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The Anthropology of Politics

A Reader in Ethnography, Theory, and Critique

Edited by

Joan Vincent

Blackwell Publishing

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Introduction

Joan Vincent

Anthropology's definition of politics and its political content has almost invariably been so broad that politics may be found everywhere, underlying almost all the discipline's concerns. At one time colleagues in political science criticized anthropologists for viewing politics simply as a matter of power and inequality (Easton 1959). Today, political anthropologists consider sensitivity to the pervasiveness of power and the political a prime strength.

Looking for articles to include in this Reader, I was very aware that a collection built around theory or intellectual history alone would fail to represent the dynamic processes through which political anthropology has defined itself, its relation to politics in the "outside" world, and the manner in which its accumulation of knowledge has taken place. What gives political anthropology its vitality is the complex play of field research with ethnography, ethnography with theory, and theory with critique.

The Reader's four parts, as narrative, are organized in approximate chronological order with field research, ethnography, theory, and critique represented in each part. Each part has an introduction, which focuses on themes or issues addressed in its chapters. These place the readings within the context of their times and suggest links with other chapters in the Reader, thus enabling the reader to see how similar problems and issues are addressed at different times in the history of the subfield. The introductions to parts also alert the reader to moments of change in subject matter or approach. Suggestions for Further Reading provide resources to further supplement theory with ethnography, and to locate alternative arguments in critique.

The rest of this introductory chapter has two simple objectives. The first is to provide an overview of the paths taken by anthropologists of politics and the second is to introduce a, perhaps surprising, finding that emerges only when one considers the readings as a whole. This is the subterranean presence of the ideas and values of the eighteenth-century European Age of Enlightenment in the anthropology of politics. A short conclusion characterizes some driving political changes that occurred with the outbreak of the Cold War in 1946 and questions whether the

theoretical approaches adopted within political anthropology are adequate to analyze and understand those changes. Appreciative of what has been achieved by the anthropologists whose work is represented in the Reader, it ends on an optimistic note.

The Anthropology of Politics: An Overview

Political anthropology was a late subfield specialization within social and cultural anthropology. Between 1940 and the late 1960s a generation of political anthropologists was exceptionally cohesive, establishing a canon and setting out a program for the subfield. But apart from that short period, anthropology's conception of politics has been inclusive enough for political aspects and content to be identifiable in nearly every branch of the discipline throughout its long professional history. For political anthropology a suitable starting point may be found in Lewis Henry Morgan's study of the league of the Iroquois (Morgan 1851). This was described by the first director of the United States government's Bureau of American Ethnology as "the first scientific account of an Indian tribe given to the world" (Powell 1880: 115). "In the beginning," as the English philosopher John Locke put it, "all the world was America."

The objective world fashions political anthropology as much as anthropology constructs and reconstructs the world in which its practitioners find themselves (Vincent 1990). In its broadest outline, the anthropology of politics can be narrated in terms of an intellectual history framed initially by British cultural hegemony over an anglophone imperial world and then by United States cultural hegemony over a world system dominated by Cold War concerns. A critical turning point in the subdiscipline came with the decline of empire and American defeat in the war in Vietnam.

Three phases may be recognized in anthropology's relationship with politics. In the first formative era (1851–1939) anthropologists studied the political almost incidentally to other interests. This phase is not represented in the Reader. In the second phase (1940 to about 1972) political anthropology developed a body of systematically structured knowledge and a self-conscious discourse.

This phase is represented in the Reader in Part II, "Classics and Classics Revisited." The first six chapters take the reader back to the political ethnography of E. E. Evans-Pritchard among the Nuer peoples of the southern Sudan, the South African ethnography of Max Gluckman, the Swat ethnography of Norwegian anthropologist, Fredrik Barth, and an ethnographic case study from a village in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) of Edmund Leach. These are "revisited" in these pages by Sharon Hutchinson, an American anthropologist working in war-torn Sudan among the Nuer from the 1980s to the present; by Ronald Frankenberg, who discusses the lasting value of Gluckman's "situational analysis" of the opening of a bridge in Zululand; and Talal Asad's critical re-evaluation of Barth's work, which suggests an alternative theoretical model that better accounts for the political organization Barth describes. It is suggested that the reader might accept Edmund Leach's invitation to reanalyze the intricate fieldwork data he presents.

