Introduction

Cultural diversity is inherent to the human condition. Humans live in webs of intersubjective meanings, expressed through, and embedded within, language, images, bodies, practices, and artefacts. These meanings shape our identities (and vice versa), inform our interests, and provide powerful resources that can be mobilized to realize diverse goals. Yet even in local contexts, the topography of culture is far from uniform. Individuals inhabit multiple, often contradictory identities – religious, ethnic, class, gender, professional, sexual, even transnational – and these become more or less salient as we move from one context to another. Culture also sends mixed messages. Individuals don't encounter one cultural script or a single neatly ordered repertoire of practices. Instead, they navigate diverse, often discordant, meanings. Added to this, individuals interpret these meanings differently. Religious meanings are a prime example. Christianity, Judaism, and Islam – all are systems of meaning, but all are subject to disparate interpretations.

If this is true of local contexts, it is an existential reality of global life. Cultural diversity is a given, just like unequal material capabilities. But while we are told repeatedly to stare material power in the face, to see it, and its implications, in the cold light of day, we either ignore culture or view it through worn and distorted lenses. This has left us profoundly ill-equipped to understand current transformations in world politics. Power is shifting to non-Western states, diffusing to non-state actors (including transnational insurgents), and undergoing a significant reconfiguration within liberal-democratic polities. Yet this redistribution of power is deeply entangled with culture. Rising states, such as China and India, bring to the stage their own cultural values, practices, and histories (contradictory and contested as these might be); transnational insurgents justify violence not in the name of national liberation or political ideology, but religious identity,

grievance, and change; and ethno-nationalism and civilizational chauvinism are the preferred garb of the West's far right.

If there was ever a time when international relations (IR) scholars needed to look squarely at culture, and to think clearly and systematically about the nature and implications of cultural diversity, it is now. IR scholars have, of course, looked at culture before, even if the field has been focused elsewhere. Samuel Huntington's 'clash of civilizations' is perhaps the most prominent example, but others include realist arguments about nationalism and strategic culture, English School writings on the civilizational foundations of international society, constructivist research on norms, rationalist work on how cultural symbols communicate the common knowledge that facilitates coordination, postcolonial writing on culture and imperialism, and normative theory on universalism and cultural particularism. Even materialist claims that culture is epiphenomenal or causally irrelevant, and rationalist moves to reduce culture to preferences, are, in some sense, arguments about the nature, place, and significance of culture. Yet all of these ways of seeing culture are problematic, amounting in the end to different forms of blindness to culture's nature and complexity.

This book is the first of three volumes on cultural diversity and international order. Debate rages today about the future of the modern 'liberal' international order, with widespread concern that civilizational, ethno-national, and religious differences are eroding an order built by the West, for the West. Others counter that the modern order, undergirded by norms of sovereign equality, non-intervention, and self-determination, is uniquely capable of accommodating states and peoples of diverse cultural backgrounds. Yet the truth is that we know very little about the relationship between cultural diversity and international order, and what we think we know rests on dubious assumptions about the nature of culture or simplistic, untested propositions about the adaptive capacities of modern institutions. My goal for these volumes is to place debate on more robust foundations, to understand, in a more systematic way, the nature of cultural diversity, how it affects international order, and how orders, in turn, condition diversity.

Such a project relies heavily on the insights of specialists in other fields: most notably anthropology, history, and sociology, as well as comparative politics and political theory. Volume II, written alongside this volume, presents a collaborative engagement between leading scholars of international order and prominent specialists on cultural

diversity, in part designed to engineer a new cross-disciplinary conversation, but also to enrich my own thinking by identifying key ideas from diverse fields and bringing them into systematic dialogue. What follows here has been greatly influenced by this engagement, and I thank my co-editor, Andrew Phillips, and our stellar collaborators for their intellectual aid.

