1. Crisis? What crisis?

That there is a 'crisis' of the nation-state, or at least of the concept of the nation-state (Hobsbawm 1992: 186), is, at the end of the millennium, 'a commonplace of contemporary political journalism' (Dunn 1995: 4). Arguably, it has been in perpetual 'crisis' since emerging as the predominant form of political organization in the nineteenth century: it is the chronic condition of this type of formation. European nation-states were often composed from diverse elements which had different reasons for submitting to another's hegemony, and their incorporation created new forms of differentiation and difference between and within the constituent elements. These were the fault-lines of future conflict, and nation-states thus contained their own 'mechanisms of destruction' (Grillo 1980: 25). International movement of capital and labour, and supranational forms of economic, military, and political organization, undermined the foundations of the autonomous national polity long before what we have learned to call 'globalization'.

Although for much of the last two hundred years the ramshackle apparatus appeared to hold together, there have been periods when one state alone, or several together, even the system as a whole, appeared to be in danger of collapse. Rather like the 'language question', with which of course, in Europe, it has been closely connected, the 'national question' has 'flicker[ed] in and out of the constant interplay between culture and power' (Steinberg 1987: 206), and, again like the language question, at certain moments it has assumed extreme importance. In both cases the late twentieth century appears to be one such moment: after a period of quiescence, the 'national question' is back on the agenda. Current problems appear to be multiple and reinforcing, affecting many nation-states simultaneously, and there is a questioning of the entire phenomenon. No one following events of the early 1990s in Eastern Europe and Central Asia could ignore the apparent, often bloody, persistence, or re-emergence, of ethnic, regional, national, and religious particularism: communism seemingly replacing communism. Such things are by no means confined to the East, as regional and other movements in Western Europe confirm. And centrifugal tendencies of that kind are not the only ones. Since World War II
countries such as Britain, France, Germany, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, and in Scandinavia have through the international movement of labour (not least from former colonies and quasi-colonies) experienced new forms of internal differentiation and difference, of race, culture, and religion, again with much communal tension, as the resurgence in many European countries of extreme right-wing parties has testified. There are other pressures, too, from multinational and supranational businesses and institutions, and there now appears to be an unravelling of historic settlements: 1945, 1919, 1815, the Act of Union. As I myself wrote, prematurely perhaps, in 1980: 'The Europe of “homogeneous” nations, painfully stitched together over the last 200 years, appears to be coming apart at the seams’ (1980: 25). Daniel Moynihan’s word ‘pandaemonium’ does not seem an inappropriate title for his account of the contemporary international order (1993).

To say the crisis is, however, misleading. There are several crises, not all of the same kind. The contributors to John Dunn’s stimulating edited collection (1995), itself entitled Contemporary Crisis of the Nation State (with question mark), tend to believe that if there is a crisis it is in the realm of political economy, more to do with the state than the nation-state as such (Dunn 1995: 9, Hont 1995: 170). In much of Africa the crucial problem is the inability of the state, for economic as much as political or social reasons, to exist, let alone function in a manner which can satisfy the needs and aspirations of the disparate and impoverished peoples which the colonial heritage conjoined within single formations. The weakness of the state in South Asia is likewise apparent in its inability to contain periodic communalism (Kaviraj 1995). But the crisis of post-colonial nation-states should not be confounded with that faced by post-Cold War federalist states in Eastern Europe (the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, and their successors). Nor should their crises be confused with those occasioned by upsurges of regional nationalism in the apparently unified nation-states of Western Europe. What Tom Nairn called in 1977, also somewhat prematurely, The Break-up of Britain, is, or would be if it occurred, a different phenomenon from that of Rwanda, Sri Lanka, or Yugoslavia.

The ‘national question’ is thus a complex of issues, and I cannot deal with all of them, especially when it comes to the contemporary world. Instead this book concentrates on one, which, with the important exceptions of Sudipta Kaviraj and James Tully, writing on India and Canada respectively, was not generally addressed by Dunn’s contributors. This is to do with the way in which nation-states conceive and handle ‘difference’, with what may be termed ‘pluralism’. At a collective level this concerns differentiation and difference of an ethnic and cultural kind in political and economic settlements. At an individual level it pertains to person and identity, and relations with significant others, who those others are supposed to be, and what is to be done about them.

Although important in the terrain on which it operates, this is not a study of ethnicity as such, and certainly does not attempt a survey of the kind essayed by, for example, Banks (1996), Eriksen (1993), or Anthony Smith in many publications (1995). The focus is pluralism, and the comparison of different kinds of plural polities. The starting point is Gellner’s observation (1983: 55) that ‘culturally plural societies worked well in the past’, but ‘genuine cultural pluralism ceases to be viable under current conditions’. Following Gellner’s example, I operate with the assumption that the interrelated working of economy, technology, and state structures provides a framework within which pluralism is enacted. This framework both shapes and is shaped by, cultural projects, through a process which may be termed an ‘ethnic dialectic’.

It would be interesting to consider ‘difference’ in societies without the state (Chapter 2 does to a limited extent), but I concentrate on political systems in which some form of state may be readily identified. For comparative purposes three kinds of state, or rather three configurations of state and society, are of particular significance: ‘patrimonial’ (or ‘pre-industrial’ or ‘early’); ‘modern’; and ‘post-industrial’ or ‘postmodern’. These, I argue, vary, interact, and their productive base, type of authority, and the space they allow difference, and I explore these links through case studies based mainly on published ethnographic and historical sources. Chapters 2 to 4 are concerned with ‘patrimonial’ societies, all of them non-Western, pre-industrial, and in the conventional sense pre-colonial. Chapter 2 takes three African examples (Alur, Azande, Nupe), Chapter 3 deals with Mesoamerica, concentrating on the Aztecs, and Chapter 4 with the Ottoman Empire. Although cultural and ethnic difference was not absent from such societies, it was never crucial to their operation: they were not driven by it. Their rulers were concerned less with their subjects’ cultural identity and way of life than with their ability to pay taxes and tribute. They therefore offer a strong contrast with the ‘modern’ nation-states which developed in Europe and North America in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and which provided the dominant world model for the twentieth (Chapters 6–8). Chapter 5 bridges the account of patrimonialism and modern nation-states by focusing on the transformation of Africa and Mesoamerica by British, French, and Spanish colonialism. Compared with patrimonial societies, whose rulers generally engaged in what Azarya (1988) has called ‘extractive’ mobilization of their subjects, modern nation-states have been driven by what he calls ‘normative’ mobilization. They have been grounded in the fostering of a common identity and homogeneous culture. Colonial practice was in this regard ambivalent: ‘patrimonial’ in so far as it emphasized the extraction of resources, ‘modern’ in so far as the colonial powers believed they had a mission to uplift and transform their colonial subjects.

Just as colonialism was poised between two images of its project, ‘modern’ metropolitan nation-states were caught between two visions of the nation. In one it was an ‘association’, and membership of the polity was, in theory, open to anyone who accepted its principles and identified with the foundation myths. In the other, it was a ‘community’ related by blood and kinship, to which certain peoples by reason of race and culture were thought incapable of assimilating: Jews in France at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the
'new immigrants' from South and East Europe to the USA in the same period, and Commonwealth immigrants to Britain after World War II. The conflict between proponents of these two visions, in nation-states apparently committed to associational ideologies and assimilative goals, constitutes the 'crisis of assimilation', one of the (many) crises facing the nation-state as the twentieth century draws to a close. This theme is developed initially in Chapters 6 and 7 concerned with France and the USA respectively, and then in Chapter 8 focusing on contemporary Britain (with some reference to France), where it will be apparent that an understanding of ethnic and racial relations under colonialism (Chapter 5) is essential for comprehending developments in these metropolitan countries. Chapters 9 and 10 extend this discussion by examining the theory and practice of cultural pluralism in Britain, France, and the USA under conditions of postmodernity, at the end of the twentieth century.

A legitimate question is why these cases and not others? Every society is socio-historically unique, and other instances (for example, in this context, the Habsburg Empire, Tsarist Russia, the former Soviet Union, China past and present, Sri Lanka, or Malaysia) might tell us additional and possibly different things, but that is not the point. The framework of the book is the comparison of three ideotypical configurations. These do not constitute a comprehensive classification, but rather a series of models, and the case studies are intended to provide the material through which to construct a discussion of certain key themes that run through them. These models are of very wide interest, but I would not claim they are exhaustive, nor that these case studies exhaust all that might be said about them. One omission must be stated clearly. There is much to be said for distinguishing between two sources of ethnic and cultural difference in contemporary societies. Kymlicka (1995a: 10-11), for instance, contrasts 'multinational states', within which several nations coexist (by 'nation' he means 'historical community, more or less institutionally complete, occupying a given territory or homeland, sharing a distinct language and culture'), and 'polyethnic states', where diversity is the result of population movement. There is, he says, 'a profound difference between the sort of diversity created by the voluntary immigration of individuals and families, and [that] created by involuntarily incorporating entire cultures which have no desire to give up their status as separate and self-governing people' (1995b: 12). Different people are involved, and different aims: integration on the one hand, self-government on the other. Kymlicka is right to point to these two important sorts of difference though, as he himself recognizes (1995a: 17), many modern nation-states contain both, and some groups (Kymlicka says African Americans, but the situation of Jews in many parts of the world is similar) do not readily fit with either. Although the distinction is not necessarily appropriate to the pre-modern era, it would none the less have been valuable to have explored and developed it. To some extent I have done so previously in a study of language in France and Britain (Grillo 1989), but here I focus on the 'polyethnic' rather than the 'multinational' character of modern and postmodern societies. There is, after all, enough to be said about it!

Underlying this book, especially the latter part, is a question: to what extent is a plural, polyethnic, democratic society possible? 'It is hard to find a democratic or democratizing society these days that is not the site of some significant controversy over whether and how its public institutions should better recognize the identities of cultural and disadvantaged minorities', says Gutmann (1994: 3). In the late twentieth century, what were strongly homogenizing, assimilative states, have to the accompaniment of an upsurge in ethnicity become more pluralistic. This pluralism is partly a response to, partly a product of, the changing social, economic, and political conditions of post-industrial, postmodern culture which now shapes our lives in the north-western 'quadrisphere' of the global society (Chapter 10). There are, however, several kinds and degrees of pluralism ranging from an out and out separatism, through varieties of what is called 'multiculturalism', to a much looser form of generalized syncretism for which the term 'hybridity' has been proposed. Each has its advocates, though my purpose is not to proselytize on behalf of one or the other, but rather to point to the choices facing our societies as we move into the twenty-first century, and try to steer a course, as Wieviorka, puts it, between the 'Scylla of universalism and the Charybdis of differentialism' (1997: 149).

2. Varieties of pluralism

By an elastic definition, all the societies discussed in this book are 'plural'. The 'Alur', the 'Azuande', the 'Nupe', the Aztec and Ottoman Empires, Britain and France, and their colonies, and the USA are (or were) polities where there coexist peoples who with varying degrees of consciousness, and with varying consequence, believe they are 'different' from each other in their way of life, their language, their religion, their historic identity. But they represent different forms of pluralism, and to call them 'plural societies', tout court, does little to forward the analysis. It is also unsatisfactory because the term 'plural society' has itself been pre-empted in political science to refer to a certain type of democratic society, irrespective of other considerations such as the ethnic composition of its population.

A useful starting point is Nicholls's account (1974) of what he called Three Varieties of Pluralism. Pluralism is both a political philosophy and an analytical category, though in each guise it has many forms. All varieties, says Nicholls, share a common concern with 'the degree of unity and the type of unity which actually exist in particular states, or which ought to exist' (1974: 1), but there are different intellectual and theoretical traditions of pluralism which address different aspects of this common concern in different ways. Some of these are relevant to the present study, some are not, at least directly. Nicholls identifies
three such traditions, two of which may be conflated because they do not specifically, or consciously, deal with pluralism of a cultural or ethnic kind. Both are schools of political philosophy: one of Britain in the early years of the twentieth century, the other in and of the USA in roughly the same period. These traditions of pluralism are concerned with the distribution of power and authority in democratic systems, and crucially with the role of the state, and the balance between state and society. Plural societies are conceived as democracies in which there exist groups and institutions mediating between state and individual. In the British view, they serve to limit the autocratic tendencies of the sovereign authority by locating some power outside the central institutions. The American version, which is also concerned with 'countervailing powers', differs somewhat by emphasizing the role of groups external to the state as 'interest groups', whose task it is to promote their particularistic view. The state as 'umpire' (Nicholls 1974: 22) has the task of arbitrating and balancing. Plural societies are thus defined as non-authoritarian, non-totalitarian democratic societies, in which different interests are recognized as legitimate, and in which mechanisms exist for promoting those interests. That is, pluralists are concerned with the existence and strength of what others would call the institutions of 'civil society', though they would not normally use that term, just as those who speak of civil society would not normally refer to 'pluralism'. Such 'plural societies' (if the term is accepted as appropriate) are not necessarily plural in the sense that their populations differ in lifestyle, language, religion, culture, identity, and so on (Ronald Cohen 1978b: 398): for early twentieth-century British political philosophers the issue of whether they did or not was irrelevant. In the USA, however, some of those concerned with ethnicity and cultural difference did attempt to draw on a traditional philosophy of pluralism and ask how and where ethnic groups might fit into the American political configuration. That is, they were concerned with how the conventional view of pluralism might accommodate ethnic diversity (see Chapter 9).

Nicholls's third variety referred to the tradition stemming from the writings of J. S. Furnivall on colonial societies. This is definitely about pluralism of an ethnic and cultural kind, though in the course of his book Nicholls abandoned 'plural society' for the formation which Furnivall described while retaining it for the political system which he believed prevailed in Britain and the USA. For societies that Furnivall called 'plural', Nicholls preferred 'segmented' (1974: 96). Furnivall's concept of the 'plural society', developed in the 1930s and 1940s, was based on his experience of colonialism in South-East Asia, though he believed it had application to a wide range of tropical colonial dependencies. Many such dependencies were, before colonial rule, heterogeneous societies, culturally and ethnically, but under the economic, political, and administrative impact of colonialism heterogeneity was transformed into cleavage. In these colonial societies there was, Furnivall argued, 'a medley of peoples'. It is in the strictest sense a medley, for they mix but do not combine. Each group holds by its own religion, its own culture and language, its own ideas and ways. As individuals they meet, but only in the market-place, in buying and selling. There is a plural society, with different sections of the community living side by side, but separately, within the same political unit. Even in the racial sphere there is a division of labour along racial lines' (Furnivall 1948: 304). Such societies lacked a common consensus and 'social will'. This meant that what any unity they had, was 'not voluntary but... imposed by the colonial power and by the force of economic circumstances; and the union cannot be dissolved without the whole society relapsing into anarchy' (p. 307). In other words there was no civil society, and Furnivall was much exercised by the process through which such configurations might make the transition from plural to democratic society (plural in another sense) when they achieved self-determination. If the plural society was, for Furnivall, typical of the tropical colonies, elsewhere (he mentions South Africa, Canada, and the USA, and 'lands where the Jew has not been fully assimilated into social life', p. 305) there were what he called 'mixed populations with particularistic tendencies'. In such cases, however, there are shared values and relationships other than economic, and such societies while having 'plural features', were not 'plural societies'.

Like Anderson's 'imagined communities' (1983), 'plural societies' was a brilliant, unifying concept, with the phrase itself generally better known than the writing where it emerged. It was, however, also like 'imagined communities', rather vague, and M. G. Smith, an arch-formalist, later extended Furnivall's idea that colonial societies were archetypically plural with a more specific and rigorous definition intended for understanding the Caribbean (1960b, 1965). For Smith, the key feature of these societies was not, as it was for Furnivall, their differentiated economies, but the coexistence within them of peoples with distinct cultural traditions: the population consisted of several sections (what Nicholls calls 'segments') distinguished from each other by their adherence to different cultural practices within the 'compulsory institutions' of kinship and marriage, property relations, religion, education, folklore, economic activity, and so on. Thus

Where cultural plurality obtains, different sections of the total population practice different forms of these common institutions; and because institutions involve patterned activities, social relations, and idea-systems, in a condition of cultural plurality, the culturally differentiated sections will differ in their internal organization, their institutional activities, and their system of belief and value. Where this condition of cultural plurality is found, the societies are plural societies (Smith 1965: 14).

The test of a pluralism was the compatibility or otherwise of the social and cultural norms which governed members of the various social sections. Where these were incompatible, there was no community of value, and the society was held together, as a society, only by force. Like Furnivall, however, Smith also recognized that many 'modern societies' were heterogeneous, but these differed from the colonial plural societies because in the latter there was found
a 'formal diversity in the basic system of compulsory institutions' (Smith 1963: 82). Thus, along with Furnivall, Smith argued that the USA was a heterogeneous but not a plural society since there 'ethnicity connotes cultural differences that are quite compatible with the inclusive social order, either because they are differences within a common idiom or permitted range, or because the groups which practice these variant cultures are numerically weak' (p. 15). The ways of life of Greeks, Irish, or Italians in New York City, for example, were only 'stylistic variations' (p. 84), and no evidence for pluralism, in Smith's sense, in the USA. On the other hand, pace Furnivall, South Africa was very definitely a plural society. Indeed, Smith argued, 'it would be difficult to name a more extreme case' (p. 87).

The writing of Furnivall and Smith gave rise to a lively debate in the social sciences in the 1950s and 1960s, and posed a major problem: their definition of pluralism was of extremely limited application (C. Young 1976: 17). In the 1960s it was often said that South Africa was perhaps the only society which fully conformed to it. (Others concluded that the Ottoman Empire was a plural society in the Furnivall-Smith sense, Braude and Lewis, 1982: 1). Crawford Young, therefore, in his wide-ranging and rich study of the Politics of Cultural Pluralism, essayed a less stringent definition, which, inter alia enabled him to encompass a larger number of societies. For Young, 'cultural pluralism' existed when, within a sovereign nation-state, there was interaction between two or more 'politically significant aggregates', differentiated from each other culturally, that is by language, way of life, etc. (Young 1976: 12; Ulster might be an example). He did not, however, go as far as Cohen and Middleton, for whom plural societies are simply collectivities which are ethnically heterogeneous (1970: 8–9).

That the Furnivall–Smith model was of limited application is not necessarily a disadvantage. Their plural society represents an extreme form along a spectrum of possible social formations: at one end Furnivall and Smith's institutionally exclusive 'plural societies', a little further on Young's 'politically significant cultural aggregates', with Cohen and Middleton's ethnically heterogeneous collectivities further on still. All three point to configurations of important kinds, even if there are many more of Cohen and Middleton's (or Young's) than of Furnivall and Smith's. None, however, is adequate as the basis for a description (let alone analysis) of the forms of pluralism which characterize 'heterogeneous' societies such as Britain. These may, as is commonly done, be called 'plural' (Commission for Racial Equality 1990a), though in the mid-1990s the catch-all term 'multicultural' is preferred by many: Rex, for example, would retain 'plural society' for the Furnivall–Smith model (1995: 79). I am quite happy to use 'plural' to describe contemporary British society, provided that it is understood that it then refers to something much looser than Smith or Young envisaged, albeit not as vague as what Cohen and Middleton proposed, and different again from the plural society of the political philosophers.

3. Pluralism and the political order

The idea of a spectrum of pluralities is helpful so long as we are not tempted to measure (if that were possible) degrees of 'institutional exclusiveness' or 'political aggregation', with a view to saying that Britain is here, France there, the USA somewhere else along the spectrum. 'Institutional exclusiveness' and 'political aggregation' are important not because they provide ways of describing a form of society, or of comparing one society with another, but because questions about whether ethnic minorities within heterogeneous (that is plural) societies should or should not be institutionally exclusive, should or should not form political aggregates, are ones which are on the political and social agenda in such formations. There is, however, another question: is the form that pluralism takes in any way related to the political order? Can varieties of ethnic and cultural pluralism be mapped against types of polity? In developing an understanding of this question some authors of the 'state' is unavoidable.

