful criteria are the attempt to find rational explanations, rather than those based on gods and analogues to human will, and the use of abstraction to generalize from concrete data.

One can speak of East Asian science because the educated elite of China, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam shared a classical written language. To a large extent, literacy in East Asia meant being educated in the same Chinese classics and writing in a language based on them, just as Europeans for centuries learned and communicated in Latin. China, because of its size, wealth, and bookish literati, tended to dominate its neighbors intellectually in science as in other fields, but East Asians elsewhere made notable contributions, some of which are noted below.

#### The Sciences

A peculiarity of Greek culture was that philosophy informed the basic educations of those who practiced mathematics and the natural sciences, and of many physicians whose writings became textbooks. In the Islamic world, and in the early European universities, curricula continued to put philosophy prior to science and medicine.

This was not the case in China. Information on natural phenomena first appeared in general writings devoted simultaneously to moral philosophy, political theory, and cosmology. Basic physical concepts and frameworks evolved in such works.

Beginning in the first century B.C.E., autonomous sciences separated from philosophy on the one hand and technical practice on the other. Their traditions, like those of earlier non-technical scholarship, were canonical. Confucius claimed that philosophy began with books that had survived from a golden antiquity into the degraded present. Analogously, almost every field of endeavor traced its beginnings to one or more classics revealed by an ancient sage-ruler. Education was based on the ritual transmission of such texts from master to disciple within each tradition.

Early monographic technical writings (many of which used the form and rhetoric of the classics) elaborated on their philosophic predecessors to meet their own needs. Practitioners did not, however, see themselves as supplementing philosophy, or engaged in an overarching intellectual enterprise. Rather, they were engaged in a common exploration of the Way (*dao*), an aim that encompassed aesthetic, literary, and visionary experi-



### Some outstanding East Asian scientists

Name	Dates	Accomplishments
Zhang Heng	78-139	Polymath, astronomer, cosmologist, instrument designer
Zhang Ji	c. 160?–after 219	First formulary for febrile diseases
Sun Simo (or Simiao)	alive 673	Alchemist, physician
Yang Yunsong	9th century	Expert on siting, author of important manuals
Zan Ning	919–1002	Author of important sources for resonance studies
Shen Gua (or Kuo)	1031–1095	Polymath, astronomer, critical commentator on science
Guo Shoujing	1231–1316	Designer of astronomical instruments, expert on water control
Li Shizhen	1518–1593	Author of <i>Systematic Materia Medica</i>
Seki Kowa (or Takakazu)	d. 1708	Japanese innovator in calculus and other mathematical fields
Mei Wending	1633–1721	Mathematician, restorer of classic computational and astronomical traditions

SOURCE: Courtesy of the author

ence, in which cognition could play only a part. Because there was no science as a single, distinct activity, it is more accurate to speak of the Chinese sciences.

Scholars in East Asia in the early twenty-first century commonly enumerate the traditional sciences using modern categories (or rather those common in the 1950s). This positivistic approach often leads to a misperception. For instance, because there was no such field as biology in ancient classifications of knowledge, one must gather traditional notions about life and organisms from treatises on materia medica, handbooks for connoisseurs of goldfish and other creatures that people collected, travel accounts, textbooks on veterinary medicine, and so on. The result is inevitably a grab bag of incompatible notions, likely to give rise to the misconception that Asians did biology poorly. Nor was physics a discrete field. The physical disciplines that did exist, such as siting and resonance studies, had no counterpart in the West. This article follows current practice by discussing scientific ideas in the categories that practitioners used. It divides them into quantitative (*shushu*) and qualitative sciences.

Before addressing the individual sciences, it is necessary to discuss certain early concepts of the cosmos and its workings that affected every aspect of culture.

**Qi, yin-yang, five phases.** In the late Zhou period (722–256 B.C.E.), ritualists manipulated natural and social symbols in sets of costumes, implements, offerings, and so on, specifying the number in each set. As the notion evolved that the order of the good state reflected that of the cosmos, courtly discussions naturally adapted this idea of numbered sets to the social and natural worlds. Certain categories—especially those arising in twos, threes, fives, and sixes—turned out to be especially useful. As philosophers used them to group phenomena and analyze their interrelations, dependence on them grew. After the third century B.C.E. these categories, especially those of yin-yang and the five phases, became the first resort for systematic thought.

At the same time, thinkers trying to account for continuity and change refined the concept of *qi*, the stuff from which everything was formed, to deal with questions analogous to those that

Anaximenes' *aer* addressed. But unlike *aer* or Aristotle's *hyle*, *qi* was also the vitality of an organism' or thing,' responsible for its stability, growth, and change. *Qi* was predominantly a matter of cyclic processes, each a sequence of dynamic phases. It circulated through the body because it circulated through the universe and through the earth as part of the universe.

From the mid third century B.C.E., several philosophers explored the use of yin-yang and the five phases to discuss complementary aspects within temporal processes or spatial configurations. By the end of the first century B.C.E., the *Inner Canon of the Yellow Emperor* (*Huangdi nei jing*), a collection of writings on medical doctrine, and *The Canon of Supreme Mystery* (*Tai xuan jing*), a cosmological treatise, provided mature syntheses in which these twofold and fivefold concepts became ways of characterizing *qi*. In Chinese thought from then on, yin and yang were not activities or forces but phases of *qi* responsible for form, vitality, and change. This understanding became a foundation not only of philosophy but also of the autonomous sciences as they appeared. Each adapted this set of concepts to its own problems, and supplemented it with additional ones.

**Quantitative sciences.** The quantitative sciences in traditional China consisted of mathematics, mathematical astronomy, and mathematical harmonics.

**Mathematics** (*shu, suan*). The pattern for mathematics was largely formed by the *Mathematical Canon in Nine Chapters* (*Jiuzhang suan shu*) of the first century C.E. It brings together 246 problems, of which some reflect the practice of government accountants and surveyors and others the concerns of small private traders. For each it provides a step-by-step numerical solution. It is not concerned with proofs (these appeared at the end of the third century), but rather aims to show how one can solve a wide variety of problems using nine general computational methods. These methods, even for mensuration problems, remained algebraic, depending on computational devices (computing boards until around the fourteenth century, then the abacus).

Unlike earlier manuscripts, the book arranged its materials in standard and rather systematic form. The main mathematical

tradition remained focused on numerically stated practical problems. Over the last millennium even authors who explored more abstract realms—always tentatively until the introduction of European approaches—still stated their problems in concrete (and often impractical) form.

The texts gathered in the other early classic of mathematics, the *Zhou Gnomon* (*Zhou bi*, later called *Zhou bi suan jing*, between 50 B.C.E. and 100 C.E.), use the try square and compass to construct simple numerical models of the universe and its relation to a central earth. These texts apparently aim to demonstrate how one might go about building up a computational astronomy.

*Mathematical astronomy (li)*. Chinese believed that Heaven gave the mandate to rule to the family best able to keep the cosmos and the state in harmony. Unpredicted celestial events were warnings to the current emperor that he was failing to carry out his responsibilities as he should. He therefore needed court astrologers to observe, report, and interpret these portents, and to find out what acts or omissions Heaven was warning him about. He also needed court astronomers to improve methods of prediction, so that there would be fewer omens to worry him. Thus both astrology and astronomy were state enterprises.

The Chinese began the day at midnight, the month at the new moon, and the year at the winter solstice. A system of computational astronomy (*li*) was a set of step-by-step procedures that officials could follow to generate a calendar for the coming year. It forecast actual new moons, solstices, eclipses, planetary phenomena, and much else.

Originators of systems generally claimed that they would yield highly accurate predictions forever. In practice, their slight errors accumulated and lead to failures sooner or later. Because unpredicted phenomena reflected on the emperor's virtue, there was endless pressure to design better systems. Some governments used them ritually to signal the cosmic aegis of a new dynasty or reign period, or even a renewal of virtue within a reign. Rulers over two millennia officially adopted roughly fifty systems. Other East Asian governments, generally relying on hereditary astronomy officials, tended to adopt or minimally adapt Chinese systems, and to use a very few of them for long periods of time.

The methods of computation were numerical, closer to modern computer algorithms than to the Greek geometric approach. Building a calendar was a matter of cycles, as a simple example illustrates.

Astronomers discovered early on that a year was on average 365 days long, and a month, a little over 29 days long. Since the units of a calendar must contain a whole number of days, the Chinese, roughly speaking, alternated months of 29 and 30 days. But 12 such months add up to only 354 or 355 days. It was therefore necessary to add an extra (that is, intercalary) month every so often to reach the correct long-term average. Specialists soon realized that adding 7 extra months at more or less equal intervals over 19 years, creating 7 years each 383 or 384 days long, would make the average year 365 days, so the calendar would roughly predict what people saw in the sky. By the end of the first century B.C.E., they extended

the scope of their systems to eclipses and planetary phenomena by incorporating many additional cycles.

This approach, based on average periods, could carry astronomers only so far. Later astronomy remained mainly cyclic in approach, but (from 223 C.E. on) gradually incorporated the varying, or apparent, motions of heavenly bodies, and (from the eleventh century on) evolved a trigonometric approach to spherical geometry. The high point of predictive power came with the *Season-Granting System* (*Shoushi li*), in use from 1281 to 1644 in China, and even later in Japan and Korea.

*Mathematical harmonics (lü, lülü)*. Chinese thinkers were as fascinated by the quantitative relations between sounds and the physical arrangements that produced them as the Pythagoreans were. Harmonic intervals implied that a quantitative order underlay apparently qualitative and sensuous phenomena. In China such studies were concerned primarily with resonant pipes. These pitch pipes provided the standards for tuning ritual bells and stone chimes. Their lengths and volumes were also the basis—symbolically, at least—for metrological standards of length, volume, and (indirectly) weight. The ceremonial music of the court applied harmonics as an aspect of the imperial charisma.

*Qualitative sciences*. Among the qualitative sciences were astrology, medicine, materia medica, alchemy, siting, and resonance studies.

*Astrology*. Astrology (*tianwen*) complemented astronomy by dealing with unpredictable, and therefore ominous, phenomena. Its portents were mainly celestial, but also included freaks of weather and of animal or human birth, palace fires, and so on. These concerns led to assiduous observation and recording, and to archives maintained over many centuries. The second task of the astrologer was to correlate newly observed prodigies with recorded instances, and thus to direct the attention of the ruler and his advisors to what aspect of government needed reform. Practically speaking, such ritual (like economic forecasting in the early 2000s), although flawed as a technique of prediction, enabled a wider range of policy discussion than those in power might otherwise consider.

The registers of phenomena have been boons to modern science. They have provided richer collections of precisely dated observations than those from any other civilization—millennia not only of eclipses (used in studying, for instance, the gradual change in the moon's speed) and comets (used to establish changes in the orbital velocity of, for instance, Halley's comet), but also of earthquakes (which have given China a leading role in research on their prediction).

*Medicine*. Traditions of medicine (*yī*) based on abstract doctrines developed by elite practitioners and passed down in writing were only a small component of health care in East Asia, as elsewhere.

Those who treated the sick were mostly laymen, illiterate healers, and priests. In other East Asian societies, methods for healing the elite were very different from the culturally embedded practices available to the majority of those populations, and the practice of medicine was affected by different social cir-

### A few important East Asian scientific books

Title	Author	Date	Contents
<i>Records of the Grand Historian (Shi ji)</i>	Sima Qian	c. 100 B.C.E.	First history to contain astronomical and astrological treatises
<i>Inner Canon of the Yellow Emperor (Huangdi nei jing)</i>	Anonymous	1st century B.C.E.?	Canonical collection of medical doctrines
<i>Mathematical Canon in Nine Chapters (Jiuzhang suan shu)</i>	Anonymous	1st century C.E.	Worked problems in practical form
<i>Kinship of the Three (Zhouyi cantong qi)</i>	Anonymous	c. 700	Early theoretical text of alchemy
<i>Formulas at the Heart of Medicine (Ishimpō)</i>	Tamba no Yasuyori	982	Compendious Japanese formulary from Chinese sources
<i>Season-Granting System (Shoushi li)</i>	Wang Xun et al.	1281	Most sophisticated system of astronomical computation
<i>Classified Collection of Medical Formulas (Ūibang yuchwi)</i>	Kim Yemong	1445	Korean collection of over 50,000 formulas
<i>Systematic Materia Medica (Bencao gangmu)</i>	Li Shizhen	1596	Wide range of data about nearly 2000 drug substances

There is no reliable, complete translation of any of these books into English.

SOURCE: Courtesy of the author

cumstances. For instance, classical Chinese medicine reached the Japanese court by the early ninth century, but was almost inaccessible outside aristocratic circles and a few Buddhist institutions. It became a mainstream tradition only between the mid sixteenth and mid seventeenth centuries, when its European counterpart was also first becoming known in Japan.

**Materia medica.** *Materia medica* (*bencao*) was the study of drugs of mineral, vegetable, and animal origin. But more than that, it was a trove of natural history. The earliest compilation (in the late first or second century C.E.) was as concerned with immortality as with the restoration of health. Later compilations described each medicinal substance in detail, with information ranging from habitat to adulterants to methods of processing. Charles Darwin drew on data from the *Systematic Materia Medica* (*Bencao gangmu*, 1596), the most authoritative treatise on pharmacognosy, in his *Variation of Animals and Plants under Domestication* (1868).

**Alchemy.** The somewhat more than a hundred surviving treatises on alchemy (*liandan*, *lianjin*, *jindan*) vary greatly in their concepts, content, symbology, and rituals, and their interrelations remain far from clear. Research in the 1990s and 2000s places them tentatively on a spectrum ranging from external alchemy to internal alchemy. Adepts in external alchemy made elixirs much as mineral medicines were made, by treating chemical substances with fire and water. Elixirs, when ingested, could cure illness, restore youth, and bring about immortal life, for the alchemist or anyone who ingested them. Internal alchemists produced elixirs within the body by visualization, contemplation, and other meditative means. These were the same disciplines used in other modes of self-cultivation, but adepts of internal chemistry used the language of the external art—chemical ingredients, crucibles, furnaces, timed application of heat, and so on—to describe their own meditative experiences. On occasion, such experiences amounted to drug hallucinations. Between these two contrasting genres were theoretically inclined writings that explained alchemy (of the laboratory or of the body) as symbolic manipulation of time and space. Whether, in external prac-

tice, adepts were charging the furnace with timed sequences of carefully weighed fuel or, in internal alchemy, they were breathing in cycles regulated by depth and time, the aim was to reproduce on a compressed scale a great cycle of macrocosmic creation, growth, maturity, aging, death, and rebirth.

In this amalgam of theory and practice, witnessing in the laboratory the process that created the elixir of experiencing it within the body perfected the adept spiritually and, as a result, physically. It made him immortal. The chemical product was unimportant by comparison. Alchemy was as much concerned with religious transcendence as with chemical processes, but along the way alchemists accumulated a great deal of practical knowledge, including understanding of quantitative relations.

**Siting.** Siting (*dili*, *kanyu*, now called *fengshui*) was concerned with the placement of houses and tombs in relation to their environments. It was based on the idea that *qi* circulated regularly through the earth, channeled by high and low places, wet and dry places, and other topographic features. The ideal site was one on which a dynamic balance of *qi* converged. Great effort went into finding the right abode for a family or an ancestor—effort that intellectuals justified cosmically and that the less educated justified as bringing good fortune. Siting is historically interesting because the compass first appears in the early eleventh century in the hands of practitioners, a century before its use for navigation. Siting fascinates landscape architects because its systematic analyses of landforms generate consistently beautiful placements in the landscape.

**Resonance studies.** All the traditional sciences attempted to find the regularities underlying change. One widespread style of reasoning began with two assumptions. The first was that since things and events observably influence each other, such categories as yin-yang and the five phases can explain their interaction. The second was that things of the same category affect each other by resonance, the same resonance that causes interaction between certain musical strings or pitch pipes. The surviving literature consists of only a few books devoted to resonance studies (*ganying*, *wuli*) and a number of assertions in

the materia medica and other literatures, and these have been little studied. Some of the assertions about how one creature responds to or changes into another echo folklore. Still, the language of resonance made it possible to collect and set in order data on, for instance, a range of biological phenomena, such as grafting of trees.

### Scholarship on East Asian Science

Historical studies of East Asian science grew out of two broader traditions: the rigorous philological scholarship (*kaozheng*) that evolved in China, Japan, and Korea, and the chronicling of positive progress (focused mainly on concepts) prevalent in early-twentieth-century Europe and America. The best-known philological scholars are Xi Zezong (b. 1931) in Beijing and Yabuuchi Kiyoshi (1906–2000) in Kyoto. And the best-known Western chronicler is Joseph Needham (1900–1995) in Cambridge, England. From around 1970 on, social history (drawing on sociology and anthropology) filled some of the gaps in the prevalent history of scientific ideas. In the 1980s, as the antagonism between “internalist” intellectual history and “externalist” social history drew to an end in the West, mainstream history of science took up the challenge of exploring phenomena as a whole, using the widest range of disciplinary tools. Nathan Sivin, using “cultural manifolds” that integrate every dimension of the problems investigated, has applied this approach to East Asian science and to cross-cultural comparisons.

New primary sources have led to fundamental reevaluations. From the 1950s on, archeological excavations have disinterred many troves of manuscripts, some earlier than any extant book, others that cast a fresh light on later technical developments. Many of these documents were not published until 1980 or later. And the excavations continue. The result is a quickly changing base of empirical knowledge, especially about the beginnings of science, that makes many earlier generalizations obsolete.

See also *Chinese Thought; Medicine: China*.

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Nathan Sivin

**SCIENCE, HISTORY OF.** The history of science as an academic discipline grew in the post-1945 era along with the development of higher education and the expansion of science and technology. In the United States, Vannevar Bush's seminal 1945 article, “Science, the Endless Frontier: A Report to the President,” called for a government-supported national research foundation. Bush's influence led to the creation of the National Science Foundation in 1950 and inaugurated an era in which science was a form of “politics by other means” for waging the Cold War. Science came to be combined with technology in ways that often made the two indistinguishable. The program to land men on the moon, the development of intercontinental ballistic missiles with nuclear warheads, the construction of supercomputers, and the war on cancer are just a few examples of technoscience during this era. As the role of science and scientists in society increased, so did the need to understand science and scientists in historical terms.

In the 1970s and 1980s, many universities established history of science programs or related science and technology studies programs, greatly increasing the number of professional scholars in the field. The annual edition of the *Isis Current Bibliography* is a good indicator of growth and decline in the history of science. *Isis* is the academic journal of the History of Science Society, the discipline's largest professional organization. According to the society's preface to the 2000 edition, “The *Isis Current Bibliography* is compiled by the systematic search of approximately 600 journals.” Throughout the 1970s, the *Isis Current Bibliography* typically listed fewer than 3,000 entries comprising books and journal articles. In 1983 the number of entries rose above 3,000, and in 1993 it first surpassed 4,000. After 1999, scholarship in the history of science seemed to decline rapidly in quantitative terms, and since 2000 the number of entries has hovered below 3,000.



Throughout most of the twentieth century, there were two generally opposed schools of thought in the history of science: internalist and externalist. Internalists believe that the history of science should be explained only through the growth and development of science as rational knowledge and methods. For the internalist, social or cultural factors merely hinder or accelerate this growth, but are not intrinsically part of science. Externalists believe that science is a part of culture and society. For the externalist, the explanation of scientific change necessarily must include non-scientific factors. Boris Hessen's book *The Social and Economic Roots of Newton's Principia* (1931) helped establish the boundaries of the externalist camp with its emphasis on the social, economic, and political forces that shaped Newton's science. Alexander Koyré's work *Études Galiléennes* (1939; Galileo studies) helped establish the boundaries of the internalist camp with its emphasis on intellectual content, growth of knowledge, metaphysical assumptions, and rational nature of Galileo's science. In principle this debate between internalist and externalist explanations in the history of science largely ended following the publication of Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* in 1962. Though Kuhn had begun historical work as a disciple of Koyré, Kuhn's book emphasized the role of social factors in revolutionary periods when one paradigm replaces another. Subsequently, though non-historians often fall into the internalism versus externalism debate, historians tend to embrace both explanations as complementary ways of understanding scientific change through time. From the internalist versus externalist debates, the sociology of science emerged as a discipline closely allied to the history of science. Because the sociology of science may use a theoretical method that distinguishes it from history qua history, it is sometimes treated as a special subcategory of the history of science.

Most historians of science focus their work around some combination of chronological period, subject category, and cultural area. Chronological periods include classical antiquity (chiefly Greco-Roman to c. 500 C.E.), the Middle Ages (Latin culture and Europe in general from 500 to c. 1450), the Renaissance and Reformation (1450–1600), and century-by-century from the seventeenth to the twentieth. Subject categories include mathematics, earth sciences, biological sciences, social sciences, and medicine and medical sciences. These are further broken down into subcategories—for example, the physical sciences consist of astronomy, physics, and chemistry. Some historians use a biographical focus within the subject approach. Cultural areas include Islamic and related cultures (including Israel, Iran, and the Near East in general; chiefly from c. 500 to c. 1600), India (to c. 1600), and the Far East (to c. 1600). Presumably, global communication and unification in the sciences make these cultural categories unnecessary after 1600. The work of Joseph Needham seems to belie this point, and the history of modern science in non-Western cultures remains a fertile and largely unexplored academic terrain.

The following categories are by no means an exhaustive survey of new themes in the history of science. Rather, they are an effort to identify selected key developments—some in traditional areas such as the scientific revolution, and others in new areas such as feminist history of science—that will help

orient scholars who are new to the discipline. Also, in part because of space limitations, history of technology and history of the social sciences are excluded, and only the history of the natural sciences is covered here.

### General Works

Specialization among historians of science and the sheer volume of publications make it difficult for a historian of science to publish a general overview of the field that pleases most colleagues and is sufficiently comprehensive. With this in mind, two generally successful efforts are Anthony Alioto's *A History of Western Science* (1987) and Daniel Boorstin's *The Discoverers* (1983). Alioto's book serves well as a general introduction for undergraduate students. It is broad and inclusive up through the end of the scientific revolution (c. 1700), and it makes some effort to survey developments in science to the late twentieth century. Alioto emphasizes that science is a way of seeing the world and a way of knowing, rather than a compilation of facts. He also acknowledges the role of metaphysics. Much like Koyré, Alioto regards metaphysics as a commitment to the inherent and knowable order of natural phenomena. Boorstin was a general social historian and not a historian of science per se, but his book is a pleasure to read and is an excellent introduction to the subject for lay readers. It portrays science as human discovery on the frontier of nature and as a progressive method for defeating ignorance. Boorstin is generally weak on the effect of the social and cultural milieu on science, but he is strong in explaining the role of instruments such as the printing press, the telescope, and the microscope. In addition to the general works by Alioto and Boorstin, W. W. Norton and Company has published a series of historical surveys of major disciplines such as chemistry, physics, and the human sciences. The volumes in the Norton series are highly recommended for scholars new to the history of science.

To understand the general scope of the history of science since 1970, two other introductory texts are necessary. One is a work about women in science, and the other is about science as socially constructed knowledge. Margaret Alic's *Hypatia's Heritage* (1992) surveys the role of women in science from antiquity through the nineteenth century. Through a series of chapter-length biographies, Alic helps students and general readers appreciate male biases that created both social hurdles to discourage women who wanted to become scientists and historical filters to render invisible those women who did become scientists. David Bloor's *Knowledge and Social Imagery* (1981) helped establish "the strong programme" for the social history of science. Bloor's method hinges on the belief that "knowledge for the sociologist is whatever people take to be knowledge." Thus, according to Bloor's symmetry principle, there should be no inherent difference between the explanations about what some might regard as true beliefs and what some might regard as false beliefs. Furthermore, Bloor is interested in the form and content of science as knowledge, and not in scientists per se. The strong programme is a theory supporting the social constructionist view and is not to be confused with the social history of science, which seeks merely to explain social influences on science. That said, the origins of the strong programme and social constructionist in the his-

tory of science can be traced to “The Merton Thesis.” Robert K. Merton’s *Science, Technology, and Society in Seventeenth Century England* (1938) argued for the linked origin of values in science, the English revolution, and the Anglican religion.

### Preclassical Antiquity

Mott Greene’s *Natural Knowledge in Preclassical Antiquity* (1992) displays a time when people lived in an oral culture and were in close contact with their natural surroundings as a daily part of life. Greene argues that this firsthand experience of nature means that mythology should be understood in natural terms as well as through philology. For example, the enigma of the Cyclops might well be explained through the presence of volcanoes—gigantic one-eyed beasts that threatened humans with annihilation.

Ideas such as Greene’s have found their way into standard works of scholarship on human ecology and nature. In *The Idea of Wilderness: From Prehistory to the Age of Ecology* (1991), Max Oelschlaeger begins by trying to understand the worldview of Paleolithic humans. He writes, “Clearly, the mythology of the Great Hunt and totemism are not stupid responses to the world but mirror the same level of intelligence—albeit one directed to an unmistakably different view of the world—as modern science” (p. 15). Furthermore, in seeking to understand the meaning of wilderness for the modern world, Oelschlaeger considers the poetry of Robinson Jeffers or Gary Snyder to be on equal footing with the environmental science of Aldo Leopold. Understanding science as an integral part of culture rather than as an exceptional activity is characteristic of postmodernism, although this way of thinking is still disputed by many historians of science.

### Middle Ages

The Middle Ages, from about 500 to about 1600, are in the early twenty-first century recognized as a fertile period marking a transition from the dominance of a handful of ancient authorities to a broad range of theory and experiment. These developments took place throughout Europe, North Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, and Asia. For the eventual rise of science in Renaissance Europe, developments in Islamic nations were especially important. For a comprehensive survey of this cultural transfer, see David Lindberg’s *The Beginnings of Western Science* (1992), which traces the development of ideas within cultures and their transfer from one culture to another as well as the cultural contexts that enframed these developments. As an historian who pioneered studies of the close relationship between science and Christianity in the West, Lindberg is especially good at laying the “religion versus science” myth to rest. He does this in a number of ways, including explanations of support for science and medicine in the medieval church and the transfer of Greek science from Islam to Europe through Christian scholars such as St. Thomas Aquinas.

### Scientific Revolution

The “scientific revolution” embraces the period between 1500 and 1700. Major biographical figures such as Francis Bacon (1561–1626), Galileo Galilei (1564–1642), Robert Boyle

(1627–1691), Nicolaus Copernicus (1473–1543), Johannes Kepler (1571–1630), and Isaac Newton (1642–1727) dominate historiography for this period, although historians have done considerable work on figures such as Paracelsus (1493–1541) or Robert Fludd (1574–1637), whose ideas on occult sciences or mysticism influenced major figures, or those such as Marin Mersenne (1588–1648) or Christiaan Huygens (1629–1695), whose ideas on mechanism or metaphysics helped shape the work of others.

Historians of science long acknowledged the importance of published communication and authorship during this period. Yet until Elizabeth Eisenstein’s two-volume *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformation in Early Modern Europe* (1979), the importance of publication and authorship was a largely untested assumption with knowledge about these phenomena scattered throughout the literature. The second volume of Eisenstein’s work is mainly about communication and science and makes a strong case that, whereas print was not *the* agent of change in giving rise to the scientific revolution, it was a crucial one. The social power of scientists as authors and the development of print-based academic culture were seen in the importance of prestige and how it came to be defined as a system of social capital. This reward system did not guarantee that publications would bring acclaim from fellow scientists, but it did ensure that an otherwise original scientist who did not publish would not receive acclaim. As an important independent variable in the history of science, publishing helps explain Galileo’s popularity (and his political troubles with the Catholic Church), the obscurity of the Swedish chemist Carl Scheele (who made major chemical discoveries but did not publish in French or English, and hence was unknown to contemporaries), the importance of the priority dispute between Newton and Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibnitz (1646–1716), and the covert pleas by Charles Darwin’s (1809–1882) friends for him to publish his *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* (1859).

Although the occasional social constructionist has doubted whether there was any such thing as the scientific revolution, most historians recognize its usefulness as a heuristic term to characterize this amazing era of change. Indeed, Kuhn’s work made revolution—the overthrow of one paradigm by another—the key event in explaining scientific change.

Instead of merely working with “revolution” as a historical tool, I. Bernard Cohen uses the historical method to investigate the very idea of revolution in science. By placing Kuhn’s work in historical context, Cohen explains how scientists used and shaped the idea of revolution from the early modern period, through the Enlightenment, and on to the late twentieth century. During the Enlightenment, revolution became a rhetorical instrument borrowed from politics and heavily laden with connotations of progress. Like Cohen’s earlier biographical histories, his investigation of revolution in science centered on key figures such as Copernicus and Newton.

Social constructionists have also focused on key biographical figures to explain the scientific revolution. By investigating

the work of the chemist Robert Boyle, Steven Shapin and Simon Schaffer sought to explain how faith in the mechanistic approach came to dominate scientific culture and how the mechanistic view came to be constructed as scientific reality. Although often criticized for its focus on Boyle's having established his legitimacy by emphasizing his own status as a gentleman, Shapin and Schaffer's work is more nuanced than that, and it does help explain Boyle's ascendancy over rival mechanists such as Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679). As a representative of the conservative traditional social order, Hobbes doubted the ability of experiments to yield knowledge and was a critic to be reckoned with. Boyle's ability to tie experimental demonstration to his mechanistic views was crucial in gaining public acceptance over Hobbes's skepticism. Shapin and Schaffer also effectively explain how the English Revolution and Anglican religion shaped the scientific revolution and hence modern science. Just as Hobbes had feared, scientists became the modern priesthood and science a major source of political authority.

In the history of science since the 1970s, Newton has continued to be a key biographical figure. In a series of books published between 1975 and 1995, Betty Jo Teeter Dobbs revealed Newton's passion for alchemy and explained the connections between this passion, Newton's theological beliefs, and his science. According to Dobbs, Newton's alchemical quest revolved around "Hunting the Green Lyon"—searching for the vegetable spirit that brought brute matter to life and revealed the divine origins of the world. Phenomena such as fermentation were examples of this vital spirit, which caused alchemical transformation as compared with mere chemical change. Newton also searched for essences through his religion and physics. Through his Bible studies, Newton sought a pure and uncorrupted reading of the Scriptures, a reading that would reveal the mind of God at work. In his physics research, Newton sought the essence of space, time, and physical matter—a research program that would reveal the "sensorium of God." Dobbs also demonstrated the effect of Newtonian science on industrial developments. Earlier scholars had pointed out Newton's search for ancient wisdom and alchemical investigation, but it was Dobbs who tied this to Newton's science in a convincing synthesis. Like Dobbs, Richard Westfall spent much of his life researching and writing about Newton. A paradigm for biographical studies, Westfall's book is more than 900 pages long, and the reader comes to Newton as a complete person in intellectual, social, and psychological terms. To accomplish this feat, Westfall deciphered Newton's boyhood journals, understood his private devotion to Bible studies, analyzed his private devotion to alchemy, and sympathized with his psychological challenges. Above all, Westfall explained the intellectual basis of Newton's science, with heavy emphasis on his mathematical and logical genius. Newton also emerges as a social force in his own right, from his work as warden and master of the mint to his leadership of the Royal Society (1703–1727).

### Biological Sciences

Just as Newton endures as a primary biographical subject for the history of the scientific revolution, Charles Darwin endures

in the history of biology. As a biography, Adrian Desmond and James Moore's *Darwin* stands in stark contrast to Westfall's study of Newton. Desmond and Moore consider Darwin's life and science almost solely on their own terms. The book is about how Darwin comes to be Darwin and not about how Darwin's work comes to influence science. Throughout, the emphasis is on creating a narrative from primary sources, not on evaluating these sources through the lens of a century's worth of historiography. Desmond and Moore do explain the economic, political, and social factors that shaped Darwin, and they discuss the role of Thomas Malthus's (1766–1834) *An Essay on the Principle of Population* (1798) and other contemporary ideas. The leitmotif that binds this biography together is Darwin's frequent illnesses, but even this is treated strictly in terms of how the illnesses were understood by Darwin and his contemporaries with no allusion to the various later historical explanations for it.

As if to demonstrate the importance of Darwin to the history of biology and the attraction of such major figures for historians, Janet Browne's two-volume biography may prove to be the definitive work on Darwin. Both volumes, *Charles Darwin: A Biography: Voyaging* (volume 1, 1995) and *Power of Peace* (volume 2, 2002), successfully integrate the wealth of primary and secondary sources. Browne is especially adept at explaining the social context of Victorian England, where Darwin lived a privileged life as a member of the leisured class. The pivotal member within a network of actors including friends and family, Darwin was both taken care of by others and in a position to manipulate them. Browne's biography is by no means a one-dimensional sociological study, but also explains Darwin's involvement with and interest in the natural world.

Two other works are important for an understanding of Darwin's role in the history of biology: Ernst Mayr's *The Growth of Biological Thought: Diversity, Evolution, and Inheritance* (1982) for the significance of Darwin's work to later science, and Stephen Jan Gould's *Ontogeny and Phylogeny* (1977) for the clash of ideas (and their political significance) in Darwinian biology. The history of twentieth-century biology is of special interest because the discipline has been largely defined by historians who actively participated as scientists in the synthesis of fields such as cytology, genetics, and embryology. Ernst Mayr is a biologist who participated in the evolutionary synthesis and became a well-respected historian, and his 1982 book is a central text for understanding twentieth-century biology.

Like other historians who have written about the evolutionary synthesis, Mayr explains how diverse scientific streams converged to form the river of contemporary biology. He focuses mainly on the streams of taxonomy, evolution, and genetics and traces their origins to sources as diverse as Aristotle's classification, Jean-Baptiste Lamarck's (1744–1829) theory of adaptation, and the cell theory of Theodor Schwann (1810–1882) and Matthias Schleiden (1804–1881). Although Mayr's work is anything but social history, he does emphasize the cultural environment surrounding biologists and their ideas. And the emphasis on the role of individual biologists is so strong that one reviewer called Mayr's book "an intellectual biography in disguise."



Mayr is inclusive in considering the sources of modern evolutionary theory, but he also occasionally plays the role of historical judge in assessing the value of certain ideas to the history of biology. He is especially harsh regarding the “straight jacket of Plato’s essentialism,” which Mayr believes held back the development of biology for more than two thousand years. Mayr’s disdain for Platonism helps explain his appreciation for the Enlightenment-era naturalist Georges-Louis Leclerc de Buffon (1707–1788), who argued that there are no species but only individuals. Mayr also judged more contemporary aspects of history, as with his criticism of Gould’s work regarding punctuated equilibrium as a driving force in evolution and as an alternative to the gradual adaptation favored by Mayr.

Like Mayr, Stephen Jay Gould, in *Ontogeny and Phylogeny*, combines history with arguments regarding contemporary evolutionary theory. Instead of a historiography that looks for the synthesis of diverse ideas through time, Gould focuses more on history of science as a battle of ideas. Gould’s scientific roots were in paleontology as contrasted with Mayr’s roots in the systematics of extant species. Paleontologists must confront the enigma of sudden widespread extinctions and the dramatic rise of newly dominant taxa. Gould’s historiographic and scientific interests led him to examine different sources than those studied by Mayr and to interpret sources in alternate ways. Thus, Gould uses history to argue that an overemphasis on gradualism and “the evolutionary synthesis” unfairly obscured other historical developments such as the alteration of regulatory genes and the role of stochastic cataclysmic events. Moreover, as he did in numerous other publications, Gould critically examines science as a problem when it is taken as an “objective” frame for politics. For Gould, moral and humanistic concerns outweigh any easy tendency to reduce complex social problems to easy scientific solutions.

Historically, Gould’s fears regarding the political misuse of biological science were well founded. Although historians such as Robert Young have pointed out the implicit class prejudice inherent in Darwin’s science, it was not until after Darwin’s death that Darwinian biology began to shape politics in this way. Daniel J. Kevles in his *In the Name of Eugenics: Genetics and the Uses of Human Heredity* (1985) explains the origins of this desire to breed better humans. Starting with the work of Darwin’s cousin Francis Galton in the late nineteenth century, Kevles tracks this program through the twentieth century, explaining the success of eugenics legislation in the United States versus its failure in Britain. In Britain, legislation failed because of a deeper appreciation by politicians of the scientific complexity or heredity, resistance from the Labour party, and arguments for individual reproductive rights. Before World War II, the American genetics program sought to prevent inferior people from reproducing. After the war and the dark image created by the Nazis for human selective breeding, American scientists shifted their program to a “reform eugenics” based on genetic testing and counseling to screen out inherited disabilities. In Kevles’s historiography, science as a process for creating and developing ideas is replaced by a science that shapes law, feeds powerful political coalitions, gets tested in the courts, and becomes an economic commodity.

The American obsession with understanding and controlling genetics through inheritance has, in recent years, turned toward manipulating the genes themselves. Sheldon Krinsky was original in looking at an episode of contemporary history as a narrative about the politics of science and science policy. America’s war on cancer began in the late 1960s and helped generate interest in and funding for research on the viral causes of cancer. This led to the discovery of SV40, a monkey virus that transformed healthy cells into tumor cells and could also be used to insert new genes into cells. As scientists learned more about synthesizing and manipulating SV40, some of them—such as David Baltimore at MIT—raised ethical concerns over the creation of human health hazards. Although scientists tried to control such biohazards through voluntary agreements, their meetings and public communication attracted public scrutiny and political attention. When federal legislation threatened commercial prospects for recombinant DNA, scientists made every effort in their public communications to black box the issue and to emphasize its potential health benefits. As a black box, scientists could sell the public on the attractive applications of recombinant DNA applications without educating the public to understand either the scientific aspects or the potential disbenefits. This rhetorical strategy was largely successful, both in the 1970s and in more recent politics of genetic engineering.

### Feminist History of Science

Since 1970, the feminist history of women in science has become an important field within the larger discipline. The term *feminist history* means more than simply the history of women in science. As an explicitly ideological perspective, feminist history seeks to explain the oppression of women and to offer strategies for overcoming that oppression. Unlike historians in other fields, who are frequently loath to consider themselves personally as agents of historical change, feminist historians of science often admit their personal biases and draw practical political implications from their work.

Carolyn Merchant in *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology, and the Scientific Revolution* (1980) considers mechanistic natural science between 1500 and 1700 as an object of criticism. In defining the harm to women and ecology stemming from the scientific revolution, Merchant examines the controversy between mechanistic and organic views of nature, the social construction of a female-gendered nature, and the struggle of some women against dominant culture. For example, instead of dismissing the persecution of witches as a fundamentally irrational practice, Merchant sees it as an integral part of the mechanistic program of control over nature. Francis Bacon, René Descartes (1596–1650), and other architects of the scientific revolution promoted this program. Merchant’s criticism of the scientific revolution fits closely with the work of other postmodernists such as Albert Borgmann and Max Oelschlaeger, who identify historical developments such as Locke’s political and economic individualism, Descartes’s universal reductivism, and Bacon’s mechanistic control as key features of the modernist period.

Margaret Rossiter takes a very different yet equally original tack in *Women Scientists in America: Struggles and Strategies*



(1982). By collecting biographical information on thousands of women who earned a listing between 1906 and 1938 in the directory *American Men of Science*, Rossiter identified systemic barriers to women's advancement in science and common strategies by which women overcame or sidestepped these barriers. As factors to further explain these barriers and strategies, she examined more than a dozen variables such as education and marital status. Rossiter found clear patterns in the factors that were associated with professional success in science. This work deflated the myth of science as a meritocracy and also helped feminists develop strategies to promote inclusion in contemporary science. Furthermore, Rossiter's work encouraged historians to look more closely at the connections between gender and contemporary social institutions.

An exemplary scientific biography of a woman scientist is Evelyn Fox Keller's 1983 *A Feeling for the Organism: The Life and Work of Barbara McClintock*. McClintock won the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1983 for her research in corn genetics and her discovery of transposable genes. Keller focuses on McClintock's struggle against patriarchy, her perseverance in getting other scientists to examine her unorthodox research, and her way of knowing nature through connection and relationship rather than through abstract analytical power. By identifying particular masculine and feminine gender characteristics, Keller explains McClintock's scientific insight based on her sympathy for and involvement with the objects of her research. Thus Keller criticizes cultural limitations on scientific knowledge and also suggests ways in which those limitations might be transcended.

In identifying barriers to knowledge and imagining ways to overcome them, Donna Haraway is a distinctively original and inspirational thinker. Her *Primate Visions: Gender, Race, and Nature in the World of Modern Science* (1989) is a good example of her ability to build a historical narrative and use critical analysis to shift the reader's point of view. Haraway began this narrative by reading exhibits at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City as primary sources. These exhibits told a story of cultural politics and "a logic of appropriation and domination" by white male European culture in the postcolonial era. The book is in three parts, beginning with the pre-World War II emphasis on the balance of nature and the need for hierarchy, shifting after the war to a "man the Hunter" trope emphasizing cooperation and the integration of individuals into society, and ending with the "Politics of Being Female"—a new feminist primatology rooted in historical conditions. For Haraway, history of science matters because of the way it shapes society, defines our ideology, and limits our imagination. History matters because it can always be contested and revised, taking on a new narrative form to explore ontological possibilities.

### Conclusion

In a brief entry such as this, it is necessary to emphasize a few popular themes at the expense of the great diversity comprising the field. Alas, much of the history of science since 1970 has revolved around telling and retelling narratives about the great men of physics and biology. It is a process that Mott Greene once called "toting bones from one graveyard to another." In his 1992 work on preclassical antiquity, Greene shows what interesting bones are yet to be discovered. In

*Geology in the Nineteenth Century: Changing Views of a Changing World* (1982), Greene demonstrates how a new way of looking at the world—the discovery of plate tectonics in the 1960s—could be a reason to rescue obscure geologists from historical oblivion. It is good history and also a good example of self-reflexivity in the post-Kuhnian age, where the historian becomes a self-conscious shaper of the social fabric, and not a mere narrator of historical truth.

Similarly—although it seems to have been a case of toting bones back and forth—the discovery of the importance of magic and mysticism to Newton, Bacon, and other major biographical figures of the scientific revolution helped open the door to another recovery project—this one centered around "wonders" and how scientists, physicians, and other adherents of natural philosophy experienced them. Lorraine Daston and Katharine Park researched accounts regarding objects of wonder such as monstrous births, extraordinary mushrooms, and urine stones that glowed in the dark. In addition to giving readers a richer sense of ontology from the twelfth to the eighteenth centuries, they also widened historical understanding of how empiricism related to society, morality, and aesthetics. Daston and Park argue that objects of wonder did not fall out of favor because empirical science excluded them as objects of popular fascination, but rather were driven to the pages of X-Men comics and supermarket tabloids by changing social fashions and etiquette.

Considered from a historiographic point of view, Greene, Dalton, and Park might have much to show about the future of the history of science. From Herodotus to Leopold von Ranke (1795–1886) to the postmodernist deconstructionists, the methods of researching, writing, and interpreting history have changed greatly. History is always subject to revision and reinterpretation based upon the questions one asks and how one seeks to answer them.

As a history of historiography, *Telling the Truth about History* by Joyce Appleby, Lynn Hunt, and Margaret Jacob is a comprehensive survey from the scientific revolution to the end of the twentieth century. By tracing history from the hagiography that made Newton into a cultural hero to the "crisis of modernity" that sees truth and objectivity as "dissimulations advanced by those who have power," Appleby et al. seek to fashion a reconstruction project. They argue that history is rooted in the human psychological experience of memory and the personal craving for meaning. This is an optimistic project. Although we must give up naïve notions of truth and objectivity, we may embrace a democratic truth that "celebrates a multiplicity of actors" (p. 283) and encourages "open-ended scholarly inquiry that can trample on cherished illusions" (p. 289).

See also *Biology; Chemistry; Historiography; Mechanical Philosophy; Medicine; Nature; Newtonianism; Paradigm; Physics; Scientific Revolution; Technology*.

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Pat Munday

**SCIENCE FICTION.** Like a rapacious and relentlessly predatory science fictional entity assimilating all it encounters (the *Star Trek* Borg come to mind), science fiction in the early twenty-first century is an unstoppable expansive force that is certainly not limited to one particular genre. Science fiction literature, once ghettoized and marginalized, is pervasive and ever more rapidly garnering respect.

*PMLA*, America's most distinguished literary criticism journal, published its first science fiction issue in May 2004. Stephen King received the 2003 National Book Foundation Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters. Philip K. Dick once dismissed as a pulp science fiction writer—because of his works' emphasis upon paranoia regarding government, technology, and personal relationships and its attention to what constitutes reality itself—has been lauded as creating the most emblematic fiction of the turn of the twenty-first century. Jonathan Lethem's *The Fortress of Solitude* was applauded as one of the most important novels published in 2003, and *Star Trek* was recognized as the most enduring cultural mythology of the second half of the twentieth century.

The attention lavished upon King and Dick especially exemplifies why science fiction is pervasive and ever more rapidly gaining respect. The National Book Foundation's decision to recognize King's achievements signaled an end to the discrimination popular genre writers automatically suffered. Dick precisely envisioned the world of the early twenty-first century, a world that did not inherit flying cars, but which endures such Dickian devices and themes as implanted memories, commercialized personalities, dislocation, and disintegrating realities.

Literary theory reflects the newfound status science fiction garners. Carl Freedman, in *Critical Theory and Science Fiction* (2000), proclaims that science fiction, one of the most theoretically informed areas of the literary profession, is a privileged genre for critical theory:

I maintain that science fiction, like critical theory, insists upon historical mutability, material reducibility, and utopian possibility. Of all genres, science fiction is thus the one most devoted to the historical concreteness and rigorous self-reflectiveness of critical theory. The science-fictional world is not only one different in time

or place from our own, but one whose chief interest is precisely the difference that such difference makes. (p. xvi)

In a 1999 essay for the *New York Times* titled “Black to the Future,” Walter Mosley positions science as one of the most exciting emerging directions in contemporary American fiction; he explains that the newly free black imagination joins with science fiction to create a new force to counter racism. N. Katherine Hayles’ *How We Became Post Human: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature and Informatics* (1999), in response to science fiction’s aforementioned pervasive presence within reality, declares that people are now more than simply human. Posthumans inhabit a brave new postmodern world in which science fiction infused reality ever more increasingly blurs the old comfortable distinctions between the real and the unreal. Via an overview of the development of science fiction literature and science fiction theory from the 1970s to the start of the twenty-first century, this entry will explore how we and our world became science fictionally post real.

Edward James’s *Science Fiction in the Twentieth Century* (1994) offers one of the best descriptions of science fiction’s historical progression; his ideas form the basis of the historical survey given here. The American New Wave influenced the most innovative science fiction writers of the 1970s (including John Crowley, Joe Haldeman, Ursula Le Guin, James Tiptree/Alice Sheldon, and John Varley). The New Wave can be defined as the 1960s generational shift away from the classic writers who began to write before World War II—such as Isaac Asimov, Alfred Bester, Ray Bradbury, Arthur Clarke, Robert Heinlein, and Theodore Sturgeon. The New Wave, an attempt to bring science fiction into the literary mainstream by emphasizing style rather than scientific accuracy, consisted of experimental works emphasizing psychology and soft sciences. New Wave writers shared the notion that the world is not improving, expressed a distrust of science and technology, and thought humans unworthy of valorization.

American New Wave writers (Robert Silverberg, Joanna Russ, Harlan Ellison, Roger Zelazny, and Samuel Delany, for example) wanted to improve upon rather than reject classic pulp science fiction. The word *pulp* refers to the inexpensive paper used to produce pulp magazines as well as to the characteristics of the fiction the magazines published. Action, romance, heroism, exotic settings, adventures, and positive endings characterize pulp science fiction stories. Pulp science fiction began with *The Argosy* in the 1890s and proliferated until the 1930s in such magazines as *Weird Tales*, *Amazing Stories* (created by Hugo Gernsback, the father of pulp science fiction and namesake of the Hugo Award), and *Astounding*. *Astounding* editor John W. Campbell insisted upon hard science as a basis for story acceptance; hence, classic pulp science fiction can be understood as a juxtaposition of science fiction, monster stories, and hero pulp stories. Such clichéd science fiction tropes as Bug-Eyed-Monsters and little green men emerging from the spaceship that lands on the White House lawn epitomize classic pulp science fiction.

During the 1970s, new subgenres arose from the combination of New Wave ideas engaging with the older traditions

classic pulp science fiction represents. Larry Niven, the exemplary writer of hard science fiction, emphasized technology, physics, and space exploration. Women writers (such as Ursula Le Guin, Joanna Russ, and James Tiptree/Alice Sheldon), in contrast, focused upon such soft sciences as psychology and sociology and produced pure literary experimentation. Much of the soft science fiction written during the 1970s was fantasy, not science fiction. (Critics have generated multitudinous arguments regarding the distinctions between science and fantasy. The rule of thumb is that texts about what can be realized are science fiction and those about what cannot be realized are fantasy. Future generations, for example, might travel in a *Star Trek* starship, which in the early twenty-first century exists only in science fiction; unlike the protagonists of the fantasy *Alice in Wonderland*, they will never experience close encounters with a watch-wearing white rabbit.) The rise of both women’s science fiction and fantasy rooted in the 1970s, two of the most important developments in the history of science fiction, continues into the twenty-first century. Feminist science fiction provides blueprints for social change, which enable us to rethink and reformulate patriarchal social domination.

Joanna Russ, the most important representative of the rise of 1970s feminist science fiction, is best known for *The Female Man* (1975), a startling, brilliant feminist novel which presents four female protagonists who inhabit four alternative worlds. Ursula Le Guin’s equally important *The Dispossessed: An Ambiguous Utopia* (1974) is more inspired by anarchism than by feminism. Delany’s *Triton: An Ambiguous Heterotopia* (1976) echoes Le Guin’s political emphasis and builds upon Russ’s feminist breakthroughs. Tiptree/Sheldon’s feminist short stories (such as “The Women Men Don’t See”—1973) are important contributions to the feminist and soft science fiction surge characterizing the 1970s. In international science fiction, the first English translations of the Polish writer Stanislaw Lem began to appear in the 1970s (for example, *Solaris* [1961, translated 1970] and *The Invincible* [1964, translated 1973]).

The new New Wave called cyberpunk dominated the 1980s. *Cyberpunk* is derived from the words *cybernetics* and the 1970s rock term *punk*. Cyberpunk arose in response to a discrepancy characteristic of the 1980s: the glaring difference between the gleaming pristine future cities traditional science fiction portrays and depressing real-world urban landscapes. Cyberpunk fiction, which portrays people dwarfed by machines in a technological world and alienated from nature, contributes a rethinking of the military-industrial complex’s hegemony. Pat Cadigan, best known for *Synners* (1991), has been called the “Queen of Cyberpunk.” William Gibson’s *Neuromancer* (1984) epitomizes cyberpunk in its portrayal of seedy and dark urban environments in which protagonists literally enter cyberspace.

In 1990, the U.S. president George H. W. Bush announced an intention to place people on Mars by 2019, inspiring some science fiction writers to focus upon Mars; such works as Kim Stanley Robinson’s *Red Mars* (1993), *Green Mars* (1994), *Blue Mars* (1996), and *The Martians* (1999) reflect this focus. Ben Bova’s *Mars* (1992) and Paul J. McAuley’s *Red Dust* (1993) are other noteworthy novels about Mars. In addition to Robinson,



Nicola Griffith and Gwyneth Jones were important writers who debuted during the 1990s. Attention to politics, ecology, feminism, and extraterrestrial soft science fiction dominate the science fiction written during this decade.

The surge in black science fiction, reflected in Walter Mosley's "Black to the Future" and Sheree R. Thomas's anthology *Dark Matter* (2000), was the most important development in science fiction at the beginning of the new millennium. Mosley's *Futureland* and work by Nalo Hopkinson, Tananarive Due, and Stephen Barnes build upon the tradition of black science fiction literature Delany and Octavia Butler pioneered. Darko Suvin's *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction: On the Poetics and History of a Literary Genre* (1979) is the most significant critical work about science fiction published since the 1970s. Suvin famously defines science fiction as

a literary genre whose necessary and sufficient conditions are the presence and interaction of estrangement and cognition, and whose main formal device is an imaginative framework alternative to the author's empirical environment. (pp. 7–8)

In concert with Suvin, Robert Scholes defines fabulation as "fiction that offers us a world clearly and radically discontinuous from the one we know, yet returns to confront that known world in some cognitive way." Marleen S. Barr, in *Feminist Fabulation: Space/Postmodern Fiction* (1992) defines feminist fabulation as feminist fiction that offers a world clearly and radically discontinuous from the patriarchal world we know, yet returns to confront that known patriarchal world in some feminist cognitive way. There is an intergenerational science fiction critical lineage between Suvin's and Scholes's corollary definitions and Barr's "feminist fabulation" that brings their influential definitions to bear upon feminism and postmodernism.

In the manner of their marked influence upon imaginative science fiction, feminism and postmodern are integral to science fiction criticism. Brian McHale in *Postmodernist Fiction* (1987) states that science fiction "is to postmodernism what detective fiction was to modernism: it is the ontological genre *par excellence* (as the detective story is the epistemological genre *par excellence*), and so serves as a source of materials and models for postmodernist writers." While McHale reads postmodernism in terms of science fiction, Larry McCaffery's *Storming the Reality Studio: A Casebook of Cyberpunk and Postmodern Science Fiction* (1991) reads science fiction in terms of postmodernism. Scott Bukatman's *Terminal Identity: The Virtual Subject in Postmodern Science Fiction* (1993), a compendious study of contemporary science fiction, positions techno-culture as the focus of the discussion about the relationship between postmodernism and science fiction. Donna J. Haraway's "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century" (1985) links postmodernism and technoculture to the feminist analysis of science fiction.

Barr's *Future Females: A Critical Anthology* (1981) was the first essay collection devoted to feminism and science fiction. Sarah Lefanu's *In The Chinks of the World Machine: Feminism and Science Fiction* (1988), which followed Barr's *Alien to Fem-*

*inity: Speculative Fiction and Feminist Theory* (1987), asserts that

the plasticity of science fiction and its openness to other literary genres allow an apparent contradiction . . . it makes possible, and encourages (despite its colonization by male writers), the inscription of women as subjects free from the constraints of mundane fiction; and it also offers the possibilities of interrogating that very inscription, questioning the basis of gendered subjectivity.

The 1990s saw the appearance of Jenny Wolmark's *Aliens and Others: Science Fiction, Feminism and Postmodernism* (1994), which analyzes the "shared theoretical moments" between feminism and postmodernism; Russ's *To Write Like a Woman: Essays in Feminism and Science Fiction* (1995), which collects her most important essays; and Jane Donawerth's *Frankenstein's Daughters: Women Writing Science Fiction* (1997), which places Frankenstein as integral to science fiction written by women. In 2000, Barr, in *Future Females, the Next Generation: New Voices and Velocities in Feminist Science Fiction Criticism*, collected the work of young feminist science fiction theorists who analyze science fiction's relevance to disenfranchising patriarchal master narratives and social institutions. Brian Attebery's *Decoding Gender in Science Fiction* (2002) carries the torch of feminist science fiction criticism into the new century. Race and queer theory are discussed in Elizabeth Anne Leonard's edited collection *Into Darkness Peering: Race and Color in the Fantastic* (1997), Daniel Leonard Bernardi's *Star Trek and History: Race-ing toward a White Future* (1998), and Samuel Delany's *Shorter Views: Queer Thought and the Politics of the Paraliterary* (2000).

Two aforementioned scholars, Freedman and Hayles, respectively explain that science fiction is crucial to the entire enterprise of producing critical theory and that at the start of the twenty-first century human beings hold being posthuman in common with science fiction protagonists. As both the scholarly works about science fiction and science fiction literature itself indicate, the boundaries between literature and life drawn in terms of fixed definitions of what constitutes the real and the science fictional are becoming increasingly blurred. We might, sooner than we expect, find ourselves on the cusp of telling Scotty to beam us up.

See also **Dystopia; Futurology; Genre; Technology; Utopia.**

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Marleen S. Barr

**SCIENTIFIC METHOD.** See **Science**.

**SCIENTIFIC REVOLUTION.** As distinct from the centuries-old conception of scientific revolutions (plural), the concept of the one and only Scientific Revolution dates from the 1930s. What meaning, if any, to give the concept over and above its signifying the birth of modern science has been in lively, productive dispute ever since. This entry first outlines the historiographical vagaries of the term, then (from the heading "A Tentative, Synthetic Overview" onward) discusses the event itself in ways meant to do some justice to what historians' ongoing debates have yielded.

### Historiographical Developments

The concept of the Scientific Revolution was introduced as part of a major historiographical overhaul that took place between the mid-1920s and the early 1950s. It was then meant to identify a period in European history, roughly between the second half of the sixteenth century and almost the full seventeenth century (that is, between Copernicus and Newton), when a unique, radical conceptual upheaval took place out of which modern science emerged essentially as we still know it. This view of a radical conceptual upheaval, first vaguely sensed in some earlier historiography, quickly began to be articulated in the budding field of the history of science in ways that turned the previously customary listing of one heroic scientific achievement after another into a careful reconstruction of the conceptual knots that those who brought about the Scientific Revolution actually had to disentangle.

**A master narrative.** Within this emerging concept-focused mode of history writing came a variety of path-breaking narratives minimally sharing a focus on how the once self-evident conception of our Earth at the center of the universe gave way to the core of the modern worldview of the Earth and the other planets placed in a solar system occupying a tiny portion of an infinite universe. What brought about this fundamental conceptual shift to a non-Earth-centered universe, as well as new conceptions of motion and of the creation of space as a void? Historians held that a major contributor was the quickly expanding process of the mathematization of nature, that is, the subjection of increasing ranges of empirical phenomena to mathematical treatment in ways generally suitable to experimental testing. Several people were seen as key figures in this process. Copernicus (1473–1543) computed, down to the required detail, planetary trajectories in a Sun-centered setting. Johannes Kepler (1571–1630) turned Copernicus's formulation into a previously inconceivable "celestial physics," and this led to his discovery of the planets' elliptical paths. Galileo (1564–1642) mathematized a significant terrestrial, as opposed to celestial, phenomenon—falling and projected bodies—in an effort to counter major objections to Copernicus's formulation. René Descartes (1596–1650) mathematically conceived space and particle interactions in space. Sir Isaac Newton (1642–1727) capped these developments by uniting terrestrial and celestial physics in his mathematically exact, empirically supported conception of universal gravitation. This is not to say that historians equated these scientists and their principal accomplishments with the Scientific Revolution. Still, for decades historians were inclined to treat most other noteworthy modern scientific attainments—such as William Harvey's (1578–1657) discovery of the circulation of the blood and others' refinements in chemical analysis—as somehow tangential to the main course of development.

**New historiographical perspectives.** Starting in the 1960s, historians introduced a range of perspectives to widen (or in some cases to replace) the historiographical master narrative just outlined and some of the insights gained thereby. In fairly random (certainly not chronological) order, these perspectives are listed below.

Historians have ceased identifying the present classification of scientific disciplines with their seventeenth century counterparts.

They are replacing it with a still increasing awareness that what we now call “mechanics,” for instance, scarcely had a counterpart in the early seventeenth century—so different, and differently aligned, was the intellectual context in which problems of motion used to be considered from the ancient Greeks onward. Some historians are even beginning to recognize that what we now call “science” developed at the time in several different modes, each with a distinct intellectual tradition, knowledge structure, mode of approach, and professional identity.

Historians are including in their narratives research subjects and/or people previously omitted or marginalized. Rediscovered research areas include ranges of (at the time) nonmathematical, chiefly descriptive subjects, like magnetism or illness, or subjects neglected because they are scarcely practiced any more today, like musical science, and/or are held under grave suspicion, like alchemy. Rediscovered contributors, though important, fall below the first rank. Examples are hosts of able Jesuit experimenters, numerous practitioners on the European Continent, as well as a small number of women (e.g., Margaret, duchess of Newcastle, who developed a speculative Cartesian yet creative theory of moving particles, or Elisabetha Hevelius, coworker with her better known astronomer-husband).