Volume III will be a work of comparative historical sociology, similar in approach to my previous books on fundamental institutions and individual rights.[1] Much of today's debate about cultural diversity and international order has a 'shock of the new' quality, as though we have been living in a culturally homogeneous order and are only now beset by newly emergent (or salient) cultural differences. Yet like many of the truisms that persist in IR, this sits uncomfortably with history. New histories of the most important international orders of the past – the Chinese, the Ottoman, and the early modern – show that these orders emerged in heterogeneous, not homogeneous, cultural contexts, and that the governance of diversity was a key imperative of order building. Even a cursory reading of the history of the modern order reveals something very similar. From its origins in the nineteenth century, the modern order has been deeply conditioned by global cultural interactions, structured by civilizational hierarchies, wracked by nationalist conflicts, and has undergone a dramatic global expansion, encompassing in time the full complexity of the human cultural condition. The history of the modern order is punctuated by grand attempts to govern this diversity. The notorious 'standard of civilization', the granting of sovereignty, first, to ethnically defined nations and, later, to civic nations, and the propagation of international norms of multiculturalism are all examples. Getting a proper grasp on what new axes of cultural diversity, entangled with shifting configurations of power, mean for the future of the modern international order requires that we understand not only how diversity has shaped the order in the past (and how it has in turn conditioned diversity) but also how the modern experience compares with that of past orders. How was cultural diversity manifest and governed in these orders? How did this affect social hierarchies and stability? And what does this tell us

[1] Christian Reus-Smit, *The Moral Purpose of the State* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999); and Christian Reus-Smit, *Individual Rights and the Making of the International System* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

about the modern order, its distinctiveness, its capacity to adapt to shifting configurations of power and difference, and its relative cultural toleration?

Before we can get to this, though, considerable theoretical groundwork is required. Writing anything on culture in our field, let alone three books, immediately meets with scepticism. Culture is the home turf of other disciplines: a deeply unstable terrain on which IR scholars should tread warily. It is, first of all, a deeply contested concept, with struggles over its nature and meaning consuming generations of fine anthropological and sociological minds. More importantly, for a field with an energetic positivist core, culture is intangible and thus unmeasurable. This is partly because of its definitional ambiguity: if we can't define it, we can't measure it. A more significant reason, however, is that whichever definition you choose, it invariably involves intersubjective meanings. As critics of norms research ask repeatedly, how do we know an intersubjective meaning (or norm) when we see one, how do we measure it, and how do we weigh its causal effects (as if meanings were any more intangible or methodologically challenging than interests, or power for that matter)? Stepping from the study of single norms – the focus of much constructivist scholarship – to the level of culture, which invariably involves larger complexes of meanings, only compounds this problem.

Yet despite this scepticism IR scholars make assumptions about culture all the time, especially when thinking about international order. I am not referring here to the diverse literatures that examine culture and particular issue areas, such as culture and diplomacy, culture and foreign policy, culture and globalization, the culture of internationalism, or culture and normative theory.[2] Rather, I am concerned with the deeper understandings of culture, and in turn of cultural diversity, that often undergird these and other literatures. A central claim of this book is that IR scholars return time and again to a single, deeply problematic understanding, which I term the *default conception*. Different schools

[2] See, for example, Iver Neumann, *At Home with the Diplomats* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012); Valerie M. Hudson, *Culture and Foreign Policy* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1997); Mike Featherstone (ed.), *Global Culture* (London: Sage, 1990); Akira Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism and World Order* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997); Chris Brown, *Practical Judgment in International Relations* (London: Routledge, 2010); and Toni Erksine, *Embedded Cosmopolitanism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

of thought come at culture from different directions as they wrestle with their own distinctive questions and problematics. Yet despite their different approaches, they arrive at essentially the same conceptual destination. This default conception treats cultures as coherent entities: bounded, integrated, and distinct wholes. It imagines them as autogenous – products of their own internal processes. And it sees them as analytically distinct from society, but nonetheless deeply constitutive of social institutions and practices.