Classic definitions of the state were usually a stepping stone towards a broader theoretical perspective encompassing wide-ranging questions of power and order. For Durkheim, the state implied a 'central power' (in Giddens (ed.) 1986: 205), which was 'the sum total of social entities that alone are qualified to speak and act in the name of society' (p. 45). It was also the 'organizing centre' (p. 40) of a variety of 'secondary organs', including administrative bodies, which implemented its decisions. A primary function of the state, however, was the elaboration of 'representations' on behalf of the collectivity. It also acted as an 'organ of reflection' whose 'fundamental duty' was to call the individual 'to a moral way of life' (p. 198). The state, saysDurkheim, was 'above all the organ of moral discipline' (p. 201). As always with Durkheim it is difficult to separate 'is' and 'ought'. Durkheim's definition described and prescribed, and offered a vision for the state in the society he knew best: nineteenth-century France. Durkheim like many other French scholars, not least the Marxists such as Althusser, cannot be fully understood unless it is realized that their principal example of a state, always at the back of their minds, is France itself.

Weber, who wrote more about the state than did Durkheim, offered the following: 'A state is a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory' (in Gerth and Mills (eds.) 1961: 78). But this is no more than a starting point for what was always for Weber the crucial question: why obey? In the definition, the word is 'legitimate', and much of Weber's theoretical argument concerns the bases of 'legitimation' of systems of power. He was concerned with power and authority in social relations, and his key notion was authority, or legitimated power. Power may be legitimated in a limited number of ways, and depending on how that legitimation is effected, different types of organization and structure emerge. There were, he argued, four reasons for accepting the legitimacy of power: because it is traditional, for affectual, especially emotional reasons,
because of a belief in its absolute value, and because it has been legally enacted. These provided the bases of legitimacy of an order, and characterized the order itself. For, he concluded, there were a limited number of types of authority which corresponded to the ways in which the order is legitimated.

These types of authority, of which Weber identified three (rational-legal-bureaucratic, charismatic, and traditional), are less relevant to defining the state than to comparing the different forms it takes. There is little to be gained by brooding over definitions, seeking to establish an apparently authoritative, seemingly universal meaning when all that is needed is to point to a certain type of political formation which, without greatly distorting the term, might be called the ‘state’. The argument is not that ‘this is the state’, but that there is an interesting kind of political formation, with certain common characteristics, which appears, in different guises, to be widespread through time and space. In this heuristic spirit, therefore, the state may refer to a centralized ruling body, powerful and authoritative, within the public domain. It is an institution, or rather a complex of institutions, which governs. Analysis of the state as a complex of central governing institutions must place it in the widest possible context: state and society have to be seen as interrelated wholes; less states ‘as such’ than polities. This was the strategy followed by the classic sociologists including, most fruitfully, Weber whose analyses linked state, authority, leadership, and administrative staff, including their economic base, how they get their keep. It also informed writers such as Gellner and Elias. The latter is especially impressive for the way in which he sought to bring together a wide range of economic, technological, institutional, social, cultural factors, in his discussion of various ‘figurations’ (‘configurations’ would be better) of state and society (Elias 1978, 1982).

When, in the past, anthropologists dealt with political systems, they were concerned less with differences between types of state than between societies that have states and those that do not (see Chapter 2). Sociologists, by contrast, were exercised by what they believed to be the dissimilarity between the institutions of nineteenth-century France, Germany, or Britain, and those of early Europe and ‘traditional’ societies in Africa, Asia, and Australasia. This was the problem behind Durkheim’s account of ‘mechanical’ and ‘organic’ solidarities in the Division of Labour in Society, where he argued that there were two types of society: one based on relative homogeneity, the other on relative heterogeneity. Although he had relatively little to say about institutional political organization, what he did say was very much in accord with this basic distinction which he developed in other writing. The following, for example, echoes themes from all his work from the Division of Labour to Elementary Forms of the Religious Life:

The State has ceased more and more to be what it was over a long era; that is, a kind of mysterious being to whom the ordinary man dared not lift his eyes and whom he even, more often than not, represented to himself as a religious symbol. The representa-
This emerges from Weber's discussion of the 'political subject'. Ruler and ruled in such states were joined in a 'consensual community' (Weber 1978: 1620) which did not depend on armed force. The idea of such a community was grounded in the belief in the ruler's 'traditional' legitimacy, and political subjects were those who accepted that legitimacy. The belief was sustained practically through the redistribution of extracted surpluses in the form of benefits of numerous kinds, at the very least in the form of largess. It was also sustained ideologically, and in fact for Weber the root of patrimonialism, its origins and its model, was 'patriarchy': the rule of the father in the family. Cohen, writing about the Emirate of Bornu in north-eastern Nigeria, says that the father-son behaviour norm is the model used by the people themselves to describe the nature of all authority relations in the society' (1967: 46). It is not that the household supplies a model for the overall form of Kanuri society, but that the relationships within the household provide a model for relations outside it. (Alternatively, one might say that all relations of super- and sub-ordination in such a society are shaped in the same way.) Evans-Pritchard's account of the Zande king Gbudwe (Chapter 2), or Clendonon's description of the Aztec ruler, Montezuma (Chapter 3), or the photograph of the Nupe ruler which forms the frontispiece of Nadel's Black Byzantium, each vividly illustrates the nature of patrimonial/patriarchal rule.

At the heart of the early patrimonial state, then, was patronage and clientage, a system linking ruler and ruled at all levels: king and chiefs, chiefs and village headmen, village headmen and villagers, or circumventing this hierarchy, kings and commoners. The patron-client principle (extraction balanced by reciprocity, underpinned by an appropriate and convincing ideology) was replicated at all levels. 'Citizenship', if that term can be used with reference to this configuration, meant participating in such a system as a client, a dependant, a follower, or a retainer, accepting the obligations inherent in occupying these statuses, and enjoying such benefits as were attached to them. At the top was the ruler: king, emperor, emir, paramount chief. In the early state, says Skalnik, 'the sovereign was the very pivot' (1978: 615). As Louis XIV put it (if he did, or knew what he meant when he did so), 'L'état, c'est moi.'

The mode of support of this authority meant that the patrimonial ruler met his or her needs by fees, taxes, tribute, and 'profit-making enterprise', with implications, inter alia, for the development of markets (Weber 1947: 351 ff.). Patrimonial rule thus encompassed what Gellner (1983) called the 'agroliterate' states of the Old Regimes in Europe (with, for comparative purposes, the emphasis on the agrarian rather than the literate), and therefore what are usually referred to as 'Absolutist States'. Szics, who offers a good description of systems which may be termed 'patrimonial', appears to locate them outside Europe, in the Orient (1988: 258). This is mistaken: there is no fundamental distinction between a 'European' absolutism and an 'Oriental' patrimonialism. This is to deny that there were differences (as well as similarities) between patrimonial states in Europe and elsewhere, just as there were varieties of absolutism in West, East, and 'Eastern-Central' Europe (Anderson 1974, Szics 1988), including the way in which culture and society were inter-related, which accounts of ethnicity should address (Ingrao 1996).

The second configuration is the 'modern' state, which Weber described as 'a system of administration and law which is modifiable by statute, and which guides the collective actions of an executive staff' (Runciman (ed.) 1978: 41). This configuration had three essential characteristics. First, it claimed authority not simply over all those who were members of the state, but also over everything that occurred within its territory. Secondly, it claimed a monopoly of the use of force. Thirdly, it was a 'rational' institution: 'The bureaucratic state order... is precisely characteristic of the modern state' (Gerth and Mills (eds.) 1961: 82). For Weber, 'rationality', or rather the harnessing of rationality to organization, and the rationalization of state and other forms of administration in a bureaucratic mode, the development of bureaucracy to a fine art, and its extension into many spheres of civil society, were hallmarks of 'modernity'. Certainly, earlier societies had bureaucracies (the Ottoman Empire for one had a complex hierarchy of officials who produced millions of documents), but these patrimonial bureaucracies lacked the procedural predictability stemming from the systematic application of the rational rules of conduct established by modern bureaucratic procedures. They also failed to apply objective criteria of organization (for example in the selection of entrants); offices were a kind of property, and business was conducted by custom and ad hominem, rather than through universalistic rules. The bureaucratic turn was reflected in the rationalization of production and consumption, with the application of science and technology of an increasingly sophisticated kind to the means of production, distribution, and exchange in societies which were becoming ever more industrialized, urbanized, and large-scale: modern societies were (are) essentially 'mass' societies.

The growth of bureaucracy was also accompanied by, and reflected, the increasing willingness of the state not simply to collect taxes to provide for the rulers, but to maintain law and order, but, as Durkheim and Weber observed, to intervene directly and extensively in the economic and social affairs of the polity ('nothing beyond the arm of the State'). Keane (1988: 54) has argued that Hegel provided 'a very broad licence indeed for state regulation and dominance of social life'. The modern state in this regard was very much a product of the French Revolution, with its masters frequently subscribing to what may be termed the Jacobin project. This project was based on the view that through a powerful state, and acting in the name of the people, the ruling powers can and must change the world for the people's betterment (and owe betide those who stand in their way). There are many variations, stronger and weaker forms of Jacobism. British Labourism ('the gentleman in Whitehall really does know better') falls into the latter category, whereas most communist parties espoused the former (Leninism was the apotheosis of the Jacobin project). This should not be taken to imply that Jacobism (hard or soft) was confined to the left.
The opposite is true, and a feature of the modern state is the way it has invaded society in general, whoever is in power.

This is closely connected to the relationship between state and ‘civil society’. The latter refers to ‘all those social relationships which involve the voluntary association and participation of individuals acting in their private capacities... It involves all those relationships which go beyond the purely familial and yet are not of the state’ (Tester 1992: 8, Simon 1982: 69). This concept, which in the 1980s became important in discussion of reforms in Eastern bloc countries, had an important role in Marxist thinking, especially that of Gramsci. Gramsci’s general analysis of the state contained three principal terms: ‘state’, ‘civil society’, and ‘political society’. Gramsci used ‘state’ in broader and narrower senses (Simon 1982: 71, Buci-Glucksmann 1980: 91). In the narrow sense the state was described as ‘politico-juridical organisation’ (Gramsci 1978: 261). This ‘state-as-government’, as it was sometimes called (Simon 1982: 71), was, according to Gramsci, assigned a number of functions in regard to civil society: as veilleur (‘safeguarding public order and respect for the laws’, p. 261), as ‘ethical state’ (the ‘autonomous educative and moral activity of the secular State’, p. 262, compare Durkheim), and as ‘interventionist state’; in economic activities.

Like other Marxists, and like Durkheim and Weber, Gramsci was primarily concerned with the nineteenth- and twentieth-century ‘modern’ state, and the extent to which the state did, or should, ‘invade’ civil society. The modern state was to a great degree the nightwatchman state and the ethical state. Some socialists (fascist, Nazi, communist, for example, but a similar point was made about capitalist society) were characterized by deliberate and extensive intervention in the sociocultural sphere (including cultural matters in the narrow sense). The modern state colonized civil society to an amazing degree, and very rapidly, and had no truck with pluralism. This contrasted strongly with earlier forms. ‘In the most advanced states’, said Gramsci, the activities.

At the same time, and this was partly a dependent effect, and partly the outcome of the application of an autonomous ideology, political space was constructed (internally and externally) in terms of ‘national’ entities and boundaries: the modern, post-Revolutionary state was a ‘nation-state’. Hobbesbawm has summarized its characteristics as follows: ‘a (preferably continuous and unbroken) territory over all of whose inhabitants it ruled, and separated by clearly distinct frontiers or borders from other such territories. Politically it ruled over and administered those inhabitants directly, and not through intermediate systems of rulers and autonomous corporations. It sought, if at all possible, to impose the same institutional and administrative arrangements and laws over all its territory’ (1992: 80–1). Modern states, then, were guided by a vision of the nation-state as ideally homogeneous, and therefore sought a common, uniform, identity and a common, uniform, loyalty among its citizens. There were, however, two distinct ways in which such a polity might be constructed. From the late eighteenth century, countries such as France and the United States shared the Enlightenment assumption that nations were composed of individuals with common ideals who engaged in a mutually agreeable contract to form a mutually beneficial society. This Gesellschaft view of the nation as an ‘association’ of like-minded people, which others who accepted their political, social, and cultural principles could join without much difficulty, assumed that newcomers could be absorbed, or assimilated. But this view, though usually in the ascendency, coexisted with another, that of the nation as Gemeinschaft, community of blood, whose proponents in the late nineteenth century tried, generally unsuccessfully, to make the basis of national adherence, inter alia arguing that certain peoples (Jews or Italians, for example) were ‘unassimilable’. Sion, writing about the USA, contrasts these two perspectives as ideologies of ‘consent’ and ‘descent’, and says that conflict between them is ‘the central drama in American culture’ (1986: 6).

Discussing contemporary Britain, Harry Goulbourne (1991: 24ff.) alludes to these two views by drawing a distinction between a ‘traditional’, and a ‘new’ or ‘ethnic’ nationalism. For Goulbourne, what he calls traditional nationalism (something close to what is here termed the Gesellschaft view) crucially ‘stopped short of trying to effectuate the congruence of “nation” and “state”’ (p. 57). This ‘rationalistic definition of the nation-state’ was, he says, not ‘dependent on an exclusive single ethnicity’ in defining membership of the body politic. In consequence, ‘traditional nationalism was none too clear about its project’ (ibid.: 218–19). It is, perhaps, misleading to label these two basic conceptions or models of the nation and of national membership ‘traditional’ and ‘new’. Both have been around for a long time. Moreover, they were never discrete, autonomous ideologies. Nor were they, as Chapter 6 shows, uniquely associated with different countries: Gemeinschaft with Germany, say, Gesellschaft with France. As Silverman cogently argues, the two perspectives are found ‘not simply between countries... but within them, not simply between texts but within them’ (1992: 24–5, cf. Hobbesbawm 1992: 22, Räthzel 1995: 166, Silverman 1996: 154, Weil 1996). If, over a long period, one tended to prevail, as in France or the United States, or in Britain, it was always in dialogue and contestation with the other. It is with that contestation which was and is quite central to the perpetual crisis of the nation-state, that much of the second half of this book is concerned.

There were, then, radically different conceptions of how the nation might be properly constituted, but across the spectrum there was a firm belief that the body politic should be socially and culturally one. This belief was, however, constantly confronted with the reality of difference, of social and cultural heterogeneity. Goulbourne (1991) and Silverman (1992) both deal with the way
in which in the late twentieth century the assimilationist model believed to underlie the British and French nation-states was severely tested not by the regional centrifugal forces which concerned Nairn, but by the presence of large numbers of people who entered those countries as immigrants in the years of economic boom after World War II. Historically, the most significant source of cultural diversity in European nation-states has been regional. Over the last century, however, large-scale population movement across national boundaries has created additional diversities. In the post-war era, tens of millions of men, women, and children left their homes, permanently or temporarily, to seek work or refuge in the core countries of Western Europe where they form some 5–10 per cent of the population. Labour migration before World War II generally involved the movement of peripheral European populations. Later came new migrants from outside Europe, often, as in the case of Britain and France, from colonial and ex-colonial territories, that is from cultural traditions perceived as very different from those of the receiving societies: the West Indies, the Asian subcontinent, North Africa, the Middle East. At first a phenomenon of men who left wives and children back home, it later involved families and independent women. In both France and Britain, as in other core countries of Western Europe, there is now a substantial immigrant family population which increased very rapidly during the 1970s, with many children born and brought up in the societies to which their parents migrated. Often these populations became heavily concentrated in the main urban and industrial conurbations: in Britain in the inner cities, in France in the peripheral suburbs.

Like their counterparts who entered the USA in the late nineteenth century, these migrants to Britain and France were perceived as challenging historic conceptions of the nation-state. This occurred at a time when both countries found themselves obliged to redefine their international roles as post-imperial, European, states: the very presence in the metropolitan countries of so many peoples originally from regions previously under colonial control underlined the imperial aftermath. It also happened in a context of other major changes in economic organization, national and international. Silverman, who asks whether France’s ‘current obsession with immigration’, is not ‘itself indicative of a crisis in the structure of the nation-state’ (1992: 33), makes the connections explicit by drawing attention to the part played in the crisis not only by the post-colonial dilemma, but also by the development of the European Union, and the globalization of monetary and cultural relations.

The emergence of supranational economic and political entities, accompanied by the globalization of production and culture, have created multiple and reinforcing points of crisis in modern nation-states; the ‘grand narrative’ which held them together has now gone. This leads to the third configuration of state and society, the postmodern and post-industrial. The concepts are complex ones, and will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 10. Briefly, however, these terms attempt to capture a range of economic, social, technological, and political changes that have, in the view of many, transformed local, national, and international relations in the last decades of the twentieth century. Dahrendorf (1959), Bell (1973), Touraine (1974), and others had suggested that by the late 1970s the economy and society of the ‘West’ was characterized by an ever-increasing reliance on scientific knowledge and a commensurately educated workforce. Production and consumption were organized on an ever greater scale with increasing centralization of key decisions. Bureaucratic modes of organization prevailed, but the ‘managerial revolution’ meant that the idea of the ownership of the means of production became problematic and increasingly irrelevant. The state continued to have a crucial role in defining and regulating the economic and social order. This type of society, the product of Keynesian interventionism in the transatlantic democracies in the boom years after World War II, is best described now as ‘high’ modernity (Wagner 1992: 475). From the mid-1970s to the 1990s, however, there have been profound changes stemming from the increasing globalization of economic (and cultural) relations and the apparent failure of the post-war economic social strategies. These changes have had important implications for the nation-state as the site of social, economic, and political relations: so far from being all-powerful, the state now seemed increasingly irrelevant, and there was a progressive disintegration of the classic forms of social and political organization associated with modernity.

So, then, what happens to ethnic and cultural differences within these configurations of state and society? The themes developed in the following Chapters are summarized in Table 1. Briefly, in ‘patrimonial’ states, patriarchal rulers were generally concerned less with their subjects’ ethnic identity and cultural values than with their ability to render tribute, taxes, and labour. Ethnicity was not absent from such systems, but ethnic identity was not a key motif in the formation of state and society. The predominant plural theme, the predominant way in which difference was handled, was incorporation through accommodation. This involved a variety of devices including, for example, the co-option of regional elites, as in Britain, or the separation (separate development even) into distinct settlements as in the ghetto. Nowhere was the system more fully elaborated than in the Ottoman Empire with its so-called ‘miller’ system, in which the population was divided into partially self-governing religious faiths, often with a specialized economic role, occupying their own quarters within towns and villages.

### Table 1. States and Pluralism: Three Configurations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Configuration of state and society</th>
<th>Plural themes</th>
<th>Identities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Patrimonial</td>
<td>Difference, Incorporation</td>
<td>Corporate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern</td>
<td>Homogeneity, Assimilation</td>
<td>Unitary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postmodern, Post-industrial</td>
<td>Difference, Heterogeneity</td>
<td>Hybrid</td>
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</table>
Although long in circulation, 'ethnicity' only came into vogue in the social sciences once there circulated a different, exclusive, definition of the nation, one which emphasized blood and kinship. By reason of this definition, some groups, some societies and cultures (or, more specifically, races) were thought to be unassimilable. The two perspectives have long been at loggerheads in countries such as France, Britain, and the USA, and their conflict often underpins the crises of these 'modern', assimilative nation-states.

Later chapters will show how over the last three decades of the twentieth century there has been an upsurge in ethnicity in so-called 'advanced' industrial countries which may be linked to social, economic, and technological changes, conditions associated with the advent of the post-industrial society and postmodern forms of sociality. A great deal of literature, anthropological and other, on Britain, France, and the USA points to this. All these are countries which to greater or lesser degrees claim to espouse some as yet vague and undetermined because it is emergent, the outcome of a multiplicity of international processes from a substantive that does not exist in vernacular English, Chapman, McDonald, and Tonkin claim that ethnicity 'is an abstract noun, derived by non-vernacular morphological processes from a substantive that does not exist' (1989: 16). 'Non-vernacular' seems to refer to use identity, etc.), then ethnicity is being subsumed into a very wide range of phenomena to be subsumed under the general study of the classification of people (by themselves and others). And then to regard the 'classification of peoples'. Then: 'It is best to regard those things that, for the moment, look like "ethnicities", as phenomena to be subsumed under the general study of the classification of people (by themselves and others). And then to regard the "classification of people" as subsumed by classification in general' (1989: 17). This is unhelpful. If 'people' means humankind in all its aspects (gender, class, height, sexual preference, etc.), then ethnicity is being subsumed into a very wide range of phenomena of different kind (possibly), with very different implications. If 'people' is
Ethnicity is obstinate: neither the word, nor the phenomena to which it generally, if inexactly, refers, will go away. Certainly it implies classification, an 'ordering of the human world into a comprehensive set of categories defined by reference to an idea of common origin, ancestry and cultural heritage' (Grillo 1974: 159, emphasis added), but there is little point in treating it primarily as such a system. Ethnicity is about difference and differentiation based on such an idea (difference is the subjective aspect of differentiation, the way in which social differentiation is perceived and conceived). Usually an ideology underpins the classification, specifying the relationship that should exist between those with the same or different identities, and how recruitment to the class is determined. In the American context, for example, Sollors (1986: 39) has identified two different, culturally constructed modes of recruitment (consent and descent), and shows that what is important is what is done with a system of classification, how difference is organized politically. The following reflects on how some of these issues have been tackled from within anthropology.