Perhaps most important of all, historians of science have strived to put the history of scientific ideas in institutional and other sociocultural contexts. Though history writing in the vein of “This thinker brought about this particular conceptual breakthrough; then that thinker that one” is still valuable for revealing the complex way in which conceptual innovation and continuity are intertwined, historians now feel that properly understanding scientific accomplishment requires a deep awareness of how it was situated in time and place. In this way historians have revealed, for example, the at times highly consequential dependence of practitioners on Europe’s patronage market, and the link between the controversy over the validity of instrument-aided experimentation, as articulated in Robert Boyle’s (1627–1691) and Thomas Hobbes’s (1588–1679) early 1660s dispute over the void, and the politics of the Stuart Restoration. As a result, historians have increasingly focused on the local particularity, over the universal validity, of the most seminal developments of the Scientific Revolution. Among genuine accomplishments of this contextualist approach must be counted a heightened concern for the day-to-day practice of experimental research and for the trustworthiness of results thus attained, a heightened sense that the course of discovery is at times fortuitous, and an awareness that discoverers had other motives than sheer backwardness and/or superstition. In the past contextualization has at times focused on this or that piece of pertinent microhistory. We face a wide-open opportunity to extend contextualization by taking the world-historical peculiarities of Europe as the context in which to make proper sense of large-scale scientific developments. Indeed, most writing on the history of science has been confined, if not just to the English speaking world, then at least to the Western tradition held to run from the Greeks, via the purported holding action of the Arabs, to medieval then Renaissance Europe, then to postrevolutionary science as it unfolded principally in the Western heartlands. Despite some inspiring, pioneering efforts in the 1930s to 1950s, a

cross-culturally comparative perspective on why modern science emerged where and when it did is still in its infancy.

***Abandonment or new syntheses?*** The net effect of this plurality of novel viewpoints has been the perhaps predictable one of resignation. What numerous historians of science have given up is not the ongoing production of partly novel interpretations of events in the history of seventeenth-century science, but the very idea that, deeply below the surface of singular events, something identifiable holds so complex an event as the Scientific Revolution together. True, we can no longer accept the once enlightening yet too one-sided formula “Scientific Revolution = mathematization of nature.” But the message that historians’ resignation imparts to nonscholars is that one of the most decisive events in world history, one of the prime motors of our modern world, was due to little more than chance. We have ready to hand a great deal of material and hosts of penetrating yet partial interpretations to answer the question of how modern science emerged in seventeenth-century Europe, rather than in one of the other great pre-modern civilizations at that or some earlier time. Yet there has been no serious effort to come to grips with the question how modern science emerged in seventeenth-century Europe. Below is an inevitably idiosyncratic, highly schematic example of how we might grapple with the question.

### **A Tentative, Synthetic Overview**

Of those civilizations where natural phenomena were subjected to scrutiny of a kind that went beyond their identification with the divine, only two did so against the background of an articulated worldview. In the Chinese tradition, which was uninterrupted until the Jesuits brought modern science along, practitioners were much inclined to an empiricist approach.

In contrast, two distinct Greek traditions—one mathematical, one philosophical—were quick to rationalize the empirically given. The Greeks also experienced a range of potentially fertile transplantations from other civilizations. In one tradition, called “Alexandrian” for short, Archimedes (c. 450–c. 388 B.C.E.), Ptolemy (2d c. C.E.), and others subjected a limited number of empirical phenomena (planetary positions, vibrating strings, and a few others) to mathematical treatment in highly abstract ways that left connections with reality minimal (i.e., the resulting science of music dealt with numbers, not with vibrations). In the other tradition, called “Athenian” for short, natural philosophers posited a limited number of first principles to explain the world at large (e.g., substantial forms in Aristotelianism, or indivisible particles and the void in atomism) and empirically shored up these principles by appeal to selected chunks of observable reality.

By means of three successive large-scale efforts at translation (second-/eighth-century Baghdad, twelfth-century Toledo, fifteenth-century Italy) these two modes of nature knowledge were transplanted, first to Islamic civilization wholesale, then (in a truncated manner) to medieval Europe, then (upon the fall of Byzantium) wholesale once again to Renaissance Europe. In each case the Greek legacy was received, then enriched in often creative ways that left the broad framework unscathed. As a result, the state that knowledge of nature attained in

Europe by 1600 was broadly similar to what it had once been like in Islamic civilization before (in the fifth to eleventh centuries) waves of invasions nipped a possible next stage of radical transformation in the bud. For the second time, in Renaissance Europe, careful reconstruction of the legacy of the Alexandrian geometers gave rise to incidental enrichment, the way Copernicus improved on Ptolemy in trusted Alexandrian fashion. Also, the incessant, inherently irresolvable debate between the four schools of Athenian natural philosophy and their skeptical nemesis raged once again.

Beside these essentially backward-looking modes of nature knowledge, Renaissance Europe also developed a third mode, which, unlike the other two, reflected in its forward-looking dynamism certain peculiarities of the civilization at large. This third mode of nature knowledge, bent upon accurate, magic-tinged description, developed an empiricism different from the Chinese variety in that it was marked by a drive toward domination or at least coercion of the natural environment.

***Onset of the revolution.*** With this much as background, we can now conceptualize the onset of the Scientific Revolution very briefly as the near-simultaneous, revolutionary transformation of three traditions.

First, natural philosophers turned the Alexandrian tradition into the Alexandrian-plus tradition. In astronomy, Kepler and Galileo, in seeking to resolve major tensions in Copernicus's variety of heliocentrism, toned down the highly abstract approach of the Greek geometers with an infusion of physical reality. For terrestrial phenomena, other natural philosophers did this by means of experiments carefully designed to demonstrate the mathematically ideal phenomenon, and these served as an empirical check on theoretical outcomes. Central to such mathematization of nature was a new conception of motion as tending to persist and as relative, in ways tentatively worked out by Galileo and his disciples for a range of cases (like falling bodies and outflowing water).

Second, Isaac Beeckman (1588–1637), Descartes, and Pierre Gassendi (1592–1655) turned the Athenian tradition into the Athenian-plus tradition. Inside the atomist doctrine, which they adopted in its essentials, they shifted emphasis from the shapes and sizes of subvisible particles to their movements, and these movements, they held, were governed by general laws that conceived of motion as persisting and relative. Descartes gave systematic expression to this conception of a world fully explicable through the imagined motions of imagined particles. He found warrant for its truth in allegedly rigorous, pseudo-mathematical derivation from first principles and empirical backing in a wealth of examples taken, without experimental intervention, from real-life phenomena.

Third, in the uniquely European, coercive, and empirical third mode of knowledge of nature, setting up carefully designed fact-finding experiments was central. This contrasts with the Athenian-plus tradition, where experimentation was lacking, and the Alexandrian-plus tradition, where experimentation served as a means of a posteriori empirical support. This transformation occurred at the hands of, notably, Francis Bacon (1561–1626; who preached rather than practiced the

approach), William Gilbert (1544–1603; magnetic and electric phenomena), Jan Baptista van Helmont (1579–1644; the chemical composition of matter/spirit), and William Harvey (the circulation of blood).

***Ongoing innovation and remaining continuities.*** In the hands of those who went along, the approaches of the traditions changed science drastically in each case. Natural philosophers mathematized an ever increasing range of phenomena, whether encountered in nature (like sound) or in contemporary craftsmanship (like gunnery), devised universal explanations through an endless variety of particle movements, and to a vast extent experimentally explored the unknown, whether encountered in nature (like wind) or in contemporary craftsmanship (like textile dyeing). What also changed was that the two first modes of explanation, which jointly defied common sense and conjured up the specter of a clockwork universe devoid of divine concern or human purpose, quickly became entangled in a battle of legitimacy of quite uncertain outcome. Meanwhile, what remained the same, at least up to the mid-seventeenth century, were the respective knowledge structures: in one case thinkers used first principles to attain at one stroke a definitive, comprehensive grasp of the world; in the other two cases, practitioners looked at phenomena to make piecemeal, step-by-step advances. Also, practitioners of each mode as a rule operated in insulation from one another. Even if an individual like Descartes or the English mathematician Thomas Harriot (1560–1621) did work in more than one mode, he made no effort to let results attained in one mode bear upon the other, let alone to reconcile (occasionally) incompatible outcomes (e.g., Descartes's Alexandrian derivation of his sine law of refraction required the assumption that light has finite velocity, whereas in his Athenian-plus philosophy its velocity is necessarily infinite).

***A decisive, mid-century change of scenery.*** Starting in the early 1660s, after the stabilization of princely authority in the wake of the Peace of Westphalia and (in Britain) the Restoration, a mood of reconciliation descended upon Europe. That mood helped overcome the rapidly expanding crisis of legitimacy. Efforts in the 1630s to 1650s to enforce a return to the fold (the trial of Galileo, the tribulations of van Helmont and Descartes) and countless cases of ensuing self-censorship gave way to conditional, religiously sanctioned acceptance. A prerequisite for this transition was the well-known shift of Europe's political, commercial, cultural, and scientific center from the Mediterranean (Italy, Spain, Austria, and Southern Germany) to the Atlantic (France and Britain). The new science was carefully walled off from all that might smack of heresy, and its experimental, and hence philosophy-free, aspects were institutionally emphasized. As a result, its widely perceived material and ideological promise of improvement of daily life and of a decisive edge in warfare earned the new science official sustenance in two major associations that came to dominate ongoing innovation of knowledge of nature in the second half of the seventeenth century and beyond. These were the Royal Society in London and the Académie Royale des Sciences in Paris, both founded in the 1660s. As a result of breakthroughs in, for example, microscopy (Antony van Leeuwenhoek's discovery of bacteria and spermatozoa) and



telescopic measurement (large-scale revision of the size of the universe), the societies of London and Paris and the journals to emanate from both came to serve as rallying centers for intellectuals in Europe to contribute in a major way to ongoing innovation.

Even more revolutionary was a new mood of reconciliation in the sciences. The Dutch mathematician Christiaan Huygens (1629–1695) and the young Newton—in blending their prime allegiance to the Galilean approach with their acceptance of the doctrine of particles in ubiquitous motion not as comprehensive dogma but as a selectively applicable hypothesis—sought to resolve the tension between the Galilean and Cartesian conceptions of motion for a range of principal cases (impact, persisting motion, rotation, oscillation). At about the same time the British physicist and chemist Robert Boyle, the English scientist Robert Hooke (1635–1703), and again the young Newton, in blending their fact-finding experimentalism with the hypothesis of particles in ubiquitous motion, managed to anchor subtly particulate mechanisms in empirical evidence and by the same move to provide their fact finding with some badly needed coherence and direction. In the end, the mature Newton not only became aware of the limitations inherent in the two highly innovative approaches but even transcended these modes in ways codified in a book that rounded off the Scientific Revolution, his *Philosophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica* (Mathematical principles of natural philosophy), published in 1687.

**The outcome.** The major result of all this was that science became a distinct enterprise, placed more prominently in society than at any other time and place. Its prominence was due not only to the promise of practical results widely attributed to it but also to intellectuals' desire to make mathematical-experimental or fact-finding-experimental assertions about natural phenomena clinching rather than at best plausible (as in speculative natural philosophy). Indeed, up against the perennial human inclination to let our bias decide, it is in the capacity of the new science to produce conclusive outcomes that its uniqueness as a mode of knowledge resides. Herein lies the deepest reason for calling the highly conditioned emergence of science and its ensuing staying power a revolution if ever there was one.

See also *Classification of Arts and Sciences, Early Modern; Enlightenment; Historiography; Knowledge; Periodization; Science, History of.*

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H. Floris Cohen

**SECULAR HUMANISM.** See **Humanism.**

**SECULARIZATION AND SECULARISM.** The terms *secularization* and *secularism* have had a variety of meanings since they were coined; “secularization” in the mid-seventeenth century and “secularism” in the mid-nineteenth, both incorporating the word *secular*. “Secular,” from the Latin “saeculum,” a generation or age, originally referred to secular clergy who were not in a monastic order. It also came to refer to the worldly realm. *Secularism* is used here in two current senses—an emphasis on the this-worldly rather than the other-worldly, and what is called in the United States as the “separation of church and state.” In Latin countries terms based on *laic* imply stronger state controls, based on their history of struggles with the Catholic Church.

Secularization involves both increasing state control of spheres formerly controlled by religious institutions and the expansion and freedom from religious control of nonreligious institutions, both state and private, and comprising education, social welfare, law, publication and the media, and forums for the expression of belief and action. In some areas, notably Turkey and communist countries, there has been state control of religion, rather than separation of church and state, and it is unclear if such countries should be called secular. Every secular country has a different version of secularism, and none of them has an absolute separation of church and state. Secularism involves belief in the priority of this-worldly considerations, and an end to religious doctrinal influence on law, education, and welfare, and the need for equal treatment of various beliefs and believers. To its opponents secularism often implies unbelief, a sense also included in some dictionaries but denied by most secularists, whether or not they are believers.

Secularism has also involved egalitarian political and social treatment of religious minorities and unbelievers, which had not been true of either Protestant or Catholic majorities, while Islam had a place for minorities but an unequal one. The major Asian religions have traditionally been more religiously tolerant and have had fewer struggles over secularism.

Works about secularism and secularization have been scattered over time and region, with the greatest concentration covering the “secularization thesis,” most popular in Great Britain, which posited a steady progress of secularization, which has not since occurred outside Western Europe. India, where secularism is a central political issue, has seen more varied literature on the subject. Many works relevant to secularism and secularization are centered on different concepts.



### History and Nature of Secularization and Secularism to 1914

Secularization originally meant the transfer of ecclesiastical property to civil or state ownership, and its first recorded use was apparently after the Thirty Years War in 1648 to mean the transfer of church lands to states. Christian Churches were huge landowners, and religious institutions in non-Christian countries also held or controlled very large properties, which states increasingly secularized. In England Henry VIII's dissolution of monasteries was a secularizing step. Secularization over time came rather to refer primarily to a process in which religious influence over government, institutions, ideas, and behavior is reduced and reliance on this-worldly bases for these spheres grows.

In premodern times religion and religious institutions had far greater power than they did later, though Confucianism, some kinds of Buddhism and Hinduism, and rationalist philosophies in ancient Greece, the Muslim world, and Europe had strong this-worldly elements. Secularization and secularism began in Western Europe, along with the rise of capitalism and stronger states. Other secularizing forces occurring first in the West, included the rise of science and the scientific outlook, over many centuries. The Copernican revolution in astronomy and the Darwinian evolutionary revolution contradicted the creation stories in Jewish, Christian, and Muslim scriptures, and cast doubt on these scriptures' literal infallibility, The spread of belief in this-worldly causation to ever-greater spheres, including history and social science, undermined ideas of divine intervention. In the eighteenth century, Enlightenment building on earlier science and philosophy, the idea of the Great Watchmaker who created the universe but did not afterward intervene became widespread among intellectuals, and was later refurbished to fit evolutionary theories. The Enlightenment had important proponents in most of Western Europe and the Americas, where Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790) and Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826) are the main names.

Protestantism is often considered a force for secularization, though it initially increased religiosity and religious loyalties, both among Protestants and among reformed and aroused Catholics. Ultimately, the proliferation of sects, including some liberal ones, and exhaustion in religious wars, helped lead to religious toleration by governments and recognition of various religious and irreligious beliefs—all elements of state secularism.

Several intellectuals encouraged secularism with writings advocating religious toleration, like John Locke's *A Letter Concerning Toleration* (1689) and John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty* (1859). Enlightenment writers often stressed anticlericalism and attacked the Catholic Church. Several, including Voltaire (1694–1778), said that religion was a good thing for the lower classes, to keep them honest, diligent, and peaceful, an idea that got support from the anti-church violence during the French Revolution. This idea had wide currency in the Muslim world until the Iranian Revolution (1979) showed again that popular religiosity did not always have such orderly effects.

The rise of nation-states and of nationalism encouraged secularism. Except in countries like Poland, Ireland, and former Yugoslavia where religious and nationalist boundaries coincide,

nationalism and nation-states have tended to undermine organized religion. Religious loyalties and ideologies were supranational, and religion supported hierarchical relations between genders, toward minorities, and in everyday life, which conflicted with the priorities of the nation. Nationalism provided an ideology for nonreligious loyalties. This accompanied socioeconomic modernization and industrialization, requiring similar workers, similar rules for treating people, and national markets. Nationalism was a secular force, and religion could play only a subordinate role in most nations. In many countries nation-states struggled with church control over schools, law, and social institutions, and generally nation-states won and expanded secular institutions.

Industrialization, urbanization, and the rising role of economic class groups helped undermine religious ties and promote secular ideologies, whether nationalist, liberal, or socialist. The rising socialist movement was often antireligious. The atheism of Karl Marx (1818–1883), who saw religion as unnecessary in a communist state, became widespread among workers and their supporters.

In mid-nineteenth century England, the terms *secularist* and *secularism* were coined by George Holyoake (1817–1906), who founded a secularist society that helped end religious discrimination in parliament and elsewhere. In the late nineteenth century elite ideas were increasingly secular and agnostic, including Charles Darwin (1809–1882) and his “bulldog” Thomas Huxley (1825–1895), the radical literary critics of Russia, and the new field of sociology, with Auguste Comte (1798–1857), Émile Durkheim (1858–1917), Max Weber (1864–1920), and others. Bible criticism, with Germans like Richard Strauss (1864–1949) and Frenchmen like Ernest Renan (1823–1892), undermined faith in established religion. Even an ideological trend that most people in the early twenty-first century find repellent—scientific racism—was predominantly secular. Women's rights movements have been secular in their effect, as all major religions endorsed male control of and superiority to women and denied women rights regarding property, work, political participation, and control of their bodies. In much of the world resistance to women's rights has been primarily based on religious, antiseccular, ideas.

Secularism usually endorses the idea found in nationalism, socialism, feminism, and some science, of progress. Darwinism, against the occasional caveats of Darwin, was seen as a story of progress, and was applied to Spencer's “survival of the fittest” in human society. Social Darwinism was intertwined with racism, one of whose offshoots was the eugenics movement, a supposed recipe for race amelioration. Socialism, nationalism, and feminism expected a better future, to be brought by human secular activity. By contrast, religions often saw history as a fall from a golden age, or as a period in which individual salvation was possible only through religion. A better world might only come via a sudden, millennial process. The contrast between traditional Jewish expectations of a messiah and the this-worldly efforts of modern (secular nationalist) Zionists exemplifies this difference.

The period 1848–1914 was the heyday of secularism and of belief in progress in the West, and saw their first rise in the

Global South. Several countries established secular states after major struggles. The papal territories were a major obstacle to Italian unification, which required their conquest and a break with the church, a break not healed until Mussolini's concordat. France experienced many struggles between clericals and anticlericals. French *laïcisme*, more militantly anticlerical than British and American secularism, won out decisively in the 1905 law disestablishing the Catholic Church. In England the Church of England remained established but, partly as a result of struggles by secularist groups, legal restrictions on non-conformists, Jews, and atheists ended, and the established church's power declined. The United States outlawed federal church establishment in the constitution, and the late nineteenth century saw the rise of new secular cultural trends and even the popularity of agnostics like Walt Whitman (1819–1892) and Robert Ingersoll (1833–1899). In all Western countries public education of children and young adults spread rapidly, and it was increasingly a secular education. In several Western countries, the fight against the Catholic Church was often the key issue in politics. Anticlericalism, with secular implications, became central to politics in several countries, partly because nineteenth-century popes ruled against modern socialist and liberal ideas.

Popular belief and state control over education and welfare became increasingly secular. In Eastern Europe and the Global South traditionalist religion remained strong and secularism made fewer inroads in governmental policy than in Western Europe, but secularism was rising, especially among intellectuals and the newly educated classes, and was often a component of nationalism. Many forces favoring secularism were similar in the West and the Global South, except (1) their time span was much shorter in the Global South, and (2) many secularizing forces entered with imperialism in the Global South, and some who resisted imperialism also resisted secularism and incorporated religion in resistance. The Indian National Congress, however, founded in 1885, was ideologically secular, secularism being the only way to unite different Hindu castes, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists, and others in a single national movement. In the Middle East the new ideologies of Turkish, Iranian, and Arab nationalism, which arose in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, emphasized Islam less and secular and nationalist values more. Several Iranian and Turkish nationalists were hostile to Islam and constructed idealized pre-Islamic national pasts full of modern and secular virtues. Even Arab nationalists, who saw Islam as a great Arab achievement, mostly favored a more secular legal system with more equal treatment of minorities. While words like *secular* never became widely popular in Muslim countries, where adherence to Islam by political leaders, and also state churches, continued, there were strong secular trends.

Among Jews secular trends were strong in the West, especially in the middle classes, but less in Eastern Europe and in the Global South. Theodor Herzl (1860–1904) and most founders of political Zionism were secularists, but many Eastern European Zionists were not. Oriental Jewry was essentially untouched by secularism by 1914, while most Jews worldwide were either indifferent or hostile to Zionism until the 1930s. Among Jews secularism and nationalism were not congruent;

many Zionists were not secularists, and many secularists were not Zionists.

### Secularism and Its Opponents since 1914

Since World War I there was at first a rise in secularism in the Global South, but then a rise in antiseccularist forces, both in the United States and in the Global South, along with a decline in optimism about the future. The biggest impetus to secular nationalism came after World War I, with Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1881–1938) in Turkey, whose leaders wanted a strong secular national state to catch up with the West. Atatürk's secularizing measures included Romanization of the script, outlawing the use of Arabic, ending religious education and the *shari'a*, basing personal status law on the Swiss Civil Code, votes for women, and discouragement of veiling. His were the strongest measures outside the communist world, and after World War II, when political parties competed, some of his measures were eased. While in the early twenty-first century Turkey has seen Islamist or partially Islamist parties in power, there has been little change in secular laws and practices, which have been guarded by periodic interventions of the secularist army.

In Iran Reza Shah, (r. 1925–41) imitated Atatürk. He promoted the secular nationalist view of Iran earlier favored by oppositionists, glorifying pre-Islamic Iran and denigrating the Arabs and Islam. He forced men and later women to adopt Western dress, promoted a secular public school system, and so forth. His son, Muhammad Reza Shah (1941–1979), continued secularist measures. With secular opposition cowed, and secular nationalism partly associated with the status quo and subservience to the United States, support grew for a religious opposition that appealed to anti-Western and antityrannical feelings and triumphed in 1979. Since then, however, secular opposition and thought have revived.

In Egypt the secular nationalism of Gamal Abdel-Nasser was undermined by defeats by Israel, and his secular successors followed unpopular economic and political policies. A growing Islamist movement there has influenced policy. Islamism is strong in the Muslim world, though several governments have suppressed it. The association of secularism with Western dominance helps account for this growth of Islamism; even the strict rulers of Saudi Arabia are attacked as infidels dependent on the United States. When Muslims want to be free of Western interference, and associate the West with support for Israel, many do not want to imitate ideologically the secular West.

In Pakistan and Israel religious identity was the *raison d'être* of movements to create nations. The early Zionist leaders were, however, secularists, and much of the population is still secularist. Muhammad Ali Jinnah (1876–1948) of Pakistan was also a secularist. Reactions against secularism, organized into several parties have, however, taken advantage of both states' religious basis, and have grown. Both states incorporate significant bodies of religious law, including religious courts for some matters.

India, where there are several major religions, is more complex. While Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh movements have grown, the secular Indian National Congress represented the main

trend of the national liberation movement. Once the Muslim League adopted and agitated for the creation of Pakistan in the 1940s, communal-religious feelings were aroused, culminating in partition in 1947. A Hindu political party ruled for some years until the secular Congress Party ousted it in 2004. Religiously based political movements have caused a weakening of secularist commitments in the Global South, at the same time as most governments continue to follow secular policies in education, welfare, and economics.

The other major area where secularism has been on the defensive and religious politics on the rise is the United States. Although the United States is very different from the Global South, the rise of religious politics in both since around 1970 is to some degree a reaction to governmental secular measures. The Supreme Court, partly responding to cases brought by the American Civil Liberties Union, began rulings favoring church-state separation in the states only in the 1930s. After World War II there were several secularizing governmental measures, but antisecular opposition has focused on two Supreme Court decisions, the outlawing of school prayer in 1962 and the legalization of abortion in 1973. The earlier concern of the religious right with evolution has also continued, as well as focus on opposition to schools' teaching about homosexuality or even about sex. Many feel that after 2001 the U.S. government under President George W. Bush became less secular, endorsing federal funds for "faith-based" programs and acquiescing to religious objections to stem-cell research and to funding international programs that include mention of abortion.

In Eastern Europe and Central Asia, the end of communism unleashed some backlash and restatement of traditions, though secularism remains strong. Even among secularists, concern over contemporary behavior patterns has been added to antisecularist ideologies. Among worldwide trends decried by antisecularists are the rise of freer sexual habits and of sexually transmitted diseases, a rise in crime rates, and a decline in community action and spirit. Some find in revived religious ties and morality an answer to such problems. Many traditions have come to be romanticized and seen as belonging to religion. The religious right creates a picture of harmony that never existed, generally idealizing the past family situation and social relations. Antisecularists everywhere appeal to the past to create religious roadblocks to the liberation of, and equal rights for, women.

In the past, when secular ideologies like nationalism, socialism, free market capitalism, and others had not been widely tried they could be seen as panaceas, while religion in government existed widely, and its faults were obvious. In the early twenty-first century this situation has reversed, with secular ideologies having been tried and shown problems, and religious groups able to present alternative ideologies and create effective religio-political organizations.

Many of the changes instituted by governmental secularization have been retained or reinstated when religious parties come to power, as seen in Iran. The Islamic Republic adopted a largely secular constitution and its economy and schools are mainly secular, despite a religious overlay, which, as with the

U.S. religious right, concerns mainly questions of gender and sexuality. Secularist ideas are also popular and religious government unpopular.

The backlash to secularism can produce its own backlash, as is happening in the early twenty-first century in Iran and possibly in India. Taking the whole world, secularism is not in dramatic retreat, although antisecular ideologies are stronger than they were. Religious politics are not important in the large, secular Japan and China, nor are they in most of Europe. Secularism seems strongest in countries that are growing in prosperity and in those that have considerable resources devoted to social safety nets, like Western Europe and Canada. The presence of large Muslim populations in Western Europe discriminated against and sometimes following Islamist ideologies and gender practices that disfavor women has created problems for European secularism, however. The most dramatic expression of secularism in the face of such problems has been the controversial French outlawing of wearing religious symbols, including the headscarf, in the schools in 2003.

*See also* ***Atheism; Cultural Revivals; Nation; Nationalism; Religion and the State; Sacred and Profane; Toleration; Zionism.***

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Nikki R. Keddie



**SEGREGATION.** The concept of segregation is usually based on race, gender, class, religion, or ethnicity, depending on the circumstances under which it is practiced. This entry will mainly address racial and ethnic segregation and when appropriate address how it spawned gender and class segregation in the Americas and Africa.

### Segregation in the Americas

The concept of segregation in the United States was different from segregation in other parts of the Americas, although all practiced slavery that affected the indigenous population. Segregation, with the exception of the United States, was not codified into law. Throughout the colonial and slavery periods in Latin America, South America, and the Caribbean, people of European descent maintained a hierarchy based on race. They attended separate schools and churches, lived in separate neighborhoods, and used separate recreational facilities. In Brazil after slavery was abolished in 1888, segregation was not by law; however, blacks and the indigenous population were not integrated into society. The government wanted to “whiten” the population by encouraging European immigration and interracial marriages. People who were viewed as white or close to white accrued privileges from their skin color, therefore indigenous Brazilians and people of African descent remained excluded from whites. Under Brazil’s racial democracy project during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, it was argued that Brazil did not have the same kind of racial problems as the United States because race was of little significance and people achieved social and economic mobility due to individual merit. If people of African descent were at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder, it was due to poverty and past discrimination. Scholars such as Gilberto Freyre, Carl Degler, and Frank Tannenbaum contended that the Portuguese who colonized Brazil were used to black people because of their experience with the Moors. The Catholic Church encouraged slaveholders to treat the slaves with a certain amount of humanity, and miscegenation was encouraged. Critical race theorists such as Thales de Azevedo began to question the racial democracy myth during the 1970s and argued that blacks and indigenous Brazilians were segregated in society based on race and not class.

Segregation was also practiced in Canada, as illustrated by the experiences of people of African descent who fought on the side of the British during the American Revolutionary War and those who escaped through the Underground Railroad. They believed they would enjoy citizenship rights in Canada, but there were few economic and educational opportunities, and land for farming was scarce. Some blacks therefore opted for resettlement in Sierra Leone.

The concept of segregation in the United States has been defined in distinct ways, based on race and ethnicity. White Anglo-Saxon Protestant immigrants were the privileged group who wielded political, economic, and social power. Other European immigrant groups were excluded from various jobs, universities, residential neighborhoods, and recreational facilities. This segregation was not codified into law and ended as soon as these groups were considered “white” and granted citizenship.

The country was envisioned as a “white man’s” country regardless of the presence of American Indians. Beginning in the early seventeenth century, Africans were brought to work first as indentured servants and then (by the 1660s) as slaves, and thousands of people from Asia emigrated to the United States in search of jobs in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Residential segregation was evident with the establishment of reservations for American Indians in 1638. People of Mexican descent experienced economic, residential, and educational segregation following the end of the Mexican-American War in 1848. People of Asian descent were encouraged to immigrate to the United States for employment in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Nonwhite workers were relegated to unskilled jobs in factories and on sugar plantations, farms, and the railroads. They were forced to attend separate schools and live in separate neighborhoods.

### Segregation in Africa

The concept of segregation in Africa will be discussed within the context of the colonial period. Segregation was defined as a hierarchy with Europeans on top; Indians, Arabs, other ethnic groups, and mixed-race people (depending on the colony) in the middle; and Africans on the bottom. In settler colonies such as South Africa, Namibia, and Zimbabwe, segregation was not solely defined in racial terms but also in ethnic, religious, and gender terms. Separate schools were maintained along religious and ethnic lines in Eritrea; Saint-Louis, Senegal, had segregated areas for Christians and Muslims; and reserves in South Africa were created along ethnic lines. Throughout southern Africa, rural areas were often disproportionately populated with women after men were forced into the urban labor market to earn wages, which left women segregated in the rural areas.

One of the most important forms of segregation found throughout Africa was residential, especially in urban areas. Cities in settler colonies were designed for Europeans and in some cases Asian and Arab merchants. The more developed parts of the city were designated for Europeans, while Africans (mostly male workers) were forced into reserves, prevented from owning freehold property, denied the franchise, and forced to carry passes. Thousands of Africans, Indians, and mixed-race people were forced out of cities in the 1950s and 1960s in South Africa and Namibia.

### Ideas Surrounding Segregation

During the seventeenth century, when Europeans arrived in what later became the United States, the intellectual ideas that supported the segregation of people of European descent from the American Indians was predicated on the belief that Europeans were culturally superior. The idea that education and conversion to Christianity could civilize American Indians was abandoned because they were thought to be biologically different from whites. The segregation of American Indians must be understood in economic terms. The colonists were in competition with the American Indians for arable land in the North, and planters in the South needed large tracts of land to produce cash crops. The segregation of American Indians was justified in religious terms—God ordained whites to have



the land. John Winthrop and John Cotton contended that the diseases that killed many American Indians in New England were sent by God and that this cleared the way for the whites to possess the land. The political architects who ensured the segregation of American Indians were the “founding fathers” (Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, James Monroe). The segregation of American Indians was justified on cultural and legal grounds by the ideology of Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson—both believed that American Indians were children and savages who could not survive in the larger society.

Before slavery was abolished in the United States, ideas among African-American intellectuals about segregation were mixed. Martin Delany and Edward Blyden believed that people of African descent would never be integrated into American society. Frederick Douglass believed that blacks should remain and fight for their full citizenship rights. Booker T. Washington, the most powerful African-American at the beginning of the twentieth century, endorsed social segregation. He argued that African-Americans should forego political and social equality until they achieved economic equality. At the same time, the most influential African-American intellectual, W. E. B. Du Bois, vehemently opposed Washington’s views on segregation. He argued that African-Americans should demand their full economic, political, and social rights and call for an end to all forms of segregation.

The emergence of the Ku Klux Klan following the Civil War illustrated how wedded some whites were to segregation. It was formed in 1866 by Nathan Bedford Forrest, who strongly believed that the South’s way of life was being undermined by the northern Republican government and the former slaves. The idea behind the Klan was to reestablish white rule in the South. The Klan was revived in 1915 by William J. Simmons, who espoused the ideas of patriotism, Protestantism, traditional American values, and American nativism. Simmons’s Klan was revived within the context of large influxes of immigrants who were not Protestant or Anglo-Saxon. The Klan was revived again in 1922 under Hiram Evans, who believed white American values needed to be preserved. Later figures associated with the Klan who espoused the values of nativism and white supremacy included Robert Shelton during the 1950s and David Duke in the 1980s and 1990s.

### **Ideas Surrounding Segregation in Africa**

Africans, Asians, Arabs, and mixed-race people in Africa were viewed through the same cultural lens—Europeans were inherently superior, and Africans were the most inferior. They were uncivilized, lazy, and childlike in their behavior. They were prone to criminal activities and therefore had to be controlled and segregated for the protection of whites. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, biology spawned ideas about race that were used to justify racial segregation in the Americas and Africa. The belief developed that there were distinct races with different levels of intelligence, capacities, and abilities guided by the laws of nature. These ideas were given scientific and academic legitimacy through the writings of historians, anthropologists, and geographers. South Africa’s Howard Pim, Maurice S. Evans, Edgar H. Brookes, James Hertzog, Jan Christian Smuts, and Charles Loram advocated

racial segregation. Evans studied South Africa and the United States and concluded that segregation was a good policy because it would help to ensure the survival of European civilization. Loram supported the idea of separate vocational education along the lines of Booker T. Washington’s Tuskegee Institute. Africans and people of color were viewed as unhealthy, diseased, and contaminated, and they had to be segregated from whites. Segregation was also needed for economic reasons: the African communal economy was not compatible with the European capitalist economy, so a dual economy was needed. Finally, it was thought that African and European cultures were too different to coexist. African society was “primitive,” and its customs would not be able to survive contact with Europeans.

When the National Party came to power in South Africa in 1948, the ideas of apartheid, or separate development, were codified into law. The major supporters of these ideas included Daniel Malan, J. G. Strijdom, and Hendrik Verwoerd, whose campaign slogan was “the white man must remain master.” The cultural ideas that espoused a racial hierarchy throughout the Americas and Africa served as the foundation for religious, political, and economic ideas that embraced segregation. Segregation was supported both in the Americas and in Africa by Christian churches, especially in South Africa by the Dutch Reformed Church (until the 1990s) and in the American South by most of the predominantly white Christian denominations (until the 1960s). Religious leaders and church members argued that the Bible upheld segregation and that forced integration was against God’s will because God ordained people to live separately.

### **Social Movements to End Segregation**

The ideas of the 1950s and 1960s that served as the catalyst to end Jim Crow segregation in the United States were not new. Intellectuals such as James Farmer, A. Philip Randolph, and Bayard Rustin supported and used the tactics of civil disobedience and mass resistance to end racial segregation. For example, James Farmer, who founded the Congress of Racial Equality, used Mahatma Gandhi’s philosophy of nonviolent civil disobedience in Chicago in the 1940s before Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. adopted them. King’s ideas of using the Christian faith, moral superiority, and moral persuasion as part of civil disobedience cannot be overlooked. King believed that unjust laws do not coincide with the law of God, therefore segregation laws, which were immoral and unjust, did not have to be obeyed. In addition, if people could not vote and did not have political representation, they were not obligated to obey unjust laws. These laws had to be overturned by just, moral means. In sum, King’s ideas of mass resistance, direct action, and civil disobedience were tied to Christianity, which instructed him to love his sisters and brothers and to have faith that morality and justice would prevail in overthrowing segregation. And through the abolition of segregation, whites could achieve salvation through living up to the American creed of democracy and liberty for all.

Segregation was opposed throughout Africa, but the fight to abolish apartheid in South Africa was waged both domestically and globally. At the turn of the twentieth century

Mahatma Gandhi developed nonviolent strategies to end segregation in South Africa, and he worked closely with the founders of the African National Congress (ANC), especially John Dube. Dube, along with Pixley Seme and Sol Plaatje, believed that African nationalism and unity would restore land and rights lost under European rule. Their beliefs were supported by the strategies of petitioning the British government and sending delegations to London to appeal for constitutional changes that would grant Africans their rights. Later leaders such as Walter Sisulu, Oliver Tambo, and Nelson Mandela committed themselves to the idea of mass resistance and established the ANC Youth League. They believed African nationalism would lead to African self-determination and that equality and the end of apartheid would only come through the efforts of Africans. Therefore, the ideology of the ANC shifted in the 1940s from a conservative to more a radical and militant approach that would involve the masses of people instead of a few educated members of the middle class. Mandela, Sisulu, and Tambo strongly believed in mass civil disobedience, boycotts, peasant revolts, and strikes, manifested in their support of the Campaign for the Defiance of Unjust Laws in 1952, when blacks, Indians, and coloreds refused to obey laws that they found unjust.

The ideas of the ANC's main leadership further shifted in the 1960s from attempting to abolish apartheid by disciplined and nonviolent means to violent forms of resistance with the establishment of a military wing, the Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation). This was established only after the South African state was ruling by force and violence and ANC leaders felt that all forms of peaceful protest had been exhausted. The ideas of black consciousness espoused by Steve Biko in the 1970s were based on building strong grassroots organizations to raise awareness of the plight of black South Africans. It was his belief that only blacks could liberate themselves through a reevaluation of African history, pride, religion, and culture: out of black consciousness, black liberation could be born. In turn blacks would gain respect from other groups in society, and the apartheid system would be abolished.

The abolition of apartheid in the 1990s was based on the political ideas of a multiracial democratic South Africa espoused by Nelson Mandela and F. W. de Klerk. The religious ideas to end apartheid came from church leaders such as Desmond Tutu and Allan Boesak, who both believed apartheid could be abolished through nonviolent means, resulting in a multiracial democratic society that granted full human rights to all citizens.

See also *Apartheid; Prejudice; Race and Racism.*

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**SEX AND GENDER.** See **Gender; Gender Studies; Anthropology.**

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT.** Unwanted sexual attention was imposed on people in no position to refuse it long before *sexual harassment* was a recognized idea. Sexual harassment seems to be practiced wherever the sexes are materially unequal, which generally they are; its reality in paid work can be traced from the beginnings of industrialization and in unpaid work throughout slavery. Until the mid-1970s, it had no name.

The women's movement of that period brought many obscured and unnamed harms long inflicted on women to social consciousness, stimulating political intervention and legal action. In this context, unwanted sex began to be resisted in the United States within the framework of an analysis of sexual politics, conceptualized by Kate Millet as relations of power on the basis of sex. In this context, Working Women United Institute (first at Cornell University, then in New York City) and others organized against the coercive imposition of sexual demands with impunity on women in workplaces.

Building on this activism, sexual harassment of working women was theorized by Catharine MacKinnon as a form of sex inequality that drew its power from a gendered dominance that was sexual combined with a workplace hierarchy that was economic. Sexual harassment was argued to be a form of discrimination on the basis of sex under federal equal employment laws in the United States. Federal courts initially rejected this legal argument, then accepted it in 1977 in the breakthrough ruling of *Barnes v. Costle*. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's 1980 guidelines codified this ruling in an influential formulation of harassment on the basis of sex as a violation of federal antidiscrimination law when "unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature [are made] a term or condition of . . . employment [or] submission or rejection of such conduct . . . is used as the basis for employment

decisions . . . [or] such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment." Sexual harassment became the first accepted legal concept to be defined by women based on their experience of victimization.

Framed as a civil right, the right not to be sexually harassed under United States law was extended from employment to education, from opposite sex patterns to same-sex situations to harassment on other grounds, and came to encompass sex- and race-based harassment combined. Through well-publicized claims against powerful men in public life, sexual harassment became a household word. By the turn of the twentieth century, legal systems around the world and international law had recognized that the human right to equality included not being sexually harassed.

The original debate centered on whether or not unwanted sex imposed under unequal conditions—whether as a *quid pro quo*, meaning in exchange for benefits, or as a hostile environment, meaning as a constant condition requiring tolerance or exit—should be subject to civil suits. What kind of violation was sexual harassment, if it was one at all? Advocates for survivors argued that it was imposed on women because they were women, thus was a form of sex-based discrimination, a status injury based on gender (the social form sex takes) of which unequal undesired sexual practices were a part. Courts that initially rejected this argument thought of sexual harassment as part of sexuality, hence personal, individual rather than gendered in the group-based sense, private, not properly regulable by public means, and biological, not social but natural and inevitable. As sexual, it was imagined inherently free and equal: nonexploitative, incapable of being socially stereotyped or scripted, intrinsically separate from social rank orderings. This sexual essentialism was authoritatively rejected when courts accepted the analysis that sexual harassment is sex-based discrimination: not personal, social; neither biological nor inevitable; the exploitative social imposition of inferiority on the group ground of sex, an injury of status as well as treatment.

The reasons the legal claim for sexual harassment was initially controversial continue, in ever-changing form, to operate as backlash and undertow in social and legal discussions of the subject. The debate over the place of sexuality in gender inequality, although authoritative resolved, has not gone away. It has continued to drive critical commentaries, to underlie public disputes, and to animate legal controversies, often taking the form of opposition to the hostile environment claim. Sexuality as such remains defended by some as inherently a sphere of freedom properly off limits to the law, while being scrutinized by others as a site of sex inequality, specifically of male dominance, propitious to abuse and in need of public exposure and redress.

Entrenched positions on these deeper questions shaped public conflicts and public dialogue through episodes that proved decisive in public consciousness. When Professor Anita Hill accused then-Judge Clarence Thomas in the fall of 1991 of what amounted to sexual harassment in his confirmation hearing for Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States,

many of the attacks on her and on the validity of the inquiry proceedings took the view that sexual goings-on did not belong in a Senate hearing or in a confirmation debate, or were not sufficiently severe to be worthy of concern. When Paula Jones accused then-President Bill Clinton in 1996 of having sexually harassed her when she was employed by the state of which he was governor, much of the hue and cry centered on the appropriateness or not of public airing of what were minimized as his sexual peccadilloes, as well as the fact that the allegations involved a single incident, which was minimized as not severe, although it was alleged to include unwanted sexual touching and indecent exposure. Trivializing sexual attacks because they are sexual remains an ideological feature of the discussion of such incidents. Far less public attention was visited on the U.S. Supreme Court decision in 1998 that public schools need not pay for the sexual injuries teachers inflicted on their students unless the abuse had been properly reported and the school had deliberately been indifferent to it—an exceedingly low standard of requisite institutional responsiveness. The Court's treatment of sexual use of young students by adult teachers reflected an ideology of sexuality as essentially private misbehavior for which public authorities were unaccountable unless put explicitly on notice.

If sexual harassment's conceptual resonance with women worldwide has propelled its acceptance, political organizing and legal acceptance has promoted its legitimacy, and the concept itself has proven adaptable to diverse legal cultures, each aspect of it has produced some debate somewhere. Some countries do not recognize it as sex inequality, as in France, where it is a crime, centering on the *quid pro quo* form. Israel's sexual harassment provision—the most explicit and far-reaching in the world in extending to all spheres of social life and expressly covering harassment based on sexuality and sexual tendencies as well as sex—is premised on values of dignity as well as equality. German law recognizes harassment only if women object to it, which can be problematic where unequal power exists. The European Community's approach has historically emphasized respect and dignity over equality, with European approaches generally tending to individualize the behavior, ignoring group hierarchies and obscuring the function of sexuality in gender-based discrimination.

In Japan, although the legal claim has been recognized, women continue to experience extraordinary difficulty being valued and believed when they claim they were sexually harassed—as, indeed, women do everywhere. Legal and social constraints on the form that the abuse must take that do not reflect the experience of victims is a globally shared problem, as is valuing the careers of perpetrators above the equality of victims. Perhaps the least legal debate has occurred in India, where the Supreme Court of India has embraced the concept and designed imaginative and aggressive relief for companies to institute. And the inclusion of the concept by interpretation under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women has solidified its place in international law.

In the United States, some scholars have urged that unwelcomeness be assumed rather than be required to be proven, on



the view that it makes no sense to assume that women at work welcome sexual attention. Some academics have urged courts be more receptive to finding gender-based harassment that is not expressly sexual, a dimension of the legal claim that has always been a part of it, sometimes complaining that too much attention has been devoted to specifically sexual forms of abuse. To reduce controversy in legal decision-making over the hostile environment claim, some jurists have urged that a per se list of acts that constitute hostile environment sexual harassment be devised, typically including sexual assault, sexual threats, and pornography. Other advocates have argued that hostile environment sexual harassment, most of which is verbal or physical expressive behavior should not be legally actionable at all, because it is speech that should be constitutionally protected.

Whether or not the claim for sexual harassment should encompass sexual harassment of gay men and lesbians has produced considerable discussion in the United States. Proponents argue that sexual orientation should not deprive a person of a right from unwanted sexual attention on the basis of sex. Opponents argue that sexual abuse based on sexual orientation is not based on sex. Proponents reply that sexual orientation is itself sex-based, as is abuse based either on the sex or the sexual orientation of the victim, whether same-sex or not. There is also some concern on both sides that harassment claims premised on a same-sex sexual orientation, if permitted, could become a pretext for unfounded or bigoted claims.

Perhaps most significantly, the fact that the idea of sexual harassment is widely recognized as defining a violation does not mean that it no longer happens—far from it. It is also far from actionable wherever it occurs, including on the street and in the home. And for survivors, challenging the behavior is not yet safe or without cost. Although protections against retaliating against them proliferate, studies indicate that women are often better off not resisting the abuse than challenging it, which is no doubt the reason that reporting rates continue to be low. Perpetrators often protect one another. Institutions often elude responsibility. Victims seldom receive effective support and relief. Despite the strides toward eliminating this form of sex-based abuse, the history of the idea of sexual harassment continues to be a short chapter in the longer history of its practice.

See also *Equality: Gender Equality; Human Rights: Women's Rights; Power*.

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## SEXUALITY.

This entry includes three subentries:

- Overview*
- Islamic Views*
- Sexual Orientation*

### OVERVIEW

When we think of sexuality, we think of many different things. We think of reproduction and the different bodies and reproductive capacities of men and women. We think of pleasure, the pleasures of the body, but also the pains, mental and physical, that can wrack the body. We think of love, and the joys of human involvement, but we might also remember the fear and hate that sexuality can evoke—through discrimination, prejudice, abuse, violence, rape. We think of potential diseases, of which HIV/AIDS has become the most potent symbol, and the possibility of death, which has always dogged sexual activity, from the perils of childbirth to the great artistic traditions that link love, sex, and death. Sexuality is about both pleasures and dangers, and that link gives it its ambiguity and its power.

This multiplicity of meanings can often confuse as much as clarify. At the most basic and popular level, *sexuality* refers to what most regard as one of the most basic features of human life, "our sexuality," the "most natural thing about us," the "truth of our being," in Michel Foucault's well-known phrase. When people say something like "this is my sexuality," they are referring to something that they see as essential to their needs, desire, identity, and social position. Yet even as we agree on its importance to individuals and cultures (at least in their Western, metropolitan forms) the term has become a highly contested one. Even those modern researchers who claim to have put our understanding of the body and its desires on a solidly scientific basis—like the sociobiologists or evolutionary psychologists who claim to be able to trace the roots of human sexuality to the first human steps on the African savannah tens of thousands of years ago—express puzzlement as to why sexuality should have evolved. For historians, anthropologists, and other social scientists alert to the different interpretations given to sexuality at different times in different cultures, the concept is a deeply problematic one.

The concept is so cloaked in historical myths and social ambivalence, and obscured by heterogeneous meanings and elaborate taboos, that sexuality often appears more a product of the mind than of the body. Perhaps, as the social anthropologist Carole Vance once suggested, the most important human sexual organ is located between the ears. Yet, of course, it is through the body that sexual desires are expressed, and the body is the site for marking gender differences, which



continue to shape culturally important differences and sexual beliefs and behaviors. The body, and its biology, cannot simply be ignored. So the safest way of putting it is that *sexuality* as a concept is perilously stretched between the biological, the social, and the psychic. Even Sigmund Freud, usually accused of putting sex into everything, confessed to the difficulty of agreeing on “any generally recognized criterion of the sexual nature of a process” (p. 323). Since then, despite our ever growing knowledge about the varieties of patterns, values, norms, lifestyles, and fantasies around the erotic, a certain ambiguity continues to cloak the meanings of sexuality.

### Conceptualizing Sexuality

A brief history of the concept in English shows how meanings of sexuality continue to evolve. The earliest usage of the term *sex* in the sixteenth century referred to the division of humanity into the male section and the female section; and the quality of being male or female. The subsequent meaning, however, and one current since the early eighteenth century, refers to physical relations between the sexes, “to have sex.” What we know as masculinity and femininity, and what came to be labeled from the late nineteenth century as *heterosexuality*, with *homosexuality* as the aberrant “other,” are thus inscribed into the meanings of *sex* from the start. *Sexual*, a word that can be traced back to the mid-seventeenth century, carries similar connotations—pertaining to sex, or the attributes of being male or female, is one given meaning. *Sexuality* as a term meaning “the quality of being sexual” emerged early in the nineteenth century, and it is this meaning that is carried forward and developed by the sexologists, sexual theorists, and researchers who emerged as a distinct category of specialists in the late nineteenth century, and became increasingly influential in the twentieth century. Luminaries included not only Freud, who is now best remembered, but also the Austrian pioneer, Richard von Krafft-Ebing (1840–1902), who can lay claim to being the founding father of sexology; the Briton, Havelock Ellis (1859–1939), and the German, Magnus Hirschfeld (1868–1935), who was also a pioneer of homosexual rights, among many others.

Sexologists sought to discover the “laws of nature,” the true meaning of sexuality, by exploring its various guises and manifestations. They often disagreed with one another; they frequently contradicted themselves. But all concurred that sexuality was in some way a quality or essence that underlay a range of activities and psychic dispensations. Thus Krafft-Ebing became a pioneer in seeing sexuality as something that differentiated different categories of beings—so opening the way to theorizing sexual identities. Dozens of individuals wrote to him with their case histories, and in the process of studying them Krafft-Ebing came to understand that there were many types of sexualities that could not easily be reduced to the traditional assumption of heterosexual, reproductive sex. Freud went further. His *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1905) began with a discussion of homosexuality, thus severing the expected connections between sexuality and heterosexual object choice, and continued with a discussion of the perversions, so breaking the expected link between pleasure and genital activity. In the psychoanalytic tradition,

sexuality was seen as central to the workings of the unconscious. More broadly, sexuality was becoming a distinct continent of knowledge, with its own specialist explorers. When people spoke of “my sexuality,” they increasingly meant those desires and behaviors that shaped their sexual (and social) identities, as male or female, heterosexual or homosexual, and so forth.

The result of all this classifying and definitional zeal was startling. The pioneering explorers of sexuality thought they were simply mapping and giving names to what was already there. It is to this generation that we owe concepts and terms such as *homosexuality* and *heterosexuality*, *transvestism* and *sadomasochism*, *coprophilia* and *necrophilia*, and a thousand more terms in the ever growing lexicon of the erotic. Later researchers such as Alfred Kinsey (1894–1956) and his colleagues sought to demonstrate that in biology there was little concept of what was right or wrong, normal and abnormal; and the sexual lives of our fellow citizens (or at least the twenty thousand or so American men and women from whom Kinsey obtained his information in the 1940s) displayed a spectrum of behaviors and desires that was far from the culture’s self-image of respectability. Whole armies, it has been well said, began to march out of the pages of the sexologists’ learned tomes and onto the stage of social history.

However, late-twentieth- and twenty-first-century theorists have questioned the naturalness and inevitability of the sexual categories and assumptions we have inherited. They suggest that the sexologists did not so much discover or map the world of sexuality as help create and constitute it. The concept of *sexuality*, they argue, unifies a host of activities that have no necessary or intrinsic connection: discourses, institutions, laws, regulations, administrative arrangements, scientific theories, medical practices, household organization, subcultural patterns, ethical and moral practices, the arrangements of everyday life. The idea of *sex*, which seems so foundational to the very notion of *sexuality*, is itself a product of the discourses. Nothing is sexual, as Ken Plummer (1975) suggests, but naming makes it so. So sexuality can be seen as a narrative, a complexity of the different stories we tell each other about the body; a series of scripts through which we enact erotic life; or an intricate set of performances through which the sexual is invented, ritualized, and embodied.

In other words, “sexuality” was a social construction, a “fictional unity” that once did not exist and that at some time in the future may cease to exist. John H. Gagnon and William Simon have discussed the need at an unspecified point in human history to *invent* an importance for sexuality. Michel Foucault queried the very category of “sexuality” itself: “It is the name that can be given to a historical construct (p. 105).” Foucault’s work particularly has had a huge impact on our thinking about the sexual. But he was building on new forms of sexual knowledge already in development. These were in turn being heavily influenced by radical social movements including second-wave feminism and the gay liberation movement, which emerged from the late 1960s.

The work of young scholars inspired by these movements began to develop critical social-scientific approaches to sexuality. Already by the mid-1970s feminists were questioning the

basic categories of sexuality, and a number of pioneering lesbian and gay historians were interrogating the fixity of the heterosexual-homosexual dichotomy to show that this apparently fundamental binary divide had a relatively recent history. If the homosexual identities we took for granted were indeed a historical construction, then so could the norm of heterosexuality be seen as something that was invented. In a similar way the sharp distinction that some of the pioneering writers on sexuality had drawn between “civilized” and “uncivilized” patterns of behavior could also be challenged, and instead could be seen as products of Western cultural—and racist—assumptions in the age of empire. In other words, sexuality, far from being the domain of the given, the natural, the biological, was preeminently historical and social, and moreover was shaped in relations of power. This has profound implications.

### Questioning the Concept of Sexuality

In the first place, we need to question the concept of sexuality. We can no longer easily see sexuality as a given and constant nexus of instincts, drives, and desires with automatic effects on individual and social lives. Rather, we need to see the erotic as always and necessarily given meaning only through the social. That means inevitably that to find the sexual, we always need to look for its specific local manifestations and the forces that structure it. Instead of seeking the laws of nature that would explain sexuality as a universal phenomenon, we need to understand the social organizations of sexualities in all their diverse forms. We therefore need to speak not of sexuality but of sexualities, not of sex and society but of sexual cultures. To understand sexual cultures we need to understand the diverse contexts in which meanings are attributed to intimacy and eroticism, and the complex social interactions that shape the erotic cultures of different societies.

It is important, further, to recognize that sexualities are hierarchically organized—that is, some forms are dominant while others have been made subordinate and marginalized—and are shaped by complex relations of power. The most familiar of these relate to gender, class, age, race, and ethnicity. There has also been an increasing recognition that sexualities in the West at least have been organized into institutionalized forms of heterosexuality, leading to critiques of “compulsory heterosexuality,” “heterosexism,” the “heterosexual panorama,” the “heterosexual assumption,” and “heteronormativity”—the phrases vary, but the effort put into these concepts underlines the importance many people give to questioning our assumptions.

### Gendering Sexualities

Gender is at the heart of our thinking about sexuality, though not necessarily in the ways traditionally believed. The complex ways in which gender is constructed, reinforced, and set in patterns of dominance and subordination through the institutionalization of heterosexuality, has become central to our developing understanding of sexualities and sexual cultures. Some feminist theorists have indeed argued that gender constitutes sexuality, and that female sexuality is shaped and organized through the mechanisms of male domination. Other theorists have argued for a significant distinction between the domains of sexuality and gender, regarding their relationship

as more complex and contingent than is often thought. But there can be little question that gender relations have been shaped asymmetrically, in patterns of domination and subordination.

But of course, the existence of a hierarchy does not determine gender relations in an absolute way. If that were the case, there could be no change. On the contrary, uneven power relations provide the necessary condition for resistance, and for sexual politics. The impact of feminism since the 1960s has simultaneously sharpened our awareness of the arbitrary nature of gender divisions and increased the possibility of changing them. Gender has increasingly been seen not simply as lived, but as “performed” through the constant iteration and reenactment of what are regarded as the essential characteristics of both sex (male and female) and gender. In such theorizations we seem to move ever further from any preexisting essence of femininity or masculinity.

### New Subjectivities

We are also moving away from seeking an essence to our subjectivities and identities. The extent to which sexuality is central to people’s sense of self is increasingly seen as historically specific, as the first volume of Michel Foucault’s *History of Sexuality* powerfully suggested. This has been best explored in tracing the evolution of homosexual identities since the nineteenth century. In a culture in which a particular form of sexuality was either denied or punished, it was inevitable that people organized their sense of self around their sexuality in various forms of resistance—through what Foucault described as a “reverse discourse.” Historians have increasingly sought to understand the dynamics of push and pull, definition and self-definition that have shaped the emergence of nonorthodox sexual identities.

Identities have been the object of struggle, often against extremely forceful and imposed norms. The sexual movements of the 1970s were in some ways heirs of the modernist project, in which it was taken for granted that the historical distinction between heterosexuality and homosexuality would be reflected in homogeneous identities, of for example, heterosexuals, lesbians, and gays. This has met a dual challenge. The emergence from the late 1980s of “queer” political movements radically challenged the homogeneous nature of the identities that existed and constituted a self-conscious refusal of identity on the part of many younger people. An even more significant challenge has come from a growing recognition that the meanings developed around sexual identity in the West were of little relevance to many marginalized people from minority ethnic communities within the Western world, or to many people in other cultures.

### Globalization

This is closely related to a recognition of the growing importance of globalization in relation to the organization of sexualities. A globalized world is one in which Western categorizations of sexuality increasingly interact and interpenetrate with those operating in other sexual cultures, and in which new categorizations emerging worldwide—whether being universalized or asserted in opposition to one another—are increasingly interconnected across cultures. The spread of the HIV/AIDS

epidemic since the 1980s to become a global pandemic is a vivid and tragic illustration of this. Sexual behavior has of course always been associated with risk: the risk of unwanted pregnancy, of disease, of exploitation, of prejudice and oppression. These risks did not disappear with the emergence of a new discourse of sexual rights over the last thirty years of the twentieth century. But the risks have changed their forms, giving rise to new forms of conflict—over, for example, the rights and roles of women in nonindustrialized societies, and the responsibility of the developed world to the Third World in relation to matters such as the population explosion. These often become central to political differences on a global scale, such as the postulated conflict between Western and Islamic values. Conflicts over sexuality have become integral to the emergence of fundamentalist politics both within Western societies and elsewhere around the world. The work of international campaigns for reproductive rights suggests that there is a double push in this global movement: for bodily integrity and the right of women to control their own body; but also for challenging wider social, economic, and cultural inequalities, without which rights may become meaningless.

This pinpoints the new dilemmas of “global sex.” If sexual cultures are varied and have specific historical formations, how do we distinguish those claims to right that have a universal resonance, and those that are highly culturally specific—and possibly distasteful to large numbers of citizens around the globe? One answer lies in the realization that human rights do not exist in nature. They are not there to be discovered written on tablets of stone. They have to be invented, in complex historical conjunctures and contestations, as part of the making of minimal common values. And in a divided, often violently polarized world, that is not an easy task.

### Conflict of Values

This pluralistic, diverse world is subject to an unavoidable conflict of values that can neither be wished away nor easily resolved by a resort to absolute standards, science, history, or tradition. In a world that is simultaneously globalized and challenged by emergent differences and new fundamentalisms, questions of values and ethics inevitably come to the fore. Sexuality may always have been an arena of moral and cultural conflict, but in contemporary societies sexuality is becoming an increasingly central and explicitly debated issue in mainstream cultural conflicts and political debates over values and citizenship. Debates about who and what we are, what we need and desire, how we should live, are to a striking degree also debates about sexuality. It is not surprising therefore that debates over sexuality display anxiety and uncertainty. The fear aroused by the HIV/AIDS epidemic was more than simply concern about a new and possibly incurable disease; it also underlined our uncertainty about contemporary moral stances. The “culture wars” that have been so prominent a feature of United States politics since the 1980s revolve around abortion, sex education, same-sex marriage, and the family—keystone issues on which views seem irreconcilable because they speak of the sort of society we are, and want. As sexuality goes, so goes society.

Advances in science, far from resolving our dilemmas, only serve to compound the general air of uncertainty. How, for

example, should we react to the possibilities opened up by embryological research? What are the implications for sexual values and ethics of the Internet revolution? In a world where traditional sources of authority such as religion and the patriarchal family are under intense pressure, and heightened individualism is increasingly the norm, it is difficult to see how there can ever be agreement on a fixed set of values, or a categorical list of rights and responsibilities to which everyone can readily adhere.

