



Harry Kreisler: Welcome to a “Conversation with History.” I’m Harry Kreisler of the Institute of International Studies. Our guest today is Jack Citrin who is Professor of Political Science and Director of the Institute of Governmental Studies at UC Berkeley. Jack, welcome to our program.

Jack Citrin: Thank you, Harry, flattered to be here.

HK: Where were you born?

JC: I was born in Shanghai, China, just before World War II, or just before Pearl Harbor actually.

HK: How did you happen to be born there?

JC: My parents were both Russian originally, Russian refugees, and they fled from Russia to China, from Vladivostok and then a trajectory of events led me to be born in Shanghai.

HK: What year did they make their journey?

JC: My father left in 1920 and my mother actually had a very dramatic escape in 1930.

HK: She was escaping from where?

JC: She was escaping from Vladivostok, walked across the border into Manchuria and then from there made her way to Shanghai.

HK: So, both your parents – their young adulthood was spent in China?

JC: The young adulthood was spent in China, and they met in Hong Kong when they were students at the University of Hong Kong.

HK: So, the experience of your family was, it sounds, driven by revolution in Russia but also revolutions to come, which we will talk about in a minute.

JC: Yes. Their lives and derivatively mine were propelled by history.

HK: They were Jewish and Russian, correct?

JC: They were Russian Jews. They fled not because of anti-Semitism but basically because, I think, they were from the merchant and capitalist classes.

HK: What was it like for them, talking now about their earlier years, growing up in Shanghai? Were they living in the international settlements?

JC: Well, my father actually grew up in Harbin. There was a large Russian community there and he went to Russian school, a Russian speaking school. My mother had a different experience. Her family went directly to China. They lived initially outside the international settlement and she went to a British school. And so, she actually learned English before my father.

HK: What, looking back, did your parents provide in the sense of a world view? In other words, what did you get from them, after this experience and the experience you were to have later?

JC: Well, I think one of the lessons was that you had to make the best life for yourself and be a part of a community, wherever you happened to be. There was also kind of a recognition that things were, in some sense, contingent and that even though you were where you were for the moment, the possibility of being uprooted was there and you had to be, in some sense, ready to cope with that.

HK: You were born in what year?

JC: I was born in 1941.

HK: So, your first years, which you may or may not remember, lead up, or are coincident with, the depiction in Steven Spielberg's "The Empire of the Sun," which is the story of the Japanese occupation of Shanghai.

JC: Yes. My parents had become naturalized British citizens, and as a result of that they were interned, as in the film, with other enemy nationals in a camp on the outskirts of Shanghai. There was a notice, which I still have actually, the official notice, to report at a particular location, notice from the Japanese civil administration of Shanghai, and then families went there and were interned in these different camps. There were a number of them outside Shanghai.

HK: So, were you born in the camp?

JC: No. I was about nine months old, I think, when we moved into the camp. [An] interesting point is that both my parents' families, both sets of grandparents, and other relatives, because they did not have British citizenship – they continued to live in Shanghai through the war.

HK: Were they able to communicate with your parents?

JC: [In a] very limited way.

HK: Do you remember anything from that experience, and if you don't, what are your parents' recollections that they must have given to you?

JC: Well, I have two very small memories. One is a memory of being taken by my mother across a field across the daycare, because the prisoners essentially ran the camp but they were allowed to have a kind of daycare or preschool, or school for the children, so I actually started preschool at a pretty early age. The other memory I have is a memory that is in the movie, and that is at the end of the war, when American planes dropped by parachute sort of care packages, and I remember we got to these care packages and the main attraction was the Hershey bar, the introduction to the Hershey bar.

HK: When American power was on the march during that period.

JC: And yeah, I also have sort of vague recollection of the living quarters which were pretty cramped. But my parents – it was actually a very important experience in their lives, because I think they came out of it feeling self-reliant and self-confident. It was hard but it wasn't a concentration camp of the German variety and there was no real serious mistreatment of prisoners, and yet you had to sort of survive in these pretty, you know, difficult circumstances – difficult material circumstances.

HK: Were provisions made, in terms of food, by the Japanese, or did people grow their own vegetables and fruits, and so on?

JC: That I don't remember. The Japanese provided food, and I think the quality of the nutrition of the prisoners sort of reflected the course of the war. As the Japanese themselves became more beleaguered and had less, the prisoners got less accordingly.