I suggested earlier that 'the national question' is now back on the agenda. It is not one that anthropologists themselves addressed very readily in the past. Before World War II Malinowski alone made any serious effort to engage with the subject, for example in his rambling, posthumously published Freedom and Civilization (1947). His view was quite simple. Human society everywhere was traditionally organized in tightly knit homogeneous units or tribes, groups of people who 'conjointly exercise a type of culture' (1941: 534). This 'tribe-nation', as he called it, was 'the prototype of what we define today as the nation, that is, a large group identified by a common language, a common tradition and a common culture. Nationhood is thus a primeval and fundamental fact in human evolution' (1947: 235). This conception, which was wrong, was common enough among those of Malinowski's background and generation, reflecting as it did the orthodox Romantic view. It is still widely held by those misguided enough to believe that society does not exist but nations are eternal. For Malinowski, though, 'tribe-nation' or nationhood was a positive force, 'the very instrument of freedom' (p. 257), he called it. This was not the case with the 'tribe-state', the framework of centralized political organization, and nationalism, the 'tendency toward the coalescence of the two' (1941: 536), he regarded as a dangerous force (1947: 274). Indeed it was in 'the relationship between nation and state' that he observed many of the problems of his contemporary world.

Malinowski's naive views on 'tribe-nation' outside Europe, and on 'nationhood' within it were further weakened by the model of isolated homogeneous communities which underpinned them. He did, however, offer an important suggestion regarding the link between politics and culture which anthropology did not take up for a long time. That it was not taken up in a European context was hardly surprising given the relatively little anthropological work under-
homogeneous, 'traditional' communities. Cole, however, detected a growing attention to the way in which such communities were undergoing economic transformation and becoming progressively part of 'larger social entities' (1977: 367). He himself emphasized the political economy of this process, arguing by reference to the so-called underdevelopment thesis that integration involved the conjoining of localities in subordinate relationships with powerful centres. These surveys did not cover everything written by anthropologists working in Europe, but anyone looking for guidance would find rather less here than in the scattered work on the Third World. If a theme was emerging it was little more than that of the 'integrative revolution', to use Geertz's striking phrase, in a different context and in a slightly different form.

Why this lacuna? There was, certainly, a sense that the formation of nation-states and national identity was not the province of anthropology: the anthropological forte was the micro-focus; the macro was best left to others, and anthropologists should content themselves with 'shedding light' on their insights. Thus Loizos on Cyprus: 'an anthropological study of a small community may prove a valuable complement to the nation-centred studies of the political scientist' (1975: 2). Other disciplines certainly saw anthropology in those terms: I was once asked to talk about nationalism to a conference mainly of historians and political scientists in a session entitled 'National identity from below'. The use of the phrase presumably reflected the idea that anthropological research is generally conducted not among educated, literate elites, but at 'street', or at least village level, so to speak, where it is concerned with 'what actually happens, on the ground' among those who are generally powerless and often muted.

Although the anthropological handling of nation was until recently weak to the point where the issue was virtually ignored, work on ethnicity in both the Third World and the First, provided, indirectly, a distinctive contribution to the study of the underlying phenomena. (Eriksen has suggested that theories of nationalism and anthropological theories of ethnicity have now converged, 1993: 100.) Three approaches may be mentioned. For Abner Cohen (1969, (ed.) 1974, 1974) ethnicity was always a matter of 'interest'. Ethnic groups were interest groups, and the degree of integration of a group was a function of the articulation of its interest. For example, the organization of the collectivity of Hausa people resident in Ibadan around the Tijaniyya sect of Islam stemmed from their involvement in the cattle trade. More generally, ethnicity was about the relationship between power and symbols, the 'two dimensions' of Cohen's *Two-Dimensional Man* (1974). Barth, too, was concerned with collectivities and their organization but shifted attention from 'internal constitution and history', to 'boundaries and boundary maintenance' (Barth (ed.) 1969: 3), the way in which difference and differentiation is sustained: how the boundary is patrolled. Both 'boundary' and 'interest' have since appeared in numerous accounts of ethnicity in many parts of the world. Neither has been without critics. Epstein (1978) was particularly severe on Cohen's materialistic conception of interest. There is often, Epstein pointed out, an 'affective dimension'. Although Epstein's stance was not fully absorbed by anthropologists, perhaps because of difficulties with the psychoanalytical framework through which he developed his 'anthropology of the emotions', none the less 'identity' came to the forefront of anthropological discussion of ethnicity, to sit alongside 'boundary' and 'interest'.

One point on which there is widespread agreement is that ethnicity is a dynamic rather than primordial or 'natural' phenomenon (Brass 1991: 16, Eriksen 1993: 54, Glazer and Moynihan 1975: 19, Roosens 1989). When Malinowski or Geertz wrote about 'tribe-nation' or other forms of local identification they did so in ways that suggested that they were given and eternal. Abner Cohen, Barth, and Epstein each stressed that ethnicity is continually constructed and reconstructed, that it is a 'process or a project, rather than a structure' (Peel 1989: 200), 'always about negotiations' (Back 1996: 158).

Although Epstein has called in question some of the more extreme claims of those who see ethnicity as a totally constructed economic and political identity or group commitment which, to cite Barth from another context, could be 'assumed and shed at will' (Barth 1959: 2), it is the dynamic character of ethnicity which stands out from these and other anthropological accounts (Ronald Cohen 1978b, Fardon 1987, Jenkins 1994). One consequence of this is that anthropological work on ethnicity has been increasingly grounded as much in historical as in contemporary ethnographic evidence.

The relationship between ethnicity and history in anthropology is by no means a simple one. Consider McDonald's study of contemporary Breton identity (1986), which she approaches through a type of discursive methodology she calls an 'Anthropology of history'. This involves 'an account of the way in which the people studied construct the past, and of the moments, situations, relations, or structural contexts in which that history is told, written or comes alive' (1986: 345). This is a powerful perspective, though in it history (and identity) are seen as heavily text-rooted, that is based on what people say about themselves, with each 'text' apparently equally weighted (Spencer 1989: 160). There are other problems, too. Chapman, McDonald, and Tonkin have sought to replace what they believe to have been the traditional question of ethnic studies: 'How far did the past create the present?' with: 'How did the present create the past?' (1989: 3). Peel has lodged a forceful objection to what he calls this 'presentism', the insistence on seeing history only in relation to contemporary constructions of the past, and thence ethnicity as only something which people do with the past. He himself has stressed the desirability of a 'properly cultural and historical explanation of ethnicity', but has also emphasized that 'culture' is no 'mere precipitate or bequest of the past. Rather, it is an active reflection on the past, a cultural work' (1989: 198; cf. Eriksen 1993: 72, 92).
What the present does with the past is an important question, and a valuable guide to understanding historical and anthropological writing about ethnicity. The problem with the perspective proposed by McDonald et al. is that it eliminates the possibility of a genuinely historical anthropology, indeed of any social history, independent of what contemporary writers, thinkers, or activists make of it. But it is insufficient to describe how 'men make their own history', we must also investigate the circumstances in which they do so. Ethnicity is not simply a mental or conceptual activity, using history as a series of validating texts, carried out in an economic, or political or social void. At the very least, construction must be seen to be embedded in context. Moreover, no matter how difficult it might be to obtain an answer, that question should not preclude another: 'What was the past like?'

In The Gaelic Vision in Scottish Culture, Malcolm Chapman has discussed what he calls 'symbolic appropriation', the way in which one society, in this case English or at any rate Lowland society, constructed the identity of and for another: Highlanders. This perspective (the 'Gaelic vision' is decidedly a view 'from above') is echoed in Chapman, McDonald, and Tonkin: 'The capacity of a successful self-defining entity like a nation to define and create its relevant history, both as it happens and in retrospect, has the corollary that minority, sub-national entities within it simply cannot compete on the same scale. They are, in important senses, history-less and event-less by comparison' (1989: 7-8). They go on:

for a minority or underprivileged group in a modern nation-state, independent history is in important senses missing. This is not only to say that the history was unrecorded or ignored, but also that, to an important degree, it did not happen; and to note, also, that the temporal grain of action and interpretation is not one that can be readily inspected for histories other than that sanctioned by majority perception (ibid.).

There is no denying the significance of this in specific contexts: the notion of the construction of the Other through the discourse of the powerful has been a compelling one in writing on or about the Third World in recent years. Yet what is often left out is the politics, and the contestation. Jenkins, for example, who emphasizes the importance of processes of categorization, argues that they must be placed in the informal and formal contexts in which they occur, ranging from 'routine public interaction' to 'official classification' (1994: 210 ff.). Other writers, whose perspective might be termed 'postmodernist' have also called for 'strategically situated ethnography' (Marcus 1986: 172), 'meshing . . . political economy and interpretative concerns' (Marcus and Fischer 1986: 84) in the manner pioneered by the so-called Manchester School of social anthropology. An example would be ethnic and cultural pluralism in the colonial world, where it is sometimes argued that the colonial state 'created' ethnicity in top-down fashion (see Chapter 5). In reality, ethnicity, as Taylor says of identity, has a 'dialogic character' (Taylor 1994: 32), and much more complex processes are at work for which I find 'ethnic dialectic' an appropriate term. The colonizers of Africa or the Americas, or the rulers of the Ottoman Empire, did not impose or operate solely with their own preformed system of classification, nor did they adopt existing systems wholesale. In the shaping and reshaping of indigenous ethnic and cultural pluralism there was, in colonialism, a complex interplay between these forces. Similarly, in contemporary Britain or the USA, 'cultural essentialism', the idea that a population may be defined by its presumed cultural specificity, although encouraged from above does not of itself generate cultural and ethnic diversity. Ethnic policies in complex ways sometimes reflect an underlying polyethnic reality, sometimes give it a particular direction, rarely do they create it out of whole cloth.

The anthropology of ethnicity has also stressed that it is not a single, undifferentiated, phenomenon, but must be treated as a 'variable rather than a unit of analysis' (Cohen and Middleton 1970: 31, Brass 1991: 13). This implies an overarching systemic, comparative perspective which places this variation in an appropriate context. Earlier approaches coupled with more recent thinking are of value here. It will be recalled that a crucial issue for Malinowski was the relationship between the 'tribe-nation' and the 'tribe-state', and that further the dominant issue of post-war anthropological writing on nationalism was the 'integrative revolution'. If the underlying thesis now smacks of discredited ideas of 'modernization', this writing was none the less concerned with the important question of the different ways in which 'ethnicity' and 'state' were conjoined. For this reason, the construction of ethnicity must be located within analyses of the kind undertaken by Gellner; one might call it the comparative political economy approach to ethnicity and nationalism, even if at times Gellner himself undervalues the role of culture.

The 'view from below' with which anthropology is associated, and with which it associates itself, is also an important one: Edmund Leach incessantly reminded anthropologists of the need to ask 'what actually happens, on the ground?' Hobsbawm's insistence that nations are 'constructed from above, but . . . cannot be understood unless also analysed from below' (1992: 10), might, however, be turned round as a methodological injunction for anthropology. The view from below should not be the limit of anthropology's ambition when it comes to discussing national identity or ethnicity. The analysis of ethnic and national identity encompasses both broad macro-structures, and the individual, villager or townee, activist or not, for whom identification with the nation is in some way meaningful. It is important not to confuse what happens on one level with what may or may not be happening on another, or read in what may not be there. The volatile and accessible nationalist literature often beguiles into believing what activists claim, and identity has to be inferred as much from the inexplicit, the casual, and informal (and sometimes seemingly trivial) as from conscious articulation. In terms of the personal (not to be confused with the psychological) an important issue is what Althusserians call 'interpellation': how the 'I' (and hence the 'We') is constituted so that the individual becomes a subject in several senses. This again is important, though
determinism and reductionism must be avoided. It should not be imagined that all that is necessary is to identify the appropriate Ideological State Apparatus which jerks the subject into life like Pinocchio. The terrain is highly contested: identity, like myth, is a 'language of argument, not a chorus of harmony' (Leach 1954: 278).

2 Plural Societies

Determinism and reductionism must be avoided. It should not be imagined that all that is necessary is to identify the appropriate Ideological State Apparatus which jerks the subject into life like Pinocchio. The terrain is highly contested: identity, like myth, is a 'language of argument, not a chorus of harmony' (Leach 1954: 278).

Pluralism and the Patrimonial State: Pre-Colonial Africa

Hundreds of thousands of people of different ethnic origins all jumbled up—the ethnologist in Africa may sometimes sigh for some neat little Polynesian or Melanesian island community!

(Evans-Pritchard 1971: 67.)

1. Patrimonial states in social anthropology

There is a story, surely apocryphal, that after the Battle of the Boyne (1689), the victor, the Protestant King William III, William of Orange, was ferried across the river. 'Who won?', asked the boatman. 'What's it to you!', replied King Billy. There are many such apocryphal tales told to point a moral about conflict in contemporary Ulster (Vincent 1993: 128). This one serves as an allegory for understanding ethnic and cultural pluralism before the modern era. The present chapter begins the comparative study of the politics of difference by examining three pre-colonial African 'early', patrimonial states, in which authority was based on what Weber called 'tradition': the Alur, the Azande, and the Nupe. Chapters 3 and 4 continue the analysis with extended accounts of a Mesoamerican society (the Aztecs or Mexica), and the Ottoman Empire.

In writing about the state, Weber, and in this he was followed by Elias, was concerned with the consequences of basing a political system on a certain type of authority and form of rule. This led him to ask about devices employed by rulers to address problems generated by the logic of the systems in which they were engaged: finance, administration, armies, and so on. Except for a short, but subsequently highly influential piece which emphasized its socially constructed nature (1978: 385–98), he had relatively little to say about ethnicity. It is largely absent from his discussion of modern states, and scarcely mentioned in his account of patrimonialism, apart from brief references to the organization of the Ottoman Janissary corps (Weber 1978: 1016 ff.). Ethnic differentiation and difference were not among the difficulties which seemed to confront the rulers of early states. None the less, many or most such states were polyethnic...
Multiculturalism and Beyond

Are we to remain prisoners of the past, insisting on a unitary image of a Briton as a person who is white, Christian, clean-shaven, wearing a suit or skirt? Or should we start conceiving a pluralistic image of being a Briton, possibly black or brown, Hindu or Muslim, wearing a turban or kanga or sari?

(Hiro 1991: 313.)

On the one side... is the vision of an increasingly unified society... the symbol of the melting pot. On the other... a vision of persistent separateness... of a society that is in some basic sense pluralistic or irreconcilably divided.

(Higham 1984: xi.)

1. Modes of pluralism in contemporary societies

In Britain and other countries with similar patterns of ethnic and cultural diversity, policy in the 1980s and 1990s stood within the messy middle of the spectrum from assimilation to separatism (Modood et al. 1994: 4). As we saw in Chapter 8, this is often signalled by the vague words and phrases used to describe this condition. Whatever the terminology, crucial questions remain: how much diversity, of what kind, and on what basis? What kind of pluralism is possible or desirable in countries like Britain, France, and the USA, where there is commitment to universalistic, democratic ideals? What room can or should such societies allow for being French or British or American 'differently'? During the 1990s a number of important contributions were made to such debates, mainly by political philosophers in North America (including Kymlicka 1995a, 1995b, Taylor 1994). I will address some of the normative issues in this chapter and the next, but for the moment I wish to look more closely at what is happening in certain societies in the late twentieth century from within a social scientific perspective.

2. Cultural pluralism: the history of an idea

Assimilation, whether into 'Anglo-Conformity' or the melting pot, was not the only model for the development of American society. From time to time a different way was proposed, though generally rejected, one which came to be known as 'cultural pluralism'. In the early twentieth century a mild form of 'celebrating' immigrant cultures was not uncommon. For Jane Addams 'diversity of creed was part of the situation in American Settlements, as it was our task to live in a neighborhood of many nationalities and faiths' (1960 (1910): 308).

The celebration of difference was in her case conjoined with a liberal outlook that led her to take up the cause of minorities generally: she was a strong supporter of black rights (A. F. Davis 1967: 102), and invited Du Bois to lecture at Hull-House (Addams 1960 (1910): 183). Going beyond this, Claghorn's review of immigrants and the law in the 1920s came close to arguing, in a way which moved in a direction opposite to Americanization, that judges needed to know the language of the immigrants who came before them (1923: 186).

Towards the end of their study, in a section entitled 'Perpetuation of groups impossible', Park and Miller, who also approved of the experiment with the New York Kehillah (see also Wirth 1928: 270), raised the question of 'the ideal character of our national life—whether we shall strive for a uniform or...
diversified type of culture and whether the perpetuation of immigrant traits and organizations will accomplish this diversity' (1921: 286). They argued, however, that if an immigrant group were separated from American society 'it will be pauperized in even the culture which it brings. No existing state or nation, and certainly no nation within a nation can create alone the values necessary to a high degree of efficiency' (p. 306). Their language brings to mind Clermont-Tonnerre on French Jews, though Paul Gilroy has pointed out that Martin Delany, an early black nationalist, and the first black officer in the United States Army, used the term 'nation within a nation' in 1852 to refer, inter alia, to the 'coloured people of the United States' (Gilroy 1993b: 22). For Park and Miller, ethnically specific institutions were valuable if, and only if, they assisted the movement towards assimilation, which they believed they did. They were important as transitional arrangements, a view supported by Covello (1967: 412; compare Nelli 1970: 200).

One theorist of the earlier period, still widely cited (Glazer 1997: 85–7), argued for something much more substantial. This was Horace Kallen, who, if he did not invent the term cultural pluralism (Sollors, 1986: 181, and others attribute it to him; Bulviant 1983: 112, to John Dewey), was its key exponent. Higham has referred to the 'chronic indistinctness of the pluralist idea in ethnic relations' (1984: 198). Kallen's meandering writing is indeed difficult to follow or criticize! His later work especially (1956) is so abstract that it is almost impossible to divine what he actually means, or rather what his beliefs might mean, in practice, on the ground (as Walzer, 1995: 145, puts it Kallen 'rarely advanced much beyond glowing description and polemical assertion'). His ideas, although vague and unspecific, perhaps because vague and unspecific, were none the less influential: Covello, for example, certainly drew inspiration from him, as did the workers associated with the New Jersey Ethnic Survey. This Survey, details of which were rescued from the obscurity of the archives by David Cohen in the 1980s, was undertaken in the late 1930s as part of a programme funded by the Federal Writers Project (an offshoot of the New Deal) to send amateur reporters into working-class areas to locate and record the experiences of immigrants in their own words (D. S. Cohen (ed.) 1990: 10ff.). It belonged, says Cohen, to a wider movement which sought to sustain cultural diversity and looked to Kallen as its spokesman.