The second section of Part II contains five new approaches, or calls for new approaches, that began to emerge in the 1960s. These range from Action Theory, through Symbolic Theory to Systems Theory, and then explode, as it were, with two

challenges to anthropology to break away from "business as usual" (i.e. developing the canon) in order to confront the issues of the objective world of national liberation movements, imperialism and colonialism, communism, and growing global inequalities. This opens a third phase in political anthropology, when all disciplinary specialization came under severe challenge.

As new paradigms challenged the earlier dominating, coercive systems of knowledge, political anthropology was first decentered and then deconstructed. The political turn taken by contingent disciplines such as geography, social history, literary criticism, and, above all, feminism, revitalized anthropology's concern with power and powerlessness. This is reflected in the readings in Part III (most of which come from the 1970s and 1980s), which I have called "Imperial Times, Colonial Places." The political issues addressed in these chapters, I suggest, provided a launchpad for an anthropology of politics that may contribute to a better understanding of the "phantasmagoric representations" of modernity in what has been termed "the Second Coming of capitalism" (Reyna 1999; Comaroff and Comaroff 2000).

The Enlightenment and its Challenges

> Without a plan... the citizen of the world remains very limited in his anthropology.
> (Immanuel Kant)

This section sets out on an exploration of "the real" Enlightenment (to echo those of our Eastern European friends who are replacing the study of socialist ideologies with that of actually existing societies). It is, in part, a response to the fact that the ideas and values of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century European Enlightenment are alive, if not well, at the beginning of the twenty-first. Increasingly, Enlightenment concepts such as "civil society" and "cosmopolitan" are being tested for their usefulness and questioned for their Eurocentrism.

The reader will find that over one quarter of the chapters in Part II, just over one half in Part III, and three-quarters in Part IV address the Enlightenment in one way or another. Thus, to take but a few examples, one moves from Kathleen Gough's Enlightenment visions of "the science of Man" and Eric Wolf's socialists and libertarians whose "root is man" in Part II; through Fox's European utopians, Unitarians, simplifiers, and sexual libertarians, and Taussig's *muchachos* of Putumayo who "traded their identity as savages for a new social status as civilized Indians and guards," to the Comaroffs' narrative of a "postenlightenment process of colonization in which Europe set out to grasp and subdue the forces of savagery, otherness and unreason" in Part III. And all this and more before embarking on Part IV, where the post-Enlightenment world of modernity (Friedman), the Enlightenment principles of equality, citizenship, individual rights and protection, sanctity of private property, popular sovereignty, progress and common good (Nugent), the emergence of modernity (Reyna), stereotypes of unilinear evolution to modern and postmodern (Tsing), enlightened cosmopolitans (Ong), civil society (Verdery), unexpected consequences (Ferguson), and the invisible hand of Adam Smith (Edelman) precede what I like to think of as the "sting in the tail." This takes the form of Spivak's suggestion in the last chapter that we do not "turn our backs on the Enlightenment but rather... learn how to revise and recycle it through lessons learned from below."

The influence of the eighteenth-century western European Enlightenment has been so profound and so widespread that it has become imperceptible. Ever since ethnologists began to study politics, they have adopted a vocabulary born of the ideas and debates of Enlightenment writers. Consider, for example, the terms community, contract, civil society, cosmopolitan, *habitus*, manifold, property – just to dip into Howard Caygill's provocative *Kant Dictionary* (1995) – as well as innocent-sounding terms like "common sense." All have been absorbed into the analytical tool kit of twenty-first-century political anthropology. That several of these terms are commonly attributed to more recent thinkers, such as Gramsci or Bourdieu, suggests how imperceptible, indeed, have been Enlightenment thought and values.

The Enlightenment, we now know, was an entity constructed only in the late nineteenth century (Pocock 1987). The label itself was clearly derived from the writings of the German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) who pronounced (perhaps with self-protective political intent) that his own era – the Germany of Frederick the Great – was an age of enlightenment that sought to use reason to solve the manifold problems of humanity. It is no coincidence, surely, that the construction of *the* Enlightenment occurred at a time when European academics were setting out to institutionalize the sciences of man in discrete university disciplines. Enlightenment ideas provided genealogical legitimacy for an ethnology problematically straddling the humanities and sciences (Stocking 1996; Wolf 1964).

