Reproduced with permission of the University of Chicago Press.
For personal, noncommercial use only.

ETHICS AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND LEGAL PHILOSOPHY

Volume LX JULY 1950 Number 4

PHILOSOPHY AND THE DIVERSITY OF CULTURES

RICHARD McKEON

I. CULTURE AND POLITICS

IT HAS been the misfortune of this age, not as some thought its glory, Burke complained, "that everything is to be discussed, as if the constitution of our country were to be always subject rather of altercation than enjoyment."[1] Burke's argument in defense of the British constitution and in criticism of the French Revolution as instrumentalities for the solution of political problems opposed them as rival hypotheses to be tested by the facts to which they were adjusted and by the ends to which they were directed. In general, Burke argued, political measures must be adapted to the dispositions, tempers, means, and external circumstances of the people and, in particular, the British constitution reflects the simplicity of the national character; it also embodies principles discerned by the native plainness and directness of understanding of the men who had successively obtained power as the constitution took form.[2] Even the discussion of everything, it is evident, is limited by facts and principles. Discussion is groundless and endless if everything is put in question at once; but it is biased and partial if anything significant is omitted.

In political negotiation, discussion is kept within limits by constitutional provisions and procedures, explicit or assumed, which determine a frame for arriving at agreements concerning purposes to be achieved and means to achieve them as well as devices for modifying principles and procedures. In inquiry, discussion is kept within limits by hypotheses which are tested against opposed hypotheses by the facts to which they are applied and by the predictions to which hypotheses and principles lead. Inquiries concerning methods of practical negotiation, like inquiries concerning methods of inquiry, are consequently investigations of devices by which discussion may be limited fruitfully and sequentially in the statement and solution of problems.

It is still the misfortune of this age, one hundred and fifty years after Burke wrote, that everything is to be discussed, and the enlarged scope of the problem has made the differentiation of fact and principle in the formulation of solutions more difficult. Burke could defend the constitution of one nation by arguing that its provisions are adapted to the character and circumstances of a people and that its principles are just and viable. His facts might be disputed and his principles questioned, but the discussion of what the character of the people had been shown to be and of what principles had been embodied in their public institutions could be based on historical data pertinent to the development of the British constitution; the discussion of what principles could and should guide future action and of what their effect would be on the character of the people could be based on the scrutiny of alternative ends or the balance of alternative means to common ends. Burke could therefore urge his countrymen to ignore the political changes in process across the English Channel as possible models for the improvement of the British constitution and instead to recommend to their neighbors the example of their own happier resolution of political problems.

The representatives of the nations of the world in international negotiations today frequently repeat modified forms of the fear expressed by Burke that the constitutions of their nations no less than the international structures of the United Nations and its agencies be always subject rather of altercation than enjoyment. The grounds of the fear are still found in the character and needs of people and in the danger to principles; but the "people" involved are all people, with their divergent traditions, expectations, and needs; and the "principles" relevant are borrowed from all disciplines, often unrelated in subject matter and incommensurable or contradictory in method and consequence. The continuing duty of statesmen to protect the processes of political change and the continuing political tradition of their nations from external interference must be adjusted to the necessity of creating and operating constitutional forms by which nations organized under radically different constitutions may co-operate in the resolution of international or universal political problems. Political methods and objectives must reflect differences in the characters of peoples and in their needs and resources and at the same time reconcile differences in the principles by which they act and think and talk.

Neither of these two dimensions of the problem is new in the political experience of mankind. It has always been necessary to discuss all subjects in their political context: the political organization of a state is adjusted to the patterns of moral conduct and ways of life determined in part by the character and occupations of the people and in part by the state of the arts, sciences, and religion. This interrelation and mutual influence of circumstance, ideal, and political power makes politics, in Aristotle's phrase, an architectonic science; it provides the grounds of the Marxist theory of an exact science of the history of society based on a study of productive forces and of man's relations of production, in which the state becomes organized oppression and a new universal morals is sought in the elimination of exploiting classes; it is expressed, at an opposite extreme, in Hegel's conception of the state as the actuality of the ethical Ideal, under which property rights and the ethical life of the family and civil society are subsumed. It has always been necessary also to discuss the interrelations and oppositions of groups in all human associations and activities—the balance of interests, the strength of parties, the cogency of principles—and to seek a common element underlying or reconciling the differences. The peculiar difficulty of discussing everything at once in the practical problems of the present arises from the interplay of these two dimensions of the discussion: the difficulty of finding political means of adjusting conflicting interests to common ends is reduced to stalemate when every statement of common interest, co-operative action, and general good is suspected as the partisan statement of some group; the difficulty of discovering something common or universal to peoples, nations, and ideas is reduced to sophistry and propaganda when the very effort to state doctrines, to characterize those who hold them, and to trace their consequences is suspected as ideological manipulation.

The crisis of our times is not a crisis simply in economics, politics, or thought, nor is it merely a crisis in all three conjointly. It is a crisis in which economic, political, and ideological problems, each compounded by the other two, must be resolved by nations opposed in their political constitutions, economic systems, and ideological doctrines. Not only can no one set of problems be discussed independently of the other, but also no positive program of action can be limited and self-contained enough to escape suspicion as a possible device to advance interests, or to seize power, or to solidify preconceptions. Political, economic, and cultural objectives can be stated simply and in the same terms by dissentient parties, but what they mean is determined in the oppositions of power politics and in the interpretations of economic interest and moral purpose which are part of those oppositions. The political ideals of peace and security in accordance with the principles of justice and democracy may be written into the preambles of international documents, but justice and democracy have economic bases and philosophic elaborations as sharply opposed as the political systems in which peace and security are preserved by force against the threat of force. Statistics concerning food and populations, concerning disease and standards of living, concerning unemployment and surpluses of production indicate the needs of peoples, and the statement of political problems, national as well as international, has been transformed to new political purposes by the common recognition of the urgency of making available to all men the benefits of the advances of science, technology, and industry to provide more adequately against disease, hunger, unemployment, and insecurity. Yet the ideal of providing peoples with opportunities and assistance in their efforts to satisfy those needs is faced by difficulties, not only in the opposition of economic interests, but also in the opposition of economic doctrines by which the alignment of interests and the means to advance them are determined and in the political oppositions by which programs are promoted or hindered. International understanding and the use and advancement of education, science, and culture are ideals all groups may profess, but each group then faces not only the difficulties involved in achieving what it conceives as understanding but also difficulties created by differences concerning what constitutes understanding (since ideas are determined by psychological predispositions, economic interests, and party lines as well as by the requirements of fact and the principles of proof) and difficulties created by suspicion of motive and fear of deception (since ideas may be used for other purposes than those professed in their statement).

The limitations that have been put on this indefinite sequence and transformation of problems, both in theoretic discussion and practical negotiation, have been of two sorts, derived, respectively, from appeal to fact and from determination of theory. The facts cited tend to fall into the triple classification on which Burke based his argument: the operations of governments, the characteristics of peoples, and the determinations of principles. One sign of the hardening of oppositions is the appearance of fixed, irreducible divisions on each of these levels. A few decades ago there was a widespread disposition among scholars to consider "sovereignty" a fiction which had lost its meanings and uses; it is now a criterion by which to test the operations of international organizations and the provisions of international negotiations, and old theoretic bases have been rediscovered and new ones have been invented for it. Experience and knowledge have amassed in recent years cumulative arguments against distinction and discrimination among men according to race, sex, color, or creed, yet the "character of nations" and the "integrity of cultures" have ceased only recently to be rhetorical commonplaces and patterns for humorous stories to become subjects for scientific investigation and platforms for political action. "Principles" are evoked in practical negotiations for which the theoretic formulation is ambiguous and the practical implementation in dispute; the general adherence which men profess to "democracy" and "human rights" permits almost as great a diversity in political practice as was possible under the oppositions of nations committed to democratic and antidemocratic doctrines fifteen years ago and almost as flagrant discrimination in economic practice and political oppressions. Yet each of these factual determinations has sound grounds and practical consequences, since nations are determined in their existence and operation by economic interests, political structures, and those ideal commitments which were once called "moral sentiments."