Identifying, explicating, assessing, and moving beyond this stubbornly recurrent understanding of culture are the tasks of this first book, *On Cultural Diversity*. The first three of these tasks are commonly dispensed with in a discrete literature review, a minor antecedent to the main game. The default conception is so deeply engrained in how we think about culture and international relations, however, that it demands sustained engagement. Moreover, the argument about cultural diversity I advance in these three volumes, and that unfolds first in Chapter 6, differs markedly from the common view, insisting that culture is always heterogeneous and contradictory, that social institutions play a key role in its patterning, and that culture, so understood, shapes political orders not as a deeply constitutive or corrosive force but as a governance imperative. Before readers will engage this new argument they will need persuading that their deeply engrained assumptions, and the established parameters of debate, are problematic and worth transcending. Sustained engagement with existing ways of seeing culture in IR has the side benefit of also providing, in a single volume, a critical survey of these approaches, offering a standalone resource for students and scholars interested in culture and IR theory.

Having said this, the following chapters make no pretence of providing a comprehensive survey of all conceptions of culture to be found in IR. Choices had to be made, and instead of going 'broad but thin' I have opted for 'narrow but thick'. This is partly because of the aforementioned need to subject the principal ways of seeing culture in IR to sustained critique, thus creating space for my alternative perspective. Such critique is possible only if attention is focused on a small number of key perspectives. The principal reason, however, relates to the larger purpose of these volumes – to understand, in a more sophisticated and systematic way, the relationship between cultural diversity and international order. This purpose has narrowed my

gaze, focussing attention on four perspectives that have been central to debates in IR about cultural diversity and order, that have been poles in broader debates about culture and world politics, or that have provided ideas I later enlist in the development of my new theoretical account. These perspectives are proffered by realists, the English School, constructivists, and rational choice theorists. Several other perspectives have insights that complement my own line of argument, most notably strands of feminism, poststructuralism, postcolonialism, and normative IR theory. I discuss these in Chapter 1, and enlist them later as either critical resources or theoretical building blocks.

Some books give their theoretical punch line early, say in the second or third chapter, and spend the remaining chapters providing an empirical or theoretical defence. Other books reason their way to a punch line that comes late in the piece, in the final substantive chapter perhaps. This book takes the second form. Chapter 1 surveys the evolution of ideas about culture in anthropology and sociology, locates IR's default conception within this evolution, and sets out a series of propositions about the nature of culture that serve as critical reference points in following chapters. Chapters 2 to 5 provide the detailed analyses of realist, English School, constructivist, and rational choice perspectives on culture. It is not until Chapter 6 that I set out my alternative theoretical perspective on cultural diversity and international order, wrapping up this book, offering some conceptual reference points for the interdisciplinary discussion in Volume II, and laying out, in preliminary form, a theoretical framework for Volume III's comparative historical sociology.

Raymond Williams famously observed that culture 'is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language'.[3] It has a meandering genealogical history, still has multiple meanings, and has long been subject to vigorous theoretical debate, yielding contending schools of thought across anthropology, cultural studies, and sociology (the 'specialist' disciplines or fields, as I shall call them). I make no claim to simplify this complexity or resolve these debates, especially as an IR scholar (a rank outsider if there ever was one). Chapter 1 does offer a working definition of culture that incorporates much that is common across contending schools of thought. Its main purposes,

[3] Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (London: Fourth Estate, 2014), p. 84.

however, are twofold. The first is to locate IR's default conception of culture within the long history of anthropological and sociological debates about the concept, showing how IR's understanding is marooned in debates that last thrived in the 1930s–1950s. The second purpose is to draw out two key insights from more recent work in anthropology, history, and sociology, insights that inform the critiques I advance in Chapters 2–5, and that I enlist when building my own perspective in Chapter 6. The first insight is that, contrary to the default conception, cultures are not homogeneous or unified entities, tightly integrated, neatly bounded, or coherently constitutive. The dominant view today is that culture is highly variegated, often contradictory, only loosely integrated, and fluidly and porously bounded. The second insight concerns social institutions. If culture is always heterogeneous, what gives it any form? Culture is not just a grab bag of atomized meanings, symbols, and practices for strategic use: it is patterned and structured, its contradictions bind as much as they divide. A key specialist insight is that social institutions play a crucial role in this patterning. Institutions are themselves cultural artefacts, but once established – once they take a structural form, reproduced through routinized practices – they channel 'the cultural flow'.[4]