Shadowy counter-enlightenments have always existed alongside *the* Enlightenment and these also manifested themselves in political anthropology. The historian Jack Hexter, provides our metaphor when he writes of "The Sown and the Waste", in a medieval village community (1972). Although called "waste", the commons that lay around the medieval village were not really wasteland at all. Commons were grazing areas worked, unlike the well-cultivated plots, by labor-extensive methods. The anthropology of politics contains within itself just such a relationship. There coexist "cultivated patches of systematically structured knowledge" and, beyond the sown, "not desert, not mere ignorance and confusion," but "waste" rich in knowledge of a qualitatively different kind.[1]

The Enlightenment's systematically structured knowledge was the ideological scaffolding of industrial capitalism that Jean and John Comaroff (1991: 60) have captured so succinctly, even as they call for something more:

> Much has been made, quite correctly, of the rise of utilitarian individualism: in particular, its celebration of the virtues of the disciplined, self-made man; of private property and status as signs of personal success, poverty as a fitting sanction for human failure; of enlightened self-interest and the free market, with its "invisible hand," as the mechanism for arriving at the greatest public good; of reason and method, science and technology, as the proper means for achieving an ever more educated and elevated, civilized and cultivated mankind.

The something more they wish to hear is the voice of those who challenge the pursuit of pure reason and enlightened self-interest, advocating a return to a world of the spirit and the imagination. This is a voice broadcast in art and literature in the eighteenth century (Butler 1981; Herzfeld 1997) but one harder to retrieve from the archives of non-conformist religious sects and working-class friendly societies (Erdman 1991; Thompson 1993.) In parochial terms, political anthropologists might hear this as a call for anthropological political economy *plus* symbolism,

imagery, and social poetics, as in Victor Turner's "Passages, Margins, and Poverty" (chapter 8). Rapprochment was happily achieved in the 1980s, as several of the chapters in Part III attest. Systematically structured knowledge – science and reason, progressive evolution, the commercial paradigm of the Enlightenment – tends towards homogeneity and exclusivity and to become hegemonic. Witness its presence in the Reader. Subaltern knowledge tends to remain multiplex and fractured, "passing" under many labels, shadow paradigms in the grey literature of a counter-Enlightenment (Beiser 1992; Hulme and Jordanova 1990). The reader must ask to what extent this grey literature is represented in these pages. The eighteenth-century counter-enlightenments were lodged in the "systematic disbelief"[2] of mystical and fundamentalist religion and in working-class protest movements. Hence its place in the political interpretations of nineteenth-century Irish American ethnographer James Mooney; he wrote a path-breaking account of a political rebellion among the Sioux Indians and of their infamous massacre by the United States military on the battlefield of Wounded Knee (Mooney 1896, 1965).[3] But where is this voice in today's world? The ideas of Immanuel Kant, Adam Ferguson, and Adam Smith are the building blocks of a standing monument to the Enlightenment belief in reason and rationality, but the "systematic disbelief" of, say, the Italian philosopher Giambattista Vico, whom Edmund Leach admired, or the poet-engraver William Blake, much cited by Victor Turner, Edward Said, and Edward Thompson, is but the shattered ruin of an alternative vision.

Addressing a session of the American Anthropological Association on the subject of "Representations of the Colonized" organized by William Roseberry and Talal Asad in 1987, the literary critic Edward Said preached to the converted (Asad 1973, 1987, 1992, 1993, and chapter 12 in this volume). He reminded his listeners that "there is no discipline, no structure of knowledge, no institutions or epistemology that can or has ever stood free of the various sociocultural, historical and political formations that give epochs their peculiar individuality" (Said 2000: 299). More recently Clifford Geertz credited historians Quentin Skinner and John Pocock with having got round to writing history as "a story of the engagement of intellectuals with the political situations that lie around and about them; rather than as an immaculate procession of doctrines moved along by the logic of ideas" (Geertz 2000: 218). Observations such as these marginalize political anthropology's long-standing appreciation and use of the work of intellectual historians.[4] Let us, therefore, turn directly to the invisible complicities of power and knowledge in the age of Enlightenment and revisit case-specific political ethnography (some of which appears in the Reader) that has contributed to this explanation.