The values to which nations are committed and which are endangered by political oppositions are not effectively exhibited by the appeal to facts. The second effort to set a practical limitation on discussion takes the form, therefore, of a choice of the means by which to reconcile these oppositions found in facts. As the choice of facts tends to emphasize the differences of nations, the choice of means for their reconciliation tends to emphasize differences of theory concerning the nature and locus of the problems and the sequences of steps in their solution. The nations of the world, despite their attachment to national sovereignty, must find means for effective international co-operation: world government, regional or world federation, or a strengthened form of the United Nations are proposed to provide a constitutional frame within which, at some sacrifice of national sovereignty, general universal welfare and understanding might be promoted by political institutions with adequate powers to enforce rules of law directed to peace, security, and justice. Radical inequalities among men, thwarted aspirations, and insecurity with respect to the bare minimum requirements for existence present a serious impediment to political negotiation: under the pressure of extreme need the choice between freedom and security has no meaning, and it is therefore argued plausibly that world government and universal understanding depend on discovering the common basis of values which different peoples pursue and on establishing conditions of life under which education, self-determination, and self-assistance would prepare them for political judgment and responsibility. Again, since neither world government nor the realization of a world society of interdependent and co-operating peoples is possible without understanding, it is argued that the establishment of world community must precede the institution of world government and the establishment of material sufficiency, since both have their foundation in shared ideas and purposes. Finally, since the bases of revolutions are found in institutions and practices poorly adjusted to conditions, many seek the solution of contemporary problems in an economic, or political, or spiritual revolution.

Not only are common interests entailed in the pursuit of particular interests and balked by differences in interpretations of how interests are secured and not only are solutions of the various levels of problems dependent on each other and inhibitive of each other, but any program of action or statement of policy may be viewed as the extension and expression of the interests of one group. The nature of the economic problems presented by the needs of men, and even the availability of instrumentalities for their solution, are influenced and determined by the rivalries of political powers and by the opposition of ideological formulations in which those rivalries are advanced. In the degree that economic problems are solved, political tensions lessen and ideological differences are reconciled; and, conversely, political co-operation and international understanding facilitate the solution of economic problems. Basic political oppositions are stated in a variety of ideological forms—as an opposition between totalitarianism and democracy, between rival conceptions of democracy, or between democracy and plutocracy—which express a conception of the relation of political institutions and functions to the interests of the people and determine the way in which economic problems are conceived and economic policies are determined. All thought and expression are involved in economic pressures and political disputes. The advancement of knowledge has given man new insights into the nature of his problems and increasing control over the means by which specific problems may be solved and by which the lives of men may be enriched both by making basic values more widely accessible to men and by making more varied and higher values conceivable and attainable; but in the conflicts of powers and interests what passes for knowledge and value becomes itself a subject of conflict.

The danger involved in the necessity of discussing everything does not arise simply from the immensity of the interrelated problems that require consideration but also from the diversity of the grounds, beliefs, prejudices, and passions to which the discussion must be related. Discussion is essential to understanding and co-operation, but understanding is prevented and co-operation is impeded by the suspicion or allegation that facts have been misrepresented or misinterpreted, values and threats to values have been misstated, and actions and intentions have been concealed in erroneous and propagandistic formulations of problems adapted to partisan commitments. When discussion ceases to be a statement and test of hypotheses and becomes, instead, a manipulation of arguments for unquestioned preconceptions, efforts to solve economic problems are brought to a stop by oppositions of economic systems, political institutions conceived to facilitate the co-operation of nations and parties are used in the oppositions and alliances of political powers, and analyses to clarify ideas and principles and to discover means for achieving ideals become devices in the oppositions of ideologies. Discrimination, force, and propaganda are masked as right, justice, and truth. The pattern is the same whether one begin with the interests of one group or with those of the whole and whether the oppositions of interests are conceived to be fundamentally economic, political, or ideological. Any form of solution depends on the integration in common action to common ends of a diversity of interests, institutions, and doctrines; and progress in the solution of any one problem—economic, political, or ideological—may be questioned because of unwarranted commitments in terms of the other two. Simple polar oppositions frustrate the integration of nations in the achievement of common ends because each of the opposed parties can profess to suspect that it has been tricked into an unstated abandoment of legitimate claims and an indirect imposition of an undesirable uniformity. Understanding is not based simply on reason, nor are its consequences or its alternatives purely intellectual. Need, fear, and confusion force the simple division of mankind into opposite camps when understanding fails; and interest, power, and deception take the place of understanding in that opposition. The necessity of discussing everything is a danger because any formulation of problems is limited to relevant facts and to a basic analysis and is therefore liable to criticism for having omitted essential data or for having neglected possible methods of analysis and action. Moreover, since no one set of problems can be discussed independently of the others, the solution of any problem commits its proponents to positions with respect to others, and the criticism of any proposed solution opens to suspicion the interests, affiliations, and arguments of those who, in advancing it, subordinate other problems to the statement of any one problem.

These dimensions of shifting formulations and grounds of argument do not set an insoluble dilemma when they are recognized as constituting the characteristic form of the problems we face. The preservation of ways of life, operations of law, and methods of thought must be adjusted to the existence and probable continuation of other habits, institutions, and convictions by the discovery of principles of universality underlying difference, by the inauguration of co-operation to common purposes despite difference of principle and reason, and by the effort to enhance the peculiar values of each by adjustment to the others rather than to destroy all by negation, assimilation, and reduction to uniformity. The political problem turns on the establishment of a constitution and of common rules of law by nations which operate under different political constitutions, economic systems, and dominant ideologies. Facts of social relations and theories of ethical and aesthetic judgment are part of the political problem. As a consequence, the problems of philosophy cannot be limited to the construction by each philosopher or by each school of a set of principles with which to explain everything and to refute all other philosophers but must include the problem of the communication of meanings and the translation of arguments as they affect common ends and common courses of action from one set of principles to another. The problem of the relation of peoples and cultures is not limited to the determination of the distinctive way of life and design for living of particular groups or the fashions in which it is modified by internal conflict or evolution and external influence or pressure but must include the problem of the emergence of value and novelty as well as the criteria of choice and preference entailed in that emergence though not uniquely determined by existent facts or historical derivation.

The tendency of philosophers to explain all things is as ancient as their differences concerning what that single explanation is. Some philosophers hope to make philosophy practically useful in political decisions by using the "scientific method" to establish philosophic principles in concrete and existential reality or by relating moral and political judgments to the principles of natural science; but scientific method is differently conceived and practiced in the different philosophies that have codified their analyses in schools—in phenomenology, positivism, Thomism, pragmatism, and dialectical materialism—and communication between scientists is impeded by what seems to Western scientists a political determination of scientific doctrine in the Soviet Union and by what seems to Soviet scientists an economic and ideological distortion of scientific principles and methods in the West.

The tendency to explain art, ideals, and purposes in terms of the cultural conditions and circumstances of men is as old as philosophic speculation, and the principles on which those explanations have been based are just as numerous as philosophies. Some anthropologists hope to make the knowledge of the dynamic interrelations among cultures practically useful in political decisions by using traits of society—such as their flexibility in making status and functions accessible to members of the society—as criteria of value and by using devices of interaction and co-operation as substitutes for criteria of knowledge and freedom; but what should be done is not determined by patterns of behavior or by what is habitually done or by the ways in which such structures of conduct are usually modified.[3]

Philosophers have no difficulty in treating facts, or anthropologists in treating ideals: indeed, anthropologists can solve the problems of philosophers and explain their principles by their social circumstances, and philosophers can return the compliment by interpreting the facts of anthropologists by analysis of their philosophic presuppositions and basic principles. The interrelations of problems encountered in practical political action, however, set a new task for both the philosopher and the anthropologists. The new dimension in the philosophic problem is not to relate philosophic principles to concrete reality—that is a task in which philosophers have always engaged and in which they have always found the weakness of their opponents—but it is the task of adjusting a given philosophy to explanations and courses of action derived from other principles. The new dimension in the problem of the relations of cultures is not to explain principles and values by their place in a culture and the esteem in which they are held but to discover in the contacts of cultures the relations between what is desirable and what has been the object of desire or of habitual preference. The intermingling of problems is not the final vindication of one science, or of one faith, or of one model of reality against all other forms of metaphysics but the indication of a new need to broaden the scope and application of each discipline. If political problems have cultural and ideological dimensions, philosophies must not only treat ethical and aesthetic judgments but must also examine the forms which those judgments must take under the operation of political power, their relevance to actions accessible to the rule of law, and their possible influence on the social expectations which make conventional morality. The study of cultures must not merely present the historically derived systems of designs for living in their dynamic interactions and interrelations in which political and ideological characteristics are given their place but must also discern in diverse designs of living the conditions and conventional understandings which are the common bases of political co-operation and the values of art, science, religion, and philosophy which are the ends of human life and the explanations of cultures.

