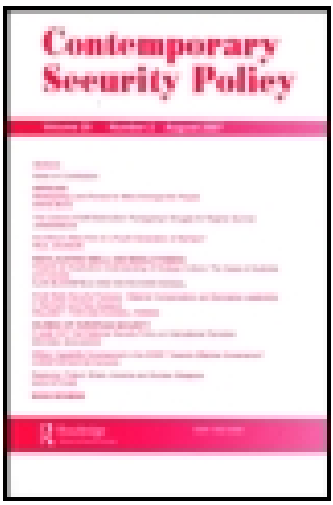

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What Can Strategic Culture Contribute to Our Understanding of Security Policies in the Asia-Pacific Region?

DAVID G. HAGLUND

This article reflects on application of the concept of strategic culture to supply analytical and policy-relevant guidance to those who ponder the future of security relations in the Asia-Pacific. Argued here is that, notwithstanding some obvious problems with the concept, there is utility in the application of strategic culture to the analysis of regional security challenges. To claim that strategic culture may not be equally applicable to all states in the Asia-Pacific region is not the same as saying it has no applicability at all, especially if the states to which it is applicable are important regional actors. This article suggests that both an old approach derivative of national character, and a new one associated with path dependence, might together prove fruitful for policy analysts and policy-makers alike, as they wrestle with what many assume to be the fundamental question of the coming half-century in the Asia-Pacific, namely whether a great power war in the region can be averted. Although there is much variation in the manner with which authors apply the master concept of strategic culture to their specific Asia-Pacific cases, each takes seriously the utility of a cultural approach to national strategic choice. So while the quest for reliable causality and predictive capability on a region-wide basis may remain that of the will-o'-the-wisp, there can be no gainsaying that, on a case-by-case basis, the authors show that the approach can demonstrate valuable insights into the policy dilemmas of cultural provenance and content confronting the Asia-Pacific.

Introduction: *Im Osten nichts Neues*?

In paraphrasing the title of Erich Maria Remarque's 1928 anti-war novel, familiar in English as *All Quiet on the Western Front*,[1] I mean to signal my intent to confront the somewhat daunting challenge presented by Jeffrey Lantis to contextualize the potential applicability of strategic culture in analysing interstate security relations in the Asia-Pacific region. Moreover, we are to do this in a way that puts a premium upon deriving *policy-relevant* knowledge. This is hardly an easy assignment, and not just because of the inherent ambiguities attending the very definition of our core concept of strategic culture – a concept that has been and remains stubbornly defiant in the face of efforts to induce an agreed-upon definition.[2] There is also the question of fit between that concept and the region under examination in this special themed issue of the journal. Much of the policy-relevant work done to date that specifically relies upon a strategic-cultural approach has focused upon other regions or countries. Europe and North America have accounted for the bulk of regional and country-specific applications of strategic culture, albeit not always explicitly under that rubric.

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As outlined in the introductory article in this collection, the Asia-Pacific has scarcely been bereft of assessments linking culture with grand strategy, even under the bounded definition many of our contributors employ that strategic culture primarily denotes a distinct set of beliefs and values appertaining to the use of force in a state's regional and global engagements. As noted in Andrew Scobell's article on China, this approach can be linked back to the works of Sun Zi, as well as forward to Alastair Iain Johnston's modern, path-breaking study of Chinese strategic culture, which continues, in so many ways, to serve as *locus classicus* for scholarly inquiry.[3] Nor is that all, for if one accepts that former Soviet space was, and remains, in no negligible manner contained within the Asia-Pacific geographical ambit, then it is not difficult to establish other, even earlier sources testifying to the region's role in the conceptualization of strategic culture. This comes through especially in the writings of what is sometimes referred to as the 'first wave' of strategic culturalists, during the Cold War, where Soviet and American 'space' also included the Asia-Pacific.[4]

So what does the above have to do with Remarque's book? More than might be thought, given that one of my chief purposes in this article is to ask just how much really can be said to be new on that 'eastern front' of the Asia-Pacific region. My answer will be mixed, starting with the claim that to appreciate how and why strategic culture might be of some help in coming to terms with the nexus between strategic culture(s) and regional security policies, we can do much worse than go back in time to an era even before our concept got its name. I refer specifically to the years of World War II when the American government was generously funding research into something termed the 'national character' of its adversaries, not least of whom was its principal Asia-Pacific foe, Imperial Japan.[5] But we also need to ask whether what might be styled (with some trepidation) the latest wave of strategic-cultural approaches is also able to assist us in making sense of our project's mission.

Accordingly, in this article I look at something old, and something new, in the concept of strategic culture. The challenge, of course, is to determine exactly which components of the strategic-cultural toolkit may be most valuable in explicating security relations of the Asia-Pacific region. Notwithstanding some demerits, I argue that elements of strategic culture as an approach retain value for scholarly and policy debate. This is the case even though it cannot be expected forever to escape the fate of all intriguing and contentious concepts, of eventually being stretched almost to breaking point,[6] then abandoned and, subsequently, perhaps being rediscovered. For some time, strategic culture has been getting stretched, but it has yet to snap, and it is far from having been abandoned. Thus, I will proceed from the assumption that there is value still to be derived from its employment.

In the following sections, I suggest ways in which strategic culture could advance scholarly pursuit of policy relevance. First, I step back slightly and examine work done during the heyday of studies into national character, with the view to ascertaining whether it might contribute anything to our understanding of 'strategic subculture(s)'. I next introduce what could be regarded as the latest wave in strategic-cultural analysis, one that is associated with an approach coming to international security studies via the intermediation of historical sociology, and is reliant upon the related notions of

'narrative causality' and 'path dependence'. My objective in this section is to argue the applicability to the Asia-Pacific of a case whose geographical origins inhered in a different part of the world and at a different time – the transformation of security relations between the United States and the United Kingdom during the course of the 20th century and up to the present. In the conclusion, I ask to what extent we might consider the 'old' (national character) and the 'new' (path dependence) invocations to be of use to us in grappling with our project's challenge, and the article closes with some examples drawn from this issue's case studies examining, respectively, Australia, China, Japan, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and the United States.

National Character as Strategic Culture?

