

**WORKSHOP ON COMPLEXITY AND
CULTURAL THEORY
IN HONOUR OF MICHAEL THOMPSON**

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GRID AND GROUP, NEW DEVELOPMENTS

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Prepared following the workshop

Cultural Theory, or CT as it has come to be known, is very much the joint creation of Michael Thompson and Aaron Wildavsky, one of those unexpected and highly productive collaborations in the history of the Social Sciences. The American Policy Analyst, Wildavsky, was renowned for his work on Government Budgeting¹, the Anthropologist, Thompson, was renowned as author of *Rubbish Theory*,². I introduced them, I had the original idea, you can say that I started it, but it would have got nowhere but for their creative action. CT has gone a long way, as attested by the large band of practitioners and the recent count of more than 700 published titles on the subject. And it is not merely of academic concern. Recently a friend who became a consultant in a big multinational company had the new internal organisation explained to him. At the end of the exposition he remarked, ‘That sounds curiously like Grid and Group’, to which the answer was, ‘Yes, not surprisingly, the new system is based on Cultural Theory’. We are proud to see that the idea has gone beyond the limits of academia to become a practical guide for people working together.

This seminar paper is offered in tribute to him, but I will make no attempt to cover all Michael Thompson’s inspiring contributions. My aim is simply to open the discussion. I will first explain the original idea of the 1970’s, where it came from and the role of Basil Bernstein in shaping it. I will go on to describe the transformation of a method into a theory in 1992³, and conclude with recent CT assessments of political activism in the Middle and Far East.

¹ Wildavsky, Budgeting

² Thompson, *Rubbish Theory, The Creation and Destruction of Value*, Oxford, 1979.

³ Thompson M., Ellis, R. and Wildavsky, A. *Cultural Theory*, Colorado 1990.

The Background

The story begins in the 1960's when anthropology was essentially ethnographic, one tribe at a time, but teachers insisted that it was basically comparative in intent, and it began to enter the social sciences. But anthropology has a special difficulty in trying to make valid comparisons. The normal social sciences are usually able to honour the principle of *ceteris paribus*, 'Other things being equal', because their fields of comparison are drawn from the same type of late industrial society. But if anthropologists want to compare two types of ancestor worship, for example, or two kinds of belief in witchcraft, the cultural differences will often be so vast as to render vain the effort of comparison. CT is a kind of solution to this problem.

When I wrote *Purity and Danger* (1966) I hoped to sidestep that difficulty by proposing a universal cognitive reaction that would be true of any culture whatever. Interested in religious doctrines of defilement, I had a hypothesis that they are the same order of behaviour as secular attitudes to defilement, and that understanding of religion would be improved if they could be brought under the same cognitive rubric. The idea was that all humans would have the same negative reaction to dirt; we should expect rational beings to experience the same internal pressures to prefer regularity and to reject disorder. After its publication I had the good fortune to meet Basil Bernstein who shared my admiration for the teaching of Durkheim. I was disappointed to find that he rejected my central argument. He protested vigorously against my universalism. Any theory of dirt and pollution, he said, must allow for different reactions. I should try to account for the undoubted variation in reactions to contact with snails, slime, faeces, vomit, entrails, some people relish eating the very things which fill others with disgust. If we feel revolted by the idea of eating human flesh, we have to admit that cannibals like it. What about the artist passionately concentrating on his painting? He may be so absorbed in his work that he can't take time to go to the toilet, so he simply relieves himself in the studio sink, where the dirty coffee mugs are standing around. The only spaces in which he cares for cleanness are his palette and his canvas, his studio is chaotic, general dirt and disorder don't worry him at all.