Kallen came to prominence through a series of articles during World War I which criticized the then prevailing mood of Americanism, and attacked the Americanization campaign, which he believed, like other kinds of assimilation theory and practice, expressed an 'authoritarian monism of culture' (1956: 99). He proposed instead a wide-ranging form of cultural pluralism which he believed inherent in and justified by the 'American Idea' (Gordon 1964: 141–53, Higham 1984: 206ff.). In his 1916 article on the 'Meaning of Americanism' (republished in 1924), he argued strenuously that compared to Europe, where 'nationality is a thing spontaneous and natural rather than voluntary, rooted in hereditary groupings far more than in reason' (1924: 51), the USA ('a union of
According to Bloom, before ‘nationalism crushed Rumania’s design for living’, Harlau was ‘a living organism functioning through ethnic divisions of labour’ (in Moynihan, p. 139), in which the various ethnic groups ‘lived together in relative harmony, indeed synergy’, as Moynihan puts it (p. 133). Kallen’s America was never really thought through as a practical project. His vision was an innocent, naive one, with little sense of the politics or economics, or of any specific social context: he believed, for example, that hostility to outsiders was ‘universal and endemic’ (1956: 33). Moreover, as Higham points out (1984: 210), he had almost nothing to say about the situation of America’s blacks (see also Glazer 1997: 111). Although cognizant of the position of the Negro in the South (1924: 237), he never considered how cultural pluralism might address existing inequalities.

Running through his work, that of the Federal Writers (Cohen (ed.) 1990), and of others such as Louis Adamic (1940), who took up Kallen’s cultural pluralism using Walt Whitman’s phrase ‘a nation of nations’ (Gordon 1964: 156, Sollos 1986: 239-40), was a strong sense of German romanticism. Higham finds this romanticism underlying all kinds of cultural pluralist thinking (1984: 210), with its emphasis on ‘folk’ culture and language, and on the idea of a national community. Compared with the proponents of assimilation, for whom the individual freedom it entailed was fundamental, cultural pluralists stressed that ‘the persistence and vitality of the group comes first’ (Higham 1984: 235). The contrast between group and individual, expressed by Clermont-Tonnerre, is an important one, and raises major questions to which we will return.

Although Kallen was influential, it was not his ‘strong’ version of cultural pluralism which commanded attention but rather his more general call for the recognition of cultural diversity (for example, in the 1920s movement for what was called ‘intercultural education’, Gollnick and Chinn 1986: 24). This tended to mean respect for cultural specificity within an overarching Americanism, and in practice came to little more than the ‘celebration’ of cultural difference of the kind which characterized the activities of the settlement workers in the early years of the twentieth century. Not until the 1960s, with the emergence of the black civil rights movement on the one hand, and the ‘new ethnicity’ on the other, did demands for a more substantial form of cultural pluralism begin to be voiced, principally in the field of education.

A landmark of that era was the formation of the ‘National Coalition for Cultural Pluralism’ which in elaborating its vision defined cultural pluralism as:

- a state of equal co-existence in a mutually supportive relationship within the boundaries or framework of one nation of people of diverse cultures with significantly different patterns of belief, behavior, color, and in many cases with different languages. To achieve cultural pluralism, there must be unity with diversity. Each person must be aware of and secure in his own identity, and be willing to extend to others the same respect and rights that he expects to enjoy himself (Stent et al. 1973: 14, cited in Bullivant 1983: 114).

Bullivant (1983: 113) points out that ‘unity with diversity’ is a typical formulation of Kallen’s. Like Kallen, the Coalition also proposed that cultural pluralism should be seen as an alternative to assimilation, indeed ‘a negation’ of it, which as well as requiring ‘the same fair share’ for all ethnic and cultural groups also demanded ‘the right not to assimilate’ (Stent et al. 1973: 16-17, cited in Bullivant 1983: 115). Bullivant links the work of the Coalition with the Ethnic Heritage Studies Program Act of 1972 (‘Title IX’), which inter alia called for ‘recognition of the heterogeneous composition of the Nation and of the fact that in a multiethnic society a greater understanding of the contribution of one’s own heritage and those of one’s fellow citizens can contribute to a more harmonious, patriotic, and committed populace’ (ibid 1983: 121).

The Act was, says Bullivant, decidedly anti-assimilationist, and thus in tune with a great deal of thinking in educational circles. One important influence was the 1972 report of a Commission on Multicultural Education established by the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education entitled No One Model American from which Bullivant cites the following extracts:

- Multicultural education is education which values cultural pluralism and rejects the view that schools should seek to melt away cultural differences or . . . merely tolerate cultural pluralism . . . (It) recognizes cultural diversity as a fact of life in American society, and it affirms that this cultural diversity is a valuable resource that should be preserved and extended . . . To endorse cultural pluralism is to endorse the principle that there is no one model American . . . Cultural pluralism is more than a temporary accommodation to placate racial and ethnic minorities. It is a concept that aims toward a heightened sense of being and wholeness of the entire society based on the unique strengths of each of its parts (cited in Bullivant 1983: 124-5).

The contemporaneous development of thinking about multicultural education in Britain towards the end of the 1970s, which entered its period of florescence in the 1980s and was endorsed by the Swann Report (Verma 1990: 52-53), was discussed in the previous chapter.

The cultural pluralism characterizing thinking in Britain and the USA, the vague, ill-defined, ambiguous set of ideas which commanded general support both inside and outside the world of education, corresponded roughly to what Gordon (1975: 105) has called ‘liberal pluralism’. The keynote was participation plus diversity, and it is around questions concerning these (how much and what kind) that the debate has revolved in Britain and other countries which to a greater or lesser extent espouse pluralistic principles. What pluralism means in practice, of course, varies hugely. It is not a fully worked-out theory or programme nor a readily identifiable social state. It is an emergent phenomenon, the outcome of a multiplicity of international, national, and perhaps above all local and specific accommodations on a range of issues which Waardenburg (1988) calls ‘test cases’. Some of these, headscarves in France, the Rushdie affair in Britain, question the ‘terms of engagement’ (Parekh 1995: 310) whereby
immigrants enter the society, and probe definitions of acceptable pluralism to their very limits.

3. Against multiculturalism

This brief history shows that multicultural pluralism (let us go with the current jargon and say multiculturalism for short) is not as recent a phenomenon as is sometimes supposed. None the less it has not been constantly on the social agenda, and certainly in Britain in the late 1980s and early 1990s it moved out of the political limelight, though still much discussed in academic and educational circles. In North America, on the other hand, during the same period it became the focus for a virulent debate, especially in the USA, where it was caught up in the controversy over 'political correctness'. The academic and polemical literature grew exponentially: figures from the Nexis database cited by Glazer (1997: 7) reveal no references to multiculturalism in 1988, thirty-three in 1989, 1,500 in 1994.

Both Glazer and Goldberg (1994), from different perspectives, agree that multiculturalism, like the earlier cultural pluralism of Horace Kallen, was a response to the monoculturalism (Goldberg 1994: 3-4) which characterized earlier policies of Americanization and assimilation. Thus, for Glazer, multiculturalism is:

a position-taking stance on the racial and ethnic diversity of the United States. It is a position that rejects assimilation and the 'melting pot' image as an imposition of the dominant culture, and instead prefers such metaphors as the 'salad bowl' or the 'glorious mosaic' in which each ethnic and racial element in the population maintained its distinctiveness (1997: 10).

More specifically, both see multiculturalism (like the 'ethnic revival') stemming from the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s, and the failure of policies of integration. For Glazer, it is 'the price America is paying for its inability or unwillingness to incorporate into its society African Americans, in the same way and to the same degree it has incorporated so many groups' (1997: 147). In Canada, on the other hand, according to Bissoondath (1994), multiculturalism followed a different trajectory and stemmed from the need to formulate a political response to the separatist demands of French-speaking Quebec. In both the USA and Canada (and Britain and France) the focal point of debate about multiculturalism has been education. Goldberg begins and ends his discussion (1994) with the university, and Glazer (1997: chapter 2) provides a riveting if scaring account of the proceedings of commissions of inquiry concerned with redefining the curriculum to take into account multicultural principles in California and New York (the outcome of the latter, in which Glazer himself participated, provoked Schlesinger's ferocious attack, 1992).

Many observers have proposed that multiculturalism takes 'strong' and 'weak' forms (see my own suggestion, outlined earlier, that forms of pluralism fall along a spectrum). Glazer, for instance, writes of a 'militant multiculturalism' (1997: 11). This, presumably, is the opposite of what Goldberg calls 'weak' multiculturalism:

a strong set of common, universally endorsed, centrist values to which everyone—every reasonable person irrespective of the divisions of race, class, and gender—can agree. These universal principles are combined with a pluralism of ethnic insight and self-determination provided no particularistically promoted claim is inconsistent with the core values (1994: 16).

This milk-and-water version he condemns as 'implicit monoculturalism dressed up as weak pluralistic multiculturalism' (ibid.). Perhaps he would so describe Rex's 'egalitarian multiculturalism' (Rex 1996: 2). Eriksen, too, writing from the perspective of the ethnography of Mauritius, identifies as a strong form of multiculturalism that which rejects ideologies of human rights and individual liberty (1997: 66). Eriksen's strong version, which he contrasts unfavourably with the multiculturalism actually found in Mauritius, is comparable to the 'communal option' discussed below, in which pluralism is formally recognized across a range of public institutions and practices.

Multiculturalism, both strong and weak, has its critics, often in unexpected alliances: 'strange bedfellows', as Schmuhl (1995: 145) describes them. There are six principal areas of controversy, problems with multiculturalist theory and practice: (1) multiculturalism's implicit essentialism; (2) the system of categorization which underpins it; (3) the form that multicultural politics takes; (4) the ritualization of ethnicity often associated with it; (5) the elision of race (and class) that it appears to entail; and (6) the attack on the 'common core' which it represents. (See also Eriksen, 1997: 66, and Glazer, 1997: 34.) Many of these criticisms stem from a focus on 'culture'. During the 1970s, as British educators worked their way through the minefield of competing terms ('multiracial', 'multicultural', etc.) in an effort to identify the nature of the project in which they were engaged, there emerged a consensus around 'culture' as 'the central all-embracing concept' (Bullivant 1983: 41). This happened, suggests Bullivant, in part because it was a term which would (so it was believed) be readily understood outside the ranks of the professional educators. And it was, of course, not only in education that a discourse of multicultural pluralism predominated. Along with other observers Bullivant sees this as a dubious emphasis: 'a seductive trap' (1983: 133). By defining the key features of social relations and the groups which compose society as 'cultural', other interpretative frameworks are precluded, notably those which would emphasize race and racism (Bullivant 1983: 229, 232), or class. Rattansi (1992) calls this 'cultural essentialism', or more fully 'cultural and ethnic essentialism': multiculturalism conceives of society as a population of 'ethnic groups'...
To essentialise is to impute a fundamental, basic, absolutely necessary constitutive quality to a person, social category, ethnic group, religious community or nation. It is to posit falsely a timeless continuity, a discreteness or boundedness in space, and an organic unity. It is to imply an internal sameness and an external difference or otherness (1997: 228).

Essentializing involves categorizing (below) and stereotyping, and is a way of thinking and acting which treats individuals as if they were 'essentially' defined, that is their subjectivity is determined, by membership of a particular category, in this case their cultural/ethnic group. In multiculturalism, therefore, culture plays the part of race and sex in other discourses (feminist thinking about sex and gender has been highly influential in the anti-essentialist critique of multiculturalism). Ethnic groups are seen as 'self-evident, quasi-biological collectives of a reified “culture”' (Baumann 1997: 222) and there is a refusal to accept that that culture is constructed within those ‘communities’ themselves. Appiah, too, argues that multiculturalism is based on ‘conceptions of collective identity that are remarkably unsuitable in their understandings of the process by which identities, both individual and collective, develop’ (1994: 156).

Essentialism is not only found in Western societies, in Western ‘Orientalism’, for example, or in the way that countries such as Britain or Sweden deal with their ethnic minorities. Werbner’s excellent account (1979b: 231 ff.) of the origins and development of the Rushdie affair shows how much essentializing there was on all sides, including that of Iranian Islamic ‘fundamentalists’. Essentialism has also characterized debates about ‘blackness’ from early discussions of négritude to the present day, and some argue that such essentialism may well have strategic value in political struggles: that there is a necessary and acceptable form of ‘strategic essentialism’ (Spivak 1987, see also Werbner 1997b: 240, Bonnet 1997: 187; see also Bissoondath 1994: 163, for an account of the way in which the word ‘racialized’ is used in a non-pejorative sense by certain black Canadians).

Secondly, categorization. Earlier, I drew attention to Richard Jenkins’s argument about the importance of categorization in the social and political processes concerned with the construction of identity (1994: 197), and numerous examples have been cited in previous chapters. Multiculturalism, it is argued, creates and/or works with existing ethnic and cultural categories and essentializes them. Cohen (1997: 136) cites the argument that in Britain, ““South Asian” is made an inclusive [category], almost inadvertently, through the power of Western liberal-democratic discourses, which require a single fabricated “culture” for their multicultural ideologies and policies’. This can happen for the best of reasons. Thus following anti-discrimination and monitoring legislation, US agencies adopted a limited number of categories for reporting purposes: ‘blacks’, ‘Hispanics’, ‘Asian’, and ‘other’ (Glazer 1995: 128). It is all too easy to stereotype. Les Back (1996: 153) quotes one young black South Londoner saying he would much rather be reading Shakespeare, but all he can find in his youth centre’s library are books about Rastafarianism. These ‘unitary definition[s] of “blackness”’ do not go unopposed (Back 1996: 152), none the less, the ‘ethnic dialectic’ would suggest that such categories are not simply invented but emerge in complex interaction of the kind which in Southall (London) leads to the emergence of an ‘Asian’ culture constructed by young people whose families are of diverse South Asian origin (Baumann 1997: 217–18).

In multiculturalism ‘all families are extended, children respect their elders, religious faith is total and unquestioning, and women are veiled creatures living in the shadows’ (Ali 1992: 109). The process of defining, or, more strongly, constituting social (and political actors) through a stereotypical and essentialized ‘culture’ (rather than, say, their relationship to the means of production), and thus by their ethnic identity, appears in many different guises, in both British and American society. Consider, for example, the school system portrayed in Gollnick and Chin’s textbook on Multicultural Education in a Pluralistic Society (1986) intended for trainee teachers and social workers. Schools should, they argue, have a multicultural curriculum pervading the classroom and the school environment at all times. Ethnicity permeates the life of all children outside school, and the school must reflect this reality, albeit in a positive way:

Bulletin boards, resource books, and films that show ethnic diversity should constantly reinforce these realities... Too often minorities are not seen on bulletin boards or included in the reading lists when students study biographies, the basic food groups, labor unions, or the environment... It is the educator’s responsibility to ensure that ethnic groups become an integral part of the total curriculum (Gollnick and Chin 1986: 93).

‘Start “where people are”’, they enjoin (p. 269), with what children bring to the school and the classroom, and that means with their ethnic identity. By stressing ethnicity within the total school environment, down to the minutiae of verbal interactions within the learning process, they seem to be saying to teachers: Whether you know it or not, whether they know it or not, your students bring their ethnicity with them. There is an assumption that students will be defined by their ethnically distinct cultures, and this assumption seems almost designed to elicit an appropriately ethnic response. As Waters comments, “The expectation in American society that everyone has an ethnic identity in addition to being American is often institutionalized in elementary
school projects where children are given the assignment of researching their roots’ (1990: 59). Waters also discovered that while interviewing her American informants ‘individuals remembered an ancestry that was not even consciously a part of what they believed their ethnic origins to be’ (1990: 23). That such a response can be elicited was found in surveys by the Linguistic Minorities Project (1985): asking pupils in British schools to reflect on their home language or dialect made them conscious of a sociolinguistic identity in a way they had not been before the study.

In discussing the rights and wrongs of British social work practice which insists on ‘same race’ adoption and fostering, Paul Gilroy argues that ‘emphasizing ethnic particularity has become an important means to rationalize the practices of [social service] departments. It organizes their clients into discrete groups with separate needs and problems which have been identified as expressive of the various cultures they inhabit’ (1987: 66). Encouragement of ethnic diversity may mean that people are ‘positively forced to adorn themselves with an ethnic label, whether they want to or not’ (Eriksen 1993: 143, 1997: 62). One should not, however, overemphasize the ability of institutions such as schools and social services to ‘generate’ ethnicity and cultural diversity. It is important not to deny the existence of distinct cultural practices and collectivities: multiculturalism does not conjure ethnic and cultural groups from nothing. If categorized as ethnic, people are almost obliged to respond as ethnic, though it is never as simple a one-way affair as that suggests. As with the ‘invented’ tribes of colonial Africa, or the categories of the Ottoman millet system, multiculturalism sometimes reflects an underlying reality, sometimes creates it, sometimes shapes it in a particular way.

Thirdly, as these examples suggest, categorization and stereotyping have an important political aspect, indeed several. First there is what Goldberg (1994: 26) calls ‘managed or corporate multiculturalism’. These are ‘tools for... maintaining a constriction of diversity that otherwise might be unmanageable and overwhelming from the standpoint of bureaucratic and administrative technologies’ (ibid.: 29). This is a point that is frequently made in Europe, including Britain (Rex 1996: 2). For example, Rex points out that several ‘Councils of Mosques’ which exist in Britain in fact originated with municipal councils (1996: 230). Multiculturalism is thus seen as a way of controlling minorities, ‘as a manipulative policy through which the state seeks to control minorities through selected elders, reifying and rendering static the notion of minority cultures’ (Rex 1996: 58; see also Rex and Drury (eds.) 1994, and Hamner 1996: 158 on Sweden). In the British context, such a conception fits well with the traditions of a polity which once ruled a multicultural empire through a system of indirect rule (Ali 1992: 104, Goulbourne 1991: 104, Sahgal 1992: 167-8). That a similar process has characterized American cultural pluralism shows, however, that it is not confined to post-imperial societies, and cannot be explained solely as the residue of a colonial heritage. This is not to say that the management of multiculturalism takes the same form. Evidence from Britain (and other European countries, see Grillo 1985), as well as from the USA and Canada, suggests that essentialism is politicized in different ways. The manner in which cultural blocks are given political and social space is often very different and in all likelihood heavily influenced by prevailing patterns of political culture. If British (or French) colonial experience offers one model through which notions of ethnic essentialism are articulated politically, an American tradition of interest-group pluralism offers another. And there may be other,...
group was one which had seven ‘essential’ (sic) characteristics: a shared history and consciousness; a distinct cultural tradition; ‘common geographical origin or descent from a small number of common ancestors’; a common language and literature; and ‘being a minority or being an oppressed or a dominant group within a larger community’ (Poulter 1986: 186). By these criteria it was accepted that Sikhs were an ethnic group and the 1976 Act applied in their case. Likewise, a 1994 court ruling determined that the harassment of an Irishman through the repetition of mindless jokes constituted an infringement of this law, and thus brought the Irish within the terms of the Act.

It is this kind of considerations which in fact lead Werbner to defend multicultural politics and, in an attempt to find what she calls a non-essentialist mode of representation (1997b: 229), to distinguish between ‘modes of objectification’ and ‘modes of reification’, the latter ‘essentialist in the pernicious sense’. Multiculturalism, she argues, ‘empowers morally and aesthetically imagined communities’, (1997b: 247). Bureaucracy essentializes, but its ‘fictions of unity’ (p. 241) are different from the essentialist constructs of racism. The objectification is situational and pragmatic and intended to serve principles of equity and ‘redistributive justice’ (p. 248).

Fourthly, the ritualization of ethnicity. Institutionally engendered or legitimated multiculturalism, managed multiculturalism, takes strong or weak forms. Sometimes it is mere tokenism of the sort that in Britain is referred to, contemptuously, as ‘saris, samosas, and steel bands’ (Joly 1992: 134; Kaneh’s phrase is ‘calcified autonomies’, 1995: 70). This tokenism highlights a simple range of what are believed to be appropriate visual cues of typical (and generally harmless) diversity, as frequently happens in those carnivals which represent the managed multiculturalism, managed multiculturalism, takes strong or weak forms. As in France: Mrs Thatcher’s reference to ‘swamping is frequently cited as an instance of this (Goldberg 1993: 73). Gilroy, and others, also point to the way in which through a discourse of ‘mugging’, gangs, and drugs, criminality ‘was gradually identified as an expression of black culture’ (Gilroy 1987: 109). Apparently, though only apparently, escshewing biology, the new racism had at its centre a theory of human nature, the idea that it was ‘natural to form a bounded community, a nation, aware of its differences from other nations. They are not better or worse. But feelings of antagonism will be aroused if outsiders are admitted. And there grows up a special form of connection between a nation and the place it lives’ (Barker 1981: 21). Seidel, who develops Barker’s argument through a study of articles in the Salisbury Review and similar writing in France by the Groupement de Recherche et d’Etudes pour la Civilisation Européenne (GRECE), concludes that the new right emphasis on cultural difference meant that a slogan such as ‘le droit a la difference’ was therefore ‘very ambiguous’ in its implications (Seidel 1986a: 129).