Although scholars who profess an interest in strategic culture are quick to realize that the concept is not entirely a novel one, they do disagree as to just how distant in time we are permitted to stray in quest of its origins. In fact, it is not all that uncommon for concepts in the human sciences – including and especially those possessed of relevance to security studies – to exist in anachronistic tension with the processes they are intended to elucidate. Sometimes we are apprised of the concept far in advance of its application, as for instance happened with human security, which might have entered official parlance in the late 1930s but needed at least a half-century to take on policy purport.[7] The reverse also holds, when we discover that, like Molière's Monsieur Jourdain, we have in effect been speaking prose without knowing it. This occurred, for instance, with the notion of security sector reform, which began to inspire a good deal of policy activism early in the 1990s, but took another half-dozen or so years finally to acquire its name.[8]

As noted in the introductory article in this issue, Johnston identified three waves, or 'generations', of strategic-cultural analysis. The first generation dated from the late 1970s and the discovery that perhaps there was something about Soviet culture that led to deterrence logic getting conceived in ways different from, and much more dangerous than, Western assessments of deterrence dynamics. A second generation led by Gramscians had a clearly normative focus that situated them comfortably within the growing subfield of critical security studies. And a third generation was his own, whose interest in the concept inhered in the symbolic transmission of policy-relevant meaning and emotion across time and space, as well as drew in multiple case examples from around the world.[9] Johnston's exploration of Chinese strategic-cultural foundations – and the fascinating set of responses it has generated in the work of Scobell and others – helped to shift the focus of the field as well as highlight critical dynamics in the Asia-Pacific.

Writing at the end of the 1990s, Michael Desch agreed with Johnston that while the waves indeed numbered three, it was only on the last of these that he regarded himself as being in accord with Johnston. The third wave was taken by both authors to represent the post-Cold War efflorescence of research on strategic culture at a time when many scholars were exploring new approaches to security studies attending the celebrated 'cultural turn' in the discipline of International Relations (IR).[10] But Desch saw no need to allocate an entire wave, the second, to

Johnston's 'Gramscians', insisting instead that Johnston's first wave was really strategic culture's second one (that is, the so-called first generation associated with Jack Snyder and Colin Gray was a misnomer). As for that first wave properly appraised, Desch located it prior to the time when our concept had attained its name. He connected it with the research programmes that battened upon generous subventions from an American government eager to learn as much as it could about the national character of its enemies during World War II.[11]

National character would turn out to be a fairly controversial category of analysis. Ruth Benedict's work on Japanese national character during World War II seemed surprisingly time-bound and stereotypical within a decade of its authorship, for example.[12] A new, critical perspective was reflected in the harshly dismissive words of one student of ethnic conflict, who disparaged the 'once-popular, but now discredited, pseudo-scientific game of trying to identify what used to be called "national character", traits by which it was thought possible to distinguish between Frenchmen, Englishmen, Germans, Spaniards, Italians, Russians, and so on'.[13] Following a peak of interest in the concept during the early postwar decades, it virtually dropped off the radar screens of analysts interested in security studies. Even those who continued to believe that ideational factors and culture absolutely deserved to be taken with the utmost seriousness by security policy-makers seemed to shift their gaze.

In part, the decline in national character research programmes was simply a reflection of the above-mentioned natural life-cycle of scholarly rubrics, particularly in disciplines such as IR, whose academic practitioners are certainly no strangers to the pursuit of the latest conceptual and theoretical fad; in this case, since the label had become outworn, the idea(s) it had been employed to advance needed to be preserved by a rebranding effort, with the result that scholars stampeded away from national character and headed off in the direction of a cognate conceptual entity known as 'national identity', as if doing so might make the definitional problem go away.[14] But there was more to the demise of national character than faddism.

For reasons not too difficult to detail, national character began to assume a very bad odour. This was especially the case because some had (quite erroneously) insisted upon linking it to the kind of 'hetero-stereotyping' that characterized the recent past, and might have contributed to a mindset that culminated in the catastrophes of World War II and the Holocaust. Hamilton Fyfe's work serves to illustrate this point. This British-born classical scholar (who among other callings was the principal of Queen's University in the 1930s) became the most vociferous critic of national character studies. Although he wrote his celebrated attack on the concept in the very early stages of World War II, it is apparent why Fyfe's *The Illusion of National Character* would become remembered for exemplifying the argument that national character deserved righteous condemnation as a dangerous and nasty category of analysis, one summoning forth all the worst features of nationalism. But it was really this latter nationalism that so agitated Fyfe, an enthusiast of world federation schemes and other 'internationalist' panaceas, because when it came to regional (or subnational) character, there was nothing at all wrong with that noun, just as long as it was stripped of its 'national' modifier. '[D]ifferent influences', he pointed out,

'produce different characters. Within a nation there are many different influences. Consequently there are many different characters'.[15]

There was an additional impetus for the decline of scholarly interest in national character, which set in around the midway point of the Cold War. By that time, it seemed that the concept had been getting ensnared in some of the same pitfalls that would trip up those who professed an interest in other popular concepts of the early postwar decades ('political culture', to name just one) – pitfalls associated with its maddening ambiguities and rampant reifications. Ruth Benedict's work on nationalist Japan (and the martial tradition of the 'sword') is but one example of such reification that to many it appears a scholarly artefact from the distant past. For sure, voices could be, and were, raised in its defence. One such defender, Dean Peabody, resorted as late as the mid 1980s to a spirited *tu quoque* reply in wondering, a bit acerbically, why it was that if someone were to express a scholarly interest in national character, he or she ran the risk of being dubbed muddle-headed, likely even 'somehow fascistic'. Yet if someone else chose to dabble in an equally problematical and confusing category of analysis, for instance 'social class', then he or she would be heralded as rather sharp, both epistemologically and ethically.[16]

Nevertheless, scholars interested in national character found the object of their curiosity to be amazingly resistant to easy definitional consensus. There was also the problem of operationalizing whatever definition could be arrived at by enough scholars so as to constitute the official version. As to the first of these difficulties, disagreement surfaced regarding whether national character was best defined as practically synonymous with culture (i.e., as learned cultural behaviour) or as something else, namely a modal personality (i.e., a statistical notion for expressing personality traits appearing with great frequency within a society). It did not take long for the latter understanding to begin supplanting the former, given that it held out a greater prospect for attaining social-scientific rigour as metrics could be devised for taking its measure.[17]

But this embrace of modal personality as the essence of national character could not solve a second problem. For even if scholars could agree on this statistical abstraction as the most appropriate signifier of national character (as many began to do), it was far from obvious how they were to take that measure. Here, the issue turned on whether character was to be revealed through systematic exploration of those presumed group behavioural traits (possibly through survey techniques), or rather whether character would become expressed in other, albeit less direct ways focusing upon a social entity's (in our case, a nation's) cultural products. These products could include such items as the collectivity's 'institutions, its collective achievements and its public policy'.[18] Needless to say, the repertory of such products was virtually limitless, and relying upon them to ferret out a national character was not an enterprise for the faint of heart.