Enlightenment scholars were men of three worlds.[5] First, they inhabited a small bourgeois world. Many were university professors, some of them (like Immanuel Kant) living and dying in the place where they were born. They were blessed with a rapidly changing social environment in the cities of eighteenth-century Europe where clubs and societies furthered their intellectual transactions. With the growth of political awareness among widening sectors of society, periodicals and learned journals multiplied as did a "reading public." Many of their works were translated promptly and received wide circulation (Oz-Salzburger 1995a, 1995b). Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1983) has set out clearly what is involved in the imaginative construction of such a world. At

its core he found a specific form of capitalism that he called "print capitalism" The invention of printing was as revolutionary a form of communications technology then as Pan-Am, email and the world wide web were in the twentieth century.

A second world of the Enlightenment intellectual was one of aggressive nationalism. Kant's self-ascribed Age of Reason and Criticism was also an Age of Militarization and Revolution. Relations between the nation states of which the Enlightenment scholars were citizens tended to take the form of either war or trade, with war either interrupting established trade patterns or furthering new ones. The eighteenth century is not an era that most anthropologists of state formation have entered upon, and it is necessary to turn to historians for enlightenment as Stephen Reyna does in his essay on "deadly developments" (1999, chapter 24 in this volume). Reyna describes how the capitalist nation states of Atlantic Europe developed as "killing machines" through reciprocity between military regimes and merchants. They established, in short, military-capitalist complexes that profited from state expansion (1999: 57–8). In this transnational European milieu, a social movement of intellectuals addressed the nature of political society, the extent to which differences between nations reflected temporal and geographical variation, types of government, patterns of progress and decline, and the tension between "private" and "public" man (Oz-Salzberger 1995b). Their questions remain salient for political anthropology today but their answers, given the times that produced them, smack of what one philosopher has called hypocrisy and another hubris. No wonder, then, that Asad urges anthropology to "take the cultural hegemony of the West as its object of inquiry" (1993: 24).

The third world in which the Enlightenment movement flourished – and on which it fed – was that of imperial expansion. The process by which European Atlantic states and market interests acquired footholds in the Americas and the Orient in the eighteenth century has been reconstructed for a later period (Stoler, chapter 14) largely using European archival sources. The experience of the indigenes in contact with the West tends to elude us despite family memories that have been passed down over the generations – the Prices' Surinam perspective not withstanding (Stedman 1988). Enlightenment scholars were highly concerned with the making of a civilized humanity worldwide but less concerned with the change that their western European brand of "civilization" was introducing. Some of these changes are recorded in Eric Wolf's magisterial *Europe and the People Without History* (1982: chs. 2–8). June Nash reviews the adequacy of post-Enlightenment analysis of *the* modern world systems analysis in chapter 20. Her attention to colonized and neo-colonized "passive peripheries" of indigenous peoples recalls the agenda set forth in 1967/8 by Kathleen Gough (chapter 10), her critique of market models of political organization that of Talal Asad (chapter 5).

But there is an underside that up until now has only been hinted at: the making of a transnational laboring class. In the new transatlantic economy of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, this was made up of seamen, slaves, indentured Irishmen, Native Americans, and pirates from Europe, Africa, the Caribbean and North America brought together through the circular transmission of human labor. European merchants, manufacturers, planters, and government officials organized workers from Africa, the Americas, and Europe to produce and transport commodities such as gold bullion, furs, fish, tobacco, sugar, and manufacturers. To their masters this first modern industrial proletariat was a many-headed monster, a

symbol of continuously self-replenishing disorder and resistance, which constantly threatened state formation, empire, and capitalism. Insurrections fringed the North Atlantic, launching the Age of Revolution first in Jamaica and America and then in Haiti, France, Ireland, and England.

In arriving at this hidden history of "the revolutionary Atlantic" in their book *The Many-Headed Hydra*, historians Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker trace lineal descent from Adam Smith, "the first theorist of capitalism" and Karl Marx, "its profoundest critic" (Linebaugh and Rediker 2000: 327). But they head their concluding chapter "Tyger! Tyger!," signifying that they have moved beyond Enlightenment to counter-Enlightenment themes. Now, "Tyger! Tyger!" is one of the most popular of William Blake's poems and, to make their message quite clear, they reproduce several of Blake's engravings that evoke the terror of John Gabriel Stedman's *Narrative of a Five Years Expedition against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam* (1988). Michael Taussig's classic "Culture of Terror – Space of Death" (chapter 15) grimly documents the oppressive conditions of plantation labor in Africa and Latin America a century later.