II. ASPECTS OF CULTURES

The need to find common bases of communication and action among different peoples and the interpenetration of social, political, and intellectual influences in the determination of their differences define the area and dimensions of cultural problems. All regularities and approximations to regularity in the conduct of men can be described in terms of the habits and ways of life established, transmitted, and valued by groups of men associated in common circumstances and purposes. Groups are not distinguished from each other because of fundamental differences in "nature" or because of rival convictions which can be tested for their objective "truth"—whether the groups be classes, races, nations, religions, or any other forms of association that set one group of men apart from the others—yet differences are recognizable in the physical and spiritual behavior of men and women, in styles of art, in basic convictions and beliefs, and in approaches to abstract thought, which are marks at once of the individual and of a group of which he is a member.

All forms of human behavior may therefore be described in terms of the ways of life and the patterns of conduct valued by groups; political institutions, art forms, religions, and philosophies no less than the organization of the family, the divisions of labor and function, and the forms of domestic utensils enter into the description of such ways of life. Any aspect of human conduct or association may, again, become pertinent to the effectiveness of political action or, in turn, be influenced or controlled by the rule of law. Political problems are determined, on the one hand, by the necessities of social circumstances and cultural attitudes and, on the other, by ideals and knowledge; and political action affects both so powerfully that politicians are sometimes tempted to try to make realities of cultural myths promulgated to citizens for motivation and acquiescence and to make truths of predetermined principles and methods imposed on scientists and philosphers for acceptance and verification. Any aspect of human conduct or association, finally, may be made the subject of expression, examination, or evaluation in art, science, philosophy, or religion; and the values so embodied and tested are manipulated in political ideologies and transformed in social attitudes and beliefs. Spiritual aspirations and preachments have frequently been sufficient to solve the problems of some men by withdrawal from the group or from the "world" and by control of immoral or antisocial impulses; but philosophic and religious systems of ethics, although they are sometimes criticized for not supplying the motive as well as the grounds of action, are not substitutes for the social expectations of conventional morality, and they are notably unsuited to deal directly with either the things that are Caesar's or the methods employed by Caesar. Yet, when the facts of social relations or the methods of political controls are stated, the objective description and the practical policy depend on purposes which turn the attention of the inquirer or the lawgiver to principles borrowed from the analyses of scientists and philosophers—to biological, physiological, psychological, social, economic, moral, or spiritual elements in the nature of man and to patterns of life, modes of production, rights and duties, natural law, and transcendent values.

The aspects of cultures which emerge from the close contacts of cultures and the practical needs of communication and co-operation are delimited and distinguished from each other not by the inclusion in one aspect of traits of conduct omitted in others but rather by the socially relevant mode of determining ways of life and conduct which is characteristic of each aspect. Cultures may be described in terms of historically derived patterns and socially valued habits for which data may be found in all human activities and functions, including political institutions and rules of law, constructions and influences of the fine arts, religious rites and dogmas, and all forms of intellectual inquiry and speculation. The political problem, enlarged from national to world dimensions, encounters these same data. The establishment of peace and security is a problem, not merely of bolstering the status quo and elaborating measures calculated to avoid armed hostilities, but of establishing an order extended to all peoples and fitted to their just expectations. A peaceful order must be adjusted to their needs and resources, and it must reflect and in turn influence their character, that is, their habitual attitudes and understandings. The establishment of such world order depends on using available knowledge and providing for its increase and dissemination and on broadening the applications of wisdom. The cultural heritage, finally, is determined in patterns which have resulted from innovations in action, thought, or expression of individual human beings engaged in the solution of problems which become in their abstract formulations social, economic, religious, aesthetic, ethical, philosophic, or scientific. The conscious, critical examination of these activities and their clarification relative to the ends they serve must discover that they are determined, not only by social conditions from which they arose or in political power and controls by which their external manifestations might be inhibited or advanced, but also by the standards of aesthetic, ethical, and scientific judgment.

These three aspects of cultures—the social, the political, and the humanistic—may be discerned in any group of social facts or activities. The social aspects of "philosophy" considered as a cultural phenomenon, thus, are found in the customs, beliefs, and doctrines in which a people during a period express their common attitudes and describe or justify their common conduct. It is in this sense that historians of cultures are able to describe the "philosophy" of fourth-century Greece, first-century republican Rome, or thirteenth-century Paris. The humanistic aspects of "philosophy" considered as a cultural phenomenon are found in the efforts of thinkers to organize in accordance with principles of explanation and inquiry, of criticism and guidance, the interpretation of human activities and of the phenomena and natural circumstances which are the context in which human activities and inquiries are developed. It is in this sense that philosophers discover that there were many competing philosophies in fourth-century Greece, in thirteenth-century Paris, and even among the practical Romans of the Republic and that the basic principles to which appeal is made recur in the history of thought and in the regions of the world. The political aspects of "philosophy" considered as a cultural phenomenon are found in the institutions and regulations designed to control the consequences of the actions of individuals and groups within the necessities and potentialities determined by the social basis and relative to possible ideal realizations. The political problem thus transforms the problems of philosophy as conceived under both its social and humanistic aspects: it sets the problem, on the one hand, of translating what are conceived to be the attitudes and the customs of a people into terms of the needs and motivations accessible for political action and, on the other, of translating the formulations of value and ethical judgment into ideals to be achieved by common action despite differences of motivation and ideology.

The characteristics of cultures may be discerned, in the first place, then, in the social aspects of human action and cooperation—in the patterns, recognizable as forms of conduct and transmissible from generation to generation, which appear in the behavior of men and in the determination of their functions. Forms of group behavior are, however, distinguishable from the cultures of which they are signs, and anthropologists sometimes differentiate "society" in the sense of a group of people who have learned to live together from "culture" in the sense of the distinctive ways of life of such a group of people.[4] The distribution of functions and the division of labor required for the production and exchange of goods and for the common life constitute the organization of societies, while the customs and beliefs which hold societies together and enable them to survive are expressions of their cultures. The distinction is seen in its limiting case in subhuman societies, like those of the social insects, which are culture-less, whereas every human society is possessed of a characteristic culture, and every culture presupposes a society.[5]

Cultures may therefore be studied in the conduct of peoples and in the cumulative traditions of the transmission of patterns of conduct with their lags, interruptions, and intrusions of novelty. So viewed, cultures are the material traces of ideas and ideals in the habits of men; and the actions, productions, and convictions by which men adjusted themselves to the conditions in which they found themselves or which they continued from some earlier adjustment of the group after the utility of the habit or the truth of the conviction had ceased may be examined for information, not about the circumstance and materials to which they were applied, but about the group. The categories of explanation and interpretation of the regularities or dynamic interrelations of cultural forms and significances are found in the subcultural social grounds and conditions of those forms. As Kroeber puts it, "cultural constants," like family, religion, war, and communication, appear to be biopsychological frames variably filled with cultural content, and "custom is a psychobiological habit on a social scale carrying cultural values."[6] The cultural content is not determined by the container, nor, again, is it determined by abstractly conceived standards of survival value, utility, or moral good. Social life depends on "conventional understandings"[7] which in turn depend on criteria later uncovered in critical inquiry. The ideas which influence social and cultural relations do not first come into existence, or begin to operate, upon the formation of an abstract expression for them. On the contrary, abstract expressions of such ideas may be viewed as the results of analysis of the concrete experiences which the ideas rendered possible in the group; and intelligent interest in the social expectations of conventional morality may in this manner yield either the philosopher's principles of ethical judgment or the anthropologist's description of national character, depending on whether the ideas are viewed in relation to the motivations of persons or to the internal pressures of groups.

Cultures are dependent on man's capacity for conceptual thought and articulate speech. Primitive cultures no less than technologically advanced civilizations are compendent bodies of beliefs and interrelated devices for the communication of meanings adapted to the ends of the society or derived from traditions which were once adapted, or seemed to be adapted, to those ends. They are tested, when questions or conflicts occur, by the consequences to which they have been related and for which they should account against rival meanings and beliefs suggested by the internal movements and the external contacts of the culture. Cultures provide the grounds for conduct and behavior thought to be effective in the society in the resolution of the problems which bring men into association, endanger their continued association, or originate in their association—self-preservation, provision of food, shelter, and mutual protection, the nurture and training of children and their initiation into adult status, the stability and continuity of the society, the advantages and pleasures of human association, and the establishment of continued expectation of satisfactions and confidence in accepted explanations—and cultures are tested by the success of traditional behavior. The stability and continuity established on custom and belief are dislocated or interrupted, and cultures are modified, by crisis or progress in experience and knowledge within the group and by war or other contacts with other cultures.