Nor, some even dared to suggest, was it an enterprise that could be entrusted to the likes of political scientists, who should instead be filling their days with the study of government and governing, while leaving national character to those who actually possessed the necessary expertise to grapple with it. Who were they? They were none other than those scholars whose professional comfort zones lay within the

confines of a personality-in-culture approach near and dear to social psychologists (as well as to some other psychologists and even a few psychiatrists). This was the rather blunt judgement of Bernard Hennessy, who would permit political scientists into this conceptual *chasse-gardée* on one condition only, namely when national character could be shown to have an impact upon the making of foreign policy. He argued in an article published a half-century ago in the journal of the International Studies Association, that this he did not expect to discover very often, if ever, since in his view foreign policies 'are made largely by cosmopolitan elite groups who appear to be on the whole little affected by national character or modal personality trends. And these policies are based, for the most part, on "hard" facts of geography, economics, historical traditions, and on more-or-less rationally calculated factors of power and prestige'.[19]

Finally, it is noteworthy that these early waves of scholarly interpretation and debate were underway in the early decades of the Cold War, largely focused on Euro-centric concerns. This meant that many fascinating changes underway in the Asia-Pacific region were largely ignored, including the reconstruction of Japanese strategic culture, the bitter historical experiences on the Korean peninsula, the evolution of security relations between the Philippines and its neighbours during the Vietnam War, the irascibility of American engagement in the region, and the slow emergence of China following the Cultural Revolution, to mention but a few. These changes were scarcely viewed through strategic-cultural lenses during this period, in spite of the fact that they would have profound implications for modern regional security.

The Utility of Strategic Culture

Given what I have been arguing so far about the contentious nature of national character, how could I possibly hint that there might yet be some nuggets of precious metal contained within such an otherwise gangue-stuffed body of ore? The first step towards answering this question comes, paradoxically, from the very same Hamilton Fyfe who was so withering in his condemnation of the concept. Recall that Fyfe was not unhappy with the notion of character, but simply the national variant thereof. In his emphasis on the utility – nay, the necessity – of subnational character, he unwittingly provided some clues as to how we might apply strategic-cultural perspectives to the quest for policy-relevant knowledge regarding security in the Asia-Pacific region (or anywhere else) today. What Fyfe was saying could be otherwise expressed by reference to what could be labelled a 'fallacy of composition', namely the practice of reasoning improperly from a characteristic of a single member of a group to the character of the entire group.[20]

This problem became off-putting to the discipline of anthropology, which had done so much to inspire research into national character in the first place, both during and immediately following World War II. One of that discipline's leading scholars of those years, E. Adamson Hoebel, explained that his and his colleagues' loss of interest in a category with which they had been, during the war, so intimately associated stemmed from their collective distaste with attempts to apply 'traditional anthropological techniques to the study of large national societies' rather than to such

smaller, more appropriate units as tribes.[21] In short, anthropologists were dwelling upon the analytical distinction between the general and the specific, and opting for the latter. This has recently been finding support from security policy analysts who are starting to conclude that for strategic culture to mean anything useful, its significance can only be found in the notion of strategic 'subculture(s)'. And it is for this reason that I suggest national character might yet have something to contribute to strategic culturalists, whether they be in the Asia-Pacific region or in some other part of the world. Indeed, we have already glimpsed, in some of the other contributions to this special issue, the usefulness of strategic subcultures (to which I return in concluding, below).

Consider in this regard the claim made by an Australian security specialist with an interest in strategic culture in the Asia-Pacific, Alan Bloomfield. He notes, in a piece published by this journal, that a major drawback to date among strategic culturalists is their compulsion to attain conceptual coherence, understood both in a temporal sense (where priority is accorded more to cultural continuity than to change) and in a spatial (national) one. In respect to both dimensions, Bloomfield argues that when we talk about strategic culture, we are necessarily conjuring up a 'number of "subcultures" [that] compete for influence over strategic decision-making'. In short, the time has come to bring into the analysis of culture its constituent parts, for so doing might enable us to resolve the coherence dilemma in both its temporal and spatial aspects. Not only this, says Bloomfield, but it could also open up to us predictive vistas:

> Accepting that there are two or more subcultures within a strategic culture can not only retrospectively explain why strategic policy changed but ... if we become familiar with a particular state's strategic debates we may be able to predict that a 'change is coming' – and possibly even determine which of the currently subordinate subcultures may become dominant for a time.[22]

The message is clear: it is the part, not the whole, that most warrants our attention when we turn to strategic culture – exactly the point made so long ago by Fyfe when he inveighed against what he took to be the first generation's fallacy of composition, of mistaking the national character for the more important subnational characters. This thought has reached its fullest flowering in the writings of someone who is not typically considered a partisan of strategic culture, but who nevertheless provides instruction on the critical importance of subcultures to an assessment of a country's strategic culture. Here, I refer to a veritable Baedeker for scholarly explorations into the realm of American strategic (sub)culture: Walter Russell Mead's *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World*.[23]

Mead's book is germane to at least two senses of our rubric, strategic culture. First, it certainly provides valuable insight into those beliefs and values that appertain to a country's assessment of the merits of employing force in its regional and global security engagements. It does more than this, though, for Mead also pays careful attention to a fascinating and consummately cultural aspect of American grand strategy, namely the manner in which ethnicity can be said to factor into the shaping of the country's foreign policy For some analysts, strategy never becomes so much a

cultural affair than when it is said to be influenced by various ethnic diasporas and their lobbies. This debate is an old one among those who study American foreign policy, and it flares up time and again.[24] This was the case recently and dramatically with the controversy triggered by the claim by John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt that American grand strategy towards the Middle East has been negatively and profoundly influenced by what they call the 'Israel lobby'.[25]

Mead finds America's Middle East strategy to be determined by sources mainly independent of ethnic lobbies.[26] Nevertheless, ethnicity plays an indispensable part in his interpretation of America's overall strategic culture, for taking a leaf out of another David Hackett Fischer book,[27] he argues that there have been four strategic subcultures (my term, not his), some of a peculiar ethnic provenance, which together have been responsible for the evolution of American thinking on grand strategy in general, and on the use of force in advancing that strategy in particular. These subcultures have, importantly, all been transplantations from America's British motherland, which between 1630 and 1775 left a cultural impress upon the new country that would have repercussions (or so both Fischer and Mead argue) down to the present, in grand strategy as well as other dimensions of America's public policies. These four foreign policy traditions, or paradigms, have all been present since the early days of the Republic, and the story of American grand strategy has to be understood in terms of the manner in which one or more of these traditions managed to gain ascendancy over policy-making, if just for a time.