HK: So, the international status of the people incarcerated with your parents and with you was different from that of the Japanese treatment of the Chinese, much different.

JC: Yes, and also from the Japanese treatment, say, of Singapore and Malaya. I think part of the reason for that was there was no fighting really in Shanghai. They had already occupied all of the Shanghai in 1937, except the international settlement. There was sort of brief, almost – hour conflict on the day of Pearl Harbor when they invaded the international settlement and took it over,

but basically the civil administration, with some police support, ran these camps. So, it wasn't sort of soldiers coming out of the heat of battle with whatever psychological impact that had, And the people interned there were interned because they were citizens of countries which with Japan was formally at war. So, our camp was mainly British, Canadian, Dutch, a few Australians. Most of the Americans actually were in the camp that is portrayed in the Spielberg film.

HK: As a young child undergoing this experience, what languages were you hearing and learning?

JC: Well, mainly English. I mean, that's why English really was my first language. I think that if we had not been in camp I would have spoken as much Russian as English, because both my parents' social circle, and the grandparents, really were Russian speaking as their first language.

HK: So, when the war ends the prisoners are able to return to whatever they had in Shanghai. Were the properties still there and occupiable [sic]?

JC: Yeah. We were fortunate in that we went back to the apartment where we lived before the war. My grandmother also had an apartment in the same building. They retained ownership of those properties during the war but were obligated to take in other people, you know, refugees and so forth, but at the end of the war we really went back to our own homes, which actually I do remember. And my mother tells a story about how my younger brother was born in the camp actually, and now we had our own room away from our parents, and that apparently was quite – not a pleasing situation to us, emotionally somewhat terrifying, where are our nurturing parents, you know. They liked it better, I'm sure. [laughs]

HK: So, then your family remained in Shanghai until the Communists took over Shanghai. Now did you experience the Chinese civil war, from this period to the end of the war, to the Chinese victory – actually the Communist victory?

JC: We experienced as consumers of news, and there was no real fighting in Shanghai, but I do remember the day the Red Army marched into Shanghai. As a child you remember things for funny reasons. I remember it because it's sort of the first day that I remember my father not going to the office, and we stayed in and we watched the army come in. And the very next day, on every street corner, there was a Red Army soldier with a red star of the cap, and I do remember that. But my parents were specialists in staying too late, not anticipating the revolution. They stayed in the Soviet Union too late and therefore left with nothing, and they stayed in Shanghai longer than they actually had to and therefore also left with nothing.

HK: So, they left after the Communists took over?

JC: We left China on December 24th, 1950. We had waited...

HK: The Communists took over when?

JC: 1949. So, there was about a year's period that we stayed. We had to apply for an exit visa, had to have a place to go – basically during that time your property was expropriated and you were kind of left with your suitcases. You could take all the clothes you wanted, I guess. And that was after the Korean War started, and I think that also slowed the exodus.

HK: So, from the age, let's say, of 5 to 10 you were really...

JC: Yeah, 5 to 9.

HK: ...you were really indirectly experiencing history and revolution and events, or were you not because you were a child?

JC: Well, I don't think I was aware of it very much. You know, I went to Shanghai British school, went to – we belonged to a community club, a center with a swimming pool, had a good life. And then it came to an end but it came to an end for reasons – I suppose by that time, I was already sort of able to consume historical facts and know sort of what was going on, the Communists had taken over, the Korean War had started, but you know, life was not hard.

HK: Your parents then emigrated to...?

JC: My parents moved to Hong Kong. We lived there for a few years, and then my father got a business opportunity in Japan. And so, when I was 13 we moved to Tokyo and that's where I went to high school.

HK: So, in this period before you actually went off to college, and we'll talk about that and where you went, you really saw the world and the different peoples that make up that world.

JC: Well, yeah. I think the one thing that I did get from that experience – two things, I suppose. One was we were expatriates always, and privileged expatriates, but nonetheless you interacted really with people of different backgrounds and different – different backgrounds, different religions. The schools that I went to always were – if you want to use the word “diversity,” they were super diverse. My high school senior class, 25 people, 12 different nationalities. And so, that was something that I grew up experiencing and I think really benefited from. The other thing, as a child you don't know that your life is different from other people's, really, very much, because most of the people you're around are living lives like yours. And I think when we moved to Hong Kong I became more aware that some of the people, mostly the British kids, had homes elsewhere, that this was just a temporary spot for them. I think for people like myself this was your home, you didn't have sort of a home country to go to, and that was something that I think had an emotional and psychological impact on me. It was sort of – that was an awareness of difference.