In these terms Bernstein persuaded me to differentiate contexts and cultures, strong and weak systems of classification, complex and simple. Obviously I needed a typology of cultures. The problem was to make a cultural framing of disgust but I couldn't find a scheme

ready-made to my purpose. In the end I produced the rudimentary typology that I called ‘Grid and Group’. It was designed to trace the distribution of values in any given population.⁴

The scheme closely followed Bernstein’s research on types of English families⁵. The first type he labelled ‘positional control’, the second type was ‘personal control’. The former is organised on a system of positions. The control system depends on classifications based on age, gender, and time-tabling conventions, time to get up in the morning, lunch time, bed time, etc. The space of the house is divided according to the same regime. In the kitchen the mother is the supreme authority, each person has his/her assigned place at table. The children may not try to negotiate their bed-times, the youngest goes off first, the second youngest next, and so on according to birth order, the eldest last. At meals, the family seating is on the same principles, no one can start to eat until all the family is seated, and what they eat is determined by the time of day and the calendar.⁶ The same goes for the distribution of work in the household. The eldest has the most responsibility, the boys do the heavy work and the dirty work, cleaning the grate, bringing in heavy things, emptying the dustbins; the girls do the beds, the toilets, the laundry. Worked out consistently the system gives coherence between different spheres, it makes sense.

In the tidy house of the positional family, the space is assigned on functional principles, dining room for eating, bedrooms for sleeping, lavatories for private bodily functions. The principles are honoured in the wall decorations, no pictures in the lavatory, no books in the dining room. Not so in the house of the personal family: under the regime of personal control there is no need for a dining room, everything is negotiable, they might eat anywhere. Space is assigned to individual members, they each have their own corner where they can do what they like. Instead of a general set of principles administered authoritatively, the children have the right to challenge any command. The parents encourage dialogue.

‘You are being too noisy. Be quiet’.

‘Why?’

‘Because Daddy is very tired, he is trying to rest’.

‘Why is he tired?’ Etc.

The child is being trained to be sensitive to the emotions of others.

‘Don’t stamp on the poor little worm’.

‘Why not?’

⁴ Douglas *Natural Symbols*, 1970

⁵ Bernstein, B. *Class, codes and Control, vol.1, Theoretical Studies towards a Sociology of Language*, Routledge, 1971

‘If you were a worm, how would you like it if a little boy stamped on you?’

This is the educational style of the middle classes, concerned to keep or to improve their place in the social class system. The child is going to grow up in an environment without certainties and without boundaries. For making his way in the world he is going to need a vocabulary for expressing his individual feelings and for anticipating the reactions of other people.

The child going from the personal family to primary school is not bewildered by the absence of the familiar framing of roles and patterning of behaviour. This child has an initial advantage, and the child from the positional family is at a disadvantage in not being able to find the expected framework. Later on we might assume that the latter child is more disciplined, more adapted to a rule governed system, readier to support the school authorities, and if it is a good school, will end up doing as well as the former.

I have used the two types of family control as miniature models of two types of culture, positional and individualistic, as shown on the Grid/Group table below.

This research method exposes the machinery of cultural transmission. Sets of values and expectations are transferred along the lines of the social structure.

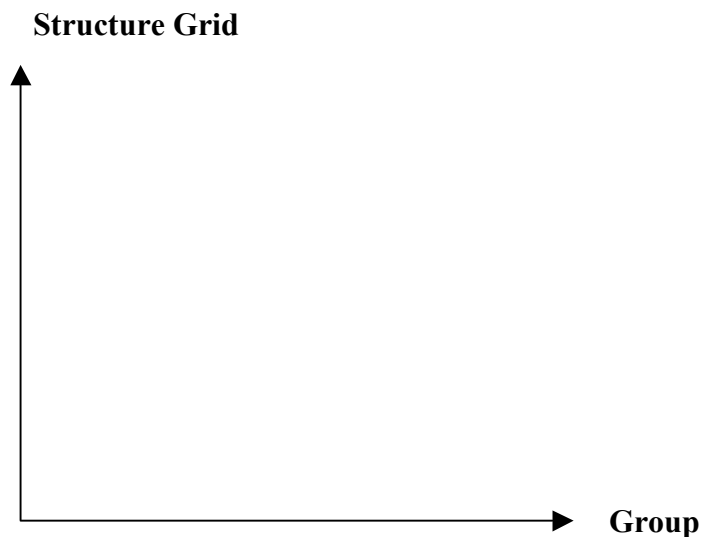


Figure 1. Grid/Group

The table shows two dimensions, representing two types of control. One is exerted for and by the group, a personal control exercised by members over each other. The other is a rich variety of anonymous controls that do not directly stem from or support the group, they are