In other words, America's strategic culture *only* makes sense when it is broken down into these four 'subcultures', which he calls Hamiltonianism, Jeffersonianism, Jacksonianism, and Wilsonianism. Although space does not permit a full exposition of what the subcultures have represented (and continue to represent), one in particular is noteworthy for our purposes in this special issue, of trying to make plausible connections between strategic culture and decision-making regarding the use of force. That is the subculture Mead calls Jacksonianism. This is the group, largely descended from the fourth (and last) great wave of British out-migration to America during the colonial era, namely the Scotch-Irish.[28] Mead argues that they constituted America's warrior caste, endowing the country's overall foreign policy with a tradition of robust bellicosity resulting in its becoming the 'most dangerous military power in the history of the world'.[29]

If, therefore, we are invited to comment upon strategic culture and the use of force, then the analysis does not get more 'cultural' anywhere than in the chapters of *Special Providence*. These emphasize not only the critical importance of strategic subcultures, but also the ethnic (that is, 'cultural' in a second sense) provenance of those subcultures. This applies all the more if the field of application for strategic culture is first and foremost one that implicates discussions about the applicability of *force* to strategy.

Strategic Culture's Latest (and Fourth) Wave?

If the old category of national character might, as I have dared to suggest above, contribute to our objectives in this special issue, can it likewise be said that a fairly new

variant (if such a thing it is) of strategic culture holds out the prospect of generating policy-relevant knowledge appertaining to security policies and dilemmas in the Asia-Pacific region? I think it can, and in arguing this position in this section of my article, I will extract meaning from interstate security relations in another part of the world (the transatlantic realm) to illustrate some ways that strategic culture understood as an instance of path-dependent behaviour might be of assistance.

But first let us ask whether this variant, borrowed from such disciplines as economics and sociology, should even be regarded as fitting within the conceptual and theoretical confines of strategic culture. It certainly is not typically considered to be resident therein, or we would already have had agreement that a fourth wave of strategic culture had been cresting over the past several years, and is now breaking upon our shores. Such agreement is not easily encountered. Still, there is a basis for culturalizing path dependence; indeed, this is suggested in the introductory article when in a review of authors Lantis considers to be third generation strategic culturalists (embodying the post-Cold War constructivist turn) he mentions a student of German strategic culture, Thomas Banchoff. This work, he suggests, gives us reason to imagine that strategic culture can be commodious enough even to embrace path dependence.[30] Indeed, the undoubtedly constructivist account of Germany's 'transformed' strategic culture Banchoff provides does make reference to the role played therein by path dependence. Noting that the typical field of application of path-dependent studies has been the arena of domestic politics, Banchoff insists that the German case 'convincingly demonstrates that the logic of path dependence can be applied to international politics'.[31] And so it can. But path dependence is decidedly not the central epistemological buttress of Banchoff's argument, and his reliance upon it, while not minimal, hardly provides the main storyline of his well-reasoned assessment of the disappearance of what had once been so central to European and global security, namely the erstwhile 'German question' (or 'problem').

To see why path dependence might be regarded as heralding the onset of an entire new wave of strategic-cultural analysis, we need to revert to what is sometimes said to be the most important debate ever to occur in this subfield, one that pitted a positivist Alistair Iain Johnston against an interpretivist Colin Gray. Gray insists that strategic culture must imply the 'context' within which security decision-making occurs, if it is to imply anything at all. And it is well known that Johnston objects strenuously to what he takes to be the tautological nature of culture-as-context arguments, and not only those made by Gray. He is not without his supporters,[32] but then neither is Gray lacking adherents. Stuart Poore, for one, has entered this fray with a clear, but not unqualified endorsement of Gray. As he puts it, the 'Gray-Johnston debate illustrates the futility of thinking about strategic culture in terms of causal explanations and falsifiable theory, whilst confirming the potential of a contextual or constitutive framework'.[33]

The contextual side of this debate is typically construed as an anti-positivist one as well, with positivism here being said to represent the will-o'-the-wisp of reliable causality (otherwise known as 'explanation'), an epistemology contextualists hold to be vastly inferior to the more modest, but honest, quest for interpreting social reality.[34] Without wishing to weigh in on either side's merits in a very long-running

debate in the social sciences,[35] let me simply observe that if we really are expected to aspire to generating policy-relevant knowledge – that is, knowledge that presupposes predictability to be within the realm of the possible, *because* explanation must also be within that realm – and if context is *a priori* ruled out-of-bounds due to its presumably anti-positivist epistemology, then there would appear to be little point in my saying what I am about to say. But let me say it anyway.

If there is one item on which agreement reigns among those contextualists who situate themselves on the interpretivist side of the debate, it is this: 'history' must always constitute a foundational element of strategic culture. Beyond this, however, there is little common understanding of the meaning of history. This observation is hardly a withering critique of these strategic culturalists, for it is obvious that historians themselves cannot come to an agreement on the meaning or nature of their scholarly enterprise. I make the observation here merely to advance the claim that taking history seriously does not necessarily mean that one is 'anti-positivist' and thereby excluded from the ranks of those who might be deemed capable of generating policy-relevant knowledge. I say this not because I am unaware that in a certain commonsensical way, it has long been remarked, 'those who do not remember history are condemned to repeat it'. Aristotle said as much, so did Santayana, and John F. Kennedy was scarcely alone among policy-makers in believing this to be so. Yet against this policy-relevant piece of lore must also be set the assessment of others, among them the estimable historian Henry Adams, to the effect that the only thing you can learn from history is that you *cannot* learn from history.

Rather, my claim here is that one can be both a contextualist *and* a positivist, if by the latter we mean to suggest that one subscribes to the business of explaining and perhaps even predicting – precisely the business that preoccupies us in this special themed issue. Take, for instance, the case of Paul Pierson, a political scientist whose areas of interest and expertise are neither strategic culture nor IR, bur rather comparative and domestic (American) politics. Still, what Pierson has to say, both about how history might be taken to matter and especially about the importance of context, should comfort even the most hard-bitten anti-positivist, notwithstanding that Pierson himself dances to a different epistemological rhythm, and very much aspires to establish reliable causality.

Context, acknowledges Pierson, has become a bad word among many social scientists, who prefer to place their explanatory wagers in casinos frequented by habitués of regression analysis and rational choice. These are the lairs of the 'decontextualizers', but they should only be entered into with caution, particularly as their devotees appear to have a perverse understanding of history, as reflecting nothing so much as a form of backward thinking. If historical context is simply taken to be the endless amassing of ever more details about past events, then the decontextualizers might have a point; but, says Pierson, this view of history is simply caricature. Context has a second, more theoretically pregnant, signification: it concerns those things that surround and therefore define matters of great interest to social scientists, and seen in this light it is nothing short of a scientific disaster to effect, as the decontextualizers wish to do, the 'removal of defining locational information'.[36]

For Pierson and many others, including and especially historical sociologists, 'placing politics in time' can best, perhaps only, be done by adhering to the logic of path dependence. This is hardly a straightforward or uncontested logic.[37] But it should have an appeal to strategic-culturalists who are discontented with structural explanations of foreign policy behaviour, for instance of the sort that ascribe policy outputs to variables such as relative capability ('power'), or cumulative wealth – testifying, in short, to a conviction that 'large' causes should result in commensurately large outcomes.[38] In contrast, path dependence implies that the process itself through which history unfolds takes on causal importance, in what some scholars refer to as 'narrative positivism'.[39]