Was there anything really new about the new racism? Racial and cultural themes have always been intertwined in xenophobic discourse in Europe and the USA, not least in the late nineteenth century. The link between criminality and culture made in the case of the black population of London in the 1980s is not very different from that made in 1911 by the United States Commission on Immigration with reference to the Italian population of New York. Gilroy sees the ‘novelty’ of the new racism in its linking of ‘discourses of patriotism, nationalism, xenophobia, Englishness, Britishness, militarism and gender difference into a complex system which gives “race” its contemporary meaning’ (1987: 43). Yet, as Colley has shown, that linkage had already been made in the eighteenth century. Moreover, it is not at all clear that the theorists of the Salisbury Review or GRECE have much influence or signifcance outside the intellectual milieu they inhabit; that, for example, the ‘new racism’ legitimizes the ‘old racism’ at street level in London or Paris. There was nothing new, for instance, in the scurrilous poem about the black British Member of Parliament, Bernie Grant, which Gilroy found in a pamphlet distributed on the streets of London (1992: 54), and its perpetrators were unlikely to have sought justification in the pages of sophisticated journals (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1993: 57, Lutz, Phoenix, and Yuval-Davis 1993: 7). On the other hand, as in France, sensitivity to the way in which race / culture was reworked in the discourse of the new right, made many on the left deeply suspicious of any statement about cultural difference. It was readily assumed that remarks about ‘culture’ were in fact coded ways of speaking about ‘race’ (Goldberg 1993: 73), and hence the ‘real’ issue was racism, tout court.

If the elision of race is paramount for some, for others it is the diversion from economic problems (Eriksen 1997: 66), or the glossing over of questions of class (Glazer 1997: 16), though Modood (1997: 157) applauds the way in which multiculturalism rectifies the denial of difference between Afro-Carribeans and Asians found in previous race-class models. For others the key issue is the extent
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...and type of diversity it promotes: will multiculturalism go too far, and destroy the common ground of British or French or US society?

Although anti-racist, multicultural, and multilingual education made only modest headway in Britain during the 1980s, in many schools the ethos was quite different from that which prevailed in the monocultural educational system of the 1960s. Latterly, however, such advances as had been achieved were attacked from the right. The case of Ray Honeyford, the Bradford head teacher who was removed from his post after parents had protested at what they alleged were racist elements in his criticism of multiculturalism, was taken up by the new right in a renewed defence of the traditional, assimilationist, school (Halstead 1988). Historically, British schools, explicitly or implicitly, have always been concerned with maintaining a language (English) and mainstream British culture. Doyle’s account of the development of the teaching of English in the early part of this century shows how that culture was seen as a’transcendental essence inhering within an’organic’ national language and a humanistic literary tradition’ (Doyle 1989: 59). That this was and remains the dominant view was confirmed by a statement by Sir Keith Joseph, Secretary of State for Education, shortly before he left the office: ‘Our schools should transmit British culture, enriched as it has been by so many traditions... It would be unnecessary... and I believe wrong, to turn our education system upside down to accommodate ethnic variety or to jettison those many features and practices which reflect what is best in our society and its institutions’ (Guardian, 22 May 1986). This affirmation of the ‘British’ tradition in education was confirmed by later legislation, principally the Education Reform Act of 1988, and the ‘National Curriculum’, which placed ‘a standard language, a definitive canon of English literature and a single, shared narrative of the nation’s history’ (Donald and Rattansi 1992: 5) once again at the core of the school’s endeavour (see also Foster 1990, Goulbourne 1991, Hiro 1991, Verma (ed.) 1989). This perspective was reinforced in 1996 by the government’s chief adviser on the curriculum who called for the ‘development of a British cultural identity in all schoolchildren, regardless of their ethnic background’ (Guardian, 19 July 1995).

In more general terms, Bissoondath (1994: 71) believes that Canadian multiculturalism has ‘eradicated the centre’. What he means is that ‘the historical centre and the sense of national self it offered are, for all intents and purposes, no more. A void remains, a lack of a new and definable centre’ (ibid.: 77). Similarly, Bernstein (1995: 357) cites approvingly the view expressed in the USA that multiculturalism is an ‘assault on the nation... on the idea that we are a nation’, and worries that it will all end in ethnic conflict as in Bosnia. Kymlicka dismisses such concerns. Fears of separatism are unfounded: ‘Even the most politicized ethnic groups are not interested in reconstituting themselves as distinct societies or self-governing nations alongside the mainstream society’ (Kymlicka 1995a: 67). Not only that, but demands for cultural rights on the part of immigrant groups are in fact intended to aid their integration (ibid.: 176), just as the ‘ethnic revival’ in the USA expressed a wish for recognition within the ‘mainstream society’ (ibid.: 98).

Kymlicka’s critique of Glazer (1995) and of Walzer (1995) perhaps misses the point: their concerns are those of Enlightenment liberals and represent a French-style ‘republican’ rejection of particularism rather than a right-wing defence of the status quo. In fact, both Kymlicka and Glazer agree that excessive demands for diversity on the part of immigrant minorities are unwarranted (see Glazer 1995: 135). In their case, ‘The expectation of integration is not unjust’ (Kymlicka 1995a: 96). They themselves decided to move to the receiving societies and in doing so ‘voluntarily relinquish some of the rights that go along with their original national membership’ (compare Bernstein 1995: 162). ‘It is absurd,’ says Rex, ‘for some Muslims to suggest that they can turn established Western societies into Islamic states’.

Immigrant communities should, as many do, accept that living in a society with its own language, religion, economic system, law, folk customs and school system, means that they must pay a price for their chosen situation. What they have to do is to learn to be culturally bilingual, to be able to operate within the institutions of their society of settlement as well as maintaining their own solidary culture (1996: 162).

But if for some multiculturalism conceded too much, for others it conceded too little.

4. Public and private domains

In a review of the Swann Report, Rex distinguished public and private domains and insisted on the need for equality of opportunity (not special provision) within the public arena. However, he goes on:

If there is only one culture in the public domain and that culture is the culture of equal opportunity, there is no reason at all why any society should insist that the norms which govern familial and community life, including such matters as marriage arrangements and religious practices, should be the same for all (1989: 14).

This he describes as ‘multiculturalism in a situation of equality of opportunity’ (p. 19). Verma, on the other hand, while accepting that under conditions of cultural pluralism, ‘the vast majority’ of those matters which distinguish one group from another ‘belong in the domain of private life’ (1990: 49), elsewhere appears to envisage a stronger version, with pluralism in the public domain. This ‘implies that certain ethnic groups (defined by combination of religion, ethnicity or cultural values) are both relatively endogamous, and strive to retain their distinctive cultural identity through some degree of institutional separation’ (1989: 238). This comes close to what Gordon (1975: 106) has called ‘corporate pluralism’ in which ‘racial and ethnic groups are formally recognized as legally constituted entities with official standing in the society’.
Legal pluralism, the coexistence of two or more distinct legal systems, characterized British and French colonial systems under policies of 'association' and indirect rule, as it did the Ottoman Empire. In British India, for example, Hindus and Muslims were governed, so far as family law was concerned, by separate codes, such as the Muslim Personal Law (Hooker 1975: 95 ff., Brass 1991: 80-2), and Muslims in French North Africa had their own statut personnel. Indeed, Hooker (in 1975) appeared to suggest that Muslims resident or domiciled in France 'continue to be governed by Islamic law unless they renounce their personal statute in accordance with the law of 10 September 1946' (pp. 212-13, my emphasis). In support of this he cites the judgement in the case of Fatma Kali v. Hamache of 1957 which confirmed that 'Whereas the Moslem rules were legally adopted by the French Parliament for French Moslems in Algeria, so the French courts must apply, purely and simply, to their class of citizens, the statute which is specific to it and has been legally recognized for it' (in Hooker 1975: 213). 'Continue' gives the misleading impression that a practice that in the colonial period was an extension of a right available to French Muslim citizens when resident in their home department was maintained after Algerian independence. It is none the less interesting that a form of legal pluralism existed for Muslim residents in metropolitan France during the earlier period.

Poulters, whose English Law and Ethnic Minority Customs provides an excellent textbook style guide to the important legal decisions in this field to 1988, argues elsewhere that the English legal system has in fact 'accommodated divergent ethnic and religious practices and beliefs in a constructive manner' (1990: 16; see also Parekh 1995: 314), and favours maintaining the current 'legal monism' coupled with 'flexibility to accommodate the cultural needs of the ethnic minority communities' (p. 22). The scope for traditional customary practice to be supported by English courts appears to be enormous (see Norgren and Nanda 1988 for an account of American experience). Take, for example, the case of Alkafi Mohammed v. Knott (1969). This involved a Nigerian who had married under Islamic law, and brought to England, a 13-year-old girl. When he took her for medical treatment, the doctor informed the police, and in due course the court committed her into care under the Children and Young Persons Act of 1963, as being in moral danger. This was overturned on appeal, with the Lord Chief Justice stating that the case could not be judged by reference to local, British standards: 'it could only be said that she was in moral danger if one was considering someone brought up and living in our way of life'. To do otherwise would be to ignore 'the way of life in which she was brought up, and her husband was brought up' (in Poulter 1986: 20). (Sexual intercourse in this instance would not be unlawful as the two partners were 'validly married').

In Mohammed v. Knott the law is a long way from 'the man on the Clapham omnibus' as the arbiter of reasonableness. Similarly, and perhaps equally problematically given current British practice, courts have supported arranged marriages. In Hituxi v. Hira (1983), the court ruled that opponents of an arranged marriage had to demonstrate that the threats or pressure to undertake the marriage were such as to destroy the validity of any assent. Poullier calls this the 'overborne will' theory, and adds: 'The dilemma posed by arranged mar­riages is to distinguish between proper and improper pressures imposed not by the other party to the marriage but by the petitioner's own family and the wider ethnic community' (p. 31). Thus the existing law gives a great deal of room for ethnically specific practices, and Poullier looks at a number of areas where it might be further amended or changed, to widen the scope or simply to clear up uncertainties. These range from the recognition of polygamous marriages (p. 58); 'defining who are members of a family in the eyes of the law' (p. 96); talaq divorces (under Islamic rules), and 'extra-judicial consensual divorces' in general (p. 123); rules governing the fostering of children, and their discipline (pp. 145-
calling for the implementation in Britain of a 'variation of the millat' law to the Home Office in 1989, also notes that some Muslims have begun to seek personal law similar to that in operation in British India, and still available to Muslims in that country (Hiro 1991: 312). Modood, making a similar comparison with colonial India, and referring to a delegation which put the case for such a law, wishes to exclude from the prohibition certain kinds of operations in the genital region which were necessary on medical grounds. These include the recognized medical practice of 'trimming' carried out in a very small number of cases each year on women who believe that their genitalia are in some way abnormal. In a first attempt to exclude this practice from prohibition, the Government included a clause which would have stated that when such an operation was proposed on the grounds of the mental health of the patient 'no account shall be taken of the effect on that person of any belief on the part of this or any other person that the operation is required as a matter of custom or ritual' (p. 157). The Commission for Racial Equality, however, argued that such a clause would 'suggest that some reasons for [the] state of mind [of the patient] may be acceptable and others, broadly confined to those which might affect persons of African origin or descent are not', and this, in the Commission for Racial Equality's view, would be discriminatory. In response, the Government minister concerned stated that 'the essential purpose of the whole Bill ... is to prevent acts of cruelty or harm from being performed under the cloak of custom or ritual ... these particular customary practices are not compatible with the culture of this country' (in Poulter 1986: 158, my emphasis). In the event, after considerable discussion in the House of Lords, agreement was reached on a clause which simply stated that among operations excluded from the prohibition were those which were 'necessary for the physical or mental health of the person on whom [they are] performed'.

Although both Poulter and Parekh argue that the range of customary cultural practices recognized as valid by the courts might be increased, they are adamant in their opposition to any form of institutionalized legal pluralism, as advocated by some Muslim groups (Parekh 1990: 72; Poulter 1990: 21, Goulbourne 1991: 237). Hiro, on the other hand, has called precisely for legal pluralism of this kind, advocating the introduction of a distinct code of Muslim personal law similar to that in operation in British India, and still available to Muslims in that country (Hiro 1991: 312). Modeed, making a similar comparison with colonial India, and referring to a delegation which put the case for such a law to the Home Office in 1989, also notes that some Muslims have begun calling for the implementation in Britain of a 'variation of the millat system' (1992a: 273). In the area of education (separate schools), law (specifically family law), and to a degree political representation (the Muslim Parliament, which Samad also likens to the millet system, 1992: 517, or in another context debates about black sections in the British Labour Party, Layton-Henry 1992: 163 ff.), there was during the 1980s pressure for some form of institutionalized, publicly recognized, separation, especially on the part of British Muslims. These pressures are seen as a severe test of any policy of pluralistic integration. As the Home Minister, John Patten, put it in 1989: if there is in Britain 'plenty of room for diversity and variety', there is none for 'separatism or segregation' (in appendix in Commission for Racial Equality 1990b: 84), a sentiment echoed by Frybés (1992), Lapéronniste (1992), Yuval-Davis (1992), Parekh, Poulter, and many others across the political and ethnic spectrum in both Britain and France (see Rex 1996 and contributors to Rex and Drury 1994).

5. Institutional pluralism

Despite the state's attempt to restore an assimilationist perspective in British education, many people remained committed to a multicultural outlook. Hiro notes in the third edition of his book Black British, White British (that since it first appeared in the early 1970s, 'my idea of social pluralism has become accepted wisdom' (1991: vii). The pluralism that was accepted, however, was always one confined within certain limits. Thus Jeffcoate (1984: 118), who described himself as a 'modified' pluralist, spoke for many when he declared that he did not believe British society could or should tolerate every instance of cultural diversity: for example, and they are all Islamic, female circumcision, the subordination of women, and halal meat. He likewise opposed mother-tongue maintenance within the school system, and any religious provision, particularly of Islamic doctrine, but supported the right of children to wear ethnically specific school dress (1984: 123). Whether or not Jeffcoate was correct in labelling his views 'modified pluralism', he was undoubtedly typical of many teachers of the period who were concerned to maintain an integrated education system, education for all, perhaps in another sense. Certainly, throughout the 1980s the views of central and local government, as well as those of educationists (as represented by the Swann Report's majority conclusions in this area, pp. 501 ff.) opposed any form of separate or special education for the children of ethnic minorities. Some kind of separatism has, however, long been permitted within the private and voluntary-aided school sector in Britain. The desirability of a different, in a sense ethnically specific, kind of schooling for some pupils was recognized by the Education Acts of 1902, 1906, and 1944 which designated a 'voluntary-aided' sector of schools run by the Church of England, Catholics, Jews, and Methodists, overseen by the state. In 1988 there were some 5,000 such schools, most of them Christian. Twenty-one were Jewish, but none represented faiths such as Islam or Hinduism (Commission for Racial Equality 1990c: 4). There were, on the other hand, a number of private
Muslim schools offering full-time education. (These are quite different from the supplementary classes found in the informal ethnic schools sector.) One prominent private Muslim school in the 1980s was the Islamia Primary School which opened in 1983 with the backing of Yusuf Islam, the former pop singer and convert to Islam Cat Stevens. In 1993, when visited by a reporter from the Independent newspaper, the school which had over 100 pupils was housed in the former Kilburn Grammar School buildings, the Islamia Schools Trust had bought for £2.5m. (The buildings also contained the Private Secondary Islamia Girls School.) The primary school's syllabus was devoted to an Islamic education for between 15 per cent and 20 per cent of the time, including study of the Arabic language, the Islamic religion, and 'how to live as a Muslim'. The rest of the syllabus was more orthodox, covering English, mathematics, and science. (The school was particularly proud of its science facilities.) The reporter commented: 'In many respects its classrooms resemble those of any primary school... But there are differences. Some of the writing is in Arabic—all children learn Arabic as a second language—and the paintings and drawings are almost exclusively abstract and geometric, with not a human figure or animal in sight.' This was explained to the reporter as ensuring that the followers of Islam are 'not tempted to worship idols' (Independent, 4 April 1993). There were some 20 such private schools at this time, with a total enrolment of over 2,000 (Independent, 7 February 1991; five years later there were about 40, Runnymede Trust 1997: 18). They were fee-paying (the Islamia primary school charged parents £1,100 per annum, Independent, 20 August 1993), and clearly offered only limited opportunities for the great majority of parents. Yet there was a substantial demand for them: Islamia claimed a waiting list of over 1,000. (Khanum 1992 describes a Muslim girls school in Bradford.)

The Swann Committee had considered the extension of the voluntary-aided sector to include Muslim schools. The majority report had opposed this, though a minority entered a dissenting note (p. 513). From the early 1980s onwards, there were numerous attempts to take over local authority schools as Muslim educational establishments with voluntary-aided status. In 1983, for example, the Muslim Parents Association in Bradford, arguing that Muslims should have the same rights as other faiths, had sought to acquire and reorganize several schools (primary, middle, and secondary) in the city. Not all Muslims were in support of this proposal which was opposed by the city's Council of Mosques, the Asian Youth Movement, and the Community Relations Council, and eventually rejected by the local authority (Halstead 1988: 44–5). Halstead comments: 'For many people, it appears that the call for the establishment of Muslim voluntary-aided schools marks the limit of what can be tolerated in a multi-cultural society, and it is the only serious request from a minority group in Bradford so far to meet with an outright refusal' (1988: 45).

In the late 1980s and early 1990s several similar proposals were made in West Yorkshire, the London area, and in Glasgow, relying on the older legislation concerning voluntary-aided status or the new so-called 'opting out' provisions of the 1988 Education Reform Act. None has been successful to date. In the early 1990s the Islamia School tried twice to gain funded status, but permission was refused by the Secretary of State. The benefits for the school would have been huge: it would have received reimbursement for all of its recurrent expenditure, including salaries, and for 85 per cent of its capital costs (Independent, 4 April 1993). By the summer of 1994 the latest of these proposals had reached an advanced stage of local agreement (Guardian, 31 May 1994), a bid by a private Muslim girls high school to become 'Britain's first state-funded Muslim school' receiving the support of community leaders and the local council. It only remained for the Education Secretary (then Gillian Shephard) to give approval, but this she refused (Guardian, 17 February 1995).

Such proposals had the backing, on equity grounds, of the Commission for Racial Equality. In a pamphlet which reviewed arguments for and against such developments, the Commission concluded that desire for separate, voluntary-aided schools was not necessarily a sign that groups wish to segregate themselves. They also reflected a wish to 'opt in':

The spokespeople of the Islamia Schools Trust, the Seventh day Adventists and the Orthodox Jewish community in Hackney, for example, all of whom are actively seeking voluntary status for existing schools, share an impressive degree of unity in declaring their desire to be part of the state system, not only to benefit from it but to be integrated into it and to contribute to it. They do not want to be trapped in the private sector (Commission for Racial Equality 1990a: 16).

In any event, the education system must not discriminate against a particular religion, such as Islam. As an editorial in the Independent argued, there was an equity argument for allowing Muslims to have their own schools (20 August 1993). The issue was raised again in 1997 by the Runnymede Trust in its consultation paper on 'Islamophobia', and in January 1998 the new Labour Government finally conceded the point. (According to Roosens 1989: 143, Islamic schools have the right under Belgian law to state subsidies, but by the early 1990s no such schools had been created (Nielsen 1995: 74–5). Islamic religious instruction is, however, widely available in state schools.)