HK: So, you, in this socialization, which is something you talk about in your work when you look at America, and we'll talk about that in a minute – you really were socialized into a unique kind of cosmopolitanism.

JC: Well, yeah. I think that I grew up sort of surrounded by rootless cosmopolitans, even if I were not one myself. I think my parents, over time, had reasonably prominent place in the – certainly in the Jewish community, in both Shanghai, Hong Kong and Tokyo, and also in the business community. And so, as a result of that, many visitors from all around would come to our home, and I think that also had some kind of effect.

HK: So, where did you finally wind up going to college?

JC: I went to college at McGill University in Montreal as my first sort of entry into the western hemisphere.

HK: What did you major in?

JC: I had a joint major in political science and economics at McGill.

HK: Any mentors there who influenced your career?

JC: Yes. Well, I would say that there're several people on the faculty who were influential. In the end I think there was one professor, he was a professor of international relations, Michael Breecher [sp?] – visited Berkeley at one time in the past. He was the one who, I think, influenced me in the direction of graduate school later on.

HK: And for graduate school you came to Berkeley.

JC: I did come to Berkeley.

HK: And in what year was that?

JC: I came to Berkeley in '64, I think.

HK: So, you were here right before the breakout of the free speech movement.

JC: Yeah, right before, just before.

HK: And in the department, what did you gravitate toward, what fields, and why?

JC: Well, I came here really thinking I would study comparative politics. That had been my background at McGill. And one of the books we read was by Herbert McClosky, it was called The

Soviet Dictatorship. So, when I came and they asked me, “Who do you want to be your advisor?” I looked on the list of faculty – that was an era where prospective graduate students didn’t do the kind of assiduous research that’s done now with – you know, you don’t go on recruitment trips, you sort of show up and are dealt with. And so, I recognized McClosky’s name. I think his was the only name that I really recognized, and so I went to see him and I said, “I’d like to study with you. I read your book.” He sort of sheepishly said, “Well, I don’t do that stuff anymore. What I do now is called political behavior, political psychology, but you’re welcome to come to my seminar,” which I did and I became engaged with that, and then he offered me a position as his research assistant. And that really is what shaped what I’ve been doing ever since.

HK: And we’ll talk about it in a minute, but I’m curious, given this background how did you see events unfolding in Berkeley as the free speech movement began to occur?

JC: Well, I think as a sort of an outsider, and not as an American, and not someone who had gone through the civil rights movement and been aware of it, I was a little detached initially. I thought it was odd, the free speech issue, the kinds of barriers that existed, so I was immediately sympathetic to the idea that you should be able to say what you want on the campus. But I wasn’t as outraged, I suppose, as some of my graduate student colleagues and friends, and I think I did become sort of more involved in that because of knowing people who actually were in Sproul Hall and arrested in December 8th. And I kind of followed in McClosky’s wake, because he was one of the faculty members who crafted the resolution that sort of ended the crisis, in a way.

HK: Did any of your background, having experienced this international turmoil, your parents and registering your parents’ response to the Communist revolution, and so on – did that ground you, in a way, in terms of your perspective on what you were seeing?

JC: I think it grounded me throughout the time in Berkeley, but I think that as we’ve had the many convulsions here over the year [sic], political convulsions, I never felt the kinds of things that, however legitimate the grievances and complaints, I just felt they sort of paled by comparison to the kinds of experiences that many of the people that I had known had gone through, because you know, during the course of all of these events and backgrounds some people survived pretty well, others did not. You know, others did not land as easily on their feet as our family was fortunate enough to do.

HK: So, you accepted a position in Berkeley and stayed here. Did Berkeley, in a way, become your home, the home that you – you had had a home, but then you hadn’t had a home.