⁶ Douglas, M., edit. *Food in the Social Order*, Russell Sage Foundation, 1984.

collective responses to climate, technology, work, anything else that underpins the web of institutions. On the diagram the horizontal axis represents the strength of group pressures on the individuals. The mere fact of belonging to a group imposes constraints: the member must demonstrate loyalty, and some intention of promoting the objectives of the group. We can present on the horizontal line a whole gamut of group affiliation, strong or weak. For example, somewhere near the zero point, one may be counted as a member of a parish by simply making an annual appearance at one of its ceremonies. At the other extreme of this measure, the point of maximum integration would be a group that demanded total commitment for life, like as monastery. Remember also that in some social environments there are no groups, strictly speaking. (The word 'group' has a technical sense in this research). But even if there are no groups to belong to, there are still conventions which control behaviour. The force of these conventions are to be measured on the other dimension, called 'grid'. It registers the amount of regulation tolerated, the rules of the road for example, safety laws for houses, health rules for fishmongers, pubs and cafes, law of trespass, standards of decency, polite conventions. These are regulations which apply to everybody, without privilege or exemption, regardless of group membership. The two independent dimensions give four types of culture.

Four types of social organisation

Isolates	Complex Groups
Individualists	Simple Groups

Figure 2. The four types of social forms

To use this scheme for empirical research, you must first choose a specific 'world' where other things are more or less equal. It must be clearly defined, and stable. I will give some examples. David Bloor chose to do library research in the world of 19th century mathematics

departments in German universities.⁸ He was able to show how the discipline of mathematics responds to cultural differences. Gerald Mars chose to do fieldwork in the world of longshore men in Nova Scotia,⁹ where he used Grid/Group to study treatment of deviant behaviour in strong groups. This led to many later applications to organised crime¹⁰.

At this stage the research was mainly an English effort, but in Scandinavia the standard was firmly planted and numerous contributions to theory and fieldwork come from Norway and Sweden¹¹. In France Marcel Calvez started to use cultural theory on the perception of AIDS and of mental handicap in Brittany, limiting the research to the world of social services. Using CT he shed new light on the behaviour of doctors, nurses, and patients with AIDS.¹²

Many more insightful studies have been indispensable to the development of the theory. In each environment, carefully identified and restricted, they found classifications and values and a vocabulary common to the members. I could cite a dozen more of early research papers which demonstrated the viability of the method for making an abstract basis for comparison in very different cultures. The central hypothesis is that a type of organisation is sustained by a particular set of well-matched values, and vice versa, social forms and culture sustain each other mutually. The match between culture and society account for institutional stability. I will now make the rounds of the diagram, describing each of the four cultural types in terms of the diagram.

It is impossible to list all the very interesting research that has already been carried out in this framework, and the new work which is being put in hand. At least I should mention the importance of the late and much regretted Carl Dake's knowledge of large scale surveys, and especially the survey that led to the redirection of risk perception from individual psychology to political bias and culture.¹³

⁸ Bloor, D. 'Polyhedra and the Abominations of Leviticus, Cognitive Styles in Mathematics', edit. Mary Douglas, *Essays in the Sociology of Perception*, Routledge, 1982.

⁹ Mars, G.
'Dock Pilferage' in *Deviance and Control*, edited P. Rock and M. McIntosh, Tavistock, 1974, 109-28;
'The stigma cycle: Value and Politics in a Dockland Union', edit. S. Wallman, *Social Anthropology of Work*, ASA Monograph, Academic Press, 1979.

¹⁰ Mars, G. *Cheats at Work, an anthropology of workplace crime*, Allen and Unwin, 1982, repub. 1994
'Criminal cultures' in D. Canter and L. Alston, editors, *Ashgate Publishing*, 2000

¹¹ Grendstad, Gunnar, and Selle, Per, editors, *Kultur som levemåte*, Der Norske Samlaget, Oslo, 1996

¹² Calvez, Marcel, 'Les Handicapés mentaux et l'intégration au milieu ordinaire: une analyse culturelle', *Handicaps et inadaptions*, editors, Les Cahiers du CTNERHI, 51-52, 190, 31-57.