It is not clear that 'opting in' reflects all opinion within the Muslim community. Foremost among supporters of the separate school idea was the so-called 'Muslim Parliament'. In October 1990 Dr Kalim Saddqui (who had Iranian backing) announced the intention of establishing such a body, with some 150 'MMPs' who would promote the interests of Muslims up and down the country (Independent, 29 October 1990; see also Rex 1995: 91, 1996: 233). In January 1991 a letter from Musadiq Dhalla of the Muslim News, referring to a comparison which had been made with the Jewish Board of Deputies and the Synod of the Church of England, pointed out that: 'The Board of Deputies aspires to the successful integration of the Jewish community into British society, while the Muslim parliament is based on a strategy of creating separate institutions.' So far as his own publication was concerned, it was believed that 'The Muslim
community has to organise itself… politically and economically, to fully participate in British society without losing its Islamic identity' (Independent, 8 January 1990). When the parliament eventually met for the first time in early 1992, high on its agenda was education, with calls for the immediate establishment of Muslim voluntary-aided schools, and, eventually, an Islamic university (Independent, 5, 7 January, 19 March 1992). The parliament, whose members one influential Muslim has described as 'hand-picked and [without] very high standing in the Muslim community' (Ahsan 1994: 352), also attacked the Commission for Racial Equality, and called for its abolition, for 'rejecting the centrality of religion and trying to assimilate Muslims into accepting “false national, racial or linguistic identities”'. The Commission, it said, was trying to ensure that Muslims and their religion would be reduced to a series of rituals so that gradually Muslims would become like British Christians' (Independent, 24 August 1992). As earlier in Bradford, many Muslims themselves (including, for example, parents in cities such as Glasgow, Independent, 28 August 1991) continued to oppose proposals for separate schools (Modood et al. 1994: 53ff.), and were hostile to the idea of a Muslim parliament. A correspondent in the Independent (25 June 1991), warning against the setting up of Muslim schools, reminded readers that 'the hardliners are far from representative of the majority of Muslims, and the academic, Akbar Ahmed advised that 'the further you pull away from the mainstream, the more isolated the community becomes' (Independent, 19 June 1991).

Two events influenced the development of the debate about separatism within the Muslim community in the early 1990s: the Gulf War, and the Rushdie affair (see Webber 1994 for an account of the former). Dr Saddiqi, who reportedly said on television that Salman Rushdie 'should be taken to Iran to face trial' (Independent, 30 December 1990) admitted that the Muslim parliament 'would not have come into being without the momentum of the Rushdie affair'. The significance of that episode as a test case of pluralism in Britain needs little underlining. For many Muslims, as Hiro suggests, it became a focus for the many difficulties which they felt they and their families encountered in living according to the tenets of Islam in a society which was Christian on the one hand and secular on the other (Hiro 1991: 182ff.; see further Samad 1992, and Ahsan 1994: 352-4, who also mentions the significance for the emergent solidarity of British Muslims of Muslim-Hindu conflict in India). It also brought out a strong, at times racist, strain of anti-Islamic feeling (as did the Gulf War), which was as apparent among liberal intellectuals as in the popular press (Hiro 1991: 312). As Gilroy remarked, many on the left 'found their common-sense commitment to a principled form of cultural relativism tested to the limit by the sight of book burnings' (1993a: 57). Like separate schools, these things were beyond the pale of what could be tolerated by British society.

Samuel has suggested that recent immigrants seem less interested in integration than previous generations, and that 'British society seems to have lost its assimilative power' (1989b: xxxiv; see also Ballard 1994: 28, and Calleo 1995: 17, and Schmuhl 1995: 143, for the USA). Moves towards separatism, on the part of Muslims and other ethnic minorities, partly reflect a desire to create institutions in which life can be led in accordance with ethnically or religiously specific beliefs and values which emanate from elsewhere. They also respond to a felt need to erect barriers of protection against rejection by the dominant society. In an obituary of Kalim Saddiqi (Guardian, 20 April 1996), Tariq Ali commented that '[Saddiqi] found support among many of the young Muslims in Britain. During the 1960s and 1970s, Asian youths had been attracted to secular projects… but during the 1980s a new generation, alienated from mainstream politics of any kind, began to find a new identity in religion.' Samad's careful account (1992) of the progress of the Rushdie affair in the city of Bradford (see also Rex 1996: 234ff.) shows how the response, especially among young Muslims, must be understood against a longer term background of economic recession and local events such as Honeyford's intervention in the schools' debate. Rejected on racist or quasi-racist grounds, many in the ethnic minorities concluded that 'their humanity must be found in communities external to the mainstream of society into which they were and are being born' (Goulbourne 1991: 122).

6. Against the communal option

Kymlicka believes there is little support for separatism on the part of ethnic minorities: Muslim educational demands he dismisses as 'atypical' (1995a: 177). Certainly, on practical grounds alone, it is very difficult to envisage a 'federal' solution for ethnic minorities in Europe which lack a territory (Habermas 1994: 128). None the less that there is some support for some form of separatism is abundantly clear.

Goulbourne is extremely hostile to this 'communal option', which he describes as 'highly dangerous' (1991: 14): 'the increasing desire of many individuals to be part of an identifiable group, and for each group not only to exist almost entirely within its own confines but also to ensure that individuals conform to the supposed norms of the group' (ibid.: 13). He sees support coming partly from ethnic minorities themselves, for whom separatism appears the only way in which they can preserve a distinct cultural identity in a hostile social environment (p. 73), and partly from the British preference for a mode of social organization derived from a colonial tradition of the Dual Mandate (p. 50). 'In post-imperial Britain', he argues, 'the overwhelming impact of much state action… has been to create a new Britain in which discrete communities, defined in terms of colour/race/culture, have little in common with each other' (p. 25). Encouragement of the communal option, he adds, represents a 'commitment to a future in which the non-white minorities have no place, or if they are to have a place this must be outside of the mainstream of social and political life enjoyed by the majority of the population' (p. 231). The emergent
model would replicate the colonial-type plural society in Furnivall's sense in which

each so-called racial group should live apart, attend separate schools, belong to separate social and sporting clubs, participate in different areas of the economy . . . In short, that the different groups of people in Britain enjoy only a market relationship; people of African, Asian and European backgrounds increasingly meet only where they buy and sell commodities (ibid.; compare Furnivall 1948: 104).

Goulbourne overemphasizes the extent to which this type of model is the product of conscious state policy, which in Britain (and France) has consistently opposed any formal separatism (for example in education), though a belated move towards the acceptance of separate private (voluntary-aided) Muslim schools might prove him right. None the less, he is correct to suggest that the encouragement of multiculturalism engenders conditions under which the communal option becomes a serious social possibility. Although seeking to 'legitimize heterogeneity in British national culture' (Yuval-Davis 1992: 283), multicultural policies have paradoxically 'created a space for separatist and fundamentalist movements which seek to impose uniformity and homogeneity on all their adherents' (ibid.). By creating opportunities for the formation of cultural blocks, multiculturalism has enabled interest groups (or fractions claiming to represent the interests of particular groups) to emerge through a dialectical process (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1993: 38, Sahgal and Yuval-Davis 1992: 14).

The idea of a positive, identity-affirming separatism is, of course, advocated by others besides ethnic minorities. For example, Peter Tatchell, a well-known, and controversial, gay rights activist in Britain in the 1980s and 1990s, although acknowledging the progress made in the status of gay people in the twenty-five years following the Stonewall riots, has argued that much of this progress stemmed from the actions of gays themselves. This led him to the conclusion that the way forward for gays was 'self-help and community empowerment'. With an emphasis on self-reliance, he believes, we can create our own homo-affirming community and safe queer space where we do not have to justify ourselves or plead with heterosexuals for acceptance. We can give each other the support that straight society denies us. Developing the lesbian and gay community as a focus of counter-culture and counter-power helps undermine the grip that homophobia has on our lives. A well organised, powerful queer community is more difficult for straights to ignore. From a position of strength, we can better challenge hetero-supremacism (Observer, 19 June 1994).

Substituting 'black' or 'Muslim' for 'queer', 'gay', etc., 'white' for 'heterosexual' or 'straight', 'racism' for 'homophobia' in that extract reveals a high degree of similarity between arguments proposed on the part of what are otherwise very different minorities, and perhaps displays the extent that the discourse of one draws on the rhetoric of the other.

Separatism of this kind may well take the form, not of the social pluralism of colonial societies, which Goulbourne fears, but of American-style political pluralism, with which he is also uncomfortable (1991: 232). In this, socially, culturally, economically, and politically distinct minorities are regarded as legitimate interest groups who compete to advance their cause (Hobsbawm 1992: 133). This is the style of politics advocated in the USA by Iris Marion Young, who believes disadvantaged minorities should be 'provided with public funding to enable them to formulate their own policy initiatives [with] policy-makers . . . obliged to take these views into account' (Phillips 1993: 116). Young also envisages what is sometimes called a 'rainbow' coalition linking minorities of all kinds including blacks, Native Americans, Hispanics, gay men, lesbians, the working class, the elderly, the poor, the mentally and physically disabled, and women (Phillips 1993: 93, citing Young 1989: 261; see also Kymlicka 1995a: 145). This is an unlikely alliance in the British context, where feminists and Muslim separatists have been at odds over education and the Rushdie affair.

The debate about whether and on what terms societies such as France and Britain should accommodate Islam has provided a major test for ideas of pluralism of both an integrationist and separatist kind. In numerous ways, the Islamic presence now makes itself felt in the daily life of many of the countries of Western Europe. The Rushdie affair or the 'Headscarves' may catch the headlines, but for some two decades now it has been in myriad events of a less dramatic though no less complex kind that the social and cultural issues raised by that presence have emerged. What does a substantial, growing immigrant Islamic population mean for European countries? What does living in Europe mean for Muslims or those of Muslim origin? The contributors to Gerholm and Lithman’s collection (1988) provided a timely opportunity for a comparative assessment of these questions, offering material from a wide range of countries which, inter alia, showed the diversity of the Islamic population of Europe. A wide range of national and regional groupings of migrants, and hence varieties of Islam, have come to the receiving countries, and emerge, in the migrant situation. This ethnic diversity, reflected in organizational diversity, has meant that nowhere does a single group emerge as representative of ‘the’ Muslim community. In fact, the latter does not exist and this frequently poses problems for the institutions of the receiving society. The activities of sending society governments, who attempt in various degrees to form their Muslims into a community and represent it, add a further complication.

Though there is, therefore, a great diversity of environments within which possible expressions of Islam, collective and individual, can occur, common to many groups and individuals is the desire to ‘make a place’ for the religion (Joly 1988). Compared with France, where the matter of headscarves proved a major stumbling block, Britain has generally made much greater room for Islam than have many other countries. None the less, the Rushdie affair revealed major tensions and differences, on all sides, as well as major misunderstandings as to the nature of other parties’ concerns (compare, for example, Modood 1992a and
Yuval-Davis 1992 for various shades of Muslim and non-Muslim opinion). There is moreover widespread throughout Europe what amounts to a 'great fear' of Islam, or rather of an imagined Islam of a fundamentalist kind (a 'misrecognized' Islam, it might be called, see Gilsenan 1982). This has been accompanied by what has been described as a 'racialization' of Islam which is represented not as a body of religious doctrine, open to all who aspire to membership of the world community of the religion (Masuq Ibn Ally 1990: 22), but as the property of non-Western groups (specifically of Asian origin in Britain), and thus an ethnic, or rather racial, trait (Sahgal and Yuval-Davis 1992: 15. Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1993: 53, and Kushner 1996: 135 for an interesting example). 'Muslim' has thus become a demonized ethnic category.

The Rushdie affair illustrated this, bringing out a strain of anti-Asian, even racist, sentiment even among liberal intellectuals (Gilroy 1993a, Hiro 1991, Weldon 1989). This meant that many Asian and black intellectuals had to walk a fine line: supporting Rushdie's right to publish but condemning the 'anti-Muslim and anti-third world sentiments' (Bhabha 1989: 35) to which the affair gave expression. In their 'nervous shuffle' (Kanneh 1995: 71) they also felt obliged to distance themselves from what was conventionally described as Muslim 'fundamentalism' (Yuval-Davis 1992). Thus Bhabha (1989: 35): 'Those of us who have experienced the authoritarian and patriarchal conditions of orthodox communities, of any colour or creed, and have witnessed their attempts to stifle dissent and discussion, can never endorse demands for censorship and unquestioned conformity.' The point recalls debates among French Jews for whom the privilege of belonging to a self-governing community was double-edged, entailing subjection to the rabbinate and a particular form of conservative Judaism.

Modood has denied that in the British context fundamentalism in the strict sense had much to do with the response of the Asian community to the Rushdie affair (see also Parekh 1995: 307-8, for a summary of Muslim complaints against Rushdie, and Schnapper 1994, who rightly emphasizes the diversity of Islam in Europe). For British Muslims, many of whom criticized the stand taken by London-based intellectuals, 'the reduction of their religion to a selfish sexual appetite [in the Satanic Verses] was no more a contribution to literary discourse than pissing upon the Bible is a theological argument' (Modood 1992a: 269). None the less, fear of an imagined fundamentalism has been an important influence on thinking about Islam and about Asian minorities in Britain, for example in debates over separate schools (Commission for Racial Equality 1990c: 16 ff.). Halstead (1988), locating his discussion of multicultural education in wider debates about pluralism, concluded that for there to be any society at all there has to be common ground in 'a basic social morality', 'commitment to the pluralist ideal', and 'the acceptance of a common system of law and government' (p. 217). This common ground, these shared values, are threatened by 'groups whose fundamental commitments include the acceptance of a divine order of authority that affects every area of their lives and prevents them from celebrating a diversity which includes groups totally antipathetic to their own beliefs and values' (p. 219). He suggests that although Muslims share certain values of British society, they are none the less the representative of groups which are 'reluctant to accept a liberal framework of values as a basis for educational decision-making' (pp. 227-8).

Thus, in the 1980s and 1990s local and global forces conspired to construct 'Muslim' as an ethnicized and racialized social category in Britain and other countries of Europe, and Muslims themselves increasingly made common cause across divisions of origin, language, and sect (P. Lewis 1994, Samad 1992, A. Shaw 1994). And 'however much [young British Bengalis] may seek to identify themselves as British', say Gardner and Shukur, 'they regularly find that others assume them to be first and foremost Muslim' (1994: 162).
1. From the patrimonial to the post-industrial

Let me recall the argument of this book. I have been concerned with plural societies, and began by asking how the political process, working through the authoritative institutions of society (the state), shapes and reproduces difference. The state has in turn been seen as embedded in a wider system of economy, culture, and technology, and so the emphasis has been on exploring the politicization of difference in the context of particular configurations of state and society. Two such configurations have received special attention: the patrimonial state, and the modern, industrial, nation-state. In these two, the terms which best describe the place accorded to difference of the kind which is generally called ‘ethnic’ are, respectively, incorporation and assimilation. In the patrimonial state, ethnic and cultural difference did not, normally, pose any great difficulty so long as the groups which constituted the polity (and early states were often highly mixed linguistically and culturally) paid their dues, literally and metaphorically. The Ottomans are particularly instructive in this regard. They cared less about how their empire was run so long as each of their dominions provided them with a steady supply of revenue’ (Ingrao 1996: section 3). As Mansell says: ‘The Ottoman government was more interested in raising revenue than saving souls’ (1995: 48).

Patrimonial rulers rarely attempted to spread uniformity of culture unless, like some, but by no means all, Islamic (and Christian) polities, they were committed (as the Ottomans were not) to proselytizing on behalf of their religion. Modern nation-states, on the other hand, have been grounded in the fostering of common identities and homogeneous cultures. Whether their nation-building ideologies were of Gemeinschaft or Gesellschaft type, their rulers eschewed difference, and promoted the homogenization which the economic, social, and political configuration demanded. And in pursuing such goals they invaded and captured the institutions of civil society. Colonialism was in this respect ambivalent: ‘patrimonial’ in so far as it emphasized the extraction of resources, ‘modern’ in so far as the colonial powers believed they had a mission to uplift and transform their colonial subjects.

Nation-building in Europe and elsewhere often incorporated linguistically, culturally, and economically disparate regions within a single polity. Many were ‘mosaic’ states (Strayer 1963), consisting of diverse localities pulled together, often unwillingly, under the hegemony of some powerful ‘centre’. Elsewhere (Grillo 1980) I have called them ‘disjunctive’ societies because the incorporative process sustained, but also created, various kinds of differentiation and difference between and within the constituent elements, and therefore they contain the seeds of their own dissolution. Much has been written about the integration or rather disintegration (actual or potential) of such societies: for many, ‘the crisis of the nation-state’ refers precisely to this. As I pointed out in Chapter 1, however, there are many crises, and this study has not really been concerned with that of the incomplete incorporation of regional, ethnic, or linguistic ‘minorities’. The focus, especially in the latter half of the book, has been rather on integration of another kind.

Various nation-states apparently committed to a Gesellschaft, or associational, ideology of the nation-state, and to assimilative goals, have at times entered periods of social and cultural crisis around those objectives: ‘crises of assimilation’. Chapters 6 to 9 explored these as they affected Britain, France, and the USA in the last decades of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In that last period there has been a new emphasis on difference, in terms of the demands made on society by many of its members, and what has been described as an upsurge in ethnic and cultural pluralism. That pluralism, however, takes different forms, and manifests itself in somewhat different strategic demands: multiculturalism and institutional pluralism, discussed in Chapter 9, and hybridity, examined below. I noted in Chapter 7 that in contemplating the ‘revival’ of ethnicity in the late twentieth-century USA, the historian John Higham made a valuable proposal in attempting to relate that phenomenon to long-term social and economic change. The present chapter develops that suggestion by seeking to locate the demand for pluralism, and the ‘upsurge’ or ‘persistence’ of ethnicity, in contemporary forms of postmodern, post-industrial state, economy, and society. It then discusses the much debated notion of ‘hybridity’ before returning to consider whether, despite all that has been said, despite all the criticisms, there is realistically any alternative to multiculturalism as a means of dealing with difference.

2. Pluralism and postmodernity

‘Why? Why pluralism now?’ Hassan’s question (1987: 167), posed from within postmodern literary theory, referred not to pluralism of a social, political, or
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become 'data' (that is fieldwork), and the way that 'data' are placed in the public
modern condition, at least in the 'West', or the 'North'. 'North', of course, does
philosophical project. One may be highly sceptical about the latter while accepting
condition? Gilroy's sense that the syncretism or hybridity which he explores in relation to black identity must be understood with reference to the
contemporary economic and political (as well as intellectual) contexts in which
they occur is a strong indication that there are issues to be addressed. But what
constitutes the 'postmodern' and (closely related term) the 'post-industrial'
condition?

A distinction should be drawn between postmodernity as a descriptive and
analytical category and postmodernism as an intellectual enterprise or philoso-
phical project. One may be highly sceptical about the latter while accepting
that 'post-industrial', and more recently 'postmodern', are concepts of considerable
value in assisting us to grasp and explain significant features of the contempo-
rary condition, at least in the 'West', or the 'North'. 'North', of course, does
not refer to a location on the globe. It is not a geographical expression so much
as a social, economic, and political one, referring to the rich and powerful
'advanced' industrial countries found mostly (but by no means exclusively) in
the north-western 'quadrisphere' of the planet.

My own scepticism about the intellectual enterprise derives from the dam-
age that postmodernism as philosophical project has done to my own disci-
pline. There have been several controversies of a deep and at times bitter
kind in social anthropology, for example over structuralism and interactionism
in the 1960s, Marxism and feminism in the 1970s, and semantic and applied
anthropology in the 1980s. Though no holds were barred, these controversies did not affect the core of the subject: anthropology is a broad church able to
accommodate a wide variety of adherents. But disputes associated with the self-
styled 'postmodernist' intervention have posed a real danger of a sort of China
Syndrome, a meltdown of the core.

Postmodernism in anthropology has strong affinities with postmodernism at
large and in other disciplines: irony and self-reference, an emphasis on meta-
narratives, a stress on language games, a shared sense of what some call a crisis of
representation in the human sciences' (Marcus and Fischer 1986: 8).

Postmodernist anthropology has taken seriously the notion that anthropolo-
gists 'construct' their data, and therefore what is central is the process of
construction. This has led to an emphasis on the 'how' of gathering what
become 'data' (that is fieldwork), and the way that 'data' are placed in the public
domain (that is through ethnography). This in turn has led to a stress on the
anthropologist as 'author', on his or her 'authority', and on the relationship
between anthropologist and 'subject'. The flavour of this intervention is aptly
summarized in the following:

A post-modern ethnography is a co-operatively evolved text consisting of fragments of
discourse intended to invoke in the minds of both reader and writer an emergent
fantasy of a possible world of commonsense reality, and thus to provoke an aesthetic
integration that will have a therapeutic effect (Tyler 1986: 125).