It is, of course, one thing to invoke path dependence, or narrative causation, as the mechanisms by which history can be said to continue to matter in the fashioning of strategic culture, for instance in the unobjectionable observation that choices made in the past can go on limiting policy options in the future.[40] Yet it is quite another thing actually to explicate the point. Thus we can predict that strategic-culturalists of what in these pages I have been calling the 'fourth wave' might expect to find themselves, as they draw ever closer to historical sociology, grappling with the two most important aspects of path dependency: 'temporal sequencing' and 'contingency'. For path dependence to mean anything, it cannot simply connote sensitive dependence upon initial conditions; rather, it must suggest a break point after which the ability of those initial conditions to shape the future can be shown to have altered substantially.[41]

Some will label that break point contingency, others will term it a critical juncture, by which they will mean those moments when choices get made that prove to have lasting impact, because they foreclose alternative future possibilities, through the generation of 'self-reinforcing path-dependent processes',[42] referred to varyingly as 'positive feedback', 'lock-in', or 'increasing returns' (this third formulation often being favoured by economists). Although there is no necessary reason for the logic of positive feedback to yield positive outcomes for interstate cooperation, usually the tendency of those who are enamoured of path-dependent approaches is to dwell upon efficient cooperation as that which is being locked in, and hence to forget that sometimes path dependency can consist in reactive sequences capable of generative negative outcomes for cooperation.[43]

To illustrate this, let us turn to a historical transformation in interstate cooperation that speaks to a radical transformation in the culture of strategic relations, as those are viewed through the lens of context. In other words, strategic culture, taken seriously as context, does not only apply to the individual units of analysis (that is, the respective national identities or even subcultures), but also to the relationship itself, such that one can speak legitimately of the culture of bilateral ties, as for instance in connection with Franco-American strategic interaction over time, often adjudged to be suboptimal because of difficulties associated with breaking a reactive sequence of events.[44] However it is not this transatlantic relationship I wish to invoke here, but rather one with a more upbeat outcome – an outcome that some take to be reason for optimism regarding the most important question about the future of security relations in the Asia-Pacific region, to wit whether a great power war between the United States and China can be averted.[45]

Students of what nearly everyone accepts was an unusual reversal in a long-standing pattern of tense and at moments even bellicose relations between the United States and its most bitter strategic rival during the first full century of its existence as an independent republic, Great Britain, have for some time pondered why and how the two countries were able to overcome this adversarial pattern, to replace it with perhaps the best example of institutionalized positive cooperation in the entire international system – so positive that the bilateral ties are routinely heralded as the 'special relationship'.[46] Now, it has to be said that not all those who have puzzled over this transformation can be fitted into a path-dependent mould,[47] but a surprising number of scholars can be, even if they may not recognize themselves within such a template. This is because their reading of the historic rapprochement that brought into being a new, more cooperative relationship between the United States and Britain is heavily accented by a quality known as contingency, a staple of path-dependent approaches. It follows that searching for, and finding, contingency becomes an eminently strategic-cultural undertaking for this brand of analyst. It does not, however, become an easy undertaking, precisely because contingency, and the critical juncture with which it so intimately connected in path-dependent renditions, can be far from self-evident.

For instance, if we were to take the notion of 'lock-in' seriously in the Anglo-American relationship, from when should we date it? Notionally, there would seem to be two major moments during which it might be said Anglo-American relations were set onto a new path, one from which there could be no going back to previous, unhappy instances of confrontational behaviour. The first of these moments is the last decade of the 19th century. The second is more recent, being the late summer of 1940. Usually, scholars inquiring into the temporal sequencing of the special relationship turn to the earlier of these two periods, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, a moment aptly characterized by diplomatic historian Bradford Perkins as the fin de siècle's 'great rapprochement'.[48] Charles Kupchan, for example, writes that this period of growing cordiality between the two large English-speaking powers set in motion a historic transformation in the manner in which they had previously related to each other – a transformation that was not only startling in its sweep but also continuous in its workings, resulting in a 'strategic partnership that has lasted to this day'.[49]

Nor is Kupchan alone in sensing that a new path emerged for the bilateral relationship at this time. Indeed, a consensus has taken shape around the idea that after the turn of the century, Anglo-American relations would never again resemble what they had been during the century and a quarter separating America's war of independence from the rapprochement. This was a period of 125 years characterized at the extreme by warfare and threat of war, but also by recurring diplomatic wrangling and *ennui* – in other words, a period in which the bilateral relationship looked far from being special, and close to being just another dreary aspect of traditional balance-of-power politics.[50] Exactly what set in motion this happier era of policy confluence, however, is not a matter of consensus. Here the dispute revolves less around contingency (that is, the notion that something reasonably unexpected occurred that would not have been predicted on the basis of the *tendances lourdes* of the bilateral record) and more around temporal sequencing.

Most scholars who search for contingency in this earlier period focus their temporal sequencing either upon 1895 or 1898. The first of these dates speaks to the importance attached to the short-lived war scare at year's end over an obscure boundary dispute between Britain and Venezuela, which improbably threatened to embroil the United States in a war with the United Kingdom. In so doing, the crisis served as a reality check for policy elites on both sides of the Atlantic, suddenly confronting the absurdity of a fratricidal war between the two Anglo-Saxon countries, and reminding everyone of the urgency of working out a saner relationship between them.[51] Those who find contingency residing in the second date recognize how important for bilateral harmony was the hinge year of 1898, when Britain alone among the European powers supported America – and did so enthusiastically – in its war against Spain.[52]

By contrast, others note that the downturn in Anglo-American relations during the interwar period signified that perhaps those who looked to the end of the 19th century for evidence of the critical juncture erred by 40 years. Instead, they date the moment of institutional lock-in in the Anglo-American relationship as the late summer of 1940, and the historic American decision to begin backstopping the British war effort, initially through that season's 'destroyers-for-bases' swap, and subsequently in 1941 through Lend-Lease and convoying – all steps taken while the United States was still ostensibly neutral in World War II.[53] According to this way of looking at path dependence, after September 1940, and crises such as Suez (1956) to the contrary notwithstanding, the enduring pattern of Anglo-American security cooperation and alliance had become locked into place, and remains a fixture of international security relations to the present.

To see whether (and if so, how), there may be relevance in the above discussion focusing upon a region half a world and many decades removed from contemporary security relations in the Asia-Pacific, let us now turn to some of the themes from the articles in this special issue.

Asia-Pacific Strategic Cultures

I have made two major points in this article thus far. The first concerns the utility of strategic culture to the explication of policy choices confronting states in the Asia-Pacific region (or anywhere else, for that matter). Although I suspect that future scholars will, when they look back at the work of IR specialists of the late 20th and early 21st centuries, detect elements of quaintness permeating the efforts of the strategic culturalists, we have not yet reached the point of terminal conceptual decline. How far along in its life-cycle strategic culture has progressed, no one can say, and even if it is true that the bloom may be off this particular rose, there is still utility in the rubric.