Four Cultures

Fatalist	Positional
Individualism	Enclave

Figure 3. The Four Cultures

The Positional Culture

At the right, at the extreme point, on top, the two dimensions arrive at their maximum, strong group, strong regulation. Try to imagine what kind of society that gives. All roles will be predetermined, all behaviour is subject to ‘positional’ rules indicated by heredity, or gender, or age, and combinations of all three. Little groups, such as families, organised in this way, may be incorporated in larger groups similarly organised. There may be several levels of groups included in a large hierarchy. As to culture, just for this to be possible the positional culture must favour tradition and continuity, must frown on competition except with outsiders, must encourage respect, loyalty, obedience and the well-being of the community.

I apologise to colleagues for using a different name. We used to call this spot on the diagram ‘hierarchy’. It is the correct, traditional word for this meaning. Many are the discussions we have had about its unsatisfactoriness, due to the strong prejudice against just this kind of society. Since the goal of cultural analysis is to provide an objective approach to cultural variation, I feel it is best to avoid terms that arouse contempt and dislike. I hope ‘positional’ is neutral.

We, as university staff, brought up in personal family systems, tend to deride the positional family and culture. I am not speaking for all academics, but the biographies suggest that a large majority of us have ‘pierced through’ (as the French say) the constraints of the class system as our parents would have experienced it. Some will have had a privileged start thanks to the individual success of their parents or grandparents. In

¹³ Dake, K., ‘Orienting Dispositions in the Perception of Risk: an analysis of Contemporary World

either case there is a tendency to despise the positional family and culture. According to Bernstein these families are found in three kinds of social context, the working classes, the hereditary aristocracy, and the military. It is a culture that subordinates the good of the individual to that of the whole, is extremely efficient for coordination, with its coherent structure of subordination and command. It cannot allow individual competition to disrupt the calm repetitive cycle of the generations. It affords certainty over a large range of questions, inspires confidence and trust. Decision-making roles are clearly located at the top, support is readily mustered. This is the kind of culture that is capable of taking the long-term into account. In the light of the comparisons with other cultures, its greatest advantage is its strength in suppressing jealousy.

Having said this, we should still admit the grave conflict between our ideas of justice, in which each citizen has equal rights, and the ideas of justice which prevails in some positional societies where ideas of justice and status have to be accommodated to each other. Attached as an appendix is part of the 'Punishment Matrix' of the now outdated Muluki Ain legal code of Nepal (1854). Its provisions were replaced in 1964, and amended again more recently. It concerns illegal sexual intercourse; if the male offender is of high caste and his female victim is of low caste, the fine he pays is almost negligible, but it goes up with the risk in caste status of the women, until if he has assaulted or seduced a woman of his own caste it is very high indeed.¹⁴

Individualism

This cultural type corresponds to the personal family. The child is trained to stand up for him/herself, to speak up, and to challenge. Leaving aside the individual, and going to the social environment, Individualism is in the left bottom quadrant. It is a competitive culture. The well-being of the community does not come above the well-being of the individual. The prominent virtues are individual courage, intelligence, perseverance, and success. Power and wealth are the rewards. At the extreme point of the diagram, bottom left, the contrast with the positional culture is total. It is a tough environment, competition is merciless, the weakest will go to the wall.

Views and Cultural Biases', *Journal of Cross-cultural Psychology*, 22, 1.

¹⁴ This may count as an example of 'essential injustice' discussed in Benjamin Davy, 1997. See footnote 28..

Aaron Wildavsky, the most eminent leader of work on cultural theory, prided himself on belonging to the culture of Individualism. For him it is *par excellence* the culture of America, the culture of the pioneers who opened the west, the entrepreneurs who lead industry and science to where they are, who developed modern technology. Here again the problem of objectivity arises. If one culture is particularly beloved, the preference casts the others into a grey area of low esteem. Let us hope that if the effort of analysis does not lead to more mutual esteem at least it encourages objectivity.