But political anthropology's interconnectedness with this new historical thesis is even closer. A reproduction of Blake's engraved image of "Europe Supported by Africa and America" (Linebaugh and Rediker 2000: 350), showing a naked, long-tressed white-skinned woman (Europe) supported by the two naked dark-skinned female figures of (Africa) and (America), furthers the connection. Europe drapes a plaited rope across her two "supporters." It is no coincidence that anthropologist Sidney Mintz used that self-same engraving as frontispiece in his *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (1985). After reading Eric Wolf's threnody of anthropology's failure to produce a satisfactory ethnography of global capitalism (chapter 19) we might consider this a step along a fourth path not yet pursued quite far enough in anthropology's analysis of global politics.

But Mintz went a fair way along that fourth path. Over twenty years earlier he had criticized in characteristically ethnographic voice the "so-called world system" of Immanuel Wallerstein. He had identified the Caribbean plantation system as the first site of industrial capital, dependent on the slave trade, and with a distinctive culture of labor (Mintz 1977). In an earlier publication (1974), he had moved anthropology away from both the Enlightenment market model of Adam Smith and the post-Enlightenment mode of production model of Karl Marx. Hinted at but never quite formulated, his focus on trans-Atlantic movements of laboring men and women might have provided political anthropology with the counter-Enlightenment global model it lacks.

But it is not the colonial implications that I wish to stress but the value of the trans-oceanic dimensions of Linebaugh and Rediker's historical research. It opens up promising directions for a grounded analysis of politics at several levels of a global politics (See Ong, chapter 27). A further step beyond *post*-Enlightenment systems analysis entails an exploration of a specifically different brand of men-in-movement – the dispossessed – in the making of the modern world. This is an analysis to which the Peruvian ethnography of Gavin Smith (1989) alerted us. He also provides the text from Marx that appears in Part I.

> Political economy... does not recognize the unoccupied worker... in so far as he happens to be outside this labour-relationship. The cheat-thief, swindler, beggar, and

> unemployed man; the starving, wretched and criminal working-man – these are figures who do not exist for political economy but only for other eyes, those of the doctor, the judge, the grave-digger and the bum-bailiff, etc; such figures are spectres outside the domain of political economy.[6]

In a twentieth-first century disordered world of near-permanent refugee and resettlement camps and prisons and asylums of militarized regimes, those dispossessed of land, livelihood, civil rights, and human dignity have been recalled, as by Paul Farmer in his essay "On Suffering and Structural Violence: A View from Below" on Haiti (chapter 33), not in the language of post-Enlightenment thought, but in that of Bertholt Brecht, Human Rights Watch, and liberation theology.

Conclusion

Around the time that Boas was completing his first bout of field research in the Pacific Northwest at the turn of the nineteenth century, American "dollar imperialism" began to expand at the expense of Europe's more overt political empires. It is barely recalled today that after the Spanish-American war – America's "coming out party" – she rapidly acquired an overseas empire that included the Philippines, Guam, a portion of Samoa, Hawaii, Alaska, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, the Canal Zone, Guantanamo Bay, the Corn Islands, and miscellaneous small islands in the Pacific. When it was suggested in 1902 that American anthropology should "follow American interests overseas," a pathway was opened up for Roy Franklin Barton's long-term field research (1905–12) among Ifugao in the Philippine islands that changed hands at the end of the Spanish-American War. In the 1930s Robert Redfield described himself as "following capital" to Mexico and in the 1940s David Schneider's scientific research began in the trust territories of Micronesia under the auspices of the US Navy (Bashkow 1991). Not a lot changed in the metropole's enlightened approach to imperialism: in the 1920s the government sent boatloads of schoolteachers to open up the Philippines; in the 1940s they sent forty-two scientists to Micronesia, most of them anthropologists (Bashkow 1991).[7]

With the Cold War developing in 1946 after World War II, the United States perceived its security interests to have changed, and intervention in what then became known as the Third World of non-aligned nations changed with it (Part IV). The Cold War arose over the fate of Central Europe, but it was fought out in "proxy wars" in Asia, Africa, and Central and South America. In retrospect, Charles W. M. Hart, an Australian teaching at Wisconsin in 1953 appears extraordinarily perceptive. "As the old style colonial governors move out," he wrote, "the commissars from Moscow and the promoters from New York move in" (1953: 207). The turn of events in North Korea, Indonesia, and Latin America fuelled his observation.