The development of internal tensions and the danger of external aggression in a society lead to the differentiation of political institutions and political authority from other forms of social structure and other forms of social sanction. The characteristics of cultures may therefore be discerned and studied, in the second place, in the political aspects of human association and co-operation—in the functions and interrelations of officers empowered to enforce rules of law. The political aspects of culture are those pertinent to the regulation of common life by the control of the material and indirect consequences of personal or group transactions. They are found in the external actions that can be controlled by law and in the motives by which adherence to the law may be induced; they are marked by the establishment of clearly defined agencies of enforcement and by an effort to achieve clear communication and definite attachment to principles of regularity. The distinction between the political and the social aspects of cultures is not a separation of entities but a differentiation of traits in the complex of human associations in accordance with modes of associations which evolve in the development of society and coexist in the more advanced forms of national states. Law cannot be separated sharply from custom in primitive societies, and even in the modern state the public is not easily differentiated from the numerous forms of private association. Yet the analytical signs of the emergence of the public or of the need for it are unambiguous: in the social examination of the conduct of a group, including its political institutions, actions and decision are related to the characteristic "way of life" of the group and to the problems which that way of life solves or raises; in the political examination of the conduct of a group, including the actions of individuals and private groups, actions and decisions are related to consequences which are judged and regulated relative to the "common good."

The differentiation of functions determining these two aspects of cultures appears even in the analyses of philosophers who do not separate "society," "culture," and "state" and who depart from widely different data and assumptions. John Dewey distinguishes the state from other forms of social organization by the consequences which flow from it and by the instruments of control which it employs. All forms of association—religious, artistic, scientific, educational, industrial, commercial, recreational, even in such varied manifestations as political parties, trade-unions, and pressure groups—produce distinctive consequences. When these consequences are appreciated intellectually and emotionally, a shared interest is generated, which in turn transforms the nature of the interconnected behavior. The distinction between patterns of co-operative action and forms of shared interest goes beyond the distinction between society and culture, since it is possible to have a human society without that conscious appreciation of shared interests which constitutes a community, while all human societies have a minimum culture. In any complex society, the community and the public emerge at the same time. Since all modes of associated behavior have extensive and enduring consequences which involve others beyond those engaged in them, the state is necessary as a form of association to regulate those consequences by the actions of public officials. Rules of law are, then, the institutions of conditions under which persons make their arrangements with one another, and the problem of the public is fundamentally a problem of communication.[8]

Similar distinctions enter a totally different philosophic context and structure when Plato analyzes the formation of the state in three stages:[9] first, the association of artisans, husbandmen, and tradesmen, determined by the division of labor to the end of providing a minimum of life, in which justice and injustice are found in the relations of citizens with one another; second, the luxurious state enlarged to provide the amenities of life, which leads, as a consequence of enlarging, to wars and to almost all the other evils, private as well as public, found in states;[10] and, third, the further enlargement to provide guardians, still according to the principle of the division of labor, for the defense of possessions against external invaders and of values against internal dangers. Plato's construction, like Dewey's analysis, finds the state first in the functions of officials in controlling external actions and encounters problems of meaning, communication, and value in the examination of the consequences of those actions. In the perfect state, which Plato was convinced never existed and never will exist, the wisdom of the philosopher-king would provide an answer to these problems based on true principles and sound demonstration; but in actual states they must be met by two related devices, the provision in the promulgation of law of adequate power for its enforcement combined with peruasion in the prelude to the law suited to win approval for the law by the citizen.[11] Cicero treats the same distinctions, but he begins with the importance of speech and communication in the development of society, culture, and the state. Speech and articulate thought differentiate men from brutes, and the inquiry after truth leads not only to knowledge and the arts but to the virtues and the associations of men in society and the state. The eloquence cultivated by the orator is merely the art of using this faculty of communication among men and of reproduction of thought in words. But the highest achievement of eloquence is to have gathered "scattered humanity in one place," to have led mankind "out of its brutish and rude existence to our present condition of culture as men and as citizens (*ad hunc humanum cultum civilemque deducere*)," and to have given shape, "after the establishment of states, to laws, tribunals, and civic rights."[12]

"Society" and the "state" serve to isolate aspects of cultures which are closely related in their factual bases but distinct in their functional operations. A society is a structure of behavior and of functions of men associated in action and in life; a state is a structure of officers and of laws established to maintain conditions of communication and community by the control of consequences of actions. A culture is a structure of customs and of beliefs uniting men in societies and determining, both within societies and in the relations of societies to each other, attitudes and expectations which require for their harmonious adjustment the controls of the state. The social aspects of cultures are the material traces of ideas and ideals in the habits and associations of men; the political aspects of cultures are the instrumental uses of ideas and ideals to establish, preserve, or transform community among men. Political organization depends on instrumentalities to control the actions of individuals and groups and on common habits or recognition of common interests sufficient to make those instrumentalities effective. Despite recurrent efforts in the political history of states to control the attitudes, intentions, and beliefs of men, the effective operation of political agencies is limited to inducements and penalties which control overt actions with respect to their external consequences on others. The politically relevant aspects of cultures are therefore externally determinable traits connected with provisions for security, acquisition and use of property, and distribution of honors. Political philosophies which treat the relation of the individual to the state in terms of their respective rights and duties range, for this reason, between the extreme in which only the life of the individual is inalienable (as in the case of Hobbes's analysis of the social contract) to the extreme in which a wide variety of freedoms is included under the property rights of the individual (as in Locke's formulation of the grounds of natural rights).

The differentiation of the political from the social aspects of cultures, consequently, has important bearings both on theory and on practice. In theory the broadened scope of world political problems has given a new relevance and practical importance to the subordination to the state of all other forms of association and cultural values in philosophies, as diverse as those of Plato and Hegel, posing issues which are immensely simplified and distorted in discussions of the "open" and the "closed" state. In practice not only has the control of all actions, including thought and expression, been undertaken in states as different in their ideologies and social structures as Nazi Germany and the Communist Soviet Union, but also opposition to communism (or, according to the Communists, the operation of economic interest) causes the Western democracies to make efforts to control thought, expression, and association. When criticisms of the totalitarian methods of the "police state" are set against criticisms of the insidious aggression of "economic and cultural imperialism" in the amenities of international political discussions, the opposition is a clash between two ways in which the cultural relations of peoples are reduced to economic terms in the formulation of political problems.

Society and the state—the law of opinion and positive law—are closely related to each other, and each exercises a crucial influence in determining the other. The state and positive law are adjusted to social circumstances and to the current opinions which interpret them. Both the state and the social circumstances may be modified, despite the conservative character of law and custom—positive law and the constitution of the state by legal enactment, judicial interpretation, or violent revolution; the law of opinion by internal change within the society or external influence—and changes in the one may be causes of changes in the other. Political action in carrying out or resisting such changes encounters, on the one hand, those social aspects of culture which determine the necessities within which political operations work and the attitudes which motivate political action and, on the other hand, those humanistic aspects of culture which guide the decision concerning alternative possible courses of action. In its minimum form this third aspect of cultures appears as a moral and humane dimension in the regulation and communication which are essential to any political community. Recognition of the reciprocal character of communication and regulation in a genuine community—that is, a community in which communication consists in exchange and mutual influence and in which regulation is the function of citizens ruling and being ruled—is as old as Aristotle's definition of the state in terms of the functions of citizens (a definition which, he points out, is adapted best to democracy[13]) and as new as Dewey's argument that the idea of democracy is identical with the ideal of community life.[14]

The moral distinction appears in the very terms applied to the instruments of political control: the distinction between education and indoctrination, information and propaganda, police regulation and totalitarian control, depends on moral judgments which cannot be reduced to differences of opinion and mores or of techniques and attitudes. Moral interests, artistic preferences, and doctrinal convictions are implicit in cultures. They depend for their material and for their exercise on the recognized forms and rules of conduct of a society and a state. Just as the laws of opinion presuppose a social fabric supported by positive laws, so, in turn, the patterns of social life and the controls of political agencies are embodiments of, and instrumentalities for, ideals which are expressed, explained, and justified in arts, sciences, philosophies, and religions. Morality, taste, and opinion have their bases in society, their material support and use in the state; but their expression constitutes the humanistic aspects of cultures, and their theory and justification are sought in ethics, aesthetics, and science.