These insights are not only alien to most IR scholarship, they challenge directly the default conception to which IR scholars routinely return, a view that would warm the heart of a 1930s anthropologist. Whether at the systemic level or at the level of the state, culture is seen as a coherent thing: a foundational substratum, deeply constitutive of political life. Institutions, from this perspective, are unproblematic cultural artefacts, their form determined by underlying cultural values, their efficacy sustained by cultural consensus. These views also inform much of the anxiety in Western capitals about the future of the modern order, as diversity is seen as threatening the cultural foundations of its institutions. The principal counter to such views comes from liberal pluralists, who grant institutions far more power. For some, the core institutions of sovereignty, non-intervention, and self-determination provide a framework that enables states and peoples of different cultures to coexist; for others, the open, rules-based nature of the post-1945 American-led order gives these states and peoples

[4] Ulf Hannerz, *Cultural Complexity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), p. 14.

unprecedented opportunities to pursue their interests, much as the liberal polity accommodates individuals with different purposes. Both views see institutions as neutralizing culture, as rendering cultural difference politically irrelevant. This misses, however, the key specialist insight – that institutions don't neutralize cultural difference, they organize it. They take extant cultural heterogeneity and construct authorized forms of difference.

Read from the perspective of these insights, the four approaches to culture considered in the following chapters amount, in the end, to different forms of blindness to culture. This is a bold claim, as at least three of these perspectives are explicitly concerned with culture or cultural phenomena. There are different ways to be conceptually, theoretically, or analytically blind, though. A perspective can be blind to culture because culture has no place in its ontology: its assumptions about the nature of the international universe do not include culture as a causally significant element. This is the blindness of heavily materialist versions of realism, discussed in Chapter 2. Blindness can also take a second form, though. A perspective can be blind to culture by not seeing it for what it is: by looking, but not seeing – much like teenagers searching for things in their bedrooms. This is the blindness of the default conception, manifest in realist discussions of groups, strategic culture, and order and legitimacy (Chapter 2), in culturalist strands of the English School (Chapter 3), in constructivist accounts of international order (Chapter 4), and in rationalist arguments about culture and common knowledge (Chapter 5).

Some might find it strange that I include a chapter on realism at all, as its blindness to culture appears so complete, rendering it largely irrelevant to a project concerned with cultural diversity and international order. Beyond telling us that culture matters little to the cut and thrust of real world politics, what resources can it possibly offer? Yet, as Chapter 2 explains, realism is a complicated beast, with at least two faces. On the one hand, its default view of the world is materialist: realists stress guns and money first, and ask questions about other factors later. On the other hand, there are certain issues that draw realists inexorably onto the cultural terrain. Groupism, for example, is a core realist assumption: IR is a realm of organized conflict groups, principally states. But when realists unpack the nature of these groups, their arguments become strongly cultural. Similarly, in order to explain why different states respond differently to the same security imperatives,

realists, along with others, have turned to the study of strategic culture, invoking again a version of the default conception. Most importantly for this project, when classical and neoclassical realists probe the foundations of international order, culture enters as a key source of legitimacy. Henry Kissinger has long argued that legitimacy is essential to a stable international order.[5] In his recent work he stresses how essential a shared civilization is for such legitimacy, highlighting the common culture that undergirded the European order, and fearing that a 'generally accepted legitimacy'[6] will be impossible in today's culturally divided world.[7]

No school of thought has devoted more attention to the relationship between culture and international order than the English School. It evinces two very different positions, though: one culturalist, the other pluralist. As Chapter 3 explains, the first is exemplified by Martin Wight's writings, the second by Robert Jackson's, while Hedley Bull's thought contains elements of both. Wight presented a quintessential expression of the default conception of culture, holding that international orders emerge only in unified cultural contexts, common values inform the nature of international institutions, cultural consensus bolsters normative compliance, and diversity undermines order. Jackson's pluralism could not be more different. In response to the religious turmoil of the Thirty Years' War, states instituted a unique solution to the problem of order in diversity. Norms of sovereign equality and non-intervention allowed states of diverse cultural complexions to coexist, effectively transferring culture as an issue from the international to the domestic arena. Bull's position was more complex. Like Wight, he saw a common culture as an important basis of international order, but ultimately he stressed the elementary interests that drive states to construct a pluralist international society. Where Wight feared for the future of order in a multicultural world, and Jackson discounts such concerns, Bull's writings vacillate between a confidence in underlying pluralist interests and anxiety about anaemic global culture. As we shall see, these contrasting positions supervene on other aspects of the English School's thought: producing, most notably,