Geertz, in many respects a prominent fellow-traveller of postmodernism, none the less recognizes the difficulties with this approach:

If anthropologists were to stop reporting how things are done in Africa and Polynesia,
if they were instead to spend their time trying to find double plots in Alfred Kroeber or
unreliable narrators in Max Gluckman, and if they were seriously to argue that Edward
Wesernarck's stories about Morocco and those of Paul Bowles relate to their subject
matter in the same way, and with the same means and the same purposes, matters
would indeed be in a parlous state (1988: 1-3).

Unfortunately, what Geertz suggested as unthinkable has happened, and parts
of anthropology are in consequence indeed in a parlous state. The ethnogra-
pher has become more important than the 'ethnographed', indeed post-
modernists would argue that it is impossible to write about them, and thus
everything is reduced to reflexivity. On the whole, I agree with Firth, who has
described himself as a 'a modified empiricist': 'The world may be an illusion—
I know of no means of proving it is not. But it is expedient to behave as if there
be a substantial reality that can be encountered, with chartable effect: and some
possibility of prediction' (1989: 50).

There is, however, a side to this which is potentially more important and
interesting. There is an ambiguity in postmodernist writing in the social sci-
ences: are we dealing with an intellectual stance (on language and so forth)
or type of culture and society whose features are captured by the phrase
'postmodern'? Or both? When Tyler says 'A post-modern ethnography is frag-
mentary because it cannot be otherwise' (1986: 131), does he speak philosophi-
cally, or is he referring to that 'thing of shreds and patches' (Hannerz 1992: 34),
does he speak philosophically, or is he referring to that 'thing of shreds and patches' (Hannerz 1992: 34),
the postmodern culture which ethnography attempts to capture? 'The breaking
up of the grand narratives', says Lyotard, referring to what in his view is one of
the principal features of the postmodern condition, 'leads to what some authors
analyze in terms of the dissolution of the social bond and the disintegration of
social aggregates into a mass of individual atoms thrown into the absurdity of
Brownian motion' (Lyotard 1986: 15). This much cited passage represents what
might be called a 'Heraclitan' view of society ('Everything is in a state of flux
and nothing remains the same'). How far can such views of the contemporary
social condition be justified, and in what way can they be related to discussions
difference?
3. The postmodern and the post-industrial

Concepts of the postmodern and post-industrial intersect each other in numerous ways. As Rose (1991: 21) points out, definitions of the two have been elaborated alongside and in relation to each other. Best known, and most persuasive, of the attempts to connect the two has been that of Lyotard, who, citing Bell and Touraine, identified the postmodern as the cultural aspect of the post-industrial. Elaborating this, Jameson has glossed postmodernity as involving the production of postmodern people capable of functioning in a very peculiar socio-economic world indeed, one whose structure and objective features and requirements—if we had a proper account of them—would constitute the situation to which ‘postmodernism’ is a response (1991: xv).

So what, then, are the features of the ‘very peculiar world’ to which postmodernism is a response and for which it is a preparation?

The term post-industrial has been in circulation for most of this century. Rose (1991: xi) dates it to c.1914, though at that time it was used by American syndicalist critics of the ‘modern’ industrial system to refer to certain social, economic, and political alternatives to it. The ideas behind this original usage were in essence anti-rather than post-Fordist, and it might be said that Kallen’s proposals on cultural pluralism in the 1920s fell within this camp. In the 1960s and 1970s, however, the term reappeared in a different guise, used as a convenient way of summarizing the apparent changes (mainly of a socio-economic kind) in the ‘advanced’ industrial economies of North America and Western Europe in the affluent years which followed World War II. It was this notion of ‘post’ or ‘advanced’ industrial society which informed, inter alia, my own account of immigration in Lyon, France, in the 1970s (Grillo 1985). ‘Industrial’, ‘post-industrial’, ‘modern’, ‘postmodern’ (and ‘early’ or ‘patrimonial’) are ideotype constructs through which social scientists carve up semantically what is in reality a continuum. Contrasts between modern and postmodern, or industrial and post-industrial inevitably hide continuities and emphasize discontinuities between one era or form of polity and another, as Gilroy, for example, is well aware (1993b: 2, 42). None the less, it is important to try to grasp some sense of the difference between ‘then’ and ‘now’, and of the significance of changes that have occurred in the course of the twentieth century.

By the late 1970s writers such as Dahrendorf (1959), Bell (1973), and Touraine (1974), had appeared to define a post-industrial form of society of which the following were the principal features. There was, first and foremost, the central and growing importance of scientific knowledge in the organization of both production and consumption. This involved the ever wider application of ‘advanced’ technologies based on electronics, nuclear physics, chemistry, microbiology, and latterly genetics. Linked to that was the demand for highly skilled manpower, at many different levels of skill, with a consequent growth of a white-collar, white-coated labour force (and an education system to match). Industrial production was becoming more and more specialized by unit (within the production process), and by region. This created greater geographical interdependence, and interdependence between industries, but also led to greater inter-regional and inter-industrial disparities. Specialization and concentration meant that the economic and occupational profiles of different regions diverged. At the extreme, some flourished, others became wastelands. The organization of production and consumption was continually increasing in scale, with a corresponding centralization of key decisions at higher and higher levels, including, supranational levels. Organizationally, ‘rational’, bureaucratic modes of operation prevailed. The ‘managerial revolution’, however, meant that the simple idea of the ownership of the means of production became a problematic, and increasingly irrelevant means of differentiating between those who had power and privilege and those who did not.

In the 1960s and 1970s there was, generally speaking, a high wage economy, at least in the North/West, though there were great disparities, some of which represented an overturning of traditional differentials: nineteenth-century labour aristocracies found themselves displaced from their once pre-eminent position. At the same time, and despite the growth of the white-collar, white-coated labour force, the work of the clerk and the secretary (what the French call employés) became increasingly similar to that of the factory worker in a Fordist-style production system. The ‘deskilling’ of many tasks due to technological change often meant that the gap between traditionally skilled and unskilled occupations declined. The lowest paid jobs in the older, declining industries, or the deskilled sectors of the industries, were given over to the least-favoured elements of the population, immigrants and women. These changes were accompanied by a high degree of physical, and a significant degree of social, mobility with the break-up (and breakdown) of traditional industrial and urban communities (old industries, inner cities), and what was seen as increasing individuation and isolation.

In all the economies of the ‘quadrisphere’, the tertiary (service) sector became increasingly important. This was related to the growing significance of consumption. But production and consumption were in turn closely linked, with the latter controlled, tailored, and consciously oriented through advertising. There was homogenization, but also, in different ways and at different levels, heterogenization of patterns of consumption. Products became standardized, but a much wider range of goods became more readily available, and there was greater variety in patterns of consumption by individual consumers. At the same time, the language of ‘consumerism’ spread to services which had previously been thought of in non-commercial terms, and there was a shift in the focuses of conflict both within the production system and outside of it. Summarizing some of these changes, the French sociologist Alain Touraine called the emerging formation a ‘programmed society’:
A new society is now being formed. These new societies can be labelled post-industrial to stress how different they are from the industrial societies which preceded them, although—in both capitalist and socialist nations—they retain some characteristics of these earlier societies. They may also be called technocratic because of the power that dominates them. Or one can call them programmed societies to define them according to the nature of their production methods and economic organisation (Touraine 1974: 3).

An important feature of the post-industrial society in this sense, which demonstrated a significant continuity with its predecessor albeit in an accentuated form, was, or appeared to be, the power of the state to define and regulate the economic and social order. Young, writing in 1976, characterized the immediately preceding decade as one in which there was a ‘centrality of the state system as authoritative arena’ (1976: 73). There had been ‘progressive expansion in generalized expectations as the role of the state; continuing accretion of the power capabilities of the state . . . and the force of the international system in enforcing the maintenance of the existing state system’. The state was the prime mover in moulding and developing the economy, and in mobilizing resources, human and physical, and in creating the framework of boundaries and infrastructure (the bounded infrastructure) within which economy and society operated. There was a ‘growing capacity of the state’, and

The state system, in roughly its present form, is hardening into an iron grid fixing the most basic parameters of politics. The yearly increments of power of their coercive instruments, improving communications networks, ever more numerous public bureaucracies, new technologies of control—all these strongly flowing currents merge into a powerful tide of central power (Young 1976: 518).

At the risk of allowing a proliferation of terminology to add further confusion (and pace Giddens 1991: 27ff., 243), it seems in retrospect preferable to use the term ‘high’ modernity for the social, political, and economic formations which emerged in the transatlantic democracies after World War II (Wagener 1992: 475). This was modernity at its apogee. The society described by Young, Touraine, and others, which Bell called post-industrial, was, suggests Wagener, the product of a particular configuration of state and politics: a ‘Keynsian’, interventionist, welfare-oriented state, and ‘competitive party democracy’ (ibid.). Wagener is, in this regard, in broad agreement with Rosanvallon, who characterized the post-war world as one in which

democratic industrial societies . . . developed either implicitly or explicitly, within the framework of the Keynsian compromise which regulated relations between the economic and social spheres in the manner of a positive sum-game. The foundations of this model were the growth of the welfare state and collective bargaining. The welfare state governed relations between the state and the working class and reflected the latter’s economic and political power (1988: 213).

This, of course, was within the ‘quadrisphere’.

In the period from the 1970s to the 1990s, however, in what Rosanvallon calls (p. 213) the ‘post-social-democratic’ era, further changes undermined this kind of formation, involving inter alia a shift from a ‘Keynsian’ to a neo-liberal, ‘Washington’, consensus. Keane pulls some of the threads together by drawing attention to the way in which, after the 1970s, the Western economies (and one might add, after the 1980s, those of the East) were forced into major restructuring in response to the apparent failure of previously successful social and economic strategies, which now seemed unable to cope with ‘deindustrialization’ and widespread unemployment. There was also a major shift in the organization of production: ‘Fordism’ gave way to ‘Post-Fordism’ (Murray 1990). In sum,

disintegration of the old technological paradigm based upon continuous-flow industries and the assembly-line system and the introduction of a great number and variety of process innovations . . . based on new microelectronics technologies . . . [has] forced trade unions into defensive (and often self-regarding) strategies . . . thrown into question the official post-war commitment to greater equality of opportunity . . . and severely undermined the capacity of the Keynsian welfare state to fulfill effectively its commitment to high levels of employment (Keane 1988b: 8).

The cause, says Keane, was to be found in changes in the international monetary system, and in the emergence of a ‘new international division of labour’, all with important implications for the nation-state as a form of social and political organization. It was the sense of rapid and dramatic change which informed the political manifesto aptly entitled ‘New Times’:

The ‘New Times’ argument is that the world has changed, not just incrementally but qualitatively, that Britain and other advanced capitalist societies are increasingly characterised by diversity, differentiation and fragmentation, rather than homogeneity, standardization and the economies and organizations of scale which characterised modern mass society (Hall and Jacques 1990: 11).

Crawford Young, a perceptive and prescient writer (see, for instance, his remarks about ethnicity and nationalism in the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, and about South Africa, 1976: 10–11, 105), failed to foresee two ways in which the social, economic, political, and cultural systems of ‘high’ modernity would be transformed. Although recognizing the growing importance of multinational corporations, he believed that economic organization and decision-making would continue to be bounded by the nation-state: ‘No doubt such transnational bodies as multinational corporations are of significant scale and import—but the fundamental cellular composition of the international system remains tied to the nation-state’ (Young 1976: 81). Yet many observers point to the 1980s and 1990s as decades in which there was a vast increase in the globalization of economic (as well as social and cultural) relations. For Jameson,
it is this transnational character of business which is the predominant feature of what he calls 'late capitalism' (1991: xx). The globalization or transnationalization of production, distribution, and exchange (banking, stock markets, debt, the 'new international division of labour', the relocation of production to Third World countries, mass international transportation systems, new communication technologies, the media, etc.), accompanied by new forms of international organization, had important implications for the nation-state as site of social, economic, and political relations.

Melucci argues that the state has been 'replaced from above by a tightly interdependent system of transnational relationships and subdivided from below into a multiplicity of partial governments' (1988: 257). For these and other reasons it no longer seems to be the 'iron grid' which Young envisaged. Rather than an inexorable increase in strength, what seems to be widespread is the weakness of the state, its incapacity to resolve the problems it is obliged to address. This view is not universally shared. Hobsbawm, for one, has continued to believe that despite international migration, industrial zones, offshore financial centres, etc., the powers of the state remain undiminished:

Quite apart from the continued importance of state direction, planning and management even in countries dedicated in theory to neo-liberalism, the sheer weight of what public revenue and expenditure represent in the economies of states, but above all their growing role as agents of substantial redistributions of the social income by means of fiscal and welfare mechanisms, have probably made the national state a more central factor in the lives of the world's inhabitants than before (1992: 182).

Robin Cohen also points out that although withdrawing from the economy, the state retains a strong political presence, controlling migration and 'galvanizing', although with diminishing capacity, a single identity around a national leadership, common citizenship and social exclusion of outsiders' (1997: 156). Hannerz (1996) entitles one chapter: 'The withering away of the nation?', with a question mark, and argues that it is not so much withering away as changing with the growth of 'transnational imagined communities' (1996: 90). None the less, the evidence for what Waters (1995: 98-100) has called 'discretization' is widespread. It is readily apparent in much of Africa, for example, or Latin America, and across great swathes of South and Central Asia and Eastern Europe (Ronald Cohen 1993: 232, 248-51), but it is also in the 'advanced' industrial countries, where sometimes for ideological reasons there was, through the 1980s, a 'selective withdrawal of state power from civil society' (Keane 1988: 9). Global economic neo-liberalism in particular represented a 'central challenge' to the Keynesian 'promise . . . to take full responsibility for the economic welfare of a given population through the deft exercise of the power of its state' (Dunn 1995: 12).

There were, of course, important tendencies of long duration, which run through both the era of 'high' modernity, and that which followed. One of these concerns changes in the form of the occupational base, and relates to what many observers have seen as a progressive disintegration of the classic forms of social and political organization associated with modernity. In many respects it is the displacement of 'class' from centre stage which has appeared to be the most important shift in the transition from modern to post-industrial and perhaps postmodern society (see inter alia Samuel 1989b: xxxii). Touraine and his colleagues link this displacement of class with the emergence of 'new' social movements based on gender or sexuality, on regional or ethnic identity, or on some special interest or a non-class-based ideology such as environmentalism. Jameson, though sceptical of the view that these new movements come out of the 'void left by the disappearance of social classes', none the less understands why this should appear to be so in an era of 'global reconstruction of production and . . . radically new technologies' (1991: 319).

4. Postmodern sociality and the politics of difference

Maffesoli, in a paper which investigates, somewhat misleadingly, 'neo-tribalism', contrasts 'modern' and 'postmodern times'. In the former there were 'individuals' whose place in the social and economic order was defined by their 'function' within it. In the contemporary world there has occurred a 'process of deindividuation'. Individuals are replaced by 'persons' ('polysomatic, polyphonic', Maffesoli 1988: 141), and collective solidarities based on function have given way to 'emotional communities' (p. 146). This 'neo-tribalism', says Maffesoli, 'refuses to be identified with specific political endeavours, does not conform to any single definite structure, and has as its sole raison d'être the preoccupation with the collectively lived present' (p. 146). He has in mind the 'spectacle [of] contemporary megalopolises' where there is a multiplicity of eclectic lifestyles and representations of self (for example, punks), which change from year to year, and which generate mutual sympathies of an extremely fluid and fluctuating character. Adherents are continually 'zipping from one group to another' (p. 147), and, echoing Lyotard, it is this which creates the 'impression of an atomization' (p. 148).

There is a similarity between the thinking of Maffesoli and that of the French sociologist Baudrillard, whom Lyotard himself cites in this connection. Maffesoli's and Baudrillard's vision of a multiplicity of transient collectivities, of a polyphony of voices in cities transformed by post-industrialism, is widely echoed elsewhere. Samuel, for example, refers to 'the building of a whole way of life out of alternative lifestyles or even popular music', and notes the way in which 'style aristocracies hold the passes between capitalism and consumerism, segmentation of the market encourages the growth of minority tastes' (Samuel 1989b: xxxii). How useful is such a vision in helping identify a relationship between ethnic and cultural pluralism and the current condition? It would certainly be misleading to suppose that ethnic and cultural difference involves simply a pluralism of style, that it is a matter of the 'media and the market'
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Jameson 1991: 220). Some forms of ethnicity do undoubtedly become entangled with what Jameson calls the 'obscene consumerist pluralism of late capitalism' (1991: 322), but most do not. Nor is it simply a matter of choice: as Sollors notes, 'if voluntary or multiple-choice ethnicity is possible, then what is the substance of ethnicity in America?' (1986: 33). It is equally unhelpful to reduce ethnicity to the individual search for place within a complex society. Fischer, writing of the tentative nature of ethnic identity in the contemporary USA, as that emerges in some autobiographies, uses the phrase 'finding a voice' (Fischer 1986: 196), a notion which also appears in work on literature produced by les beurs (Hargreaves 1991, 1995), second-generation North African immigrants in France. 'Being Chinese-American', says Fischer, 'exists only as an exploratory project' (1986: 210).

This approach, redolent of the disintegration of social aggregates into a mass of individual atoms' has its limits. Following Gans (1956a, 1956b, 1979) there has been considerable discussion in American sociology of the notion of 'symbolic ethnicity'. The suggestion is that many Americans have a 'taste... for ethnicity in a mild form, without strong commitments to ethnicity as a social bond' (Alba 1990: 251). There is adherence to cultural markers of identification (cuisine, saints' days, life cycle rituals) which are 'somewhat intermittently and consciously maintained' (Waters 1990: 116). The result is a 'fragile and thin layer' (Alba 1990: 121) of ethnically specific cultural expressions of identity 'alloyed to ethnic background with someone else' was the second most frequently cited ethnic and cultural pluralism. In Alba's survey (1990: 79) 'Discussing your ethnic experience', after eating ethnic cuisine.

...as important as they like' (1990: 295). This is manifestly not true of other Americans: 'the ways in which ethnicity is flexible and symbolic and voluntary for white middle-class Americans are the ways in which it is not so for non-white and Hispanic Americans' (Waters 1990: 156). Consider, for example, the 'exploratory project' of a Korean-American in Los Angeles in the early 1990s: find a corner grocery shop, stay open all hours, and get a .38 Police Special for protection.

There are other ways of understanding ethnic and cultural pluralism under conditions of post-high-modernity (see further below), but one question should not be evaded: why ethnicity? As Breines suggests, it is necessary to ask 'why our age finds it so intensely important to have any sort of ethnic identity in the first place' (Breines 1992: 539). Compared with the past, when similarity formed...
condition of 'deregulation' which Durkheim observed in certain periods in nineteenth-century France. These periods of deregulation and disembedding may in turn be correlated, at least in the 'quadrisphere', though, increasingly during the late twentieth century, across the globe as a whole, with periods of severe economic depression, themselves perhaps identifiable as low points in a long-term Kondratieff cycle. (Interestingly, Stuart Hall notes one criticism of the 'New Times' argument: that what was portrayed were the conditions on the upward slope of a 'Kondratieff' curve, 1990: 122.)

This wider context inevitably takes us some way beyond our immediate concerns, and we must return to the principal theme, and consider how ethnic and cultural pluralism might appear in this scenario. Are 'ethnic' to be seen, perhaps like coal miners, as left behind, relics of modernity, or is ethnicity, if not a product of postmodernity, a response to it?