The humanistic aspects of cultures found in arts and sciences and other expressions of values undergo in the operations of the state and in the problems of the statesman a transformation similar to that which characterized the shift from the social to the political aspects of cultures. As the complex of relations which constitutes the social aspects of cultures tends to be translated into external material aspects of actions and organized expressions of attitudes available for purposes of political control, so, too, the complex of values pursued in arts, religions, and sciences tends to be translated into the moral judgments which underlie public policy in the political ordering of the life of a community. Religious observance, scientific explanation, and aesthetic expression are, like political structure and regulations, indistinguishable parts of social forms in primitive societies, and their separation may be traced as an evolutionary process in which the first emergence of religion, art, and science coincide with the appearance of a class freed from the necessities of life and from the banausic arts to devote its leisure to nonutilitarian pursuits. One of the basic political problems in advanced societies is to bring the value-judgments implicit in these humanistic aspects of culture to bear on the solution of problems of political community; and the relation of ethical, aesthetic, and scientific judgments to each other and to political action is a problem in all philosophies, whether they distinguish, relate, or identify theory and practice.

The marks of these differences in the aspects of cultures are apparent even in philosophies which do not separate "society," "state," and the "humanities." Statements of the differences frequently take one or two exaggerated forms—the attempt to treat humanistic values apart from consideration of political or social aspects of culture or the attempt to reduce all aspects of culture to one by explaining them in terms of society, or the state, or the conclusions of some science, or religion, or philosophy. But the aspects of cultures are also recognized and distinguished by means of historical or dialectical devices which stress their interpenetrations rather than their parallelisms and distinctive contributions to the common life. Burke, thus, uses "society" and "state" as equivalent terms and conceives them as "contracts" rather than "associations," but his conception of the state depends on a contrast between humanistic and material aspects of culture. "Society is indeed a contract. Subordinate contracts for objects of mere occasional interest may be dissolved at pleasure—but the state ought not to be considered nothing better than a partnership agreement in a trade of pepper and coffee, calico or tobacco, or some other low concern, to be taken up for a little temporary interest, and to be dissolved by the fancy of the parties. It is to be looked on with other reverence; because it is not a partnership in things subservient only to the gross animal existence of a temporary and perishable nature. It is a partnership in all science; a partnership in all art; a partnership in every virtue and in all perfection."[15] Hegel, on the other hand, differentiates civil society from the state, but the state is absolutely rational, the actuality of the ethical Idea, and the true ground of society and all human association. "Since the state appears as a result of the advance of the philosophic concept through displaying itself as the true ground [of the earlier phases], that show of mediation is now cancelled and the state has become directly present before us. Actually, therefore, the state as such is not so much the result as the beginning. It is within the state that the family is first developed into civil society, and it is the idea of the state itself which disrupts itself into these two moments."[16] Not only are the patterns of social relations and of the tenure and use of property based on the state, but also freedom of thought and science have their origin in the state.[17]

The humanistic aspects of cultures are found in expressions of values and ideals, in man's effort to understand his environment and himself, to determine his career among the forces of nature and with the co-operation of men, and to adjust and control nature and his own actions and expressions to the values and ends which he discovers. The materials and the problems as well as the symbols and the confusions of the humanistic aspects of cultures are found in the social situation, in the restrictions and facilitations of political forms, and in the communal significances among which the artist, the thinker, and the sage live, but the peculiar properties of these aspects of cultures are in the uses of common material and the resolutions of common problems in individual works of art, science, philosophy, religious formulation, or social communication.

The social, economic, political, and cultural situation influences thought and expression, but the influence is universal and does not serve to differentiate magic from science, superstition from religion, or skill from art. Statesmen, demagogues, and politicians arise from the same social conditions, and with the shift of political circumstances and the exchange of compliments in political debate the titles are exchanged indiscriminately. Common problems are treated, common terms are used, and common ideals are evoked or condemned by the spiritual leaders, the obscurantists, and the sectarians of an age and by the philosophers, the scholastics, and the sophists. Scientists, tinkerers, and charlatans, like artists, dabblers, and hacks, are distinguished from each other by the contribution which the individual worker makes in each case in his treatment of common materials, common problems, and common forms. These humanistic aspects are so conspicuous in great original work in all fields that it is easy to ignore the social and cultural influences that condition the work of an artist who first uses a form which departs from earlier modes of expression or of a thinker who first formulates a problem and resolves it in a way which reveals the errors or insufficiencies of earlier approaches. Nonetheless, the artist and the thinker drew on the materials prepared in previous formulations, on the interest centered on the problems they treated, on contemporary effort, awareness, need, and appreciation. The preparation of the scene for the individual effort is, indeed, so important that innovations, inventions, and discoveries are often made simultaneously by several men, and great original departures are usually the common property and characteristic of the age succeeding that of their discovery.

The recognition of "climates of opinion" of times and places and the search for the "spirit" of an age and the "character" of a culture in the common concepts, symbols, and attitudes of the social aspects of cultures should not, however, obscure the contemporary differences of meanings expressed by philosophers in those symbols, the varieties of presentations evolved by artists, the fruitful divergences of scientists by which they develop the implications of previous stages of inquiry, or even the oppositions of historians and sociologists interpreting the spirit and evolution of previous ages. Not only are the differences directly pertinent to problems and to progress in philosophy, art, or science, but they also determine the shifts in character which ages derive from thought and expression. The contribution of the artist, the philosopher, and the scientists to communication between social groups, national states, and cultures and to the establishment of more inclusive communities is not found in the common symbols they employ or the common materials they treat but in the uses they make of them. Art is intelligible across cultural and national boundaries, but the effectiveness of artists in communication must be found in the aesthetic qualities of their works rather than in the attitudes and prejudices of particular audiences to which propagandists appeal or in the dominant tastes and sentiments of groups or classes on which hacks depend. The influence of science, philosophy, and religion is not limited to the common symbols which bind the men who use them together but derives its vitality from the significances imparted to those symbols by the insights of individual men.

The aspects of cultures reflect the dimensions of communication. Any communication, in any mode or medium, is adapted to the audience to which it is addressed, to the circumstances, times, and cultural forms under which it was conceived, and to the subject matter with which it is concerned. As communication it expresses concerning that subject matter an insight or a truth that has not been expressed to that audience before or that is better comprehended than in earlier expression. The form or content of great expressions of art, science, or philosophy may profoundly alter the society, the culture, and the nation. The artists and thinkers of the Renaissance, thus, built a contemporary culture creatively from the reinterpreted cultures of Greek and Roman antiquity. The readiness of the times and the availability of the materials conditioned but did not determine the creative expression. Shakespere's rendering of the past departs often from the historical facts, and it would be difficult to determine how accurately he expressed the attitudes and aspirations of his contemporaries, since his writings constitute an important part of the evidence and since he contributed to forming the national character of his countrymen by writing lines in which they later expressed or exemplified their ideas and ideals. The use of Homer by Greek philosophers and critics is indication of the influence of the poet on the national character, conduct, and spirit, and the Romans felt the need of a native *Iliad* even before the *Aeneid* was produced to be adapted to their cultural and educational needs and uses and to afford guidance to future Dantes in their exploration of new cultural regions.

The humanistic aspects of cultures are distinguished from the social aspects by qualities which are isolated in critical judgment and evaluation. If the effects of communication are sought in the behavior of men and in their associations, no sharp line separates one form of communication from another. Verifiable truth and artistic form are not necessary to achieve wide and forceful effects. The methods used by primitive man to control the forces that surrounded him are broadly similar to the scientific method; art originated in religious observances and in practical functions; and philosophy grew from speculation on values and objectives embodied in cultures; yet in the process the advantages of science over taboo, the characteristics of artistic expression, and the critical evaluation of standards of action became apparent in spite of the difficulties men encountered in formulating principles and criteria or agreeing on any one formulation. Human values depend on the intrinsic qualities for which they are valuable and on the extrinsic circumstances which make them available and accessible to appreciation. Differences in preferences are due to differences in circumstances which make all values relative, but that relativity in turn is discovered in characteristics discerned and discriminated by ethical, aesthetic, and scientific methods and criteria which extend beyond considerations of circumstances and which serve to guide action and to mold social forms. The paradox of cultures is in the fact that values are relative to cultures and that cultures progress in their pursuit of values: intelligent action, individual or social, depends on the discernment of values and their translation into policies of action.

III. THE MULTIPLICITY OF CULTURES

The three aspects of cultures—social, political, and humanistic—are inseparably interconnected as distinguishable phases of the life of men living in association with men. The adjustments of human beings to conditions and problems are not determined by their biological adaptation alone, and the individual characteristics of men result from their nurture, training, and education in the groups in which they participate. Individual men are consequently characterized by their habits, and these include all socially acquired responses to stimuli—political attitudes, virtues, skills, and knowledge, as well as personal character traits. But since conditions affect habits by inducing activities which modify, inhibit, or strengthen prior habits and since habits affect conditions by the actions to which they lead, force and justice are needed to control the consequences of actions and the formation of habits. To understand and to judge social relations and political actions in their relation to the choice of means to the good life is to make explicit and to judge criteria which determine fact, action, and purpose. Man is a social animal, adapting himself to a natural and human environment by forming habits; he is a political animal, ruling and being ruled; he is a human animal, creating and appreciating values. Not only are social habits, political controls, and humanistic values aspects of culture in which the same cultural phenomena are viewed, respectively, from the vantage point of the forms which order and characterize the phenomena, of the forces employed to alter or conserve them, and of the criteria by which they are directed and judged, but the common cultural phenomena, whatever the view taken of them, have a natural basis in particular circumstances and an ideal realization in universal values.