JC: Well, I think that I and a couple of my very closest friends who had the same background as I did in China and Japan, we were looking for a home. We didn’t want to be sort of permanent expatriates, at least I didn’t. And I loved Japan, and I loved Hong Kong, I mean, I go back there with enormous pleasure and nostalgia even, but I think that I really wanted to be rooted in a place. I think I deliberately did not study international relations, or Asian politics, which you would have

said, well, I might have had an advantage – right? – in doing so. I didn't want to do that, and I think I wanted, really, to be in a place that one, I could consider home, and I think that America and Berkeley is a welcoming and accepting place, actually, institutionally. You can never become Japanese. My parents lived in Japan for 42 years. You can't become Japanese. But I think you can become American, and I think that was one of the things that has always kept me here.

HK: Talking now about your career as a political scientist, why did you choose political science? Why didn't you become – go into the professions, law, medicine...?

JC: Well, I think that also was related to where was your home. If my home where my parents lived was Japan – but I couldn't be a lawyer in Japan, I couldn't be a doctor in Japan. I could have stayed in Canada, I suppose, and done those things. With my major, I suppose, law, government or business would have been the alternatives, law or government, and I did think of that. But even there, which country – you know, where would you settle? And so, academia was, in some ways, a default choice for me, and it's not something that I planned on, not even when I came to Berkeley as a graduate student. I didn't really have a conception of what the professorial career would be like. But that did develop here, and then I was very lucky.

HK: If students were to watch this interview, what can you tell us about the skills required to do what you do as a political scientist?

JC: Well, I think to be really successful you have to be – you have to persevere, you have to be disciplined, and it helps to be engaged and interested in your material, but you have to, I think actually, to some extent, detach yourself from the hurly burly of daily politics and have a kind of analytical detachment. I think that's difficult because many of us are interested in politics precisely because we know it's important and affects large numbers of people and you want to say something that is meaningful in that context, relevant in that context, policy relevant, as well as just relevant in the sense of adding to the store of knowledge. And I think balancing that is difficult. And so, how to manage that is something that, I think, beginning graduate students especially need to learn. And then I think you have to be able to be a scientist. I don't mean a scientist necessarily like a scientist but someone like – as a detective, as a historian, you have to be able to kind of keep on digging and digging, and then synthesize things together. I think you have to be willing to defer gratification because I think the process of publishing, which is important, is a difficult one. And the other thing, I guess, you have to get used to, which I certainly didn't realize, is that you may be the professor but in a certain sense you're always in school, you're always being judged, by your peers, by anonymous reviewers, and I think that's something that you have to – it's useful to sort of know and prepare yourself for.

HK: Let's talk a little about the topics that interested you and how you came to them. I know that your early work was on government and trust in government. Tell us a little about that.

JC: Well, you know, I was doing my PhD during the height of turmoil in the United States and other countries where the assault on authority, political authority, social institutions, was at its maximum. And so, the first thing that I worked on was what creates bonds of trust and allegiance between citizens and government and what erodes those feelings of trust. And so, that was really the first phase of my career, from when I got my PhD in 1970 on for almost a decade. That's what I wrote about, using surveys mainly but other kinds of data, as well. And I think I was, in some ways, directed to that, really, and the later topics that I have spent most of my time studying by my – actually my personal background is sort of what makes you feel at home, what makes you feel a connection to those who govern you, which frankly, we had never had.

HK: You mean, your family?

JC: My family and me never really felt as a citizen, never had voted, never had the legal right to vote. And so, here was a situation where in a stable democracy these sort of bonds of trust and commitment were obviously under assault, so I studied it not only empirically but also sort of analytically, what is really the meaning of trust, what does it mean to say that you trust an institution, and what does an institution have to do to sustain that trust, and what are the consequences of trust being lost.

HK: And what was the answer? What did sustain the trust?

JC: Well, a combination of things, as always: sense of the process is operating as it should, and then also, over the long haul, just outcomes. And in some sense trust has to be earned and re-earned. You know, we are socialized into a particular conception of our political systems, and all systems try to socialize you into feeling committed and loyal with greater or lesser degree of sense. But in the end, I personally ended up saying that the loss of trust in the late '60s and '70s in American officials and institutions was, in some sense, rational. It was based upon failed performance. So, there's a kind of a balance of prior socialization and then the impact of events, or the impact of events as perceived through messages about those events, and there, of course, the media becomes a player, as well.

HK: And in the next phase of your career you worked on – you continued, in a way, this set of problems by focusing on the tax revolt.