Isolates

We are at the top left corner of the diagram. By definition, group is at a minimum and regulation at a maximum for what ever world is being studied. Everyone who is found in this situation must be an isolate, separated not by forests and swamps or other natural barriers to communication but separated by the rules and regulations that control social relations. Urban dwellers are likely to have this experience. Conventions prevent them from joining groups, perhaps because they lack qualifications, wrong colour, wrong accent, not enough money, or the wrong schooling. At the extreme tip of this quadrant the isolates, perhaps as deviants, or refugees, or immigrants, have not been able to meet the conditions for belonging to viable groups in the positional society. Or for similar reasons have lost patronage and been pushed out of the culture of competitive individualism.

We may well doubt whether it makes sense to speak of a culture of isolates, since culture is a collective product. If they can't get together how can they make a culture of their own? The answer is that in this case we are talking about a shared experience to which persons respond by developing a common set of ideas. Perhaps it would be less confusing to say that Isolates share a common philosophy. The name is 'fatalism'. Being alone, they have little or no influence, no close friends, no one has a reason to consult them, their support is not requested as it is hardly worth having. They don't have anyone much to talk to. (I am referring to the extreme point of the top left corner). Conversation is limited. Ideas get simplified. International conspiracy is one of the favourite easy explanations for the things that are wrong with the world. The isolate perceives injustice, accepts privation, but there is nothing to be done about it. 'It's all a stitch-up', a fatalist taxi-driver summed it up.

On apathy CT can be illuminating. Development Economists often find their best efforts thwarted by the apathy of the people whose lives they want to improve. Apathy is

the response to lack of opportunity. Cultural theory has an explanation and a remedy. It should be a prime concern of development officers to remove barriers to personal advancement, and, if they want to see their work bear fruit, to encourage a culture of competitive individualism¹⁵.

Enclave

Finally we come to the quadrant on the bottom, at the right. The combination of the two dimensions determine that this culture will have strong groups, and weak structure. That gives social groups with strongly barred frontiers and very feeble internal regulation of any kind. A group of monks living their life together in a monastery would correspond well to the group dimension, but not to the absence of structure. Their strict rule would place them among the positional cultures. The nearest I can think of would be the communes of the 1970's, or the many varieties of communities that flourished in America in the 19th century, or sectarians such as the Seventh Day Adventists, or the Plymouth Brethren. They had strict rules that regulated their contact with the outside, but inside the group they avoided social differentiation.

Aaron Wildavsky used to draw on Walter Scott's novel, *Old Mortality*, for visualizing such a community. These were paramilitary Covenanters (Calvinists) embroiled in the religious conflicts of 18th century Scotland. Fiercely intolerant, hard to each other and pitiless towards their enemies, the book gives such a sinister twist to the word 'sect' that it would have to belong to the extreme right point of the quadrant. This is the model from which in the early phases of grid/group analysis our ideas about the enclave were based. I shall show that later fieldwork has forced me to withdraw from this extreme position. As I saw it, a sect was composed of a group of persons who dissented from the way of life in the dominant society and had withdrawn to live together according to their chosen principles.

Wanting to account for the remarkably dichotomous thinking that characterises such sects, I developed the following argument. Being a dissenting minority, this group would have difficulties in preserving itself, threatened without by the society that it regarded as corrupted by wealth and power, and threatened from within by disaffected members, its political life would be very insecure. The leaders would constantly fear defection of

¹⁵ Douglas, M., 'Traditional Culture _ lets hear no more about it', with an appendix by Marco Verweij, edited by V. Rao and M. Walton, *Culture and Public Action*, 2004, pp.85-114.

members. Their best remedy was to paint the non-members as thoroughly evil, proved whenever their relations with the outside turned violent. Persecution and attack from the mainstream society would have the effect of rallying the flagging spirits of the group.