It is perhaps for this reason that the language of human rights and of sexual or intimate citizenship has come to the fore. It provides at least one discursive form through which the necessary debates can be carried on in working out what is and is not possible. It provides an iterative framework through which we can try to agree to the minimum standards we need to attain to recognize simultaneously each other's differences and common humanity. This is a long way from the belief of the pioneering sexologists of the late nineteenth century and the sex researchers of the mid-twentieth century—that the truth of sexuality in nature could be discovered. It remains even further as a position from those prophets of the truth who would like us all to bend a knee to their insights, whether religious or moral. But it is in tune with a recognition that sexuality is a product of negotiation and choice as much as of revealed truth. And that, surely, is the only way forward that accords with the diversity of our sexual world.

See also *Body, The; Family Planning; Feminism; Gay Studies; Gender*.

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## ISLAMIC VIEWS

Islam considers sexual pleasure to be a gift from God to humanity that should be enjoyed with gratitude. The religion has also always frowned on celibacy. The Prophet, who is an exemplar for all aspects of Islamic behavior, enjoyed his many wives, including his famous child-bride, 'A'isha. Hence, sexual regulation is concerned not so much with the potential for sexuality to distract the believer from God as with its capacity to disrupt social relations. Specifically, this means control over paternity, being sure that the father is really the father of his children. As a result, those forms of sexual behavior that do not threaten patriarchal transmission are either authorized or socially tolerated, while those behaviors that threaten to create a doubt over paternity are both condemned in Muslim law and aggressively repressed by Muslim societies.

Sexual segregation, rather than preaching, has always been seen as the most (if not the only) effective means to keep sex within licit channels. One of the most oft-repeated sayings of the Prophet is that when a man and a woman are together (alone is implied), the devil is the third. In premodern times one result, especially for the rich and powerful, was the use of eunuchs as guardians of women or domestic spaces generally. Even in the early twenty-first century, in most Muslim societies, women's domain is said to be the home and there is a reluctance, especially among revivalists, to permit women to go out into public nondomestic space more than the minimum necessary. Outside the home, and in the presence of all but a limited circle of male relatives, a Muslim woman should be covered by garments that range from a scarf covering the hair and neck, in the more lenient view, to the all-enveloping shrouds of *niqabs*, chadors, or burkas, for stricter interpretations. The need to avoid stimulating men and women through public contact has led to practices such as separate seating, or entrances, in public transportation, separate seating in public halls, and so on (mosques have separate seating and entrances). After a period when the imperialism of Western mores led to a reduction in segregation and covering, both practices have been on the increase since the late 1970s.

Licit sex includes sexual intercourse (whether genital, oral, or anal) within marriage. (A man may marry up to four wives if he has the means to support them; a woman may only have one husband). But a man may also have licit sex with concubines whose number is not limited. In premodern times there was a vigorous and legal trade in slave-girls for those with the means to own them. Some branches of Islam authorize temporary marriage. Since the period for this marriage may be as short as one hour, and since Islamic marriages are contracts in which property usually figures, the result can resemble prostitution, with the difference that the woman cannot remarry until she has had her menses, thus obviating any doubt over paternity.

Both male and female homosexuality are forbidden in Islamic law (though only male homosexuality is explicitly condemned in the Koran). In premodern Muslim societies homosexuality was widely tolerated, and even celebrated in literature. In discussions of lesbian practices, mutual masturbation (called rubbing) was even considered potentially positive as

it helps to prepare the woman for male sexual penetration. In most respects, attitudes to homosexuality in Muslim societies were a continuation of those that dominated in the ancient classical world in which any shame only attached to the passive partner. Modern revivalist movements, by contrast, have made the repression of homosexuality part of their neo-puritanical agenda.

Literature, both popular and elite, took a very free attitude to the varieties of sexual behavior in premodern Muslim societies. European imperialism, however, brought Victorian values that have been strengthened by the contemporary revivalist movements (at least in their public utterances). Hence, a great classic such as *The Thousand and One Nights* is only available in expurgated editions (or on the black market).

The sacralization of sexuality extends to the rewards promised to the just in Paradise. In addition to spiritual and other sensual pleasures, the elect male is given multiple (the most common figure is seventy) *houris*, beautiful maidens in paradise, for his sexual pleasure. He will also enjoy congress with all his legitimate wives (these last will have the enjoyment of their husbands).

The sacralization of sex coupled with the need to control behavior have historically led Muslim societies to potentially contradictory positions. On the one hand, the rich literature of sexual technique and description celebrates female pleasure. On the other hand, many Muslim societies (principally, though not exclusively, in Africa) continue to practice clitoridectomy, the removal of this part of the female genitalia before puberty in order to dampen female desire. The practice also exists in some non-Muslim African societies. Muslim jurists have labeled the practice as either recommended (hence optional) or permitted, but never required or forbidden.

The Koran specifically grants men authority over their wives, including the right to use corporal punishment on a rebellious wife. A wife's marital duties include the obligation to grant sex to her husband unless she is physically indisposed. However, contemporary revivalist women have argued either that the sexual obligation does not extend to anal sex, or that the husband's right to use corporal punishment does not apply to issues of sexual access. Disputes over anal sex also appear in premodern sources.

Adultery or any sex outside of licit relationships is condemned in Islam, though in practice enforcement has been made difficult, especially for men. A woman accused of sexual impropriety, or even the appearance of such, suffers the full brunt of social disapproval, extending to death by legal or extralegal means. The "honor killing" of females who have escaped the control of their male relatives or guardians is widespread in many Muslim societies. Though such homicide is clearly not consistent with Islamic law, its proponents claim the support of the religion and adduce the Koranic verse permitting corporal chastisement of rebellious women as justification.

See also *Feminism: Islamic Feminism; Gender: Gender in the Middle East; Honor, Middle Eastern Notions of.*



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*Fedwa Malti-Douglas*

**SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

The phrase *sexual orientation* is used to describe different forms of erotic attraction: toward people of the same gender (homosexual), the opposite gender (heterosexual), or both (bisexual). Like any simplistic categorization, such definitions quickly become mired in contradictions and complications. For instance, is the label “heterosexual” to be reserved for people who only have sexual interactions with members of the other sex, so that those who deviate from this pattern are classed as homosexuals regardless of the number of same-sex relationships they have had, even if the opposite-sex relationships far outnumber them? When can an individual be labeled bisexual, homosexual, or heterosexual?

The influential study of Alfred Kinsey on American males in 1948 and his later study of females first pointed out the difficulties of such classification. To overcome it, he developed a 7-point scale with 0 representing individuals who only had heterosexual intercourse, and 6, those who only had same-sex activities. Unsurprisingly, Kinsey found that 37 percent of the males and 13 percent of the females in their sample had at least one homosexual encounter. The scale, however, did not establish numerical ranges for categorizing sexual orientation. Is a man who has sexual relations with females 70 percent of the time and with males 30 percent of the time a homosexual? Is a woman who has sex with males 30 percent of the time and with other women 70 percent a lesbian? Are they both bisexual? The issue is further complicated by the fact that many people do considerable experimentation before confining themselves to one sex. Others might originally have only partners of the opposite sex, but as they age they have increasing numbers of partners of the same sex and settle down with a same-sex partner. This pattern is even more marked in many non-Western societies, where same-sex sexual experimentation may be expected as a premarital phase; a highly institutionalized version of the age-specific structure was documented by Gil Herdt in parts of Melanesia, where before Christian missionizing changed sexual mores, every male was expected to progress through a series of alternating same-sex and heterosexual phases.

**Some Factors to Be Considered**

There are other factors to be considered, particularly the relation between actual practice, fantasy, and feelings. Anna Freud, for example, maintained that the crucial determination of homosexuality or heterosexuality was one's thoughts and images when masturbating or becoming sexually aroused. A woman who becomes sexually aroused by same-sex fantasies while having sex with her husband would be classed as homosexual even

though she never engaged in homosexual behavior. The opposite case with males would be equally true. The question of whether erotic attraction or sexual practice is the defining characteristic of sexual orientation continues to be debated by researchers.

Another approach taken by scholars attempting to discover the true “nature” of sexual orientation has been to look at nonhuman species. Frank Beach, for example, held that homosexual activity among animals was usually an expression of the dominant or submissive role of that particular individual animal vis-à-vis another. He cautioned, however, that the existence of homosexual behavior in some animals says little about homosexual relations in humans, that is, it could not prove that homosexuality is “biologically normal.” The empirical evidence from animals, he felt, was irrelevant.

Another knotty question has to do with the relationship between sexual orientation and gender. Whereas stereotypical images of the homosexual associate same-sex desire with male effeminacy and masculine-appearing women, in actuality the relationship between gender and sex is far less predictable.

Cross-cultural data further complicate the picture. Clellan Sterns Ford and Frank A. Beach (1951) examined 190 cultures for information about sexuality using what was then called the Human Relations Area Files, a collection of reports of a variety of cultures. The information was extracted from reports of observers in earlier periods, many of them missionaries or explorers, while later reports were more often made by trained anthropologists. They found that homosexual behavior was not a predominant sexual activity among adults in any of the societies but that in the majority of the seventy-six groups for which information on homosexuality was available, same-sex relations were considered to be normal and socially acceptable, at least for certain members of the society. In about one-third of these societies where homosexuality was reported, it was said to be rare, absent, or carried on only in secrecy. The fact that it was not mentioned in the reports of the majority of societies, however, should not be taken to say it was nonexistent since the observers might well not have been looking for it.

For example, Balinese society was classified by Ford and Beach among the 36 percent minority where homosexual activity was rare, absent, or carried on only in secret. Yet the crossing of sex roles is common among the Balinese, and their religious beliefs place a high valuation on the hermaphroditic figure of Syng Hyan Toengaal, also known as the Solitary or Tjinitja. Tjinitja existed before the division of the sexes and is regarded as both husband and wife. Are the transvestic ceremonies connected with god homosexuality? Other examples of gender and sexual variation in non-Western and tribal societies, such as the Native American *berdache* or “two-spirit person” or Polynesian *mahu*, have all been objects of fascination to European and U.S. homosexuals looking for evidence of sexual freedom, but in reality, it is very difficult to map Western notions about sexual orientation onto non-Western contexts. Even in closely related societies, such as those of Latin America, the United States, and Canada, ideas about male homosexuality have been shown to vary considerably, so that, for

example, the nature of the sexual activity (active versus passive) may be more important than the sex of the partner in determining sexual identity. Furthermore, within complex societies, distinct sexual subcultures with their own notions about sexual orientation flourish within different racial, class, ethnic, and regional groups. For instance, while upper-middle-class lesbians in the United States embraced a model of androgyny and equality between partners in the latter half of the twentieth century, working-class lesbians chose to be either “butch” or “femme,” a pattern that later came to influence their wealthier and better-educated sisters as well.

In the early twenty-first century, although some social and biological scientists continue to pursue other methods of identifying sexual orientation, most observers simply ask the person in question, leaving sexual orientation as a question of self-identity. Such an approach assumes a more tolerant attitude toward homosexuals and bisexuals than in the past, when such an identity was widely regarded as “sick” and their “illness” as illegal. It was not until 1974 that members of the American Psychiatric Association (APA) adopted a resolution that being “homosexual did not imply any impairment in judgment, stability, reliability or general social or vocational capabilities” (Bullough, 1994). Such a conclusion was based on research dating from at least the beginning of the twentieth century, but change in psychiatric opinion was slow and occurred only in response to activists in the gay and lesbian community, who confronted both the American Psychiatric Association and the legal system. Groups such as the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and the American Law Institute began agitating for change in the 1950s and the early 1960s, as did a growing number of people in the gay community, an agitation culminating in the 2003 decision of the U.S. Supreme Court declaring sodomy laws unconstitutional.

### Acquiring an Identity

As the barriers fell, increasing numbers of gays and lesbians came out of the closet, proclaiming their sexual orientations. Acquiring a public gay identity is extremely important but not always an easy process even though most gays and lesbians indicate they felt that somehow they were different in childhood and adolescence from others. Only gradually in their teens did they begin to identify themselves as homosexual. Those who do so tend to be culturally defined by society as a single homogeneous class.

In reality, of course, gays and lesbians, either as individuals or in groups, are a very mixed collectivity of individuals with a wide-ranging variety of behaviors, although most seem to be gender atypical in some traits. Attempts to identify the precise relationship between sexual orientation and gender by researchers have led only to contradictory and very tentative results, possibly because such relationships tend to change rapidly in response to changing social conditions.

Most theories fall into one of two categories: psychosocial dynamic or biological dynamic, sometimes simplified as nurture versus nature. Psychosocial dynamic theories attempt to explain development of a person’s sexual orientation in terms of internal mental processes and the interaction of these with

reward and punishment. Examples of these include the psychoanalytic theory of Sigmund Freud or socialization theory such as put forth by Ira Reiss, who held that the greater the rigidity of gender role in male-dominant societies, the higher the likelihood of male homosexual behavior. This was, he said, because the rigidity of the gender role could lead a male child who did not conform to find conformity with other nonconformists, that is, male homosexuals.

In the 1990s biological theories that explain sexual orientation in terms of biological phenomena, such as brain circuitry, hormones, genes, and evolution, became increasingly popular. Researchers have looked at such factors as prenatal hormones as well as other physiological and anatomical features, but all of these theories have limitations, some more serious than others. Since homosexuality is thought to run in families, there has been a search for genetic influence; but while some researchers have found what they think is evidence along these lines, there generally has been a failure to replicate the findings.

So far there are too many variables involved to come up with any definitive answers. At the moment, sexual orientation seems best left up to the individual to define for himself or herself.

*See also Gender; Identity; Love, Western Notions of; Psychology and Psychiatry.*

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Vern L. Bullough

**SHINTO.** *Shinto*, composed of two ideographs, literally means the “way of the *kami*.” Although *kami* can be translated as gods or deities, it also refers more generally to spirit-beings, the supernatural, or to a sacred quality in which an individual can even participate. *Shinto* refers to what has become a

religious tradition indigenous to Japan that recognizes the existence of the *kami* governing various aspects of reality. There is no primary revelatory text from which doctrines emanate. Instead, doctrines have become established over time, with evidence showing conceptual interaction with Daoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism over the centuries.

The sacred as represented by the *kami*, in whom lie the constructive “way” of creation, harmony, and uprightness, plays a central role. These truths can be discerned through faith and ritual. While beneficial and malevolent forces are both recognized, they are not necessarily strictly separated, since good and evil are understood as closely related. In Shinto mythology, for example, it is not unusual for the effects of particular gods to change from one to the other depending on the *kami*’s circumstances.

Central to Shinto is the concept of purity and purification of one’s inner and outer selves. Purification of the inner self involves living before the *kami* in reverence and worship. Shinto recognizes that life lived with such reverence shapes attitudes of heart and mind, leading to *magokoro* (“heart of sincerity”). This, in turn, influences all of man’s relationships to himself, to others, and to the world leading to harmony and peace. In this way, man also partakes in the divine as he lives in accordance to the way of the *kami*. The purification of the outer self involves the observance of various rites—among which are included rites for different stages in an individual’s life, and festivals (*matsuri*) at various times of the year.

Contrary to common perceptions, for most of its past, Shinto did not exist as an independent religion. In this sense, presenting a summary of the “history of Shinto” may misleadingly reify its existence when it was not truly there as a distinctive religious tradition. The term as it is understood today did not become common parlance until the twentieth century. Still, since modern Shinto reflects the broader tendencies of folk religion in Japan’s history, and since the tradition claims historicity, the history of Shinto as it is often presented remains significant.

It is standard to present the origins of Shinto as being historically discernible as far back as the Yayoi period (roughly 300 B.C.E. to 300 C.E.) in which *uji*, or clans, worshipped the *ujigami*, its tutelary deity. While these *kami* were often ancestral, others represented various aspects of nature or ideas. As the Yamato clan, from which the imperial line is said to come, gradually grew powerful, the authority of its tutelary deity also expanded. During the seventh and eighth centuries, Daoist, Confucian, and Buddhist traditions deeply influenced Japanese folk belief. Efforts in the eighth century made Buddhist and Shinto philosophies compatible in a process called *shim-butsu shûgô* (unifying of gods and buddhas). Shinto *kami* became protectors of Buddhism, making it possible to have Shinto shrines within Buddhist temples. Such Buddhist-Shinto accommodation became more explicit during the Kamakura period (1192–1333): Ryobu (Dual) Shinto taught that the two realms of the universe in Shingon Buddhism corresponded with the two *kami* (Amaterasu and Toyouke) of the Ise Shrine; and, Sannô Shinto taught that the fundamental truth of the universe was equivalent to Amaterasu, the sun goddess, who

was the source of the universe. Buddhism, however, generally remained more politically powerful and much of what is referred to as Shinto during this time may, in fact, be more Buddhist.

Shinto as a more distinct religious tradition is said to become more recognizable in reactions to Buddhist dominance that occurred in the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries. In the thirteenth century, Watarai (or Ise) Shinto taught that *kami* were the basis of all beings including buddhas and bodhisattvas. In actuality, however, the Watarai tradition continued to assume compatibility with Buddhism. In the fifteenth century, hints of Shinto as a distinctive religion appear. Yoshida Shinto, established by Yoshida Kanetomo (1435–1511), taught that Buddhism and Confucianism were second-hand versions of Shinto, and that indigenous knowledge of truths had been handed down through generations through his lineage. Although Yoshida Shinto’s influence would be subdued during the Tokugawa period (1603–1867) when Neo-Confucian philosophy legitimized the state, it continued to inform Shinto beliefs leading to the development of Nativist Studies (Kokugaku) and the thinking of Motoori Norinaga (1730–1801). This would eventually coalesce in Fukko (Restoration) Shinto that called for the restoration of imperial rule, resulting in the Meiji Restoration and the start of Japan’s modern history.

Following the Meiji Restoration until the end of World War II, Shinto was made a state religion that taught the national ethic of reverence for and submission to the emperor. Kokka (State) Shinto, as this form is called, was very much a modern creation and was used aggressively by the state to nurture a loyal and nationalistic population. In the postwar period, though some traditionalist conservatives are known to seek revivals of this in some form, due to its disestablishment in the postwar constitution, Shinto no longer has such close connection with the state and is substantially weaker.

Still, Shinto belief and practice continue and exert their shaping influence upon attitudes and values of many Japanese. Shinto weddings, or festivals marking the calendar such as *obon* in the summer, the November festival for children, or New Year’s Day, all remain popular and have become deeply embedded in national life. This has invited a new generation of scholars to move beyond viewing Shinto only in its statist form, to seeing it as a rich and lively tradition that continues to flourish in modern Japanese society. Although its close association in both beliefs and practice with the people and politics of Japan has given Shinto a parochial sensibility not conducive to spreading overseas, its continuing vitality has raised questions regarding the place of folk religion in the modern era and has won scholarly interest.

*See also Japanese Philosophy, Japanese Thought; Religion: East and Southeast Asia; Sacred Places.*

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Genzo Yamamoto

**SKEPTICISM.** Skepticism is both a generalized sense of doubt and disbelief as expressed in everyday language and an identifiable school of thought in the history of ideas. In its most general sense it refers to uncertainty, doubt, disbelief, suspension of judgment, and rejection of knowledge. It is characterized by its opposition to dogmatism, which claims to know reality and the truth.

As a philosophical tradition skepticism is best understood as the product of two movements in ancient Greek philosophy. Academic skepticism can be attributed to Socrates and to Plato’s successors at the Academy in Athens (fifth century to second century B.C.E.), and Pyrrhonism can be traced back to Pyrrho of Elis (c. 365–275 B.C.E.). Elements of skepticism can be found in many other schools of ancient Greek philosophy, from Heraclitus to the Cyrenaics and the Cynics. There are also analogies to ancient Greek and Roman skepticism in ancient Chinese, Persian, Arabic, and Indian philosophy, but they did not have the impact on modern thinking that the Mediterranean skepticisms did.

### Academic Skepticism

The Roman philosopher and statesman Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 B.C.E.) is the chief source for Academic skepticism. His *Academica* (45 B.C.E.) reports on the teachings of Arcesilaus (315–240 B.C.E.) and Carneades (214–129 B.C.E.), both heads of the Academy, and he claims allegiance to the

Academic school. St. Augustine of Hippo’s earliest extant work, *Contra Academicos* (Against the Academics; 386 C.E.), is also an important source of knowledge about Academic skepticism.

Socrates can be placed at the origins of skepticism if it is understood that he only asked questions and did not teach positive doctrines. Plato and Aristotle strayed from his path when they claimed to know the truth. Arcesilaus gave renewed vigor to skepticism, arguing against the opinions of all men, as Cicero put it. But he also showed that skeptics could make choices in accordance with the *eulogon* (the reasonable) in the absence of truth. Carneades, also a master of arguing on both sides of every issue, refined this into the standard of the *pi-thanon* (the credible). Cicero translated this into Latin as *probabile*, setting the stage for the skeptics’ claim to live by the probable in the absence of truth.

Manuscripts of Cicero’s *Academica* were available in the Middle Ages to figures such as John of Salisbury (1115–1180), who used it to underpin defenses of liberty of thought and speech. The text was first printed at Rome in 1471, followed by numerous commentaries and annotations. By 1600 more than 100 editions had been published.

The Dutch humanist Desiderius Erasmus (1466?–1536) admired Academic skepticism in his *Praise of Folly* (1511), which provoked opposition from Christians like Philipp Melancthon (1487–1560). Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola’s *Examen Vanitatis* (1520) drew from both Cicero and Sextus Empiricus. Omer Talon emphasized the Academics’ philosophical freedom from dogmatism in his *Academia* of 1547, and Petrus Ramus praised their rhetoric and style in *Ciceronianus* of 1557. Giulio Castellani (1528–1586) defended Aristotelianism against Academic skepticism in *Adversus Marci Tullii Ciceronis* (1558), arguing that disagreement is not as widespread as the skeptics claimed. Johannes Rosa (1532–1571) brought out a substantial early commentary on the *Academica* in German in 1571, and Pedro de Valencia (1555–1620) refashioned Academic skepticism in his own *Academica* of 1596, published in Spain.

Publication of Sextus Empiricus’s works in the 1560s replaced Cicero as the chief source of information about ancient skepticism. After that point most authors drew their inspiration from both sources, so it is hard to speak of purely Academic skeptics from then on. One exception is David Hume (1711–1776), sometimes called an Academic skeptic, among other reasons because a character in his *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion* (1779) takes the role of an Academic. There has also been scholarly debate about whether other individual early modern figures were Academic skeptics or Pyrrhonians, but in this period the two traditions were often run together and few, if any, authors made a clear distinction.

### Pyrrhonism

The chief source for ancient Pyrrhonism is the work of the Greek physician Sextus Empiricus (second century C.E.), including *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, *Against the Dogmatists*, and *Against the Mathematicians*. Once thought of as a mere compiler, many recent studies have found philosophical originality



in his texts. As Sextus explained it, skepticism was not a philosophy but rather a way of life in which one opposed all claims to truth with equal opposite claims (equipollence). Standard tropes or formula arguments could be used against any certainty or truth. He attributed one set of these tropes to the Greek philosopher Aenesidemus and another to Agrippa (both first century B.C.E.). Diogenes Laertius's *Lives of the Philosophers* (early third century C.E.) is also a source for information about ancient skepticism, including the tropes.

In Sextus's account, the basic ten tropes or formula arguments show that the same thing appears differently (1) to different animals, (2) to different individuals, (3) to different senses, (4) to the same sense in different conditions, (5) in different positions or places, (6) in company with different things, (7) in different quantities, (8) in different relations, (9) if common or if rare, and (10) to people with different customs or ways of life. Thus, any claim about a thing could be matched with an equal counterclaim. Other tropes bring out the problem of the criterion (an infinite regress), unresolved disputes, problems with attributing causation, and more. The result of the skeptical tropes was that one would suspend judgment (*epochē*) and then find oneself in *ataraxia*, or tranquility, no longer disturbed by conflicting claims. One would live in accordance with the phenomena or appearances, without taking a stand on the truth or reality behind them. One would follow one's natural impulses as well as local customs and laws.

Even in ancient times, critics of the skeptics accused them of inconsistency, incoherence, immorality, and inability to live their skepticism. These arguments were more and less sophisticated, and ranged widely from the claim that skeptics cannot be fully skeptical because they believe their own positions are true to the claim that skeptics will not make reliable friends. As late as the 1980s, a number of scholars of ancient skepticism continued to maintain these claims, but opinion turned in the 1990s as a consensus emerged that skeptics could indeed live their skepticism, and that they would not necessarily be any more immoral than followers of other philosophies.

Much of Sextus's text consists of refutation of other dogmatic philosophies of the time. Since he quoted their ideas in order to refute them, his text has been an important source of information about ancient Stoicism, Epicureanism, and other philosophies.

### Early Reception

Occasional references to the ancient Pyrrhonists can be found throughout the late Roman and early medieval periods. The oldest extant Greek manuscript of Sextus dates from the tenth century, and manuscripts of Latin translations existed in medieval collections by the fourteenth century. More manuscripts came into Italy from Byzantium in the mid-fifteenth century, when the Florentine religious leader Girolamo Savonarola (1452–1498) used Sextus to combat pagan philosophy, and the humanist scholar Pico della Mirandola drew on Sextus to fight other dogmatists. Knowledge of the materials eventually spread into France and other northern countries.

The printing press made for the most influential dissemination of these texts. Published Latin translations by Henri II

Estienne (Stephanus) (1562) and Gentian Hervet (1569) provided the stimulus for a widespread "skeptical crisis." Michel de Montaigne (1533–1592) was the most influential of the early European writers to draw on the writings of Sextus in his *Essais* (Essays; 1580–1595). In his longest essay, "Defense of Raymond Sebond," Montaigne retailed most of the skeptical tropes and all of the skeptical vocabulary from Sextus Empiricus. In this and other essays he demolished pretensions to human knowledge and argued both sides of nearly all issues. He was never pessimistic but showed people how to live a good life in spite of skepticism, which helps explain why his work was so popular.

Later thinkers often started from Montaigne. One who went beyond him in posing questions of skepticism was René Descartes (1596–1650). Without specific precedent in the ancient materials, he set out to answer the skeptical idea that there could be an all-powerful *malin genie* or evil demon that manipulates human perceptions and reasoning, fooling people about the world. His conclusion was that individuals know of their existence because they can think—the famous "I think therefore I am." Explaining why one's perceptions of thinking could not be a deception, Descartes asserts that God would not allow such deception. Religion is invoked to certify truth. Later skeptics would worry about a deceiving God.

Bishop Pierre-Daniel Huet (1630–1721) and the Huguenot refugee Pierre Bayle (1647–1706) have been described as the "master skeptics." Huet invoked Sextus Empiricus in great detail against Descartes and many other dogmatic philosophers in his *Traité philosophique de la faiblesse de l'esprit humaine* (1723; Philosophical tract on the weakness of the human mind). Bayle's massive works attacked all previous philosophy and historical scholarship but upheld moral rigorism.

### Reception in and since the Enlightenment

The Scottish philosopher David Hume responded to the skeptical challenge in ways that made him central to philosophical discussion up to the twenty-first century. His *Treatise of Human Nature* (1739–1740) argued for skepticism about both facts and reason. His critique of causation reduces it to little more than a habit based on constant conjunction. And yet in typical skeptical fashion he showed people how to live with skepticism on the basis of probabilities and custom.

The Prussian philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) was called the "all-destroyer" because of his rejection of many other dogmatic philosophies. He adopted skeptical Greek vocabulary when he argued that one could have no knowledge of the noumena—the reality behind appearances—but only of the phenomena. He saved free will and morality from scientific determinism by reducing human knowledge of them to faith rather than knowledge. Other skeptics writing in German in his time included Salomon Maimon and Gottlob Ernst "Aenesidemus" Schulze. When Carl Friedrich Stäudlin's *Geschichte und Geist des Skepticismus* (History and spirit of skepticism) of 1794 showed Hume facing Kant on the title page, it was clear that these two thinkers had posed the skeptical challenge for the age. Stäudlin denounced unphilosophical skepticism even as he demonstrated that philosophical skepticism could not be refuted.

In the nineteenth century, the German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831) believed that ancient skepticism was of great philosophical importance while modern skepticism had little merit. The Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855) incorporated skepticism into his theology. One of the prize questions of the Royal Academy in Paris concerned the failure of all answers to skepticism. The Swiss philologist and philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) made skepticism a significant part of his philosophy. Karl Marx (1818–1883) and Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) followed in a long-established tradition of using various skepticisms against their opponents but then claiming dogmatic truth for their own positions. Their practice reflected the important distinction between partial skepticism (e.g., of claims in one domain, such as religion, or the claims of an opposing political party) and global or universal skepticism, which suspends judgment about everything.

In the twentieth century Jean Grenier (1898–1971) translated Sextus into French. His student Albert Camus (1913–1960) drew on skepticism in his work as one of the founders of existentialism. In Germany, Odo Marquard (1928–) led a self-consciously skeptical charge against the dogmatism of thinkers such as Jürgen Habermas. Also in the same century, some analytical philosophers developed their own ahistorical definitions of skepticism and debated them with little if any reference to the traditions of skepticism. Revisionists such as Stephen Toulmin (1922–) then interpreted one of their heroes, Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889–1951), as following in the footsteps of the ancient skeptics.

### Skepticism in Medicine and Science

Of all the fields that in the early twenty-first century are considered sciences, medicine has been especially intertwined with skepticism. Sextus Empiricus was a practicing physician whose work influenced his philosophy. The writings of the Greek physicians Hippocrates (c. 460–c. 377 B.C.E.) and Galen (c. 129–c. 200 C.E.) stressed the importance of skeptical observation and experience and the dangers of dogmatic theory in medicine. Their work was an important part of medical education in early modern Europe, introducing the student to both dogmatic medicine and the skeptical critique.

Several prominent early modern physicians developed the connections between skepticism and medicine. The Toulouse professor Francisco Sanchez (c. 1550–1623) called himself “Carneades philosophus,” attacking Aristotelian science in his book *Quod Nihil Scitur* (That nothing is known; 1581). The English physician and philosopher John Locke (1632–1704) borrowed some of the skeptical elements in his philosophy from the skeptical physician Thomas Sydenham (1624–1689). Martín Martínez (1684–1734), royal physician and president of the Royal Medicine Academy of Medicine in Seville, published *Medicina Sceptica* (1722–1724), attacking dogmatic Galenism, and *Philosophia Sceptica* (1730), which introduced Descartes to Spain. The German physician Ernst Platner’s (1744–1818) skeptical writings were influential in Kant’s time.

The early natural scientist Francis Bacon (1561–1626) was convinced that the experimental method would produce

absolute certainty. Skeptics like François de La Mothe Le Vayer (1583–1672) used skeptical tropes to show that science could not produce certain knowledge. Other philosopher-scientists, such as Marin Mersenne (1588–1648) and Pierre Gassendi (1592–1655) in France, rejected the need for certainty and defended experimental science on the ground that it is enough that it produces useful knowledge. This attitude prevailed at the Royal Society in London. Skepticism could sweep away the pretensions of Aristotelians and other dogmatists while leaving scientists free to continue their experiments. In this spirit, Robert Boyle (1627–1691) named his spokesman “Carneades” in *The Sceptical Chymist* (1661), and Joseph Glanvill (1636–1680) titled one of his books *Scep̄sis Scientifica* (1665).

By the twentieth century, natural science had pretty much left the skeptical path, claiming something close to a monopoly on truth and knowledge. But avatars of the skeptical tradition still emerge here and there in connection with the sciences. The philosopher of science Karl Popper (1902–1994) contended that scientific claims could never be absolutely verified, only falsified. Paul Feyerabend (1924–1994) was described as a Pyrrhonian for his generally skeptical attitude toward all scientific claims.

### Skepticism in Law, Historiography, and Political Thought

It is no accident that one of the chief sources for Academic skepticism was a lawyer. After all, Cicero spent much of his professional life making cases for clients, regardless of which side truth was on. Montaigne also studied law and served as a magistrate, and concluded both that judges can make the law come out any way they want, and that they are often wrong. Legal realists in the twentieth century endorsed these views, concluding that the law was more an expression of social power than of truth or certainty. Legal education encourages skepticism by teaching lawyers how to argue both sides of any case.

Especially in the seventeenth century, skepticism made its way into historiography, as writers began to question the received accounts of history. La Mothe Le Vayer’s *On the Small Amount of Certainty in History* (1668) and Pierre Bayle’s *Historical and Critical Dictionary* (1697–1702) brought numerous historical errors to public attention. The only lasting solution was to learn to live with the appearances and accept lower standards for practical purposes instead of absolute certainty.

Throughout the early modern era, skepticism was used to justify a wide variety of political stances, from radical reform to quietist conservatism. The implications of many of Montaigne’s political commentaries were quite subversive of the political arrangements of his time. But his contemporary, the Dutch thinker Justus Lipsius (1547–1606), claimed that skepticism justified repression of reformers on the ground that they could not know that they were right. The English political philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) accepted much of the skeptical critique of knowledge and concluded that, for the sake of social order, the king should define the truth and punish deviations from it. Hume drew the different political

implication that people should be left alone in commercial society to define their own manners and opinions. Kant concluded that one can know what politics should be like (ethical and republican) but that one could never know if these standards are really instantiated in any concrete political arrangements.

Earlier figures from Montaigne to Kant were often aware of the genealogy of their ideas, but even later writers working in ignorance of the roots of their ideas have come up with a similarly wide range of political conclusions. Without indicating much awareness of the skeptical tradition, the British political philosophers Edmund Burke (1729–1797) and Michael Oakeshott (1901–1990), each in different ways, used skepticism to undermine dogmatic political activism. Postmodernists with generally radical or activist sympathies have also not usually been aware of how close some of their positions are to the skeptical tradition.

### Skepticism and Religion

The historical scholarship of Isaac la Peyrère (1596–1676), Benedict de Spinoza (1632–1677), and Richard Simon (1638–1712) contributed to skepticism about the Bible. In response, it has been common to accuse skeptics of atheism, libertinism, and immorality. But skeptics were not necessarily atheists. One of the most common uses of skepticism was by the self-described orthodox against pagan claims to truth; by the Lutherans and Calvinists against Catholic claims to infallibility; and by Catholics against Protestant claims to truth. Many religionists believed that if all claims to truth can be demolished, one should accept traditional religion on faith. This position is known as fideism.

Various versions of fideism were widespread. Thinkers from Montaigne to Huet and Bayle wrote that skepticism cleared the way to faith by removing rationalist objections. Kant famously wrote that he had had to deny knowledge in order to make room for faith. Whether some of these figures were insincere atheists, using fideism as a defense against charges of heresy, has been the subject of debate ever since.

But there is little doubt about the sincerity of many fideists. The sixteenth-century translators of Sextus, Huet and Stephanus, were both Christians who believed that skepticism could help them in apologetics. Blaise Pascal (1623–1662) in France Christianized skepticism by showing that, properly understood, it set the scene for Christianity. Philosophers at the Prussian Academy who translated the Greek, Latin, and British skeptics into French and German, such as Jean-Henri-Samuel Formey (1711–1797), Jean-Bernard Mérian (1723–1807), and Jean de Castillon (1709–1791), tried to draw the teeth of skepticism by adding notes that made it consistent with Christianity. The Germans Johann Georg Hamann (1730–1788) and Friedrich Jacobi (1743–1819) adopted skepticism as a propaedeutic to Christian faith. Kierkegaard claimed that skepticism was the key to proper Christianity, which required a “leap of faith” after dogmatism had been destroyed by skepticism. The Russian theologian Lev Shestov (1866–1938) even rejected mathematics in order to achieve faith. Twentieth-century theologians were also compelled to either use skepticism or refute it.

In the twenty-first century it is safe to say that the challenges of the skeptical tradition to any claims to human truth and knowledge are alive and well. Many and perhaps most modern and postmodern thinkers have internalized much of skepticism, often without full awareness of the genealogy of their ideas. The chief elements of skepticism must be adopted, adapted, or refuted by any thinker. Since no one has succeeded fully at the last of these, variations on the former prevail.

*See also Cynicism; Dialogue and Dialectics: Socratic; Epistemology; Philosophy, History of; Rhetoric.*

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*John Christian Laursen*

**SLAVERY.** Slavery is possibly the most ubiquitous of all human institutions. It has existed in most times and most places, and few peoples have not, at various times, been either the enslaved or the enslavers. While slavery has generally been coerced, the result of war capture or kidnapping, in periods of





**Slaves cutting sugar cane in Antigua, 1823 painting by William Clark.** The majority of slave labor was used in crop production and the handling of livestock, but some slaves were retained as domestic servants and still others as concubines. COURTESY OF THE JOHN CARTER BROWN LIBRARY AT BROWN UNIVERSITY

low and variable levels of agricultural output slavery has been entered into voluntarily, people choosing survival ahead of freedom. Slavery has almost always been a status reserved to those, both males and females, considered outsiders to the enslaving society, but the definition of the outsider has varied over time and place. It has been based on nationality, ethnicity, religion, race, or membership in a different tribal or clan group. Individuals who are considered outsiders have a different legal status and can be subject to different treatment and punishments from those considered members of the enslaving society, who will not become slaves, whatever their treatment in other regards.

Slavery is regarded as one end of a spectrum that includes different forms of coerced labor, including serfdom, indentured labor, debt bondage, and “wage slavery,” in contrast with so-called free labor. Slavery is characterized legally as including the right to buy and sell the enslaved and to have control over where the slave will reside and the nature of his or her labor. As a legal system it is enforced by the government or the elites, and this enforcement is central to its continuity, since it precludes one individual bidding slaves away from their owner as well as ensuring that runaway slaves will be returned to their owners. These legal rights are given slave owners and create an unbalanced power relationship, with psychological

impacts upon the enslaved; these rights do not mean, however, that nominally free labor need be treated better or have a higher material standard of living than do slaves. If there are limited choices of work and residence due to poverty, the dramatic legal difference may seem more limited in its consequences in actuality.

The work performed by slave labor varied among slavery societies, and in several societies slave women served as concubines or objects for the sexual pleasure of the enslavers and not just as agricultural or industrial workers. In the extensive debate about the relative efficiency of free versus slave labor in agriculture, the expected benefits described for free labor included both the greater incentives of free labor compared to a slave system that presumably had no incentives and the greater need for free labor to work hard to avoid starvation, whereas slaves could be supported by their owners.

### **Abolition**

Most religions generally considered that slaves be well treated and that, if possible, manumission into freedom was desirable. This did not mean, however, that the existence of the slave system was placed under attack. The first major attack on slavery as a system originated in England in the late eighteenth century, and this attack spread to other western European nations



**Volume of transatlantic slave arrivals by region of arrival, 1519–1867**

Region	Numbers (in thousands)	Percentage
British Mainland North America	361.1	3.8%
British Leewards	304.9	3.2%
British Windwards and Trinidad	362.0	3.8%
Jamaica	1077.1	11.2%
Barbados	494.2	5.1%
French Windwards	305.2	3.2%
St. Domingue	787.4	8.2%
Spanish American Mainland	430.3	4.5%
Spanish Caribbean	791.9	8.2%
Dutch Caribbean	129.7	1.4%
Brazil	3902.0	40.6%
Guianas	403.7	4.2%
Other Americas	118.7	1.2%
Africa	130.8	1.4%
<b>All Regions</b>	<b>9599.0</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

SOURCE: David Eltis, et al, eds. *Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*

and to the United States in the nineteenth century. Although the attack was aimed at slavery on moral or economic grounds, most nations ended the foreign slave trade about a quarter-century before slaves were freed. Western European nations ended slavery in their American possessions at about the same time European nations ended serfdom, often with similar arguments about the nature and morality of coerced labor. In the cases of both slavery and serfdom, compensation was generally paid to slave owners and landowners in cash, bonds, or compelled labor time, with no compensation paid to the freed labor, reflecting the belief in the property rights of owners of labor, not the right of individuals to own themselves.

The antislavery argument stressed the immorality and the economic inefficiency of the slave system and argued that a devastating psychological impact resulted from the status of being a slave. Two arguments for this psychological effect dominated the slavery debates. To some, given the then-racial basis of slavery, it was due to the genetic basis of the African population. To most antislavery advocates, the destructive impact was due to the slave status and reflected environmental factors that would influence anyone, of any race, who had been enslaved. This distinction was not only important in the arguments about slavery but also was central to debates about whether emancipation should be immediate or gradual. Hence emancipation schemes that allowed for periods of apprenticeship were advocated not only because they helped masters obtain a financial return but also because such apprenticeship could serve to provide a necessary education to the freed people to deal with their freedom.

### Modern Slavery in the Americas

Although slave societies have taken many different forms in terms of differences in the proportion of the population who

were slaves, in the labor undertaken by slave laborers, and whether they were located in rural or urban areas, most impressions of the meaning of slavery are based upon what Moses Finley (1980) describes as the five major slave societies in world history—Greece and Rome (each with about 30 percent of the population being slaves) and the three New World slave powers—the British and French Caribbean (90 percent slaves), the U.S. South, and Brazil (each with about 30 percent slaves).

The New World slave powers imported slaves purchased in Africa; about 10 million Africans were taken to the Americas from the start of the sixteenth century to the middle of the nineteenth century. Generally the number of males transported was greater than females (a proportion of about 60 to 40), due both to a New World desire for males and an internal African demand for females. There was also a large trade from southern Africa to North Africa and the Middle East, as well as a substantial internal slave trade within Africa. Most slaves in the transatlantic trade went to the Caribbean and to Brazil, with the United States receiving only a small part of this migration. The United States was unusual for a slave society because of its high fertility rate among slaves and rapid rate of natural increase, whereas the other areas suffered from a natural decrease, and the United States came to account for a large part of the New World slave population by the nineteenth century.

Slave labor was generally most important in producing crops, such as sugar, cotton, tobacco, rice, and coffee on plantations, for sale in European markets. Crops were grown on units larger than family farms—often, in the case of sugar, containing up to two hundred laborers—although most of the labor input on these plantations involved the growing of foodstuffs and the handling of livestock. Rising prices paid for slaves in Africa and in the Americas throughout this period are suggestive of the profits obtained from the use of slave labor. A few northern states in the United States ended slavery by the 1780s; with intellectual impetus from England and elsewhere in Europe, in the next century slavery was ended throughout the Americas due to slave rebellion in Haiti, legislated compensated emancipations by the British and French, the Civil War in the United States, and by legislation in Brazil in 1888.

The experience of all ages and nations, I believe, demonstrates that the work done by slaves, although it appears to cost only their maintenance, is in the end the dearest of any. A person who can acquire no property, can have no other interest but to eat as much, and to labour as little as possible.

SOURCE: Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*.

There is no use for slaves, where all disagreeable work can be, and is performed by the weaker sex; Australian and Melanesian women supply the place of slaves. On the other hand, where the women hold a high position, and the men are desirous of relieving them of a part of their task, slavery is likely to arise sooner than otherwise would be the case.

SOURCE: H. J. Nieboer, *Slavery as an Industrial System*.

Despite the ending of slavery in the New World, it continued into the twentieth century in Africa and Asia, with the final legislated ending in the Arabian peninsula in the 1960s, although variant forms of slavery continue to exist in parts of North Africa and sex slaves continue to be held in Asia and Arabia. The term *slavery* remains applied to conditions of low income and of a loss of control by individuals over their own lives, not just to the existence of slaves as a form of legal property, so that it is still argued that slavery persists in the world of the twenty-first century.

See also ***Abolitionism; Black Atlantic; Liberty; Resistance and Accommodation.***

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**SOCIABILITY IN AFRICAN THOUGHT.** *Sociability* is a descriptive term that refers to the relational or interactive disposition and condition from which persons, as individuals, are said to derive their identity and status. According to this view, humans are regarded as beings whose defining characteristics, like reason, and its manifestation in cognitive, moral, and language

capacities, are said to arise from the social conditioning of human life. Although this communalistic principle underlies African philosophical endeavors as well as African people's practical orientations to social, moral, and political values generally, the concept has received only meager attention and treatment by African intellectuals and remains to be finely articulated and applied openly in metaphysical, epistemological, political, and ethical analyses of Africans' experiences. This lack of a robust presence of the relational view of the world in African theoretical culture is in spite of the vigorous claim by African political leaders like Léopold Sédar Senghor (1906–2001) and Julius Nyerere (1922–1999) in the early 1960s that "African socialism," an idea they claimed was based on traditional African communalism, was the moral flag of a distinctly African ideological framework and the key to a collective African socioeconomic growth. Benefiting from both the political (independence) and religious (post-Vatican II and ecumenical) fervors of the time, emerging African theologians and philosophers, like Vincent Mutilago (1924– ) and John S. Mbiti (1931– ), defended this view, arguing that the Christian Church had much to learn from the communalistic African cultures in its quest toward self-definition as a community or family of believers. More recently, African philosophers, especially Kwasi Wiredu and Kwame Gyekye, both of Ghanaian origin, have published works that crucially and compellingly place African communalism back at the center of a distinctly African point of view to philosophical visions.

The idea of human sociability is metaphysical, but it is founded on the observation of the biological human dependency of new members of the species on other and older members for their security, growth, and flourishing. The observation of this basic human condition leads to the idea that humans can attain the full development of the characteristics and properties that make them specifically human, or persons, only by depending on each. By education and imitation, humans learn from each other and acquire the capacity to competently function and behave as members of the species. Thus one is born biologically human but only socially does he or she become a person. It can be argued upon this view that although human nature is bestowed upon us by the biological constitution of the species, it is the communicative activity among us that sets in motion the development and flourishing of our cognitive and moral capacities. Thus our capacity to develop our basic human competencies is governed by our disposition to be sociable. It is in this sense that sociability becomes a metaphysical condition, because the distinguishing properties of the species depend on, and grow from, it.

While sociability is recognized in all cultures as a universal condition for the growth and flourishing of human capacities, some cultures go further by making such a condition the basis for advancing the belief that values that promote communal interests are superior to those that promote individual ones. Dominant ideas about individual selves, or persons, and about how they relate to others in society are the basis of vast differences in value systems of different societies and cultures as reflected in their respective sociopolitical and economic organizations, as well as in the principles upon which their moral systems and ethical theories are built. While cultural systems that give prominence to the rights and liberties of the

individual tend to define individuals in terms of their inherent personal attributes and capacities, those that put emphasis on the community tend to prefer relational models of personhood. In the latter, individuals are considered as links in genealogical chains within which they bear responsibility for the furtherance of their respective families and lineages. They are part of larger communal or social subjects that have rights just as individuals do. Cognitively and morally, individuals in relational models of society become part of the social quest toward ideal common goods such as truth and moral good. Because of this communalistic standpoint, one notices in these cultural systems or traditions a signification skepticism toward objectivist epistemological theories, as well as toward the idea, pivotal to the Kantian moral scheme in Western philosophy, of universal moral right that is knowable, directly and independently, by individual minds. By contrast, it is argued from the African communalistic view that epistemological truths and principles of moral right are ideals that we become aware of only in social contexts. Kwasi Wiredu, arguably the most senior and prominent African philosopher of the early twenty-first century, argues (1980, 1996) that epistemological truths are only opinions whereas the principles of moral right, while pursuing the golden rule, are arrived at by way of sympathetic impartiality. In other words, cognitive truths are neither part of the structural condition that makes experience possible nor are they the function of the mechanistic functioning of such structure. Truth is the idea, entailed in the nature of the assertions about our experience of the world, that it indeed be as we claim we perceive it. And it is hard, very hard, and perhaps impossible, for any one person to estimate such truth-value of their own assertions of their experiences without comparing them with those of other people, for every truth is always someone's truth. Truth, according to this view, is opinion. Similarly, as the estimation of the morally obligating nature of certain actions upon us, the idea of duty is not a structural property. Rather, it is a value that we know (become aware of) in social contexts as we attempt to harmonize our individual interests with the interests of others in society. Thus the communalistic view of morals provides the Kantian golden rule with a base, a social base. According to this view the construction of morals requires both the objective rationale and the subjective motivation.

African thought, whether traditional or more recent, does not view the idea of basic selfhood of all individuals as conflictual with what it upholds about community. In its constitution and realization, the self is enhanced and made possible by the communal condition of its flourishing, but it does not become inferior to the community by virtue of this dependency on it. Any view that sharply separates the two as mutually exclusive would be the result of the failure to see the pivotal mutual dependency between the two categories as logically, metaphysically, and practically related. Subjectivity is essentially intersubjective or relational, inasmuch as one can be empirically conscious of oneself only as one individual among many and must thus posit the freedoms and rights of self as commensurate with the freedoms and rights of others. Egoism and other principles of self-centeredness can thus develop only at the point where one loses sight of the superior common good that conditions and informs individual claims thereon, for common goods are, like human rights, those goods that are required equally by all as a means to leading life

worthy of human beings. For example, apart from abuses for which African leaders became notorious over the first four to five decades of Africa's independence from colonialism, traditional virtues are unequivocal on matters of human rights. Every person has a right to life irrespective of their age, gender, or their occupation in the community. Likewise, the traditional political and moral lores taught that every adult person has the right to those basic means, like land and their opinions, by which an adult is not completely one unless they can, respectively, fend for themselves and their dependents, as well as contribute to the growth of the community through the expression of their opinions. Because these rights are considered to be at the very foundation of what it means for everyone to be fully human, every individual has the right to demand these rights from their community as much as the latter has the duty to guarantee them for all its members. It will not escape the notice of many that this is one area in which African governments have made significant deference to traditional systems in matters of communal land use by limiting the jurisdiction of contemporary statutory law over some land tenure procedures. According to this view, the community protects the rights of the individual as much as the individual preserves the common good by respecting the rights of all other individuals with whom she shares basic equality in the eyes of the community.

African thought holds, therefore, that individual freedom must be externally limited if a community of free individuals with equal rights is to be possible, and demonstrates that a just political order is a demand of reason itself, since the principles of political and moral right are functions of generalizations made out of the practical experience of mutuality. The Ghanaian philosopher Kwame Gyekye uses Akan proverbs to illustrate the view that in African thought moral and political principles underscore the centrality of the idea of community while simultaneously upholding a relative status of individuality. According to him, "The view seems to represent a clear attempt to come to terms with the natural sociality as well as the individuality of the human person. It requires recognizing the claims of both communality and individuality and integrating individual desires and social ideals and demands" (1997, p. 41).

In their zeal to chart a sociopolitical path that was commensurate with their understanding of a full sense of post-colonial independence that included the recovery of cultural values deemed useful to the project, the first generation of African political leaders ideologized this communality into what they referred to as African socialism. It is significant to note that different brands of doctrinaire socialism were rife at the time African leaders were campaigning against colonial domination and therefore they may have been influenced in their choice of terminology (like the word *socialism*) to characterize this African virtue. However, the key texts in that generation of political thought, including the works of Léopold Sédar Senghor of Senegal and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, both now deceased but renowned political and ideological leaders in the continent in their times, seem to indicate that their reference was to the communalism that Gyekye describes. In *On African Socialism*, Senghor says of the centrality of African idea of community: "Negro-African society puts more stress on the group than on the individual, more on solidarity than on the

activity and needs of the individual, more on the communion of persons than on their autonomy. Ours is a community society” (pp. 93–94). For Senghor, this communalistic “attitude” is an axiomatic foundation that clearly distinguishes Negro-Africans in their moral and sociopolitical value-systems from such others, like the European systems, for which society is an “assembly of individuals.” Thus for Senghor, as for the Martinican poet and political leader Aimé Césaire (1913– ), with whom he jointly coined the term *negritude*, communalism was a major and distinctive characteristic of “being Negro-African.”

Like Senghor, Nyerere too believed that communalism was such a distinguishing mark of African cultures that it ought to be the guiding ideal of postcolonial politics. Nyerere gave it a new name, *Ujamaa*, a (Swahili) term recovered from the traditional social and moral systems to express the view that lasting good stems from recognition of the basic interdependency and ultimate unity of all human endeavors and goals. The distinguishing marks of *Ujamaa* were that it was communitarian rather than collective, democratic rather than totalitarian, homocentric rather than materialistic, and that it was founded on the primacy of law rather than on the dictatorship of class. In *Ujamaa: The Basis of African Socialism*, Nyerere says, “it is the attitude of mind, not the rigid adherence to a standard political pattern, which is needed to ensure that people care for each other’s welfare” (p. 1).

See also *Person, Idea of the; Personhood in African Thought; Society*.

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D. A. Masolo

**SOCIAL CAPITAL.** The term *social capital* first began to be defined in the 1970s and remained largely restricted to the academic world of the social sciences until the 1990s, when it suddenly emerged as a central element in public discussions and policy debates about the quality of civic culture in Western nations, especially the United States of America. At the same time it also gained a place of prominence in discussions of political and economic “development” in the non-Western world by international agencies such as the World Bank. Despite this rapid ascent—becoming a key analytical concept used by academics (primarily sociologists, political scientists, and economists, but also anthropologists and historians), government policy planners, and international officials in development agencies within less than a generation—a firm definition of the term has not yet emerged, which is not surprising given that what it seeks to describe is largely intangible, diffuse, and elusive. As a result there has been a proliferation of usages, which has weakened the conceptual cogency of the term.

Broadly defined, what most authors mean in the early twenty-first century, when they write of social capital are social networks of cooperation in which people invest and from which they may ultimately derive benefits. According to most contemporary theorists of the concept, the three most important diagnostic features of such networks are social interaction, civic trust, and normative behavior.

Social capital is a theoretical concept rather than a clearly tangible phenomenon. Interaction, trust, and norms are observable and even measurable phenomena, whereas social capital is not itself perceptible, and hence difficult to define. Nevertheless, the first references to the term (as opposed to a defined concept) of social capital were observational rather than theoretical.

Most studies trace the first use of the term to a 1916 academic study by Lyda Judson Hanifan, a school supervisor, on the deterioration of civic culture in rural West Virginia. The next and perhaps most influential use of the idea came with Jane Jacobs’s 1961 study of the decline of American cities, a study that was based on her close observations of the changing nature of urban communities in New York City. Both authors called attention to the features and benefits of close social communities, and hence the need to preserve them.

It was not until the 1970s that the idea began to attract theoretical attention in the academic world; elements of the theory of social capital predate these attempts at definition, having been traced back to the idea of, among others, Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832), James Mill (1773–1836), Alexis de Tocqueville (1805–1859), Karl Marx (1818–1883), Max Weber (1864–1920), Georg Simmel (1858–1918), John Dewey (1859–1952), and Emile Durkheim (1858–1917). It is widely accepted that the three most important proponents of the concept of social capital have been the French social theorist Pierre Bourdieu (1930–2002) and two American social scientists, the sociologist James Coleman and the political scientist David Putnam. Their definitions of the concept, which vary considerably, usefully summarize a range of analytical and definitional perspectives.



Bourdieu's conceptualization of social capital, which owed nothing to the work of Hanifan and Jacobs, came out of his understanding of the workings of cultural capital among the upper classes of French society. He was interested in elucidating disguised or invisible forms of capital that were deployed by elites to maintain social inequality. He saw the nonmaterial exchanges inherent in social relationships as producing resources that members of elites drew upon to maintain their positions within the existing social structure. This view of social capital was very hierarchical and exclusive in its conceptualization, whereas Coleman's understanding of social capital was egalitarian and benign. His interest in social capital came out of his research on the importance of family and community in educational results. He found that familial and community resources, which he defined as social capital, were sufficiently powerful to compensate for economic disadvantages. For Coleman, whose definition of social capital drew on the concept of human capital that had been current in economics for over two decades, not only individuals benefited from social capital, but also society as a whole.

The highly influential definition of the social capital put forward by Putnam in the 1990s originated in his examination of the differences in civic engagement in northern and southern Italy; he used the concept to explain the more successful integration of civil society and the state in the north, which he traced back to medieval guilds. He went on to apply the concept of social capital to his study of civic culture in the United States; in an article published in 1995, which anticipated and summarized the argument of his book *Bowling Alone*, he brought the concept of social capital into the world of political debate and the popular media, first in the United States and then internationally.

Putnam looked at social capital primarily in terms of its benefits to society rather than the individual. He argued that there was a direct correlation between the quality of civic culture and levels of poverty, violence, and democracy. The diagnosis became popular in no small part because it suggested noneconomic solutions to social problems: increase social capital and solve a range of social problems. However, there was at least one major flaw in such reasoning: Putnam had failed to consider the role of economics adequately in the deterioration of civic culture in the first instance. Furthermore, as critics of Putnam, such as Alejandro Portes, have noted, social capital can itself lead to social problems, whether in the form of organized crime associations, prostitution and gambling rings, or youth gangs. These negative forms of social capital are much different than newspaper readership, voluntary associations, and political trust, which were the positive forms Putnam examined.

Social capital has been appealing to both conservatives, who use it to argue for the devolution of former governmental responsibilities onto society, as well as to liberals, who see it as a means for the state to deal directly with the causes of social problems rather than merely their symptoms.

Despite the divergent ideological lessons drawn from it, there is wide agreement about the importance of the concept in both academic and public policy circles today. However,

there is no consensus on how to measure it. Unlike conventional forms of capital, social capital is primarily relational rather than material. Some economists have been skeptical about the cogency of the concept as well as about the ability of proponents of social capital to arrive at quantifiable measures. Measuring social capital has been a particularly important task because of the prominent role the concept has assumed in discourses concerning economic development in the non-Western world, where the emphasis is not on civic culture but directly on amelioration of economic and political conditions.

By bringing the social to the forefront of discussions of economic and political conditions, social capital has had an important impact on the thinking of institutions such as the World Bank about development in the non-Western world. But the application of the concept beyond the West has raised a series of important questions, the central one of which is its relationship between society and the state. Some forms of social capital have been seen as inimical to economic and political development; where states have collapsed or become oppressive and economies deteriorated, and where accordingly survival strategies have heightened the importance of social capital, the symptoms have been read as a cause of continuing economic and political failure. Many forms of social capital that appear to be negative in the context of the West, must be understood within the much different historical origins and more problematic dynamics of the relationship between state and society in many parts of the non-Western world.

Both within the West and for the non-Western world, the idea of social capital offers new ways of thinking about social problems. In particular, it offers the possibility of integrating our understandings of the social and economic; however, if not properly integrated there is a real danger of the latter merely colonizing the former, thereby reducing social interactions to sets of instrumental strategies and rational calculations. Simply because it is a relatively recent concept, it requires further elaboration and refinement, which it is already beginning to attract. Even more nuanced insights will result.

*See also Cultural Capital; Human Capital.*

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Sean Hawkins

**SOCIAL CONTRACT.** The "social contract" in the early twenty-first century is associated with the modern school of natural jurisprudence as crystallized in the seventeenth century (although earlier scholastics and humanists had also spoken of contracts, but differently, for example contracts between people and ruler rather than contracts that actually generate sovereignty). Yet there were preceding statements of central elements of social contract theory. The ancient Sophist Lycophrone is sometimes credited with originating the idea of the social contract, and there are echoes of it in the teachings of Protagoras (c. 490–c. 421 B.C.E.) as well. The Roman author Cicero (106–43 B.C.E.) stated in his widely read treatise on rhetoric, *De inventione*, that social, legal, and political associations were the result of a primeval agreement to live together on the part of human beings who were previously in a wild and asocial condition. Likewise, St. Augustine (354–430) insisted that any true republic required agreement on the part of its citizens about the object of their love.

### Modern Formulations

Modern theorists of the social contract school argued that political authority was artificial and conventional rather than divinely or naturally ordained. To sustain their argument, some—including Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679), John Locke (1632–1704), and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778)—appealed to a social contract as a way of explaining the rational basis for and limits on political authority. But for most of these thinkers, the social contract was not the deepest basis of their arguments, which depended rather on new views about natural rights, sociability, passion, and reason. It was David Hume (1711–1776) in his "Of the Original Contract" of 1748, who, although agreeing that political authority was artificial and

conventional, attacked the use of the "social contract" by Locke and his followers and so retrospectively turned this image into the badge of a tradition.

By contrasting the social contract unfavorably with his own view of a duty to obey government grounded in utility, Hume established the debate between the social contract and utilitarianism that continued to structure Anglophone philosophy into the twenty-first century. (John Rawls's *A Theory of Justice*, 1971, is widely credited with reviving contractarianism, though others contributed to this revival before and since.) But Hume's classic criticisms of the contract approach—Were any governments actually founded by contract? When and how could people consent to such a contract, especially one founded before they were born? Why should the duty to keep contracts or promises be more fundamental than the duty to obey political authority?—apply principally to its Lockean interpretation.