This was two generations ago. To come almost up to date, Keith Hart in his "Reflections on a Visit to New York" (2000), writes of American expansion in the 1990s following the collapse of the Soviet Union. He invokes a new American imperialism based on the communications revolution, its restructuring industries at home and abroad, and new financial instruments (such as derivatives) to address uncertainty in a high speed global marketplace. To understand globalization, he suggests, begin in New York. "Three dozen corporations have an annual turnover of $30–50 billion,

more than the GDP of all but eight countries: and the majority of them are American" (2000: 2). But can that be all there is to understanding globalization?

The question arises whether the theoretical approaches currently adopted in the anthropology of politics are adequate for analyzing and understanding the world around us today (Anderson, chapter 21; Friedman, chapter 23). Consider the concepts itemized by Jonathan Friedman in characterizing the tectonic movement of declining cultural hegemonies. They include: the transhistorical; neo-traditionalism; modernity, modernism, postmodernism; developmentalism; alterity; ethnicity, ethnification, multiethnification; individualization; nation state, national identity, transnationalization; as well as modern world system, cosmopolitanism, and globalization (chapter 23). Most of these might be applied retroactively, as it were, to the North Atlantic in the eighteenth century.

The foundational metaphor of the Enlightenment is system. But, as Mary Poovey has pointed out, what is systemic discounts individual experience for more general gains. These gains may be those of the philosopher (or ethnologist) whose production of general systematic knowledge sets him apart from the common man. They may be those of the policy-maker for whom a systems model "submits that policies should support – and could be defended as supporting – the general and long-range effects that experts recognized rather than what individuals experienced as their immediate interests" (Poovey 1998: 234). Poovey limits her discussion to the science of wealth and society as it shifts from conjectural history to political economy in the making of the modern fact. Her point is well taken in view of political anthropology's historical engagement with national policy-making. In the 1870s, researchers at the Bureau of American Ethnology provided systems models of the political organization of Native Americans that contributed to the latter's pacification. A century later European and American anthropologists contributed systemic analyses to international development projects in Africa and central America. Gayatri Spivak, in the talk from which chapter 35 is extracted, "Thinking Academic Freedom in Gendered Post-Coloniality," is devastating in her account of the *speed* with which Bangladesh "fell into the clutches of transnational global economy" intent on unrestricted "development." Such development obliged the newly postcolonial state "to veer away from any possibility of redistributive functions" (1992: 21). Thus we are reminded in our discourse on the frailty of the state or the widening gap between rich and poor throughout the globe, that the precise *timing* of a colonial or postcolonial intervention is crucial to the outcome and so to our analysis of a whole range of political realities. Ultimately, Spivak, the self-ascribed native informant (Spivak 1999) legitimates ethnographic inquiry that is both "local" and historical.

For the most part, however, the anthropology of politics has remained firmly in the grip of systems thinking. Before we proceed any further towards the political anthropology of the twenty-first century we need to step back and recall the making of an anthropology of politics long before political anthropology was recognized as a subfield specialization (see Vincent 1990).

Part IV of the Reader opens with chapters by Benedict Anderson, Arjun Appadurai, and Jonathan Friedman that are staged, as it were, as a debate on whether there is really anything new in the postmodernity of late capitalism. Looking back at the readings on "Imperial Times, Colonial Places" (Part III) may suggest that a scaffolding has already been put in place. If it has, political anthropology has the tools to tackle New World Disorder, its description (ethnography), analysis (theory)

and critique (Anderson, chapter 21). What is not clear is whether political anthropology in the twenty-first century (and beyond) will refine the Enlightenment ideas and values with which it has grown up; whether it will question and reject them on the grounds of their eurocentrism and offer in their place cultural and historical alternative hegemonies; or whether it will create a different (certainly trans-disciplinary) understanding in which the shadowy world of Enlightenment and counter-Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment and counter-post-Enlightenment confront each other at every step.

Marshall Sahlins suggested that what seemed like enlightenment to the philosophers of the eighteenth century has turned out to be nothing more than "the parochial self-consciousness of European expansion and the *mission civilisatrice*" (1999: ii). But whether the Enlightenment was nothing more than a packaging of European folklore is a problem that the anthropology of politics is currently grappling with as it confronts the unfolding of the New Millennium (see Part IV). Amidst terror of new world disorder, failing nation states, the moral dilemmas of human rights abuses on a world scale, global poverty and pandemic disease, Enlightenment discourse takes on new life as it comes under intellectual scrutiny once again.