The movements of cultures reflect both an attachment to the particular sources of the values of a culture and a striving for the realization of those values in universal and communicable forms. As structures of communication and action, the patterns of cultures depend on establishing modes of action on bases of habitual behavior and modes of thought on bases of traditional belief. The survival of the group depends on adherence to the structure of beliefs that constitute it a group: cultures are therefore both conservative in their resistance to change and exclusive of each other in their tendency to diversity and multiplicity. Yet, communication and action are sensitive to alteration within the group and without, and the mechanisms by which the group is preserved make it readily susceptible to change. The conservative character of custom, which contributes to the preservation of the group, is a source of danger when the mode of behavior has lost its adaptive value; the variable character of custom, which contributes to the adjustment of the group, is a source of danger when the acquisition of novel modes of behavior impedes pursuit of common values which unite the group. Political controls likewise depend on the cultural foundations to which they are attached and the common interests to which they are directed, while humanistic values seek universality of expression in the particular materials which they form and order. The action and frustration of the individual in the groups with which he is associated, the protection and oppression of the individual in the state in which he has his right and duties, and the clarification and confusion of the individual among the values which he pursues are the alternating forms of the common problems of the relations of cultures which are particular in the bases which distinguish them and universal in the values which they share.

This pull between the particular and the universal poles of culture and the tumbling sequence in which problems are considered under their social, political, and humanistic aspects and in which they influence each other reciprocally and are successively dominant as causes are illustrated in the histories of all nations which have achieved high civilizations and wide contacts with other nations. The Romans, during the Republic, were accustomed to attribute the development of Rome into the dominant world power to the traditional virtues and freedom which were part of Roman family life. The world conquests which those virtues made possible brought to Rome wealth which had the effect of disintegrating the family discipline on which the virtues were based. The body of law which grew up to regulate the intercourse of peoples associated in the extension of Roman power—the *jus gentium*—laid the broad foundations of a universal code of law, but the Romans did not succeed in their efforts to preserve local customs and cults, and although the political structure and constitution of Rome itself were little altered in the period during which the power of Rome was extended from Italy to the limits of the civilized world, they were so profoundly transformed in operation that the democratic institutions became the instruments of oligarchical control of a newly established aristocracy. Dislocations in agriculture, industry, and commerce affected the moral tradition and the social structure and produced consciousness of common interest in economic groups adversely affected by the changes.

Statesmen like the elder Cato attributed the disintegration in morals, customs, and family discipline, in part at least, to the influence of foreign literature and philosophy, and in accordance with that conviction philosophers and rhetoricians were banished from Rome. Statesmen like Cicero, on the other hand, sought a philosophic basis for the restitution of the constitution of Rome and the harmonious co-operation of classes. The efforts of the popular party to secure economic reforms was frustrated by the inadequacy or ambition of its leaders and eventuated in the dictatorship of Caesar. The efforts of the constitutional party to re-establish a harmony of classes and to redistribute power under the old constitution were frustrated by compromises with the oligarchy and prepared the way for the "restoration of the republic" under the autocracy of Augustus. Political freedoms and the traditional virtues disappeared under the Empire, but literature continued to flourish during the first century A.D., science reached a high point in the age of Galen and Ptolemy during the second century A.D., and the growing influence of Christianity during the political disorders of the fourth and fifth centuries laid, in the inversion of the city of man to the city of God, the cultural foundations of ways of life, forms of authority, and conceptions of value which were to determine the development of the Western world during the succeeding centuries. The pull between the particular and the universal, between the forces of division and those making for unification, is apparent in each aspect of culture, and the movements of cultural change, however caused, can be traced in altered social structures, distribution of political powers, or operation of effective values.

The social aspects of cultures are based on a division of labor and functions which tends as it becomes more efficient in the production of goods to divide the society into conflicting parts and to set its members to the pursuit of ends destructive of the purposes and amenities to which the society was earlier directed. The division of functions and the exchange of products instituted to secure common interests more effectively become the basis for a separation of economic classes whose members recognize common interests and common opponents. Values are sought by group action in opposition to other groups and classes, and value is attached to membership in respective groups. The possibility of pursuing values beyond the limited objectives of bare subsistence afforded by the establishment of media of exchange endangers the ability of some members of society to secure bare subsistence, while it permits the unlimited accumulation of material goods by others. The traditional customs and beliefs which are the bond of society come into conflict with the more refined beliefs of subtler and more skeptical minds, and as beliefs become better and more accurately adjusted to the nature of things by their increase in scientific precision they are more easily perverted or removed from their social functions relative to the actions of men.

These oppositions and movements have been accentuated by the advance of technology and the growth of industrial society, but they were recognized as fundamental forces in the earliest speculations on social problems. Plato and Aristotle both treated the problems of practical politics in terms of the oppositions and adjustments of the "rich" and the "poor" and of the mediating devices that could be found to regulate such oppositions in view of common interests; both looked upon money, property, and the arts of acquisition as devices for the achievement of the common good which are in themselves "infinite" or "undefined" unless limited by political control and moral insight; both looked to science and to values for solutions which might regulate a more equitable distribution of material goods and set limits on their accumulation, but they recognized that the regulation of property and of passions depends on putting them in the perspective of goods which, unlike material goods, are enhanced rather than lessened by being shared and are increased rather than divided by competition. Progress in science, technology, and industry has sharpened the division between proletariat and entrepreneur, between labor and management, in the balance of their respective interests; it has infinitely increased the possible accumulations of wealth and economic power without making the increased production of goods more easily available to relieve penury, famine, disease, and insecurity; it has made more difficult and unwieldy the intelligent application of the scientific methods, which provided new material resources and opportunities, to the solution of moral and religious problems; and it has shaped the common forms of life in patterns not easily influenced by spiritual, ethical, and aesthetic values.

The political aspects of cultures are based on the distribution of public offices and on the powers which they exercise in the control of actions. The constitution or government of a state consists in that distribution of power; laws are adapted to constitutions and determine the administration of states, and justice and the rights of citizens are determined effectively, in any state, by the constitution and the operation of the laws. Justice in operation is the order in which the citizens are unified in a state by the pursuit of common interests, and the end of the state, as St. Augustine pointed out, is not justice in any transcendental sense but the preservation of the state. To achieve even that end, however, the constitution and the laws must be effective as instruments of common interests and as embodiments of a justice which reflects the conditions, potentialities, and aspirations of the citizens and subjects of the state. When the political constitution ceases to be adjusted to the social circumstances it was designed to control, violent or gradual revolutions alter the constitution or change the groups who exercise power under it. Justice and power are at once conservative of the social structure they reflect and revolutionary mechanisms for the establishment of new orders.

Political actions operate between the extreme of the necessary conditions by which they are determined—the characters of peoples, their circumstances and resources, the state of their arts and sciences, their tensions and ambitions—and the extreme of the ways of life to which they are devoted or the ideals which they seek. But the ideals are assimilated to the character of nations setting them apart from other nations, and movements which split established political structures assimilate to themselves other universal ideals. Traditional forms of nationalism depended on the claim that some universal ideal was the particular possession of a people inhabiting some particular area. The ancient Jews regarded themselves as the chosen people and the custodians of the true religion. The Greeks differentiated themselves from the barbarians by the possession of freedom and a cultivated life of art and thought, and the Romans were lawgivers who extended universal peace to the peoples of the world. The English have in modern times been proponents of Protestantism and of parliamentary practices and institutions; the French, since the Revolution, have been the promulgators of democratic freedoms, the rights of men, and intellectual enlightenment; the Americans have appeared as the defenders of the common man and common sense and have exemplified technological skill and industrial organization; the Russians assumed the role of partisans of the equality of men and the solidarity of the workers of the world against exploitation and oppression. The revolutions of the twentieth century have cut across this nationalistic attribution of universal values to special nations, and the claims presented by those who suffer want and need, racial discrimination, and imperial domination have led to new delusive attributions to one race, one economic class, one economic system, one party, one creed, of universal values by which to organize the world more justly.