Structure legitimates the division of labour, economic and political. Without any structure, jealousy would be rampant. One of the disadvantages of a group conforming to this condition would be the difficulty of establishing authority and the consequent weakness of leadership. Anyone who tried to exercise influence would soon be accused of trying to split the group, or of free-loading. A common solution to the problem of leadership is to choose a charismatic person who can claim to be getting counsel from God direct. Another is to put decisions to aleatory tests. The immense difficulty of trying to live together without structure is well-described by Steve Rayner and J.G. Flanagan, in 'The Rules that Keep us Equal'.¹⁶ The existence of the enclave is continually threatened by defection or by factions and splitting. The leaders react by strengthening the barricades against the outside. Such drains on their attention and resources make for inefficiency. It is much easier for an enclave to make sharp short forays against its enemies and retreat behind its walls than to try to expand its areas of influence and bring a larger part of the population under its control. It is good at disrupting, bad at administration.¹⁷

At the beginning of our combined research Aaron Wildavsky felt deep disdain for the American political activists who had taken the cause of the environment to heart, and also the anti-nuclear programme of protest. In the Seventies they were attacking everything he held most dear, the government, industry, the military, blaming them for all the ills that afflict our planet. This negative bias was apparent in our joint writing of *Risk and Culture*¹⁸, and cost us some hostile reviews.

Before I move on to discuss major developments in the history of this work, I should underline the examples of intercultural hostility that have been noted. We have seen the incompatibility of Positional culture with competitive Individualism, and now the hostility between Individualism, Positional culture and enclaves. That this shows up so

¹⁶, Rayner, S., 'The Rules that Keep Us Equal' in J.G. Flanagan and S. Rayner, eds. *Rules, Decisions, and Inequality in Egalitarian Societies*, Avebury, 1988.

¹⁷ Rayner, S., 'The Perception of Time and Space in Egalitarian Sects: a Millenarian Cosmology', edit. Douglas, M., *Essays in the Sociology of Perception*, 1982, Routledge.

¹⁸ Douglas, M. and Wildavsky, A., *Risk and Culture*, 1984.

consistently and clearly is because the two dimensions on which the scheme is based identify strongly incompatible forms of organisation.¹⁹

Grid and Group, as I have described it so far, was in process of development. Every new piece of research brought clarification and development. From the start the scheme was a powerful discriminator of cultural bias, but it was static. It held no normative messages, it was a research tool, not a theory. Then Michael Thompson and Aaron Wildavsky started their collaboration. In 1990 they co-authored *Cultural Theory*.²⁰ Each had already been writing on the subject or risk, They had been working together for some time²¹. Aaron Wildavsky was professionally concerned in the big question on the political horizon, risks to the environment had become an important Washington lobby. In the course of his work at the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis in Vienna Michael Thompson had separately been drawn into a major project on the dangers and benefits of liquid natural gas.²² They agreed there was a need for a sociology text book that would put the theory into its historical context beside other schemes for approaching the relation between culture and society.

The happy convergence of their interests and talents transformed Grid/Group analysis from a modest method to a brand new theory. The scheme had been static and leaky, they clarified it and made it dynamic. The method had offered no normative lessons, now it became relevant to public policy. The changes in 1990 focused on three new assumptions. First, at the level of social organisation, every kind of society was deemed to comprise all four cultures, even at the family and specially at the national level. Second, at the cultural level, each of the four cultures is self-defined by contrast with, in opposition to, the others. Third, the relations between cultures in a given society is conflictful. (Here is the source of cultural dynamics). From these principles, came the principle of mutual honour between cultures. Though the cultures can empirically be ranked in importance in any one society, so that one culture may naturally have hegemony over the others, it will endanger well-being and harmony if the dominance of one culture oppresses and eliminates the others From the study of inter-cultural relations flows Michael Thompson's theory of 'Clumsy Institutions', an exercise in political

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²⁰ Thompson, Michael, Ellis, Richard and Wildavsky, Aaron, *Cultural Theory*, Boulder, Westview Press

²¹ Thompson, Michael, and Wildavsky, Aaron, 1986, 'A Cultural theory of Information Bias in Organisations', *Journal of Organisational Studies*,23:273-86,

science that advises against imposed one-sided solutions to dispute, and favours fair negotiations and jointly conceived and jointly executed policies²³.