Locke, in his *Second Treatise of Government* of 1689 (the year it was published anonymously), interpreted the social contract to require actual consent, whether explicit or "tacit." Most critics concur that he was unable to show convincingly when or how such consent is given, though he did powerfully develop the claim that however given, consent to a government that proves grossly incompetent or malicious can be rescinded. At the opposite extreme, Rousseau, in *Du contrat social* (1762; *On the social contract*), accepted only assemblies actually giving consent to laws as indicative of authentic social contracts. Yet the most interesting treatments of the idea of the social contract are those that treat it as a device for testing the rationality of obedience to political authority. Here, the justificatory force rests on not on visible consent or contract but rather on the rationality (broadly conceived) that such a contract exhibits. In different ways, Hobbes and Rawls both take this approach, as will be discussed below.

### Political Authority versus Moral Principles

Hume's sometime-friend Rousseau can be seen as the initiator of a second fundamental question about the contract: that of its scope. Hobbes and Locke had both treated the contract in relation to the justification of political authority, although for Hobbes the contract also turned the precepts of a minimal morality (the "laws of nature") into binding civic law. Rousseau, however, saw the contract as creating simultaneously political legitimacy and genuine moral principles: in transforming asocial or antisocial "men" into civically minded "citizens," his social contract created justice and freedom along with the artifice of political authority. This role of the contract in constructing morality inspired Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), who, in addition to featuring the contract in his political theory, transformed its role in creating moral principles into his idea of the categorical imperative instructing every rational being to act only according to maxims that he or she could will to be a universal law.

Toward the end of the twentieth century, Rawls developed the role of the contract in justifying political authority, while its role in constructing and testing moral principles was developed primarily by David Gauthier, J. C. Harsanyi, and Thomas Scanlon. Scanlon extended a Rawlsian approach from

justice to morality, arguing that “contractualism” identifies principles that no one could reasonably reject. By contrast, Gauthier and Harsanyi both bridged the Humean distinction between contract and utility, using contractarian approaches to argue for utilitarian principles as simultaneously morally right and rational to pursue.

### Hobbes and Rawls

This entry returns to the rational-justification approach to the contract’s role. Sometimes this is called the “hypothetical” approach, as it is often framed in terms of a contract to which one could or would agree. But since the question then arises of how a hypothetical contract can be regarded as morally binding, one is forced back upon its rationality. Rationality, however, can be divided (using Rawls’s terms) into a narrow conception of rationality on the one hand, and “reasonableness” on the other. The narrow conception of rationality, which the term bears in the remainder of this entry, is identical with prudence: assessing the best way to pursue one’s own goals and interests. “Reasonableness,” by contrast, involves assessing the fairness of the conditions under which all can pursue their goals and interests.

Using this distinction, it can be said that Hobbes, in his *Leviathan* of 1651, uses the contract to argue that it is rational to act reasonably—that is, it is rational and prudent to obey an effective sovereign and so to act fairly towards all the others who are also obeying rather than to try to evade obedience for personal advantage. Rawls, in contrast, uses the contract to argue that one must first establish reasonable conditions for reflection on what is rational and only then decide what one can rationally pursue. For Rawls, obedience is justified because what is obeyed is just, whereas for Hobbes, what is obeyed is just because this is what it is most prudent to obey.

So for Rawls, what is reasonable both structures the contracting position and shapes the analysis of what would be chosen within it. The role of the contract is to model the reasonable constraints of publicity and reciprocity: any principles of justice chosen must be mutually acknowledged by citizens, even though in the “original position” all are ignorant of their actual identities and so would reason the same way. Rawls insists on this ignorance because, like Kant in his moral theory, he wants to exclude special pleading and unfair existing advantages from the contracting or “original” position. Whereas for Hobbes, people have the same overriding interest in preserving their lives and can be shown that in a “state of nature” without government they will best do so by acting reasonably, for Rawls people should recognize the fairness of starting with the reasonable prior to any particular rational interest they might have.

### Feminist Views

Some feminists have criticized the social contract approach as excessively individualistic, arguing that to treat contract as the fundamental moral and/or political relationship is to overlook the dependency on the care of others that characterizes infants, the elderly, the severely disabled, and everyone to the extent that they are vulnerable. Carole Pateman has noted the problematic relationship of women to contract in the seventeenth-century

heyday of natural jurisprudence, when married women could not own property or make contracts in English common law. But others have argued that the social contract approach can be turned to feminist ends. Susan Moller Okin argues that a consistent Rawlsian theory would include the family within the scope of the theory of justice, while Jean Hampton contends that contractarianism can be used to test and prevent the exploitation that may pervade intimate relationships between family and friends.

See also *Human Rights; Liberalism; Natural Law; Society; State of Nature.*

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Melissa Lane

**SOCIAL DARWINISM.** Social Darwinism arose in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. It was an intellectual movement associated with the theory of evolution in general but was principally derived from the works of Charles Darwin (1809–1882), especially his *Origin of Species* (1859).

Five major questions are raised by the extension of Darwin’s theories to the human sphere.

1. To what extent was Darwin’s theory simply a reflection of the thinking and prejudices of his day?
2. What does “struggle” actually entail? And what exactly are these “human capacities”?
3. What have been the continuing effects of this movement?
4. What are the differences between the natural and social sciences and how do these disciplines relate to each other?
5. How can Social Darwinism be developed?



**Darwinism: A Product of Society?**

Darwin argued that biological laws affect all living beings. Population growth takes place within limited resources. This leads to a struggle for survival, with particular physical and mental capacities conferring advantages to some individuals and not others. These traits are selected for, reproduced, and inherited, resulting in new species emerging and others being eliminated.

Darwinism and Social Darwinism need to be placed in context for two reasons. First, many of the ideas that are conventionally linked to Darwinism were well established before *The Origin of Species* (1859). Herbert Spencer (1820–1903) was the dominant British philosopher of the late nineteenth century, and he, more than Darwin, made evolution the dominant discourse of that era. Similarly, Jean Baptiste Lamarck (1744–1829), who explained variation and diversification of life as a product of acquired characteristics, was expounding his ideas in the early decades of the nineteenth century. His views greatly influenced Spencer, and they were developed by Darwin, especially in *The Descent of Man* (1871).

Second, Darwinism as a science was itself influenced by its social context, specifically by British industrial capitalism at the heart of a global empire. The struggle for survival in the context of limited resources, with some organisms or species surviving and others not, mirrored mid-nineteenth-century society back on to the nonhuman world.

However, the fact that Darwinism was a product of its era does not make it useless for understanding how species have evolved. This point was well made by Karl Marx in his correspondence with Friedrich Engels.

Meanwhile, influential propagators of Social Darwinism made highly controversial parallels between the species of the natural world and different groups of humans. Nonwhites, women, and the working class apparently did not have the requisite physical and mental capacities to thrive in the modern world.

**Human Nature and the Struggle for Survival**

There are three connected issues here. What is human nature? How fixed and transmissible is it? How does human nature relate to modern society?

Commentators imbue “human nature” with the qualities that best fit their philosophical and political predilections. Writing in the early twentieth century, for example, the anarchist Pyotr Kropotkin (1842–1921) argued that all species are collectively oriented. The struggle for existence is actually composed of individuals collaborating. Indeed, the rise of capitalism had wrecked this essential human nature, a circumstance to be reversed by an anarchist society. In contrast, Fabian socialists, such as Sidney Webb (1859–1947) and Beatrice Webb (1858–1943), argued that people can easily be individualistic and competitive. They therefore envisaged a form of social engineering that would override these propensities. Individual actions “must sooner or later be checked by the whole, lest the whole perish through the error of its member” (cited in Hawkins, p. 165). Meanwhile, William Sumner (1840–1910)

**MARX ON EVOLUTIONISM AS A SOCIAL CONSTRUCT**

In a letter to Friedrich Engels, Karl Marx argued that the theory outlined in *The Origin of Species* is a construction of human society used to understand nature. “It is remarkable how Darwin recognises in beasts and plants his English society with its ‘inventions’ and the Malthusian ‘struggle for existence’” (Dickens, 2000, p. 29). But Marx had a great deal of respect for Darwin. Despite using metaphor, Darwin’s theory referred to real, important processes. It needed incorporating into Marx and Engels’s understanding of human society. “Although developed in the crude English fashion, this is the book which, in the field of natural history, provides the basis for our views.”

and others in the United States celebrated possessive individualism, arguing that “the progress of civilisation . . . depends on the selection process; and that depends upon the workings of unrestricted competition” (quoted in Hofstadter, p. 57).

Social Darwinism has relied heavily on the idea of “traits” or “characteristics” that are seen as determining whether an organism, a “race,” or even a nation survives and satisfactorily breeds. This issue is especially important when considering eugenics, the deliberate selection of people with particular traits and their discouragement from breeding through forms of social control. Darwin’s own writings, especially *The Descent*, express anxiety about biological decline stemming “the weak members of civilised society” not only propagating their kind but, as a result of medical and charitable intervention, leading to “the degeneration of a domestic race” (Darwin, 1901, p. 206).

The issue was to arise forcibly with Darwin’s cousin Francis Galton (1822–1911) and his colleague Karl Pearson (1857–1936). In *Hereditary Genius*, Galton studied family trees over a period of two hundred years and argued that a disproportionately large number of distinguished jurists, politicians, military commanders, scientists, poets, painters, and musicians were blood relatives. He concluded that it would be “quite practical to produce a highly gifted race of men by judicious marriages during several consecutive generations” (quoted in Kevles, p. 4). His young colleague Pearson attempted to measure mental capacities and claimed on a statistical basis, one appealing to scientific method, that these capacities were indeed passed on between generations.

But the influential Herbert Spencer envisaged “human nature” as flexible and transformed over time. “Primitive man”



was immoral, irrational, mendacious, and aggressive. A number of groups (including children, women, inferior social ranks, and tribal cultures) remain arrested in a prehistoric state, although they could be civilized during their individual lives. Social evolution, Spencer argued, is generally progressive. It has consisted of a steady improvement of a primitive state of affairs. Individualism, morality, and voluntary association (qualities Spencer approved of) had developed in modern society, one in which people could start caring for one another.

The idea of inborn characteristics generating success has remained influential since the days of Galton and Pearson. It was made prominent in the late twentieth century with the suggestion by Richard Herrnstein and Charles Murray that success in modern society depends on people's inbuilt ability to handle information. In modern society the successful are those with advanced mental capacities. Meanwhile unsuccessful people with low intelligence are interbreeding to produce a rapidly increasing underclass. Society is again envisaged as "natural," class structure being a product of inborn characteristics. Robert Plomin and others supporting the work of Herrnstein and Murray are searching for a genetic basis to intelligence.

The issue of a fixed, heritable, possibly genetically based human nature remains highly controversial. In contrast, there is a rapidly growing literature showing that early parenting and schooling are especially important in determining both mental and physical "fitness" (Dickens, 2004). Perhaps the most important defining "trait" of human beings is their flexibility, their capacity to adapt to many different circumstances.

As regards the relationship between human nature and modern society, a recurrent theme was established by Graham Wallas (1858–1932), another Fabian socialist. Writing in 1908, he asked, "Why should we expect a social organisation to endure, which has been formed in a moment of time by human beings, whose bodies and minds are the result of age-long selection under far different conditions?" (quoted in Hawkins, p. 64). The implication is that human nature was established during the earliest years of human evolution but is inappropriate for, or even destructive to, modern society.

This is a position developed later by "evolutionary psychology." Again using the idea of a genetically based human nature, the suggestion is that humanity's principle predispositions were established while the species evolved on the savannah. The modern mind remains a "neural computer," one "driven by goal states that served biological fitness in ancestral environments, such as food, sex, safety, parenthood, friendship, status and knowledge" (Pinker, p. 524). Male philandering, female coyness, and even aesthetic predispositions were genetically embedded in humanity during that era. These theories are also proving highly controversial (Rose and Rose).

### **Social Darwinism, Eugenics, and the Modern Era**

Social Darwinism, and particularly its extension to eugenics, has had a continuing, often evil, impact on modern society. The Nazi Holocaust killed over 5 million Jews and sterilized at least 375,000 supposedly "inadequate" people. This was all

### **KARL PEARSON ON INHERITING OF MENTAL CAPACITIES**

"We inherit our parents' tempers, our parents' conscientiousness, shyness and ability, even as we inherit their stature, forearm and span" (quoted in Kevles, p. 32).

in the name of a "science" of eugenics, one deeming Jews and others to be biologically inferior to the Aryan race. These programs were the horrific climax to an extreme eugenic movement that swept through much of the Western world during the first third of the twentieth century.

While Jews were the targets of eugenics in Europe, black people were made victims of this movement in the United States. Intelligence quotient (or IQ) tests purported to show that they were inherently inferior, a conclusion that greatly hindered the extension of educational opportunities beyond the white population. And it has become clear that in Sweden, a society often held up as a model of social democracy, thousands of misfits, deviants, gypsies, and others were sterilized as late as the 1960s. This was an attempt to make a pure, socially responsible breed of human being. Eugenics still finds echoes in the early twenty-first century. Yet eugenics has no serious credibility as a science. Not only are there no proven connections between innate biological characteristics and human behavior, but there is no such thing as a pure race—"Jewish," "black," "white," or otherwise. Migration and intermarriage have meant that biological characteristics have become fully combined.

### **Problems of Direction, Progress, and Teleology**

Social Darwinism has often implied that evolution is developing in a linear and progressive way. Furthermore it may be fulfilling some long-term purpose. These themes have a long history. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831), writing in the early part of the nineteenth century, remains among the best-known advocates of the argument that history is marching toward a definite end, one in which human beings will finally recognize and fulfill themselves as human beings. A similar argument informed early evolutionary thought. In the mid-nineteenth century Robert Chambers (1802–1871) combined a notion of linearity and progress with one of teleology or underlying purpose. The fossil record shows, he argued, that invertebrates developed into fish, fish developed into reptiles, and the latter evolved into mammals. In due course the process culminated with "man." Furthermore these developments signify "progress," the transition from basic animals to humanity being seen as a generally beneficial development. Finally, Chambers argued that the advance toward humanity was the unfolding of a divine purpose. The law of progress was created by God.

Darwin resisted all three supposed tendencies. He saw evolution as open-ended and capable of diverging or branching

### DARWIN AND WALLACE ON GENDER DIFFERENCES

Darwin wrote that “the chief distinction in the intellectual powers of the two sexes is shown by man’s attaining to a higher eminence in whatever he takes up, than can women—whether requiring deep thought, reason, or imagination, merely the use of the senses of the hands” (quoted in Richards, p. 119). Alfred Wallace (1823–1913), the codiscoverer of the theory of evolution, argued that if women were freed from financial dependence on men, their mental potentials would soon become fully realized. They would be “regenerators of the entire race” (quoted in Stack, p. 29).

in any number of directions. How, or whether, a species survives depends on the environment it encounters. Darwin certainly denied that it was directed toward some predetermined, God-given, goal. On the other hand, his understanding of “progress” was also colored by the dominant views of his day. Witness his assertion that the European white race represented a major advance over other “races” or that men are more capable of rational thought than women. Men, he argued, had developed this capacity when they had to hunt and protect their families in the earliest stages of evolution.

T. H. Huxley (1825–1895), Darwin’s contemporary and great publicist, offered a related analysis. He argued that women’s capacities excluded their full involvement in science. Their levels of intelligence rendered them largely unable to handle abstract ideas. Here again a supposed “science” is used to legitimate power relations. Social relations are envisaged as a product of nature, and nature is immutable.

As regards humanity as a whole, Darwin proposed a progressive model of evolution that conferred superiority on humans while remaining consistent with his general theory. In *The Descent of Man* he argued that humanity had separated itself from apes as a wholly unique way of adapting to life in the ancestral forests. Early human beings had adopted an upright posture in this kind of environment. Unlike the apes, who needed their hands for locomotion, early humans’ hands were freed up to hunt and make tools. This freeing up, Darwin argued, led to the development of advanced human intelligence and dominion over nature.

Nevertheless, the views of writers such as Chambers rather than Darwin were those that prevailed in the making of Social Darwinism, the idea of an open-ended, undirected form of evolution finding little or no support. Similarly, the idea of

a linear progression toward some kind of ideal solution was especially influential in evolutionary anthropology.

Notions of “progress” and direction remain important in early-twenty-first-century social and political science, albeit in muted and perhaps less-teleological forms. There often remains, for example, an implicit suggestion that there is just one way in which societies can evolve. It is toward liberal democracy, with individual fulfillment being obtained via democracy and the market. Pursuing such an end remains, for some, a divinely inspired mission. Such arguments are controversial since they do not recognize that societies, their politics, and religions may also branch off in their own, perhaps unique directions.

### Evolution and Society: Ways Forward

Social Darwinism therefore has a distinctly checkered history. A “science” that concludes that nonwhites, working-class people, and women are biologically unable to succeed is nowadays likely to encounter ridicule and outright hostility. Sociobiology, the forerunner of evolutionary psychology, has run into similar controversy. It suggested that genes and the reproduction of genes into future generations is the primary mechanism informing the behavior of humans and other animals. Sexuality and gender inequalities are largely governed by genes, and there is little that can be done to change inherited nature (Wilson).

But there remains much potential value in alternative forms of Social Darwinism. One important contemporary application of evolutionary thought to human society is to use evolution primarily as a metaphor or analogy. Jürgen Habermas, for example, envisages society as similar to a natural organism, one with highly differentiated parts, one that is self-maintaining and capable of selecting alternative strategies. This has echoes in the analogies between society and nature made by, for example, Herbert Spencer. But Habermas uses the organic metaphor not as a means of developing laws supposedly applying to both humans and nonhumans. Rather, evolution and biology are being used as heuristic devices. They are deployed as a means of understanding how contemporary society develops and changes.

Evolutionary analogies are used in other fields. “Evolutionary economics,” for example, treats the competition of firms as analogous to the struggle for survival in the nonhuman world. And a popular understanding of technological change also uses evolutionary analogies, some technologies succeeding over others in a competitive process.

Analogies and metaphors of this kind are helpful in developing new insights. But they do not address the main difficulties of early Social Darwinism. Two central questions remain. In what sense is society “natural”? How are the insights of the social and natural sciences to be combined?

A useful first step in developing a modern “Social Darwinism” would be to recognize different levels of generality. Evolutionary processes and tendencies operate at a general level and over immense periods of time. Biological evolution has left human beings with developmental tendencies and needs stemming from their remarkably long periods of infancy. But precisely how these tendencies and needs are realized crucially depends on the contingent circumstances that they encounter.

Early parenting as well as experience at school and work deeply affect cognitive abilities and levels of health, and these are all highly variable over time and between different societies.

A rigorous dualism between “society” and “nature” was maintained by early Social Darwinism, women and nonwhites being allocated to the category of “nature,” for example, and European men being allocated to “culture.” This kind of dichotomy is full of dangerous implications but can be overcome if evolution and biology are envisaged as bequeathing potentials and tendencies that can be realized in different ways by the kinds of society encountered.

Social Darwinism attempted, often in crude, premature, and dangerous ways, to link insights from the social and natural sciences. But there remain exciting possibilities for developing new, more complex, nuanced, and transdisciplinary ways of linking the social and biological sciences. These are likely to throw important new light on the nature and well-being of humans as they interact with one another and their environment.

See also *Eugenics; Evolution*.

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Peter Dickens

**SOCIAL HISTORY, U.S.** The “new” social history that emerged in the United States in the 1960s and came to dominate the profession by the 1980s, conjoined two scholarly agendas. The first was a program for reshaping history along the lines of the behavioral sciences—in particular economics, political science, and sociology—and employing quantitative methods and models in historical research. The second was the project of rewriting history from the “bottom up,” and providing a “usable past” for contemporary movements for social change. Although the advocates of social history might differ in their methodological or ideological commitments, they agreed on the need to displace “traditional” narratives of the American past—ones that privileged high politics, diplomacy, or intellectual life—and to replace them with “new” histories that emphasized social and economic processes and phenomena. Their efforts prompted extensive discussions about the means and ends of historical analysis, and produced a major reorientation within the profession.

Among the earliest, and most forceful, proponents of social science history were Lee Benson and Robert Fogel. Benson, and other practitioners of the “new” political history, urged historians to develop systematic methods and generate quantifiable data with which to verify hypotheses. In *The Concept of Jacksonian Democracy: New York as a Test Case* (1961), Benson used electoral returns and census data to suggest that ethnic and religious factors, rather than social class, best accounted for party affiliation and voting behavior. Fogel and his fellow “diometricians” developed a “new” economic history that adopted complex mathematical models and counterfactual questions from economics, and applied them in statistical analyses of serial data. In *Time on the Cross: The Economics of Negro Slavery* (1974), Fogel and Stanley Engerman drew upon a wide variety of sources in order to demonstrate that slavery was a profitable and efficient system of labor, and that in terms of material conditions, the lives of slaves could be compared to those of wage workers. The interdisciplinary interests and the collaborative activities of the new historians led to the establishment of such institutions as the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (1962), which served as an archive for machine-readable data and as a center for training in quantitative methods; the publication of such periodicals as *Historical Methods Newsletter* (1967), the *Journal of Social History* (1967), and the *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* (1970); and the organization of the Social Science History Association (1974).

For other scholars, the turn to quantitative methods was more a matter of pragmatic choice than professional manifesto. Stephan Thernstrom, in *Poverty and Progress: Social Mobility in a Nineteenth Century City* (1964), sampled city directories, and censuses in order to determine rates of occupational mobility in Newburyport, Massachusetts. Social mobility, he discovered, was a far less common phenomenon than was assumed by scholars or celebrated in popular culture. *Poverty and Progress* came to serve as a model for a number of social mobility studies, and as one of the key texts in the development of a “new” urban history. Thernstrom’s creative use of sources, in particular manuscript census returns, also generated significant interest among historians who wished to



examine the lives of a great majority of Americans, those whose experiences were missing from the pages of histories focusing on elites. Recovering the histories of workers, women, immigrants, and minorities—"anonymous Americans" as Tamara Hareven (1937–2002) characterized them—became a central concern for social historians. So, too, did the need to connect these histories to such contemporary issues as civil rights and feminism. To many aligned with the New Left, writing social history was both a professional and a political activity.

Both the historiographical critiques and the methodological prescriptions of the new social historians became matters of controversy. Scholars interested in such areas as foreign relations, finance, and the presidency rejected characterizations of their work as "top down" or "great man" history. Historians whose works were dismissed as being "impressionistic" rather than "rigorous" replied that not every past event or piece of evidence was suitable for quantification. Whether to count or not should be a matter of choice, not creed. The most extensive, and rancorous, exchanges over the implications of quantitative history came in the wake of the publication of *Time on the Cross*. In such works as Herbert Gutman's *Slavery and the Numbers Game* (1975), critics of Fogel and Engerman pointed to problems in their statistical analyses and the scope of their data sets. They raised moral objections as well. Should the suffering of slaves be reduced to a series of indices and equations? Could the complex system of chattel slavery be adequately represented with the tools of cliometrics?

Among those who identified themselves as social historians, there were also differences in approaches to materials and methods. While social science historians preferred to make their claims on the basis of "objective" sources—city directories, wills, estate inventories—historians of the marginalized and of social movements also continued to rely on "subjective" sources—letters, diaries, and newspapers—for evidence of consciousness or culture. Sean Wilentz and other "new" labor historians questioned the suitability of concepts imported from liberal social theory, such as modernization and social mobility, and the utility of elaborate statistical modeling. They preferred instead the style of social history done by such British Marxists as E. P. Thompson (1924–1993) and Eric Hobsbawm (1917–). In *Chants Democratic: New York City and the Rise of the American Working Class, 1788–1850* (1984), Wilentz examined the interaction of socio-economic transformation and political mobilization, in particular in the era of Andrew Jackson. Where Lee Benson had found cross-class alliances along "ethno-cultural" lines, however, Wilentz discovered class conflict and the development of an oppositional working class culture. Though not all social historians were Marxists, the revival of interest in modes of Marxist analysis, and the return of interpretations, which emphasized conflict instead of consensus, were among the most important changes that were wrought in the profession.

By the mid-1980s, much of what the first behavioralists and "bottom up" historians had envisioned was being realized. Major periods and problems in American history had been

reinterpreted and revised along social history's lines. New fields of study, such as women's history, had been opened up; and others, such as urban and labor history, had been renewed. A once-dominant political and diplomatic grand narrative of national development was being replaced by one that concentrated on questions of race, class, and gender, and that stressed conflict as the engine of social change. Scholars who wrote about members of the elite assumed defensive positions; prominent intellectual historians called for a new social history of ideas.

Yet a number of social historians, including Lee Benson, expressed doubts about the enterprise. The serious critiques of positivism gaining currency among social scientists could be directed toward social history as well. So, too, could questions about agency, and postmodern rejections of the possibility of objectivity. More than a few social historians turned away from the assumptions of behavioral economists and sociologists, and toward an engagement with methods of cultural anthropologists and literary critics. In these moves from statistics to symbols, and from verification to interpretation, the "new" social history began to give way to a "new" cultural history. Quantitative social science history did not disappear, however, and remains important in such areas as demographic history; yet when compared to cultural history, it is no longer as influential a force. To the extent that the new cultural historians employ American history in terms of oppression, resistance, and emancipation, they are carrying on the mission, if not always using the methods, of history "from the bottom up."

See also *Cultural History*.

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**SOCIALISM.** The difficulty of defining socialism is apparent to anyone who attempts to study this protean doctrine, not least because what socialism is or is not is usually a matter of contentious debate. However, there is a general consensus that the various schools of socialism share some common features that can be summarized as follows. Socialism is above all concerned with the relationship between the individual, state, and society. For the socialist, the individual is never alone and thus must always define himself or herself in relation to others. Socialists believe that a well-ordered society cannot exist without a state apparatus, not least because the state is seen as the most effective vehicle for coordinating and administering to the needs of all.

Socialists' views on human nature distinguish them from their principal political rivals, the liberals and conservatives. While the latter two groups tend to hold that all humans are inherently self-interested and materialistic, socialists contend that these traits are products of social conditioning under capitalism. On this view, individuals act selfishly and competitively, not because it is in their nature to do so, but rather because they are encouraged and rewarded for such behavior. Socialists hold that the values and beliefs promoted in a socialist society would enhance our capacity for acting cooperatively and collectively in pursuit of mutually reinforcing material and spiritual goals.

Because they see material circumstances as being key to the well-being of individuals, socialists stress the importance of the economic system that operates in every society. It was their observations of the deleterious effects of industrial capitalism that caused socialist reformers to call for the development of new economic structures based on a completely different set of moral principles. The question of how the transition from capitalism to socialism would occur has been answered in different ways by different socialist theorists. Robert Owen (1771–1858), Charles Fourier (1772–1837), and other early socialist thinkers saw the need to reform rather than destroy capitalism, while followers of Karl Marx (1818–1883) and Friedrich Engels (1820–1895) insisted that capitalism had to be completely overturned in order for society to advance to a state of socialism. Contemporary socialists do not envisage the transition from capitalism to socialism as a sharp break, but as a process of economic reforms that takes into account the role of market forces.

So far as is known the terms *socialist* and *socialism* first appeared in print in Italian in 1803, but in a sense were entirely unconnected with any of their later meanings. No trace of the word *socialist* appears again until 1827, when it was used in the Owenite *Co-operative Magazine* to designate the followers of Robert Owen's cooperative doctrines. Across the English Channel, *socialisme* was adopted by the Saint-Simonians—followers of the French philosopher and social scientist Claude-Henri de Rouvroy (1760–1825), comte de Saint-Simon—during the 1830s to describe their theory, and thereafter it was increasingly used to refer to those groups aiming at some kind of new social order resting on an economic and social conception of human rights.

In these senses, socialism was used to distinguish the attitudes of those who laid stress on the social elements in human

relations from those who emphasized the claims of the individual. In fact, to be a socialist was to be someone who promoted a social system in direct opposition to the highly individualistic order being advocated by the proponents of *laissez faire* economics.

### **Industrial Revolution and the Rise of Socialism**

As a political ideology, socialism arose largely in response to the economic and social consequences of the Industrial Revolution. There is an abundance of literature that attests to the dramatic way in which the industrialization of Europe affected the daily lives of individuals, particularly the working classes. The reformist trend in British politics during the 1830s brought some of these harsh realities to the public's attention. In 1832, for example, a parliamentary investigation into the conditions in the textile factories—later known as the Sadler Committee's Report—revealed the appalling toll on human life that had resulted from unregulated industrial growth. And, even if we discount certain embellishments or exaggerations, these accounts of the general working conditions in the factories were nonetheless all too illustrative of a social climate in which practices of the most callous inhumanity were accepted as a natural order of events and, most important, were at first not thought to be the general public's concern.

It deserves mention here that, in addition to the horrors wrought by an unregulated factory system, workers were also subjected to the changes brought on by the machine age. The introduction of new technologies in the workplace invariably meant the displacement of laborers. No less important was the fact that many of the changes wrought by rapid technological advances and the consequent restructuring of the workplace (e.g., the factory system) had an alienating effect on the worker. To the minds of some, however, these evils of industrialization were not inevitable outcomes. Such was the case with the so-called Utopian socialists who emerged in England and on the Continent around this time.

### **Utopian Socialists: Owen, Saint-Simon, Fourier**

In the beginning there were basically three groups of socialists, although there were lesser groups representing broadly similar tendencies. The three principal groups were the Fourierists and Saint-Simonians in France and the Owenites in Great Britain. There were obvious similarities between them: (1) they regarded the social question as by far the most important of all; (2) insisted that it was the duty of all good men to promote the general happiness and welfare of everyone in society; (3) regarded this task as incompatible with the continuance of a social order that was maintained strictly on the basis of a competitive struggle between individuals for the means of living; and (4) were deeply distrustful of politics and politicians, believing that the future control of social affairs ought to lie not with parliaments or ministers or kings and queens but with the "producers." They held that, if the economic and social aspects of men's lives could be properly ordered, the traditional forms of government and political organization based on conflict and competitiveness would soon be superseded by a new world order of international peace and collaboration.

On the other hand, there were wide diversities separating these three groups. The Fourierists and Owenites were community-makers. They set out to establish a network of experimental communities based on their ideas that would become the foundation stones of a new social order. The Saint-Simonians differed from these two groups in that they were strong believers in the virtues of large-scale organizations and scientific planning. Their principal aim was to transform nations into great productive corporations dominated by a sort of “technocracy” composed of scientists and technicians. Unlike the Fourierists and Owenites, who eschewed political activity, the Saint-Simonians were not opposed to using the existing political channels as a means to bring about the transformations they were advocating.

Thus, at this juncture in its historical development, socialism meant collective regulation of the affairs of people on a cooperative basis, with the happiness and welfare of all as the ultimate goal, and with the main emphasis not on “politics” per se but on the production and distribution of wealth. Enemies of individualism, the socialists sought to strengthen the socializing influences that brought people together in a harmonious whole. They therefore emphasized education as an instrument for conditioning patterns of behavior, social attitudes, and beliefs.

It deserves mention that in this description of socialism nothing is said about the proletariat or the class struggle between it and the capitalist class. This is because the members of the aforementioned socialist schools did not think in these terms. They did not see capitalists and workers as rival classes, nor did they believe that a revolutionary struggle between the proletariat and bourgeoisie was necessary to put their social plans into effect.

### “Scientific Socialism”

In following the historical analysis of socialism offered by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, the modern socialist movement dates from the publication of their *Communist Manifesto* in 1848. The term *communism*, which came into common usage in this same period, was often used in connection with the idea of socialism, though the former tended to have a more militant connotation. This is most likely why it was used by the Communist League, the group that commissioned Marx and Engels to write the *Communist Manifesto*. As Engels later explained, the word *communism* carried with it the idea of common ownership, and, above all, it helped to distinguish the ideas of Marx and Engels from those of the so-called utopian socialists in that it lent itself better to association with the idea of the class struggle and with the materialistic conception of history.

The publication of the *Communist Manifesto* coincided with the revolutionary tide that swept through Europe between 1848 and 1849. Marx and Engels were still correcting the proofs of their soon-to-be famous pamphlet when the first barricades of 1848 were being erected in Paris. But while it is true that the *Manifesto* was published during a period of political tumult, it did not have a profound impact on the revolutionaries of the period. Nevertheless, it was an important document in the

history of socialism, above all because it presented in outline form the theoretical basis for modern socialism.

Perhaps the boldest and most probing argument advanced by Marx and Engels was their critique of present and past societies. According to this, society’s political and cultural arrangements (superstructure) are shaped primarily by the forces of material production (base). When the productive modes and relations have developed as far as they can within the existing framework of political and economic structures of society, then the conditions arise for a thoroughgoing social revolution, a process that inevitably brings about a transmutation of these older forms into more progressive ones. In this way, societies are able to advance progressively from more primitive states (e.g., feudalism) to more sophisticated ones (e.g., capitalism).

In their discussion of the relationship between state and class, Marx and Engels identify further dimensions of their “stages” view of history that were to become cornerstones of “scientific” socialism. According to them, the state is essentially a class-based institution, expressing the will and exclusive interests of the dominant political and economic groups in society. The state and its apparatuses are thus seen as essential features of the superstructure that overlays the economic base (which itself corresponds to the stage reached in the development of the powers of production). Under capitalism, the authors go on to say, the bourgeoisie seek both to expand their base—which is too narrow to accommodate the wealth created by them—and to overcome the economic crises caused by the development of productive forces beyond the point compatible with capitalism. By so doing, they begin to dig their own graves, for the scramble for new markets inevitably creates new problems that cannot possibly be resolved within the framework of the one created by the bourgeoisie. At this point, the *Manifesto* explains that it is the ongoing and ceaseless dialectical struggle between the dominant and dominated classes that provides the impetus for breaking down the barriers for further social and economic development. With the advent of revolution, the control of the state and its forms passes into the hands of the new dominant class (the working classes), thus paving the way for the development of new forces of production.

Another distinguishing aspect of the doctrine outlined in the *Manifesto* has to do with the special historical mission that Marx and Engels assigns to the proletariat. Unlike previous insurgent classes, which developed their importance and strength within the preceding social order, Marx and Engels contend that the laboring class under capitalism is driven to revolt through its own increasing misery. Once they have wrested political power from the middle classes, the authors believe that the proletariat will be able to establish their own hegemony (construed more concretely in later writings as a dictatorship). Over time, during which the material conditions are created for the construction of socialism, their class rule would give way to a classless and stateless society, communism.

As regards the relationship between communists and the working classes, Marx and Engels assert that communists were the most advanced and politically resolute segment of the proletariat in every nation, not least because they had the

advantage of seeing more clearly than others the direction in which society is moving. As revolutionaries, their role was to assist the exploited workers in three ways: (1) to raise their class consciousness so that they can realize their role in history; (2) to overthrow the bourgeoisie; and (3) to establish working-class control of the state and its ruling apparatuses (i.e., a dictatorship).

Having said all of this it is important to keep in mind that the *Manifesto* cannot be regarded as a full exposition of Marxist doctrine. And while Marx sketches out many of the basic tenets of his communist viewpoint, at this point in his career he had not worked out his complete system of thought, which was carefully developed over many years, culminating with the publication of his magnum opus, *Das Kapital*, in 1867. Nonetheless, it is significant to note that both Marx and Engels continued to endorse the views of the *Manifesto* even after most of them were rendered irrelevant by the course of events. The continuing relevance of this important document, then, had less to do with its predictive powers than with its potency as a clarion call for revolution. The *Manifesto* is full of memorable and moving phrases such as, “Workers of the World unite. You have nothing to lose but your Chains.” The teleological understanding of history presented in the *Manifesto* was also compelling to successive generations of socialists. In their “scientific” critique of the bourgeois society with which they were acquainted, Marx and Engels managed to invest history with both a dramatic purpose and a desirable destination. History was, according to them, moving toward a higher goal that could only be obtained through class struggle and social revolution. It was thus the moral message embedded in their theory of historical materialism that made the *Communist Manifesto* a landmark publication in the history of modern socialism.

### Socialism during its “Mature” Phase

The genesis and development of socialism paralleled the rise of liberalism in Europe. Over the course of the nineteenth century, liberalism had become the predominant ideology in Great Britain and on the Continent. However, from 1889 on, socialism increasingly challenged liberalism’s supremacy in the political arena. In Europe generally there were various schools of socialist thought that came to maturity during the second half of the nineteenth century: reformist socialism, Marxism, anarchism, and syndicalism. Of these currents, Marxism tended to be the dominant socialist theory, partly because of its conceptual cogency and partly because it was embraced by the most powerful and influential social democratic parties affiliated with the Second (Socialist) International, (1889–1914), a confederation of socialist parties and labor organizations that was created in order to continue the work of the First International Workingmen’s Association.

Why did socialism become so important at this time? One of the contributing factors was the growing influence of positivism on the general outlook of European thinkers. Following in the tradition of the French Enlightenment, intellectuals like Auguste Comte (1798–1857) and Herbert Spencer (1820–1903) promoted the idea that an understanding of both the natural and social worlds could be achieved through scientific

knowledge. It was this belief that inspired socialists like Saint-Simon and Marx to develop political cosmologies that they thought could be grounded on a sound empirical basis. Marx in particular asserted in the *Communist Manifesto* and other major writings that his brand of socialism was distinguished from all others by its “scientific” approach to the study of economics and society. This is not to say that Marxists were the only socialists who were convinced of the scientific validity of their theories. Anarchist social views, particularly those espoused by the Russian revolutionary Pyotr Kropotkin (1842–1921), also owed a great deal to the positivist tradition. And, finally, the evolutionary brand of socialism known as Fabianism that developed in Great Britain at the end of the nineteenth century was shaped by the positivist beliefs of its leading theorists.

A general shift in the attitude toward the role of the state in society also contributed to the growth of socialism. The failure of laissez-faire political and economic policies, which had been long favored by liberal governments as a way to respond effectively to the problems created by the periodic crises of capitalism, the second wave of industrialization, and the emergence of a mass society caused many to see the state in a more favorable light. For example, the unexpected and occasionally jolting economic fluctuations of the 1870s and 1880s not only drove a wedge between the workers and their liberal middle-class representatives, but also alarmed industrialists and other members of the economic elite. As a result, an increasing number of all these groups started turning to the government for protection. The growing popularity of imperialism in the closing decades of the century also made the average person less opposed to the growing powers of the state.

Among the many other factors that favored the rise of socialism at this time, the most notable can be summarized as follows. (1) The increase in the number of workers in the industrializing nations was one important factor. The concentration of industries during the so-called second industrial revolution that occurred during the last two decades of the nineteenth century brought together workers in unprecedented numbers. Rapid industrialization also accelerated the tendency of the general population to move from the countryside into urban centers. Cities proved to be favorable environments for socialist organizations—which demanded a fairly sophisticated social/cultural infrastructure in order to thrive. (2) The rise of literacy also redounded to the benefit of the socialists: as more and more workers learned to read they were able to imbibe socialist ideas in the form of pamphlets, books, and the press. (3) The “democratization” of the ballot box also helped the socialists in that the extension of the franchise brought more workers into the political arena thus making it possible to get socialist deputies elected to parliament. All of these factors created the basis for a “proletarian” mentality or consciousness. By the late 1880s workers were joining clubs and trade unions, electing their own representatives, and subscribing to their own publications. And though this is not to say that all workers were necessarily socialist, it did mean that the principal vehicles for propagating and sustaining socialism were now anchored in the framework of modern industrial society.



### The Spread of Marxism during 1880s

Of all the varieties of socialism that existed during this period, Marxism proved to be the most popular doctrine among working-class parties that began to emerge in the 1870s in France, Germany, Belgium, and elsewhere where there was a large industrial proletariat. In countries where industrialization had yet to be firmly established, Marxism was a minority tendency. This was particularly evident in Spain, where anarchism was a major force among both the industrial workers and the peasantry. Anarchism also attracted a sizeable following among peasants and workers in Italy, though it never achieved the mass following it did in Spain. In Russia, Marxism became important only after the turn of the century and even then it did not represent the largest segment of the socialist movement as a whole.

Beginning in the 1880s a special effort was made by Friedrich Engels to popularize Marx's theories, particularly among the growing reading public of workers. As far as Marx's general theories were concerned, this was no easy task, for, apart from intellectuals, few people could easily grasp the meanings of his probing analysis of capitalist development. In order to make such views more accessible, Engels set himself the task of defending Marxian theories against Marx's would-be critics. In *Anti-Dühring* and several of his better known works, Engels attempted to expand upon the views of his lifelong collaborator by stressing that Marxism was not just a revolutionary theory but a scientific worldview that lay bare the complexities of society. By arguing in this way, Engels hoped not only to discredit rival views of socialism but also to demonstrate the continuing relevance of Marx's theories. From a doctrinal point of view, Engels's most enduring legacy to socialism, however, was his materialist conception of history. More so than Marx, Engels saw the march of socialism as an inexorable historical process that could be predicted with almost mathematical certainty by correctly reading the "objective laws" that governed the evolution of both the natural world and society. He therefore suggested a view of socialist development that linked it to a general process of change that could be measured and read by means of empirical investigations.

The certitude of the causal explanatory model sketched out in Engels' writings on historical materialism appealed especially to the generation of socialists who came of age during the closing years of the nineteenth century, a period when positivism was at its height. Karl Kautsky (1854–1938), Eduard Bernstein (1850–1932), Georgy Plekhanov (1857–1918), and V. I. Lenin (1870–1924) were all indebted to Engels's elaboration of Marxist doctrine. No less a testament to Engels's impact on the future development of socialism is the fact that his materialist conception of history became an article of faith in all the regimes that declared themselves to be Marxist in the twentieth century.

### The Anarchist Alternative

The anarchists represented one of the strongest non-Marxian currents in the socialist movement and it was their ongoing rivalry with the Marxists that kept alive the doctrinal debates and organizational divisions that characterized both the First (1864–1876) and Second Internationals (1889–1914).

Anarchism was never a homogenous ideological movement. At one time or another in the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries anarchists who belonged to the international socialist movement identified themselves as mutualists, collectivists, communists, and syndicalists. Yet, despite their theoretical differences, anarchists of all schools were united in their opposition to Marxism. Above all this was because of their diametrically opposed views of the role of the state. For the Marxists, the state was a necessary vehicle for governing society until full communism had been achieved. Once this stage of history had been reached, the state would, in the words of Engels, cease to be a useful instrument of rule and simply wither away. The anarchists completely rejected the notion that the state could serve any positive function. In sharp contrast to the Marxists, they believed that the working classes would overturn capitalism, not by wresting political power from the middle-classes, but by concentrating their energies in developing and organizing their own social institutions and by engaging continuously in an economic struggle against their oppressors.

Anarchists also opposed Marxism on the grounds that its communist principles were incompatible with the kind of libertarian society they envisaged. The Russian anarchist Mikhail Bakunin (1814–1876) famously declared that he detested communism because, "it is the negation of liberty." He further accused Marx of promoting an authoritarian form of communism that "concentrates and absorbs all the powers of society into the state."

Since the anarchists abstained from politics and thus rejected the ballot box as a means of advancing the workers' cause, they were forced to adopt a revolutionary strategy that also placed them at odds with Marxists and reformist socialists. For this reason there are two main features of the movement that need to be mentioned: direct action tactics and violence. The former included such things as sabotage, strikes, and public demonstrations—May Day celebrations, for example. The anarchists' reliance on a tactic known as "propaganda by the deed" gave rise to the stock image of them—popularized by writers and social scientists like Joseph Conrad (1857–1924), Henry James (1843–1916), and Cesare Lombroso (1835–1909)—as social deviants who were bent on destroying the foundations of civilization. This overblown stereotype was reinforced by several widely publicized anarchist outrages that punctuated the last years of the nineteenth century. Apart from launching small-scale attacks against symbols of class, state, and religious rule, anarchists were responsible for the political assassinations of several heads of state. Within a span of only six years, the presidents of France (1894) and the United States (1901), the empress of Austria (1898), the prime minister of Spain (1897), and the king of Italy (1900) were murdered by anarchists. The stigma that all anarchists were now saddled with obscured the fact that these were isolated acts committed by only a handful of individuals. Most rank-and-file anarchists were strongly opposed to terrorism, and most saw education and trade unions as the main vehicles for conducting their revolutionary activity.

At the turn of the century anarchism, which had nearly died out in most areas of Europe, was revitalized by the



development of yet another brand of socialism known as revolutionary syndicalism. When Arturo Labriola (1873–1959), Émile Pouget (1860–1931), José Prat (d. 1932), and other libertarian thinkers began to marry the new doctrine (which emphasized trade unionism and direct action tactics like the general strike) to old anarchist beliefs the result was anarchosyndicalism, a movement that was particularly important in France, Spain, and Italy. In fact, it was the introduction of syndicalism that brought about the phenomenal growth of anarchism in Spain. Over the course of the next two decades, anarchosyndicalism became a mass movement, with its membership peaking at over 1.5 million members during the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939).

### Marxism Challenged

The anarchists were not the only ones to challenge the view that socialism was synonymous with Marxism. Toward the end of the nineteenth century there emerged several strands of “new” socialist thinking that developed outside the Marxist tradition. The most important of these was the brand of socialism known as Fabianism, which became an important movement in Great Britain after 1889. Originally comprised almost exclusively of upper-middle class intellectuals—notably, George Bernard Shaw (1856–1950), Annie Besant (1847–1933), and Beatrice Webb (1858–1943), and Sidney Webb (1859–1947)—the Fabian Society advocated a nonrevolutionary form of socialism that was shaped more by the ideas of Herbert Spencer (1820–1903), Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832), James Mill (1773–1836), and John Stuart Mill (1806–1873) than it was by those inspired by Karl Marx. Unlike the Marxists, who saw historical progress in terms of class conflict, the Fabians conceived of society as an organism that evolved gradually over time. Socialism was, in their eyes, a natural outcome of social development, but one that needed to be guided by enlightened thinkers like themselves. Drawing upon their faith in positivist principles, the Fabians were convinced that a “scientific” approach to the study of social phenomena would produce an effective strategy for constructing incrementally a socialist society. By insisting that socialism could be achieved in a peaceful way, the Fabians set themselves against the Marxian parties of the Second International who conceptualized social change in terms of a dialectical struggle.

### Revisionist Controversy on the Continent

The greatest challenge to Marxism at this time, however, came not from without but from within the Marxian current of socialism. Beginning in the late 1890s a diverse group of so-called revisionist thinkers increasingly questioned the validity of a number of fundamental Marxist tenets. They particularly objected to how rigidly Marx’s doctrine was being interpreted by his epigones in the Second International. The foremost theoretical spokesman of the revisionist movement was Eduard Bernstein. Bernstein was a German social democrat whose views on socialism had been influenced by his extended sojourns in Switzerland and particularly in England, where he became familiar with the views of the early Fabian Society. While his own theory of socialism differed from theirs, Bernstein nevertheless shared many of the Fabian beliefs, including the notion that socialism could be achieved by

nonrevolutionary means. In a series of articles that first appeared in *Die Neue Zeit* between 1896 and 1899 and later published in the book *Evolutionary Socialism* (1899), Bernstein laid the foundation for a revisionist challenge to Marxist ideas that had long been regarded as sacrosanct. Above all, Bernstein’s writings were meant as a corrective to some of Marx’s fundamental economic suppositions—his theory of surplus value, for example—as well as to some of his a priori claims, such as his prophecy that, by virtue of its inherent contradictions, the cataclysmic end of capitalism was inevitable. From his own observations of general economic and political conditions at this time, for example, Bernstein concluded that class tensions were easing rather than intensifying. Instead of becoming increasingly poorer, Bernstein asserted that available statistical measures indicated that workers were generally enjoying higher living standards. By further arguing that the state should be used as a vehicle for abolishing all class privileges and promoting democratic rights, not just for workers, but for all groups in society, Bernstein also ran afoul of his colleagues in the Marxist-dominated sections of the German Social Democratic Party (known by the German acronym SPD) who maintained that the working classes alone should benefit from the advent of socialism.

Bernstein’s intellectual assault on the reigning orthodoxy of Marxist thinking set in motion a series of debates and discussions within the Second International that did not die down until the onset of the World War I (1914–1918). Leading the opposition to Bernstein’s revisionism were Karl Kautsky, the foremost interpreter of the writings of Marx and Engels at this time, and Georgy Plekhanov, the principal architect of the Russian Social Democratic movement. Both attempted to defend what they regarded as the core principles of Marxism by contending that Bernstein had failed to grasp Marx’s basic notions about the relationship between economics and politics and that the antirevolutionary policies implied by his revisionism rendered socialism completely unnecessary. In the former case, for example, Kautsky explained that socialism would come about, not as a result of the increasing pauperization of the working classes, but as a result of sharpening class divisions, which were inevitable and therefore unavoidable features of historical development.

In reaffirming their faith in the immutable principles of Marxism, Kautsky and other antirevisionists hoped that they could prevent socialism from deviating from its revolutionary path. Yet despite their commitment to this understanding of socialism, the fact is that the majority of groups affiliated with the Second International at this time were already pursuing reformist policies. In France, Spain, Italy, and even in Germany the social democratic parties preferred the ballot box to confrontational tactics as a means of advancing their cause. In most instances this entailed working in cooperation with rather than against the middle-class parties that dominated political activity in the various Western European countries where socialism had an important following. Thus, Jules Guesde (1845–1922), the leading figure in the Marxist branch of the French socialist movement, was so committed to the idea of achieving socialism through peaceful means that he advocated parliamentary collaborationism. Another key French socialist

in pre-World War I period, Jean Léon Jaurès (1859–1914), was equally convinced that theoretical concerns should be subordinated to the tactical needs of the movement. He therefore thought it possible to retain his commitment to revolutionary Marxism while at the same time promoting a democratic path to socialism.

There were other socialist thinkers around this time who did not necessarily draw reformist conclusions from their critique of Marxism. Georges Sorel (1847–1922) was a French socialist who had come to Marxism late in life. Within a few years of his conversion, however, Sorel was ready to reject the scientific pretensions of Marxist doctrine as well as the reformist policies of the French socialist movement in order to embrace a form of revolutionary syndicalism. In his most famous work, *Reflections on Violence* (1906–1908; English trans., 1912), Sorel set forth a philosophy of syndicalism that stressed the importance of violence (by which he meant rebellion against existing institutions) in the workers' moral and economic struggle against capitalism. According to Sorel, the revolutionary élan of the workers needs to be sustained by the "myth of the general strike" or poetic vision of the coming epic showdown between workers and their oppressors.

While Sorel himself was not directly involved in the working-class movement, his ideas contributed to the growing body of left-wing syndicalist theories that had been developing since the late 1890s in countries like Belgium, Holland, France, Italy, and Spain and that would continue to exercise a profound influence on trade union development in those countries until the outbreak of World War II (1939–1945).

### Socialism versus Communism

The two events in the twentieth century that had the greatest impact on the course of international socialism were the World War I and the Russian Revolution (1917). The outbreak of hostilities in Europe in 1914 brought to an abrupt halt the numerous theoretical debates inside the socialist movement that had been raging up to that time. The war also dispelled the notion held by nearly all socialists that, irrespective of doctrinal differences, socialist parties everywhere were united by a common goal (the overthrow of capitalism) as well as by their internationalist outlook.

The Russian Revolution of 1917 that brought the Bolsheviks to power had even more far-reaching consequences for the development of socialism. First and foremost, it signaled an end to Marxism as it was generally understood by most socialists up to 1917. This was not least because the epicenter of Marxism was transferred from Western Europe to the east and would remain there for the greater part of the twentieth century. In its new surroundings, Marxism would be widely referred to as *communism*, a term that was adopted in 1919 by V. I. Lenin (1870–1924) and the Bolsheviks in order to distinguish their movement from the so-called infantile revisionist socialism that had come to characterize the Second International. With the founding of the Soviet Union in 1924, the division between socialism and communism was formalized and made permanent. From this point on, socialism moved along two very distinct paths. One was defined and

largely controlled by the Soviet communists and the other followed a course that was defined by the pluralistic socialist traditions of Western Europe. Because the story of communism occupies a distinct chapter in the history of socialism in the twentieth century, it is not our intention here to summarize the main features of that movement. Instead, we will proceed with our survey of European socialism after the advent of communism.

### Socialism in the Interwar Period, 1919–1939

The trauma and physical destruction that resulted from the World War I created widespread political and economic instability in Europe. Established political traditions and practices were the first to be challenged in this uncertain environment, first by the communists who sought to build upon the revolutionary experiences of Russia, and then by radical right-wing factions and fascists, who set themselves against both liberal democrats and left-wing parties. In these circumstances, socialists of the social democratic variety fared poorly. In most countries, socialist parties had barely recovered from their setbacks during the war when they were met with crises caused by the aforementioned groups. On one level, the communists forced socialists to adopt either the Russian Revolution as their standard or the reformist model that still prevailed in most European social democratic movements. The result was disastrous in countries like Italy and Germany, where a divided left made the socialists and communists more vulnerable to their more unified opponents on the right. The fascists were particularly adroit at playing on the weaknesses of the socialists. By the mid-1930s socialists everywhere were either in retreat in the few democratic countries that had survived the aftershocks of the war or driven completely underground by the authoritarian and totalitarian one-party states that had come into existence across Continental Europe.

Socialist participation in the communist-inspired Popular Front was an electoral strategy during the mid-1930s that was meant to check the rapid advance of fascism and other antidemocratic movements that were gaining ground at this time. In both Spain and France, for example, socialists played a pivotal role in forging a political alliance that embraced a wide spectrum of left and liberal factions. However, in Spain the Popular Front government formed in February 1936 was short lived, as civil war broke out in July. In France, Léon Blum's (1872–1950) socialist-led Popular Front coalition also enjoyed only limited success between 1936 and 1938. In this brief period, Blum managed to push through a number of social reform measures, such as the implementation of the forty-hour work week, before his government succumbed to the pressures of its conservative and pro-appeasement rivals.

The outbreak of yet another general war in 1939 marked the beginning of a seven-year hiatus in the development of socialism. When the war ended in 1945, socialist parties found themselves struggling against a number of currents. On the one hand, they were confronted by the spread of communism throughout the greater part of East and Central Europe. The strangle-hold that Joseph Stalin (1879–1953) had secured over the postwar regimes that emerged in this region between 1946 and 1949 effectively smothered the development of any

independent socialist movement for the next few decades. Under immense pressure from Moscow, social democratic parties were forced to disband and amalgamate with the communist parties loyal to the Soviet Union.

Except in Great Britain and the Scandinavian countries—where social democratic parties were in the ascendant—circumstances in much of Western Europe also conspired against a general revival of socialism. The right-wing dictatorships in Portugal (Antonio de Oliveira Salazar) and Spain (Francisco Franco) survived the war and both governments maintained their ban on left-wing parties for the next few decades. The postwar difficulties socialism faced elsewhere in Europe were compounded by the onset of the Cold War. Because the political and economic stability of the pro-capitalist nations remained in doubt in the immediate aftermath of the war, socialism was generally viewed with suspicion by the electorate. This was partly because socialists in Italy and France tended to form alliances with the Moscow-oriented communists, and partly because of the growing dependency of many European nations on the economic and military support of the United States. In fact, the United States made it clear to the newly restored postwar regimes that, because Europe was now divided into mutually hostile ideological blocs, it would not tolerate the idea of socialists and communists forming government coalitions outside the Soviet umbrella.

There were further reasons why socialism failed to make inroads into the political arena at this time. One was connected with the cultural and ideological shifts on the liberal and conservative end of the political spectrum that had taken place in Europe since the Great Depression and World War II. The economic problems thrown up by the Depression had caused many liberals to revise their views regarding the state's role in the economy. The mixed economic model for capitalism promoted by the liberal economist John Maynard Keynes (1883–1946) gained currency at this time, and this trend in economic thinking was generally reinforced during the war, when the collectivist practices of the state were deemed both necessary and desirable by the majority of the population. At war's end, the consensus among liberals and conservatives was, at least for the time being, the state would have to play a major role not only in bringing about the political and economic recovery of war-torn Europe but also in sustaining the social welfare of the general population during this critical period of transition.

While the socialists stood to gain much from this development, they failed to win popular backing at the polls for policies with which they had long been identified. This was due in part to their own miscalculations—such as their insistence on forming alliances with the communists—and in part to the fact that the socialists' general political outlook was woefully out-of-date. With few exceptions, social democratic parties in Europe were reluctant to refashion the theoretical content of their political programs. For example, most still looked to the working classes (trade unions) as their main constituency and most retained a nostalgia and even reverence for the Marxist ideological underpinnings of their movement.

Despite these shortcomings, socialist parties continued to occupy an important place in the political arena. This was

especially true in countries like Sweden, where the social democrats (SAP) dominated politics for the greater part of the twentieth century, and in Great Britain, where the Fabian style of pragmatic reformism of the Labour Party has won out over other forms of socialism.

The cultural ferment associated with the 1960s and early 1970s helped to inject some new life into socialist doctrine. The left-wing radicals who spearheaded protest movements in this period turned a fresh eye to the historical and ideological roots of socialism. In doing so they helped to resurrect themes that had lain dormant for many years but that now appealed to the intellectually diverse postwar generation of leftists. Perhaps the most important of these was the question of women's role in the socialist movement. From its origins, socialist thinking had been concerned with the fate of both men and women. Yet, apart from Charles Fourier, August Bebel, Friedrich Engels, Edward Carpenter (1844–1929), and a handful of other theorists, socialists tended to ignore specific questions relating to sexuality and gender. Indeed, all of the classical socialists who addressed the woman question, such as Engels did in his *Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884), regarded women as proletarians in the household and thus did not, as twenty-first-century socialist feminists do, view gender as distinct from class. Fewer still thought it necessary to transform socialist practices so that they matched the profeminist rhetoric of their movement. It was against this background that a new generation of socialist thinkers began their campaign to infuse socialism with feminist values and beliefs. The research of socialist feminists like Sheila Rowbotham and other historians of gender revealed that women played a much greater role in the development of socialism than had hitherto been acknowledged. Up until this point, Flora Tristan (1803–1844), Vera Zasulich (1851–1919), Rosa Luxemburg (1871–1919), Alexandra Kollantai (1873–1952), Dolores Ibárruri (1895–1989), Clara Zetkin (1857–1933), Beatrice Webb, and other notable activists had rarely received the kind of historical attention that was commensurate with the contributions they had made to socialist theory and practice. For example, it was not until the late 1960s that the prominent role that Luxemburg played in the key debates and discussions within European socialism during the first decades of the twentieth century became widely recognized by the scholarly community. Beside making her mark as a theorist during the revisionist controversy in *Reform or Revolution* (1899), Luxemburg became famous during World War I for leading the socialist opposition to the war in Germany. By the time of her death in 1919, the year she helped spearhead an ill-fated coup against the provisional Weimar government, Luxemburg had also established a reputation as a critic of the authoritarian policies of the Leninist brand of revolutionary vanguard Marxism. While the theoretical differences between her and Bolsheviks such as Lenin and Trotsky should not be exaggerated, Luxemburg always stood for a more open and democratic interpretation of socialism than did her Russian counterparts. No less important was the light that gender-sensitive research cast on the role that anonymous women in the past and present played not only in building socialism through their participation in grass-roots associations but also in broadening female participation in the public sphere.



Besides seeking to revise the historical record, socialist academics, writers, and activists in the women's liberation movement were also interested in changing the attitudes and perceptions that the majority of socialist men held of women. Socialist feminists pointed out that, while most men endorsed pro-feminist principles, they nevertheless tended to see women in sexist terms. For example, few concerned themselves with issues—child care, birth control, sexual expression, among others—that directly affected their wives, sisters, mothers, and female friends. Nor were they alive to the second-class status to which women were consigned in the workplace, where gendered divisions of labor prevailed, and in society generally, where male dominance was both profound and pervasive. The degree to which socialist feminists were successful in their endeavors is hard to measure. There can be no question that their efforts to place the women's question high on the socialist agenda and their insistence that "the personal is political" contributed in a number of ways to the rejuvenation of the theory and practice of a doctrine that was increasingly out of step with the realities of late twentieth century society. Nonetheless, the legacy of socialist feminism is mixed. Though it failed to bring about the much sought after gender reorientation of a number of socialist parties, socialist feminism can be credited for greatly advancing the ongoing struggle for women's rights. Contemporary feminists are above all indebted to this movement for having raised society's awareness of the multiple ways in which gender relations affect the daily lives of everyone.