Kant's "Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View" introduced both a humanistic anthropology and a knowledge of man as a citizen of the world, which the social sciences later displaced. This theme surfaces again and again in the pages that follow: a humanist strain within anthropology that is captured in the image of Franz Boas, one of its founding fathers in the United States, seated in his igloo in Baffinland reading Kant. "Where is today's Boas to lend the authority of academic anthropology to this old political struggle against division of the common human interest?", asks Keith Hart (2000: 2). This is an old political struggle, we may note. It began as a generational struggle when Kant's student, Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803), first introduced "culture" in its modern pluralizing sense, thus carving up Kant's ideational human universe.

Systems of thought are, in William Blake's unforgettable phrase, "mind forg'd manacles." Appropriately enough, Edward Said reminds us of this at the end of his analysis of "Orientalism," a ground-breaking literary ethnography of The Enlightenment in operation. Thus in this Reader, Richard Fox (chapter 13) and Aihwa Ong (chapter 27) suggest that Edward Said's representation of orientalism (1978) is a European construction of knowledge that is, in part, derived from Enlightenment ideas and values. They seek to show the extent to which "orientals" involved themselves in the making of "orientalism."

As ever, William Blake provides the envoy:

> I must Create a System, or be enslav'd by another Mans
> I will not Reason and Compare: my business is to Create.

One thing is certain: the world of political anthropology is wide enough for both foxes and hedgehogs: for those who seek to construct systems and for those who delve into particulars. As the Greek philosopher Archilocus observed, "The fox knows many things, but the hedgehog knows one big thing." Both foxes and hedgehogs are well represented in this Reader.

(July 2001)

NOTES

1 The politics of progress where the rights of the common people are threatened by "improvement" is a counter-Enlightenment theme common to both history and anthropology. It has, perhaps, been most succinctly expressed in popular verse:

> The law locks up the man or woman
> Who steals the goose from off the common
> But lets the greater villain loose
> Who steals the common from the goose.

For a recent political ethnography in this vein, see Darby 2000. The struggle continues, of course, in the name of development (chapters 31 and 32).

2 "Systematic disbelief" is a phrase Collingwood (1965) uses to characterize the vision of Giambattista Vico (Herzfeld 1997).

3 A reconstruction of this aspect of Mooney's political ethnography is beyond the scope of this brief Introduction. It rests on papers in the Mooney archive and the "recovery" of ten chapters in his original report to the government on the Sioux outbreak of 1890 (Mooney 1896). These were omitted from the text edited by Anthony Wallace (Mooney 1965.) The quotation from Mooney at the end of Part I provides an Introduction in the Wallace edition. In the Report it is page 657 and is headed by lines from the Irish poet, George Moore:

> There are hours long departed which memory brings
> Like blossoms of Eden to twine round the heart.

Mooney calls the narrative that accompanies it "Paradise Lost."

4 For the use of the very historians Geertz names, see Eric Wolf's *Anthropology* (1964) and Joan Vincent's *Anthropology and Politics* (1990).

5 My characterization draws on Oz-Salzberger 1995b, which narrates the relations among Scottish and German Enlightenment scholars. A focus on Adam Ferguson and Immanuel Kant is particularly valuable inasmuch as their ideas were foundational in British and American anthropology respectively.

6 This is an extract from Karl Marx (1844), in T. Bottomore (ed.) *Karl Marx: Early Writings*, New York: McGraw Hill, p. 85.

7 I attempt to trace the effect of these acquisitions on the development of American political anthropology in Vincent 1990. Clearly that story is too complex to engage us here but its now subterranean existence may be suggested by a reminder that Rudyard Kipling's poetic call "Take up the White Man's burden..." was written to commemorate American, not as is often assumed British, imperialism.

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witnessed, while in the second we have participated in it. But the anthropologist is in a very unfavorable position for judging the so-called great world, or high society; for its members are too close to one another and too far removed from other people. One of the ways of extending the range of anthropology is traveling, or at least reading travelogues. But if we want to know what we should look for abroad in order to extend it, we must first have acquired knowledge of men at home, by associating with our fellow townsmen and countrymen. Without a plan of this kind . . . the citizen of the world remains very limited in his anthropology . . .