The second point is that while scholarly consensus on the definition of our concept remains as elusive as ever, this is no reason to despair about the potential for strategic culture to shed light on policy-relevant discussions, not least those concerning security in the Asia-Pacific region. A bit of help, I have tried to show, can come our way from the experience of the 'first wave' of strategic culture, properly enumerated: the national character studies of the period during and shortly after

World War II. Admittedly, it will be among the more open and penetrable political systems of the Asia-Pacific region that are most likely to be encountered debates yielding insights into diverse strategic subcultures, and in this respect the United States and Australia may be the most rewarding venues for this kind of strategic-cultural analysis. Still, to claim that this manner of construing strategic culture may not be equally applicable to all states in the Asia-Pacific region is not the same as saying it has no applicability at all in the regional context, especially if the states to which it is applicable are important regional actors, as both Australia and, *a fortiori*, the United States are.

If we can agree that context as culture need not be antithetical to the quest for explanation (and therefore prediction), we can bring ourselves to realize that one important way in which history matters for strategic choice is in the temporal sequencing of those events that constitute the historical record. To be sure, it is far from simple to plumb this fourth wave for policy inspiration, but that does not mean the effort should not be made. After all, there exists ample theoretical reason from a structural perspective to assume a pessimistic reading of security outcomes within the region. This suggests that at least insofar as concerns the region's great powers (China and the United States), we can expect nothing of strategic interactions other than the 'same damned thing, over and over again'.[54] Against this structural pessimism is a strategic-cultural perspective that, if not guaranteeing a happier ending to the regional security story than that provided in the structuralists' coda, at least holds out a greater prospect of one than do those accounts emanating from power-transition theory. In this alternative story, all depends upon the region's two most powerful actors, the United States and China, being able to institutionalize their relations so as to ensure that increasing returns come to prevail over reactive sequences, as they did in the case of the earlier power-transition episode noted between Great Britain and the United States. Is there any reason for thinking this alternative story from the Atlantic world might have resonance in the Pacific?

To approach an answer to this question, let us briefly take a parting glance at how our various authors might be situated within the bifurcated framework I have developed in this article. In their analysis of Australian strategic culture, Alex Burns and Ben Eltham combine an attentiveness to both the importance of strategic subcultures and the impact that path-dependence can be said to have had upon the development of the country's strategy, especially as it has been articulated in cycles of defence white papers. The result, they fear, is that strategy can become developed in ways that are suboptimal, and not necessarily congruent with the requirements of regional security at a moment characterized by an important American 'pivot' towards the Asia-Pacific. Thus, they recognize the mutually constitutive nature of strategic-cultural orientations and their potential to fuel competition in an increasingly volatile region.

Andrew Scobell's piece on China is consistent with a path-dependent understanding of strategic culture as context, albeit of the kind suggestive of reactive sequences instead of the more common, and certainly more optimistic, rendering of path dependence as leading to institutional lock-in and the reproduction of efficient cooperation. In particular, Scobell highlights a 'myth' of a Chinese monistic strategic culture founded upon a conviction that China only ever uses force for defensive purposes

(unlike, it is said, other regional powers). The result, he argues, is to blind Chinese elites (and publics) to the dangers inherent in their 'Great Wall of the imagination', first and foremost of which is the exacerbation of an Asia-Pacific regional security dilemma that looks to become more worrisome.

Andrew Oros broaches the always intriguing, if vexing, question of strategic-cultural change, in his investigation into whether one might expect Japan to depart from a decades-long posture of pacifism in favour of a return to one marked more by militarism. Important to his analysis, and not at all inconsistent with some of the other contributors' emphasis upon strategic subcultures, is the notion that strategic culture needs always to be contemplated within the context of a related notion, 'security identity', and that this latter is the outcome of a vigorously contested and negotiated political process by and among elites. For the past several decades, there have been three cardinal elements of this identity: Japan should have no traditional military forces; what ability to use force it does have should always be directed towards territorial self-defence; and there should be no Japanese involvement in 'foreign' wars. Oros concludes that it is too early for anyone to pen epitaphs for this security identity, but he does note that Japan's regional security horizon has darkened in recent years, which may and probably will be reflected in publication, pending as this is being written, of its first national security strategy.

Renato Cruz de Castro anchors his analysis of Philippine strategic culture less in strategic subcultures per se, and more in a combination of the country's geography and its history, each of which has fostered the highlighting of 'internal security' as the principal objective of the country's military. But of late there has been more than a hint of a shift away from traditional preoccupation with low-intensity ('asymmetrical') warfare in favour of a growing concentration upon territorial defence, triggered by China's growing presence in the nearby South China Sea. As is the case with Australia, an extremely important element in the Philippine defence profile is alliance with the United States. If this is so, it is possible to detect in the Cruz article a variant of the path-dependent dynamic sketched by Scobell, save that in this account what gets emphasized is the importance of institutional lock-in for Philippine strategic culture, with the objective becoming ensuring that one can count on the protection of a great and powerful friend.

Jiyul Kim's article on the Republic of Korea also relies upon a national characteristic, one that is embedded in what he calls the 'meta-narrative' of Korean nationalism, itself so profoundly shaped by centuries' worth of memories of having been dominated and humiliated by regional aggressors. In large though not exclusive measure, this historical memory continues to exert influence upon the country's grand strategic preferences, structured as these have been in recent decades around three 'pillars' (attaining national power and prosperity, deflecting the 'existential' threat from North Korea, and preserving the alliance with the United States). Modern security policy development in the Republic of Korea is thus shaped by history.

Finally, Brice Harris critically examines American strategic culture and an important, if unfortunate, tendency in the impulse to substitute technology for strategy. This, Harris argues, is as long-standing as it is durable, being reflected most recently

in such approaches as 'network-centric warfare' (NCW) and 'effects-based operations' (EBO). This reliance on technology, Harris argues, is problematic in its potential impact on American security relations with the Asia-Pacific. He describes how the American experience with the frontier, occasioning as it did greater reliance upon technology, and accompanied by a national preoccupation with cultivating applied science, frames a modern technology-dependent approach to China and regional relations. Significantly, Harris stresses how much the contemporary pivot of the Obama administration expresses cultural continuity, instead of, as it is sometimes said, a break with continuity. In this sense, his approach to strategic culture might, *mutatis mutandis*, be nested within the national character paradigm.