A well-run community needs some hierarchy in the sphere of government, some enterprise on the part of Individualists, some criticism from Enclaves, and it cannot avoid having some passive members in the sector of Isolates. If the Positional culture dominates, it will make things hard for those in the lowest positions. If the Individualist culture dominates, ruthless competition will make the weak suffer. If the Enclave suffers, the heavy hand of moral censorship will calcify the cultural scene. If the others combine to suppress the Enclave, violence will erupt as the enclavists will not be silenced. Here lies the first of the normative lessons for our times, war on terrorism will not be won unless the Enclave's consciousness of injustice be calmed: 'Do not attend solely to the policing without attending to the injustices that fuel subversive movements'.

I conclude with a quick note on some important recent studies of oriental enclaves. Two cause us to revise our initial reading of the enclave culture, biased as it was on sectarian protest against government policy. Recall that the general picture that we had of the enclave culture emphasised its administrative weakness, factionalism, the membership a prey to jealousy, and the building of a moral fence separating members from non-members as a tool for strengthening internal authority. It is not an attractive picture, and I admitted to the very biased anti-sectarian literature that inspired the reading of that part of the diagram. Research in Palestine and Israel obliges us to unravel its meaning. From his field research on Arab and Israeli fundamentalist groups, Emmanuel Sivan (Hebrew University of Jerusalem) gives a new slant on movements which initially I would have taken to be extreme enclaves²⁴.

The main difference between Christian and Moslem sects stems from their position in the mainstream society. The Christian movements referred to above are intrinsically hostile to the surrounding society and to its established church. Consequently they suffer from the political disabilities I have listed. The case is quite different for Islamic and Jewish fundamentalist movements. They are not necessarily in disaccord with their fellow believers, though they may reproach them for luke-warmness. In the early history of Christianity, similar movements would not be attacking the Catholic authorities, but

²²Thompson, M., 'Postscript, a Cultural Basis for Comparison', Kunreuther, Howard and Linnerooth, Joanne, *Risk Analysis and Decision Process, the Siting of Liquefied Energy Gas Facilities in four Countries*, Springer-Verlag, 1983

²³Thompson, Michael, and Verweij, Marco, *Clumsy Solutions for a Complex World*, (forthcoming)

reacting to persecution by Rome. In the contemporary Middle East the Jews are reacting to threatening Arabs and the Arabs to persecuting Jews, outsiders in each case. These enclaves are not strongly withdrawn from the larger society surrounding them, or not very much. They actually enjoy support from public opinion and they may even be heavily subsidised by the State.²⁵ Their enclave politics are not in principle discordant with government policies, but they act independently.

Instead of these groups being withdrawn from the established society around them, it is rather their governments who are threatened and insecure in the much larger international scene. This makes a big difference to how the favoured enclave is organised and how it behaves. They would be expected to be more tolerant of ranking and authority, given their quasi-military activities. In which case, if they go further towards the Positional culture in ranking, they might have to be placed further towards the middle of the diagram and not on its extreme egalitarian edge.

Paul Mishal and Maoz Rosenthal (Political Science Department of the University of Tel Aviv) have made a typology of Arab terrorists. They defined a new type of political organisation which they call 'dune organisation' on account of its extreme fluidity. Again, it is a form of enclavism, but it enjoys the support of the dominant society. They do not construct a big wall to separate themselves from non-members. So far from being hostile towards groups with similar objectifs, they maintain fraternal relations and give and receive reciprocal aid.

For example, the objectives of Hizballah, Hamas, and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad are to liberate from the control of Israel all of Palestine and all the Lebanese territories. The objective of Al-Qaeda, more global and trans-national, is to overturn the Arab chiefs who fail to adhere to the Islamic Sharai rules, to destabilise the western world, especially America, Russia, and Israel so as to liberate the Islamic world from domination, (We observe that the enclave formation is uniquely well-adapted to destabilising and liberating.

New technology of communication has allowed further changes in favour of the political enclave and the Dune formation of its institutions. An organisation with aggressive projects against its enemies needs an effective system of communication with its affiliate groups. Thanks to electronic techniques it can contact its allies, ask for immediate military support or for armaments. Several such groups can combine for a

²⁴ Sivan, E. 'The Enclave Culture', edit. M. Marty, *Fundamentalism Comprehended*, Chicago University Press, 1995.