### Socialism at the End of the Twentieth Century

In the closing years of the twentieth century, socialism experienced further transmutations. On a practical level, socialist parties tended to resemble each other more and more, though this was not necessarily due to a closer collaboration among the various socialist parties. Ever since the demise of the Second International in 1914, socialists had all but abandoned the idea of using an overarching body to coordinate the policies of the various national socialist parties. The largely inert bureau of the Labour and Socialist International (LSI) met for the last time in April 1940, and it was not replaced until 1946. The onset of the Cold War after 1948 forced changes within the LSI that resulted in the creation of a new organization, the Socialist International (SI), in 1951. Echoing the realities of the postwar era, the executive council of the SI made clear to all its members that it would "put an end to the equivocation of parties which want to belong to our socialist group while in fact obeying directives from Moscow." Apart from reaffirming the European socialist parties' commitment to democratic socialism, the SI provided intellectual and moral support to the socialist parties that had been forced underground in antidemocratic regimes of Western Europe or were threatened by communist influence in the non-aligned movement countries. It was particularly successful at assisting the resurrection of socialism in Portugal (1974) and Spain (1975) when democracy returned to those countries in the late 1970s. During the 1980s, the SI continued to expand its influence in Europe and in parts of the Third World, though, in an age when nationalist feelings greatly diminishes the spirit of internationalism, its relevance to the future development of socialism remains an open question.

Partly in response to the electoral successes of their ideological opponents on the right, during the mid-1980s socialists throughout Europe began questioning their longstanding commitment to socialization policies, such as social welfare and public ownership (nationalization). And though a small core of purists refused to abandon the transformative goals of their doctrine, the vast majority of socialists elected to office in this period believed that social justice and equality could best be achieved by adopting the principles and practices of neoliberalism. As a result, the notion of what it meant to be a socialist underwent significant revision, with some critics arguing that the pre-capitalist values of "credit card" socialists made them indistinguishable from their liberal and conservative rivals.

Those who belong to the generation of socialists alluded to here are widely known in the early twenty-first century as *social democrats*, a label that refers to their commitment both to parliamentary democracy as well as to the principles of market socialism. According to this model of a mixed economy, the government should play a role in overseeing the ownership of certain enterprises (e.g., utilities and public transportation) but would allow market forces to determine the allocation of their goods and services. While the social democrats insist that their policies are aimed at implementing the classic socialist ideals of social justice and economic equality for all, they do not subscribe to the age-old socialist belief that holds that the state should function as the sole vehicle for achieving these much-desired goals.

The theoretical and policy shift that were identified with the social democratic movements of the 1980s greatly contributed to a reversal of the political fortunes of socialist parties in several countries. In Spain and France, for example, the socialists dominated national politics throughout the 1980s. The ascendancy of the New Labour Party movement in Great Britain during the late 1990s and early years of the twenty-first century seems to have signaled a further shift of socialist doctrine away from its historic ideological foundations.

The rightward drift of socialism in the last decade of the twentieth century was given even greater emphasis following the collapse of communist regimes in East Central Europe in 1989 and the Soviet Union in 1991. With communist ideas largely discredited the socialists' doctrinal links with Marxism were completely severed. The intellectual preoccupations and foci of the post-Cold War era promise to erode further the core elements of socialist ideology.

It is evident from the foregoing account that socialism has been in a state of flux over the course of the past two centuries. Socialism in the twenty-first century cannot be located on the same ideological map that it occupied as a revolutionary theory in the nineteenth and greater part of the twentieth centuries. Whether it will continue to change or cease to exist as a distinct ideology remains to be seen. But whatever its fate as a doctrine, socialist ideas and values are so integral to Western political traditions that they will no doubt continue to find expression in an ever-changing political landscape.

*See also Anarchism; Capitalism; Communism; Marxism.*



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nineteenth century. African socialisms represent various combinations of African thinkers, politicians, and activists' absorption with and reconfiguring of nineteenth- and twentieth-century European socialist ideas and practice. The sources are multiple, from trades unions and contact with European workers, to affiliations with European political parties, and through contact with Pan-African (West Indian and African-American) radicals. Many African thinkers and movements have identified with various strands of social democratic and Marxian forms of socialism, seeking to indigenize them to Africa.

The rise of African socialisms as a movement coincides with the early phases of nationalism and national development, the high point of which was the non- nonaligned movement and Third Worldism. African socialism as practice began with the first self-proclaimed socialist-nationalist revolution in Africa, Gamal Abdel-Nasser's (1918–1970) 1952 Officers Coup in Egypt; and intended with globalization meeting South Africa's thwarted redistributive social democracy.

All African socialisms shared overlapping features that provided bases for nationalism and approaches to postcolonial development and nation building. First, was a combination of state ownership, an equitable distribution of wealth, and increasing citizen well-being; second, was the urgency of conquering underdevelopment, of "catching up"; third, was creating relevant noncapitalist institutions that would shape economic development; and fourth was creating well-balanced social relationships of citizenship that could establish cohesion between people and the state.

Prior to the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, socialist ideas and practices were mooted among sections of the African middle and working classes. The *Sierra Leone Weekly News* in 1913 compared union-based socialism in industrial Europe with the supposed hallmark of an indigenous socialism, African "hospitality," auguring in sentiments (and myths) subsequently invoked by African Socialist-nationalists and political leaders. Striking laborers and clerks in Lagos in 1897 had neither socialist ideas nor organization to mobilize them against low wage labor policy for Africans, yet African socialist movements begin with the development of a modern work force.

Where industrial capitalism had penetrated more deeply in Africa, as in South Africa, Egypt, and Algeria, burgeoning workers and trade union movements would become subjects of communist and socialist ideas. Established primarily by settler, expatriate or European unionists and intellectuals, these movements learned their socialism in metropolitan-based parties. Striking white miners between 1906 and 1907 and from 1913 to 1914 in South Africa would beckon the call of (white) trade unionism and socialist organizing and practice, as would black workers in 1918. Socialism's claim to social justice would uniquely shape South Africa's national experience, where a class divided by race would force the national question to the center of discussions about the nature of socialism and independence in South Africa.

The first communist party in Africa (and in the Arab world) was formed in Egypt in 1921, where textile and transportation workers became the subject of communist attention after

**SOCIALISMS, AFRICAN.** Socialist ideas have been in Africa before the advent of colonialism at the turn of the

World War I. The general orientation of Egyptian Marxists and socialists was directed to the Arab world, which would persist into Nasserism. Egyptian communism remained small; having a large impact upon intellectual Marxism, debating many important questions about socialism in a backward country; it had little impact upon Egyptian politics and was unable to develop a mass following among a large indigenous working class, a well-developed trade union tradition, and millions of Egyptian peasants, or fellaheen. The party eventually disbanded in 1965 through in-fighting and Nasser's repression.

Until the formation of the 1970s Afro-Marxist regimes, movements espousing revolutionary Marxism were nonexistent. An exception was one the large metropolitan, European dominated, Algerian Communist Party, formed in 1936. By the 1950s it had disgraced itself by constantly placing the French interests above Algerians'. Two other exceptions were Sudan Communist Party and the South Africa Communist Party (SACP). In the early twenty-first century the SACP remains numerically strong, while the large Sudanese Communist movement, founded in 1946 under the influence of Egyptian Marxists, played a role in the nationalist movement, retaining significant influence in Sudanese politics before General Gafur Nimeri's murderous purges in the early 1970s.

Marxist influence would find homes within African socialism. Soviet and Chinese communism were benchmarks of socialism throughout colonialism, nationalism, and the formative years of national development. With few exceptions, like self-management in Algeria (1960–1965), alternative or academic socialisms had little foothold in Africa. If communist party formation was prohibited during colonialism, many independence parties (especially in Francophone Africa) were modelled on communist parties. Many African leaders, even when seeing communism as threatening, were impressed by the rapidity of its modernizing achievements through centralization, planning, and the one-party state. The Cold War also demanded positions on communism; most African states preferred charting unaligned vistas between it and Western capitalism.

### North African, "Arab" Socialisms

Nasserite Egypt (1960–1974), Bourguiba's Tunisia (1954–1986), Algeria from Ahmed Ben Bella's and Boumediene's through the reforms of the mid-1980s Qaddafi's Libya (1969/1977–) represented the beginning and end of North African socialisms.

Like the Cold War, the Egyptian Young Officer's coup would prepare a template for much of the continent's independence with its one party, state capitalist socialism; it also demonstrated efficacy in achieving power through armed force. Originally hostile to socialism, Nasser eventually used "Arab" socialism to rationalize confiscating large landed estates, foreign nationalizations, and outlawing political and religious opposition, all identified with holding back national development. A trademark of African socialisms was invoking development in the "people's" name, and populist state capitalist socialism became a practice of legitimation. The imperative of rapid economic and social development through planning was put forward as guaranteeing modernization and equitable

redistribution that only the state could be charged with. Multiparty democracy was viewed as a disruptive extravagance the progress of the "people's" developmental state could ill afford, and trade unions, once a ground of radical support, were expected to have no role other than to support the aims of the state.

One finds similar rationalizations in all other North African socialisms, despite differences over, for instance, the extent to which there was a need for the state to own socialized property, rather than direct the redistribution of wealth. In Habib Bourguiba's modernist appeal to socialism at independence in 1956 through the Tunisian nationalist Neo-Destourisme; in Algeria's attempt to come to terms with the reconstructive aftermath of a brutal war of independence, in the response to the chaos of the early years under Ahmed Ben Bella's (1918–) chaotic self-management; and Houari Boumediene's (1965) coup, auguring in "Real Socialism," the rationalized normalizing of the revolution combing technocratic development through state-led industrialization; as well as Ghadafi's coup and eventual 1977 announcement of Jamahiriya (the "people's" state) socialism for Libya. In their different ways, each sought to balance national identity as Islamic, with the demands of modernizing under the quasi-secularist nationalizing, one-party state. Each feared fragmentation, and each sought centralized political and economic control to overcome it. Each restricted political parties, undertook a more or less centralized state for fear of unfettering dormant interests uniting around religion, class, and ethnicity. All claimed to have modern egalitarian and equitable ends, and all wanted to justify themes consistent with religion, while keeping the ulema and conservative classes allied with them under control, ensuring religion did not interfere with its national cohesion and national development.

Only Ghadafi clung to fictionalizing socialism's name as real; by the early twenty-first century Tunisia had abandoned all simulation, embarking on the most controlled secular march toward modernizing the society and the economy; while Algeria continued to live with the effects unleashed by the (1978–1991) economic and political liberalization, forces repressed by one-partyism. From the breakdown of the state from ethnic loyalties to the violence of Islamist backlash in the face of annulled elections in 1993, the facade of socialism was all but forsaken.

### African Socialists

Nkrumah's Ghana (1957–1966), Ahmed Sékou Touré's Guiné (1958–1984), Modibo Keita's Mali (1960–1968), Julius Nyerere's Tanzania (1960–1985) Leopold Sédar Senghor's Senegal (1960–1981), and Kenneth Kaunda's Zambia (1964–1991) are the primary exemplars of "south of the Sahara" African socialisms.

African socialists were nationalist-politicians who believed the anthropologically problematic idea of a long-established ethos within the precolonial community's traditions of extended family networks of social mutualism, social egalitarianism, and a consensus system of political order. This order could be modernized but able to avoid conflicts inherent in European class

societies, as in Tanzania's Julius Nyerere's (1922–1999) vision of a policy of education for self-reliance that would enable a willing peasantry to accept collective decision-making in villages organized by the state. Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah (1909–1972) is often identified as the major figure, not because he was the most original; nor because of his execution of socialism when in power. It lies, rather, in his posthumous stature among Pan-Africanists and because he left a corpus of writing after his overthrow in 1966 that identified his credentials as a reborn radical. While in power, however, his political policies followed a familiar trajectory of one-party socialism—the imprisonment of the opposition, the banning of strikes by the same unions he would demand take up the cause of revolutionary socialism after his overthrow. There is little in his thought or, indeed, in much of his practice that to varying degrees, one cannot find in Mali's Modibo Keita (1915–1977) or in Guiné's Ahmed Sékou Touré (1922–1984), or for that matter much that is different in the North African socialist variants. In the case of Touré, he claimed that because prior to Guiné's independence in 1958, colonialism's inability to create class antagonisms was because extensive private ownership barely existed. The Africanization of Marxism could begin by building upon the supposed solidarity of a precapitalist caste-based society. His early, distinctly radical rule tried to create the cadres for a socialist revolution. As his policies failed, Touré responded with greater centralized rule and fiercer social oppression, which was mirrored in a collapse of the economy and livelihoods in Guiné.

Consistent with notions that the one-party state was best suited to carry out nation-building and development tasks, after independence Modibo Keita promptly moved to declare the Union Soudanaise Independence Party the single party of the Malian state, pursue a socialist policy based on extensive nationalization, and court both the Soviet Union and China. Malians were constructing socialisms through choosing the best from their Islamic past, where duties to the weakest and poorest in society were part of Afro-Islamic egalitarianism. Keita genuinely believed economic and financial decolonization from France and the establishment of socialist structures throughout the country. To this end, from 1961 before his overthrow in 1968, Keita's regime would maintain the necessity of structural sectorial reforms.

In contrast, Leopold Sédar Senghor (1906–2001) was a pragmatist for whom socialism was a cultural vision. Less interested in immediate structural transformations in the economy, he was more interested in an identification of the alleged mores of African societies, which, he claimed, were forms of social humanism. For Senghor, African socialism as culture never translated, except pragmatically, into much more than a cultural disposition that could modify some of the more corrosive values of western individualism. There were never the attempts at the large-scale socialization of production found among the more radical African socialists, in part because of the intimate economic and cultural relations Senegal had with France, and also because of the various conservative members of coalitions that supported the ruling Union Progressiste Sénégalaise (UPS), especially the Islamic Brotherhoods, who maintained some control over much of Senegal's main export commodity, groundnuts.

Political compromise rooted in production and key resources made political commitments appear rationalizations. So, Kenneth Kaunda's (1924–) eclectic African humanistic justification of state nationalization and state welfare through bringing together elements of Christian and Fabian socialisms allied with a selective liberalism was joined to a putative African collectivism. If it appeared well meaning, it could also appear a rationalization of state patronage through Zambia's major industry, copper: accumulation by political elites through nationalization. Profiting from soaring copper prices on world markets for over a decade after independence, many urban Zambians benefited from state subsidies and an expanded welfare system. Less than a decade later, however, these services shrunk under the burden of low world commodity prices and accumulated debt, revealing that the socialization means of production benefited a freeloading bureaucracy that contributed little but their vacancies.

Between 1965 and 1977, Nyerere's *ujamma* (familyhood) socialism was the highest profile African socialism and development. Initially meant to promote an egalitarian ethos, and a way of forestalling the development of classes and inequality, it failed because of a long price depression for its export commodities, costs sustained in removing Idi Amin from power, and the inability for the state to genuinely understand the needs of its peasantry. Peasants, the supposed source of *ujamma* modernization from below became subject to state-sanctioned bureaucratized replacement of traditional rural households with the forced displacement of nine million rural dwellers into planned resettlement “development” villages.

Nyerere said that villagization was not socialism but a technical decision concerned with the concentration of resources in settlements with little input from the peasantry; socialism and its full appreciation would come later. They never did. Very much reliant upon foreign aid for development programs, Tanzania was anything but self-reliant. After a decade of economic failure, and compelled by the demands of international financial institutions (IFIs) to adjust and stabilize its economy, by the time he left office in 1985 there was no more African socialists.

### Afro-Marxism

Marxist socialisms grouped under the rubric of Afro-Marxist regimes, which came into and out of existence between 1963 and 1995, primarily coming to power through military coups. They include Congo's Masekela-Debat to Sassou Nguesso (1963–1991), Ethiopia under Mengistu Haile-Miriam (1974–1991), Somalia under Siad Barre (1969–1991), Mathieu Kérékou's Benin (1972–1991), and Didier Ratsiraka's Madagascar 1975–1993, 1997–). Also included is Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe (1924–), who came to power through armed struggle and subsequent elections, and who also used Marxist-Leninist rhetoric. African “scientific socialisms” only real affinities to Marxism-Leninism and most practicing African socialism were one-partyism, the nationalization of industries, and authoritarianism. There were also Marxists, like the Cap Verdian Amílcar Cabral (1924–1973), the Angolan Augustinho Neto, and the Mozambiquans Eduardo Mondlane and Samora Machel, whose successors came to power inheriting very



unstable states in the violently uneven and unresolved Lusophone national liberation struggles. All regimes accepted some alliance with the Soviet Union. The one actual social revolution, which sought to socialize production and attempt to actually transform society, was the Ethiopian Revolution (1974), which was also the most bloody, killing thousands in its wake. Afro-Marxists also came into existence at a time when there was a revivification of Third Worldism, but also at a time when world markets were contracting, and debt was beginning to grow.

Afro-Marxism's rhetoric and practice were divorced from the realities they enforced themselves upon. Few understood, even cared to understand, both peasant life and the ethnic environments within which they inhabited. The exceptions were the assassinated leaders, Cabral and Eduardo Mondlane (1920–1969). For both Marxism had little utility unless it allowed activists and peasants alike to understand their worlds as ends to participation and well being, and both felt that understanding the materially cultural aspects of the populations that sought liberation was practically and normatively important. Striking about all of Afro-Marxist regimes is how easily they either collapsed or so easily altered themselves from Marxist-Leninist parties to liberalizing recipients of neoliberal adjustment policies. The regimes and leaders that did not collapse transformed themselves into devotees of the advice offered by (IFIs). Often leaving a bloody bequest of failure and death, these regimes' rhetoric was as deep as their commitment to actually revolutionize the relations and forces of production.

### Conclusion

Whether Marxist, social democratic, or state-capitalist, African socialisms reflected diverse political economies and politics, covering theoretical intents, ideological perspectives, political movements, cultural and regional orientations, revolutionary struggles, and formerly actually existing socialist states. Over half of Africa's states have celebrated themselves as socialist or social democratic, have identified socialism in the pages of their liberation charters, and/or have retained "socialist," or socialism in their constitutions.

Like most other African political systems, African socialisms failed to meet people's aspirations and needs. They sometimes employed opportunistic and brutal ambition to thwart people's wishes for greater freedoms and choices over the nature and status of their needs. Equally, they frequently had their hopes aborted as casualties of Cold War realpolitik and vacillating economic desires of a world capitalist system.

African socialism's prospects look inauspicious. The wave of post-1970s, liberalization, and the collapse of the regimes, or death of many important leaders associated with African socialism's preeminence and disgrace, also saw many of these socialisms go with them. Increasing constraints of economic deprivation and debt, the imposition of adjustment and stabilization, and the demand, internally and externally, for greater pluralism and political choice, further limit prospects for renewal. African socialism became a consensus metaphor for failure—of the centralization, authoritarianism, and inefficiencies of state malfunction. The history of socialism in

Africa suggests much failure and a history of false promises; it also suggests, however, that those failures arise from development failure, a failure not generic to Africa and not to socialism alone. African socialism was a history of intent; as such it should also be remembered as past optimism for what it promised, even where it couldn't fulfill it.

See also **Socialism**.

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**SOCIETY.** The concept of society is in transition due to globalization and the knowledge associated with it. Today's views of society are not altogether new, however. Rather, they are engaged with the rediscovery of the worlds of antiquity. Since the 1970s, scholars have reached to the past to explain mainstay concepts such as society. In this manner, ancient Eastern ideas flood into the current Western perspectives on society. The turn to the archaic East also heightens awareness of the West's own archaic past. Thus the concept of society metamorphoses while it embraces a living past.

### Ancient Views of Society: East and West

Until the modern era, China did not have a word for society. The current term *shehui* means an organized assembly. In the ancient world, China utilized the idea of *wenming* (civilization), which literally meant the brightness of culture or the clarity of writing. It also had the idea of *zhongguo* (Middle Kingdom), denoting the middle of the world on a geographical plane and the middle of the universe (between heaven and earth) on a cosmological plane. During the pre-Qin era (third century B.C.E.), Chinese society was a living matrix of ideas and events, of spirituality and materiality. James Sellmann describes this world as "hylozoistic—a living world empowered with *qi* [life force]" (p. 5). As a "foci-field model" or "field cosmology," the pre-Qin society was conceived as an organic complex that changed as the seasons changed.

The Chinese philosophical coupling of yin-yang was an organizing principle that connected the heavens to earth and established all worldly changes. Political decision making relied on proper timing: the right season, the right pitch of the pipes,



the right state of mind. The balance of space and time was the key to harmony in the Chinese dynasties to come.

In highly stratified and patriarchal societies such as the West and Middle East, women might constitute a society within a society. While similar situations existed in the Far East, the harmonizing balance of Chinese philosophy accommodated women throughout history to occupy prominent roles ranging from calligrapher to empress.

In the Roman world, *socius* was a word that meant friend—hence the English word *society* as a modern word related to a community of friends. In the ancient world, one could not get by without friends who shared common values, common work, and common lands. Thus the Roman word *communitas* as applied to society symbolized the collectivity of physical and spiritual relations that bound together a people, as in the slogan *senatus populusque Romanus*—the Senate and the People of Rome. Roman community was bound together by a sense of *civitas* or citizenship as defined by the civil virtues of Rome. The English word *civilization* derives from the Latin and carries the sense of a social, political, cultural, religious, and philosophical whole. The Middle Ages in Europe saw the splintering of Roman civilization into church and state, or into religious and political spheres of influence. As towns began to develop and the world split more visibly into city and country, social philosophers' views on society also bifurcated.

### Early Modern Views of Society

When the Jesuits brought knowledge of their explorations into China back to Europe, an organic view of society as a compendium of functioning interdependent parts started to take shape. Although this was a bare shadow of China's sophisticated civilization, it led to a Western idea of a body politic, with the state as the head, the church as the heart, and economy and other social systems as the limbs and organs of society. This organic view had far-reaching implications well into the twentieth century, especially in structural functionalist views of society. Karl Marx (1818–1883), however, regarded these developments as a definitive conflict between the generation of civil society and political community. Civil society developed conflicting classes within it that were regulated by the political community. The contradictions of everyday life were monitored by a state that favored the ruling class, and the state wore a political lion skin for the dominant class. Hence, political relations were often mediated by class relations. Hence, society began to manifest simultaneously both conflictual and consensual components. Society was forever in a state of flux.

With the division of labor, industrialization, and the quest for the development of the nation-state, a new philosophical challenge emerged in the form of one question: What comes first, society or the individual? In the ancient Western world of Greece and Rome, the individual was not so much a factor. Rather, a person made commitments to the virtues of various institutions and traditions such as the family. But with the struggle for the creation of the European nation, especially in France, the concept of the individual greatly challenged definitions of society. On the one hand, the more conservative view of kings retained the idea of society as a given, as a complete whole functioning in accord with the will

of God; individuals would simply obey the laws of society and work to maintain this equilibrium. On the other hand, the more radical views of French revolutionaries saw the individual as the center of the universe with a variety of inalienable rights; society would serve the individual while maintaining the supremacy of that individual through *liberté, égalité, fraternité*—liberty, equality, fraternity—a battle cry of the French Revolution.

### Society: Consensus and Conflict

Views of modern Western society tend to fall into two camps: consensus and conflict. Consensus views beginning with the economist Max Weber (1864–1920) and continuing into the structural functionalism of the American sociologist Talcott Parsons (1902–1979) describe society as a complex combination of static and dynamic systems. Weber identified society as a system of potential harmonization, with rational actors choosing the best means to the end of ensuring the smooth operation of society; Parsons discussed the functional and dysfunctional aspects of society as it strives for a dynamic equilibrium through complementary institutional structures.

Marx is still the main proponent of the conflict theory of society, among a plethora of thinkers up to Louis Althusser (1918–1990) and beyond. Marx conceived of society as a kind of shape shifter, culminating in and overcoming moments of conflict through a sequence of class struggles: slavery giving way to feudalism, feudalism giving way to capitalism, capitalism giving way to socialism, socialism giving way to communism. Althusser divided society into repressive and ideological apparatuses. He had a rather pessimistic view of society's transformations because of its ingrained structures of dominance, especially in the overwhelming powers of the modern state.

The philosopher Jürgen Habermas (b. 1929) combined both consensus and conflict theories while exploring a legitimation crisis of modern society struggling for a communicative competence among both institutions and individual actors. These five thinkers—Weber, Parsons, Marx, Althusser, Habermas—still stand as the most prominent models of social scientific thinking regarding society today. What is attractive about their approaches seems to be an ability to connect abstract macro-level ideas about society with more concrete micro-level ideas about individual social actors within the framework of these umbrella systems.

### The New Ancient World: Leibniz, Vico, and China

Given the present trend toward global communications, more attention has focused on the origins of concepts of society, especially in the works of pioneering scholars in the relations between East and West. The philosopher Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646–1716) did not simply rehearse Christian views of Chinese society. Like Giambattista Vico (1668–1744), Leibniz was impressed with the Confucian view of benevolence and the harmonious society that it spawned. Like Vico, he distrusted René Descartes's and Isaac Newton's image of a mechanical universe. Leibniz was indebted to the Jesuit Matteo Ricci (1552–1610), who was similarly open-minded about Chinese philosophical and religious life. Leibniz embraced a Chinese notion of society as a living organism and

popularized this image in Europe. His description of matter applies to society as well: “Thus every portion of matter can be conceived as a garden full of plants or a pond full of fish. But every branch of the plant, every limb of the animal, every drop of its humors, is again such a garden or such a pond” (1965, p. 159). For Leibniz, society was a thoroughly interdependent living entity whose every fiber was connected. Every societal institution was dependent on each other and necessary for a harmonious balance. Since every entity was composed of matter, then matter itself was infinitely interconnected. His idea of monadology was clearly linked to the Confucian idea of *li* (principle, form, pattern) as a primary substance that generated *qi* (primordial vapor or life-energy force), both of which acted upon every aspect of the life-world. He correctly perceived Chinese society as holding to a cosmology that ensured harmonious relations: “Indeed, it is difficult to describe how beautifully all the laws of the Chinese, in contrast to those of other peoples, are directed to the achievement of public tranquility and the establishment of social order” (1994, p. 47). Leibniz so much admired China’s “public morality” and “natural theology” that he referred to it as an “Oriental Europe.”

Whereas Leibniz was influenced by Matteo Ricci, Vico was influenced by another religious friend, Father Matteo Ripa (1692–1746). Ripa had lived for many years at the court of Kangxi, the emperor of China’s Qing dynasty. When Ripa returned to Italy, he brought with him copper engravings of world maps and garden vistas complete with Chinese poetry. Ripa introduced many Chinese scholars along with an abundance of knowledge to Naples, where he established the Collegio dei Cinesi (The Chinese institute). This cross-cultural milieu greatly influenced Vico’s formulation of *Scienza Nuova* (The new science) and his image of society that aimed to give birth to the ancient past in the present.

Vico was interested in myth and language, especially in tracing etymologies of words to their ancient roots and then awakening them in modern contexts. In other words, language was a conduit for the past to become the present. It is language that gives life its poetic character. Hence Vico characterized society in terms of a “poetic cosmography,” a mapping of the world of gods, heroes, and humans. As a humanist, Vico did not believe in the dominance of rationalism through physical and mathematical sciences to the exclusion of the arts of philosophy and history. Through each of these vehicles, humans could attempt to recover the essence of society. This fundamental societal essence is what Vico called “conatus,” a primordial beginning or striving “proper to the human will” (p. 101). Vico endeavored to discover this beginning through various stages of history: the age of gods, the age of heroes, and the age of men. Each held its own nature or birth: divine imagination, heroic nobility, and modest conscience. Likewise, each represented a kind of government: theocratic, aristocratic, and human. Finally, each offered a language: divine poetic, heroic blazoning, and articulate speech. In his linguistic configurations, Vico is clearly indebted to both ancient Chinese and Greco-Roman thought. Divine written characters (hieroglyphs) were used “by all nations in their beginnings” (p. 341). These “poetic universals” were followed by heroic “imaginative universals” that spoke of noble events and then by human words.

The Chinese, for example, retained the number of pictographs in circulation for daily use from the large lexicon of classical and literary characters. Like the Egyptians, the Chinese maintained “the vanity of their imagined remote antiquity” (p. 21). This included the elevated speech of heroic singing reflected in the tones of the Chinese language and the recording of their first histories in verse. In many ways, Vico tried to emulate this style in his own works. He describes the Greek use of the dragon Draco, probably one of Gorgon’s serpents attached to Perseus’s shield (later Athena’s shield) and eventually the writer of Athenian law in blood, as that which “signifies the rule of the laws” (p. 228) in the time of heroic aristocracies. He then compares this with the Chinese dragon used as a royal emblem and a symbol of civil rule, while marveling at the poetic convergence of East and West.

### Phenomenology and Society

John O’Neill, who has made a significant impact on social sciences and humanities since the 1970s, develops Vico’s ideas into a new phenomenological view of society. O’Neill recognizes Vico’s call to enter language and thereby “renew” society through every word: “Thus etymology is the music of Vico’s wild sociology inviting us to hear our beginnings in the birth of language” (1974, p. 37). Vico’s Chinese-inspired metaphor of the body politic replaces a mechanical scientific one. In attempting to recreate the “public functions of rhetoric,” O’Neill revises Vico’s project by identifying three levels of body politic in modern society: bio-body, productive body, libidinal body. The first refers to the institution of the family through the discourse of well-being; the second refers to work through the discourse of expression; the third refers to personality through the discourse of happiness. In addition, O’Neill maintains that “on the one hand, we have the bodies we have because they have been inscribed by our mythologies, religions, philosophies, sciences, and ideologies. But, on the other hand, we can also say that we have our philosophies, mythologies, arts, and sciences because we have the body we have—namely, a communicative body” (1989, p. 3). Influenced by Maurice Merleau-Ponty, O’Neill’s idea of society takes shape by way of a communicative body as a reciprocal crossing of experience somewhere between idea and flesh. It is the visceral grounding that is the heart of a society in constant flux. O’Neill is not afraid to cross spatial and temporal borders in his embrace of global thought, both East and West. His influence is wide, reaching into political theory and philosophy.

Building upon a similar understanding, Fred Dallmayr invites scholars to move “beyond orientalism” in discarding the Eurocentric views of society. Dallmayr is concerned with the recognition of non-Western cultures in the current shaping of a “global village.” Phenomenology helps shape “cross-cultural ‘co-being’ in a shared world—where the issue is neither to distance the other into the indifference of externality nor to absorb or appropriate otherness in an imperialist gesture” (p. 52). A strategy for understanding a global society necessitates a comparative political theory. Hwa Yol Jung’s *Comparative Political Culture in the Age of Globalization* (2002) follows Dallmayr and O’Neill in evoking phenomenology to explain a cultural hybridization of East-West views of society. Inspired by Merleau-

Ponty and Martin Heidegger, Jung promotes an idea of “planetary thinking” whereby a “global citizen” (*homo globatus*) engages in a world beyond the nation-state. Jung writes, “For the transversalist, globalization means to decenter Western hegemony and disclaim Western superiority thereby empowering the non-West to participate fully in the new worldmaking as an act of hybridization or imbrication” (Jung, p. 14). The writings of O’Neill, Dallmayr, and Jung go a long way to providing a new global understanding of the concept of society.

See also *Chinese Thought; Civil Society; Communism; Globalization; Marxism.*

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Jay Goulding

**SOCRATIC METHOD.** See *Dialogue and Dialectics: Socratic.*

**SOPHISTS, THE.** The word *sophist* (Greek: *ho sophistês*) can be traced as far back as the early fifth century B.C.E. and

means literally someone who engages in or teaches wisdom (*sophia*). Thus Homer, Hesiod, the Seven Sages, Pythagoras, and other preeminent poets, musicians, philosophers, and statesmen are referred to as “sophists” by ancient writers. However, the word acquired a technical meaning by the middle of the fifth century B.C.E. to describe a number of itinerant teacher-intellectuals who, visiting Athens from time to time, displayed their wisdom in virtuosic speeches (*epideixeis*) and claimed to be able to teach human excellence or virtue (*aretê*) for large fees.

The principal source of information about the Sophists is Plato (427?–347 B.C.E.), whose dialogues portray them as occasional interlocutors of Socrates. Since their own works exist only in fragmentary form, there is uncertainty about their philosophical views and the precise impact of their thought on the history of rhetoric, philosophy, political theory, and pedagogy. If we follow Plato, the list of major fifth-century Sophists should include Protagoras of Abdera (c. 490–c. 421 B.C.E.), Prodicus of Ceos (c. 465–after 399 B.C.E.), Hippias of Elis (fl. after 460 B.C.E.), and the brothers Euthydemus and Dionysodorus from Chios (fifth century B.C.E.), all of whom teach virtue for pay. It is customary, however, to include a number of other figures on the list, such as Gorgias (c. 485–c. 380 B.C.E.), Polus (fifth century B.C.E.), and Thrasymachus (fifth century B.C.E.), who appear in Plato’s dialogues as teachers of rhetoric but not of virtue; as well as Xenocrates (fifth century B.C.E.), Lycophron (late fifth or possibly early fourth century B.C.E.), Critias (c. 460–403), and Antiphon (c. 479–411), whom we know of from other sources.

#### Sophistic Speeches

Sophistic speeches were famous in antiquity for their rhetorical style and their moral and philosophical content. Prodicus’ “Hercules at the Crossroads,” (see Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, II.i.21–34) depicts a young Hercules at the brink of manhood choosing between a life of virtue and one of vice. Though the life of vice appears easy at first and the life of virtue difficult, virtue is said to produce genuine happiness (*eudaimonia*), while vice produces shame and distress.

Another important speech is the “Great Speech” of Protagoras in Plato’s dialogue by that name (302c–328d), which details the process of moral education from childhood through adulthood and celebrates the virtues of justice (*dikê*) and respect for others (*aidôs*) as prerequisites for civil life. In a different vein are the speeches of Gorgias, which showcase the power of certain rhetorical techniques to defend positions of dubious morality and truth. Thus his “Encomium of Helen” and his “Defense of Palamedes” make two classical villains appear blameless, while his speech “On the Non-Existent,” argues that nothing exists, that even if it exists it is inapprehensible to man, and that even if it is apprehensible, it cannot be expressed.

#### Pedagogy

Surprisingly little is known of the virtues that Sophists taught in private when they took students under their wing for long periods (a pedagogical method referred to as “association,” *suneimi*). Certainly skill in legal and political argument was a



large part of these virtues, since the Sophists were all talented statesmen, and their students were aspiring members of the political class. Evidence suggests that the major Sophists imparted a fairly wide set of moral and intellectual virtues. Not only respect for others and justice, but *euboulia*, or sound political judgment, was evidently part of Protagoras' program; while Hippias taught students advanced arithmetic, astronomy, geometry, and music before arriving at anything immediately political.

An exception to this rule (besides Gorgias and other rhetoricians who eschewed the teaching of virtue) is the nefarious pair of Sophists, Euthydemus and Dionysodorus, who in Plato's dialogue *Euthydemus* present their crash course in "eristic" as a complete schooling in virtue. Eristic, which derives from the Greek word for strife, is a form of rapid verbal combat in which opponents are drawn into well-rehearsed philosophical paradoxes in order to be refuted or confounded. It is doubtful whether these Sophists' spurious arguments were ever taken seriously as "virtue," but they were at least philosophically interesting enough to attract the attention of Aristotle (384–322 B.C.E.), whose *On Sophistical Refutations* responds to them directly.

### Doctrines

In addition to their activities as teachers and statesmen, the Sophists wrote treatises on a staggering array of subjects, including rhetoric, debate, poetry, music, natural science, geometry, theology, and government. The surviving fragments of these treatises suggest that the Sophists' philosophical interests and doctrines varied widely. (One of the most common mistakes has been to treat the Sophists as a unified movement or school.) Protagoras is best known for the opening (and only surviving) lines of two works. His book *On Truth* began: "Man is the measure of all things, of things that are that they are, and of things that are not that they are not." Debate has centered on whether this fragment represents some form of secular humanism (i.e., man, as opposed to the gods, measures the truth of all things), or a type of subjectivist relativism (i.e., each man measures what is true *for himself*). The latter interpretation is most plausible, though the former is sometimes supported by reference to the famous fragment from Protagoras's work, *On the Gods*: "Concerning the gods I cannot know either that they exist or that they do not exist, or what form they might have, for there is much to prevent one's knowing: the obscurity of the subject and the shortness of man's life."

The Sophist Prodicus also wrote on the gods, arguing anthropologically that what are called gods are "things useful for human life." Whether his theory was meant to support atheism or rather to bolster belief in the gods by relating them to human needs is not clear. Prodicus was more famous in antiquity for his art of defining words (called "synonymic" by German scholars), which enabled his students to untangle vexing paradoxes by distinguishing precisely between terms and concepts.

The fragments of Hippias of Elis testify to the breath of learning of the Sophists. If his work, *The Collection* (*Synagogê*), was an encyclopedia of some kind, which is likely, it would help explain why he is cited well into the Middle Ages on a

host of diverse topics—from the etymology of particular words, to the biographical details of famous personages, to questions of astronomy and geometry. Perhaps the most familiar Sophistic doctrine today is the one put forth by Thrasymachus in book one of Plato's *Republic*, namely that "justice is the advantage of the stronger." It is not certain that Thrasymachus should be grouped among the Sophists (Plato himself does not do so), but his oft-quoted maxim has been used to give the Sophists a bad name. It is interesting to compare Thrasymachus' views to those of the *Anonymous Iamblichi*, a short treatise thought to be composed by a Sophist of the late fifth-century B.C.E., in which laws are similarly understood as merely conventional and yet defended as the source of political stability.

### Historiography

The Sophists have always been controversial figures. They were vilified in Aristophanes' play *The Clouds* for teaching students to evade moral responsibility through argument. In Plato they are criticized chiefly for accepting pay when they have failed to think deeply and rigorously about the virtues they teach. Since the nineteenth century, however, the Sophists have been evaluated more favorably, beginning especially with George Grote's *History of Greece* (1850), which casts them as effective teachers of invaluable political skills. Grote's view that the Sophists contributed substantially to democratic theory, practice, and education was developed in the twentieth century by Werner Jaeger, Eric Havelock, Karl Popper, and Cynthia Farrar.

Other scholars, beginning with Hegel, have emphasized the Sophists' importance in the history of philosophy. This is usually described as a rejection of both Ionian and Eleatic accounts of reality for a greater emphasis upon sensory experience, where the Ionians had stressed a single causal substance at work in the universe (for example, fire or air), and the Eleatics (particularly Parmenides) had described being as one, the Sophists are said to have emphasized the phenomenal world with all its variety and contradictions. Though this philosophical-historical approach to the study of the Sophists has led to masterful studies by W. K. C. Guthrie and G. B. Kerferd, it often involves speculation beyond what the fragments can bear, as it did in Hegel's *Philosophy of History* and Mario Untersteiner's *The Sophists*. Most recently, the Sophists have been studied for their seminal role in the history of rhetoric. In this context the so-called "second Sophistic" movement is also important; this was a vast movement of the second century C.E. that attempted to recover and to develop the rhetorical techniques of the classical age.

See also *Aristotelianism; Democracy; Platonism; Rhetoric; Ancient and Medieval*.

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**SOVEREIGNTY.** *Sovereignty* refers to the supreme and ultimate source of authority that exists within any political unit or association. A sovereign power is deemed independent of all other authorities and it possesses no rivals within its jurisdiction. Thus, sovereignty has internal and external dimensions. Internally, it connotes the superior and final power to determine who shall rule and how rule shall occur. Externally, it involves an exclusive right to exercise power within fixed geographical boundaries without interference from or intervention by other authorities. Although the terminology of sovereignty is sometimes employed metaphorically, it is fundamentally a concept related to matters of governance. For instance, when the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformer John Calvin (1509–1564) referred to “God’s sovereignty,” he was seeking to explain the relationship between the divine and His worldly creation in a way that characterized the governmental dimension of heavenly rule over the earth and its inhabitants.

### Early Concepts

As an intellectual construct, sovereignty has often been assimilated to the rise of the nation-state in Europe during the early modern period. It is true that sovereignty as a theoretical or a practical precept is incompatible with tribal or feudal societies, where power is decentralized or parceled out into the hands of numerous lordlings, all of whom exercise governmental functions in overlapping and semi-autonomous forms. Yet societies that deified their supreme rulers, such as ancient Egypt or Japan, thereby sought at least implicitly to capture a salient el-

ement of sovereignty: that a unitary source existed from which flowed the validity of all lesser forms of command and rule.

Perhaps the political and legal system that most cogently expressed the aspiration to sovereign authority before the rise of the modern state system was the Roman Empire. (Of course, Roman ideas, especially those contained in its civil law, in turn exercised considerable influence on early modern thought.) The Roman doctrine of imperium, meaning the concentration of powers over the territories of the Empire in the hands of its Emperor, conveyed the unrivaled and unchallengeable supremacy invested in the ruler. To affront this imperium by word or deed constituted a grave crime against the Roman majesty, punishable by execution. When imperium is coupled with the legal doctrine that the Emperor is *legibus solutus*—a law unto himself answerable to no one—one arrives at a concept very nearly identical to that of sovereignty.

Although Roman law was widely disseminated in Europe during the postclassical period, and concepts such as imperium and *legibus solutus* were widely discussed, the conjunction of a feudal social structure with religious and ecclesiastical constraints on power rendered sovereignty functionally inapplicable to temporal government. The ecclesiological doctrine of the pope’s “plenitude of power” (*plenitudo potestatis*), according to which the papacy possesses final authority over the determination of matters of orthodox, however, does involve elements of a theory of sovereignty. Yet not even extreme papalists would claim that the pope is beyond error or “infallible” (in the meaning of that term as, in effect, spiritually sovereign, which was eventually proclaimed by the First Vatican Council in the nineteenth century).

Only near the end of the Middle Ages does the word *sovereignty* appear in the major vernacular languages of Europe, and its meaning during this time remains ambiguous. A particularly clear example of this ambiguity is afforded by the French law book *Coutumes de Beauvaisis*, compiled by Philippe de Beaumanoir (c. 1250–1296) during the later thirteenth century. Beaumanoir declared that “the king is sovereign (*souverains*) above all others and by his rights has the general protection of the whole realm, because he can make all statutes for the common benefit and what he decrees must be followed.” The assertion of binding legal authority sounds very familiar to modern ears. Yet Beaumanoir also blunts some of the impact of this sovereignty by insisting that “every baron is sovereign (*souverains*) in his barony,” meaning that each noble prince can do for his immediate territorial subjects precisely what the king does for the entire realm. Hence, an exclusive franchise is lacking from Beaumanoir’s doctrine, which remains consonant with the multiple and overlapping jurisdictions typical of European feudalism. The key idea of “complete” sovereignty stemming from a unitary wellspring is absent.

The Western world was not alone in struggling with the meaning behind sovereignty. In the Persian-language treatise of political advice *Mau'izat-i Jahangiri* (1612–1613), written in Muslim-controlled India by Muhammad Baqir Najm-i Sani (d. 1637), the ruler is counseled to exercise his “sovereignty [*dawlat*] according to the injunctions of Islamic law.” The word *dawlat* has a general meaning of “bliss” or “felicity” in Persian,

as well as the more concrete connotation of supreme political authority. Given the intertwined personal, religious, and political overtones, it becomes difficult to specify with precision whether Baqir intended to conceive of the Emperor as fully sovereign or whether instead the ruler must subject himself to religious precepts that constrain his authority.

### Early Modern Views: Absolutism

The real crystallization of the doctrine of sovereignty occurred in sixteenth-century Europe and, like so much else, in the context of the religious turmoil that accompanied the Reformation. In France, Germany, England, and the Low Countries, the salient issue driving affairs of state in external relations with their neighbors and internal dealings with their populations concerned the determination of religious confession. Regardless of whether toleration or establishmentarianism prevailed, it came to be recognized—theoretically as well as practically—that a single authority must be ceded the right to determine how inhabitants might worship. And this ultimate and supreme authority enjoyed sovereignty.

The classic statement of this position is ordinarily ascribed to the *Six livres de la république* (1576) by the French lawyer and humanist Jean Bodin (1530–1596). Bodin proposed a definition of sovereignty as absolute and indivisible, so that the ruling power possessed sole final authority over the legislative, judicial, administrative, and military functions associated with the state. In formulating this conception of sovereignty, Bodin explicitly challenged many of the central tenets of Aristotle's political science, such as the distinction between the governance of the family and the rulership of the state. Moreover, Bodin ridiculed as incoherent the idea that sovereignty could be shared between or mixed among different groups or institutions. The sovereign is answerable to no earthly authority and, while he is cautioned by Bodin to subject himself to divine and natural law, there is no temporal compulsion that he do so. Hence, Bodin's doctrine is generally described as "absolutism," since it posits the absolute and unchecked sovereignty of the monarch.

Another important advocate of absolutism was Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679), especially in his masterpiece, the *Leviathan* (1651). Like Bodin, Hobbes insisted that the only justifiable form of sovereign authority is absolute and indivisible. Hobbes ascribed to human beings natural liberty and equality, which licenses them to undertake any actions necessary in order to preserve themselves and to avoid pain. He believed that the pursuit of self-preservation by free and equal creatures left to their own devices (the "state of nature") logically leads to unceasing conflict and unremitting fear. Frustrated in their realization of their basic desires, human beings voluntarily exchange their chaotic natural freedom for peace and order by means of a social contract, the terms of which call upon the parties to renounce all liberties and rights they possess by nature (with the exception of self-preservation itself). Any contract that permits the retention of some rights, and thus a limitation on the sovereign's absolute authority, will fail to achieve the peace sought and will eventually slip its members back into the state of nature. In contrast with Bodin, Hobbes did not insist that the constitutional form of sovereign rule *must*

be monarchy, although it is evident that he preferred royal government. Rather, Hobbes held that *any* type of regime—aristocracy (rule of the few) and democracy (the rule of the many) as well as kingship (the rule of one)—might meet the standard for sovereign authority so long as it commanded with an undivided and single voice.

Hobbes recognized that religion constituted an especially fertile source of political conflict and thus a particular threat to the maintenance of sovereign authority. To remedy the divisive consequences of religion, he offered a rather extreme solution in the second half of *Leviathan*, of strictly limiting the autonomy of ecclesiastical officials and offices and reinterpreting Christian theology in a manner consonant with his conceptions of human nature and sovereignty. While Hobbes's Erastian proposals were highly unusual, his comments about religion and public order demonstrate clearly how the emergence of the idea of sovereignty reflected deep concern about the corrosive effects of confessional dispute.

A further strand of absolutism may be associated with "patriarchal" ideas, such as were proposed by Sir Robert Filmer (c. 1586–1653). In his *Patriarcha*, Filmer drew a direct analogy between Adam, to whom God had entrusted the whole of the earth, and the kings who followed after him. Since Adam enjoyed unchecked sovereignty over both natural resources and over his family, so should his heir, the king, possess fatherly authority to dispose of his subjects and their goods as he saw fit, without the approval of a superior authority.

### Early Modern Views: Popular Sovereignty

Alongside the view that absolute power was vested in a single governor (or group of governors) emerged the competing doctrine that the sole legitimate source of authority sprang from the people as a collectivity or joint body. Intimations of this idea can be discovered in medieval authors such as Marsilius of Padua (c. 1280–c. 1343), for whom all forms of legislative and executive power pertained in the first instance to the whole body of citizens. But Marsilius's theory possessed the same deference to the fragmented condition of authority in the Middle Ages that characterized Beaumanoir. Instead, the modern principle of popular sovereignty arose in response to the perceived excesses of absolutistic theories.

Writing in explicit opposition to Filmer (and perhaps also indirectly against Hobbes), John Locke (1732–1804) insisted that sovereignty is the creation of the people who contract with one another to form civil society and who only entrust executive authority to a government conditionally. In contrast with Filmer, Locke held that the natural condition of mankind was individual freedom, and no person—not even a man's own offspring—was entirely subject to arbitrary rule. Against Hobbes, Locke maintained the impossibility of renouncing one's natural rights of subjects to life, liberty, and estate in the process of creating sovereign power. Instead, a ruler who systematically violates human rights breaches the bond of trust that authorizes his office. Locke thus insists that no one is obligated to obey the commands of an illegitimate government. If the magistrate attempts to coerce their obedience, members of civil society may legitimately use force against him, just as

they would in the case of robbery or assault, since they retain control of their rights individually and together.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) extended the idea of popular sovereignty by means of an innovative marriage between Lockean and Hobbesian insights. Sovereignty for Rousseau cannot be exercised legitimately by any authority external to the body of citizens. The citizens alone are competent to renounce their natural liberty and bind themselves jointly and individually to laws and rulers. Hence, no matter what constitutional form of government is appointed—and Rousseau contends that kingship, aristocracy, and democracy may each be appropriate, depending on the scale of the territory to be governed—it remains only the executive of the general will of the community. Freedom reposes strictly and exclusively in the communal order in which the moral liberty of each person assumes the equal moral liberty of every person, guaranteed under the terms of the law and protected by the magistrates. Hence, Rousseau’s free state is guided by the collective determinations of the people about how they wish to live—a clear statement of a system of popular sovereignty. Nor can the general will be judged errant or mistaken. Whatever the people decide is right and must be treated as obligatory.

### Later Developments

The dispute between absolutistic and popular conceptions of sovereignty might seem highly polarized and irresolvable. Certainly, the violent upheavals of the French Revolution between the ancien régime and the advocates of popular rule seemed to presage a cataclysmic clash between two profoundly opposed visions of the location of supreme authority. But at times, efforts were made to find a common ground or bridge between the apparently incommensurable points of view.

The framers of the United States federal Constitution, ratified in 1789, afforded one strategy for resolving the conflict. The Constitution proclaimed in its preamble the sovereignty of the people as the source of the authorization of government and the execution of public duties. Toward this end, some officials were to be directly elected on the democratic principle of one vote assigned to each citizen. At the same time, other magistrates such as the President and Vice-President and senators were to be selected by intermediary bodies (the Electoral College and state legislatures, respectively, although the ratification of the Seventeenth Amendment in 1913 provided for senators to be directly elected), while still others (such as the judiciary) were appointed by essentially non-democratic means. The result was to create a system of checks and balances to diffuse the potential domination of any portion of the populace—especially, the poor and least educated (but numerically greater) segment of the people. The supporters of this vision articulated a set of theoretical principles supporting the constitutional design in the collection of occasional essays collected together under the title of *The Federalist Papers* (1788).

From a more philosophical perspective, the German thinker Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831) in his *Philosophy of Right* (1821) endorsed a conception of the state that also sought to redress the divide between absolutism and populism. Hegel evinced considerable skepticism concerning the

viability—let alone coherence—of unmitigated popular sovereignty such as that endorsed by Rousseau. Hegel instead posited a realm of civil society the members of which concerned themselves with their own narrow and partial interests. In order to ensure that these interests did not come into conflict, they received representation at the level of a legislative body and enforcement by a professionalized and disinterested civil service. But Hegel also insisted that an independent hereditary monarchy, unencumbered by any external constraints, was necessary to ensure that the laws governing the nation arose from an undivided and unimpeachable act of will. Hence, Hegel’s king lacks constitutional restraints, in the sense that he is not obligated to defer to the popular determinations of the legislature, but his absolute power is limited to the ability to affirm or deny the statutes with which he is presented.

### Obsolescence of Sovereignty?

Given the condition of the political map in the aftermath of the Treaty of Westphalia (1648), with its checkerboard of nation-states, sovereignty might seem to be a doctrine with global purchase, taken as universally efficacious and valid. Yet in many places the idea of sovereignty never really took hold, and in many contexts there may be good reason to declare its erosion or increasing irrelevance.

In certain cases, the spread of European political and legal values in the wake of colonialism often was received with indifference, if not hostility. New Zealand’s early colonial history is instructive. When the British arrived to settle Aotearoa in the mid-nineteenth century, they entered into an agreement, the Treaty of Waitangi (1840), with some of the tribal elders of the Polynesian (Maori) population that ceded—or so the colonizers thought—“absolutely and without reservation all the rights and powers of Sovereignty” to the English Crown. The Treaty, set down in both English and Maori languages (of which the latter is the official version), takes as the equivalent for *sovereignty* the word *kwanatanga*, a term that means something like “trusteeship” in Maori. Indeed, it remains unclear whether the Maori had any vocabulary at the time that could plausibly be translated as “sovereignty,” simply because their worldview, not to mention political and legal language, was so differently constituted than that of the Pakeha (Europeans). The consequences of this crucial failure on the part of the British to recognize the cultural specificity of “sovereignty” resonate into the twenty-first century, as the Maori and Pakeha populations of the country struggle to accommodate the tribal social, economic, and legal system that was never actually surrendered in the context of a representative democracy that claims the status of a sovereign state.

Another illustration of the breakdown of sovereignty derives from the appearance, especially since World War II, of transnational regimes in both the public and private spheres. Economic globalization, free trade zones, and the easy flow of capital across national borders obviously threaten the ability of sovereign states to make crucial decisions about the welfare of their citizens. Moreover, quasi-governmental and non-governmental agencies and institutions such as the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund, and the European Union have been granted



(some say, usurped) many of the rights and powers customarily associated with sovereignty, whether in a legal, economic, military, or cultural sense. Little wonder that in a 1999 appraisal of the topic, Stephen Krasner refers to the very idea of sovereignty—in our own times, and perhaps even in the past—as “organized hypocrisy.” The interdependence that ties together the international state system seems increasingly likely to relegate sovereignty to the dustbin of obsolete concepts.

At the same time, sovereignty throughout the world has come under direct challenge from subnational groupings as well. The rise of regional independence movements, often built around ethno-nationalist agendas, sets in question the basic principle that public power must derive from a single autonomous and supreme source. One encounters the demand for autonomy and sometimes secession even in highly developed nation-states with strong traditions of sovereign authority, such as the United Kingdom, Spain, and Canada. It is little wonder that some scholars during the last several decades of the twentieth century spoke about the “re-feudalization” or “re-tribalization” of the political scene globally.

See also *Authority; Monarchy; Nation; Power; State, The.*

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**SPACE.** See *Field Theories; Physics; Relativity.*

**SPECIES.** See *Life.*

**SPONTANEOUS GENERATION.** See *Development.*

**SPORT.** “What do they know of cricket who only cricket know?” queried the historian and political reformer C. L. R. James in the preface of *Beyond a Boundary* (1963), his lyrical exploration of political, social, and racial relations in the twentieth-century West Indies and British Empire. He answered throughout the book that those who only know sport really know nothing of value. Sport, he insisted, was an essential part of the fabric of modern cultures, the democratic art of the globe’s common folk, the stage on which a myriad of social issues were contested. Intellectuals who dismissed sport as mere games or mass opiates misunderstood the fundamental power of sport for shaping modern culture, James insisted. James wrapped his arguments for West Indian political independence and the equality of people of color in the British Empire in discourses on cricket and the ideals of fair play. “It isn’t cricket,” James insisted, whether he was decrying poor sportsmanship within the boundaries or denouncing racism on the cricket pitch or in any other human endeavor.

In the course of his meditation on sport, James also claimed that ideas about sport were interwoven with ideas about identity, citizenship, gender, and every other facet of human culture in ancient as well as modern societies. Following the lead of James, scholars since the 1960s have contended that ideas about sport are inextricably linked to ideas about politics, economics, and other facets of culture. The vast majority of investigations about the power of sport in shaping and revealing cultural mentalities have concentrated on modern history, especially on modern Western societies. A smaller contingent has excavated the athletic ideologies of classical Western antiquity. The sporting lives and ideas of non-Western and non-modern peoples remain mostly unexplored. Regardless of the time period or culture studied, however, recent scholarship insists that those who know only the details of sporting practices and nothing about the larger cultures which shape and are shaped by those practices really know nothing of value.

#### Sport and Traditional Cultures

Modern conceptions of the contrasts between tradition and modernity frame contemporary studies of the history of ideas about sport, physical education, and body culture. Perhaps the most influential work in shaping contemporary paradigms, Allen Guttman’s *From Ritual to Record* (1978), grounds the history of athletic competition firmly in the modernity versus tradition dialectic. While contemporary scholars certainly bring differing theoretical perspectives to the study of ideas about sport, they rarely question the notion that traditional and modern physical cultures are essentially different entities.



Even though a few historians argue that traditional physical activities are so different from modern athletics that sport can only be understood as a product of modernity, a range of evidence indicates an ancient lineage for sport. Sport, in various forms, has been a part of cultural life since the origins of the human species. As most anthropologists contend, the hunters and gatherers of early human history lived in societies with abundant leisure. Their sports played a critical role in teaching the skills and teamwork necessary for hunting and warfare. Athletic contests served as sites for the demonstration of physical prowess—particularly male prowess. Sports were also embedded in the religious rituals of hunters and gatherers, as they are enmeshed today in the sacred practices of the world's few remaining traditional cultures.

The archaeological evidence for sport among hunters and gatherers, or among the early farmers in the new agricultural societies that began to emerge in various places around the world circa 7000 B.C.E., is limited and sketchy. Carvings and inscriptions related to sport appear occasionally in ancient Western, American, and Asian civilizations. The first compelling written evidence regarding ancient ideas about sport appears in Homer's *Iliad* (c. 750 B.C.E.) and *Odyssey* (c. 725 B.C.E.). Homer's work reveals Greek aristocrats who used competitive sport as a vehicle for demonstrating prowess. Significantly the ancient Greeks used the same word, *agon*, to refer to athletic contests and combat. Winning honor and glory in war or sport marked the zenith of Greek masculine achievement.

Ancient Greeks formalized and rationalized competitive athletics, moving from funeral games and irregular contests to well-organized sporting extravaganzas held at a variety of sites, and especially in sacred places to honor Greek gods. The most important Greek athletic festival, celebrated every four years beginning in 776 B.C.E., was the Olympic Games. The Olympics evolved into a vital celebration of pan-Hellenic identity for the balkanized Greek city-states. Greek citizens felt compelled to make a pilgrimage to Olympia at least once in a lifetime. Homages to and exposés of the Olympics appeared frequently in Greek literature, philosophy, and drama. Greek city-states sponsored athletic programs to develop stars to win fame for their hometowns in the games, especially at Olympia.

The Olympics reveal much about Greek culture. Participation and spectatorship were limited to males. Only freeborn Greek citizens could compete in the Olympics. Victors won olive-wreath crowns symbolizing their accomplishments. Early twenty-first century scholarship indicates that the Greeks had no conception of what moderns label amateurism. While Olympic champions received only symbolic garlands from the sponsors of the festival, their city-states subsidized their training and bestowed enormous riches on those who brought glory to their polis.

The Greeks also sponsored sporting contests in which athletes competed directly for lucrative prizes such as the Panathenaic Games. Athletes earned fame and fortune in ancient Greece. Public acclaim translated their athletic prowess into political clout. Male athletes served as icons of physical beauty and objects of erotic desire. The athlete embodied Greek notions of physical perfection and inspired artistic re-creations of

the human form. By the 500s B.C.E., a class of professional athletes appeared in Greece. The time, effort, and attention lavished on athletics earned condemnation from Greek intellectuals such as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, who did not object to athletic competition in principle but disparaged the narrow focus on bodily prowess to the exclusion of all other characteristics of good citizenship required of elite athletes. These thinkers argued that athletics should be one of many components in the general training of good citizens. Such arguments sparked a debate about the meaning and purpose of sport that has raged in Western societies ever since, raising issues regarding whether sport should serve the general education of the common citizen or whether sport should serve exclusively to test the extremes of human capability.

Traditionally scholars have argued that, with a few exceptions such as an athletic festival for women hosted at Olympia in honor of the goddess Hera or odes to the athletic prowess of Spartan maidens, Greek athletics were relentlessly patriarchal. In the 1990s, a debate over the level of participation by Greek women in athletics began. Some revisionists posit a much more substantial role for women in Greek sport, noting that female names appear on lists of Olympic victors. In one famous case, a woman who owned a chariot team won an Olympic race. Other revisionists argue that contextual readings of the evidence reinforces rather than revises the patriarchal nature of Greek sport, contending that an accurate interpretation reveals that the Spartan female chariot owner was in fact a surrogate put forward by her male relatives to further embarrass the defeated chariot teams and demonstrate that wealth rather than masculine skill won equestrian competitions.

Greek athletics spread throughout the ancient world during the Hellenistic era. Greek stadia, gymnasia, and hippodromes appeared in cities throughout the ancient West. Even after the conquest of Greece by Rome, Greek athletics remained the normative conception in ancient Western cultures. The Romans, like other cultures influenced by the Greeks, both adopted and resisted Greek ideas. Some Roman patricians patronized the Olympic and other Greek games and propagated Greek notions of the importance of physical education in the general development of the citizenry. Other Roman elites, with the support of many plebeians, rejected Greek athletics as too hedonistic and effete for Roman tastes. The Greek custom of competing in the nude offended Romans such as the philosopher Cicero, who condemned Greek sport as undermining family, duty, and state.