[5] Henry Kissinger, *A World Restored: Metternich, Castlereagh and the Problems of Peace: 1812–1822* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1957).
[6] Ibid., p. 1.
[7] Henry Kissinger, *World Order: Reflections on the Character of Nations and the Course of History* (London: Allen Lane, 2014), p. 8.

conflicting narratives of international history. What matters for the larger project, though, is that the School is torn between two equally unsatisfying views of culture. Wight's conception of culture is vulnerable to all of the aforementioned criticisms of the default conception, and his widely quoted claim that the best historical examples of systems of states have all emerged in unified cultural contexts is belied by a wealth of new histories.[8] Jackson's conception suffers from precisely the opposite problem: religious conflict spurred the Westphalian solution, but after the Westphalian settlement institutes a pluralist international society, culture drops out of his account, offering us no resources with which to understand the complex cultural politics that has actually shaped the modern order.

Constructivists treat cultural phenomena, if not culture, as foundational. Ideational structures are privileged; their intersubjective meanings determining how, among other things, actors understand material structures – 'anarchy is what states make of it', as Alexander Wendt famously argues.[9] Meanings are also said to constitute actors' social identities, a primary source of their interests. And, last, rules and norms are seen as providing reasons for action, justificatory resources that actors conscript to realize their interests. Not surprisingly, constructivists often cast what they study as 'culture'; Peter Katzenstein's landmark collection, *The Culture of National Security*, is a case in point.[10] Yet constructivism evinces two, equally unsatisfactory, treatments of culture. The first disaggregates culture into individual norms, and then studies their emergence, reproduction, and causal effects. However productive this project has been, it obscures how individual norms, or normative dyads, sit within wider complexes of diverse and often discordant meanings and practices. Not only does this pay

[8] See, for example, Karen Barkey, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative* Perspective (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010); Euan Cameron, *The European Reformation*, 2nd edn. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Pamela Kyle Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror: History and Identity in Qing Imperial Ideology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Lisa Lowe, *The Intimacies of Four Continents* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015).

[9] Alexander Wendt, 'Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics', *International Organization*, 46.2 (1992), 391–426.

[10] Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).

insufficient attention to the fact that actors always navigate complex intersubjective terrains; it misses the highly complex cultural contexts in which international orders evolve. The second approach treats culture as deep structure, as a coherent set of constitutional norms, social epistemes, or collective mentalities that determine the institutional architectures of international orders. Here the problem is not atomism but undifferentiated holism, and it is in this work that we see one of the most pronounced expressions of the default conception of culture.

Rationalists offer the fourth way of approaching culture. Many assume that they have nothing to say on the subject (or, more critically, nothing to contribute). By focusing on the strategic, utility-maximizing behaviour of individuals, bracketing interest formation, and discounting the constitutive role of institutions, rationalists are seen as fencing off culture, treating it as ontologically irrelevant. Yet these criticisms miss the now well-developed rationalist accounts of culture, accounts that grant significant weight to intersubjective meanings, albeit within a choice-theoretic framework. Rationalists have long argued that their focus on individual preferences accommodates cultural phenomena, as nothing in their theory requires interests to be material, and cultural values are most saliently expressed through individual preferences. As Chapter 5 shows, however, this is now complemented by an argument about the structural significance of intersubjective meanings. For individuals to coordinate their actions they need common knowledge – knowledge that everyone knows, and everyone knows that everyone knows.[11] Culture provides this knowledge, rationalists argue. Rituals and practices, which instantiate intersubjective meanings, reproduce and communicate the information individuals need to coordinate. As Chapter 6 explains, this insight helps explain why order-builders routinely seek to organize and discipline the complex cultural environments they encounter, channelling culture in ways that facilitate control through coordination. It is limited in two important respects, though. It does nothing, first of all, to counter the long-standing criticism that rationalists ignore the constitutive power of intersubjective meanings: how they shape actors' identities and interests before issues of coordination ever arise. More importantly for this project, it is