²⁵ Almond, Gabriel, and Sivan, E., *Strong Religion*,

well-co-ordinated attack, and after the action they can disperse and disappear without trace. The new enclave is not an ineffective form of organisation, for certain objectives it is admirably well-adapted. It seems that all that is needed is steady commitment of its members, and that is secured by the glory of the action itself.

The other oriental example is from Nepal. Dipak Gyawali, hydro-engineer, ex-minister in the government of Nepal, and expert in Cultural theory, wrote *Water in Nepal* to describe the perplexities of national water policy. It is about the 1980's, a passionate three-sided conflict. The government was wanting to secure prosperity and economic development in one of the poorest countries in the world; the big industrial multi-national companies were seeking big contracts for building big dams for hydro-electric development, and the government sided with them. Big dams are more productive than the small dams. Third, the agricultural interests, backed by the political activists, were aligned against both. The activists argued with reason that the big dams would destroy the livelihood of the small farmers. Big dams are more dangerous than small ones, and building them involves flooding whole valleys and displacing the rural population. The small farmers of Nepal faced ruin.

The enclaves of activists appealed to the conscience of the nation. They presented themselves as the champions of the poor, standing up to a government indifferent to the fate of the farmers, seduced by commercial interests, and by the hope of vast riches. But inevitably they were cast as the enemies of economic development. (Dipak draws the parallel with the same problems facing the Chinese Cultural revolution). They would have lost outright but for another modern development favouring enclaves and embarrassing governments. The 80's witnessed the growth of NGO's round the world. The movement for human rights became engaged in the matter, also Friends of the Earth, the government of Nepal faced an international furore and feared to lose the confidence of its big creditors. It had to make concessions, the conclusion was not an outright victory for the activists, but a compromise.

I conclude by naming a few more of many studies that show Cultural Theory as a useful tool for understanding political movements, and throwing light on human rights. The recent civil wars in Sierra Leone seemed tragically impenetrable to normal political analysis. Paul Richards has applied CT to uncover a deeply embittered rift between the young and older generations, modernisation having had the effect of disfranchising the

young, denying them the education and opportunities they might have enjoyed.²⁶ The problems of global warming had never been set in the perspective of the social sciences until Steve Rayner organised the massive four volume, *Human Choice and Climate Change*, in a CT framework²⁷. John Adams' critique of the English and American jury system explains how decisions are affected by perceptual filters provided by cultural bias, explaining how the debates on genetically manipulated organisms have come out differently in the two countries.²⁸

These are all instances of research that has practical implications. There remains to record the value of the reflective theses on human society that have been written in this tradition. Myself, I greatly value Benjamin Davies' treatise on how the concept of justice changes in harmony with the dominant culture. He calls it *Essential Injustice*²⁹, a title which recognises the great importance of the 1990 innovations which produced a Theory of Culture. The chart is the abstract space on which all possible social environments may be plotted. The two dimensions identify social systems which are intrinsically incompatible. Each is sustained by its supporting patterns of values, it is an anvil on which ideas of law and justice are hammered out. Inevitably they will be incompatible. Each culture protects its fragile institutions from dissolution by holding up the values of the other types to contempt. The injustice of the other cultures is essential to the viability of each. When we recoil at the old Nepalese system of fines which pays tribute to high standing offenders we are demonstrating the essential intercultural hostility which lies at the basis of CT.

Thanks to these innovative researches, we are justified in thinking that CT is here to stay and that eventually cultural influences will be automatically included in political and social analyses.

²⁶ Richards, Paul, 1996, *fighting for the Rain Forest: war, youth and resources in Sierra Leone*, Oxford, for the International African Institute.
1999, 'New Political violence in Africa: Secular sectarianism in Sierra Leone', *Geog. Journal*, (special issue, *Grid-Group Cultural Theory*, edit. V. mamadouh, 433-42).

²⁷ Rayner, S. and Malone, *Human Choice and Climate Change*,

²⁸ Adams, John,

²⁹ Davies, Benjamin, *Essential Injustice, When Legal Institutions Cannot Resolve Environmental and Land Use Disputes*, Springer , 1997