Still, like the Greeks, the Romans promoted chariot racing and built huge monuments for sporting contests. The Romans practiced a different set of spectacles that emerged from a different history. The *ludi Romani* represent the first appearance of mass spectator sport in history. The Roman games comprised three basic disciplines. The circuses, by far the most popular and common of the three spectacles, devoted themselves to chariot racing. The *munera* presented gladiatorial combats to the masses. The *naumachia*, the rarest of the Roman games, were elaborate reconstructions of famous naval battles. Each of the Roman games was deeply intertwined in the political conflicts of Roman society. Chariot teams at

circuses promoted political factions. Gladiators fighting to the death reminded both Roman citizens and barbarians that the empire had been built on violence. Significantly very few of the gladiators were Roman citizens. The vast majority were war captives, criminals, or political or religious dissenters sentenced to the arena for the amusement of the masses. Opposition to gladiatorial games from both Roman and non-Roman sources highlighted the cruelty of the *munera*. Foes of Roman games also condemned them as part of a “bread and circuses” policy practiced by imperial governments to buy the consent of the masses with the dole and sporting delights. These condemnations of sport as an agent of statecraft bent on diverting the people from social problems have remained staples of sporting critiques into the contemporary era.

Greek and Roman sports were exceptional in their imperial reach and sophisticated organization but traditional in most other aspects. Traditional sports were frequently part of sacred rites and were generally martial exercises for training warriors. Traditional sporting practices were almost invariably local and loosely organized. Traditional games varied from place to place and from time to time, and were based on custom rather than formal rules. Traditional sports were incredibly durable, lasting in similar form for thousands of years. Finally traditional sports were, like traditional social relations, structured around social inequalities. Hierarchy, kinship, ethnicity, and gender habitually shaped participation. Women were generally excluded from the sports of traditional societies, especially as participants and sometimes as spectators.

### Sport and Modern Cultures

Histories of sport reveal that modern cultures conceptualize physical activity differently than traditional societies. Modern sport tends toward the secular rather than the sacred. A focus on equality, both in the conditions of competition and in opportunities to compete, consumes modern sport. Modern sport replicates modern social structures in other ways as well, manifesting the peculiar modern manias for specialization, bureaucratization, rationalization, and quantification in unique ways. In modern history, sport is embedded in the major trends of modernity itself, industrialization, urbanization, and nationalism. Most significantly, at least from modern perspectives, has been a new conceptualization of sport as a useful tool for solving social problems that has replaced an understanding of sport as part of the steady rhythms of traditional life. The idea of sport as a social utility certainly has roots in older traditions, as Greek and Roman concepts about athletics as training for citizenship testify. However in the modern period the idea of sport as a useful tool grew to grand historic dimensions.

In early modern Europe, sports served the emerging centralized monarchies by symbolizing power and cultivating popular support. Monarchs commandeered the older sporting practices of the aristocracy in order to celebrate regal prowess and wealth. To gain popular support as they moved to usurp the power of the nobility and clergy, European monarchs transformed popular peasant pastimes into political rights to win over the masses. At the same time sport became a central element in the education of European elites. The Renaissance

witnessed the excavation of classical notions of sound minds in sound bodies. Renaissance thinkers insisted that a complete education developed physical as well as intellectual faculties. Utilitarian notions of sport also developed in unexpected places. Early-twenty-first-century scholarship has revealed that Protestant reformers, far from the sport-hating puritans of stereotype, in fact endorsed a variety of athletic endeavors as long as they were undertaken to make people better workers, better citizens, better soldiers, and better Christians.

Purposeful sport that served specific social ends was firmly established in Western societies in the early modern period. During the same epoch, the sports of non-Western cultures moved rapidly toward extinction. The “Columbian Exchange” in sport was initially a one-way street. Indigenous sports, such as the elaborate ritual of the Mesoamerican ball game, were destroyed by Western conquest. Modern sports developed almost exclusively in Western cultures. Western cultures sometimes appropriated pastimes such as lacrosse, a game with heritages in both Europe and the Americas, but they relentlessly modernized them. A survey of sports including the largest global athletic event, the modern Olympic Games, reveals that, with one exception, all developed from Western sources. That one exception, judo, was invented by pro-Western innovators in Japan who sought to modernize their own nation through the introduction of Western-style sports. The global sporting culture that has emerged since the mid-1800s is a product of the West.

The rise of the modern nation-state, beginning in Europe and North America in the eighteenth century, fueled rapid growth of the idea of sport as a useful social tool. In sport many nationalists thought that they had discovered an elemental force for making the French Revolution’s three criteria for modern nationhood—liberty, equality, fraternity—into social realities. Through modern sport they proclaimed the end of the old sporting order of *ancien regimes* and the rise of new national pastimes, from cricket to prize fighting to varieties of football to baseball. They recognized, as C. L. R. James later noted, that when the modern masses had the liberty to choose their leisure they gravitated to sport. Sport also became a testing ground for modern notions of equality. Class, ethnicity, race, and gender boundaries increasingly came under attack on playing fields in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The ideal, if not always the reality, of equality, played to mass audiences in sporting dramas through “great experiments” in racial integration such as the tales of Jackie Robinson in U.S. baseball, Edson Arantes do Nascimento (better known as Pelé) in Brazilian soccer, and Learie Constantine in British cricket.

It was, however, the third element of the French Revolution’s prescription for modern nationalism where sport found the most fertile loam. More than any other modern institution with the exception of war, sport provides the necessary conditions for the blossoming of fraternity, the patriotic bonds that bind citizen to citizen. Sport and physical education as agents of fraternal bonding first developed during the 1700s and 1800s in the English-speaking world and in Germany. In Germany, which was occupied by France and not yet unified as a modern state, a powerful national movement known as

the Turners arose. The Turners were devoted explicitly to promoting physical fitness and implicitly to creating a nation of soldier-athletes to win independence for the fatherland. The movement married exercise to patriotism. Turners formed the core of the German revolution against French hegemony and fought for a unified German nation. The Turner movement spread to German communities in Europe and the Americas, and sparked imitations in Denmark and Sweden. The inherent Germanness of the physical education system, however, ultimately prevented global diffusion of the Turners.

At the same time, in the heartland of the industrial revolution, modern competitive sports developed in Great Britain, its colonies, and its former colonies. National games such as cricket, soccer football, and rugby football emerged. Promoters sold these games as the fraternal foundation of Greater British identity. Resistance to British national games from sections of the English-speaking world sparked the modernization of Gaelic football and hurling in Ireland and the invention of baseball and American football in the United States. Through these games, and the massive literature that grew to support them such as the classic English sporting novel, *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1857), Anglo-American cultures crafted the idea that participation in sport taught modern peoples the basic tenets of citizenship. In Anglo-American ideology sport promoted moral virtue, balanced individual and communal needs, and fostered fair competition in every social endeavor. Sports, as Anglo-American promoters ceaselessly preached, were essential tools in the construction of modern nationhood.

While the gymnastic exercises of German Turners failed to find a receptive global audience, Anglo-American sports soon became a worldwide phenomenon. As the world's major imperial power, Great Britain's games spread throughout the world. As a rising imperial power, the sports of the United States also spread. With the birth of the modern Olympic Games in 1896, an event midwived by the baron Pierre de Coubertin, a French Anglophile who fervently believed in Anglo-American sporting ideology, modern Western sport moved toward global hegemony. During the twentieth century, the Olympic Games and the World Cup soccer tournament—a 1930 spin-off from the Olympics—became the world's most popular spectacles. Soccer football, originally a British pastime, became “the world's game,” spreading from the West to the rest of the world through emulation and diffusion rather than at imperial gunpoint. Non-Western cultures clearly chose to adopt this European import.

Encased in rhetorical claims that sport promoted peaceful internationalism, the global spread of sport during the world's bloodiest century (the 1900s) revealed that most of the world's cultures had converted to the Anglo-American faith that sport was a crucial element for fueling patriotism rather than athletic pacifism. As sport became the common language of global culture, it represented a dialect that forged national rather than global identities and was spoken with equal fluency by dictatorships as well as democracies. Sport represented an essential bonding agent in the “imagined communities” of many modern nations. Initially national sporting cultures embraced men but discouraged or excluded women from serving as patriotic

athletes or fans. As ideas of gender equity altered social relations in modern nations, the homosocial boundaries of sport came under assault. By the end of the nineteenth century, women had begun to participate as both spectators and players in increasing numbers. The emergence of women in sport was frequently equated to women's emancipation and suffrage. When U.S. swimmer Gertrude Ederle became the first woman to conquer the English Channel in 1926, beating the times of all the men who had previously navigated those waters, her feat was hailed as a triumph that rivaled the acquisition of women's voting rights.

In spite of the feats of Ederle and other women, male performances remained normative in modern sport. Women athletes were frequently prized as much for their sexual appeal as for their athletic prowess, a consumer culture trend since the early twentieth century that perhaps explains the early-twenty-first-century global fascination with tennis player Anna Kournikova. Fans in many nations both cheered and leered when women Olympians stoked the fraternal furnaces of athletic nationalism. In cultures where women athletes raised direct challenges to gender orders, such as in some modern Islamic states, female champions such as the Algerian runner Hassiba Boulmerka aroused violent reactions.

Sporting conflicts over ideas about gender reveal that in the early-twenty-first century sport remains a powerful site for debating social concepts and practices. The history of ideas about sport indicates that the question that began C. L. R. James's meditation on cricket and West Indian culture should be expanded. What do they know of sport who only sport know? Insights into human societies develop at the intersection of sport with the myriad other facets of culture, from politics to religion to gender to economic interchange. In the history of ideas, sport represents a popular common pursuit for many societies at many times that can reveal much about the dynamic complexities of human cultures.

See also *Body, The*.

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Mark Dyreson

## STATE, THE.

This entry includes two subentries:

### Overview

#### *The Postcolonial State*

### OVERVIEW

The concept of the state was central to the social sciences until temporarily displaced in the 1950s by a concept of the “political system” that is mainly associated with Talcott Parsons’s (1902–1979) systems analysis. Parsons’s sociology identified the political system with behaviors and institutions that provide a center of integration for all aspects of the social system. David Easton echoed Parsons by declaring that “neither the state nor power is a concept that serves to bring together political research” and instead defined the political system as “those interactions through which values are authoritatively allocated for a society” (p. 106). Systems analysis was tied closely to various theories of decision making, but most notably to pluralist theory, which viewed decision making as the outcome of peaceful bargaining between interest groups in society. Pluralist theory implicitly assumed that key sources of power such as wealth, force, status, and knowledge, if not equally distributed, are at least widely diffused among a plurality of competing groups in society.

### Return to the State

A return to the state in political science, sociology, and history was launched by the publication of Nicos Poulantzas’s *Pouvoir politique et classes sociales* (1968; Political power and social classes) and Ralph Miliband’s *The State in Capitalist Society* (1969), which directly challenged pluralist theory and systems analysis. The worldwide political rebellions of 1968 called into question the dominant assumptions of an academic social science that presumed the existence of pluralism and system equilibrium as the basis of the political system. Miliband and Poulantzas both drew on a radical tradition identified with the writings of Karl Marx (1818–1883), Friedrich Engels (1820–1895), V. I. Lenin (Vladimir Ilich Ulyanov; 1870–1924), and Antonio Gramsci (1891–1937) and considered a theory of the state anchored in this tradition to be the main alternative to the dominant social science. Their works were highly

influential. At the height of his popularity in the mid-1970s, Miliband was one of the leading political scientists in the English-speaking world. Nicos Poulantzas was arguably the most influential political theorist in the world, with works that influenced scholars in Europe, North America, and Latin America.

### Instrumentalism and Structuralism

Miliband’s writings are most notable for reestablishing an instrumentalist theory of the state, which was subsequently adopted by many scholars conducting research on political institutions and public policy. Prior to Miliband, the instrumentalist theory of the state had been articulated cryptically by Paul Sweezy, who asserted the state is “an instrument in the hands of the ruling class for enforcing and guaranteeing the stability of the class structure itself” (p. 243). Miliband identifies the ruling class of a capitalist society as “that class which owns and controls the means of production and which is able, by virtue of the economic power thus conferred upon it, to use the state as its instrument for the domination of society” (p. 23). Both authors trace this concept of the state to Marx’s famous dictum in *The Communist Manifesto* that “the executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the affairs of the whole bourgeoisie.” Miliband identified the chief deficiency of Marxist political theory as the fact that nearly all Marxists had been content to assert this general thesis as more or less self-evident, but without proving it. Thus, Miliband’s main objective in renewing state theory was “to confront the question of the state in the light of the concrete socio-economic and political and cultural reality of actual capitalist societies” (p. 6). Miliband suggests that Marx provided a conceptual foundation for the socioeconomic analysis of capitalist societies, Lenin provided guidance for a political analysis, and Gramsci supplied the conceptual apparatus for a cultural and ideological analysis of capitalist societies. Miliband was convinced that the central thesis and conceptual structure of Marxist political theory was effectively in place and therefore what Marxist political theory needed was more empirical and historical analysis to give concrete content to this thesis and its associated concepts.

The state, as Miliband conceives it, does not exist as such, but is a conceptual reference point that “stands for . . . a number of particular institutions which, together, constitute its reality, and which interact as parts of what may be called the state system” (p. 49). This state system is actually composed of five elements that are each identified with a cluster of particular institutions, including:

1. The governmental apparatus, which consists of elected legislative and executive authorities at the national level, which make state policy;
2. The administrative apparatus, consisting of the civil service bureaucracy, public corporations, central banks, and regulatory commissions, which regulate economic, social, cultural, and other activities;
3. The coercive apparatus, consisting of the military, paramilitary, police, and intelligence



agencies, which together are concerned with the deployment and management of violence;

4. The judicial apparatus, which includes courts, the legal profession, jails and prisons, and other components of the criminal justice system;
5. The subcentral governments, such as states, provinces, or departments, counties, municipal governments, and special districts.

One of the most direct indicators of ruling-class domination of the state is the degree to which members of the capitalist class control the state apparatus through interlocking positions in the governmental, administrative, coercive, and other apparatuses. Miliband emphasizes that: "It is these institutions in which 'state power' lies, and it is through them that this power is wielded in its different manifestations by the people who occupy the leading positions in each of these institutions" (p. 54). A similar concept of the state was also adopted by many non-Marxists, such as G. William Domhoff, who proposed a power structure theory of how "the owners and managers of large banks and corporations dominate the United States" (p. xi). Although indebted to Marx's writings, Miliband was also aware that Marx "never attempted a systematic study of the state" (p. 5) comparable to the one conducted by Miliband, but instead left a collection of political writings that are unsystematic, fragmentary, and sometimes self-contradictory.

This ambiguity in Marx's work quickly led to a disagreement with Nicos Poulantzas, who became the leading spokesperson for a structuralist theory of the state. Poulantzas claims that the basic structure of the capitalist mode of production generates contradictory class practices and crisis tendencies that inexorably disrupt the capitalist system at the economic, political, and ideological levels. These crisis tendencies and contradictions necessitate a separate structure to specifically maintain and restore its equilibrium as a system. Although Poulantzas modified systems analysis by introducing class conflict as a disequilibrating mechanism, he was nevertheless clearly indebted to the American functionalists and systems theorists in arguing that the general function of the state in the capitalist mode of production is its function as "the regulating factor of its global equilibrium as a system" (p. 45).

Whereas Miliband articulates an institutionalist conception of power, Poulantzas articulates a functionalist conception of power anchored by the methodological assumptions of structural functionalism. In direct contrast to Miliband, Poulantzas draws a sharp analytic distinction between the concepts of state power and the state apparatus. Poulantzas defines the state apparatus as: "(a) The place of the state in the ensemble of the structures of a social formation," that is, the state's functions and "(b) The personnel of the state, the ranks of the administration, bureaucracy, army, etc." (p. 116). The state apparatus is a unity of the effects of state power (i.e., policies) and the network of institutions and personnel through which the state function is executed. Poulantzas emphasizes the functional unity between state power and the state apparatus with the observation "that structure is not the simple principle of

organization which is exterior to the institution: the structure is present in an allusive and inverted form in the institution itself" (p. 115, fn. 24).

Poulantzas defines state power as the capacity of a social class to realize its objective interests through the state apparatus. Bob Jessop observes that within this framework "state power is capitalist to the extent that it creates, maintains, or restores the conditions required for capital accumulation in a given situation and it is non-capitalist to the extent these conditions are not realised" (p. 221). In structuralist theory, the objective effects of state policies on capital accumulation and the class structure are the main objective indicators of state power.

Poulantzas's well-publicized methodological differences with Miliband were deeply influenced by the French structuralist philosopher Louis Althusser, but like Miliband, he also claims to draw on the work of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Gramsci and "to provide a systematic political theory by elucidating implicit ideas and axioms in their practical writings" (pp. 1, 42). Yet, while Miliband placed Marx and Engels's *Communist Manifesto* at the center of his political theory, Poulantzas identifies *Capital* as "the major theoretical work of Marxism" (p. 20). The chief difficulty in designating *Capital* as Marx's central theoretical treatise is that it is an unfinished work with no theory of social class and no theory of the state, but a text that is rife with lacunae, omissions, and stated intentions never fulfilled in fact, particularly in its latter volumes.

These disputes were aired in the *New Left Review* in a series of widely heralded polemical exchanges that became known as the Miliband-Poulantzas debate. The debate itself was symptomatic of unresolved epistemological issues within Marxism that had far-reaching methodological repercussions beyond state theory and even beyond Marxism. Their public debate set off a wide-ranging discussion among scholars throughout the world that stimulated renewed interest among social scientists in the nature of the state. The debate mainly revolved around Poulantzas's claim that Miliband's empirical and institutional analysis of the state in capitalist society constantly gives the impression that "social classes or 'groups' are in some way reducible to inter-personal relations . . . and the State is itself reducible to inter-personal relations of 'individuals' composing social groups and 'individuals' composing the State apparatus." Poulantzas insisted that this method of analysis failed to comprehend "social classes and the State as objective structures, and their relations as an objective system of regular connections, a structure and a system whose agents, 'men', are in the words of Marx, 'bearers' of it" (pp. 70–71).

Instrumentalists and structuralists were quickly divided into competing schools of thought symbolized by the fractiousness of the Miliband-Poulantzas debate. As the polemic between them and their supporters became redundant, state theorists began looking for ways to move beyond the methodological stalemate. Moreover, despite the ongoing methodological controversy, both theories of the state shared a common analytical postulate that the state successfully implements the long-term interests of the capitalist class by maintaining the equilibrium of the capitalist mode of production. This postulate was increasingly called into question in the later 1970s as a result of

slow economic growth, high unemployment, high inflation, and the crisis of the welfare state. The growing disequilibrium of the welfare state was dramatically symbolized by the expenditure rollbacks of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in Great Britain and President Ronald Reagan in the United States.

### Derivationism

The Miliband-Poulantzas stalemate and the crisis of the welfare state defined the intellectual and political context in which the journal *Kapitalistate* first introduced derivationism—also known as the capital logic school—to Anglo-American scholars. Derivationism emerged from the West German student movement in 1969, but it did not have an impact outside Germany until the translation and publication in 1978 of several essays by John Holloway and Sol Picciotto. The central axiom of the derivationist approach is that the analysis of the relation between state and society must be deduced from contradictions inherent in the capitalist mode of production. The rationale for this claim is that if capitalism were in fact a spontaneous and self-regulating economic system as stipulated by neoclassical economics, there would be no logical rationale for state action in relation to capital accumulation. Yet, the state routinely intervenes in economic relations in all capitalist societies. Therefore, derivationists posit the state as a logically necessary instance of capitalist society that must perform for the capitalist class those tasks that it inherently cannot perform for itself. These tasks, whatever their nature at any given historical period, define the general interests of the capitalist class.

Derivationism was viewed briefly as a way to transcend the methodological antinomies of the Miliband-Poulantzas debate because it focused state theory on the limitations imposed on state policies by its relation to the process of capital accumulation. Derivationism seemed to offer a more dynamic approach to the state that would explain the relationship between the state's historical political development and the underlying contradictions of the capitalist mode of production in contrast to the static models proposed by Miliband and Poulantzas. Paradoxically, the major objection to derivationism was that it tended to remain ahistorical and nonempirical in its approach to the state and thus provided little guidance to scholars who were interested in studying the historical political development of actually existing states.

The derivationists' main contribution was to call attention to the possibility that systematic and insurmountable limitations on state policy may be imposed by the developing contradictions of the capital accumulation process. It could no longer be assumed that the state would automatically succeed in maintaining the equilibrium of the capitalist system or resolve the underlying political conflicts generated by that process. Thus, state theorists increasingly searched for a theory of the state that could identify the limits of its policy-making capacities and that could conceptualize, anticipate, and explain the crisis tendencies of late capitalist societies, rather than describe its maintenance and stabilization mechanisms.

### Systems Analysis

A new systems-analytic approach sought to identify these limits by identifying specific examples of policy breakdown,

particularly instances where state policy either fails to maintain capital accumulation or to restabilize social order among disaffected subordinate classes. The systems-analytic theory of the state is largely identified with the "post-Marxist" works of Jürgen Habermas and Claus Offe, who were influenced by the derivationists conceptually, but whose methodology draws heavily on the radical systems theory of Niklas Luhmann. Offe is largely credited with advancing state theory beyond instrumentalism and structuralism by introducing the dependency principle. The dependency principle asserts that the decision-making power and policy capabilities of the state in capitalist society are dependent upon the continuity of the capital accumulation process, primarily because of the modern state's dependence on tax revenues. Therefore, state elites in a capitalist economy must adopt policies that enhance business confidence in the short-run and that promote a favorable business climate over the long-run. Where state elites promote a favorable business climate with public policy, they will be rewarded with high rates of private investment, economic growth, and employment stability. Where state policies undermine business confidence, business people will refuse to invest, which generates an investment strike throughout the economy, while many business people may even redeploy their capital toward economies in which they have greater political and economic confidence.

The modern state's dependence on substantial and growing tax revenues means that every interest state personnel have "in their own stability and development can only be pursued if it is in accordance with the imperative of maintaining accumulation" (Offe, p. 126). According to Offe, "this fundamental dependency upon accumulation also functions as a selective principle upon state policies," because violating this logic of accumulation would simultaneously weaken or undermine all state capacities. Thus, a concern for the continuity of private accumulation is "incorporated in the pursuit of interests and policies that, considered by themselves, may have little or nothing to do with accumulation" (p. 126).

However, in a political democracy, the capitalist state must also be legitimate. A capitalist state that sustains an exploitative accumulation process can only achieve legitimacy by deploying concealment and ideological mechanisms. Concealment mechanisms, such as administrative secrecy, facilitate the adoption and implementation of maintenance policies outside the sphere of class struggle and special-interest competition. The state's ideological mechanisms convey the image that its power is organized to pursue the general interests of society as a whole, even though it functions in a specific relationship to capitalist accumulation. Consequently, a capitalist state must sustain and yet conceal a structural disjuncture between its democratic form and its capitalist functions.

The capitalist state must respond to contradictions in the capitalist mode of production with social policies, but an important feature distinguishing post-Marxist systems analysis from similar structuralist analyses is the assertion that welfare states actually fail to function at precisely those moments when most needed and these system failures result in contradictory outcomes that produce a variety of cumulative crisis tendencies

in capitalist societies. Jürgen Habermas and James O'Connor suggest that the political contradictions and policy failures of modern states cumulatively generate an economic crisis, a fiscal crisis, crises of state rationality and legitimation, and a motivation crisis in the underlying population and workforce.

### Organizational Realism

During the 1980s and 1990s, state theorists influenced by the new institutionalism in political science and sociology elucidated yet another post-Marxist approach to the state called organizational realism. Organizational realists define the state as an organization that attempts to extend coercive control and political authority over particular territories and the people residing within them. A fundamental thesis of organizational realism is that in pursuing this political objective state elites are self-interested maximizers whose main interest is to enhance their own institutional power, prestige, and wealth. Consequently, Theda Skocpol has suggested that during exceptional periods of domestic or international crisis state elites may be impelled to implement social policies, economic reforms, and institutional changes that concede subordinate class demands while violating the interests of those classes that benefit from the existing economic arrangements within a state's jurisdiction. Under certain circumstances, Skocpol argues that state elites might deploy state power to act against the long-run interests of a dominant class or even act to create a new mode of production. However, Skocpol cautions that the extent to which states actually are autonomous, and to what effect, varies from case to case, which means "the actual extent and consequences of state autonomy can only be analyzed and explained in terms specific to particular types of sociopolitical systems and to particular sets of historical international relations" (p. 30). Therefore, the aim of this research strategy has been to focus on the theoretically limited task of constructing empirical generalizations by using comparative historical case studies of policy formation and state institutional development.

### Economics and the State

The new institutionalism in state theory has been embraced by some economists, such as Douglass C. North, who observes that "the whole development of the new institutional economics must be not only a theory of property rights and their evolution but a theory of the political process, a theory of the state, and of the way in which the institutional structure of the state and its individuals specify and enforce property rights" (p. 233). There have been few significant efforts to follow through on this observation. Joseph Stiglitz also suggests that because most state activities involve questions of resource allocation, state theory falls within the purview of the economics discipline, but economists have largely neglected the state despite their agreement that there are only two ways of coordinating the economic activities of large populations: (1) central direction involving the use of coercion (that is, the state) and (2) the voluntary cooperation of individuals (the market).

Economists have devoted little attention to the theory of the state because most assume that markets provide optimal resource allocations in contrast to the state's supposed inefficiency. From this perspective, state intervention in the economy

is only justified in cases of market failure, but since market failures are considered exceptions to the rule that markets optimize resource allocations, the analysis of the state and its role in society is considered marginal to the main focus of neoclassical economics. At its most extreme, libertarian philosophers and economists not only accept this proposition, but draw on well-accepted definitions of the state as a coercive institution to argue that the state is inherently parasitic. Murray Rothbard claims that regardless of its form, the state is inherently illegitimate since it is dependent on "coerced levies" (i.e., taxes) that make it essentially no different from "a criminal band" beyond the fact that it is the "best organized aggressor against the persons and property of the mass of the public" (pp. 46–47). In contrast to Marxist theory, which views the state as a mechanism for subordinating subaltern classes by a dominant class, libertarian theory views the state itself as a political class that exploits the entire society of economic producers.

Stiglitz has proposed an economic model that reverses the main assumption of neoclassical economics with the argument that markets are always imperfect because information is imperfect and this makes all markets incomplete without state intervention. In Stiglitz's model, the issue for economists is not to identify market failures, since "these are pervasive in the economy, but of identifying large market failures where there is scope for welfare-enhancing government interventions" (pp. 38–39). This model incorporates the normative assumption that the state will (or should) pursue welfare-enhancing policies and, therefore, challenges the normative claims raised by most other theories of the state, which view it as an exploitative organization.

### Globalization and the State

The main contours of "the state debate" were fixed by the early 1990s, and there were few new developments in state theory as many scholars lost interest in the topic. The proliferation of state theories from 1968 onward resulted in an intellectual stalemate, where scholars retreated into their favored theoretical approach to conduct empirical and institutional research on political development and public policy. Postmodernist and poststructuralist theories of power claimed that power was not centered in the state, but diffused in a variety of everyday relationships and identities such as language, gender, race, ethnicity, mass media, medicine, family, work, and play. Many scholars shifted their attention to the analysis of these diffused forms of "micropower." Finally, the process of economic globalization, which became so evident in the 1990s, led others to conclude that the state was in crisis, retreat, or decline as its sovereign functions were lost or ceded to global markets and transnational corporations.

However, the latter trend also witnessed the emergence of new supranational institutions (for example, the European Union and the World Trade Organization) and the strengthening of preexisting international organizations (for example, the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund). This development stimulated renewed interest in state theory at the turn of the century, while shifting its analytic focus toward the new forms of global governance and their relation to the



nation-state. A variety of theoretical positions quickly appeared, which are distinguished mainly by their analysis of the American state within this global system and their claims about the role of the nation-state within the world economy.

The proponents of the American superstate thesis argue that the collapse of the Soviet Union has left the United States with no serious rivals in the economic, political, or military realms, and thus economic globalization and its auxiliary institutions are viewed as a projection of the American state's power on a global scale. Thus, globalization is not viewed as a development external to the nation-state, because it is nation-states, particularly the United States and its allies, that have played the leading role in creating a new global economy, while remaining the primary actors within the new supranational institutions.

A major theoretical challenge to this thesis is Martin Shaw's argument that an internationally legitimate "global-Western state" has integrated its member nation-state's functions as an organizer of legitimate violence and authoritative rule maker into larger bloc structures. While the United States played a leading role in constructing the Western state's supranational military and economic organizations, Shaw insists that "the idea of American hegemony is too simple to characterize relations within the Western state." Instead, Shaw claims that the global-Western state is "an integrated authoritative organization of violence" that should be considered "a new type of state, rather than an alliance or a complex set of alliances of states" (pp. 240–242).

Finally, a thesis proposed by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri seems to mark a new phase in the abandonment of the state concept. Hardt and Negri seek to replace the state with a concept of empire. Their main hypothesis is that globalization is transforming governance to such an extent that "sovereignty has taken a new form, composed of a series of national and supranational organisms united under a single logic of rule" (p. xii). The global form of sovereignty is called empire. Hardt and Negri argue that "Empire establishes no territorial center of power and does not rely on fixed boundaries or barriers. It is a decentered and deterritorializing apparatus of rule that progressively incorporates the entire global realm within its open expanding frontiers" (p. xii). Hardt and Negri concede that the United States enjoys a privileged position in empire, and they attribute the origins of its logic to the United States Constitution, but they view empire as a supranational logic "that effectively encompasses the spatial totality . . . that rules over the entire 'civilized' world." Empire is an "order that effectively suspends history and thereby fixes the existing state of affairs for eternity" and thus marks the end of history or the final phase of world political development (p. xiv).

See also *Empire and Imperialism; Marxism; Political Science; Sovereignty*.

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Clyde W. Barrow

#### THE POSTCOLONIAL STATE

The scope of coverage of the term *postcolonial* varies across disciplinary fields and authors, being broader in literary studies, for example, than in political science. Some authors include former settler colonies as referents alongside non-settler colonies. Other analysts, such as Amina Mama, distinguish the term *postcolonial*, used to refer specifically to former colonies, from the term *post-imperial*, preferring this term to refer to former imperial powers. In temporal terms, *postcolonial* does not refer simply to the period after colonialism but assumes continuity, in terms of the continued effects of processes initiated during colonialism, as well as discontinuity, in terms of new processes unfolding subsequently. The term *postcolonial* is used here to refer to the study of the attempted transformation, successful and otherwise, of former colonies in the context of changing imperial conditions.



### From Structural Functionalism to Marxist Structuralism

In the early days of independence, the individualistic approach of authors who singled out the performance of those in positions of power earned them the label of “leadership theorists.” Leadership was essentially viewed as a means for achieving “order.” Such writers shared much in common with the “nation-building” school of American structural functionalism, where “nation” was very often equated with “state.” This literature was more concerned with the possibilities of statehood and the development of political institutions in the new states than with the constraints on institutional development, the latter being of greater interest to Marxists. The chief merit of leadership approaches is the emphasis on the created aspects of state formation and the efforts of individuals with a degree of control over their political life and environment. Critics (see Stark) point out, however, that the analysis tends to foster philosophical idealism and does not take enough account of the relationship between ideology and social action.

During the 1960s and 1970s, the underdevelopment paradigm became very influential in efforts to explain the economies and modes of rule that decolonizing nations were constructing. Underdevelopment theorists were concerned with the economic dependency of postcolonial states in the context of international capitalism as well as the relative autonomy of the postcolonial state from social classes. The theoretical model drew on the dichotomy between base and superstructure that characterized Marxist structuralism, but the focus was on trade rather than production. Several authors (see Ollawa) have pointed out that the developmental experiences of decolonizing countries highlight the centrality of the postcolonial state in structuring the necessary conditions for continued capital accumulation and regulating the allocation of surplus among different social categories.

In an influential essay on Pakistan and Bangladesh, “The State in Post-Colonial Societies—Pakistan and Bangladesh” (1972), Hamza Alavi posited that the postcolonial state was “over-developed” due to its foreign creation. It was consequently particularly powerful compared to the leading agrarian and industrial classes, the latter being “under-developed.” The idea of the relative autonomy of the state was proposed because of the independent material base of the bureaucratic-military oligarchy and its relative autonomy from the other propertied classes. Critics of Alavi’s position point to the idea of the state being reduced to a handful of bureaucrats and military officers in his analysis. Understanding the limitations placed on the state’s responses to pressures from hegemonic interests requires a closer examination of the state, in relation to its constituent parts and in relation to the international environment, and a more comprehensive view of classes.

Alavi’s 1972 essay sparked off considerable debate amongst Marxist Africanists. This included John Saul’s emphasis on ideology, which he said was neglected in Alavi’s analysis, but was necessary for the state’s function of holding together the capitalist system. Colin Leys responded by reasserting the importance of class as the basis of analysis of the state, and others responded in a similar vein. Many Marxists are of the view

that patterns of belief can bind the state together and, drawing on the ideas of Antonio Gramsci (1891–1937), have attempted to conceptualize anew the role of elites and their ideologies, in the complex economic relationships of the post-colonial state.

### Interweaving History, Politics, and Culture

Jean-Francois Bayart points out that the notion that the state was an external structure does not recognize the ways in which Africans quickly re-appropriated the new state forms and the accompanying colonial political culture. Similar perspectives (e.g., Mbembe) point to the re-appropriation taking place not only in the institutional sphere but also in the material and cultural spheres. State power creates its own world of meanings through administrative and bureaucratic practices. It also attempts to institutionalize this world and turn it into people’s everyday understanding as well as the consciousness of the period.

The historicity of the postcolonial state is at the center of Bayart’s analysis. His focus is on the genesis of the state, the strategies of the actors, the procedures of accumulation and the world of political make-believe, all of which contribute to social inequality. Bayart’s evocative phrase, “the politics of the belly,” refers to desires and practices associated with interrelated themes: poverty and food scarcity; accumulation, corruption, and sexual excess. These are all understood as changing patterns of historical action, that are located in a network of tensions and interdependence, and that act upon one another. Bayart highlights the ways in which authoritarian regimes have managed to retain control over security forces and economic rents whilst maintaining the support of Western powers and international financial institutions. African postcolonial states rested on indigenous social bases whilst simultaneously being connected to the international system. Bayart’s approach counters the conception of African states and societies as lacking history, and of African politics as absent or inexplicable. These prevailed in colonial historiography, in philosophy, and continue today in mainstream Western sociology and political science.

From the 1980s onward, considerable scholarly attention across the social sciences has been paid to the “crisis” of the African state. The literature has also examined the shifting orientations of international financial institutions, from initially increasing the interventionist powers of the state to reversing that position by the mid-1980s. In an ideological climate defined by neoliberalism and marked by structural adjustment programs, scholars of diverse ideological orientations are united in their fierce criticism of international financial institutions, their appropriation of the concept of the “overdeveloped state” and the effects of their policy impositions on diverse categories of people. The literature has characterized the activities of international financial institutions as “rolling back the state” and bypassing the autonomy of the state in several critical ways through policy prescriptions and financing patterns.

Achille Mbembe’s poststructural analysis of the “post-colony” draws attention not just to the historical strength and purpose of the state but also to questions of power—its manifestations and the different techniques of enhancing its value to either ensure abundance or scarcity. Before and after

colonization, state power in Africa magnified its value by establishing specific relations of subjection that were informed by the distribution of wealth and tribute, and that shaped modes of constituting the postcolonial subject. Postcolonial states were strongly influenced by the modalities of their integration into world trade, such as reliance on one or more key resources for export, and whether they were financed through the peasantry, aid, or debt. Their modalities of integration shaped the forms taken by postcolonial states; the ways in which their ruling elites were inserted into international networks; and the structuring of relations among state, market, and society. Mbembe highlights the significance of the links that the postcolonial state in Africa forged among inter-related arenas. These were the production of violence, the allocation of privileges and livelihoods, and systems of transfer, such as the reciprocities and obligations comprising the communal social tie. The state's systems of allocations and transfers were significant in underpinning social and political cohesion and, thereby, the state's legitimacy.

Mbembe also draws attention to the present erosion of state legitimacy since the concentration of the means of coercion by the postcolonial state is difficult to achieve given the acute lack of material resources. Instead, autonomous power centers proliferate within what used to be a system. This is a consequence of the growing indebtedness of local rulers and trading elites, thus leading African polities to lose external power and exposing them to the risk of internal dissolution. The violence and predation required by the new form of integration into the international economy has led not only to the militarization of power and trade, and to increased extortion, but also to serious destabilization of the trade-offs that had previously governed the relationship between holding state power and pursuing private gain. The idea of the state as a general mechanism of rule and as the best instrument for making possible the exercise of citizenship is thus being seriously threatened.

### **Feminist Analyses of the Postcolonial State**

In contrast to the above approaches, a key debate among feminist analysts of the postcolonial state concerns the extent to which the state is able to act as a vehicle for social change aimed at increasing gender equality. For example, in Morocco in the early 1990s, the modernizing state drew women into the public arena through law and education. The other side of the debate concerns the state as a mechanism for male social control and the convergence between the state and patriarchal forces. Where politics becomes deeply communalized, particularly when it is supported by state-sponsored religious fundamentalism, the traditional control over women that rested with particular male individuals—such as fathers, brothers, husbands—soon shifts to all men. Sonia Alvarez argues that there is nothing essential about the state's ability to act in either direction—social change or social control—but that its trajectory is more likely to be determined by political regime and historical conjuncture.

The feminist analyst Shirin Rai conceptualizes the state as a network of power relations that are located in economic, political, legal, and cultural forms interacting with and against each other. This allows her to examine the state in the context

of social relations shaped by systems of power, which are themselves affected by struggles against these systems. Rai points out that the state may take different forms in different historical, social, and economic contexts, as in the case of postcolonial states emerging from struggles against imperialism and colonial rule. The nationalist opposition to colonialism was itself located within the modernizing framework favored by colonialists. The prioritization of goals, first by the nationalist movement and then by the postcolonial state, erased issues that potentially challenged the modernist developmental conceptions of the new nation-state, such as women's interests and rights.

Rai highlights three features of postcolonial states that are significant for women's strategizing for social change. The first concerns the transformative role of the state: most nationalist elites saw themselves as agents for social and economic transformation, and state institutions were also relatively autonomous from dominant social classes. This allows space for institutional and political struggles. Second, the infrastructural capacity of the state is uneven, resulting in the possibility of activists targeting sympathetic institutions and individuals within the state. Third, the existing level of corruption is an important determinant of whether negotiation within the state is possible or not. Rai points out that one of the important implications of the poststructuralist conception of power as dispersed is the recognition that power takes diverse forms and can be used in varied ways. Simply taking an adversarial position against the state may be positively dangerous for women, given the deeply masculinist character of society, including civil society.

The gendered character of state formation, state practices, and militarism are analyzed by Amina Mama. In an earlier paper, Mama had argued that, in an international context highly influenced by women's movements, the military regimes of Generals Ibrahim Babangida (1985–1993) and Sani Abacha (1993–1998) were appropriating Nigerian women and their struggles whilst seeking legitimacy for their continued rule. Later, she refined this position by pointing out that the situation was more complex than this. This complexity included the fact that the politics of transition, and hence its gender politics, was more improvised than planned and took several turns in different and contradictory directions. Moreover, Nigerian women, in diverse and competing ways, were not passive pawns but actively engaged in the political maneuvers involved.

Drawing on Michel Foucault's theorization of power as dispersed, Mama theorizes power as dispersed across micropolitical, existential states of being as well as more macropolitical formations such as the nation-state. This allows her to consider ways in which these different levels of social reality come together to produce resonance and, potentially, dissonance. Mama also draws on the feminist philosopher Judith Butler's development of Foucault's theorization of power, arguing that being implicated or enabled by relations of power does not rule out the possibility of subversion. Mama examines the gender discourses articulated by the Heads of State and their wives in successive regimes, the programs and political practices articulated by these discourses, and the different structural changes made in efforts to institutionalize them. In the process, she highlights the interplay among power, knowledge, and

practice that facilitated the manufacture of consent to the military regimes dominating the workings of the state.

Rajeswari Sunder Rajan delineates the changing, heterogeneous character of the postcolonial state in India in her exploration of the state's contradictory positions toward female citizens. In a feminist analysis of social realities textured by divisions of age, ethnicity, religion, and class, Sunder Rajan examines women's lives, needs, and struggles around issues such as child marriage, compulsory sterilization, female infanticide, and prostitution. She shows how the state is critical to an understanding of women's individual and group identities at the same time as women and their struggles affect the operations of the state.

### Conclusion

Three major conceptual fields are identifiable in the above literature. The first is that of structuralism, spanning ideas from structural functionalism to Marxism and with concomitant emphases on individualism and class. This field was in the ascendant in the 1960s and 1970s, its influence waning since then. The second field, emerging in the late 1980s, highlights the agency of actors in and around the state, located in inter-related historical, material, and cultural contexts. Although highly innovative in its syntheses of literature in history, politics, and cultural studies, the ideological orientation of this work in relation to social action is less clear. Finally, there is the field of feminist thought. This field shares common features with that highlighting agency, such as poststructural approaches to the analysis of power and the recognition of nonunitary, contradictory interests surrounding the postcolonial state. Unlike either of the other two fields, feminist scholarship is distinguished by its analysis of gendered state processes, the implications for women, and strategies for realizing gender justice.

See also *Anticolonialism; Colonialism; Postcolonial Studies*.

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Charmaine Pereira

**STATE OF NATURE.** The state of nature is a situation without government, employed in social contract theory in order to justify political authority. The device is most important in the works of the great contract theorists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, mainly Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679), John Locke (1632–1704), and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778). But it has a long history and was used by many other theorists. In the latter half of the twentieth century, variants of the state of nature were revived by John Rawls and other theorists who attempted to establish particular moral or political principles on the grounds that they would be selected in artificially constructed choice situations.

Accounts of humanity's purported natural condition differ in important ways, for example, whether circumstances are peaceful or riddled with conflict, whether there is an absence of society as well as the state, and the extent to which the people depicted resemble those in existing societies. These variations and others lead to justifications of different forms of governments—and moral principles.

### Early History

Mythical accounts of a pre-social and/or pre-political Golden Age abound in classical literature. Familiar variants are found in Hesiod's *Works and Days* (lines 108–21) and in Plato's *Statesman*. In Plato's *Protagoras*, the title character describes the original human condition as one of isolation and peril from wild beasts and the elements. Divine intervention provided fire and the crafts, which allowed humans to defend themselves, and moral qualities of justice and respect, which allowed them to live together peaceably. A roughly similar account was presented by Cicero, in *De inventione* (On invention, I.2.2), and an especially vivid account in Book V of Lucretius' *De rerum natura* (On the nature of things). A variant of these themes is that people originally enjoyed a condition of peace and plenty, until some intervening event gave rise to conflict, which made



the state necessary. The Stoic Posidonius attributed humankind's fall to the origin of property (Seneca, *Epistle* 90), while according to Ovid, the change occurred as people began to eat meat (*Metamorphoses*, XV.96–111).

Connections between an original condition and the origin of justices are presented in Book II of Plato's *Republic*. Plato's spokesman, Glaucon, argues that justice arose from a general compromise: people agreed not to take advantage of others, in exchange for not being taken advantage of themselves (358e–59b). This was perhaps the first “social contract” argument in the Western tradition.

Classical arguments blended well with Judaeo-Christian accounts of the Garden of Eden and subsequent fall, to support the important medieval notion that the state arose as a remedy for sin. But other theorists, influenced by Aristotle, argued against the state of nature and contract traditions, claiming that the human is naturally a political animal, and so there could not have been a primordial pre-social (or pre-political) condition. St. Thomas Aquinas and subsequent Scholastic theorists argued that even in the Garden of Eden, authority was necessary to coordinate people's activity to achieve the common good.

### Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau

During the late medieval and early modern periods, claims according to which political power originated from a pre-political, natural condition generally supported limitations on political power—which people would have required for renouncing their natural liberty. The great originality of Hobbes was to use a contract argument to establish absolute government. He accomplished this by depicting the state of nature in horrific terms, as a war of all against all, in which life is “solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short” (*Leviathan*, chap. 13). Hobbes argued that, in order to escape such horrors, people would consent to absolute political authority—and that only absolute authority could ward off the state of nature.

Although Hobbes employed the device of the state of nature for largely analytical purposes, he also believed in its historical accuracy. Evidence he provided is people's defensive behavior in society, the “savage people” in America, whom he saw as living in a “brutish manner,” and how states confront one another in the international arena, “in the state and posture of Gladiators,” with their “Forts, Garrisons, and Guns” pointed at one another (*Lev.* chap. 13).

In the state of nature described by Locke in his “Second Treatise of Government,” people live under the law of nature, which, in the absence of government, they enforce themselves (Secs. 6–9). People also establish property rights, use money, and have something of a developed economy. But conflict arises because people are self-interested and so not impartial in their own disputes. Recognizing the need for an impartial umpire, Lockean individuals leave the state of nature, in two stages, forming first a community and then government. When government violates the agreement according to which it was established, people revert to a pre-political but not pre-social state. The state of nature returns only with complete destruction of society, through foreign invasion or similar catastrophes (Sec. 211).

In his “Discourse on the Origin of Inequality,” Rousseau criticized other theorists for attributing to natural man qualities they found in their own societies. Influenced by anthropological and zoological discoveries, Rousseau depicted natural man as little different than an ape: solitary, without language, and with limited reasoning capacity. But because his purely physical needs are satisfied relatively easily, he is content and, above all, morally innocent. Man becomes corrupt only through a gradual process of moving into society, and Rousseau depicted the contract through which government originates as a clever fraud perpetrated by the rich upon the poor. Rousseau's political theory aspired to recapture as much primordial natural purity as possible, through the new contract described in *The Social Contract*.

### Contemporary Developments

By the end of the eighteenth century, the social contract was widely criticized on historical grounds. The idea fell into general disuse, and with it, the state of nature. Contract theory was revived by John Rawls, in *A Theory of Justice* (1971), although Rawls used his contract to justify moral principles rather than a form of government. Rawls's principles of justice are those that would be agreed upon under appropriately fair conditions. The state of nature reappears in his theory as the “original position.” In order to prevent people from choosing principles that would advantage themselves, they are placed behind a “veil of ignorance” and so deprived of knowledge of their personal attributes, e.g., age, religion, race, and wealth. The two principles selected under these conditions are highly egalitarian, guaranteeing equal liberty and that economic inequalities benefit the least-advantaged members of society. With Rawls, the state of nature (original position) loses all historical pretense. It is simply an analytical device to help identify appropriate moral principles.

Other theorists employ contractual devices to justify moral principles rather than government. In David Gauthier's *Morals by Agreement*, appropriate principles are those that would be agreed upon by parties motivated by self-interest. Gauthier's “initial bargaining position” differs from Rawls's original position in that the parties have full knowledge of their circumstances and interests. The principles agreed upon represent the parties' least possible concession to others' demands, the “maximum relative concession.”

A different, highly influential alternative to Rawls's contract theory is Robert Nozick's “invisible hand” explanation of the origin of the state, in *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*. According to Nozick, individuals situated in a Lockean state of nature join together in “mutual protective associations,” which are then moved by market forces to combine in ever-larger associations, eventually giving rise to an “ultraminimal state,” and finally a minimal state. Nozick argues that a state can arise through such a process without violating anyone's rights, and that only a minimal state can meet this condition.

See also *Human Rights; Philosophy, Moral; Social Contract*.

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George Klosko

**STOICISM.** Stoicism, from its foundation, has been most famous for its ethical ideas. Even now, *stoical* suggests a particular ethical stance, endurance of pain or misfortune without complaint. But in antiquity Stoicism was notable also for its unified view of the scope of philosophy and of the nature of reality.

### The Stoic School in Antiquity

Stoicism, alongside Epicureanism, was one of the two most important philosophical movements in ancient Greece in the Hellenistic period (after the transformation of the Greek world by Alexander the Great). Both schools were founded in Athens at the end of the fourth century B.C.E.; both offered a distinctive way of life and an integrated theory and worldview. Ancient philosophical schools were not formal institutions but rather groups of intellectuals and students centered on a leading figure (the head of the school). Stoicism was founded by Zeno of Citium (c. 335–c. 263 B.C.E.), and developed by a series of subsequent heads, particularly Chrysippus (c. 280–c. 206 B.C.E.) in the late third century, who systematized the teachings of Zeno and made special contributions in logic. From the first century B.C.E. onward, the school was not based at Athens or centered on a specific head, but became a more diffuse movement, with Stoic teachers and adherents throughout the Greco-Roman world. Stoic teachings were transmitted by an extensive body of treatises, especially by Chrysippus, supplemented by summaries of doctrines and more popular writings especially in practical ethics. Stoicism was a powerful philosophical force throughout the Hellenistic period (until the late first century B.C.E.) and in the first two centuries C.E. under the Roman Empire. It died out as a creative movement in the third century C.E., though its influence remained important in later antiquity.

### Main Doctrines

In ethics, Stoics saw themselves as perpetuating the key ideas of Socrates (c. 470–399 B.C.E.), especially as presented in Plato's (c. 428–348 or 347 B.C.E.) dialogues. These ideas were combined with the view of philosophy as an integrated system of branches of knowledge and a picture of reality as an intelligible and unified whole. For the Stoics, complete wisdom consisted in a synthesis of ethics, physics (study of nature), and logic.

The Stoic ethical ideas drawn from Socrates were that virtue was unified, a type of knowledge, and the only thing that was good in itself. Also Socratic were the ideas that virtue was the sole basis for happiness and that all human beings were capable of achieving full virtue. The Stoics developed these ideas into a systematic theory of value linked with a normative picture of human development. Apart from virtue, the other so-called good things in human life, such as one's own health or prosperity and that of one's family or friends, were "matters of indifference," not goods, though they were naturally "preferable." In a complete process of ethical development, human beings would progress from valuing "preferable" things to recognizing that virtue (conceived as order and rationality) was the only good. Failure to develop an understanding of what was really good produced emotions, such as anger and grief, that were defective and misguided reactions. One of the main objectives of Stoic practical ethics was to cure people of the misconceptions that produced these emotions and to promote the development toward full wisdom that alone brought true peace of mind. Sociability and the desire to benefit others was also seen as a natural instinct in human beings, which should develop toward a sense of kinship with all other human beings as rational animals. The realization of the brotherhood of humankind (which was also seen as the expression of "natural law") was the ultimate ideal and desired objective of Stoic political thinking. Stoics did not favor any specific type of conventional constitution such as democracy or monarchy.

In Stoic physics, the natural universe was seen as unified and coherent. Reality, including god and the human mind, was conceived in wholly material terms. The universe was a total fusion of active and passive principles; the active principle could be understood as fiery air or animate breath (*pneuma*), and also as immanent god, reason, or fate. The universe was also seen as a seamless web of interconnected causes with no random events. This nexus of events, and the universe as a whole, was understood in teleological terms, as expressing underlying providential purpose or rationality and as being, in that sense, good.

For the Stoics the scope of logic included the philosophy of language and epistemology as well as the systematization of arguments. Chrysippus in particular developed formal logic to a very high level, especially the logic of propositions; Stoics also partly anticipated Gottlob Frege's (1848–1925) distinction between sense and reference. In epistemology, they maintained the empiricist claim that certain kinds of sensory "appearances" form the basis of an infallible grasp of reality. However, they also held that complete knowledge, or wisdom, involves a systematic, theoretically based understanding of reality as a whole.

The goal of philosophical enquiry was an integrated grasp of these three areas. For instance, the Stoic theory of determinism embraces a conception of universal causation (derived from physics), a logical analysis of possibility and necessity, and an ethical account of human responsibility, based on the idea of humans as both rational agents and an integral part of the causal chain. The modern stereotype of the stoical person as one who accepts life's vicissitudes as the work of fate derives from this conceptually powerful set of theories. The seemingly idealized

picture of natural human development adopted in Stoic ethics was seen as consistent with the idea, fundamental to Stoic physics, that nature forms an organic and providential whole. The Stoic conception of the good was, in essence, that of structure, order, and rationality, manifested as virtue in the sphere of ethics, as the order of the universe in physics, and as a system of argumentation and knowledge in logic.

### The Medieval and Modern Reception of Stoicism

From the third century C.E., Stoicism was eclipsed as a creative force by Neoplatonism and Christianity. Both those movements replaced the Stoic holistic worldview with transcendent ideals, but they also absorbed and transformed key Stoic themes. The Stoic idea of *logos* (reason) as a bridge between the divine and the human, and as a fundamental principle of reality, was embraced in different ways by both Neoplatonists and Christians in late antiquity and the Middle Ages. One possible response was to draw on Stoic writings for their moral rigor but to ignore or revise their larger philosophical framework. This approach was applied to Epictetus's (c. 55–c. 135 C.E.) *Handbook*, a pithy statement of Stoic practical ethics; by the Neoplatonist commentator Simplicius (fl. c. 530 C.E.); and by medieval Christian ascetics, who used the text as a guide for monastic self-scrutiny. Christian philosophers such as St. Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274) and Francisco Suárez (1548–1617) similarly drew on Stoic ideas to define the idea of virtue as a natural property. In the Enlightenment period, engagement with Stoicism was more full-hearted, and the Neo-Stoic Justus Lipsius (1547–1606) argued for the fundamental equivalence of Stoic and Christian ethics and theology. In the nineteenth century, Hellenistic thought was often regarded as an inferior phase of ancient thought by philosophers (notably Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel) and scholars. But in the twentieth century, especially its last thirty years, Stoicism was an object of intensive scholarly study. The modern revival of virtue-ethics and cognitive approaches to emotion, and current interest in nonreligious practical ethics, have given Stoic ideas renewed appeal. In the twenty-first century, we may expect to find Stoicism also valued for its holistic approach to the universe and the mind-body relationship and the attempt to integrate ethics, science, and logic.

See also *Christianity; Epicureanism; Epistemology; Language, Philosophy of; Ancient and Medieval; Logic; Neoplatonism.*

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## STRUCTURALISM AND POSTSTRUCTURALISM.

This entry includes two subentries:

*Overview*  
*Anthropology*

### OVERVIEW

Structuralism was both an intellectual movement with wide ramifications in the twentieth century and an attempt to provide scientific status to the knowledge of language, culture, and society.

Structuralism originated in the work of Ferdinand de Saussure (1857–1913), a Swiss linguist whose lectures, when published by his students in 1916 (*Course in General Linguistics*), launched the new school of thought. Initially, the influence of Saussure's ideas was limited to linguistics and to the linguistics-based study of literature that the Russian formalists carried out in the early decades of the twentieth century. When one of the leaders of the formalist movement, Roman Jakobson, emigrated to the United States during World War II, he met the French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss and introduced him to Saussure's work. When Lévi-Strauss returned to France after the war, he launched structural anthropology and initiated French structuralism. His work in the late 1940s and 1950s inspired congruent and related work in psychoanalysis, sociology, history, and literary and cultural studies that culminated in the mid-1960s in the writings of literary scholars Roland Barthes, Tzvetan Todorov, and Julia Kristeva, historian Michel Foucault, and psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan. Structuralism dominated French thought through the early 1960s. In 1967, a new movement that questioned and extended the insights of structuralism arose. Poststructuralism, as it came to be called, is best known in the work of philosophers Jacques Derrida, Luce Irigaray, and Jean Francois Lyotard; sociologist Jean Baudrillard; and literary critic Hélène Cixous.

### Saussure and Structuralism

The Saussurean legacy in structuralism assumes two forms. The first is the study of the latent system that generates surface events such as speech in language. The second is the study of culture, language, and society as systems of signs that facilitate communication and the creation of meaning in human culture.

Saussure revolutionized the study of language. He shifted attention away from surface utterances, the everyday speech practices that make up spoken language, and focused it instead on the underlying system that allows those utterances to come into being. He distinguished between *langue* (language system) and *parole* (speech). Each speech utterance presupposes the simultaneous existence of the entire language system from which it arises, much as a leaf, when cut transversally, to use Saussure's example, reveals its entire invisible structure. Saussure also compared language to a game of chess, in which each move has meaning and is made possible by the rules of the game, all of which are implied in each move. In language, similarly, utterances can function as bearers of ideas or as names of things only if the entire system of language is implied in each utterance.

Saussure's most innovative contention was that words are signs that consist of a palpable sound image (signifier) and a mental concept (signified). All signs exist in chains that connect them to all other signs in the language. Language works through the interrelationship and interaction of linguistic signs, not as the naming of objects by words. The relation between words and things, Saussure contended, is entirely arbitrary. *Cat* names a particular animal not because the sound image or signifier "cat" has a real connection or resemblance to the creature but because the signifier "cat" is different from other adjacent signifiers such as "rat" or "hat" in the particular chain of signifiers in which it exists. The slight difference in sound and spelling creates a difference of meaning. Those signifiers in turn function to name things or have meaning because they sound different and are spelled differently from other words. This is known as the diacritical principle. The identity of signifiers is determined by their differences from other signifiers. In language, according to Saussure, there are no identities, only differences. It is the relation between terms that allows signifiers to appear to possess an identity of their own. Language, in other words, is entirely conventional, a matter of form, not natural substance.

Each signifier has a value, a function within the system of language understood as a set of relations between differentially connected terms. A signifier has value as a noun or a verb or as the designator of a particular thing or as performing a particular grammatical function—that is, as a qualifier or pronoun. Saussure notes, for example, that the French *mouton* functions to name both the animal and the food; it has a double value, while English uses two different words with two different values to carry out this function—*sheep* and *mutton*. Each language assigns different values to signifiers, and it is the relation between signifiers that determines value.

Saussure also distinguished between the syntagmatic and the paradigmatic dimensions of language. The syntagmatic names the linking together of parts of language in temporal chains such as a sentence. The paradigmatic is the spatial dimension of language that comprises the possible options that might fill any one space in a syntagmatic chain. For example, in an utterance requiring a verb in a particular position, the slot for "verb" might be filled by any number of possible actions from that particular paradigmatic set.

**Influence of Saussure.** Saussure made the study of language more scientific by dividing the field into its component parts. He also specified the linguistic field as being concerned with the way language worked as a sign system with a particular structure and with specific rules of operation.

Two of Saussure's ideas proved of great use to thinkers in other fields such as philosophy, history, and sociology. The first was that language is a self-sufficient system of interconnected terms whose value derives entirely from their functions within the system, not from their relation to objects or ideas outside it. This insight allowed other thinkers to argue that *human knowledge and human consciousness in social life occurs within language or discourse*. Knowledge of reality is frequently more a matter of the interconnections among terms in the particular discourse (of economics, politics, or science, for example) than of the connection between the terms of the discourse and

objects in the extra-discursive world. The second influential idea was that *difference makes identity possible*. There is no substance in language apart from the differential relations among the terms, none of which otherwise have an identity of their "own." All traditional notions of a natural substance in philosophy, social thinking, political theory, and other fields could now be rethought as effects of differential relations.

Saussure's discoveries influenced work in other fields directly and by analogy. In the structural anthropology of Lévi-Strauss, both kinds of influence are evident. Lévi-Strauss noted, for example, that numerous different myths, when studied together, reveal a common structure. Myths are sign systems in which terms have different values in relation to one another. Those values often consist of oppositions between terms such as the *raw* and the *cooked* or *nature* and *culture*. Myths functioned to resolve contradictions in human culture by constructing stories in which opposed and contradictory possibilities are mediated and their opposition resolved in a way that provides a solution to some conceptual problem or conflict of values in that particular culture. The myth of Oedipus, for example, resolves the dilemma of human origins by positing a mediation between the supposed earthly origins of human life and the fact that all humans are the product of human sexual relations. The tale is a version of the opposition between nature and culture.

Many mythic stories revolve around the incest taboo, which forbids marriage between members of the same family. In his famous study of human kinship systems (*The Elementary Structures of Kinship*, 1949), Lévi-Strauss noted that all human societies enjoin incest. If one studies kinship structurally as a system of relations between terms in which one element has meaning through its relation to all the other terms, then the incest taboo must be understood as a function of the larger kinship system. Kinship is like language in two respects. It is a system of communication among different tribal groups, and it is a language, in which value is determined by function. The value of the incest taboo is that it forbids marriage within a clan or family, but as a result, it has the function of obliging marriage between members of different clans, tribes, and family groups. The result is a form of communication through marriage that binds different people together. The larger function of this language-like kinship system is to work to prevent conflict; strife is less likely between groups connected by marriage.