[11] Michael Suk-Young Chwe, *Rational Ritual: Culture, Coordination, and Common Knowledge* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), p. 3.

not clear that the rationalist view captures the complexities of culture, the fact that in any given cultural context individuals have to navigate multiple, often conflicting values and practices, and that this complexity has its own implications for the development of political orders. Indeed, unamended, the rationalist thesis that shared rituals and practices are needed to generate the common knowledge that enables coordination can be read as supporting the problematic Wightian thesis that a unified culture is necessary for the emergence of an international order (qua system of states).

As this brief survey indicates, all four ways of seeing culture circle back, through one path or another, to some version of the default conception of culture. Cultures – whether strategic mindsets, nations, civilizations, or collective mentalities – are imagined as coherent things: integrated, differentiated, and strongly constitutive in their effects.

The argument I advance in Chapter 6, and summarize here, starts from a very different position.[12] We should begin by assuming existential cultural diversity, by assuming that the cultural terrain in which politics plays out is polyvalent, multilayered, riven with fissures, often contradictory, and far from coherently integrated or bounded. As Andrew Hurrell argues, 'it is precisely *differences* in social practices, values, beliefs, and institutions that represent the most important expression of our *common* humanity. What makes us different', he insists, 'is precisely what makes us human'.[13] Elements of unity, strands of commonality, and patches of homogeneity do exist, of course, but we learn more about politics, I suggest, especially the politics of international orders, if we treat these as things to be explained, not assumed. It would be tempting at this point to accept the fact of diversity but adopt the standard practice of norms research: locate key constitutive norms within the heterogeneous mix and trace how they shape or sustain an international order. Again, my approach is different. My previous work shows how hegemonic beliefs affect the nature of an order's basic institutions.[14] I now think that cultural

[12] This argument was first elaborated in Christian Reus-Smit, 'Cultural Diversity and International Order', *International Organization*, 71.4 (2017), 851–885.
[13] Andrew Hurrell, *On Global Order: Power, Values, and the Constitution of International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 40.
[14] Reus-Smit, *Moral Purpose of the State*; and Christian Reus-Smit, 'The Constitutional Structure of International Society and the Nature of Fundamental Institutions', *International Organization*, 51.4 (1997), 555–589.

diversity itself has an effect, above and beyond the constitutive effects of any particular meanings.

I argue elsewhere that international orders are best conceived as systemic configurations of political authority,[15] and like all authority structures they require legitimation. This is always a complex affair, but involves two principal challenges. The first, which has received considerable attention, requires inequalities of material power to be converted into political authority: might has to become right, so to speak. The second challenge, which has been largely neglected, is to turn extant cultural heterogeneity into authorized forms and expressions of difference. Three imperatives drive order-builders to so organize diversity. Control is number one. In heterogeneous cultural environments multiple opportunities exist for the construction of identities, mobilization of meanings, and the harnessing of both to diverse political projects, which can be either order sustaining or order threatening. By organizing diversity, order-builders seek to institutionalize preferred meanings and identities, engineer consent for these institutions, and limit the scope for innovation. The second imperative is self-location: the placing of one's identity, as an order-builder, within the cultural terrain one seeks to organize. This involves the cultural narration of identity; the crafting of the broader landscape of identities, meanings, and practices; and the choreographing of hierarchical relations within this landscape. The third imperative is social and political coordination. By privileging and structuring meanings, licensing and ordering forms of identification, and authorizing certain practices, order-builders generate the common and collective knowledge needed for such coordination. In all of this, order-builders are not animated solely by strategic calculation, but are commonly informed by their own beliefs about what constitutes a legitimate cultural order.