The particular circumstances and universal ideals embodied in the constitutions of states, no less than those of groups and parties in revolt, are means simultaneously to unify and to divide. The revolutions of our times are motivated by efforts to secure political self-determination, economic security, and human equality. The new nationalism differs from the traditional nationalism which developed with the spread of industrialism, since the new nationalism is an expression of the responsive demand for industrialization in regions where it has not yet taken root. The forms in which this nationalism expresses itself range from the exercise of the newly acquired independence of the Philippines, India, Pakistan, Burma, and Indonesia and the aspirations to self-government of colonial peoples like those of Ceylon, Nepal, and Indo-China, to the establishment of Israel as the homeland of a people, to the jealously guarded cultural autonomy and sealed borders which are instruments of economic and political change in the Balkan states, to the efforts of nations long established to solve their economic and social problems. In the political context cultural problems are translated still into terms of property and of the external consequences of actions on security, possessions, and honor. The necessary conditions within which political action operates and the ideals to which it is directed are both stated in terms of the distribution of goods: the necessary conditions are set by needs and resources, and the choice of actions for the resolution of needs is thrown into stultifying confusion by the ideological conflict which affects the discussion of facts, actions, and the very theories involved in analyzing the conflict. Ideals and purposes are economically determined in that conflict according to both extremes of theory, for it is held at one extreme that the conflict will be stopped only by the elimination of exploiter classes and at the other extreme that it will be resolved only by the elimination of those who oppose free enterprise and individual rights.

The humanistic aspects of cultures are based on the arts, the sciences, the philosophies, and the religions which express values and seek knowledge and the control of man's destiny. Arts and sciences, ideas and ideals, have their roots in social situations and are affected by political institutions and regulations; they are in turn powerful instruments in molding the social situation and in altering political structures and the operation of laws. But progress in knowledge, in artistic expression, and in spiritual insight depends on a double movement: first, science is separated from magic, fine arts from mechanical and banausic, religion from superstition, since they are subject to improvement and refinement, and those who practice the more advanced forms of each, as well as those who appreciate them, are separated in their preferences and their understandings from other groups in society; then, since science, art, and religion have an effect on life, reformers and practical men try to make religion effective as motivating beliefs in the practices of men, to restore to fine arts an influence such as mechanical arts have in men's lives, and to rejoin theory and practice.

Science, art, and religion as modes of communication acquire breadth, power, and precision in the development of common symbols relative to common ideals and common subject matters, but in the process they become inaccessible to those who do not share those symbols, and the organized efforts of groups or governments to bring them to bear on the attitudes, understanding, and emotions of larger groups run the risk of reducing them to propaganda. Although they have profound influences in the creation and solution of political problems, nations, like the Soviet Union, which undertake to control them and in so doing recognize their importance inhibit the possibility of their achieving their distinctive values, while nations, like the United States, which provide the possibility for their free development have not found means by which to take serious account of their possible social applications and consequences. The manipulation and control of scientific, aesthetic, and spiritual values and the separation of those values from social and political problems have comparable stultifying effects, for the one makes them socially pertinent but sterile, while the other fosters their development in directions removed from effective relevance.

The division of mankind into groups in the pursuit of ideas and values, like the divisions of men according to social function and political power, may be the cause of tension or of progress. Differences and even conflicts in ideas and values have contributed to the advancement of knowledge and art and society; and, even short of holy wars and ideological conflicts, they have in turn been affected by the divisions of men. But the basis of universality and particularity in the communication of ideas is different from what it is in the exchange of goods. Science consists in the formulation and solution of problems, and its universality consists in a uniformity of communication in which results are susceptible of independent tests; it is particularized by reference, not to subject matter, but to rival groups, schools, or nations. The universality of religion is found in values experienced by men and shared by the great religions of the world; it is particularized by reference to rival groups, creeds, or nations. Great art is universally intelligible and is closed in particularity only by the mannerisms and exclusiveness of groups, styles, and nations.

All these forms of value differ from social ways and political institutions, which are bound to specific groups or societies, however large, in that they depend on principles, ideas, and criteria which are universal and are potentially accessible and intelligible to all men everywhere. Yet they can be reduced to objects of ownership, causes of division, and instruments of power rivalry. Their universality is preserved against such appropriation to groups by the standards which are discovered in ethical, aesthetic, spiritual, and scientific judgments and are tested in the scrutiny of the principles and methods of such judgments which is proper to philosophy. Value-judgments are not determined by the practices of current morality, the preferences of actual taste, the dogmas of prevailing creeds, or the consensus of men in general or of experts concerning the nature of things. Not only do great accomplishments in arts, science, and philosophy transcend and transform current judgments of value, but they affect attitudes toward economic circumstances and material goods. The ascetic ideals of religious communities have lessened the domination of other values in the group and have introduced new cultural forms; and the program of Gandhi, by freeing his followers from fear of loss of property and even of life, prepared a political revolution designed to secure for India not only self-government but economic advancement. Conversely, the discipline of parties—Fascist, Nazi, or Communist—can impose standards by force and transform economic relations, political institutions, and cultural values by fear. The great problem of democracy, within nations and between nations, is to form policies based on ethical, aesthetic, and scientific judgments and to secure cooperation in them by agreement rather than by force in the solution of economic, social, and political problems.

The new problems in the relations of cultures may be stated in their bearing on all three aspects of cultures. The division of labor and functions in the production of goods and in common life leads to the separation and antagonism of groups, classes, races, and nations unless it is accompanied by co-operation and mutual respect born of understanding of social interdependences and values. The distribution of power and prestige in political organization leads to the reduction of justice to what can be secured by power unless there are standards of justice by which to guide the exercise of power and the distribution of goods and functions. The enjoyment of values lends justification to the identification of the good with what we desire unless it is rectified by criteria by which to determine whether or not we enjoy and desire what we should; and inquiry into the implications of the principles of the philosophy which we hold is sectarian and parochial unless adjusted to the principles of mutually consistent philosophies and concordant values. An important instrument in the solution of these interrelated problems is lost if we neglect the humanistic aspects of cultures, not only because we then reduce the values which are enhanced by co-operation and sharing to those oppositions and competitions which are satisfied only by unique possession and to those external marks which are substitutes for appreciation of values, but also because the cultivation of the values of art, science, and philosophy contributes standards essential to the solution of social, economic, and political problems.

IV. PHILOSOPHIC INQUIRY AND CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

Values are relative to the cultures in which they are created and appreciated, but they are by nature intrinsic to the qualities which are valued. The relativity of cultures and the understanding of other cultures are not justification for a simple acquiescence in the conclusion that what is customary is by definition good and what is in force or is desired is therefore desirable or for a dilettante erudition in the odd and picturesque ways in which other peoples do what we prefer to do differently. Communication between cultures and the establishment of world community and understanding depend on the creation of values which are not peculiar to any existing culture and on the preservation of values which are the forms assumed by common values in particular cultures. Yet the relations of cultures has become a problem of the relations of nations and—within nations and across national lines—of classes, races, churches, and parties. In both forms, national and international, the political problem assumes primacy, since cultural relations uncover differences and oppositions of economic and social needs and involve clashes of interests and powers, but the source of differences is found, not in the needs which are widely recognized or in the resources and knowledge which are available, but in the opposing ideologies, political forms, and economic systems by which means to remedy the situation are considered. This problem of analysis found in problems and of communication concerning actions has been little considered, and there has arisen, consequently, a widespread sense of an unreal separation of fact from value and of knowledge of fact from knowledge of value which is criticized as anti-intellectual and antirational and for which remedies are sought by "realistic" and "practical" assertions that values are facts and are found among facts.

The suspicion of argument in all forms which is a characteristic of our times and the effort to remedy its abstractness from particular situations by return to particularity and to remedy its flexibility to the purposes of the inquirer or demonstrator by imposition and predetermination of meanings assume their most paradoxical form in political discussions and actions. The flight from arguments in its generalized manifestations leads philosophers to substitute for the principles and movements of proof the concrete phenomenology of thought, or the specific difficulties and adjustments of experience, or the dialectical oppositions of nature, or the arbitrary determinations of symbols. In politics, and in the legal and moral disciplines related to political action, the distrust of proof takes two complementary forms: the discrediting of arguments to permit recourse to facts and the manipulation of facts to establish the cogency of arguments.