JC: I did. You know, the last '70s, Proposition 13, the tax revolt – by that time I was collaborating with a professor at UCLA, called David Sears, we've done a lot of work together, and our work essentially began with a sort of theoretical question, how much is personal self-interest the motivation of one's political attitudes, as opposed to broader attitudes such as ideology, patriotism, racism. And so, we were doing work along those lines already, and then the tax revolt occurred and [we] had an opportunity to look at that, and my own take on that was the tax revolt was, in some sense, another act of mass defiance of established elites, because Proposition 13 was opposed by every elite actor in the State of California, both major political parties, the business, the educational

establishment, the labor establishment, and yet it passed overwhelmingly. And it should never have happened because the way in which property tax revolt developed was, in some sense, a failure on the part of state political leaders to react to an obvious problem. And so, my take on the tax revolt [was] that it was sort of a manifestation of the loss of trust, or the lack of trust, that I'd been studying earlier. And so, then I did a number of studies of direct democracy as a kind of mechanism for popular voice. It's not always that because direct democracy is now kind of being manipulated by the very institutional actors it was originally intended to constrain, but at that – so, that was my take on the tax revolt. So, it really was a development of previous work.

HK: As I relate your research to your background I sense a consequence of the experience of your family's, and let me play this out to see if you agree, that in a way society and the economy that they were relating to became inadequate, in other words, for the problems that emerged when there was a problem with the government, basically, because in the sense of Russia, the Communist Revolution, and in China – is that fair? In other words, I'm seeing this trend in the problem that you wound up focusing on, because in fact, for you, for your family, but for everybody, this question of trust in government is really important.

JC: Yeah. Well, I think I would answer it a little differently, Harry. I mean, I think we reacted to authority. You know, my family never were in a position to influence political authority, so in some sense we were subjects, always subjects, and had to kind of adapt to the institutions and the system as it existed, and once we got – even in China, after the war, and certainly in Japan, these were not oppressive regimes, but you were outside. Now – so, for me, wanting to, in some sense, be a member of a political community, the issue was what happens when you're in that community and when the relationship of trust is sort of meaningful. Now you had an opportunity for voice and not everyone – you don't particularly want to constantly on the barricades but what happens when that sort of trust is squandered.

HK: And then to follow up on that then, as your career and your identity is evolving, the American identity, and the American experience, and American citizenship really become very important for you in your life story.

JC: Well, I became an American, I changed my citizenship in 1976. I could have done so earlier. I was a little bit reluctant to give up my British passport simply because it was, in some sense, what I was, but I really knew that this was my home. By that time I was married, my wife is an American, was born here, and you know, I came to feel that I wanted my child to have no ambiguities to who she was, and what she was, and where she was from. So, I became a citizen and that really enabled me to start being a citizen in the sense of voting and complaining, and all the things, kind of, that we do. And the experience of actually being naturalized, which was in a federal courthouse in San Francisco – I was about one of, I think, 500 people at the time, I would say the majority of whom at that time, 1976, in San Francisco were of Chinese background, as I was, too, [laughs] even though no one would have guessed. But you know...

HK: [laughs] Born in Shanghai. So, the next phase of your research career, you really turned to this question of what is the American identity and what are the threats to it. Talk a little about that, and the time in which you were directed to this research.

JC: Well, I began that research, really, in the late '80s, but it grew out of an earlier kind of interest. Actually a graduate student class I took with – you may have taken it yourself – with Ernie Haas, Nationalism and Imperialism, and if you remember, he talked about different models of nationalism, civic versus ethnic, and various kinds of things, and then sort of the future of the nation state. You know, a lot of people are hostile to nationalism and the nation, but I think I had, because of my background, a more positive outlook, certainly on the American nation state, because it was the nation that allowed me to, in some sense, become a citizen. Now it was not unique, I could have done this in Canada, too, but I didn't, I did it here. And then what happened was that in the late '80s there began to be a political concern over immigration, the impact of Asian and Hispanic immigration to the United States, and whether this would, in some sense, change the conception of American nationhood. And you know, I became very intrigued by this and wanted to study it empirically. And so, starting really in 1990, I've had more than a decade of research and publications focusing, first of all, sort of on the historical constructions of American identity and the competing visions of America, and then the impact of waves of immigration, and then finally, what is the meaning of the current wave of immigration and the occasional backlash against it. And so, in some sense, is American remaining, and can it remain what may be [a] somewhat idealized image of it as a country where people can come as strangers and then over a couple of generations become citizens and identifiers, and sort of Americans in some psychological and every – and cultural sense.