Meeting these legitimation challenges has had a significant affect on the institutional architectures of international orders. Although largely ignored by IR scholars, all international orders have developed what I term 'diversity regimes': systemic norms and practices that legitimize

[15] See Reus-Smit, 'Cultural Diversity and International Order'; Christian Reus-Smit, 'The Concept of Intervention', *Review of International Studies*, 39.4 (2013), 1057–1076; and Christian Reus-Smit, 'The Liberal International Order Reconsidered', in Rebekka Friedman, Kevork Oskanian, and Ramon Pacheco-Pardo (eds.), *After Liberalism* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp. 167–186.

certain units of political authority (states, empires, etc.), define recognized categories of cultural difference (religion, civilization, nation, etc.), and relate the two (civilization and empire, nation and state, etc.). All of the great moments of order building that have occupied IR scholars – Westphalia, Vienna, Versailles, San Francisco, and post-1945 decolonization – involved the construction of such regimes, and the same is true of the great non-Western orders. The Ottomans instituted the Millet system, for example, and the Qing Chinese established the Lifanyuan and Eight Banners systems: all marrying particular configurations of political authority with distinctive organizations of cultural difference. Built in response to prevailing distributions of material capabilities and articulations of cultural difference, these regimes have historically faced two pressures for change: shifts in the underlying distribution of material power, and the expression and mobilization of new cultural claims, often animated by grievances against the exclusions and hierarchies of prevailing or past diversity regimes.

This argument about diversity and order takes seriously the insistence by anthropologists, cultural studies scholars, and sociologists that cultural complexity and heterogeneity are the norm. It also builds on their instructive insight about the structuring effects of institutions. From studies of how 'diversity' policies adopted in multiple institutional contexts have restructured the racial order in the United States,[16] through analyses of contrasting national multicultural policies and their effects on patterns of ethnic identification,[17] to research on how the legal institution of marriage conditions the culture of love,[18] scholars have shown how institutions give culture form. My own work on international law shows that the same dynamics are at work at the international level, with the institutional norms and practices of international law structuring global cultural interaction around human rights.[19] Chapter 6 applies this insight to international orders, arguing

[16] Ellen Berrey, *The Enigma of Diversity: The Language of Race and the Limits of Racial Justice* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2015).
[17] Kenan Malik, 'The Failure of Multiculturalism', *Foreign Affairs*, 94.2 (2015), 21–22.
[18] Ann Swidler, *Talk of Love: How Culture Matters* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2001).
[19] Christian Reus-Smit, 'International Law and the Mediation of Culture', *Ethics and International Affairs*, 28.1 (2014), 1–18.

that the very fact of cultural heterogeneity drives order-builders to construct diversity regimes, institutional norms and practices designed to authorize particular axes of cultural difference and link these to structures of political authority.

Thinking about diversity and order in this way has several implications, two of which are taken up in the Conclusion. The first concerns how we should think about the future of the modern international order. As noted earlier, debate is presently polarized between two positions. Culturalists see the modern order as a Western cultural artefact, and fear for the order's survival under conditions of heightened cultural diversity. Institutionalists, by contrast, place faith in the modern order's distinctive institutions, claiming that they can accommodate states and peoples of diverse cultural backgrounds. The first of these fails to understand that cultural diversity has been a constant in the history of the modern order, and the second misses the recognition function of international institutions: how they organize, not neutralize, cultural diversity. From the perspective advanced here, both positions fail to grasp the key question for the future of the modern order: Can the prevailing diversity regime accommodate new conjunctions of power and articulations of difference? The second implication of my argument is normative. Until recently, normative debate in IR has been pulled between cosmopolitan universalism, which discounts the moral significance of cultural differences, and communitarian relativism, which sees discrete cultural communities as the primary sources of moral values and obligations. The argument advanced here challenges both of these positions, holding (against cosmopolitans) that culture matters, but (against communitarians) that its diversity is not that of cultural billiard balls. Moreover, while cultural landscapes are always highly varied, they are also institutionally structured. Political theorists have long been attuned to this institutional ordering of diversity, subjecting the assimilation and multicultural policies of states to sustained normative scrutiny. Normative IR theorists have largely ignored the international analogues of these policies and practices, and taking them seriously, I suggest, requires an institutional turn.