5. Why pluralism? Why now?

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the solution to the problems of an industrializing, urbanizing society involved a consolidation of the assimilative state. In France, for example, nationalization pressed ahead from the time of the Third Republic, drawing citizens ever more closely into state structures, guaranteeing the advantages of citizenship, extending means of communication, and so on, reaching its apogee in the years after World War II (Noiriel 1992: 179). Kallen's cultural pluralism was a response precisely to that kind of solution (1924: 9 ff., 84). It represented a Romantic reaction to the fulfilment of the Enlightenment dream, comparable to the poet Mistral's seeking in Provencal regionalism a bulwark against late nineteenth-century industrialization (Grillo 1989). In what ways is pluralism now a product of, or a reaction to, the international development of capitalism, easy and rapid means of international transport and communication, the emergence of supranational institutions, and other social and economic changes characteristic of the contemporary condition? That there is such an effect is widely accepted. Hall, for example, writes of globalization 'powerfully dislocating national cultural identities' (1992b: 299), generating a 'fragmentation of cultural codes... multiplicity of styles, emphasis on the ephemeral, the fleeting, the impermanent, and on difference and cultural pluralism' (ibid.: 302). Moreover, through flexible specialization and niche marketing globalization, 'actually exploits local differentiation' (p. 304).

Thus: As a tentative conclusion it would appear that globalization does have the effect of contesting and dislocating the centred and 'closed' identities of a national culture. It does have a pluralizing impact on identities, producing a variety of possibilities and new positions of identification, and making identities more positional, more political, more plural and diverse (Hall 1992b: 309).

Thus, one way of approaching the question is a macroscopic one, stressing the decline of the nation-state as the principle focus of economic, political, and social activity. The nation-state, squeezed from above and from outside no longer shapes things as it once did and is in retreat.

At the same time, as Bell suggested long ago, the new forces and institutions operating at a multinational, supranational, global level have as yet 'no real "civil theology" to bind them' (1975: 144). They do not, and cannot, provide a moral force, organize a community, command personal loyalty, provide a basis for identification. The relevance of this to ethnic and cultural pluralism lies in Bell's view that where this civil theology is absent, then 'one finds the centrifugal forces of separatism gaining strength'. The link between the breakdown of the nation-state and enhanced space for ethnic and cultural pluralism is also made explicit by Ronald Cohen: 'increased localism and the active dismantling of centralized governmental control along with a worldwide movement for increased democratization, means that pluralism is on the rise' (1993: 251). Mass communications, the mobility of capital, international migration, adds Goulbourne, have 'helped to undermine the continuing relevance of the nation-state duo' (1991: 219). Ironically, mass communications and mobility of labour were often the very things which the nation-state made possible, and vice versa.

Hannerz, seeking a way of signalling the interdependence of social, cultural, economic, and political relations which characterize contemporary experience, has promoted the phrase 'global ecumene' (1992, 1996), meaning roughly the totality of the known world, which nowadays is coterminous with the planet. A consequence of existing in such a world is that essentialist visions of culture and society become 'unviable' (Webner 1997a: 6). There is, however, what seems to be a paradox here: 'It is a feature of the contemporary world that groups and individuals apparently become more similar and more different at the same time... although people in a certain sense become more similar because of modernization, they simultaneously become more distinctive' (Eriksen 1993: 147). Globalization brings with it 'powerful centrifugal waves of cultural homogenisation' (Eriksen 1993: 149; compare Hall 1992b: 219; Waters 1995: 136), yet globalization has also been accompanied by massive movement of population, voluntary and involuntary, in what Castles and Miller (1993) have called The Age of Migration. 'All societies', says Taylor, 'are becoming increasingly multicultural, while at the same time becoming more porous... more open to international migration; more of their members live the life of diaspora, whose center is elsewhere' (1994: 63). New migrations, new diasporas, new 'localisms' are constantly emerging (Eriksen 1993: 150), and new choices have to be made: to be Asian or West Indian or English or British or Asian and West Indian and English and British, and perhaps 'European' as well (Goulbourne 1991: 5). At the same time, 'unable to control the social relations in which they find themselves, people have shrunk the world to the size of their communities and begun to act politically on that basis' (Gilroy 1987: 245). So
the nation-state retreats, ethnic and cultural pluralism advance; and the more they advance, the less the nation-state becomes capable of acting.

6. Cosmopolitans, transnationals, and hybrids

To say 'pluralism advances' of course begs the question: pluralism of what kind? As Hall comments: 'The trend towards "global homogenization" ... is matched by a powerful revival of "ethnicity", sometimes of the more hybrid or symbolic varieties, but also frequently of the exclusive or "essentialist" varieties' (1992b: 313). There are manifestly different ways of living 'pluralistically', and some of these become apparent if, in keeping with the notion of globalization and all it entails, we focus on the migrant. Migration and diaspora are key terms in current debates in social and cultural studies with migrants celebrated as archetypal hero(ines)/victims. Obliged to live within and between cultures, they must, metaphorically and usually practically, be multilingual and multicultural. Yet their multiculturalism (polyphonic, syncretic, hybrid) is very different from that described in previous chapters.

In Bhabha's view, the most productive contribution to the Rushdie debate came from feminists, concerned less with the politics of textuality and international terrorism, and more with demonstrating that the secular, global issue lies uncannily at home, in Britain—in the policies of local government and the race relations industry; in the 'racialization of religion' in multicultural Britain; in the imposition of homogeneity on 'minority' populations in the name of cultural diversity or pluralism (Bhabha 1994: 229).

The position he takes on the affair thus broadens the issues to encompass the wider debate about pluralism in Britain. This is of a piece with his general position on culture and society in a post-colonial world which he signals through the word 'hybridity' (or 'hybridization'). Writers such as Bhabha and Gilroy reject both separatism and, as Bhabha's remark cited above indicates, much of what passes for multiculturalism in British policy. His starting point is an 'international culture, based not on the exoticism of multiculturalism or the diversity of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture's hybridity' (1994: 38). Culture is seen as a dynamic force, 'an enactive, enunciatory site' (p. 178), and to that extent all cultures are 'hybrid', though Bhabha is particularly concerned with the hybridity which occurred in the colonial period (in India, for example), and currently in a post-colonial world. I return to hybridity in a moment; but it is useful first to look at two other ways in which plurality is experienced.

The old term 'cosmopolitans' has recently been resurrected to refer to communities which transcend national boundaries: scholars, scientists, artists, feminists, advocates of human rights, socialists (Waldron 1995: 102). In another category would be the officials of international organizations such as the UN or the European Union in Brussels, dreaming of 'European citizenship' (Shore and Black 1994). These are carriers of a 'transnational culture' (Hannerz 1992: 249), not confined to a single nation or state. Hannerz rightly points to an earlier discussion of the cosmopolitan intellectual by Karl Mannheim (1936), though Mannheim himself wanted to distinguish between the conservative 'cosmopolitic' intellectual and the progressive internationalist (1952: 168), and it would be interesting to consider the differences between the cosmopolitans of Mannheim's generation and those of Hannerz's (the Saids, for example, the Spivaks, and the Gilroys). Manifestly the global ecumene of the year 2000 is different from that of 1900 or 1930 or even 1960. The same applies to another category for whom the term 'transnational' might be the most appropriate (following Hannerz 1996, Kearney 1995, Rex 1996, and Webner 1997a).

Transnationals are migrants who differ from cosmopolitans in that theirloyalties are anchored in translocal social networks ... rather than the global ecumene' (Webner 1997a: 12). Their situation is typical of many international labour migrants and so-called diasporic communities. (The term 'diaspora' has expanded far beyond its original sense and now refers to a wide range of migrant and exile groups to the point where virtually everyone now has a diaspora. Cohen, 1997, attempts to institute some rigour into the discussion.) Pakistani migrants (extensively studied by Webner), Sikhs, a favourite example of Rex's, and Senegalese street traders in France, Italy, and other countries are excellent illustrations of the phenomenon of transnationalism. The Senegalese may be based in a city or region, but are mobile within their country of (temporary) residence, between that and other countries in which their trading networks are established, and between them and their home regions in Senegal (Bruno Riccio, personal communication). Latino migrants in Sacramento whom M. P. Smith (1992) describes through an adaptation of Rosaldo's metaphor of 'border crossings', provide another example. Transnational migration of this kind is, of course, far from a recent phenomenon, and the differences between the form it takes now and what happened in the past deserve much fuller consideration than can be accorded here.

Transnationals, like cosmopolitans, are likely to be multilingual and multicultural, but their situation, their multiculturalism, must be distinguished from that of a third category: hybrids. 'Hybridity' is an awkward word. It appears to have entered postmodern and post-colonial critical theory via architecture: Rose draws attention to the way in which Jencks (1978) used it to 'describe the complexity of codes in postmodern architecture' (1991: 105). For the literary critic Hassan, 'hybridization' (the 'mutant replication of genres', 1987: 170) is one of eleven 'definiens' of postmodernism along with indeterminacy, fragmentation, decanonization, and so on (1987: 168-72). It is somewhat puzzling, however, that this word, which is of course a biological metaphor, should appear innocently in post-colonial theoretical writing, unless of course intended as a deliberate, ironic gesture of defiance against the 'degeneracy' (cultural and physical) of 'miscegenation' or 'mongrelization' presumed by

In earlier anthropological literature on the Caribbean, 'hybrid' was certainly used biologically, to refer to people of mixed racial origin (Smith 1963: 6), though it was also used metaphorically as in 'cultural hybridism' (ibid.: 172, Wolf 1962: 254). None the less, it is not pedantry to insist that whether or not the intent is ironic, biological metaphors need to be used with great care when referring to culture and identity, not least when, as a good dictionary would remind us, hybrids are sterile (Cohen 1997: 131, Young 1995: 8). The same applies to another metaphor widely used in this context: schizophrenia. Gilroy, who employs 'hybridity' in The Black Atlantic, signals as possible alternatives 'creolisation', 'métissage', 'mestizaje' (1993b: 2). 'Hybridity' does not appear in earlier work (1987), where he uses 'syncretism' instead, and this may be preferable.

Hybridity signals a range of themes, and perhaps now carries too much baggage. For Bhabha it refers to what happens culturally in the 'third space', the 'interstitial passage between fixed identifications' (1994: 4); this is where multilingualism and multiculturalism is made possible and their creative potential exploited. The concept also draws on the Bakhtinian concept of 'heteroglossia', the juxtaposition of voices within texts (Papastergiadis 1997: 267-8, Werbner 1997a: 4-5, Young 1995: 20), and perhaps on a Lévi-Straussian notion of bricolage (Back 1996: 5). Thus, as Gilroy implies, it has to do with linguistic and cultural syncretism and with creolization (Hannerz 1992, 1996). Hybridity therefore celebrates polyphony and creativity. As Rushdie says, it also 'rejoices in mongrelization', perhaps in a biological rather than cultural sense, appealing simultaneously to a social, cultural, and physical 'Brazilianization', as it were, or at any rate imagined Brazilianization, from which would emerge new social and cultural forms, and new persons. Thus Back: 'Young people . . . are creating cultures that are neither simply black nor simply white. These syncretic cultures produce inter-racial harmony while celebrating diversity . . . and result in volatile cultural forms that can be simultaneously black and white' (1996: 159). And consider Bissoondath's 'new vision of Canadianness . . . a Canada where inherent differences and inherent similarities meld easily and where no one is alienated with hyphenation. A nation of cultural hybrids, where every individual is unique, every individual distinct . . . a cohesive, effective society enlivened by cultural variety: reasonable diversity within vigorous unity' (1994: 224). In a curious way does not this echo nineteenth-century visions of the 'melting pot'?

What emerges from Gilroy and Bhabha is that multiculturalism, and still more separatism, are underpinned by a static view of culture and cultural production and by cultural essentialism. There is an underlying sense of cultural difference as 'fixed, solid almost biological properties of human relations' (Gilroy 1987: 39). The result has been to promote a 'pseudo-pluralism' in which 'a culturally defined ethnic particularity has become the basis of political association' (ibid.). This reification and freezing of culture is something that Gilroy finds in 'Afro-centricity', a form of separatism which operates with an 'essentialist' view of black culture and identity (1993a: 122, 197, 1993b: 31). This 'desire to anchor themselves in racial particularity' (1993b: 86) runs counter to the historic hybrid or syncretic character of black (and other) cultures which have always been in a constant state of renewal. Ethnicity, says Gilroy, is an 'infinite process of identity construction' (1993b: 223; compare Hall 1992a), and the reification of culture through both multiculturalism and separatism seeks to impose an unacceptable block on that process. As Sollors remarks, 'Perhaps ethnic scholars ought to develop as much joy in syncretism as they have found in purity and authenticity in the past' (1986: 246).

For Gilroy, what is paramount has been the development of black culture and identity in a dynamic way within the context of what he calls a Black Atlantic: 'A new structure of cultural exchange has been built up across the imperial networks which once played host to the triangular trade', that is slavery (1987: 157). These networks have four nodes: the Caribbean, USA, Europe, and Africa, the limits, in broad terms, of the black diaspora. With London, in the 1980s and 1990s, an 'important junction point' in this 'web' of black political culture and identity (1993a: 141). In his view, therefore, the process of cultural production transcends the traditional boundaries of nation-states, and must be seen in relation to the 'transnational character of modes of production, social movements and informational exchanges' (1993a: 71). In similar fashion, new information and communication technologies 'have taken all nationalisms away from their historic association with the technology of print cultures' (1993a: 192).

This intersection of the local and the global in the production of culture and identity may at first sight be thought of as a problem of interest only to cosmopolitan intellectuals. Comments by Bhabha might seem to confirm this. Referring to 'the people of the pagus—colonials, postcolonials, migrants, minorities—wandering peoples who will not be contained within the Heim of the national culture and its unisonant discourse' (1990: 315), he gives the appearance, at times, of locating them in some universal Paris: 'Gatherings of exiles and émigrés and refugees, gathering on the edge of "foreign" cultures; gathering at the frontiers; gatherings in the ghettos or cafés of city centres, gathering in the half-life, half-light of foreign tongues' (p. 291). Here 'hybrid' appears to mean marginal, and the marginality, the cultural doubling of the migrant or exile, is an old theme (Sollors 1986: 245, 252). Another, perhaps better sense of what hybridity means at the street level emerges from Gilroy. He remarks, on the record, the 1990 hit by the Impressions entitled 'Proud of Mandela', that it
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brings Africa, America, Europe, and the Caribbean seamlessly together. It was produced in Britain by the children of Caribbean and African settlers from raw materials supplied by black Chicago but filtered through Kingstonian sensibilities in order to pay tribute to a black hero whose global significance lies beyond the limits of his partial South African citizenship and the impossible national identity which goes with it (1993b: 95).

The 'fusion and intermixture' he commends is revealed in the work of another group, 'Fun-Da-Mental', whose leader is Haq Qureshi, Pakistani-born but who grew up in Bradford. Known as 'Pete', but calling himself 'Propa-

receivers of racial abuse. 'Seize the time', for example, contains the lines:

'We're ready for a collision with the opposition | It won't be a suicide mission | And one thing about me, I'm not afraid to die'. The rap style enables the writer of an article (Caroline Sullivan) to describe the group as 'half-West Indian/half-Pakistani', a music for which, 'ironically', as she says, 'most of their audience is white' (Guardian, and Hutnyk 1997).

Some of the most interesting writing on hybridity has come from cultural studies concerned with popular music. This may lead to the reproach that it is 'far too textual', as Wolff (1992: 557) says of Smith's account of Latino creative endeavours to 'make a space' for identity at the intersection of the global and local ethnic identity. Certainly Smith's study is partly textually based, in a manner reminiscent of Gilroy (see, for example, the description of Latino identity in song, 1992: 516–23), but he goes far beyond the text to provide an institutionally rooted, though not institutionally confined, rendering of how ethnicity operates in a postmodern, post-industrial, transnational environment. There is also what Back (1996: 11) calls a 'small but significant literature' dealing with multiracial areas of Britain which describes how new, syncretic cultures are emerging among gangs of young people. Back himself and in an earlier study, Roger Hewitt (1986), both describe how young people from racially mixed South London housing estates have begun to develop a common culture. Hewitt shows how black (British, Jamaican) language and music has 'hegemonic authority' (p. 81) in the clubs and on the streets, and this leads to some white youths adopting black speech and lifestyle. Both Hewitt and Back stress that in the clubs and on the playgrounds a novel culture was being negotiated. 'Young white and black people', says Back, 'construct an alternative public sphere in which truly mixed ethnicities develop' (Back 1996: 158), and this to an extent transcends the barriers of race.

Those who write about hybridity are in the main optimists, seeing in it a way forward out of the quagmire of essentialism and multiculturalism. Others are not so sanguine, and Back himself stresses the need for caution in 'projecting romantic and utopian desires' on to the accounts and interpretations of the culture of young people' (1996: 1). In Hewitt's study, relationships did not survive much beyond the mid-teens and leaving school, and Back found that young Vietnamese were excluded by both blacks and whites. Friedman and Hutnyk both criticize hybridity on political grounds. For Friedman it is elite, cosmopolitan idealism, and far removed from the 'Balkanisation and tribalisation experienced at the bottom of the system' (1997: 85). Hutnyk describes it as 'a rhetorical cul-de-sac which trivialises Black political activity' (1997: 128). 'This view of the world seems very happy to identify differences and celebrate multiplicities', he says, and continuing in Dave Spart vein, 'but does little in the way of organizing political alliances across these differences. It is all well and good to theorise the diaspora, the post-colony and the hybrid; but where this is never interrupted by the necessity of political work, it remains a vote for the status quo' (Hutnyk 1997: 134). He is right, of course, to point to the need to address 'the contextualising conditions in which these [cultural] phenomena exist' (Ibid.), but his own agenda seems as devoid of substance as those he criticizes.

7. Coda

What now, then? What will eventually happen in postmodern and post-industrial societies is unclear because not yet determined. It is not obvious what kind of pluralism will prevail: institutional pluralism (what the French would call ghettosisation), the messiness of multiculturalism, or that hybridity which, argues Gilroy (1987: 219), comes from 'stepping[ing] outside the confines of modernity's mostpressive achievement—the nation-state'. (None would have pleased Gellner, for whom 'in a mobile world of overlapping communities, the diversity of communal visions is a problem, not a solution', 1987: 168.) Ironically, the globalization which encourages hybridity also fosters conditions where separatism and other forms of particularism might flourish. In the deregulated political and moral economies of the late twentieth century, where there has been 'a disintegration of social aggregates', where there are only 'individuals', and 'no such thing as society', institutional pluralism and hybridity are both understandable responses to the multiply riven, media-driven, anarchic, postmodern, post-industrial wastelands inhabited by many ethnic minorities in Britain, France, and the USA, a landscape vividly portrayed in the mid-1990s in the French film La Haine.

For most of us, I suspect, the problem remains one of navigating between the 'Scylla of universalism and the Charybdis of differentialism' (Wieviorka 1997: 149). Much has been written in the 1990s about the rights of cultural and ethnic minorities, and it is clear from the work of Kymlicka that liberals can justify a wide range of group-specific rights of the kind which go with a relatively strong form of multiculturalism. Although much less familiar with the position of minorities such as Muslims in Europe than he is with racial and ethnic minorities in North America, Kymlicka provides a convincing philosophical basis for a
politics of difference from a liberal perspective. On the other hand, like Taylor (1994), he has a less sure grasp of questions of power, and as his comments on numerous issues suggest, of the day-to-day practicalities of living in a multicultural society: his suggestion that 'shared identity' will provide the basis for unity in multinational states (1995a: 187 ff.) seems to beg all the questions of what and how.

My own feeling is that matters are determined less by philosophy than by rapports de force, and I make no claim to have any answers. None the less, like Rex, Werbner, and others, I believe that so far as migrants are concerned a non-essentializing version of 'egalitarian' multiculturalism, if that is possible, one which provides for a genuine integration, is probably the least-worst solution. Perhaps Noah Yannick is right: liberté, fraternité, and diversité. A 'politically re-configured' multiculturalism (the phrase is Back's, 1996: 251), however, requires a strong national and local state prepared to intervene directly in society's affairs, for and on behalf of egalitarian multiculturalism's ideals, and willing to tolerate a vibrant, ethnically and culturally diverse, civil society. Under modernity, the state acknowledged it had such an interventionist role, though usually it intervened to suppress rather than promote difference. Goulbourne has called for it to 'resume its historical responsibilities' (1991: 238), though not necessarily its traditional stance. Whether there is the will or the ability or the resources remains to be seen, but it would be safest to assume that we will have to learn to do without it.


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State, Culture, and Ethnicity in Comparative Perspective

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