Lévi-Strauss's work had an impact on literary and cultural studies, psychoanalysis, and historiography. Roland Barthes argues in *Mythologies* (1957) that culture (in the form of movies, advertisements, commodities, books of photography, wrestling matches, travel guides, and so on) resembles language in that it operates through signs that create meaning. Barthes distinguishes between signifiers such as the photo of a black French colonial soldier on the cover of a magazine saluting the French flag and the signifieds such an image generates. Such signifieds have several levels, from the elementary—the image signifies the loyalty of the colonial subject—to the more complex and abstract—the idea of imperialism that is sanctioned and communicated by the image. In his later work in literary criticism, Barthes studies literature in a similar manner, noting how



writers operate within systems of meaning that rely on the differences between terms to make signification possible.

The impact of Saussure is also evident in the work of literary critics Julia Kristeva and Tzvetan Todorov. Todorov argues in *The Poetics of Prose* (1971) that fictional narratives can be understood in structuralist terms. A diverse set of short stories by the same writer can be interpreted as having a similar internal structure. The tales of Henry James, for example, all deal with an absence at the center of the tale. Kristeva in *Semanalysis* (1967) uses structural linguistics to argue that works of literature have different levels—the phenotext and the genotext—that resemble Saussure’s distinction between *langue* and *parole*.

### Jacques Lacan, Michel Foucault, and Gilles Deleuze

One of the most ingenious and influential uses of structuralism occurred in psychoanalysis. In *Écrits* (1966), Jacques Lacan gathered together three decades worth of work, much of which owed a debt to Lévi-Strauss and to Saussure. For Lacan, the psyche is immersed in signification, and psychic content exists in the form of signifiers. The unconscious, as he famously put it, “is structured as a language.” Symptoms of psychic dysfunction are signifiers, but because the psyche is semiotic in the same way that language is, one never moves from psychic signifiers to a content or a mental object. Instead, signifying reference moves along a chain of signifiers, each of which is linked to other signifiers. All one can do in the process of psychoanalysis, then, is trace the signifying links. One can never reach the “real” that would deliver up a knowable object or thing or reality signified by psychic language.

The other major work of mid-1960s structuralism was Michel Foucault’s *Words and Things* (1966; *Les mots et les choses*, translated 1970 as *The Order of Things*). A historian, Foucault argues that our knowledge of the world is always mediated by signifiers. Over time, systems of signification change, and with each new system, a different picture of the world emerges. Each *episteme*, or system of knowledge, portrays (or signifies) the world differently depending on what kind of signification is used.

Like a number of structuralists, Foucault pointed the way toward poststructuralism’s critique of rationalism. His *Madness and Civilization* (1961; *Folie et déraison*) reflected the influence of the philosopher Martin Heidegger, who shifted attention away from the post-Enlightenment philosophic concern with rational knowledge and focused instead on fundamental metaphysical issues that he felt withstood rationalization. A similar influence came from philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, whose recently translated work was critical of the idea that one could know the world clearly through reason. Nietzsche noted that knowledge reduces the complexity of the world to false identities. His influence is evident in the work of the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze, especially in his *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (1961). Deleuze, in his work in the 1960s such as *The Logic of Sense* (1969), tries to expose the irrational and allogical elements of human knowledge.

What these thinkers share is a sense, derived from Saussure, that the identities of knowledge arise from and are made

possible by differential relations between terms that have no identities of their own apart from those relations. Reason, inasmuch as it operates through clear distinctions that demarcate separate identities (of categories, of things), cannot, by definition “know” or grasp this realm of difference. Difference makes knowledge possible, yet it is ungraspable using only the categories of knowledge. Difference by definition does not lend itself to identity, but knowledge consists of identification.

### Jacques Derrida and Deconstruction

This antirational implication of Saussure’s thinking is most fully exploited beginning in 1967 in the work of Jacques Derrida (*Writing and Difference*, *Of Grammatology*, and *Speech and Phenomenon*, all published that year). Derrida contends that if difference makes knowledge possible, it also renders it impossible on its own terms. If the world is differential in the same way language is, then knowledge of that world which operates according to rationalist imperatives and seeks to identify “what is” will necessarily miss the mark. We have to think more complexly about how we know, and we have to rethink what the known world looks like.

Derrida’s most interesting advance on Saussure consists of formulating a new concept, which he calls *différance*. He argues that philosophy has traditionally based concepts of truth on presence—the presence of the thing or of the idea to the mind. Yet when one examines presence, one finds that it is not a simple identity. Presence must exist both in time and in space. In time, it must be distinguished from past moments and from future moments. In space, the presence of a thing can only be isolated and identified by distinguishing it from other objects. In both a temporal and a spatial sense, then, presence arises out of difference. Derrida combines spatial and temporal difference into one process—difference spelled with an *a*, or *différance*. This neologism is significant because in French one cannot hear the *a* when one pronounces the word. The *a*, in other words, cannot be made present. It thus resembles the way difference in time and space gives rise to presence (of the present moment, of the thing in its presence) without itself assuming the form of presence.

Derrida contends that all being and all thought is made possible by *différance*. In order for difference to be operative in language, there must, he argues, be at work in being a more primordial process that distinguishes one thing from another in time and space. It has no identity of its own, but it makes all identity possible. All things thus bear the mark or trace of other things from which they differ and to which they relate or are connected in their very constitution. Because this primordial process can never assume the form of presence or of identity, one finds its imprint, when one reviews the philosophic tradition, in the very concepts and categories that would seem to deny its priority. Because all philosophic concepts operate through identification and the naming of presence, they obscure the process of *différance*. Yet because it is prior and because it constitutes all presence and all identity, its effects are evident in the text of philosophy.

Derrida’s method of analysis, called “deconstruction,” seeks to locate the fuzzy, anti-identitarian process of *différance* at work



in philosophic and literary texts. He notices places in texts where thinkers lay claim to an ideal of natural substance or of full and self-identical presence that allows them to order their conceptual world. Usually, such ordering consists of a hierarchy in which the ideal of natural substance or of presence is thought to be prior, foundational, or axiomatic, and something else is declared to be derivative, secondary, and lesser in relation to that norm. Such differentiations, Derrida finds, characterize most if not all philosophical thinking. Many thinkers, for example, locate value and truth in what is declared to be more natural in relation to something else that is declared to be artificial, external, additive, or merely supplementary in relation to an internal or prior essence. Even Saussure, Derrida argues, is guilty of this “metaphysical” maneuver. He argues that speech is more central and internal to language because it is more natural, while writing is more artificial, a matter of external notation and convention rather than of natural substance. Yet, Derrida notes, Saussure’s own concept of difference should instruct him that what he calls nature is itself differential. Indeed, in order to delineate the natural as a concept, Saussure must differentiate between an inside and an outside. The supposed natural substance of speech is declared to be inside language, while the technical artifice of writing is declared to be an external addition. Saussure’s description of language never takes this particular distinction into account, but on it his entire argument rests. Saussure merely assumes it is the case that speech is closer to the natural “inside” of language while writing is an “external” form. If he tried to take the initial distinction between “inside” and “outside” into account, he would be obliged to notice that difference must precede and determine what he calls “nature.” And what this means is that nature is not foundational; it derives from and is produced by difference.

What Derrida calls *différance* thus obliges philosophic knowledge to relinquish its traditional concern with identification and to instead adopt a looser style that makes weaker, less absolutist claims. American philosophers like Richard Rorty (*Philosophy and The Mirror of Nature*, 1979) notice that Derrida’s position recalls arguments made by proponents of Pragmatism, which also favored a less absolutist epistemology and an approach to knowledge tailored to circumstances that would be more experimental in character. Knowledge, for Pragmatism, is what works in a particular historical situation, not what is absolutely and unequivocally true in nature.

### Poststructuralism

Derrida’s work launched a new intellectual movement called poststructuralism. If structuralism searched for the invariant structures of language and culture, poststructuralism was more concerned with criticizing the rationalist impulse that animated the structuralist undertaking. The impact of his work was immediate and profound. Structuralists like Barthes and Kristeva shifted their focus to the alogical and prerational dimension of literary texts. In *S/Z* (1970), Barthes examines a tale by Honoré de Balzac from the perspective of the multiple codes that go into its making; in *Revolution in Poetic Language* (1974), Kristeva notices the conflict in texts between a symbolic level associated with logic and meaning and a semiological level that is prerational.

Derrida’s contention that the world is itself differential led many thinkers to apply his ideas to such social issues as feminism. The two most noteworthy practitioners of deconstructive feminism were Hélène Cixous and Luce Irigaray.

In *The Newly Born Woman* (1975), Cixous examines the traditional way in which men and women are characterized in Western culture. She suggests that men are associated with reason, identity, truth, and logic and women with unreason, difference, falsity, and hysteria. Cixous argues that this social and philosophical system is deconstructed by certain kinds of avant-garde writers such as James Joyce and Virginia Woolf who write in a way that undermines traditional rationalist assumptions. Their writing is deliberately alogical and semantically generative. It works through horizontal linkages along a differential chain of semiotic connections that obey no rationalist logic. Cixous calls this “feminine writing” because it accords with the traditional negative way of characterizing women. Following Derrida, she argues that a deconstructive strategy in regard to the patriarchal tradition would deliberately inhabit its terms and reveal their subversion from within. If *différance* does inhabit and make possible the categorical identities of patriarchy, then its undoing consists of revealing that *différance* and undermining the authority of those categories.

Luce Irigaray argues in *Speculum of the Other Woman* (1974) and *This Sex Which Is Not One* (1977) that in Western philosophy woman have been portrayed as matter, body, fluidity, boundarylessness, irrationality, artificiality, and the like. Women are the opposite or mirror image (hence *speculum*) of men, who are assigned reason, truth, and authenticity. Male philosophic speculation abstracts from concrete particularity and bodily materiality when it resorts to metaphysical concepts and categories such as “being,” “becoming,” “truth,” and “infinity.” The attempt to transcend matter is quintessentially male. In pursuing such speculative philosophy, men have sought to separate themselves from matter and from *mater*, that is, from their own links through their mothers to physical life and to material fluidity. Men must separate from their bloody origin in the mother’s body and elevate themselves above such matter if they are to attain a psychic identity predicated on masculine principles and ideals. The subordination of women is thus both a psychic and a philosophical necessity and process. Men take matter as an object of speculative knowledge and thereby gain control over physical processes that threaten to overwhelm and overpower male identity. Those processes must remain outside male reason and never accommodate themselves to its categories. Irigaray thus ends up arguing for female separatism.

Jean François Lyotard pursues the poststructuralist argument in books such as *The Postmodern Condition* (1979) and *The Differend* (1983). Lyotard argues that knowledge and discourse are inseparable. The traditional stories or narratives about the world have been transformed in what he calls the postmodern era. The classic narratives of the Enlightenment such as liberal humanism and Marxism no longer provide a convincing or accurate account of the world. They have been replaced by a proliferation of micro-narratives. In a world dominated by corporations, especially, what counts as true is increasingly determined by the

financial and technical requirements of those with economic power. Lyotard sees society as consisting of contending stories about the world, no one of which is in itself more true than another. Each person or group must work rhetorically to convince others of the truth of their own particular discourse. Social life is an ongoing discussion in which people seek to make their perspective and their story dominant. Totalitarianism consists of abolishing this free play of discussion by establishing a consensus that silences further discussion.

One of the most innovative French poststructuralists, Jean Baudrillard, began as a structuralist sociologist interested in the way the semiotic regimes of advertising shape and categorize reality. Baudrillard has since that early work on “consumer society” been preoccupied with the power of cultural representations to become lived reality. Initially, this meant for him the power of advertising images to shape social identities and to impose modes of behavior. By “being a Marlboro man,” one adopted a cultural sign and adapted one’s behavior to the code it implied and imposed. In that code, to become the bearer of certain signs (smoking cigarettes, for example) is tantamount to assuming a particular social identity. The code shapes and determines reality through the operation of both cultural and behavioral signs. Baudrillard’s understanding of this process becomes more pronouncedly pessimistic over time. From *Symbolic Exchange and Death* (1976) to “Simulacra and Simulations” (1981), he argues that the media have become so powerful that simulated realities have now replaced actual reality. This hyperreality is a perfect imitation of reality, much as Disneyland aspires to be a totally enclosed universe of its own, created through the manipulation of signs. At his most provocative, Baudrillard argues that something like the first Gulf War “did not take place.” Its “reality” was so mediated and constructed by images that in effect it occurred in hyperreality. The real, in other words, can be shaped to be whatever those with economic, political, and cultural power want it to be.

While there are significant differences between structuralism and poststructuralism, the two movements share a concern with signs and with the power of sign systems both in the field of human knowledge and in the field of culture and society. The structuralists moved from examining the operations of sign systems to understanding their role in human society. The poststructuralists furthered that undertaking by studying the way signs operate to misrepresent the world and to underwrite social power.

See also *Postmodernism; Structuralism and Poststructuralism; Anthropology; Text/Textuality*.

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Michael Ryan

## ANTHROPOLOGY

Structuralism in anthropology is inextricably linked with its founder, Claude Lévi-Strauss. His principal contributions have been in the field of kinship and in the analysis of symbolism, particularly of myths. The characteristic approach of structuralist analysis is to categorize systems, not in terms of the composition or content of their component elements, but in terms of the structure of relationships between these elements.

Lévi-Strauss's first major work, *The Elementary Structures of Kinship* (1949), begins with the premise that exogamy, the obligation to marry outside one's own group, is a corollary of the incest taboo, a defining criterion of "culture" as opposed to "nature." If complex kinship structures are characterized by negative rules—prohibitions on marrying certain categories of relatives—then elementary structures are defined by positive rules that indicate marriage with specific kinds of relatives. Bilateral cross-cousin marriage, in which a man marries either a father's sister's or a mother's brother's daughter, can be conceived of as a system of symmetrical exchange of women between two groups. Matrilateral cross-cousin marriage, where a man marries his mother's brother's daughter but never his father's sister's daughter, involves asymmetrical exchange, whereby a man takes a wife from one group and marries off his sister to another.

In 1962, Lévi-Strauss published *The Savage Mind*, a work on symbolism that characterized primitive thought as *bricolage*, a term that translates roughly as "handy work," working with whatever is readily available rather than using a specific tool adapted to a certain task. The primary tool of such thought is metaphor, grounded in analogical reasoning. In other words, if the members of one clan are "bears" and their neighbors "foxes," this has nothing to do with intrinsic resemblances; rather, the difference between human groups is considered to be analogous to the difference between species of animals.

Lévi-Strauss applied this approach in his magnum opus, a four-volume series on mythology: *The Raw and the Cooked* (1964), *From Honey to Ashes* (1966), *The Origin of Table Manners* (1968), and *The Naked Man* (1971). The aim of his analysis is "to show how empirical categories—such as the categories of the raw and the cooked, the fresh and the decayed, the moistened and the burned, etc., which can only be accurately defined by ethnographic observation and, in each instance, by adopting the standpoint of a particular culture—can nonetheless be used as conceptual tools with which to elaborate abstract ideas and combine them in the form of propositions."

Lévi-Strauss begins with a myth from the Bororo culture in Brazil, initially comparing it to other Bororo myths, then to myths from neighboring populations, until by the end of the fourth volume, he discusses no fewer than 813 myths from across North as well as South America. The mythology of the Americas is depicted as a single vast system in which individual myths can be interpreted as transformations of other myths and where relationships between elements from different codes—social categories, animal and plant species, modes of food preparation, parts of the body, celestial and meteorological phenomena, among others—can always be expressed as analogical to other codes.

## Followers and Critics

Lévi-Strauss's work on kinship gave rise in Britain to "alliance theory," whose leading practitioners were Edmund Leach and Rodney Needham. They challenged the prevalent classification of kinship systems in terms of matrilineal and patrilineal descent and suggested instead a classification based on patterns of marriage. Needham attempted to distinguish between "preferred" and "prescriptive" cousin, but Lévi-Strauss himself refused to admit the pertinence of such a distinction, and Needham encouraged one of his students, Francis Korn, to publish a case-by-case refutation of *Elementary Structures of Kinship*. The work of Abraham Rosman and Paula Rubel in the United States and of Françoise Héritier in France represents other applications of structuralism to kinship theory.

Lévi-Strauss's influence has been even more pervasive, if more diffuse, in the study of symbolism. Edmund Leach and Dan Sperber have published important general works on the subject. Numerous ethnographies have incorporated structural approaches in their analyses of the symbolic systems of specific cultures, including Stephen Hugh-Jones's discussion of Amazonian cosmology, Sherry Ortner's analyses of Sherpa rituals, Louis Dumont's account of caste and pollution in India, and Luc de Heusch's comparative study of Central African myths of kingship. Although Mary Douglas has remained persistently critical of Lévi-Strauss's work, her work on purity and pollution shows definite affinities with structuralist approaches.

Certain Marxists and materialists such as Claude Meillassoux and Marvin Harris criticized Lévi-Strauss for his radical idealism, his interest in mental structures rather in the material circumstances underpinning them; other Marxists, however, notably Maurice Godelier, sought to reconcile Marxism and structuralism. In addition, critics such as Pierre Bourdieu have pointed out that Lévi-Strauss's concern with abstract thought rather than with the process of thinking leaves no room for human agency.

## Poststructuralism and Anthropology: Foucault and his Impact

*Poststructuralism* is a term loosely applied to members of the next generation of French thinkers after Lévi-Strauss who also concerned themselves with texts and discourses. Of these, Michel Foucault had the greatest impact on anthropology. Foucault's work is specifically concerned with the relationship between knowledge and power. Knowledge, for Foucault, is not primarily a collection of facts or even ideas, but only takes on significance within what he calls an *episteme*, an overarching framework situated in time, within which such ideas emerge as relevant and indeed possible. Though Foucault avoids Marxist terminology, one might characterize his *epistemes* as "modes of thinking" as opposed to "modes of production." In a similar manner, he situates "power" within a framework of possibilities determined by an overall system rather than as a property of individual actors. In *Discipline and Punish* (1975), he uses the modern prison system as a central example of how these two systems, of knowledge and of power, are fused in contemporary society. Discipline is, he argues, a central feature of modern institutions—prison, army, school—inscribing power relations on the bodies of subjects who must



conform but must also be constantly monitored; this monitoring of subjects is the intellectual task of modern “disciplines”—psychology, sociology, anthropology, and others.

Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (1978) argued in a similar vein that European and American expert knowledge of the “Orient” and particularly the Middle East was inextricably connected with the exercise of Western hegemony over the region. Such critiques have made anthropologists much more self-conscious about the implications of their own representations of “other,” non-European peoples. James Clifford and George Marcus have been concerned with the ways in which such representations are constructed through writing, and the rhetorical means by which anthropologists lay claim to “authority.” Talal Asad has suggested that anthropologists’ attempts to arrive at ahistoricized definitions of such phenomena as religion serve to naturalize (that is, make cultural concepts and thought systems appear timeless, natural, and universal) post-Enlightenment systems of European thought while simultaneously problematizing other systems of practice, even in European history. Paul Rabinow has been perhaps the most adamant disciple of Foucault within the discipline, both as an exegete and as an ethnographer of modern France.

### Derrida and Deconstruction

At first sight, Jacques Derrida’s *Of Grammatology* (1967), which makes the provocative claim for the logical priority of writing (or at least “*archè*-writing”) over speech, might not seem a likely candidate for a work that would influence anthropological thinking. Derrida’s point is, first of all, that writing reveals the spaces, silences, and erasures that speech conceals; second, that there is an apparent gap in time and space, a *différance*, between the enunciation and reception of a written text, whereas speech gives the illusion of immediacy. Derrida’s purpose is to radically call into question the relevance of authorial intention and the possibility of any fixed meaning. Texts, written or spoken, must be interpreted not only in terms of what they “say” but of what they keep silent, and with respect to other texts before and after. Derrida’s approach to texts, “deconstruction,” lays bare the internal contradictions of any text, precluding the attribution of definitive meaning, intentional or otherwise.

The term *deconstruction* has been used so loosely by many anthropologists that it has lost any clear referent—an ironic fate for a concept intended to challenge the fixity of meaning. More specifically, Derrida’s skepticism about intentionality in the interpretation of texts has fueled “postmodern” critiques of anthropological representations of the “other.” Derrida’s wordplay and elliptical style have inspired new forms of anthropological writing, best exemplified by the work of Michael Taussig.

Ultimately, both structuralism and poststructuralism have contributed to tendencies on the part of many (but by no means all) anthropologists to call into question the characterization of their discipline as “science” and to reposition themselves more centrally in the humanities—structuralism through its emphasis on the decoding of symbols, a domain often considered antithetical to strictly “scientific” approaches; and

poststructuralism by forcing anthropologists to call into question their own practices of representation. Critics from within the humanist camp, however, have pointed out that both structuralism and poststructuralism are theoretically de-humanizing (that is, ignoring or minimizing the impact and importance of human agency), most obviously in Derrida’s critique of human intentionality but also, at least implicitly, in the work of Lévi-Strauss and Foucault. At best, such theories make any consideration of human agency problematic; at worst, they leave no place for it at all.

See also *Anthropology; Cultural Studies; Postmodernism; Text/Textuality.*

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Robert Launay

**SUBJECTIVISM.** *Subjectivism's* natural antonym is *objectivism*, and various species of subjectivism have been developed as alternatives to objectivism of various sorts. One can be a subjectivist about a variety of things—ethics, aesthetics, even science. Many of these topics are covered in related entries, however, and the emphasis here will be on subjectivism with respect to ethics in modern and contemporary thought.

Philosophers often distinguish normative ethics, which deals with specific questions about rights or duties or ideals (e.g., “is infanticide wrong?”) and metaethics, which deals with questions about the status of ordinary moral claims (such as, “can moral judgments be true or false?”). Subjectivism and objectivism are positions in metaethics.

### Ethics and Values

The moral or ethical realm is extremely complex. Our moral lives involve practices, principles, convictions, commitments, duties, ideals, and more, and one can be a subjectivist about some of these without being a subjectivist about others.

Many versions of moral subjectivism are motivated by a combination of two views. In the first, different cultures, societies, subcultures, and the like often have strikingly different conceptions of morality; thus, many cultures have practiced human sacrifice, infanticide, and slavery. In the second, we are indelibly shaped by the culture and historical period in which we live; we cannot step outside our modes of evaluation and thought to some neutral Archimedean point from which we can impartially adjudicate the conflicting claims of alternative moral codes. Indeed, many subjectivists go one step further, urging that the notion that there is one true story about morality is empty.

Our moral beliefs and claims exhibit several fundamental features that any viable position in metaethics must either explain

or explain away. First, ethical discourse often appears to describe, quite literally, facts in the moral realm. The theory that endorses the claim to objectivity is known as cognitivism; moral judgments make cognitive or descriptive claims, rather than simply expressing emotions or making recommendations. Second, when we give arguments that something is right or wrong, we often marshal reasons for thinking certain moral claims to be true or false. Third, moral judgments often provide motivation to act in accordance with them. Fourth, morality is a social institution that involves shared practices and beliefs.

### Objectivity

According to the metaphors often used to characterize objectivism, the world (or some subdomain of it, like ethics) is “out there,” beyond our language and thought. If we are fortunate, we may discover something about this mind-independent realm, but in no sense do we create or construct it. Thus, to objectivists, there is a fact about whether abortion is ever acceptable that obtains quite independently of anyone’s opinions on the matter.

### Varieties of Subjectivism

When people say that morality is subjective, they often mean simply that there really aren’t any objective moral truths. But philosophers who defend versions of subjectivism frequently go on to offer us a new account of the moral dimension to compensate for the loss of objectivity.

**Individual subjectivism: existential choice.** If alternative moral codes and ideals are possible, can each person simply choose which ones to adopt? According to many existentialists, most notably Jean-Paul Sartre (1905–1980), there are no objective moral values or meanings. Each person, thrown into an indifferent, often cruel world, must create individual values through making choices and living life. Indeed, it is added, no values can be binding unless chosen personally. On this view a person’s claim that abortion is wrong represents a moral judgment, but one that is motivated by (and only by) subjective, existential choices. Views like Sartre’s are subjectivist in the sense that people create their own values for themselves, and different people (even within the same culture) may choose quite different values.

On accounts like Sartre’s, disagreements about very important things (like the death penalty or forced clitoridectomy) boil down to simple differences in the values people have decided (often tacitly, and for no objective moral reasons) to adopt. But people who disagree about things like the morality of abortion rarely feel that their claims are merely expressions of their subjective commitments; indeed, most of them would see this as trivializing their view. Finally, views like Sartre’s fail to do justice to the social nature of morality.

**Individual subjectivism: noncognitivist views about ethics.** Noncognitivism is the view that moral claims do not (despite appearances) function to describe a moral realm and that they instead play a very different role. The most common versions of noncognitivism are species of expressionism, according to which moral claims serve to express a speaker’s attitudes, feelings, or emotions.

In the 1930s the British philosopher A. J. Ayer (1910–1989) defended one of the earliest and most influential versions of expressionism. In the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, thanks to philosophers such as Allan Gibbard and Simon Blackburn, noncognitivism has enjoyed a resurgence, though the current versions are far more nuanced than Ayer's.

Noncognitivism avoids problems that threaten objectivism. It also explains the link between moral judgments and moral motivations, since such judgments are seen to be based on attitudes and feelings, which often have a powerful motivational force. On this view the claim that abortion is wrong serves to express the speaker's disapproval of, or horror at, abortion.

Objective versions of noncognitivism are possible, but noncognitivism has a strong tendency toward subjectivism. Most versions of noncognitivist subjectivism treat moral claims as expressions of a person's (subjective) attitudes or emotions and recognize that people (even within the same culture) may differ about these. Like most forms of individual subjectivism, this view is vulnerable to the difficulties, noted above, that threaten views such as Sartre's.

**Group subjectivism.** There are several different types of group subjectivism.

**Different human groups.** Human beings are social animals who acquire most of their values and attitudes in the process of socialization; these acquisitions become part of a shared social heritage. Hence, it is often argued, there can be widespread agreement about right and wrong and what makes for a meaningful life within a group (such as a culture). But groups with different cultures, languages, or religions may share values that are quite alien to other groups.

This view allows a good deal of agreement and intersubjectivity within a culture, and morality does not boil down to simply what any particular individual thinks or feels or decides. Furthermore, it enables us to explain how moral arguments within a culture are possible; the partisans share enough values and beliefs that disagreement here and there is possible, and issues can often be evaluated within a shared framework of values and standards for moral justification. On this view the claim that abortion is wrong amounts to the claim that all or most members of the culture believe that it is or, more plausibly, that they subscribe to more general principles that entail this.

This view is subjectivist in the sense that moral facts and values are not based on any objective moral realm, but instead derive from (shared) attitudes and outlooks that may vary from group to group. Although ethical debate within a relevant group (such as a culture) is possible, there are no non-question begging methods to adjudicate disagreements between different cultures or the like. Moreover, it is extremely difficult to view some moral differences (as about the Holocaust) as mere differences in group opinions.

**Species subjectivism.** Species subjectivism is the view that ethical matters rest on subjective aspects (like emotions) of human beings. Humans are similar enough, however, that specieswide values are possible. David Hume's (1711–1776)

mid-eighteenth-century account of morality is the prototype for such views.

On Hume's view, morality is a matter of feeling rather than reason and is based on human sentiments that are ultimately grounded in human sympathy. Because Hume believed human nature to be constant, he concluded that many of the basic aspects of morality would be similar for all human beings. Still, in a letter to Francis Hutcheson Hume regretted the limitations of his view, stating that it "regards only human nature and human life." Recent "sensibility theories" are more sophisticated than Hume's but are recognizably inspired by it.

Species subjectivism underwrites a specieswide intersubjectivity that allows genuine moral argument and debate among humans. Hume went on to argue that we often "project" our feelings and attitudes onto the world, so they seem (wrongly) to characterize something objective ("out there"). This enabled Hume to explain the appearance that moral discourse and argument involve literal description.

Different versions of species subjectivism would offer different accounts of the claim that abortion is wrong, but all rest on views about human nature and human sensibility. Views like Hume's are subjective in the sense that, although all human beings have roughly the same moral sentiments, this is a completely contingent fact about us.

Many philosophers have argued that morality is based on things like reason that run deeper than emotions like human sympathy. In fact, as Hume himself lamented, his account may make morality seem uncomfortably contingent, resting on subjective (such as emotional) aspects of human life. Indeed, it is nowadays natural to view these aspects as the product of an evolutionary history shot through with randomness and chance.

## Conclusion

In the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries there has been a great deal of work on objectivism and subjectivism. As such views become more subtle and sophisticated, it becomes more difficult for an outsider to tell them apart. But they remain important, involving as they do very basic questions about the human condition and our place in the world.

See also *Empiricism; Knowledge; Objectivity; Truth*.

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Chris Swoyer

**SUFISM.** Sufism is the English rendering of the Arabic word *tasawwuf*, which derives from *suf*, meaning “wool.” *Tasawwuf* in early Islamic history refers to the attitude of people who used to wear a white woolen garment as a sign of renunciation of worldly possessions. To be properly understood, the emergence of Sufism must be situated in the context of Islamic expansion. During the first and second centuries of Islamic expansion, Muslims conquered vast tracts of land that were part of the Byzantine or Persian Empires. They acquired huge amounts of wealth. Many of them became obsessed with mundane things. At that moment, a few believers, haunted by the Prophet's model of perfection and remembering the description of the hereafter in the Koran and the punishment reserved to those who went astray, did not only content themselves to follow the commandments of God and abandon his prohibitions. They devoted much of their time to praying, fasting, and nightly vigils. These are the first people who practiced what has come to be known as *tasawwuf* or Sufism. Sufism became one of two dominant paradigms in Islamic theology as to how Muslims might interpret the teachings of the prophet Muhammad.

The other paradigm is based on the premise that the prophet Muhammad was sent to deliver the Koranic message to the whole of humanity. In addition to the Koran, the deeds and sayings of the prophet Muhammad (known as the *sunna*) would provide guidance to Muslims who lived during his lifetime as well as to subsequent generations of Muslims until the day of the Last Judgment. But, according to this paradigm, no communication with the Prophet was possible after his death. This understanding led to a perspective labeled legalistic, fundamentalist, or scriptural based on the dual premise of the immediate readability of religious texts, which govern their rights and duties, and of the conceptual equality of all Muslims. This perspective also developed an individual approach to salvation.

Conversely, the Sufi paradigm is based on the belief that, after the passing of the prophet Muhammad, communication with his soul remains possible. As Islam spread and Islamic

theology became more and more elaborated, Sufis developed very complex sets of doctrines and worldviews, some of which bore a similarity to other forms of mysticism. One of the most fundamental Sufi ideas is that the Koran, in addition to an apparent meaning (Ar., *zahir*) that is accessible to all, has a hidden meaning (Ar., *batin*). To have access to the latter, one must follow a path (Ar., *tariqa*; pl., *turuq*) that leads to spiritual fulfillment. This was the justification for the creation of Sufi orders, which quickly became and still remain a dominant form of spirituality in the entire Muslim world.

Another fundamental Sufi idea is that there exists a conceptual inequality among believers, some of whom are closer to God by virtue of enjoying a higher rank in His eyes in relation to others. The Arabic word *wali*, “friend of God,” which suggests the idea of proximity and friendship, renders the notion of proximity to God. It occurs several times in the Koran either in the singular (*wali*) or in the plural (*awliya*) but is interpreted differently within each of the two above-mentioned paradigms. For legalist Muslims, every pious believer is close to God, whereas in the Sufi tradition, the status of *wali* is accorded exclusively by divine grace to certain individuals. Sufis believe that the *awliya* have extraordinary powers, because they are close to God. For example, they have the power to secure happiness in this world and in the next for their disciples and their descendants by blessing them. They have retaliatory powers over their enemies, whom they can curse and punish. They have the mystical power to heal the ill, and so on. These desires for happiness and healing constitute the basis of the veneration of Sufi *awliya* in the Muslim world. Sufis have successfully established themselves as mediators between God and believers throughout the Muslim world.

The commitment to Sufi Islam is marked by a formal introduction in the course of which a disciple is initiated by a master. The master was himself initiated by another master through a chain of initiation (Ar., *silsila*) going back to the founder of a Sufi order, who usually claims to have started his order subsequent to prophetic revelation. Once initiated, the disciple is expected to obey the master. Moreover, on his or her way to spiritual fulfillment, the disciple is believed to be in the hands of the master as a cadaver is in the hands of a mortician. In other words, there is an assumed relationship of utter dependence of the disciple on the master.

Islam in Africa was greatly influenced by Sufi ideas and understanding of salvation. The majority of African Muslims practice Sufi Islam. Historically, the two orders of the Tijaniyya and Qadiriyya spread in the whole Islamized part of the African continent during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These orders provided a paradigm of salvation based on the belief that certain persons have supernatural powers. But there are also orders that were founded locally, such as the Muridiyya established by the Senegalese Shaykh Ahmadu Bamba (1853 or 1854–1927).

The book *Rimah hizb al-rahim 'ala nubur hizb al-rajim* (1863), written by 'Umar B. Sa 'id Tall (1797–1864), is one of the most elaborate expositions of the doctrine of the Tijaniyya Sufi order. It is a good illustration of the special privileges that God bestows on followers of Sufi orders. According



to the *Rimah*, all disciples of the Tijaniyya will be spared from the agonies of death, they will not be persecuted in their graves by angels, and they will be safe from all tortures in the grave from the day of their death until the day they enter Paradise. God will forgive all their sins and they will not have to account at the Day of Judgment. They will be among the first group of believers to enter Paradise together with the prophet Muhammad and his Companions. They will die as *awliya* (friends of God) because of their love for the founder of the Tijaniyya, Shaykh Ahmad al-Tijani (1737–1815). Finally, because, they are members of the Tijaniyya, not only will they go to Paradise, but members of their family will also go to Paradise.

More than just religious fraternities, Sufi orders have often been vital economic, political, and social organizations that perform many social functions. They are organized around *zawiya* (lodges), which are centers of religious learning, initiation places for disciples in search of spiritual realization, shelters for fugitives, and locations of saintly shrines where disciples go to seek healing and blessing.

In Africa, there were times when some Sufi sanctuaries were virtual states within states, for example the Senusiyya in Cyrenaica (modern Libya) and the Tijaniyya in Algeria, and the Mourides in Senegal. Since the tenth century, Sufi orders have constantly risen, declined, regenerated, and split. Sufi orders exist in all Muslim countries.

Sufism provides ingredients through which many Muslims—educated and uneducated, “modern” and “traditional,” men, women, and children—understand their universe.

See also *Asceticism; Islam; Mysticism; Religion*.

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Ousmane Kane

SUPPLY AND DEMAND. See *Capitalism*.

**SUICIDE.** The word *suicide* is a seventeenth-century English invention put together from Latin elements and meaning literally “self-slaughter,” and from English the word spread to other European languages. An isolated scholar around 1130 had in fact coined a Latin word *suicida*, but it had not gained currency, and that fact highlights the question why so ancient an act should have had to wait so long for a name.

#### Taboo

One reason was taboo. People did not want to talk about suicide and, when they had to, used composite expressions like the medieval lawyers’ “homicide (or felony) of oneself,” or others, tinged with euphemism, like “to hasten death,” “to die by one’s own hand” (to quote from over a dozen expressions in classical Latin). A second reason, linked with the first, was an enduring difficulty in understanding the character of suicide. This is best seen in the history of a much older word, the Greek *biaiothanatos*. It literally meant “violent death” and included suicide along with deaths we would classify as accidents, like falling from a bridge, all of which were thought polluting, and had consequences for burial and for the dead person’s status as a ghost. Although the Latinized successor-word, *biothanatos*, came increasingly to be confined to suicide, it still carried the old ambiguity as late as the twelfth century. The slowness of that discovery is confirmed by early legal texts, where rabbis, Christian canon lawyers, and commentators on the Koran all, in their turn, insist that it is intention that distinguishes suicide—as if people did not know.

So the mere linguistic history of suicide already reveals a lot about how it was conceived. It suggests, further, that the taboo extended beyond the topic to the act of suicide, however vaguely distinguished. Religion absorbed the taboo, and in time gave it force and rationale. Already in Greek antiquity we find indignities attached to the burial of suicides, so understood. Similarly, as ideas of hell became better defined, we find suicides assigned to it, first (this time) in India.

#### Rationale

As for rationale, it drew on two kinds of source, divine and social. Around the sixth century B.C.E., Pythagoreans taught that we mortals are on sentry duty and bound to stay at our watch until relieved, an image that clearly implied man’s obligation to superior powers, sovereign beyond death. The image would be absorbed by Plato and his innumerable readers, who in the later Roman Empire included Neoplatonists and Christians, both of whom used it, with other borrowings, to fortify their faintly equivocal traditions. For the Christian tradition had until then itself been uncertain. In the Bible, keen eyesight is needed to find suicide expressly forbidden (as perhaps in Gen. 9:5 or Exod. 20:13). And although most suicides in the Bible—Judas the most notorious—are manifest villains, a “suicide guerilla” had slipped in among biblical heroes around the tenth century B.C.E., in the person of Samson (Judg. 16:18–30), and was joined around 70 B.C.E. by another hero, Razias, who had killed himself after military defeat, in the Roman manner (2 Macc. 14:43–46). The early church furthermore revered as saints certain women who had killed themselves to avoid rape. In the fourth century C.E., Christ-



ian opinion formers set about closing these loopholes, notably Pachomius (in respect of burial ritual) and Augustine (in argument). A few centuries later, Muslim commentators would do the same for the Koran, whose deficiencies in this particular were amply supplied by the Hadith (tradition).

A second main source for an antisuicide rationale was social. Aristotle had explained the Athenians' mutilation of suicides' corpses on the ground that a suicide had injured his polis (an argument to be seized on gratefully by Christian theologians in the later Middle Ages, when Aristotle became available in Latin). The Jews, for their part, told sympathetically (in *Tobit*, c. 200 B.C.E.) of a woman restrained from suicide by the thought that it would hurt her father. Even suicide-prone Roman Stoics could be restrained by consideration for their friends. Illiterates meanwhile expressed their social feelings on the subject by ideas about pollution of the community cemetery and bad weather. Finally, social considerations could express themselves on the vertical plane, from master to dependent. A Roman slave who killed himself robbed his owner, who might make him an example by maltreating the corpse. In early medieval Europe—when nearly everyone was someone else's dependent—lords would punish an underling's suicide by confiscating the property. That prerogative gradually passed to monarchs. That suicide was in England classed as a felony until 1961 probably owed its origin to the defiance it had represented, in the early Middle Ages, to the king qua lord.

### Justifications of Suicide

Condemnation of suicide, though widespread, has been far from universal. In all kinds of society, including preliterate kinds in Africa and America, communities with a suicide taboo can sometimes be found alongside others without. At least in more advanced cultures, two kinds of milieu have bred acceptance of suicide. One is military. In 1897 Émile Durkheim's classic, *Suicide*, recorded abnormally high rates among military officers. Durkheim ascribed this to the military ethos, on grounds that soldiers are familiar with weapons and death and set a high premium on honor. The same factors have operated throughout history. Greek and Roman warrior-heroes like Ajax or Brutus—not to mention their opposite numbers among Germanic opponents of Rome—were remembered honorably as falling on their swords after defeat. Off the battlefield, in a political climate similarly based on honor, members of the same class might kill themselves to vindicate their honor, as Lucretia and Cato did, winning posthumous glory as martyrs, respectively to chastity and republicanism. In the most intensely militarized cultures, suicide can become an institution, as with the hara-kiri ("belly-cutting") ritualized by samurai in twelfth-century Japan, and the kamikaze of their twentieth-century successors, who piloted torpedoes and bombs. A more complex case is that of warriors fighting for Semitic monotheisms, which frown on suicide. That Jewish warrior-suicide Razias would set a dilemma for Christian commentators, while Muhammad's condemnation of suicide came to sit uneasily with the martial ethos of early Islam, which could at its most extreme produce an offshoot like the Shurat ("sellers of their lives for God"), who plunged into battle against patently overwhelming odds.



***Suicide of Lucretia* (c. late 16th-mid 17th century) by Guido Reni.** Lucretia, a Roman noblewoman who was raped by Sextus, son of the tyrant Tarquin the Proud, sought to restore her honor by committing suicide. © ARALDO DE LUCA/CORBIS

The second tolerant milieu has been philosophy. The classical Greek kind of philosophy, still thriving, tends to resist taboos unjustified by reason; and reason alone cannot easily justify the taboo on suicide, as Hamlet found. It may indeed resent it, since, lacking unquestionable evidence of sensation beyond death, reason suggests that an unhappy life with no prospects is best ended. This train of thought was formally inaugurated by the Cynic Diogenes in the fourth century B.C.E. and survived under the capacious blanket of Roman Stoicism, whose philosophers argued that, just as we may quit a banquet if it becomes tedious, so, under the same condition, we may—indeed must, to be rational—quit the banquet of life; what we do is in any case up to us and no cause for disgrace or punishment. Among lasting effects of this view was the systematic erasure from classical Roman law of any stigma on suicide as such. Around the fourth century C.E. came a change of mood, of which Augustine's arguments were less a cause than a symptom. The philosophical current only began reemerging in the Renaissance, and more fully in the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, when it targeted, in particular, ancient rituals that aimed to disgrace a suicide's memory, usually to the prejudice of his family. After a series of skirmishes—including a pan-European scandal at the romanticization of suicide in Goethe's novel *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* (1774; The sufferings of young Werther)—philosophical tolerance completed its conquest of European law during the twentieth century.

Quite a different philosophical tradition has meanwhile recommended suicide of a very strictly defined type. The same ancient Sanskrit texts that condemned suicide done through passion have allowed those ascetics who have overcome passion to sever its last roots by parting from their bodies, by the least passionate method available (say, by drowning in a sacred river or by starvation). Traces of this view have been present in Mediterranean history, and condemnation of suicide by the Semitic religions may owe some of its force to a defensive reaction, against the doctrine of what one early Koran commentator calls the “Indian fools.”

While suicides form a minute proportion of the population (0.03 percent per annum is a fairly high figure), a study of their circumstances, as Durkheim and his successors have demonstrated, throws otherwise inaccessible light on the lives of everyone else. In the same way, while suicide commands only a small proportion of moral and legal theory, it raises inexhaustible questions, both of the casuistical kind about suicide as such and also, through those, about life itself.

See also *Christianity; Cynicism; Judaism; Stoicism.*

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Alexander Murray

**SUPERSTITION.** Superstition has had different meanings in different cultures and epochs. One thing binding these meanings together is that they are usually negative—superstition is a concept defined principally by its self-declared opponents. A second is that superstition is defined as the opposite of something praiseworthy—usually true religion or true science.

The ancient Greeks referred to superstition as *deisidaimonia*—fear of the spirits or daimons. This term was originally used positively, in the sense of “God-fearing.” The first known negative use occurred around the fourth century B.C.E. in Theophrastus’s *Characters*. His character of the superstitious man shows a person so obsessed with carrying out rituals to ward off the gods’ anger that he could not lead a normal life. After Theophrastus, negative uses of *deisidaimonia* became much more common, although positive uses never entirely

ceased. Plutarch (c. 46–after 119 C.E.), in his essay on superstition in the *Moralia*, used the Aristotelian doctrine of virtue as a means to distinguish between atheism and *deisidaimonia*, opposite vices in the field of religion. He argued that atheism was in every way superior to superstition, as it was a lesser insult to the gods to assert that they did not exist than to assert that they were cruel. The atheist was insensitive, but the superstitious person lived in constant terror. Plutarch included a wider range of religious behavior in the category of superstition than had Theophrastus, including human sacrifice, Jewish observance of the Sabbath, fear of punishment in the afterlife, and belief in the literal truth of Greek myth. Unlike Theophrastus and many other ancient writers, Plutarch emphasized the grim rather than the comic aspects of superstition. The consequences of superstition could be disastrous not only for the superstitious person but for everyone—Plutarch’s life of the Athenian general Nicias ascribes the Athenian disaster at Syracuse in large part to Nicias’s timorous fear of a lunar eclipse.

The word *superstition* itself originates with the ancient Romans, who used the term *superstitio* mainly as a pejorative for those religions and religious practices they found barbarous, including Judaism and Christianity. Superstition was the opposite of religion, the decorous and pious worship of the gods. The antiquary Varro distinguished between the superstitious man, who feared the gods as his enemies, and the religious man, who was devoted to them as his parents.

Christians countered accusations of superstition by accusing their pagan opponents of both superstition and *deisidaimonia*. Christian polemicists particularly emphasized the superstitious nature of pagan “idolatry.” Saint Augustine (354–430), in a particularly influential passage of *On Christian Doctrine*, explicitly linked idolatry with divination as superstitious practices, essentially reducing all of pagan religion to superstition. The conversion of the Roman Empire to Christianity in the fourth century and the growing Christianization of Roman institutions led by the fifth century to Roman laws referring to all non-Christian religions as “superstition.” Christian authorities for a long time ascribed the superstitious practices of Christians themselves to lingering paganism.

#### Superstition and the Medieval and Early Modern Catholic Church

Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274) provided a meticulous and influential definition of superstition in the *Summa Theologica*. Aquinas followed Plutarch in claiming that superstition was a vice of excess of religion, as impiety was a vice of deficiency of religion. Varieties of superstition included erroneous worship of the true God (Aquinas gives the example of someone in the Christian era who worships according to the old Law, i.e., a Jew) or unsanctioned by the church. Another variety of superstition was idolatry, worship directed to inappropriate objects—that is, anything other than God. Divination and other magical practices, which Aquinas claimed involved an implicit or explicit agreement with demons, were also superstitious in violating the religious precept that man should learn from and trust in God. Even practices outwardly pious, such as wearing the relic of a saint, were superstitious if they relied

on practices having nothing to do with piety, such as the particular shape of the reliquary.

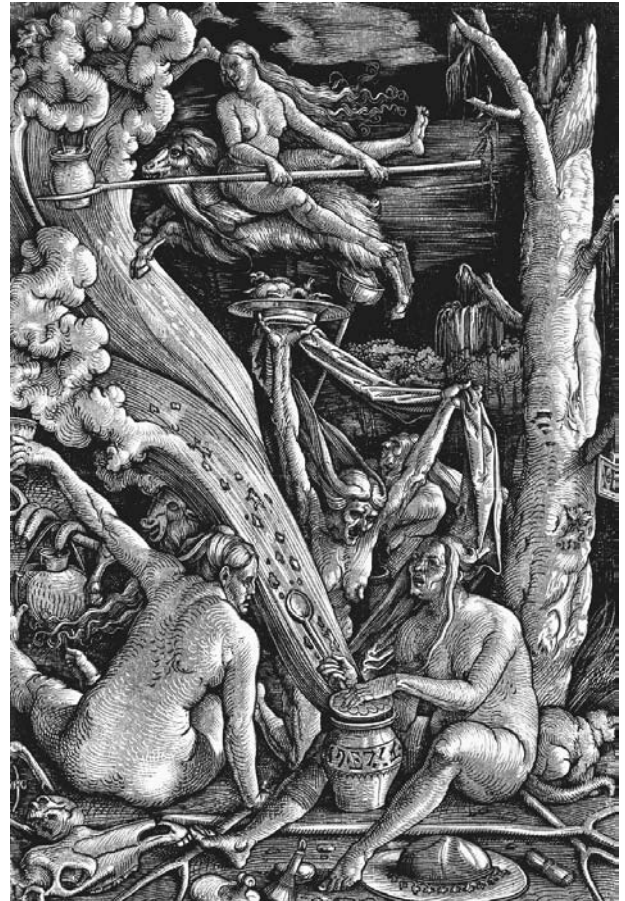
The Catholic campaign against superstition in the Middle Ages and early modern periods were not merely theoretical. Church reformers preached and campaigned against what they identified as superstitious religious practices, the wearing of charms and talismans and other non-Church sanctioned activities. Catholic authorities defined superstitious practices as those that did not rely either on nature or on divine power for their effectiveness. Superstition was not only a threat to the laity. Parish priests were often seen as tolerating superstition or even practicing it themselves, and many of the leading campaigners against it were friars operating outside the diocesan hierarchy of the church.

Early modern Spain produced a particularly rich literature on superstition from the pens of Catholic priests, ranging from the vernacular works of the sixteenth-century friars Pedro Ciruelo (1470–1548) and Martin de Castanega to the Scholastic Latin writings of the eminent Jesuit theology professor Francisco Suarez (1548–1617). Ciruelo's influential *Treatise Reproving All Superstitions*, aimed at ordinary Spaniards whose souls were threatened by superstition, identified it almost completely with magic. All superstition, Ciruelo claimed, was based either on the desire for illicit knowledge or material gain. Superstitions aimed at gaining knowledge were necromancy and divination; those aimed at gain were enchantment and witchcraft. Like much of the early modern Catholic literature, Ciruelo's work focused on questions of causation, claiming that events could be caused either by direct divine intervention, as in the case of miracles, the actions of good or evil angels, or natural causes. Ascribing outcomes to other causes was superstitious. The general tendency of the Spanish literature on superstition from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century was to circumscribe the area of direct divine action and ascribe more and more events to natural causes.

### Superstition and Its Foes in the Islamic World

Campaigns against “superstitious” practices emerged independently in the Islamic world. Muslims who venerated shrines of deceased holy men or celebrated “mawlid”—the birthday of Muhammad—were condemned for practices that were non-Koranic and directed worship to persons other than God, the crime of “shirk” or idolatry. Among the most important medieval Muslim intellectuals to campaign against superstitious practices was the brilliant and uncompromising Syrian jurist of the Hanbali school of Sunni legal interpretation, Taqi al-Din Ibn Taymiyya (1263–1328), and his disciple Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (1292–1350). Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn Jawziyya saw the first three centuries of Islam as free from superstitious practices but the Muslims of their own time as corrupted by them, linking prayer at graves with the practices of pre-Islamic Arab polytheists and contemporary Christians. Despite Ibn Taymiyya's influence, however, his opposition to shrine visits and other “superstitions” did not become the mainstream position in the Sunni ulama.

The Wahhabi movement of Islamic reform, which emerged in eighteenth-century Arabia, recognized Ibn Taymiyya as a



**Sixteenth-century woodcut of witches by Hans Baldung Grien (1484–1545).** During the medieval period, the Catholic Church labeled several different practices as superstitious, among them idolatry, incorrect worship of God, and magical practices such as witchcraft. PHOTO CREDIT: RÉUNION DES MUSÉES NATIONAUX / ART RESOURCE, NY

precursor and carried on a vigorous struggle against the “superstitious” veneration of tombs and shrines, destroying many of them. Similar Islamic reform movements, such as the Indian movement founded by Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi (1786–1831), would also denounce superstition. Indian Islamic reformers often linked “idolatry” to the influence of Hinduism.

### Superstition in the Protestant and Catholic Reformations

The concept of superstition as a religious error was very influential during the Reformation, when Protestants defined many aspects of traditional Catholic worship, including pilgrimages, prayers for the dead, the cult of the saints, and the veneration of the consecrated host, as superstitious. Francis Bacon (1561–1626) in his essay on superstition quoted Plutarch and followed him in believing atheism preferable to superstition, a position he particularly emphasized by placing the essay on superstition immediately after the one on atheism. Bacon listed as superstitions “pleasing and sensual rites



### THE *SPECTATOR* ON SUPERSTITION AND ENTHUSIASM

In an issue of the *Spectator* dated 20 October 1711, Joseph Addison distinguished between superstition and enthusiasm, linking superstition with Catholicism, enthusiasm with Protestant Dissent, and “masculine piety” with the group he himself was a member of, the Church of England.

An Enthusiast in Religion is like an obstinate Clown, a Superstitious Man like an insipid Courtier. Enthusiasm has something in it of Madness, Superstition of Folly. Most of the Sects that fall short of the Church of *England* have in them strong Tinctures of Enthusiasm, as the *Roman* Catholick Religion is one huge overgrown Body of childish and idle Superstitions.

The *Roman* Catholick Church seems indeed irrecoverably lost in this Particular. If an absurd Dress or Behaviour be introduced in the World, it will soon be found out and discarded: On the contrary, a Habit or Ceremony, tho’ never so ridiculous, which has taken Sanctuary in the Church, sticks in it for ever. A *Gothic* Bishop perhaps, thought it proper to repeat such a Form in such particular Shoes or Slippers. Another fancied it would be very decent if such a Part of publick Devotions were performed with a Mitre on his Head,

and a Crosier in his Hand. To this a Brother *Vandal*, as wise as the others, adds an antick Dress, which he conceived would allude very aptly to such and such Mysteries, till by Degrees the whole Office has Degenerated Into an empty Show.

Their Successors see the Vanity and Inconvenience of these Ceremonies; but instead of reforming, perhaps add others, which they think more significant, and which take Possession in the same manner, and are never to be driven out after they have been once admitted. I have seen the Pope officiate at St. *Peter’s* where, for two Hours together, he was busied in putting on or off his different Accoutrements, according to the different Parts he was to act in them.

Nothing is so glorious in the Eyes of Mankind, and ornamental to Human Nature, setting aside the infinite Advantages which arise from it, as a strong, steady masculine Piety; but Enthusiasm and Superstition are the Weaknesses of human Reason, that expose us to the Scorn and Derision of Infidels, and sink us even below the Beasts that perish.

SOURCE: Donald F. Bond, ed., *Spectator*, 2:289–290.

and ceremonies; excess of outward and pharisaical holiness; [and] overgreat reverence of traditions,” recapitulating common Protestant anti-Catholic rhetoric. The charge of superstition was also a polemical weapon in intra-Protestant battles. Bacon also hinted that there was a “superstition in avoiding superstition, when men think to do best, if they go furthest from the superstition, formerly received” a veiled thrust at the extreme Protestants of his day (Bacon, p. 40).

Catholic accusations of superstition against Protestants were less common, as the principal charge they made was heresy. Heresy differed from superstition in that it resulted from willful error rather than ignorance. In common usage, superstition also differed from heresy in that it was focused more on practices than beliefs. The early modern period also saw more secular analyses of superstition in Sir Thomas Browne’s (1605–1682) *Pseudodoxia Epidemica* (1646) and the works of other

collectors and denouncers of “vulgar errors” who preceded and followed him. These writers included superstitions among other false beliefs. Although in many places endorsing the theory that superstitions had been handed down from ancient pagans, Browne and his successors had more interest in cataloging and analyzing individual superstitions than did the theologians and religious polemicists. Their work contributed to the later development of the anthropological study of superstition.

#### Superstition in the Enlightenment and Romantic Periods

Enlightenment thinkers like David Hume (1711–1776) and Joseph Addison (1672–1719) adapted the “virtue of the mean” model of superstition by defining the opposite extreme not as atheism or irreligion but as enthusiasm or fanaticism. Hume considered the different social consequences of the two



extremes. Hume claimed that superstition originated in the fear of the unknown and that people undertook superstitious activities to propitiate unknown forces and thus protect themselves. Superstition sprang from excessive fear, enthusiasm from excessive confidence. However, Hume claimed that superstition was far more dangerous to society than enthusiasm. Superstitious people, afraid to approach the divine directly, handed over authority to priests, whereas enthusiasts refused to admit any intermediary between themselves and God. Superstition encouraged timorousness, and enthusiasm encouraged fearlessness—therefore despotic government and political passivity naturally accompanied superstition. Socially, eighteenth-century thinkers identified superstition with marginalized groups—peoples outside Europe, the European masses, and women, particularly old women.

Some radical Enlightenment philosophers broadened the concept of superstition until it described all organized religions. The entry on superstition in Voltaire's *Philosophical Dictionary* recounted how various Christian and non-Christian sects have accused each other of "superstition." By pointing out that there is no religion that has not been denounced by another as superstition, Voltaire discredited organized religion generally. Both Voltaire and Hume hinted that the inevitable superstition of the masses might not be altogether a bad thing, if it kept them quiescent.

The Romantic era saw a more positive valuation of superstition, part of the reaction against Enlightenment rationalism and the growing interest in "folk" culture. The English poet John Clare (1793–1864) viewed superstition in his country as a remnant of the culture of the Anglo-Saxons and Normans and spoke of it almost rhapsodically. "Superstition lives longer than books; it is engrafted on the human mind till it becomes a part of its existence; and is carried from generation to generation on the stream of eternity, with the proudest of fames, untroubled with the insect encroachments of oblivion which books are infested with" (Clare, p. 301). The human sciences that emerged in the nineteenth century considered superstition and particular superstitions part of their subject matter, and anthropologists and folklorists collected and analyzed them while psychologists sought the root of superstition in the human mind.

### Superstition in the Modern World

Superstition in the modern era is less likely to be contrasted with true religion and more likely to be viewed as the opposite of science, reason, or modernity. Campaigns to abolish superstition have continued but have not usually been motivated by interest in purifying religion. The early twentieth-century Chinese government in its efforts to modernize Chinese culture employed a new concept, *mixin*, usually translated as "superstition," to denote many aspects of popular religion previously called *xie*, "heterodoxy." This linguistic change accompanied a shift from the Neo-Confucian strategy of incorporating popular religion as a support for the established order to one of actively suppressing many aspects of it. The Chinese nationalist government's 1928 decree "Standards for Preserving and Abandoning Gods and Shrines," attacked superstition as opposed to science and progress. The decree distinguished between cults, which remained permissible, mostly those of deified humans

such as Confucius and the Buddha, and "superstitious" cults, which were outlawed, mostly those of nature deities such as the god of rain. It was followed by several other antisuperstition edicts attacking divination and other magical practices.

Even when lacking the coercive power of a state or church, rationalist and scientific polemicists continue to describe the beliefs of their opponents as superstitious. Psychologists have investigated the human propensity for superstitious beliefs, attempting to identify those populations most and least likely to adopt superstitions. The causes for superstition they have put forth include the human propensity to ascribe meaning to coincidence or to assert control over uncontrollable events. Much of this work has been placed in a context hostile to superstition, seeing the identification of superstition's causes as essential to fighting it and defending rational thought. The idea of "superstition" has even been broadened beyond human beings; B. F. Skinner (1904–1990), in his 1947 paper on "Superstition in the Pigeon," gave a behaviorist interpretation of superstition. Skinner claimed to have produced in pigeons a tendency to repeat behavior associated with food getting, even when there was no real causal connection between the behavior and the appearance of food. He suggested that superstitious beliefs in humans could originate in the same way.

Anthropologists and folklorists have continued their studies of superstition, producing a myriad of studies of superstitions in particular geographical areas, among particular subcultures such as actors or baseball players, and concerning particular subjects, such as cats or fertility.

See also *Demonology; Magic; Miracles; Religion; Witchcraft.*

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**SURREALISM.** In view of its global impact, as Anna Balakian has persuasively argued, Surrealism constituted the major poetic and artistic current of the twentieth century. Of the dozens of movements that vied for this honor, Surrealism proved to be the most influential and the most persistent. Although abstraction enjoyed a huge success, it was limited almost entirely to art. Surrealism's most serious rival was probably Cubism, since it had an important impact on both literature and painting. Another leading contender was Expressionism, however one chooses to define it, which influenced a broad spectrum of aesthetic creations. Nevertheless, Surrealism was the only movement to span the greater part of the century and to enjoy widespread popularity.

### In the Beginning

The term "surrealism" was coined by Guillaume Apollinaire in 1917 to describe Jean Cocteau's ballet *Parade* and his own play *The Mammaries of Tiresias*. After Apollinaire died the following year, André Breton appropriated the term in homage to the fallen poet. In contrast to Apollinaire's surrealism, which was basically analogical, Breton's Surrealism (with a capital S) was preoccupied with the Freudian unconscious. Breton, a former medical student who served as a psychiatric orderly during the war, sought to probe the secret recesses of the mind. In particular, since he was a practicing poet, he wondered what aesthetic discoveries they might hold.

Although Surrealist art and film were destined to achieve greater popular success, Surrealism was originally conceived as a literary movement. The Surrealists proposed exploring the unconscious via the written and/or spoken word. By systematically violating linguistic rules, they attempted to increase our ability to describe irrational experiences and illogical events. By pushing language to the edge of intelligibility—and beyond—the Surrealists created a powerful instrument for exploring the unconscious. Like the Dada movement, from which it originally sprang, Surrealism strove not only to revolutionize language but also to renew its primary function. Surrealist practitioners no longer regarded words as passive objects but rather as autonomous entities. "Words . . . have finished playing silly games," Breton proclaimed; "Words have discovered how to make love" (p. 286).