The suspicion of arguments has reached its heights in jurisprudence, where the historically effective use of argument has been questioned because the applications of rules of law evolve in successive interpretations and because the reasons alleged by judges as grounds for their decisions do not express the processes of thought which led them to their conclusions. Realists in jurisprudence have sought in the appeal to facts remedies for weaknesses in legal methods of determining facts and interpreting law; yet the facts sought under the guidance of economic and psychological theories are dependent on arguments, and the facts alleged determine only what has been done and what can be done, not what should be done. The same suspicion of propaganda and distortions extends to whatever is said in the negotiations between nations and in the political discussions and campaigns within nations, and cures are sought in devices that would discredit sound as well as invalid arguments and would at best yield information about speakers and their motives or audiences and their susceptibilities. In political philosophy, in general, an escape from the complexities of argument is sought in the hope that scientifically verified facts or established principles from some region of scientific inquiry will remove the ambiguities and uncertainties of social and political discussions, while political experience proves that hope illusory by the vulnerability of scientific pursuits to social and political influence and interference. Even if the scientists of the Soviet Union and the West were in some sense in agreement concerning the scientific principles and facts of physics and biology, and even of psychology and anthropology, despite differences concerning dialectical materialism and naturalistic empiricism, that agreement would not supply criteria by which to bring them to agreement concerning the respective virtues of common or private possession of the means of production. The complementary form of these devices to avoid the deceptions of argument are even more sinister, for inasmuch as arguments are conditioned by the convictions of the thinker the silencing or elimination of the class or the party committed to erroneous arguments is an effective substitute for refutation as means of bringing attitudes and actions into more precise relation and contact with facts.

In this argument about arguments which appears at all levels of political problems both parties profess attachment to moral ends, which each thinks lacking in the other, and both find proper employment for the scientific method, which each argues is neglected or misused in the other. The problem of fact and understanding repeats, on the philosophic level of speculation concerning methods and criteria, the problems found in each of the three aspects of cultures. The values proper to the social aspects of cultures are determined by and adapted to their particular circumstances in each culture: they are destroyed alike by failure to adjust to changing conditions and by the leveling effect of cultural uniformities externally imposed; and the new problem presented by the vastly increased cultural contacts in the present world is to discover a basis for understanding, communication, and mutual respect in the common values differently expressed in different cultures. The interplay of justice and force determining the order which characterizes the political aspects of cultures encounters new problems in like fashion in the contact and interrelations of nations organized under different political constitutions, economic systems, and ideological preconceptions. Science, art, and religion give expression in the humanistic aspects of cultures to this balance of innovation in content and expression set against changeless patterns employed and changeless values sought. The philosophic effort to discover order of phenomena and rationality of explanation encounters the same problem of principles as an interplay of the particular circumstances which determine values and the universal values accessible in circumstances in each of these aspects and the happy mediations of philosophers on the philosophic efforts of practical men and scientists to reduce being and becoming to common principles are disturbed by a new form of the philosophic problem. In a world which must co-operate, if possible without either the imposition of a common creed or the operation of a conquering force, philosophy must face not only the traditional task of explaining phenomena, knowledge, and action by recourse to the principles of a preferred philosophy and of refuting opponents by the same device but also the task of considering the relation of the principles of that philosophy to other principles of explanation and action. Philosophy contributes to communication and cultural community in two ways, by philosophic disputation and conversion, which develops community by extending the number of adherents to the principles of a school, and by discovery of similarities of doctrines, purposes, and values in opposed principles with consequent common opposition to pseudo-philosophies in support of common conceptions of man and life. The great philosophic problems of our times, when scientists, artists, and politicians are involved in philosophic issues, is to advance the methods by which the common values of diverse philosophic principles may be disclosed in contrast to the principles which distort or threaten those values or the eclecticisms and syncretisms which confound and confuse them.

Philosophic inquiry is implicit in each of the aspects of cultures, and the contribution of philosophy to cultural community and communication is found in a form adapted to each of the aspects. With respect to the social aspects of cultures the contribution of philosophy is to the understanding and appreciation of the values and aspirations of peoples. The philosophies of peoples constitute information concerning the cultures of the world, to be found in part in explicit statements and in part in common images, symbols, and scales of preference; they are embodied in the external civilization and they determine the uses that are made of material resources and technical skills. With respect to the political aspects of cultures the contribution of philosophy is to the motivation of peoples in their co-operative activities. The statesman should find the resources of philosophy available for his use in two forms derived respectively from the social and the humanistic aspects of cultures: he should be able to recognize the existing customs, beliefs, and capabilities and he should be able to formulate policies which reflect practicable ideals. Political communication should lead to agreement on common courses of action enforced by the imposition of penalties on actions which endanger the common action and the community. With respect to the humanistic aspects of cultures the contribution of philosophy is in the critical clarification of values and of means employed for their achievement in arts, sciences, social structures, and religious observances.

In all three forms the contribution of philosophy is made ordinarily without the need of technical philosophy or the ministrations of technical philosophers; philosophy emerges with awareness of basic principles or values as they exist in the relations of men, in their instrumental activities, or in their inquiries and free expressions. All three depend, therefore, on a fourth contribution of philosophy to culture, which consists in the achievement of the proper purposes of philosophy, recognizable in great philosophies, however variously the purposes of philosophy are stated in those philosophies. The present juxtaposition of philosophies in the juxtaposition of cultures and the pressing importance of the practical consequences of philosophic differences in the ideological conflict concerning the relations of cultures and nations have set problems for philosophers which may illuminate the relations between their respective methods of performing the proper tasks of philosophy. Any degree of success in treating the social, political, and humanistic aspects of cultures must contribute somewhat to such intellectual communication, for philosophy is not only a subject, a means, and a test of communication and community, but it is also a form of communication, and the development of philosophy is one of the marks by which progress in world civilization will be recognized. Intelligent resort to analysis and principles should contribute instruments to move the complex parts of world culture, but the functioning of world community must eventually depend on a common spirit and force which is diffused in various forms throughout the whole.

University of Chicago

NOTES

1. Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* ("World's Classics," Oxford, 1907), p. 100.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 98. Cf. Burke, *Thoughts on French Affairs* ("World's Classics," Oxford, 1907), p. 375.

3. Cf. Charles A. Beard's analysis of the relation of empirical knowledge and science to problems of choice and policy in *The Open Door at Home* (New York, 1935), pp. 7–18, 135–37.

4. C. Kluckhohn and W. H. Kelly, "The Concept of Culture," in *The Science of Man in the World Crisis*, ed. R. Linton (New York, 1945), p. 79. The authors refer to a long treatment of the distinction between the "social" and the "cultural" which was omitted from the published form of their essay (*ibid.*, p. 102). Cf. R. Linton, "Present World Conditions in Cultural Perspective," *ibid.*, p. 203: "The culture of a society is the way of life of its members; the collection of ideas and habits which they learn, share, and transmit from generation to generation. Culture provides the members of each generation with effective, ready-made answers to most of the problems with which they are likely to be confronted. These problems, in turn, stem from the needs of individuals living as members of organized groups."

5. Cf. A. L. Kroeber, "The Concept of Culture in Science," *Journal of General Education*, III (1949), 183: "That nondifferentiation of the two aspects should continue up to a certain point is expectable, since culture by definition includes, or at least presupposes, society. As something shared and supra-in-

dividual, culture can exist only when society exists; and conversely every human society is accompanied by a culture. This converse, to be sure, is not complete: it applies only to *human* societies. In principle, however, the limitation is extremely important. The existence of cultureless or essentially cultureless subhuman societies, especially the highly elaborate ones of the social insects, serves as an irrefutable touchstone for the significant discrimination of the concepts of the social and the cultural: they *can* exist separately. At any rate, one of them does exist separately."

6. Kroeber, *op. cit.*, p. 186.

7. Kluckhohn and Kelly, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

8. John Dewey, *The Public and Its Problems* (New York, 1927), pp. 15–16, 69–74, 96–98, and 151–59.

9. *Republic* ii. 469B ff.

10. *Ibid.*, chap. 373D.

11. *Laws* iv. 722A–723D; x. 886E–887D.

12. Cicero *De oratore* i. 8. 33.

13. Aristotle *Politics* iii. 1. 1275^{b}5–7, 17–21.

14. Dewey, *op. cit.*, p. 146: "Nevertheless the current has set steadily in one direction: toward democratic forms. That government exists to serve its community, and that this purpose cannot be achieved unless the community itself shares in selecting its governors and determining their policies, are a deposit of fact left, as far as we can see, permanently in the wake of doctrines and forms, however transitory the latter. They are not the whole of the democratic idea, but they express it in its political phase." Cf. p. 148: "Regarded as an idea, democracy is not an alternative to other principles of associated life. It is the idea of community life itself."

15. Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, p. 106.

16. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, trans. T. M. Knox (Oxford, 1942), par. 256, p. 155.

17. *Ibid.*, par. 270, p. 172.