Although there is much variation in the manner with which the above authors apply our master concept of strategic culture to their specific Asia-Pacific case studies, there is one element of commonality that deserves underscoring here: each takes seriously the utility of a cultural approach to national strategic choice. So while the quest for reliable causality and predictive capability on a region-wide basis may indeed remain what some say it has always been, namely a will-o'-the-wisp, there can be no gainsaying that, on a case-by-case basis, the authors have contributed valuable insights into the policy dilemmas of cultural provenance and content confronting the core states of the Asia-Pacific.

NOTES

1. In German, *Im Westen nichts Neues*.
2. See David G. Haglund, '"Let's Call the Whole Thing Off"? Security Culture as Strategic Culture', *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol. 32 (December 2011), pp. 495–517. Also on this difficulty, see Christoph O. Meyer, 'Convergence towards a European Strategic Culture? A Constructivist Framework for Explaining Changing Norms', *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 11, No. 4 (2005), pp. 523–49, citing from pp. 523–5.
3. Alastair Iain Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995). Also see Huiyun Feng, 'A Dragon on Defense: Explaining China's Strategic Culture', in Jeannnie L. Johnson, Kerry M. Kartchner, and Jeffrey A. Larsen (eds), *Strategic Culture and Weapons of Mass Destruction: Culturally Based Insights into Comparative National Security Policymaking* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 171–87.
4. Most prominently, Jack Snyder, *The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Nuclear Options* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1977); and Colin S. Gray, 'Strategic Culture as Context: The First Generation of Theory Strikes Back', *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (1999), pp. 49–69.
5. Which is not to claim that national character was a new concept even at that time; to the contrary, scholars had been evincing interest in it for more than a century. Some argue that Tocqueville pioneered this line of social inquiry, while others trace its lineage back to David Hume, nearly a century before Tocqueville. See Reino Virtanen, 'French National Character in the Twentieth Century', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 3701, No. 3 (1967), pp. 82–92; and Srdjan Vucetic, 'The Search for Liberal Anglo-America: From Racial Supremacy to Multicultural Politics', in Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *Anglo-America and Its Discontents: Civilizational Identities beyond West and East* (London: Routledge, 2012), pp. 105–24, cited on p. 111.
6. For one scholar's assessment of what he takes to be the perils of conceptual expansion, applicable to international as well as to comparative politics, see Giovanni Sartori, 'Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics', *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 64 (December 1970), pp. 1033–53. But for a rather different view, one arguing that conceptual expansion is a normal and reasonably healthy practice, cf. T.D. Weldon, *The Vocabulary of Politics* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1953), pp. 26–7.
7. Although by the 1990s human security was becoming a common reference, its name was actually coined back in late January 1938, by President Franklin D. Roosevelt; see James A. Morone, *Hellfire*

Nation: The Politics of Sin in American History (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), pp. 354–55. On the concept itself, much has been written of late, with the following figuring among the best sources: S. Neil MacFarlane and Yuen Foong Khong, *Human Security and the UN* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006); Roland Paris, 'Human Security: Paradigm Shift or Hot Air?', *International Security*, Vol. 26, No. 3 (2001), pp. 87–102; and David Chandler, 'Human Security: The Dog That Didn't Bark', *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 39, No. 3 (2008), pp. 427–38.

8. Obtaining it in a policy address given at the Royal College of Defence Studies on 13 May 1998, by Clare Short, at the time Development Minister in the Tony Blair government; see David Law, 'Security Sector Reform in the Euro-Atlantic Region: Unfinished Business', in Alan Bryden and Heiner Hänggi (eds), *Reform and Reconstruction of the Security Sector* (Münster: Lit Verlag, 2004), pp. 21–45.
9. Johnston, *Cultural Realism* (note 3), pp. 3–5; *idem*, 'Thinking about Strategic Culture', *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (1995), pp. 32–64. For an elaboration, see my chapter, 'What Good Is Strategic Culture?' in Johnson, Kartchner, and Larsen, *Strategic Culture and Weapons of Mass Destruction* (note 3), pp. 15–31.
10. See Sujata Chakrabarti Pasic, 'Culturing International Relations Theory: A Call for Extension', in Yosef Lapid and Friedrich Kratochwil (eds), *The Return of Culture and Identity in IR Theory* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1997), pp. 85–104; Jeffrey Checkel, 'The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory', *World Politics*, Vol. 50, No. 1 (1998), pp. 324–48; and Peter Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).
11. Michael C. Desch, 'Culture Clash: Assessing the Importance of Ideas in Security Studies', *International Security*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (1998), pp. 141–70, citing from pp. 141–5.
12. Ruth Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1946).
13. Victor T. Le Vine, 'Conceptualizing "Ethnicity" and "Ethnic Conflict": A Controversy Revisited', *Studies in Comparative International Development*, Vol. 32 (Summer 1997), pp. 47–75, quote at p. 49.
14. On that problem, see Philip Gleason, 'Identifying Identity: A Semantic History', *Journal of American History*, Vol. 69, No. 1 (1983), pp. 910–31; and Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper, 'Beyond "Identity"', *Theory and Society*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (2000), pp. 1–47.
15. Hamilton Fyfe, *The Illusion of National Character* (London: Watts, 1940), pp. 58–9.
16. Dean Peabody, *National Characteristics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 10.
17. See Alex Inkeles and Daniel J. Levinson, 'National Character: The Study of Modal Personality and Sociocultural Systems', in Gardner Lindzey and Elliot Aronson (eds), *The Handbook of Social Psychology* (2nd edition; Vol. 4: *Group Psychology and Phenomena of Interaction*) (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1969), pp. 418–506, citing from pp. 424–5.
18. Morris Ginsberg, 'National Character', *British Journal of Psychology*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (1942), pp. 183–205, quote at pp. 187–8.
19. Bernard C. Hennessy, 'Psycho-Cultural Studies of National Character: Relevances for International Relations', *Background*, Vol. 6 (Autumn 1962), pp. 27–49, quoting from pp. 43–5, 47.
20. On this fallacy, see David Hackett Fischer, *Historians' Fallacies: Toward a Logic of Historical Thought* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1970), pp. 219–21.
21. E. Adamson Hoebel, 'Anthropological Perspectives on National Character', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 370, No. 3 (1967), pp. 1–7, quote on p. 3.
22. Alan Bloomfield, 'Time to Move On: Reconceptualizing the Strategic Culture Debate', *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol. 33, No. 4 (2012), pp. 437–61, quotes on pp. 438, 454.
23. Walter Russell Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2001).
24. See David G. Haglund and Tyson McNeil-Hay, 'The "Germany Lobby" and US Foreign Policy: What, if Anything, Does It Tell Us about the Debate over the "Israel Lobby"?', *Ethnopolitics*, Vol. 10 (September–November 2011), pp. 321–44.
25. John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, 'The Israel Lobby', *London Review of Books*, No. 28, 23 March 2006; and *idem*, *The Israel Lobby and US Foreign Policy* (New York: Penguin, 2007). For the debate the publications touched off, see Michael Massing, 'The Storm over the Israel Lobby', *New York Review of Books*, No. 53, 8 June 2006.
26. See his 'The New Israel and the Old: Why Gentile Americans Back the Jewish State', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 87 (July/August 2008), pp. 28–46.
27. David Hackett Fischer, *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