Surrealism's basic principles were not all promulgated at the same moment nor adopted by everyone with the same measure of enthusiasm. The first *Manifesto of Surrealism* (1924) focused on the role of psychic automatism:

SURREALISM, n. Pure psychic automatism by which we propose to express—either verbally or in writing or

in some other manner—the true functioning of thought. The dictation of thought, in the absence of all control exercised by reason, outside all aesthetic and moral preoccupations.

ENCYCL. Philos. Surrealism rests on a belief in the superior reality of certain forms of association neglected until now, in the omnipotence of dream, in the disinterested play of thought. Ultimately it tends to destroy all other psychic mechanisms and to take their place in resolving the principal problems of life.

Despite the excitement evident in these and similar proclamations, psychic automatism assumed a limited role in Surrealism. Most, if not all, of the Surrealists exercised a certain amount of conscious control over their works. Breton himself distinguished between Surrealist texts, which were entirely automatic, and Surrealist poems, in which unconscious desires were encompassed by a broader design.

### Marvelous Encounters

The concept of the marvelous also played a crucial role in Surrealist works. Differing from one era to the next, the marvelous was defined basically as exacerbated beauty. Provoking an involuntary shudder in the reader or viewer, the marvelous mirrored the perpetual anxiety underlying human experience. In Surrealist works, it often assumes the form of eerie images and enigmatic adventures. The concept of objective chance played an equally important role. According to Surrealist theory, the most powerful imagery was that which caused the greatest surprise. In order to create marvelous images, Surrealist poets juxtaposed two terms that appeared to conflict with each other but were secretly related. The power of the resulting imagery was directly proportional to their apparent dissimilarity.

Surrealist artists performed a similar operation by juxtaposing incongruous or contradictory images on the canvas. Psychic automatism provided one means of achieving this goal. Artists and writers also resorted to chance operations like those governing an exercise called "the exquisite cadaver," in which several individuals contributed different words to create a nonsensical utterance. The name derived from their first attempt, which produced the following phrase: "The exquisite cadaver will drink the new wine."

### Later Developments

With the publication of the *Second Manifesto* six years later, the Surrealist program acquired additional principles. These principles applied to every official member of the Surrealist movement. One of these, which Breton called "the supreme point" (or sometimes "the sublime point"), attempted to revive the medieval concept of *coincidentia oppositorum*. "According to all indications," he declared, "a certain point exists in the mind where life and death, the real and the imaginary, the past and the future, the communicable and the incommunicable, the high and the low cease to be perceived as contradictions." The Surrealists sought to eliminate traditional binary oppositions, including the distinction between beauty and ugliness, truth and falsehood, and good and evil, because

they appeared to be arbitrary. In their opinion, these and other cultural constructions merely restricted the imagination.

Since the Surrealists strove to revolutionize life as well as art, they also, almost without exception, became ardent Marxists. How could one liberate humanity, they reasoned, without correcting widespread social abuses? Psychological freedom clearly depended on the achievement of political and economic freedom. Although the French Communist Party refused to take Breton and his colleagues seriously, they continued to subscribe to Marxist goals.

A final principle to be enshrined in the Surrealist pantheon was delirious love. Officially adopted in 1937, when Breton published a book of the same name, it was already well established. Hence the *Second Manifesto* (1930) celebrated love as the “only [idea] capable of reconciling every individual, momentarily or not, with the idea of *life*” (Breton, p. 823). In keeping with Surrealism’s objectives, passionate commitment was portrayed as a liberating force.

As much as anything, Breton and his colleagues insisted, Surrealism sought to improve the quality of everyday life. Although the movement’s accomplishments were largely aesthetic, it strove to revolutionize our view of the world around us. Among other things, Surrealism offered potential solutions to a number of problematic situations. One of the problems it addressed was the relation between the individual and his or her unconscious. By inventing strategies to glimpse this hidden realm, it conferred a new significance on the ancient Greek motto “Know thyself.” In addition, Surrealism explored the relation between individuals and the natural world. While the concept of the supreme point stressed the unity of life, the principles of objective chance and the marvelous emphasized its extraordinary beauty. In addition, the Surrealists aimed to redefine the relation between the individual and society and between man and woman. Reflecting the movement’s eclectic origins, they succeeded in reconciling Freud with the alchemist Fulcanelli and Eros with Marx. Ultimately, they attempted to modify the process of seeing, thinking, and feeling in order to achieve total liberation.

### The Movement’s Reception

Originating in France, Surrealism soon spread to every corner of the globe. Painters and poets all over the world were attracted to the Surrealist endeavor, especially those living in Spain and Latin America. At least two of the latter artists, Salvador Dalí and Joan Miró, were destined to play a major part in the movement. An analogous role was reserved for Luis Buñuel, who founded the Surrealist cinema. In addition, Surrealism attracted three poets who would eventually receive the Nobel prize for literature: Vicente Aleixandre, Pablo Neruda, and Octavio Paz. In retrospect, Surrealism cast a long, indelible shadow over most of the twentieth century. Artists and writers who were not affiliated with the movement also benefited—and continue to benefit—from the Surrealist enterprise. Surrealism led to the creation of a new language, a new vision, and a vast body of exciting, innovative works. It revolutionized not only the way we perceive ourselves and the world around us but the way in which we translate this perception into words and images.

*See also Arts: Overview; Avant-Garde; Dada; Dream; Periodization of the Arts.*

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*Willard Bohn*

**SYMBIOSIS.** *See Environment.*

**SYMBOLISM.** The symbolist movement began in France in the 1880s as a literary phenomenon. The term *symbolism*, however, quickly came to encompass a range of arts, from painting and sculpture to theater and music. While the movement is often said to have spanned the years 1885–1895, the ideas and aesthetic interests of symbolism are often traced back to the middle of the nineteenth century, and many early twentieth-century artists and writers continued to be influenced by its ideas. Symbolism was first and foremost a movement in French literature centered in Paris, and many of its central participants were French (Stéphane Mallarmé, Paul Verlaine, Arthur Rimbaud). Yet many artists and writers from elsewhere were also central to French symbolism: Maurice Maeterlinck, Émile Verhaeren, and Albrecht Rodenbach were Belgian, Jean Moréas was Greek, Téodor de Wyzewa was Polish, and Stuart Merrill was American. In addition, there were symbolist movements in Germany, Italy, Russia, and Belgium. Many scholars also see mid-nineteenth-century British aestheticism as a form of symbolism.



Each manifestation of symbolism had its own distinct characteristics. For example, most Belgian symbolists were more socially and politically engaged with working-class issues than their French counterparts, while Russian symbolism linked spiritual, social, and national concerns. Many artists and writers who never would have called themselves symbolists are considered under the rubric of symbolism because their work shares at least some of the same interests as that produced by self-proclaimed symbolist artists.

Proponents of symbolist aesthetics rejected the notion that the purpose of the arts is to represent the world as it appears to one's senses. They proposed instead to create works that would use suggestive (and often abstract) forms, images, or sounds to embody transcendent (and sometimes spiritual) ideas and would thus offer their readers, viewers, or listeners an experience of truth, beauty, or the idea beyond the material realm. Symbolism—be it in literature, music, or the visual arts—is thus characterized by a paradox: It relies on an emphasis on material form (decorative patterns in painting, repeated sounds, or arrangements of words on the page in the literary arts) as the vehicle for transcending the material or empirical world. This foregrounding of form links symbolism to the emergence of modernist abstraction in art and literature.

For a long time, scholars saw the symbolist refusal to depict the empirical world as a reaction against naturalistic artistic and literary movements such as realism and Impressionism. Later scholarship suggested that, rather than seeing symbolism mainly as a rejection of naturalist aesthetics, it should be acknowledged that symbolism was embedded in wider cultural and political anxieties of the late nineteenth century. The dominant philosophies of positivism and Darwinism threatened to substitute empirical facts for the traditional religious explanations of the great mysteries of the world. Human activity was increasingly explained in mechanistic psychophysiological terms and human beings appeared to be less and less in control of their thoughts and behaviors. The development of capitalist economies led to an increasing commodification of daily life and an increasingly materialistic culture. Rather than situating symbolism in the rarified world of the aesthetic, scholars came to see the symbolist alternative to materialism—evocative abstraction, suggestion, mysticism, and dreamlike imagery—as an attempt to oppose the effects of materialism and capitalism.

### Symbolism in French Literature

The symbolist movement was formally launched in 1886, when the poet Jean Moréas (1856–1910) published a manifesto in the major Parisian newspaper *Le Figaro*. Moréas described symbolism as the

enemy of teaching, of declamation, of false sensitivity, of objective description, Symbolic poetry seeks to clothe the Idea in a perceptible form that nevertheless will not be the ultimate goal in itself, but, which, even as it serves to express the Idea, remains subject to it. The Idea, for its part, must not allow itself to be deprived of the sumptuous robes of external analogies; for the essential character of symbolic art is never to reach the Idea itself. Accordingly, in this art, the depictions of nature, the

actions of human beings, all the concrete phenomena would not manifest themselves; these are but appearances perceptible to the senses destined to represent their esoteric affinities with primordial ideas. (p. 60)

Moréas' version of symbolism rejects all attempts to represent the perceptible world directly or instruct the reader straightforwardly. Instead, Moréas advocates allusive language that will allow the idea to be intuited by readers through a series of analogies. Moréas makes clear that for symbolism the important subject matter lies beyond the perceptible world. In addition, in the manifesto, Moréas advocates new kinds of verse no longer bound by traditional rules of poetic composition.

Moréas' manifesto served many purposes. On one hand, it was a declaration of the direction modern poetry should take and thus part of a wider attempt on the part of young writers to find cultural legitimacy while declaring themselves outside the traditional French academy. This general trend toward establishing an independent literary milieu is perhaps most clearly evidenced in the plethora of literary magazines that emerged in the mid-1880s: *Le Symboliste*, *La vogue*, *Le scapin*, *La Décadence*, and *Le Décadent*. Some, such as *La vogue*, sought legitimacy as serious journals by publishing new work by young poets such as Gustave Kahn, Jean Moréas, René Ghil, and Édouard Dujardin alongside the work of already established symbolist heroes such as Mallarmé and Rimbaud. These small journals also published articles further formulating and often arguing the points of symbolist theory. Many journals founded in the 1880s and early 1890s were short-lived, some lasting less than a year. Some journals, however, such as *La revue indépendante*, *La plume*, and *Les entretiens politiques et littéraires* had more successful runs, and one, *Le mercure de France*, still exists, though its aims have been considerably broadened since the original publication.

While in some sense declaring his independence from tradition, Moréas also wanted to distinguish what he called "Symbolism" from the approach of other nontraditional writers and artists he designated as "Decadent." In 1883, Paul Bourget had expounded a "theory of decadence" when discussing Charles Baudelaire (1821–1867) in his *Essai de psychologie contemporaine* (Essay on contemporary psychology). Baudelaire's figure of the hypersensitive dandy aesthete became the model for the decadent artist, and Joris-Karl Huysmans's novel *À rebours* (1884; *Against nature*) became a veritable handbook: The main character, Des Esseintes, became a fictional cult hero and model for aspiring decadent artists and writers.

There is a great deal of overlap between decadence and symbolism. Both reject the value of empirical descriptions of the natural world and look to the artist's heightened sensitivity and imagination for the source of creativity. The aim of decadence, however, more often seems to be the rejection of bourgeois values and everyday morality in favor of detailed explorations of socially marginal and exotic subject matter: the occult, the femme fatale, sexual debauchery, extreme artifice, and aestheticism.

Conversely, symbolism, while sometimes overlapping in subject matter, is more seriously concerned with the search for a new approach to poetic, literary, or artistic form drawing on



the experimentations of an older generation of writers such as Baudelaire, Edgar Allan Poe, Mallarmé, Rimbaud, and Verlaine. Moréas' description of symbolism refers most directly to Baudelaire's poem "Correspondences" from his volume *Les fleurs du mal* (1857, expanded 1861; The flowers of evil)—a work that became a touchstone for symbolist artists and writers:

La nature est un temple où de vivants pilliers  
 Laissent parfois sortir de confuses paroles;  
 L'homme passe à travers des forêts de symboles  
 Qui l'observent avec des regards familiers.  
 Comme de longs échos qui de loin se confondent  
 Dans une ténébreuse et profonde unité,  
 Vaste comme la nuit et comme la clarté,  
 Les parfums, les couleurs et les sons se répondent.  
 Nature is a temple whose living pillars  
 Sometimes emit confusing messages  
 Man passes through forests of symbols  
 That observe him with familiar glances.  
 Like extended echoes that blend in the distance  
 In a shadowy and deep unity,  
 Vast as the night and as the light,  
 The perfumes, the colors and the sounds are answered.  
 (translation author's)

Baudelaire's poem suggests that humans inhabit a world where the mundane can serve as a "forest of symbols" to which the poet is especially attuned. Everyday objects and experiences offer secret correspondences between sounds, scents, and colors in which the poet deciphers a higher meaning. The poem evokes two ideas that will be central to symbolism: first, the role of the artist or poet as a gifted seer capable of identifying connections that point beyond the perceptible world; and second, the importance of formal echoes in sensory data where scents, colors, and sounds "se répondent" (respond to one another) in synesthesia—the connection between different sensory realms.

Baudelaire had been strongly influenced by the work of the U.S. writer Edgar Allan Poe (1809–1849), whose prose writings he had translated in the 1850s. Mallarmé and others were especially influenced by Baudelaire's 1859 translation of Poe's essay "Philosophy of Composition." Whereas Mallarmé was influenced by Poe's allusive figures and economy of means, others looked to Poe's status as *poète maudit* (damned poet), whose subject matter delved into mystery, the occult, and madness. In his work, Arthur Rimbaud (1854–1891) followed this interpretation of Poe, taking on the mantle of damned poet for himself. For Rimbaud poetry was not a controlled process of self-expression in the tradition of romanticism but instead a vehicle for the unraveling and disorganization of self—"a long, boundless, and systematized disorganization of *all the senses*"—that allows the exploration of those elements of human subjectivity associated with madness. As Rimbaud famously put it: "I is an *other*. . . . I am the spectator at the flowering of my thought: I watch it, I listen to it: I draw a bow across a string: a symphony stirs in the depths, or surges onto the stage" (p. 102). Rimbaud published *Un saison en enfer* (A season in hell) in 1873 and abandoned writing before the age of twenty. Other volumes of his work, *Illuminations*

(1886) and *Poésies complètes* (1895), were published at the instigation of others long after they had initially been written.

Whereas Rimbaud's questioning of the boundaries of poetry and of the self ultimately led him to abandon poetry, Stéphane Mallarmé (1842–1898) repeatedly wrote poems about the impossibility of embodying the Idea in poetic form. This is most famously thematized in the poetic symbol of *l'azur*, a term evoking both the color blue and the sky and alluding to the impossible ideal that the poet seeks to grasp and express. In an 1891 response to Jules Huret's *Enquête sur l'évolution littéraire* (Survey of literary development), Mallarmé, attempting to describe his approach to poetry, expanded on Baudelaire's notion of correspondences and turned it into the *modus operandi* of creation. According to Mallarmé,

to name an object is to suppress three quarters of the pleasure of the poem which is meant to be deciphered little by little: suggestion, that is the dream. This is the perfect use of mystery which constitutes the symbol: to evoke an object little by little in order to show a state of the soul or, conversely, to choose an object and glean from it an emotional state by a series of decipherments. (1891 response to Jules Huret, *Enquête sur l'évolution littéraire*)

As this passage suggests, the purpose of a poem is not to put forth a clearly decipherable message about the exterior world or the intentions of the writer, but to set in motion a process of reading. The word on the page always points beyond itself or its obvious referents to an unknown that cannot be fixed. Mallarmé's works place the emphasis on language's material unfolding through the poem, and the reader's unending act of decipherment is not a sign of the poem's failure but of its success.

### Symbolism and Music

Many symbolists share the notion that all art should aspire to the condition of music, which was thought to be the most emotionally direct aesthetic medium. In "Art poétique" (1884), Paul Verlaine (1844–1896) famously instructed poets on the importance of "music before all else." This musicality was achieved in much symbolist poetry through rhyming, alliteration, assonance, and other rhetorical flourishes.

Mallarmé's famous late poem *Un coup de dés* (1897; A die-throw) takes the relationship between poetry and music even further than Verlaine. In this poem, Mallarmé radically experimented with type size and placement, leaving many blank areas, which themselves seem to carry meaning. The poem has been compared to a musical score with blanks that prescribe rests and with phrases that evanesce in much the same way as the music of Mallarmé's contemporary, the composer Claude Debussy. Indeed, Mallarmé's conception of his poems as a kind of music is brought out in an anecdote. When Debussy asked permission to set Mallarmé's "Afternoon of a Faun" (1876) to music, Mallarmé responded: "But I thought I had already done that!" (Sieburth, in Hollier, p. 796).

No composer is more closely aligned with symbolism than Claude Debussy (1862–1918). Debussy is famous for setting

many symbolist writings to music, including several poems by Baudelaire and Mallarmé. Most famously, he wrote “Prelude to the Afternoon of the Faun,” meant to complement and extend Mallarmé’s poem. Perhaps more important, Debussy approached musical composition with aims parallel to those of many symbolists. As Debussy wrote in an article of *La revue blanche* in 1902, music should not be “confined to producing Nature more or less exactly, but rather to producing the mysterious correspondences which link Nature with Imagination” (quoted in Lloyd, p. 266).

Like the symbolists, Debussy experimented radically with the conventions of rhythm, abandoning artificial demarcations within musical time in a move analogous to the symbolists’ rejection of the classic meters of poetry. Debussy compared his desire to minimize symbol and ornament in music to Mallarmé’s carefully wrought economy of language. Debussy also rejected any notion that music should tell an easily decipherable narrative: “There are those who want music to tell base anecdotes! As if the newspapers didn’t perform this task wonderfully well already” (quoted in Lloyd, p. 263). Both Debussy and Mallarmé imagined that their work, because of its rejection of anecdotal references and formulas, required active participation by its audience and asked them to transcend the mundanity of everyday experience. Debussy emphasized not only sound but silence as an element of meaning in his music, and this has been described as analogous to Mallarmé’s emphasis on the pauses and blank areas of the page in his late poem “Dice Thrown.” Finally, both Debussy and Mallarmé composed works that circle around the theme of desire.

Many poets associated with symbolism were extremely interested in the German composer Richard Wagner (1813–1883). The French interest in Wagner went back to the 1860s, when Baudelaire had admired and written about him and Auguste de Villiers de l’Isle-Adam, Judith Gautier, and Catulle Mendès had all visited him. Wagner imagined his music-dramas as *Gesamtkunstwerke* (total works of art) in which all the arts would be combined in a single work to transcend the possibilities of individual media. While some critics emphasized the naturalist tendencies of Wagner’s music, French interpreters of Wagner imagined the orchestrator of the total work of art as a secular priest and the work itself as a means to provide a transcendent experience. Baudelaire described his experience of Wagner’s music-drama *Lohengrin* (1848) as ecstatic, instigating an involuntary dreamlike state. Furthermore, in a transformation of Wagner that would be seized on by the symbolists, Baudelaire relates this experience to the synesthetic ideal he had described in “Correspondences,” saying that music by its very nature suggests synaesthetic analogies. In the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, the performance of Wagner’s operas had been banned in France. Many French literary figures, however, visited the festivals at Bayreuth, and by the mid-1880s there was a veritable cult of Wagner in France. From 1885 to 1888 one of Mallarmé’s disciples, Édouard Dujardin, published a symbolist journal, *La revue wagnérienne*, devoted to Wagnerism.

### Les Vingt and Belgian Symbolism

In Belgium, the avant-garde group Les Vingt (The twenty) held exhibitions, musical events, and readings from 1884 to 1893.

Its founders, Edmond Picard and Octave Maus, aimed to promote avant-garde culture using the Wagnerian theory of the unification of the arts. The exhibition galleries of Les Vingt displayed works by avant-garde artists from Belgium and elsewhere. Performances of the work of contemporary composers (including Debussy) were held in the galleries. The elite of the literary world were invited to speak on literature, and readings of avant-garde poetry were regularly held. Belgium had long been fertile ground for the development of literature and the arts and the influence of France had always been strong. As a French-speaking nation close to France’s border, Belgium had hosted many exiled French artists and writers, including Baudelaire, and often works by French writers that could not be published in France were published in Belgium. Journals such as *La jeune Belgique*, *L’élan littéraire*, and *La Wallonie* contributed to the development of Belgian symbolism and also had a great influence in France. Many on the staff of *La Wallonie*, for example, were important players in the French symbolist movement. The Belgian symbolist writers Verhaeren, Maeterlinck, and Rodenbach participated in the literary events of Les Vingt. They were influential in the literary worlds of both Belgium and France. The journal *L’art moderne* championed Les Vingt and published many articles explaining its aesthetic platform, which was broadly antiacademic (and thus embraced Impressionism and Neoimpressionism alongside symbolism). Like the organization itself, the journal was devoted to a range of media—painting, sculpture, engraving, and furniture and costume design were discussed alongside literature and music. Significantly, *L’art moderne* also promoted a socialist political agenda and rejected the bourgeois public, the press, and the official exhibiting space of the Salon as its enemies.

### Russian Symbolism

The symbolist movement in Russia is known as the Russian Silver Age (1892–1917). Although it was a widespread cosmopolitan movement encompassing often contradictory elements, certain general outlines can be drawn. In the 1890s a young generation of Russian writers was strongly influenced by Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860), Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900), Poe, Baudelaire, Mallarmé, Rimbaud, and Verlaine. The writer Valeri Briusov was instrumental in introducing Western work to the Russian audience through his translations of Baudelaire and Poe as well as his editorship of the important symbolist journal *Vesy* (The scales), which was modeled on *Le mercure de France* and published the works of Russian writers alongside European symbolists, including Moréas, Verhaeren, and Rémy de Gourmont. In 1892 three collections of verse were published under the title *The Russian Symbolists*. Rejecting positivism and materialism as well as the classic approach to literature, these writers followed the example of their Western counterparts. Writers such as Briusov, Konstantin Balmont, Fyodor Sologub, Zinaida Gippius, and Dmitry Merezhkovsky experimented with literary form and valued suggestion, intuition, and musicality in their work. The poet, mystic, and theologian Vladimir Solovyev described “life’s reverberating noise” as an “altered echo of transcendent harmonies.” Like their French and Belgian counterparts, Russian symbolists rejected the didactic depiction of the empirical world

and conceived of a truer reality hidden by phenomenal experience. They believed that intuition was more important than objective knowledge. This borrowing of ideas from further west was accompanied by an aesthetics of art for art's sake.

At the turn of the century Russian symbolism began to develop a much stronger character of its own, emphasizing a particularly Russian spiritual content. In 1901 Gippius and Merezhkovsky opened their Saint Petersburg Salon to contributors to Sergey Diaghilev's journal *World of Art* and in 1902 Merezhkovsky founded the Religious Philosophical Society. This led to a cross-fertilization of the literary, visual, and philosophical components of the movement in a forum focused on cosmic consciousness and the particular role of Russia as an intermediary between Eastern and Western spirituality, and on various forms of occult theorizing. The writers Vyacheslav Ivanov, Aleksandr Blok, and Andrey Bely were important participants in this later phase of the symbolist movement. Andrey Bely (1880–1934) described the new Russian poetry as apocalyptic and poets as prophets of the end of European civilization who foreshadow in their work a new, more highly evolved form of human consciousness. Solovyev described the poet as a possessor of secret knowledge. Aleksandr Blok (1880–1921) wrote poems drawn from mystic experiences and based on dreams. Bely is perhaps best known for his symbolist novels, the most famous of which is *Saint Petersburg* (1913). The novel, composed of experimental suggestive prose, combines descriptive narrative with mystical symbolism and can be read on many levels.

### British Aestheticism

In Britain a movement known as aestheticism is often seen as part of the wider symbolist movement. From the mid-nineteenth century until the early twentieth century, the artists and writers associated with British aestheticism experimented with the idea that art is a realm separate from the everyday world and the artist's role is to cultivate and express beauty for its own sake. British aestheticists most often used very refined evocations of women from myth and legend as a means for exploring their own highly cultivated sensibilities. They rejected classic approaches to art and literature and disputed the notion that art should educate its audience about moral values. The retreat into the realm of highly refined art and the refusal to address contemporary issues are often regarded as an oblique attack on bourgeois morality and the growing commodity culture of nineteenth-century Britain.

The writers of the aesthetic movement drew on the work of British romantic poets such as William Blake (1757–1827). Some were also influenced by Baudelaire and the French symbolists. One of the precursors to the aesthetic movement was the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, which was formed by a group of young painters and writers in the mid-nineteenth century. This movement rejected the classic aesthetic of the British academy and looked to other sources for its inspiration and subject matter. Many of their early works had Christian subjects. Often they tried to re-create the forms and methods of Gothic art and looked back to stories of knights and ladies. Pre-Raphaelite journals such as *The Germ* combined literary endeavors with explorations of the visual arts. Initially, the Pre-Raphaelite aesthetic involved taking a detailed approach and for this reason

it is often linked to realism. Nevertheless, many of the poems and paintings of artists such as James McNeill Whistler, Edward Burne-Jones, and Dante Gabriel Rossetti are rather vague and suggestive and these are commonly seen as part of the aesthetic movement. Writers associated with the aesthetic movement include John Ruskin, Alfred Lord Tennyson, Christina Rossetti, Charles Swinburne, Walter Pater, and Oscar Wilde. Many participants in British aestheticism embraced the notion of synesthesia and looked for correspondences between poetry, painting, and music. Dante Rossetti often based his paintings on his own poems, especially those evoking stories from the writings of Dante Alighieri (1265–1321), author of the *Divine Comedy*. Claude Debussy set Dante Rossetti's poem "The Blessed Damozel" (1850) to music in 1887–1888. Rossetti had completed his own painting of this poem in 1881, and the painting, which had the poem inscribed on the frame, is thought to have inspired Debussy's composition. James McNeill Whistler (1834–1903) was a close friend of Mallarmé and symbolist critics described him as a "painter-poet." Whistler embraced the connection between art and music by giving his works musical titles such as "symphony" or "nocturne," with subtitles designating colors or subject matter.

### Symbolist Theater

Symbolist theater relied on the Wagnerian idea of the total work of art, while also emphasizing the importance of using suggestion to reach metaphysical concepts of "the enigma of life" (Villiers de l'Isle Adam). The symbolists aimed to eliminate all traces of naturalistic or imitative acting, and all romance and melodrama. In theory, the actor was to be a depersonalized symbol pointing to a meaning beyond what was visible on the stage. In France, the Théâtre d'Art and the Théâtre de l'Oeuvre put on plays by symbolist writers and held experimental poetry stagings. In addition to the plays of French writers, they produced adaptations of works by Edgar Allan Poe, which had recently been translated by Mallarmé, and of *Salomé*, the play Oscar Wilde had written in French during his exile from Britain. Plays by the Belgian symbolists Maeterlinck and Rodenbach were also produced. Often the plays featured stage sets created by Paul Sérusier and other artists from the symbolist group the Nabis. In "On the Absolute Lack of Utility of Exact Staging," the playwright and theorist Pierre Quillard wrote that "the set should be a pure ornamental fiction which completes the illusion through analogies of colors and lines with the play. . . . Theater will be what it should be: a pretext for dream" (quoted in Deak, p. 145). Significantly, the sets were meant not to echo the visible shapes or forms of the characters, but, in a kind of synesthesia, to analogize the essence of the play itself.

Plays by the Scandinavian writers Henrik Ibsen (1828–1906) and August Strindberg (1849–1912) also became important parts of the French symbolist repertoire. In a manifesto accompanying the opening of Aurélian-Marie Lugné-Poe's Théâtre de l'Oeuvre, the symbolist critic Camille Mauclair identified Ibsen with the symbolist struggle to express "libertarian ideas or taste for aestheticism" and "modern beauty." Ibsen's plays *Ghosts*, *The Wild Duck*, *Hedda Gabler*, *A Doll's House*, *The Lady from the Sea*, *Rosmersholm*, and *An Enemy of the People*



the *People* were all staged in the early 1890s. Part of the reason Ibsen was appropriated as a symbolist had to do with the staging. The Danish actor, director, and novelist Hermann Bang described Lugné-Poe's staging of *Rosmersholm* as "without any firm contours. The actors wander restlessly over the stage, resembling shadows drifting continuously on the wall. They like to move with their arms spread out, . . . like the apostles in old paintings who look as if they've been surprised during worship" (quoted in Deak, p. 189). Bang's description of actors resembling apostles and shadows on a wall gives us a sense of how the staging of the play used vagueness and suggestiveness to reach higher spiritual meanings. As Frantisek Deak points out in his study of symbolist theater, however, Bang saw these initial attempts by Lugné-Poe as a misappropriation of Ibsen and attempted to persuade Lugné-Poe to emphasize psychological elements in his staging. Many Scandinavian critics, who believed Ibsen's play was realist, objected to the staging. Several of August Strindberg's psychological dramas (including *The Father* and *The Creditors*) were also staged at the Théâtre de l'Oeuvre, despite the fact that he too had previously been understood to be a naturalist.

### Symbolism in the Visual Arts

In the 1880s and 1890s, many European artists experimented with work that had similarities to symbolist literature. When applied to the visual arts, symbolism designates less a recognizable style than a general approach to art that rejects direct representation of the material world in favor of allusion and suggestion. While artists such as Paul Gauguin and the Nabis or Ferdinand Knopff consciously pursued an aesthetic agenda analogous to the project of literary symbolism, others, such as Pierre Puvis de Chavannes and Gustave Moreau or Auguste Rodin were annexed to the symbolist movement by a younger generation of artists in much the same way that Ibsen and Strindberg had been.

The aim of searching for more authentic ideas than those offered by material reality was in some sense similar to the traditional goal of idealization long pursued by academic art. The technical means by which symbolists pursued the idea was often quite innovative, however. In 1886, the symbolist critic Gustave Kahn offered a description of symbolism that lent itself to translation into visual media. Rather than portraying "the quotidian, the near at hand," as realist and Impressionist artists had done, symbolists "wish to be able to place the development of the symbol in any period whatsoever, and even in outright dreams (the dream being indistinguishable from life)." With this reference to Schopenhauer's theorization of the world as representation, Kahn proposed that symbolist artists or writers look inward for their subject matter: "The essential aim of our art is to objectify the subjective (the externalization of the Idea) instead of subjectifying the objective (nature seen through a temperament)." (*L'Événement*, 28 September 1886). Kahn negated the naturalist writer Émile Zola's championing of the expression of individual temperaments and called for the externalization of the transcendent Idea.

**Symbolism and modernism.** The symbolist artists imagined that their privileged subjective states were best expressed through allusive, nonnaturalistic arrangements of line and

color. *The Talisman* (1888), a painting by Paul Sérusier (1865–1927), is often said to be the first attempt by French symbolist artists to practice this aesthetic. In a story recounted by Maurice Denis, Sérusier is said to have painted the work following Gauguin's instruction: "How do you see this tree, Gauguin asked in front of a corner of the Bois d'Amour: is it green? Then paint it green, the most beautiful green on your palette; and that shadow, rather blue? Don't be afraid to paint it as blue as possible" (p. 50). In this way, bold and simplified color patterns were extracted from the natural landscape. In 1891 Albert Aurier wrote "Symbolism in Painting: Paul Gauguin," in which he defined the characteristics of symbolist painting and suggested by Gauguin's work embodied them. Like Moréas he emphasized the primacy of "the Idea" and necessity of clothing it in a synthetic form that would work by allusion. He stressed that the work should be *subjective*, because an object would not be considered as an object, but as a sign of an idea perceived by the subject.

Denis's painting *April* (1892) demonstrates his own experimentation with this aesthetic. In 1890, Denis wrote in his manifesto "Definition of Neo-Traditionism": "Before it is a battle horse, a nude woman, or an anecdote, a painting is a flat surface, covered with colors arranged in a certain order" (p. 1). Thus Denis, like the symbolist poets, foregrounded the abstract qualities of his medium and like them explicitly defined symbolism as a kind of modernism. The title of his manifesto points to the paradoxical nature of his symbolist project. Denis wished to turn to tradition in order to found a new (neo) kind of art. He argued that artists should look to aesthetic examples such as the Italian primitives and Pierre Puvis de Chavannes (1824–1898). That artist, who was France's greatest painter of murals on national themes, interested the symbolists because his large, boldly patterned compositions in muted colors, such as *Poor Fisherman* (1881), seemed to suggest rather than define their subjects. His compositions were often described as dreamlike. The critic Téodor de Wyzewa, for example, explained the unanimous praise for the artist as being a result of "a thirst for dream, emotion and poetry."

**The artist as prophet.** The notion that the artist was a seer or prophet who, in the words of the symbolist critic Camille Mauclair, "painfully saved our sickened souls from the excremental muck of materialism" (quoted in Matthews, p. 15), was explicitly embraced by many artists in France who wished to be associated with symbolism. Paul Gauguin as well as the artists who formed the avant-garde group the Nabis (*Nabis* is the Hebrew word for *prophets*)—Maurice Denis, Paul Sérusier, Paul Ranson, Édouard Vuillard, and Émile Bernard—are good examples of this. Art, they believed, had the potential to offer the kind of salvation that had previously been the terrain of traditional religions. Some, such as Denis, were part of a wider, extremely conservative neo-Catholic movement.

Others were looking for less traditional forms of spiritual meaning beyond everyday existence. Artists such as Paul Gauguin, Paul Ranson, and Odilon Redon in France, the Blue Rose group led by Pavel Kuznetsov as well as Mikhail Vrubel' in Russia, and the Czech artist František Kupka embraced the occult mysticism that was in vogue during the late nineteenth



century. Some artists employed principles of “sacred geometry” according to which basic shapes or harmonic ratios shared by plants, animals, or other natural objects were thought to demonstrate a universal continuum of form understandable to all. Such ideas were derived from the theosophy of Madame Blavatsky and Édouard Schuré and from the study of earlier illustrated treatises on the occult, which aimed to find unifying principles in disparate religions. These theories of the occult also shared an interest in dualistic principles of male-female, heaven-earth, and a three-part godhead of matter-mind-spirit, which were often represented using geometric diagrams. This emphasis on abstract geometry thus links the spiritualist emphasis of some symbolists to the more widespread modernism of the movement.

One of the main international exhibition forums for mystical symbolist art was the Order of the Rose + Cross of the Temple and the Grail, whose Salons were held in Paris from 1892 to 1897. The order had been founded by the self-anointed “Sâr” Joséphin Péladan (1859–1918; *Sâr* was the title designating Assyrian royalty), a prolific art critic, the author of *Androgyne* and *Vice suprême*, and a high priest of the occult. He described the artist as the “supreme priest” who should represent “dreams instead of reality.” The flamboyant Péladan viewed himself and all his public activities as a work of art. He even coined the term *kaloprosopia* to describe this art of personality in which the externalization of an aesthetic idea in dress, gesture, and demeanor would ultimately lead to the internalization of this aesthetic as a personality trait, and visa versa. Péladan himself dressed in archaic silk robes and affected the pose of a quasi-Byzantine mystic.

Péladan and other symbolist artist-prophets expected to be rejected by the mass audience, thought to be incapable of interpreting the truths embodied in their art. Thus symbolism often brought with it a form of elitism that was sometimes used to support a conservative social agenda. The symbolist rejection of a wider bourgeois audience has also been interpreted as a protest against the degraded mass culture that resulted from industrial capitalism and the related effects of capitalism’s materialist values on human subjectivity. However much the symbolists themselves may have understood their elitism as a form of protest, their emphasis on the creative genius unwittingly reinforced the notions of individualism on which the growing art market traded.

**Symbolist primitivism: the retreat from Western civilization.** Like Kahn, the symbolist art critic Albert Aurier described the artist as a visionary who, by looking inward, achieved access to the absolute. According to Aurier, this ability to communicate more directly with basic truths was shared by others whose “uncivilized” natures brought them closer to an originary state of being in which the senses were not yet dulled by daily exposure to decadent European culture: children, non-Europeans, peasants, madmen, and hysterical women. Symbolist artists who embraced the primitive wished to return their own consciousnesses to equivalent states of innocence and instinctiveness. In France, the symbolist interest in the primitive was related to the opening of markets between East and West, and to the expansion of colonialism that gave

artists exposure to what were viewed as more primitive peoples and their art. Many artists borrowed from non-Western sources. The Dutch artist Vincent van Gogh, Paul Gauguin, and many other late-nineteenth-century artists looked to the bold patterns and lack of traditional Western perspective of Japanese prints for a seemingly primitive source of artistic ideas.

Paul Gauguin (1848–1903) retreated to Brittany in the 1880s in what he imagined was an escape to a more primitive region of France, where he hoped to set up an artists’ colony. There he painted several images of the natives, including the famous *Vision after the Sermon* (1888). This painting used bold patterns and generalized shapes to picture the mystical vision of “primitive” peasants. Vincent van Gogh (1853–1890) moved from Paris to Arles at about the same time and invited Gauguin to join him in a similar attempt to escape the metropolis. Ultimately, seeking a retreat to a primitive paradise, Gauguin fled Paris for Tahiti in the 1890s. He continued to paint boldly patterned works of primitive subjects—especially native women—until his death.

On one hand, many of the symbolists sincerely valued what they believed to be positive characteristics of so-called primitive peoples. On the other, they also believed that though women, children, and savages were closer to the absolute, they lacked the intellectual ability to recognize and identify universal ideas. Neither did such primitives possess the artistic ability to communicate the absolute through art. Only the artist-seer had both access to the absolute and the means to recognize and communicate it. Thus, while symbolism encouraged artists and poets to explore marginalized realms—to “become” momentarily feminine, mad, or primitive in the act of creativity—it also denied the possibility that traditionally “primitive” people could themselves be artists. It therefore shored up the elite status of already privileged European male artists. In addition, in the process of celebrating the people they saw as primitive, these artists reinforced the stereotypes that allowed the wider culture to marginalize them, or, in the case of colonialism, they justified imperial expansion as a needed civilizing force.

**Artifice against nature.** In Joris-Karl Huysmans’s 1884 novel, *À rebours* (Against the grain, or Against nature), the decadent aesthete Des Esseintes withdraws into an elaborate world of his own construction in an effort fully to control his “reality.” Within the confines of his abode, the differences between nature and artifice, reality and imagination are effaced and the whims of his highly refined sensibility are indulged to such an extent that nothing natural remains. This transformation of the natural world into a product of the Des Esseintes artifice is well illustrated when the protagonist decorates his home with a live turtle encrusted with gold and jewels. (The turtle, not surprisingly, dies.) Des Esseintes’s walls are hung with the works of Odilon Redon and Gustave Moreau. Each artist pictures worlds that work “against nature.” Their works overtly claim status as products of the imagination rather than replications of the real.

Gustave Moreau (1826–1898) belonged to an earlier generation of artists and had little respect for the symbolist movement. He refused to exhibit with them at Sâr Péladan’s Salon



***Vision after the Sermon: Jacob Wrestling with the Angel* (1888) by Paul Gauguin. Oil on canvas.** Gauguin frequently imbued his boldly patterned paintings with spiritual meaning. He believed that art had the same power of salvation as religion. © ARCHIVO ICONOGRAFICO, S.A./CORBIS

of the Rose + Croix and described the “enthusiasm for the invisible . . . exclusive need of dreams, mystery mysticism, Symbolism and the undefined” as so much snobbery and posing (quoted in Cooke, 124). By the time Huysmans wrote about Moreau’s paintings *Salomé* (1874) and *The Apparition* (1876) in his novel, Moreau had been exhibiting scenes from the Old Testament and Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* in the Salon for nearly three decades. Despite this, Moreau did share some aims with the works of artists aligned with symbolism, though his aesthetic approach is quite different from artists such as Gauguin and the Nabis. His works embody the principle that one must move beyond the description of the everyday and against any sense of the replication of nature. Moreau’s paintings combine imagery and symbols from a wide range of sources (including Old Masters, Egyptian art, the Byzantine empire, and Asian culture). All these are incorporated into highly detailed paintings whose disparate symbols are held together by a distinctive painterly style. Elaborate and often minute patterns, sometimes painted, some-

times scratched into the paint, form a unifying armature or screen over the canvas. The effect is a disconcerting jewel-like surface and dreamlike treatment of the familiar that now appears to be wholly a product of the artist’s artifice.

Like Moreau, the printmaker and painter Odilon Redon (1840–1916) was chosen by Huysmans as an artist favored by his fictional decadent hero Des Esseintes. Redon’s small-scale works on paper differ greatly from Moreau’s intricately wrought history paintings. Redon’s imagery, however, like Moreau’s, draws on a range of sources, from ancient myth to Christian subjects to natural imagery to contemporary literature, and often combines sources in impossible and surprising ways that evoke formal or conceptual correspondences between seemingly disparate objects. This combination, reminiscent of dreams in which one thing metamorphoses into another, was sometimes further enhanced by the captions or evocative titles that accompanied the works. Like symbolist poetry, Redon’s prints push the reader into a process of interpretation where

echoes between elements suggest meanings but resist any ultimate decipherment or closure. In Redon's work, as in symbolist poetry, the viewer's engagement with the process of interpretation seems to be the most important element.

In many works, Redon specifically thematizes the transformation of nature into imagination by transmuting natural forms into highly evocative dreamlike visions. In *There Was Perhaps a First Vision Attempted in the Flower*, a plate from the lithograph series *Les origines* (1883; *Origins*), the orb at flower's center becomes an eye and the lashes give it the look of a carnivorous plant. In other works, flowers, spiders, or planetary orbs have human faces. Redon studied anatomy and natural history. His hybrid creatures cross categories of the natural world to become evocatively unnatural. Their hybridity also speaks to the possibility of a primeval continuum tying together different categories of being.

A similar hybridization of natural categories is seen in the works of the Norwegian artist Edvard Munch (1863–1944). In the series of paintings *The Frieze of Life*, the forms in background landscapes seem to be based on contemporary studies of the physiology of the human body. Furthermore, Munch described the landscape itself through physiological metaphors, sometimes of pulsing or breathing. In Munch, as in Redon, the metaphorical correspondences link disparate realms of being to point to basic structures or primeval truths beyond the immediately visible.

### Symbolism, Gender, and Sexuality

Woman is a ubiquitous subject in symbolist art and literature. Sometimes, as in Denis's *April* or the early work of Piet Mondrian, she is a positive symbol of innocence and possibility—desexualized and dematerialized. In paintings by D. G. Rossetti or Whistler, woman is a highly aestheticized and unattainable love object. In his early work, the Russian artist Kazimir Malevich (1878–1935) used the motifs of women and embryos to express the notion that woman could be the incarnation of a higher, purer, more spontaneous realm. At other times, woman is turned into a sexualized femme fatale, as in Jean Delville's *Idol of Perversity* or in the works of the Belgian graphic artist Félicien Rops or the German artist Franz von Stuck. Thus, much symbolist visual art reinforces and amplifies a long-standing dichotomy between woman as virgin and woman as whore.

Significantly, each of these stereotypes aligns woman closely with nature. Such images reinforce the idea that woman, imprisoned within her biology—as the innocent vessel of the life-bearing force or as bearer of uncontrollable and instinctive sexual desire—is incapable of transcending her bodily functions and desires. Woman is a subcategory of nature and is linked to the primitivism that was such an important subtext of the symbolist project. The Belgian symbolist Ferdinand Khnopff's *Art (Caresses of the Sphinx)*, 1896) combines many of these elements. The Dutch symbolist Jan Toorop, with his flat linear vision, and Munch painted renditions of woman as femme fatale. Moreau's images of Salomé and other female figures also fit this description.

Significantly, these works were produced at a time when feminist movements were experiencing a resurgence across Eu-

rope and when women were beginning to work in a number of male professions. This imagery may be seen partly as a cultural reaction to the emergence of a well-defined social type—"the New Woman"—a bourgeois woman who sought financial independence, education, and a professional life. To counteract this threat to traditional values, the mainstream definitions of femininity in late-nineteenth-century European culture denied woman the possibility of "genius." And individual women who pursued intellectual or professional activities were described as "masculine." Artistic representations of woman's proximity to nature counteracted women's demands for intellectual pursuits by reinforcing the boundaries between intellectually endowed virile masculinity and body-bound femininity. Patricia Matthews argues that the masculinity of the intuitive artist-seer was ultimately protected by the exclusion of women from the category of genius. Like the primitives, women might experience intuition, spirituality, or a loss of the boundaries of self, but because they lacked genius, they would never be able to transform those experiences into an understanding of higher truths; nor could they communicate those truths through art. One rare exception to this general belief was the sculptor Camille Claudel, whose works were praised by several symbolist critics. Nevertheless, many of them still related the power of Claudel's works to her instinctual femininity. Other successful women artists and writers were said to have lost some of their femininity in expressing their genius.

The relationship between symbolism and sexuality was not always degrading to women. For some Russian symbolists, including the woman writer Zinaida Gippius and the male writers Ivanov and Merezhkovsky, sex was a source of liberation with the potential to unite humanity with God. Furthermore, many male symbolists conceived of their own projects in feminized terms. Intuition, spirituality, emotionalism, loss of intellectual control—all these were characteristics commonly aligned with the feminine. Many symbolists (Sâr Péladan is the most obvious example) enacted the role of feminized aesthete in their public lives, constructing personae that rejected bourgeois norms of masculinity. The British aesthete and writer Oscar Wilde (1854–1900) also assumed the role of the unconventional dandy (though in a less extreme form than Péladan). In the early twentieth century, many lesbians, including Romaine Brooks and Claude Cahun, would take the image of the male dandy as a model for their alternative visions of female sexuality.

Because it challenged normative values and offered alternative cultural forms, symbolism and the aestheticism that often accompanied it opened new avenues for imagining sexuality, which sometimes offered positive ways of conceptualizing the marginal subject position of the homosexual male. Rimbaud is famous for writing in a symbolist vein about his relationship with Verlaine. André Gide, who would openly theorize male homosexuality in dialogue form in *Corydon* (1911–1924), began his literary career in the symbolist milieu. Péladan described the androgyne as a symbol of creative possibility—an innocent creature prior to the corruption of sexuality who still embodied the intuitive possibilities of femininity without its negative aspects.





**Laus Veneris (1873–1875) by Edward Burne-Jones. Oil on canvas.** British artist Burne-Jones frequently depicted androgynous figures in his works, which certain critics believed to partially symbolize the homosexual subculture in the country. © ARCHIVO ICONOGRAFICO, S.A./CORBIS

Wilde seems to have found something enabling in the images of the femme fatale (his version of Salomé clearly differs from the overtly misogynist versions produced by many late-nineteenth-century artists). Swinburne attacked normative sexual morality in his poems by incorporating perverse sexuality into his images of beauty. British artists such as Aubrey Beardsley, Simeon Solomon, and Edward Burne-Jones, and writers such as Pater and Swinburne, often represented androgynous figures. Richard Dellamora and Thais Morgan connect these androgynous figures to the construction of a homosexual subcultural identity in Britain. Morgan suggests that images of the androgyne and of the hermaphrodite were meant to be read both as symbols of the perfect art object (by the mainstream audience) and as specific objects of homosexual desire.

### Symbolism and the Unconscious

Symbolism was part of a wider cultural trend in which the order, clarity, and hierarchy that had long been associated with traditional academic art were replaced by modes of representation that focused instead on experimentation with representational form and an emphasis on individual sensibility. In this sense, symbolism is connected to Impressionism in painting and naturalism in literature. In fact, many symbolist artists

emerged from this naturalist milieu. Unlike naturalism, however, symbolism emphasizes the sensuous suggestiveness of language and form and the tendency of this suggestiveness to solicit individual interpretations from viewers and readers. Because symbolism suggested rather than instructing or describing, and because its subjects were so often themselves dreamlike, it seemed to open the door to a proliferation of fantasies in its audience. Thus the symbolist project was part of broader challenges to the notion of the autonomous human subject—a male subject for whom thought and representation had the potential to be transparent. When the boundaries of this traditional male subject position were opened up, many consequences, both aesthetic and political, followed.

The symbolist movement was one element in a general reconceptualization of human subjectivity that took place just as the existence of the unconscious mind was being imagined by psychologists and sociologists. One salient example of this theorization of the unconscious and the consequent questioning of the nature of subjectivity is to be found in the popular fascination with hysteria, hypnosis, and “suggestion.” The power of suggestion was thought to be especially strong when the subject had a weak or nervous personality (for example, children, primitives, and women). There was much debate over whether “normal” men with strong personalities were also



subject to the suggestion of others. In 1891, Alfred Fouillee summed up the consequences of recent psychological discoveries, saying “contemporary psychology has wrested from us the illusion of a bounded, impenetrable, and absolutely autonomous ego (p. 811). The discovery of the unconscious led to the possibility that human beings were not truly in control of their thoughts and actions. Works of art were deemed to have the potential to open their audiences to a suggestibility analogous to the state of hypnosis. Thus, paradoxically, the symbolist rejection of material reality in favor of the world of dream took shape at approximately the same time empirical science was confirming the importance of fantasy in daily life.

Conservative critics such as Ferdinand Brunetière in France or Max Nordau in Germany worried that symbolist work, with its incantatory echoing sounds and forms and its refusal to point readers or viewers to clear edifying messages, might encourage a loss of control not only in the artists who produced it but in the audiences who experienced it. Brunetière believed the aesthetic experience should serve as an edifying point of focus for the reasoning mind. He charged that the “empty forms” and “hollow rattling words” of symbolism would “dissolve the unity of the self in a diversity of successive states . . . give it over to the wandering voluptuousness of dream,” which would lead to “the glorification of egoism” rather than the betterment of society (Shaw, p. 192). Nordau’s book *Degeneration* described symbolism as a symptom of a general decline in Western civilization. Yet the very qualities that critics such as Nordau abhorred were the things that made symbolism a turning point in the arts. Symbolism opened new aesthetic possibilities of experimentation and abstraction and created space for alternative subject positions. It created the possibility, that is to say, for many of the wide range of avant-garde movements that followed in the early twentieth century.

See also **Arts; Modernism; Periodization of the Arts; Poetry and Poetics; Theater and Performance.**

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**SYNCRETISM.** Syncretism—the process whereby two or more independent cultural systems, or elements thereof, conjoin to form a new and distinct system—is among the most important factors in the evolution of culture in general, but especially in the history of religion. Indeed, *all* of the so-called world religions, that is, Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, are to a fair extent syncretistic. But the process occurs whenever previously independent belief systems come into sustained contact, no matter what their respective levels of sophistication may be. This article briefly surveys examples of syncretism drawn from several traditions, including the aforementioned world religions and Japanese Shinto, as well as three syncretistic belief systems that emerged as a result of Western colonial expansion, slavery, and/or proselytizing: Santeria, Voodoo (or Vodou), and the Ghost Dance, which twice swept across large areas of Native North America in the late nineteenth century.

### Syncretism in the World Religions

Of all the world religions, Christianity is probably the most syncretistic. Although rooted in Judaism, Christianity quickly came to absorb elements of Zoroastrianism (the ancient dualistic religion of Iran), some important features of pharaonic Egyptian religion, the religions of ancient Mesopotamia, and a number of Greco-Roman cults, which were themselves highly syncretistic. The Zoroastrian impact, which was already present in postexilic Judaism, was profound indeed. The prime example here is the intense Christian (and late Judaic) emphasis on a constant struggle between good and evil, which was the essence of the religion found by the Iranian prophet Zoroaster (or Zarathustra, c. 630–550 B.C.E.). The fully evolved figure of Satan is a classic example of syncretism: a fusion of the Hebrew concept of Lucifer, the “fallen angel,” and the Zoroastrian figure Angra Mainyu (Ahriman), who is the evil opponent of Ahura Mazda (Ormazd), the “wise lord” and the embodiment of light, truth, and goodness. Moreover, the late Zoroastrian texts tell of a final conflict between Ahura

Mazda and Angra Mainyu, during which a messiah-like figure will appear and lead the forces of Good. This, of course, is dramatically reflected in a number of Judeo-Christian apocalyptic texts, from the Book of Daniel to the Book of Revelation. The important thing here is that neither Angra Mainyu nor Lucifer is identical to Satan. Rather, the Judeo-Christian figure is a syncretism of the two otherwise distinct evil entities.

Precursors to the importance of the resurrection of Jesus for Christianity were the resurrected Egyptian god Osiris, as well as the Mesopotamian deity Dummuzi, who was rescued from the land of the dead by his divine lover Inanna. The Egyptian cult of the goddess Isis, sister-wife of Osiris and mother of the god Horus, who, together with Astarte and other Near Eastern goddesses, influenced the rise of the medieval cult of the Virgin Mary. The Isis cult also affected Christian ritual. The *sistrum*, a tinkling rattle that was shaken during ceremonies honoring the goddess, is the source of the bell that is rung several points in a Roman Catholic mass.

Several Greco-Roman religious cults also impacted the new religion. For example, the dove, a widespread symbol of the goddess Aphrodite and her Roman counterpart, Venus, became a symbol of the Holy Ghost, and the god Apollo was sometimes equated with Christ.

Islam also drew extensively on older religions, including Christianity and Zoroastrianism, especially after the Muslim conquest of Iran in 641 C.E. The chief Muslim demon, Iblis, is markedly similar to Angra Mainyu, and Islam also holds that there will be a final, Armageddon-like battle between the forces of good and evil.

Classical and modern Hinduism can be characterized as a grand syncretism between the indigenous Dravidian belief systems of northern India, as reflected in the artifacts of the Indus Valley civilization, and those carried into India in the middle of the second millennium B.C.E. by the Aryans, whose beliefs were a variant of those carried by Indo-European speakers across Eurasia from India to Western Europe. One of the best examples is the major Hindu god Shiva, the third member of the trinity that includes Brahma and Vishnu. Shiva is often called “the Lord of Beasts,” and an Indus Valley stamp seal found at Mohenjo Daro dating from about 1800 B.C.E. shows a god seated in the lotus position and surrounded by animals. This figure’s connection with the later iconography of Shiva is clear, and thus strongly suggests that the god in question reflects a syncretism of the ancient Dravidian and Aryan religions. Even the fully evolved Hindu caste system involves an amalgamation of the Aryan tripartite social class system, which they shared with other ancient Indo-European-speaking communities, and the indigenous emphasis on occupation groups, which is clearly evident in the physical layout of the chief Indus Valley cities: Mohenjo Daro and Harappa.

Buddhism too has evolved its fair share of syncretistic beliefs and practices, especially as it spread to countries outside of India. In what is now northwest Pakistan (ancient Gandhara), where the Mahayana, or bodhisattva-centered, evangelical form of Buddhism crystallized in the centuries immediately preceding the beginning of the Common Era, the

religion's iconography (sacred images) was heavily influenced by Greek artistic ideals, as the region in question was conquered by Alexander the Great in 326 B.C.E. These Hellenized images of the Buddha and other sacred figures were later carried into China, beginning in the first century C.E., where they blended with the indigenous artistic tradition. Moreover, by the time Buddhism arrived in Korea and Japan in the late fifth to mid-sixth centuries C.E. it had heavily syncretized with Confucianism, a development that is clearly exemplified in Shōtoku Taishi's (574–622 C.E.) famous "Seventeen-Article Constitution" (604 C.E.), which seamlessly blended the idea of filial piety and the other primary Confucian relationships with the Buddhist concept of *dharmā*, which is itself deeply rooted in the Hindu tradition.

### Syncretism in Japanese Shinto

Shinto, the indigenous belief system of Japan, has coexisted with Buddhism for the past fifteen hundred years (the traditional date of the first appearance of Buddhism is 552 C.E., when the ruler of the Korean kingdom of Paekche sent a contingent of priests to the court of the Yamato emperor as a goodwill gesture), and Shōtoku Taishi's constitution is by no means the only example of syncretism between the two faiths. The form of Buddhism (Mahayana) that penetrated East Asia places great emphasis on bodhisattvas, or "enlightened," Buddha-like deities that intercede with the divine on behalf of human beings. Many of these figures were syncretized with the myriad Shinto *kami*, or deities. A good example is Hachiman, who became a Shinto war god, but whose origin, as Byron Earhart (p. 44) points out, "may be Chinese, Buddhist, or both."

Indeed, Shinto and Buddhism have become so intertwined in Japan that it is sometimes hard to know where one ends and the other begins. Most large Buddhist temples play host to one or more Shinto shrines, and, like Hachiman, Shinto *kami* are often conceived as guardians of the enshrined *bosatsu* (bodhisattva). Moreover, the latter are often worshiped in the same fashion as the *kami*, that is, he or she will be asked for the same sort of favors: good health, success in business or in passing examinations, and the like. Many Japanese assert that they "live" as Shintoists, but "die" as Buddhists, and this underscores a major distinction between the two faiths: the former emphasizes this world, while the latter tends to focus on the afterlife. But for practical purposes Shinto and Buddhism are, with a few exceptions, what amounts to a single faith in Japan, a complex syncretism that meets the religious needs of most Japanese.

### Santeria and Voodoo

Yet another important example of syncretism can be found in the Caribbean. As a result of the slave trade, a host of West African religious beliefs were transplanted to Cuba, Haiti, and other Caribbean islands, as well as to Brazil, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. There, they intermingled with the Roman Catholicism of the slave masters and plantation owners. The result was a set of syncretistic religions, the most important of which are Santeria and Voodoo (or Vodou).

Santeria took shape primarily in Cuba and reflects for the most part the beliefs of the Yoruba people, who live in what is now Nigeria. The focus of the Yoruba (and other West African

belief systems) is upon a pantheon of deities called *orishas*. However, in Santeria, these figures are often identified—that is, syncretized—with Catholic saints. A good example is Changó, a male god of thunder, lightning, and fire, who is nevertheless identified with St. Barbara, a devout young woman who lived in the fourth century C.E. and who was beheaded by her father for refusing to give up her Christian faith and marry according to his wishes. At the moment of her beheading her father was struck by lightning, and this gave rise to a legend that St. Barbara had power over lightning bolts. Although Changó is a masculine *orisha*, the similarities between this legend and the Yoruba traditions about him led to the syncretism in question.

Haitian Voodoo (more properly Vodou or Vodun) is similar to Santeria in a great many ways, both in its African heritage and when it comes to syncretism. Here, the West African deities, primarily from Benin and Dahomey, are called *loa* and are also usually identified with Roman Catholic saints. For example, the serpent *loa*, Damballah, is often identified with St. Patrick, drawing on the legend that the latter drove the snakes out of Ireland. *Houngan*, or Voodoo priests, have long since adopted elements of Roman Catholicism in Voodoo rituals, including the use of candles, bells, crosses, the practices of baptism, and making the sign of the cross. These Christian elements are intertwined with such African religious practices as drumming, dancing, ancestor worship, and spirit possession.

### The Ghost Dance

The final example of syncretism involves what anthropologists call a "nativistic movement," that is, a religious reaction to the appearance of a more powerful and hegemonic culture. Although such movements have occurred in areas as diverse as Siberia and Melanesia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the most intensely studied nativistic movement is the Ghost Dance, which began in northern Nevada among the Paiutes in 1870. In that year, a shaman named Tavibo had a vision in which he learned that if his people danced in a certain fashion, their ancestors, or "ghosts," would return, and the white men would be swallowed up by a great earthquake. Soon other tribes heard of this dance, and by 1871 it had spread widely among Native American tribes in the Great Basin and parts of California. However, the ghosts never materialized, and the religious fervor soon died down.

A generation later, Tavibo's possible descendant, another Paiute shaman named Wovoka (c. 1856–1932), revived the dance, but this time it was heavily syncretistic. As a youth Wovoka spent several years working for a white family that was extremely religious and gave him the name "Jack Wilson." In 1889, during a severe illness, Wilson had a vision in which God told him that not only would his ancestors return, but that a Native American incarnation of Jesus would return to help them, and that the whites, who were the spawn of Satan, would be swallowed by the earthquake that failed to occur in 1870. By the middle of 1890 the second Ghost Dance had spread widely east of the Rocky Mountains and eventually included among its converts the famous Sioux shaman Sitting Bull. However, on December 29, 1890, the Ghost Dance movement also led to one of the great tragedies in Native American history: the Wounded Knee massacre on the Pine

Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, in which several hundred people—including women, children, and elderly men—were killed simply because they refused to stop performing the Ghost Dance. Afterward, belief in the power of the dance diminished rapidly.

In sum, these are but a few examples of syncretism, a process that has played an enormous role in human religious history, from antiquity to modern times and in almost every corner of the globe.

See also *Communication of Ideas; Diffusion, Cultural; Religion.*

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