HK: And what was that construction of American identity that emerged as you put these pieces together?

JC: Well, I think there're essentially two competing conceptions, and historians debate the relative strength of these two images. One is a sort of liberal cosmopolitan, inclusive, individualistic conception, and the other is an ethnocentric ethnic conception in which kind of certain groups, whether – initially Anglo-Protestants, then later maybe European, and then sort of became these paradigms of Americanism and American identity. And I think there's a legitimate discussion of the gap between rhetoric and reality, ideals and practice, but I essentially believe that the end of World War II and the civil rights movement, and really the change in the immigration law in 1965, represented the triumph of the liberal conception of American identity in law, and in official ideology. And ironically, it became challenged by multiculturalism. So, my new book, also written with David Sears, which we hope to publish next year, is called American Identity and the Politics of Multiculturalism. So, it looks at sort of a different challenge to this liberal individualist conception of American identity, that sort of anyone can belong provided you accept a certain set of values and cultural practices.

HK: And in some of this work, which I've looked at, you focus on, as a political scientist, what you call self-categorization effect and normative content. You look at – and then tell us how you come

up with your answer to the problem in the sense of looking at the process of making America work and what the evidence is showing.

JC: Well, I think the evidence shows that for minority groups, and for immigrant groups, the self-categorization changes generationally, and there's a movement from a self-categorization which your ethnic origins and your country of origin classification is psychological very important to one in which it sort of loses that significance and has only some kind of nostalgic symbolic significance. So, the whole emphasis on Irish-Americans, Italian-Americans – I mean, people maybe talk that way today, but given the intermarriage, social mobility, all of that kind of white ethnic self-designation has eroded and is not significant, and the question...

HK: Over generations.

JC: Over generations. And if you even look at data about Hispanic Americans, you see there, too, a big difference in terms of this preferred self-categorization from new immigrants, second generation immigrants, and then immigrant – you know, people whose immigrant origins are far more distant. The other thing we find that – you know, linguistic assimilation, and one of the things in terms of the popular content of what it means to be an American, speaking English is way at the top of most people's lists, and actually speaking the country's language is the top of most of the lists for – cross nationally, as well – I've been looking at some European data. But what you find is despite fears, and some concerns expressed by some writers on the topic, that by the third generation most immigrants, wherever they come from, are monolingual in English, have trouble talking to their grandparents in their native language. I mean, it was my own experience. My grandparents spoke only Russian, really, my parents were bilingual, I have a smattering of Russian, my child has no Russian.

HK: So, in this process I know that you think upward mobility important, and so the role of the university becomes very important in the adoption of policies that help further the assimilation that's crucial to American national identity. Talk a little about that, and where you think the university gets it wrong and gets it right.

JC: Well, two things have changed between, say, the 1920s, that wave of immigration, and contemporary period. In that era Americanization policies existed and assimilation was not a dirty word. Today in most university circles assimilation is, at best, viewed ambiguously, and sort of maintaining one's ethnic heritage is of value, it's proclaimed in various ideologies of multiculturalism. So, the notion of one nation and a prior commitment to the nation rather than sort of sustaining one's ethnic traditions, culture – I think the word "culture" is thrown around very, very loosely – is in certain segments of the university the dominant ideology. So, as Troy Duster pointed out years ago, in his study of Berkeley, diversity at Berkeley, rather than the university encouraging people to think in terms of an overarching identity, whether it's a national identity or even an intellectual identity, the official ideology with which I have openly disagreed, so this is not news to anyone who knows me, is the opposite, is to sustain difference and to value difference. Now

you know, having grown up in a world of differences I certainly can appreciate differences, but I think my experience was that people from all these different backgrounds and experience thought of themselves as members of a common enterprise. So, I think that's the challenge in any country where there are religious, linguistic or ethnic differences, and I think it's something that doesn't happen automatically. I think that – you know, there's a lot of research in psychology that shows we prefer to be with people like ourselves, that we tend to favor people like ourselves. So, how do you define the self, and how do you categorize people like you? And the nation should not be the only such – a unit of solidarity, but if you want people to feel that there's a sort of obligation to share, there's an obligation to provide for people who have less than you, who are different from you, etc., then if you don't – if that's not grounded in some sense of common membership, I think it's very difficult to sustain, particularly in the face of everything else in the society that says look out for number one.