28. James G. Leyburn, *The Scotch-Irish: A Social History* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1962).
29. Mead, *Special Providence* (note 22), pp. 219–20.
30. Jeffrey S. Lantis, 'Strategic Culture: From Clausewitz to Constructivism', in Johnson, Kartchner, and Larsen, *Strategic Culture and Weapons of Mass Destruction* (note 3), pp. 34–52, quote on p. 37.
31. Thomas Banchoff, *The German Problem Transformed: Institutions, Politics, and Foreign Policy, 1945–1995* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1999), p. 170.
32. One such being Christopher P. Twomey, 'Lacunae in the Study of Culture in International Security', *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol. 29, No. 3 (2008), pp. 338–57.
33. Stuart Poore, 'What Is the Context? A Reply to the Gray-Johnston Debate on Strategic Culture', *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 29 (April 2003), pp. 279–84, quote on p. 284.
34. For our own precinct of social science, this dichotomy has been best captured in Martin Hollis and Steve Smith, *Explaining and Understanding International Relations* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).
35. See Georg Henrik von Wright, *Explanation and Understanding* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1971).
36. Paul Pierson, *Politics in Time: History, Institutions, and Social Analysis* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), pp. 167–69.
37. See, for instance, the thoughtful critique by Andrew R. Rutten, 'Review Essay: Politics in Time', *Independent Review*, Vol. 11 (Fall 2006), pp. 299–305.
38. Paul Pierson, 'Increasing Returns, Path Dependence, and the Study of Politics', *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 94 (June 2000), pp. 251–68, quote at p. 252. Also see Margaret R. Somers, '"We're No Angels": Realism, Rational Choice, and Relationality in Social Science', *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 104 (November 1998), pp. 722–84.
39. Andrew Abbott, 'From Causes to Events: Notes on Narrative Positivism', *Sociological Methods and Research*, Vol. 20 (May 1992), pp. 428–55. Also relevant here are Kevin Fox Gotham and William G. Staples, 'Narrative Analysis and the New Historical Sociology', *Sociological Quarterly*, Vol. 37 (Summer 1996), pp. 481–501; John Gerard Ruggie, 'Peace in Our Time? Causality, Social Facts and Narrative Knowing', *American Society of International Law: Proceedings 89th Annual Meeting* (1995), pp. 93–100; and Lawrence Stone, 'The Revival of the Narrative: Reflections on a New Old History', *Past and Present*, Vol. 85 (November 1979), pp. 3–24.
40. See Theda Skocpol, 'Sociology's Historical Imagination', in Theda Skocpol (ed.), *Vision and Method in Historical Sociology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 1–21.
41. See Jack A. Goldstone, 'Initial Conditions, General Laws, Path Dependence, and Explanation in Historical Sociology', *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 104 (November 1998), pp. 829–45.
42. Giovanni Capoccia and R. Daniel Kelemen, 'The Study of Critical Junctures: Theory, Narrative, and Counterfactuals in Historical Institutionalism', *World Politics*, Vol. 59 (April 2007), pp. 341–69, quotes on p. 341.
43. James Mahoney, 'Path Dependence in Historical Sociology', *Theory and Society*, Vol. 29 (August 2000), pp. 507–48.
44. See Steven Philip Kramer, *Does France Still Count? The French Role in the New Europe* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1994), where on p. 89 it is argued that improving transatlantic relations can only come about through changing 'the *culture* of US–French relations, because a history of mutual dislike among much of the elite and general public is not without its effect on relations between the two states' (emphasis added). Supporting this contention that interstate interaction can and does constitute cultural context in its own right, is Kenneth W. Terhune, 'From National Character to National Behavior: A Reformulation', *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 14 (June 1970), pp. 203–63, who in an effort to operationalize 'national character' stresses that '[p]redicting how two nations will interact by knowing the national character of only one of the nations will probably be as inexact as trying to predict the interaction between two chemical elements when the character of only one is known' (p. 256).
45. See in particular Feng Yongping, 'The Peaceful Transition of Power from the UK to the US', *Chinese Journal of International Politics*, Vol. 1 (2006), pp. 83–108.
46. See Alan Dobson and Steve Marsh (eds), *Contemporary Anglo-American Relations: A 'Special Relationship'?* (London: Routledge, 2013).
47. For an example that stresses 'racialized' collective identity instead of path dependency as the wellspring of the Anglo-American special relationship, see Srdjan Vucetic, *The Anglosphere: A Genealogy of a Racialized Identity in International Relations* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011).
48. Bradford Perkins, *The Great Rapprochement: England and the United States, 1895–1914* (New York: Atheneum, 1968).

49. Charles A. Kupchan, *How Enemies Become Friends: The Sources of Stable Peace* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), p. 2.
50. On the history of the bilateral relationship, see Kathleen Burk, *Old World, New World: Great Britain and America from the Beginning* (New York: Grove Press, 2009); Kenneth Bourne, *Britain and the Balance of Power in North America, 1815–1908* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1967); Harry Cranbrook Allen, *The Anglo-American Relationship since 1783* (London: Black, 1959); Charles S. Campbell, Jr., *From Revolution to Rapprochement: The United States and Great Britain, 1783–1900* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1974); Robert Balmain Mowat, *The Diplomatic Relations of Great Britain and the United States* (London: E. Arnold, 1925).
51. See, on this crisis, Jennie A. Sloan, 'Anglo-American Relations and the Venezuelan Boundary Dispute', *Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol. 4 (November 1938), pp. 486–506.
52. Christopher Hitchens, *Blood, Class, and Empire: The Enduring Anglo-American Relationship* (New York: Nation Books, 2004), quote at p. 30. Geoffrey Seed, 'British Reactions to American Imperialism Reflected in Journals of Opinion, 1898–1900′, *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 73 (June 1958), pp 254–72; and Sylvia L. Hilton and Steve J. S. Ickringill (eds), *European Perceptions of the Spanish-American War of 1898* (New York: Lang, 1999).
53. On the destroyers-bases exchange, see James R. Leutze, *Bargaining for Supremacy: Anglo-American Naval Collaboration, 1937–1941* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1977), pp. 72–93, 114–27; and Philip Goodhart, *Fifty Ships that Saved the World: The Foundation of the Anglo-American Alliance* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1965).
54. This is the clear implication of John J. Mearsheimer, 'The Gathering Storm: China's Challenge to US Power in Asia', *Chinese Journal of International Politics*, Vol. 3 (2010), pp. 381–96.