Finally, world history, biography, and even plays and novels are auxiliary means in building up anthropology, though they are not among its sources . . .

If an anthropology written from a pragmatic point of view is systematically formulated and yet popular . . . it has this advantage for the reading public: that it gives an exhaustive account of the headings under which we can bring the human qualities we observe, and each heading provides an occasion and invitation for the reader to add his own remarks on the subject . . . In this way the devotees of anthropology find its labors naturally divided among them, while the unity of its plan gradually unites these labors into a whole – an arrangement that promotes and accelerates the development of this generally useful science.

Immanuel Kant (1797)

The Effects of the Observation of India on European Thought

If such a science as I have endeavoured to shadow forth in this Lecture is ever created, if the Comparative Method applied to laws, institutions, customs, ideas, and social forces should ever give results resembling those given by Comparative Philology and Comparative Mythology, it is impossible that the consequences should be insignificant. No knowledge, new and true, can be added to the mental stock of mankind without effects penetrating deeply and ramifying widely. It is conceivable that, as one result, we of Western Europe might come to understand ourselves better. . . .

I refrain from more than a mere reference to one set of effects which observation of India might have on European thought, those which might be conceived as produced by the spectacle of that most extraordinary experiment, the British government of India, the virtually despotic government of a dependency by a free people. . . . Observation of the British Indian political system might throw a flood of new light on . . . the history of the Romans under the Empire. . . . British India teaches us that part of the destroying process is inevitable; for instance the mere establishment of a Court of Justice . . . in Gaul would alter and transform all the customary rights of the Gallic Celts by arming them with a sanction. On the other hand, certain institutions of a primitive people, their corporations and village-communities, will be preserved by the suzerain state governing them, on account of the facilities which they afford to civil and fiscal administration. Both the good and the evil of the Roman Empire are probably reproduced in British India.

Henry Sumner Maine (1887)

From H. S. Maine, Rede Lecture, in *Village-Communities in the East and West* [1887], 5th edn. (London: John Murray), pp. 230–2, 236.

The Property Career of Mankind

Since the advent of civilization, the outgrowth of property has been so immense, its forms so diversified, its uses so expanding and its management so intelligent in the interests of its owners, that it has become, on the part of the people, an unmanageable power. The human mind stands bewildered in the presence of its own creation. The time will come, nevertheless, when human intelligence will rise to the mastery over property, and define the relations of the state to the property it protects, as well as the obligations and the limits of the rights of its owners. The interests of society are paramount to individual interests, and the two must be brought into just and harmonious relations. A mere property career is not the final destiny of mankind, if progress is to be the law of the future as it has been of the past. The time which has passed away since civilization began is but a fragment of the ages yet to come. The dissolution of society bids fair to become the termination of a career of which property is the end and aim; because such a career contains the elements of self-destruction. Democracy in government, brotherhood in society, equality in rights and privileges, and universal education, foreshadow the next higher plane of society to which experience, intelligence and knowledge are steadily tending. It will be a revival, in a higher form, of the liberty, equality and fraternity of the ancient gentes.

Lewis Henry Morgan (1877)

Spectres outside the Domain of Political Economy

Political economy, therefore, does not recognize the unoccupied worker, the workman, in so far as he happens to be outside this labour-relationship. The cheat-thief, swindler, beggar, and unemployed man; the starving, wretched and criminal working-man – these are figures who do not exist for political economy but only for other eyes, those of the doctor, the judge, the grave-digger and bum-bailiff, etc.; such figures are spectres outside the domain of political economy.

Karl Marx (1844)

The World Market

The need of a constantly expanding market for its product chases the bourgeoisie over the whole surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connections everywhere.

The bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world market given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country. To the great

From L. H. Morgan, *Ancient Society, or Researches in the Lines of Human Progress from Savagery through Barbarism to Civilization* [1877], ed. Eleanor Leacock (New York: World Publishing, 1974), pp. 561–2.

From K. Marx, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, in *Karl Marx: Early Writings*, ed. T. B. Bottomore (New York: McGraw Hill, 1964), p. 85.

From K. Marx and F. Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* [1847], ed. Samuel Beer (Arlington heights: AHM Publishing Corporation, 1955), p. 13.