HK: What is your perspective, talking a little about foreign policy, on the notion that we have a model that can be applied to the rest of the world? I mean, what are the elements of truth in that idea, and what's wrong with it, in a way?

JC: Well, one cannot simply export institutions of government, or even a whole complex of cultural values in some kind of – the way you can export a Ford, or a Honda, or some such thing like that. I mean, I think that's absurd. But I do think that there are macro-historical processes that derive from economic change, that derive from cultural interaction, where certain impulses, sort of the impulse for self-realization, the impulse for some kind of control over your own destiny, the impulse to be able to kind of speak out, is not a universal human quality, but that it does sort of manifest itself, really, around the world in various contexts, and I think that the way in which this particular impulse interacts with other kinds of cultural habits and expectations, traditions and institutions, will vary very much. I think that certainly within the advanced industrial west there are certain kinds of convergences, not necessarily in institutions but in norms of conduct, in political norms, say with respect to gender equality now, but to sort of think you can go to a patriarchal society and automatically say, well, this is the way it has to be, and not expect resistance is kind of very naïve. And I think that in foreign policy there's always the balance between sort of alliances of strategic necessity and then kind of your moral judgment of those allies and enemies, for that matter.

HK: You've now assumed a new role of Director of the Institute of Governmental Studies. Tell us about your hope for the future of that institution.

JC: Well, this Institute of Governmental Studies, IGS, is actually a old research unit on campus. I found out that it's 88 years old. It got its beginning in the '20s as a kind of school of public administration, as sort of a good government operation, and its first leaders were political scientists who were in public administration or [had] an interest in state and local government, and who interacted quite a lot with public officials. It's since has evolved into kind of a unit that has sort of clusters of researchers, some of whom continue to work on issues of that nature and to interact with Sacramento, and that's something that I think is important, both going back to your question of

why be a political scientist – here’s an opportunity to sort of communicate on a policy relevant dimension – it’s also important, I think, for the campus, a public institution, public university, to have positive relations with people in government. But we have a number of research clusters, a couple of which reflect my own interests, but which are really led by faculty from different disciplines on campus. One of those focuses on race, ethnicity and immigration, another is a kind of comparative [sic] institutions of government – governance, and a third which we’re just launching this year is going to be called the Center for the Study of Representation. And representation, again, is something you talked about – you know, I have this sort of personal interest in being represented, or how does one get represented, but I think representation is sort of an umbrella term that allows us to look at not just political representation but access to education, economic inequality, various kinds of ways in which politics and policy distributes benefits to a pretty diverse citizenry.

HK: One final question, which is if students were to watch this program and they look back at your career, what would you advise them with regard to preparing for the challenges of nationalism versus cosmopolitanism as they deal with the world in the future? Any particular rules of thumb that have come to you after this experience we’ve just talked about?

JC: Well, I think what I would have them think about is a kind of – what is the value of a tempered nationalism. We can talk in idealistic terms about a world community and a world government, but in reality the institutions that you can influence in a democratic way that have the most sort of impact on your life, at this point, are national institutions, and you’re a citizen of a nation. That doesn’t mean that you – you know, my country, right or wrong, obviously not, but I think the value of nationhood, to me, is linked to the value of citizenship. And that is how I would think about it. What is the meaning of a citizenship? Who is a citizen? Who should be a citizen? And you know, if you eschew, even as an immigrant, as I did, for about ten years or so, or maybe less – when I could’ve been a citizen I eschewed that choice. I had no ability to influence even my local government, even the school board, you know, so when it came down – time for my kid to go to school, I was pretty unhappy with the school system, but I had not been a player.

HK: Well, on that note, Jack, I want to thank you for joining us today. Good luck in your new role as Director of the Institute of Governmental Studies.

JC: Harry, thank you, and I know we’re going to work together in that new role.

HK: Good And thank you very much for joining us for this “Conversation With History.”

[End of Interview]